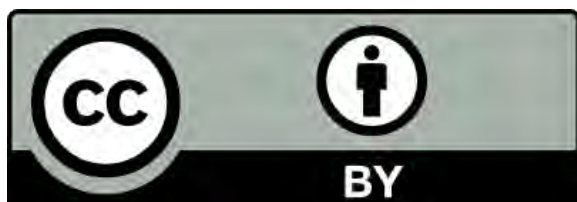


He Ara Poutama mō te reo Māori

Forecasting te reo Māori Speakers in Aotearoa,
New Zealand

'E hoki whakamuri, kia anga whakamua'





This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. In essence, you are free to copy, distribute and adapt the work, as long as you attribute the work and abide by the other licence terms.

To view a copy of this licence, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Reference

Nicholson Consulting & Kōtātā Insight. (2021). He Ara Poutama mō te reo Māori. Wellington, New Zealand.

In text reference

(Nicholson Consulting & Kōtātā Insight, 2021)

ISBN 978-0-473-59571-5

Published in October 2021 by

Nicholson Consulting
Wellington, New Zealand

Contents

Kupu Arataki

Introduction 1

Kei hea tātou ināianei?

Where we are now? 3

He aha ngā kawekawe whai pukenga mō te reo Māori?

What impacts acquiring te reo Māori? 9

Ko te Ara Whakamua

The pathway forward 11

Te whakanikonikotanga

Technical Details 21

Kupu Arataki

Introduction

He Ara Poutama mō te reo Māori was built to support the joint vision of the Maihi Māori and Maihi Karauna strategies; a vision of a future where everyday conversations in te reo Māori are the norm and te reo Māori is valued as part of the national identity of Aotearoa.

He Ara Poutama mō te reo Māori is a tool to help forge a path towards this future by forecasting the number of conversational and fluent speakers of te reo Māori from now until 2040. This tool was designed to be used by organisations working in the te reo Māori revitalisation space to understand who is speaking te

reo Māori and where, as well as how changes to certain revitalisation initiatives may affect future numbers of te reo Māori speakers.

The data insights are presented for decision makers and industry experts to use this knowledge to tautoko their mahi in te reo Māori revitalisation.

Thanks to our partners



Kei hea tātou ināianei?

Where we are now?

