

# Families and Whānau Status Report 2016

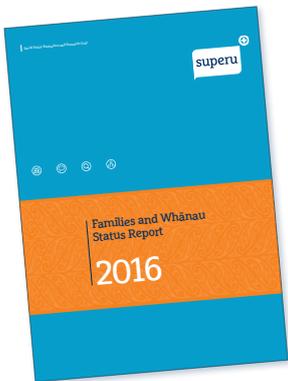
JUNE 2016

## Introduction

Families are key building blocks of our society. They give us a sense of identity and belonging.

The core functions of a family are to care, nurture and support, to manage resources, to provide socialisation and guidance, and to provide identity and a sense of belonging.

Here, we look at New Zealand's families and take a closer look at ethnic differences for families with children aged under 18 years. This information is from our *Families and Whānau Status Report 2016* which aims to measure, monitor and better understand family wellbeing in New Zealand.



If you'd like more information about anything in this summary, you'll find a copy of the full report at [superu.govt.nz](http://superu.govt.nz)



## About At a Glance

Superu's *At a Glance* series uses infographics to illustrate research findings or key information about a priority topic.

## Family ethnicity

European  
79.7%

Māori  
18.4%

Pacific  
8.0%

Asian  
13.1%

Middle Eastern,  
Latin American  
& African  
1.5%



Ethnicity is based on **at least one family member identifying with that group**. This means that a family can be represented in more than one ethnic grouping

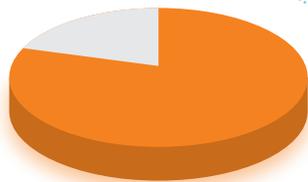
# Families in New Zealand



Nearly half of families include a child aged under 18



Families living together make up **78%** of the population



**80%<sup>†</sup>** of families include at least one member who identifies as European



**1.13 MILLION** Families in New Zealand



Nearly **1 in 5** families include at least one member who identifies as Māori



**18%<sup>†</sup>** of families live in the same house with other families



**1%<sup>†</sup>** of partnerships are same sex couples

<sup>†</sup> Figures rounded  
Source: Statistics New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings 2013

# How do we know if a family is working well ?



## Health

Family members enjoy optimal physical and mental health.



## Relationships and connections

Family members enjoy constructive relationships within their family and with wider family members, and have positive connections with the community and outside the family.



## Economic security and housing

Family members live in economic security and independence.



## Safety and environment

Family members are physically safe and live in a positive environment.



## Skills, learning and employment

Family members have the knowledge and skills to participate fully in society.



## Identity and sense of belonging

Family members have opportunities to learn values, languages and ideas, and engage in traditions important to the family.

# Types of families we look at

**Families do not stand in isolation – they are connected to other families, schools, workplaces and communities.**



COUPLE, BOTH AGED UNDER 50 YEARS



COUPLE, ONE OR BOTH AGED OVER 50 YEARS



TWO PARENTS, AT LEAST ONE CHILD AGED UNDER 18 YEARS



ONE PARENT, AT LEAST ONE CHILD AGED UNDER 18 YEARS



TWO PARENTS, ALL CHILDREN AGED 18 AND OVER



ONE PARENT, ALL CHILDREN AGED 18 AND OVER

Taking a closer look at:



## Two parent families with at least one child under 18 years of age

### Most common family type

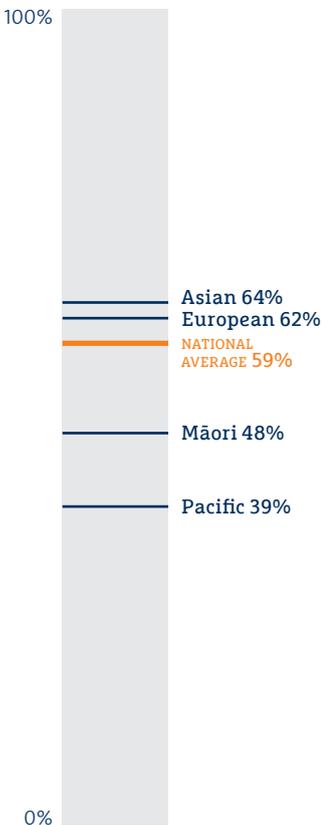
Have at least one child under 18 living at home. May have older children



