

## **Data201 - Written Advice on Māori Data Governance and Sovereignty**

Can Stats NZ still accurately measure the Māori population?

If the Census is replaced by data from Stats NZ's Integrated Data Infrastructure(IDI), there's a risk that Māori will be undercounted. The IDI pulls information from government agencies like health, education, and tax records, but not everyone shows up in those systems. Māori who have less contact with government agencies could be missed entirely. This clashes with collective benefits, because if the population count is wrong, iwi and hapū miss out on fair resources and support.

The impact of this undercount would be obvious as all funding, planning, and service would rely on accurate population measurements. If Stats NZ depends only on the IDI, Māori communities may receive fewer resources than they need, which would increase inequalities rather than decreasing them.

To reduce this risk, Stats NZ should work in partnership with Māori to design better ways of assessing the Māori population. This could involve additional surveys, carrying out targeted counts, or a stream of data gathering led by Māori in addition to IDI sources. To ensure that the numbers are reliable for making decisions, Māori must have the power to define what is considered accurate population data.

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