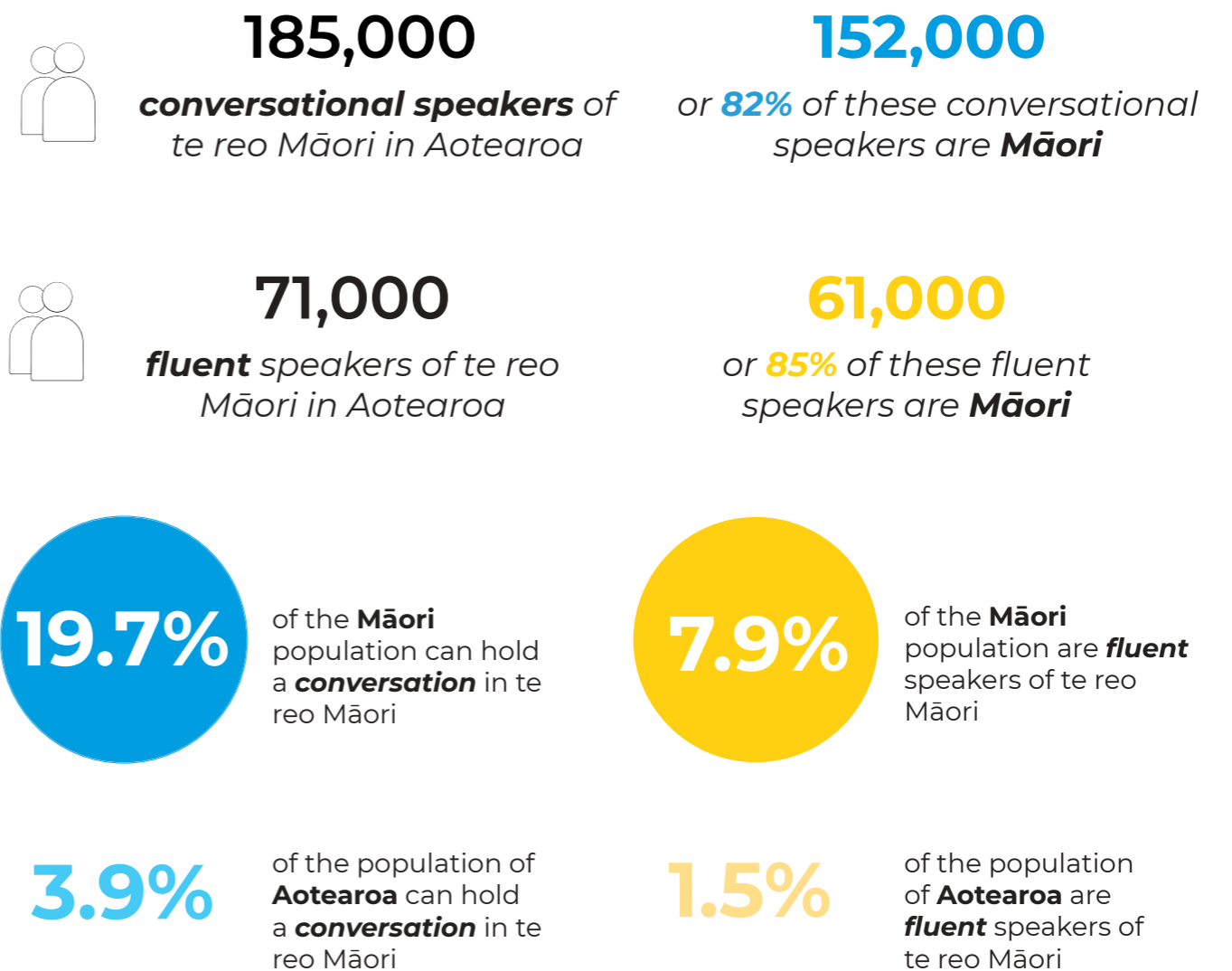
It is vital to know where we are now to set a successful course into the future.

Here we present figures for the number of Māori and non-Māori conversational speakers, people who have the ability to have a conversation about a lot of everyday things in te reo Māori and fluent speakers, people who have the ability to speak te reo Māori fairly well, well, or very well. These figures are as at June 2021, based on our forecast modelling.

To reach the audacious goal of one million speakers by 2040, both Māori and non-Māori will need to commit to advancing their te reo Māori abilities and knowledge.