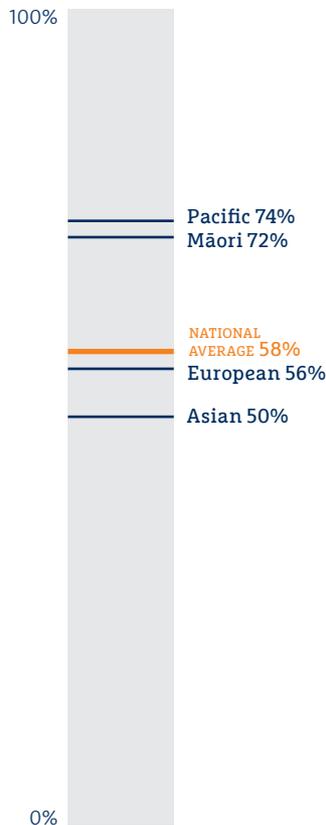
European families are faring relatively well across all of the indicators. Māori, Pacific and Asian families are more likely to face financial and housing difficulties.

### How are these families faring compared to the national average?\*

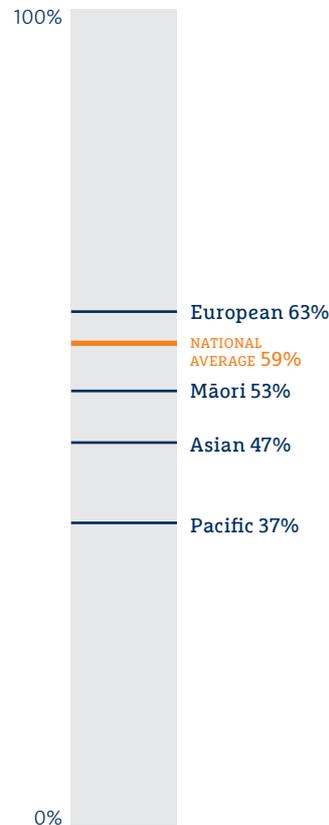
#### No major housing problems



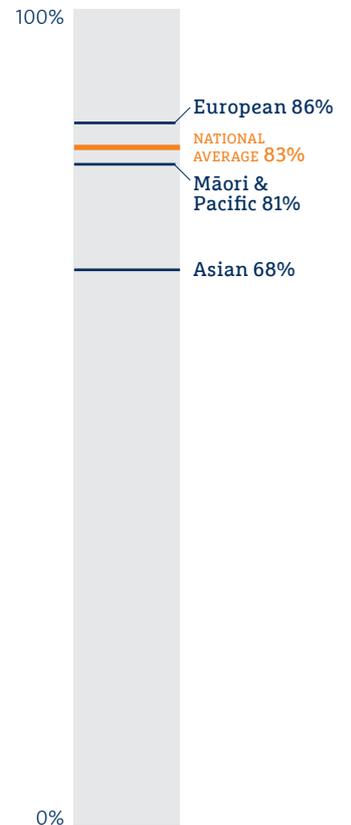
#### Provide extended family support



#### Ok with hours and pay



#### Can easily express their own identity



\* Only selected indicators are shown here

Taking a closer look at:

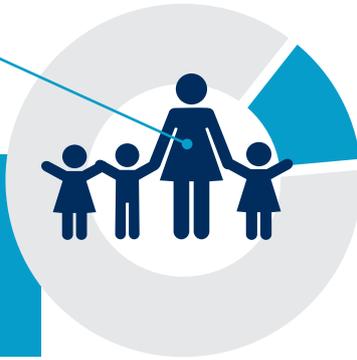


# Single parent families with at least one child under 18 years of age

Have at least one child under 18 living at home. May have older children

**82%<sup>†</sup>** are headed by a female

**140,000 FAMILIES**



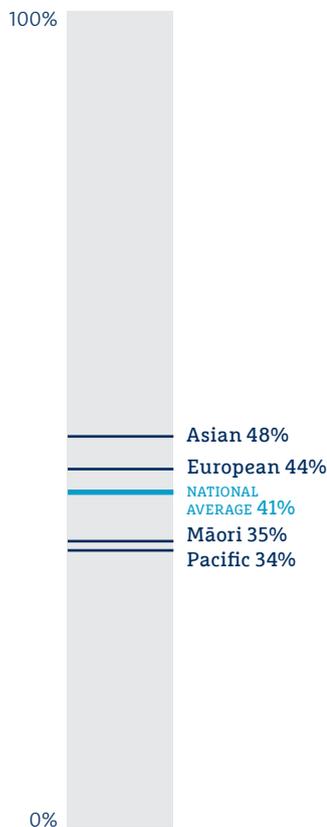
**13%<sup>†</sup>** of families are single-parent families with at least one child aged under 18

Across all four ethnic groups, single-parent families with younger children are facing difficulties and financial stresses. These families also have low mental health outcomes, which further affects their ability to function well as a family.