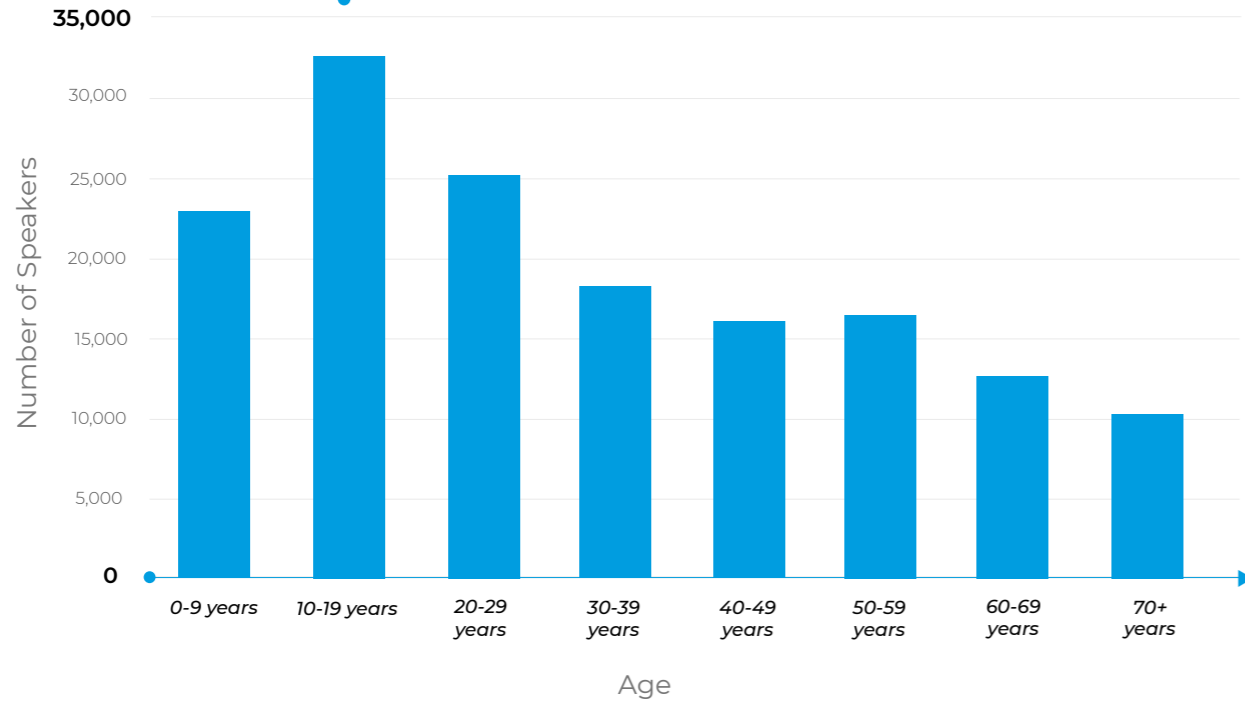
In the technical details of this work we have used Māori ethnicity to help explain factors associated with learning te reo Māori. Māori and non-Māori, in this report, are defined by decent (whakapapa).

As of 2021, there are...