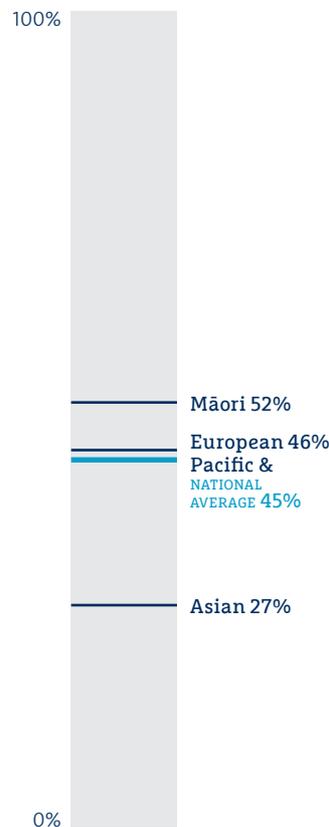
<sup>†</sup> Figures rounded

## How are these families faring compared to the national average?\*

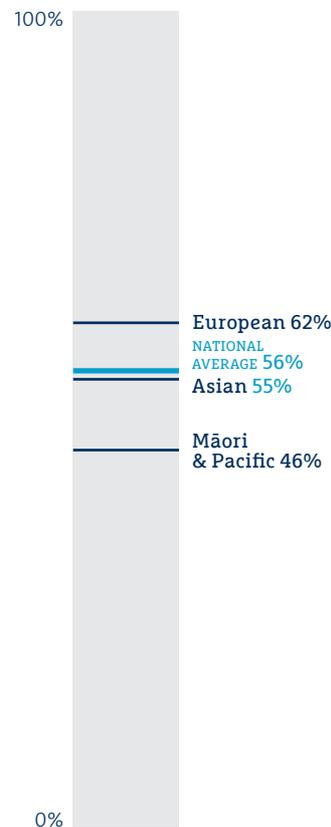
### Has post-secondary education



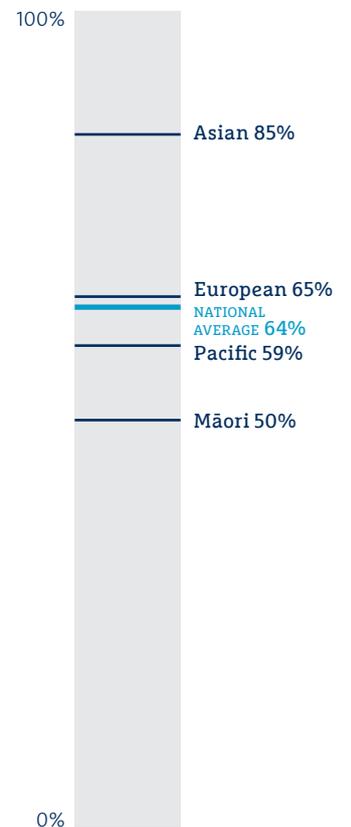
### Voluntary work in the community



### Employment



### Non-smoking family



\* Only selected indicators are shown here

## Families and cultural diversity

New Zealand has an increasingly diverse population so it's important that our research reflects this. Is 'family wellbeing' defined in the same way across different cultures?



### Individualist and independent family values

Typical in western cultures where people tend to live in small, nuclear families. Autonomy and personal accountability are highly valued. Parenting tends to focus on children's independence and uniqueness.



### Collectivist and interdependent family values

Usually found in non-western cultures. Reciprocal relationships among family members are emphasised rather than an individual's personal autonomy. Parenting tends to focus on obligations to the family, conformity and duty.

#### FAMILY FUNCTION: TO CARE, NURTURE AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER

Parents support children until they are adults

Children expect support from their parents but there is little obligation to reciprocate

Support networks tend to be small and localised

Extended families are often not included in support networks

Parents support children throughout their lives

There is an expectation to reciprocate support among family members

Support networks tend to be large and span geographic and kin borders

Extended families are integral to the support network

#### FAMILY FUNCTION: TO MANAGE RESOURCES, SUCH AS TIME, MONEY AND SKILLS

Resources are provided by the close family network

During their life, each person becomes self-sufficient

Economic ties tend to be distinct from community and social relationships

Economic resources and security are part of personal pride

Resources are provided by the larger family network

During their life, each person keeps reciprocal economic ties with family members

Economic ties are strong to the community

Economic resources and security are part of collective pride

#### FAMILY FUNCTION: TO PROVIDE SOCIALIZATION AND GUIDANCE TO EACH OTHER

Values are communicated by parents and wider society, like schools and the media

The concept of collective identity is limited to a small group

Each person is responsible for their life decisions

Values are communicated by extended family and community networks

The concept of a collective identity is broad and tends to be prioritised above personal identity

The family unit is responsible for important life decisions

#### FAMILY FUNCTION: GENERATE IDENTITY AND A SENSE OF BELONGING

Each person is distinct but part of the family

Focus is on the individual and their unique characteristics

The degree to which an individual prioritises their relationships is flexible and fluid