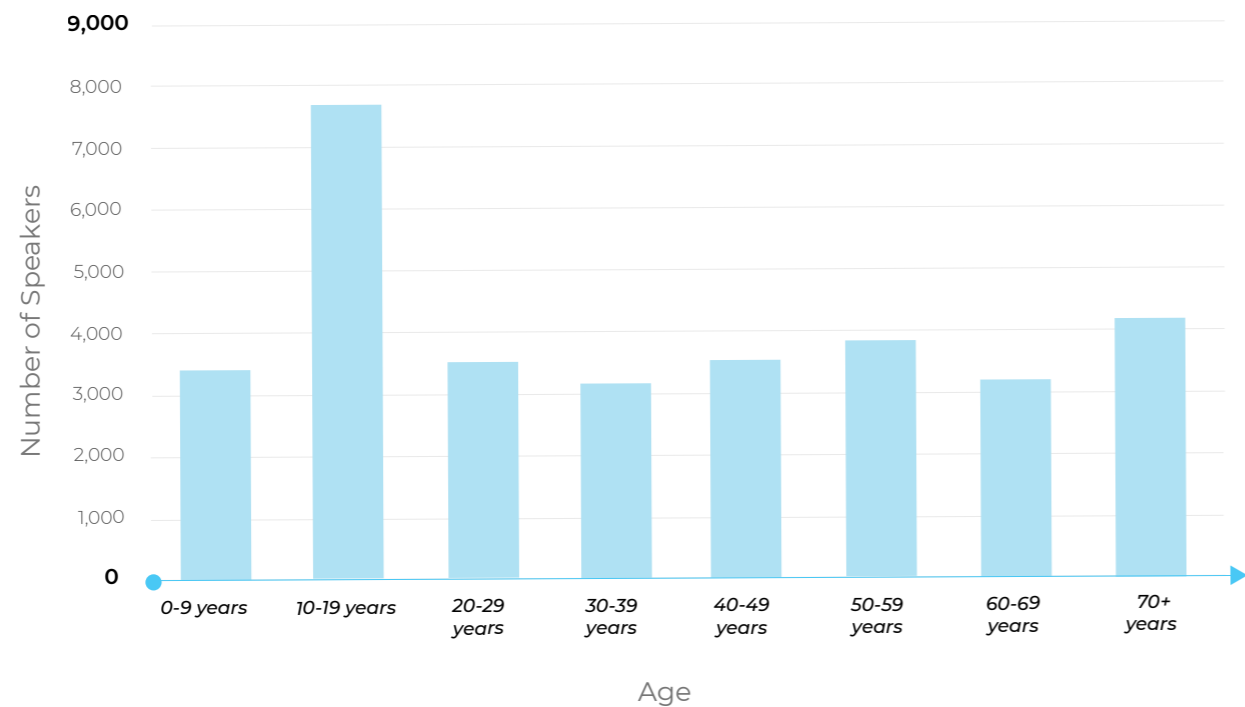


Conversational Speakers - Māori (2021)

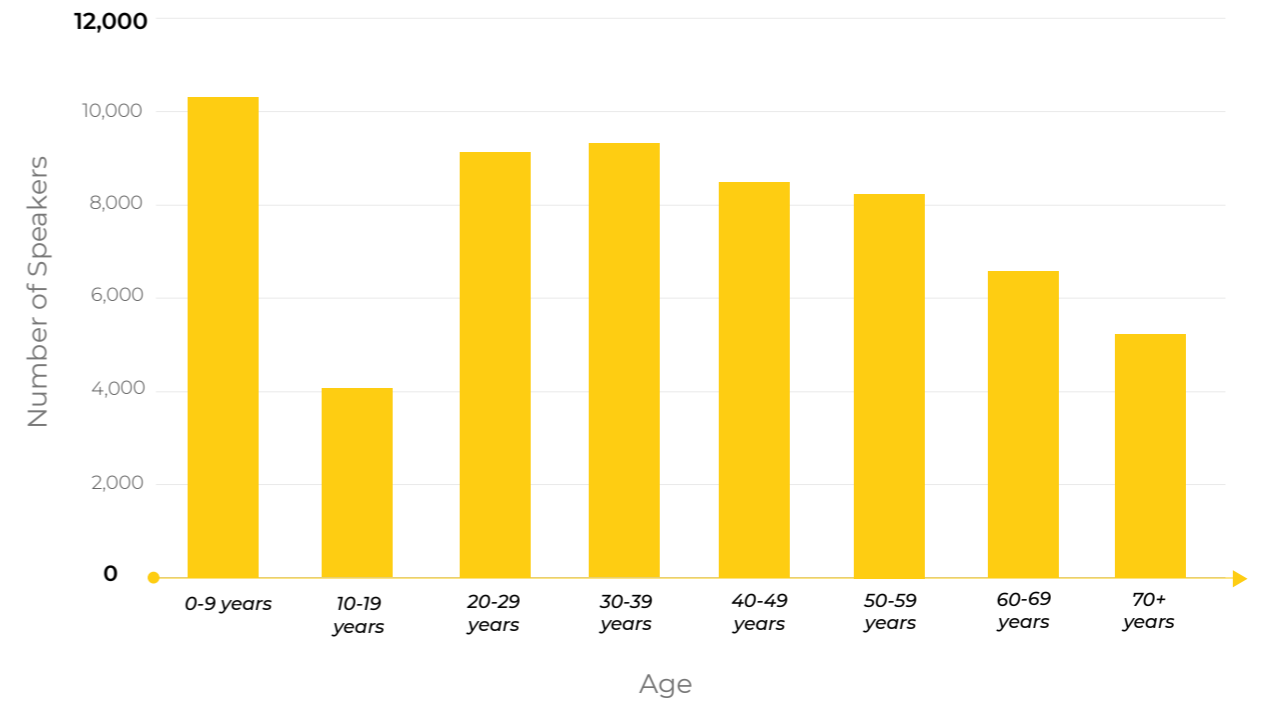
If this trend continues, high numbers of young Māori speakers will contribute to growth in te reo Māori speakers in the future, as these groups age



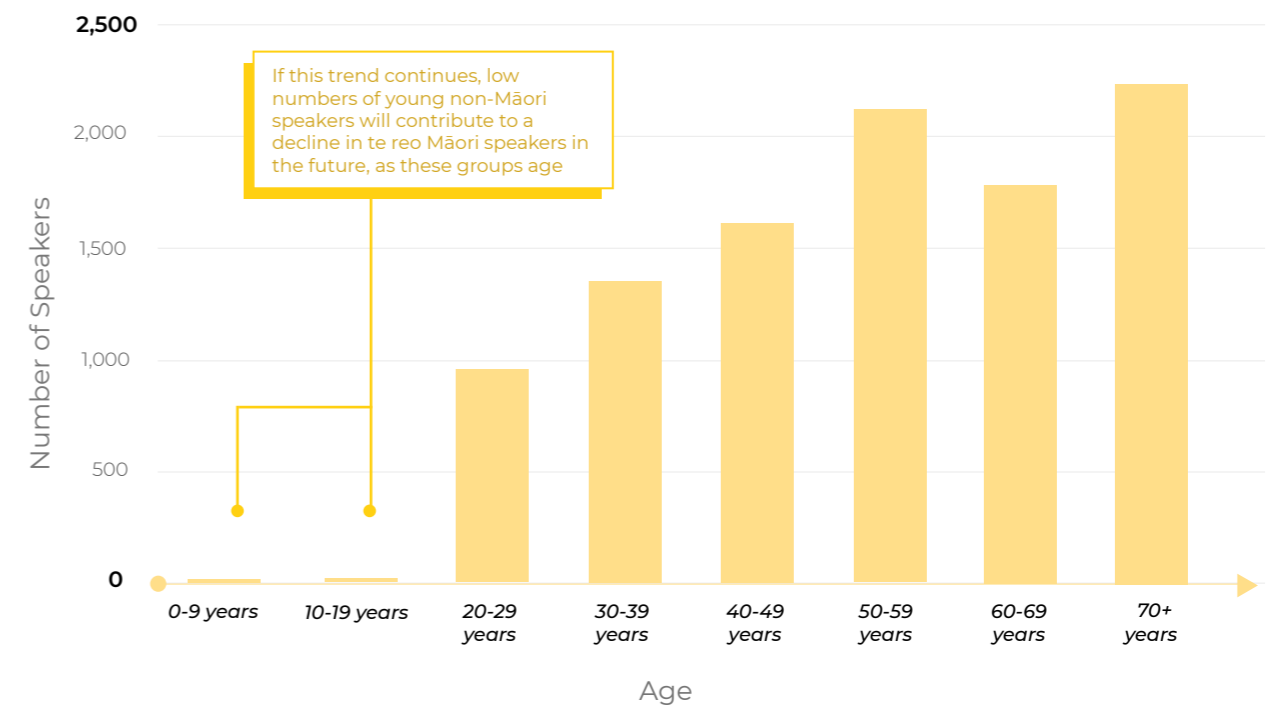
Conversational Speakers - Non-Māori (2021)



Fluent Speakers - Māori (2021)



Fluent Speakers - Non-Māori (2021)