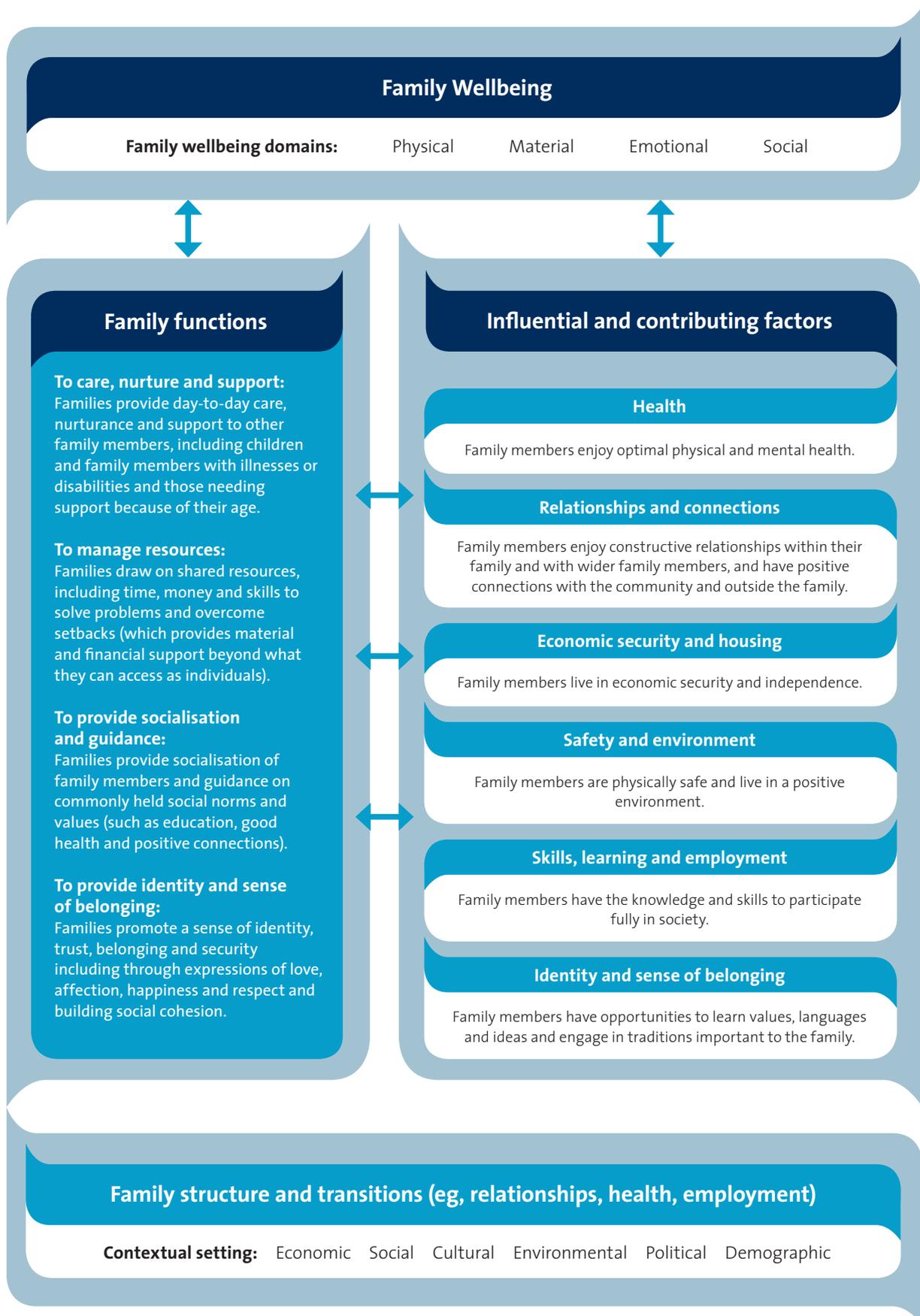
Each person is part of the collective family and wider community

Focus is on the collective and the wellbeing of all members

Relationships are prioritised over the wants and needs of the individual

# Family wellbeing framework

This is the framework we've developed to measure and understand family wellbeing.



## Our purpose

To increase the use of evidence by people across the social sector so that they can make better decisions - about funding, policies or services - to improve the lives of New Zealanders, New Zealand's communities, families and whānau.

## What we do

We work across the wider social sector to:

- **promote** informed debate on key social issues for New Zealand, its families and whānau, and increase awareness about what works
- **grow** the quality, relevance and quantity of the evidence base in priority areas
- **facilitate** the use of evidence by sharing it and supporting its use in decision-making.

### About the Families and Whānau Status Reports

Each year since 2013, we have produced an annual families status report that measures and monitors the wellbeing of New Zealand families and whānau. This requirement was introduced by the Families Commission Amendment Act 2014, and we are proud to undertake this work.

The general aim of the Families and Whānau Wellbeing Research Programme is to increase the evidence about family and whānau wellbeing. Our research aims to better understand how families and whānau are faring, and the key role they play in society. This is so that decision-makers in the social sector make informed decisions about social policies and programmes and better understand what works, when and for whom.



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### Related publications:



Families and Whānau Status Report 2016 (June 2016)



Families and Whānau Status Report 2016. Technical companion report (June 2016)



Families and Whānau Status Report 2016. Executive Summary (June 2016)