Te reo Māori is local

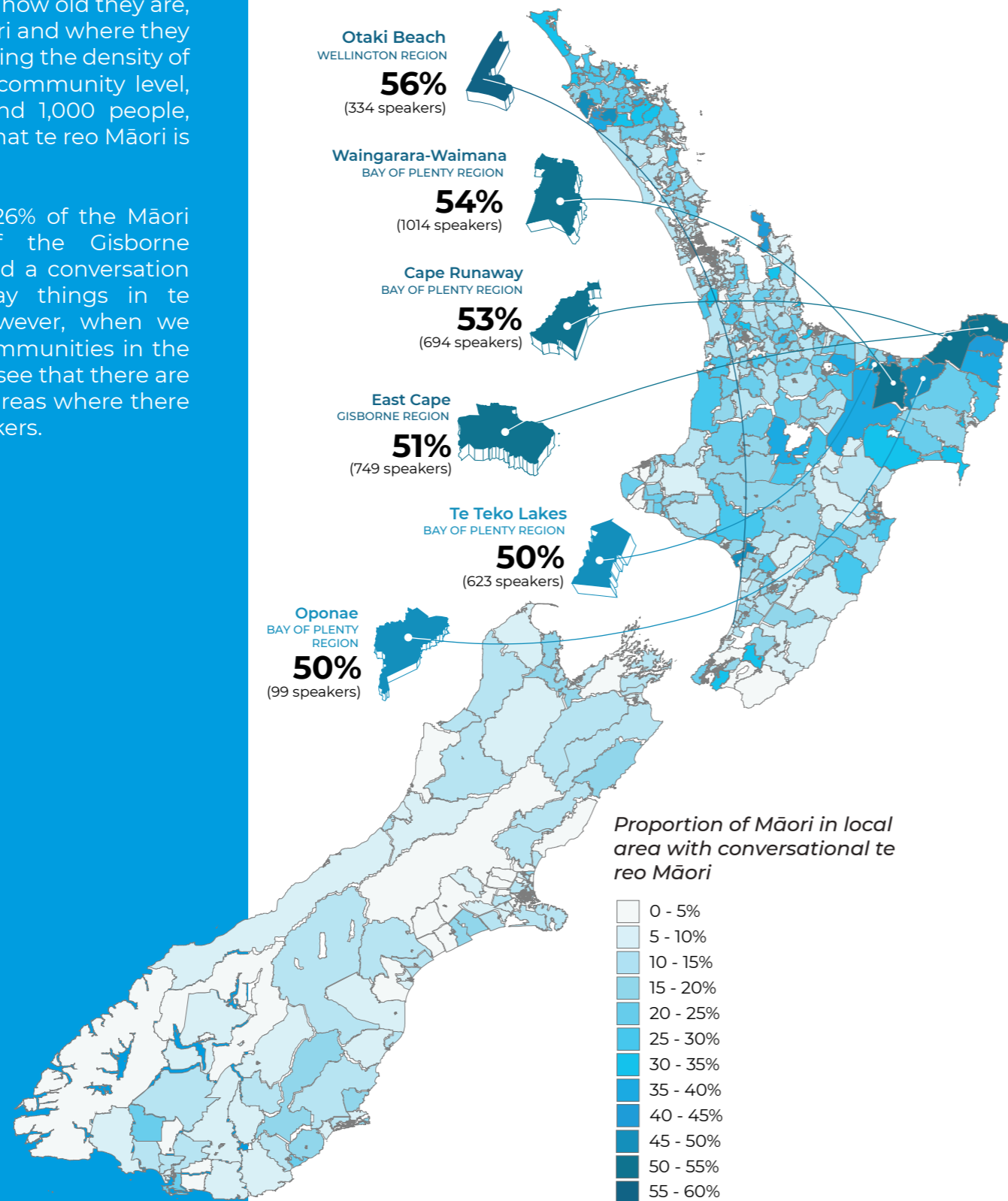
He Ara Poutama mō te reo Māori allows us to understand more about who the speakers of te reo Māori are – how old they are, if they are Māori and where they live. By measuring the density of speakers at a community level, which is around 1,000 people, we can show that te reo Māori is local.

For example, 26% of the Māori population of the Gisborne region can hold a conversation about everyday things in te reo Māori, however, when we look at the communities in the region we can see that there are geographical areas where there are more speakers.

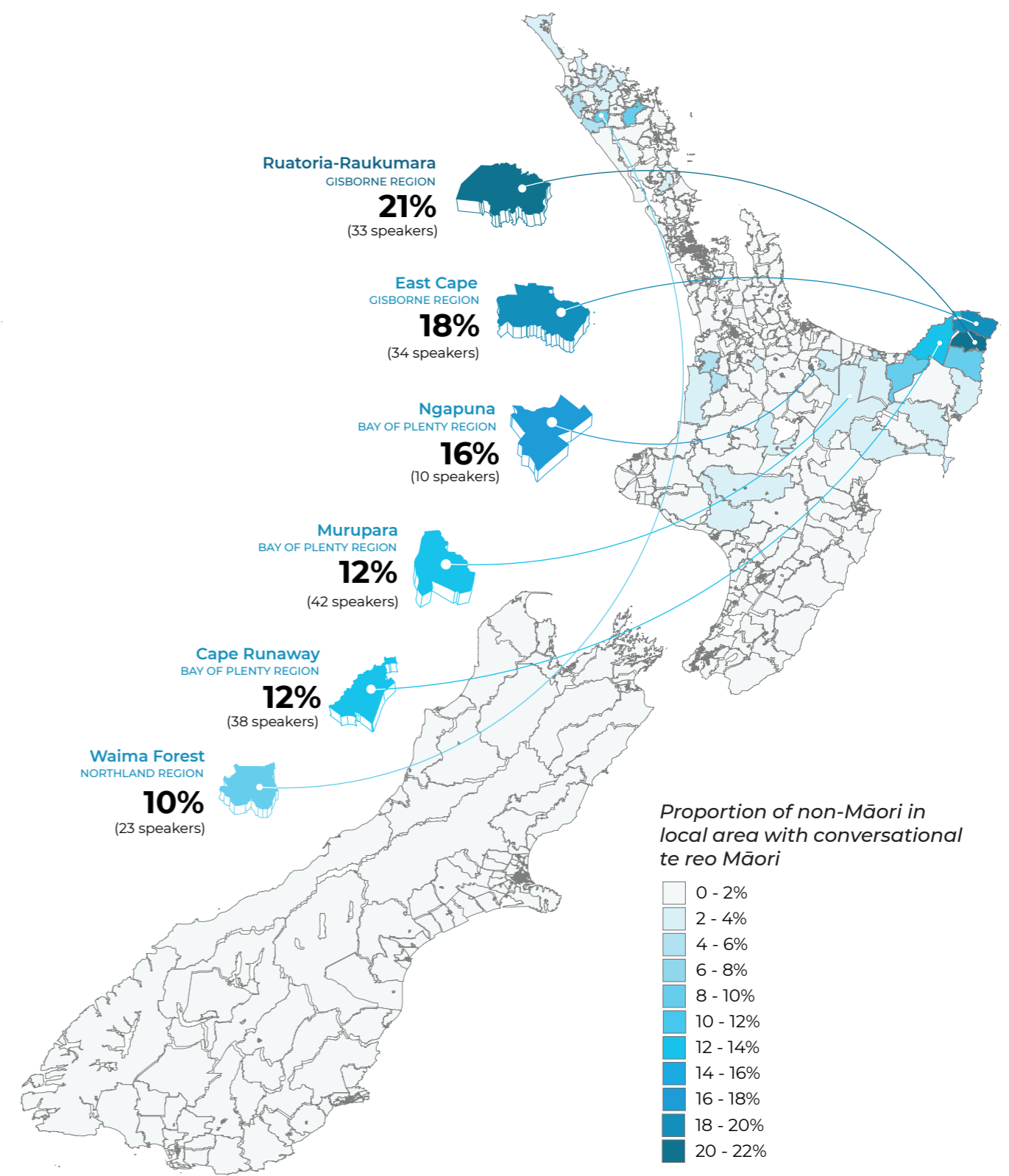
Proportion of te reo Māori speakers by local area

The maps below highlight the six local areas with the highest proportion of te reo Māori conversational speakers, for Māori and non-Māori speakers separately.

Conversational Speakers - Māori (2021)



Conversational Speakers - Non-Māori (2021)



He aha ngā kawekawe whai pukenga mō te reo Māori?

What impacts acquiring te reo Māori?

Te reo Māori has many drivers

There are many traits of a person's life that can drive and support them to learn te reo Māori. We can measure some of these, such as a person's individual characteristics like age, ethnicity and their current level of ability to use te reo Māori. We can also measure the support and resources around them, like access to fluent speakers in their community and home, intergenerational transmission,

education, and community initiatives. We have described these traits as drivers.

Our hope is that this first go will demonstrate the value of collecting more data and information about te reo Māori to support revitalisation efforts now and in the future.

Why the impact of drivers is different for Māori and non-Māori

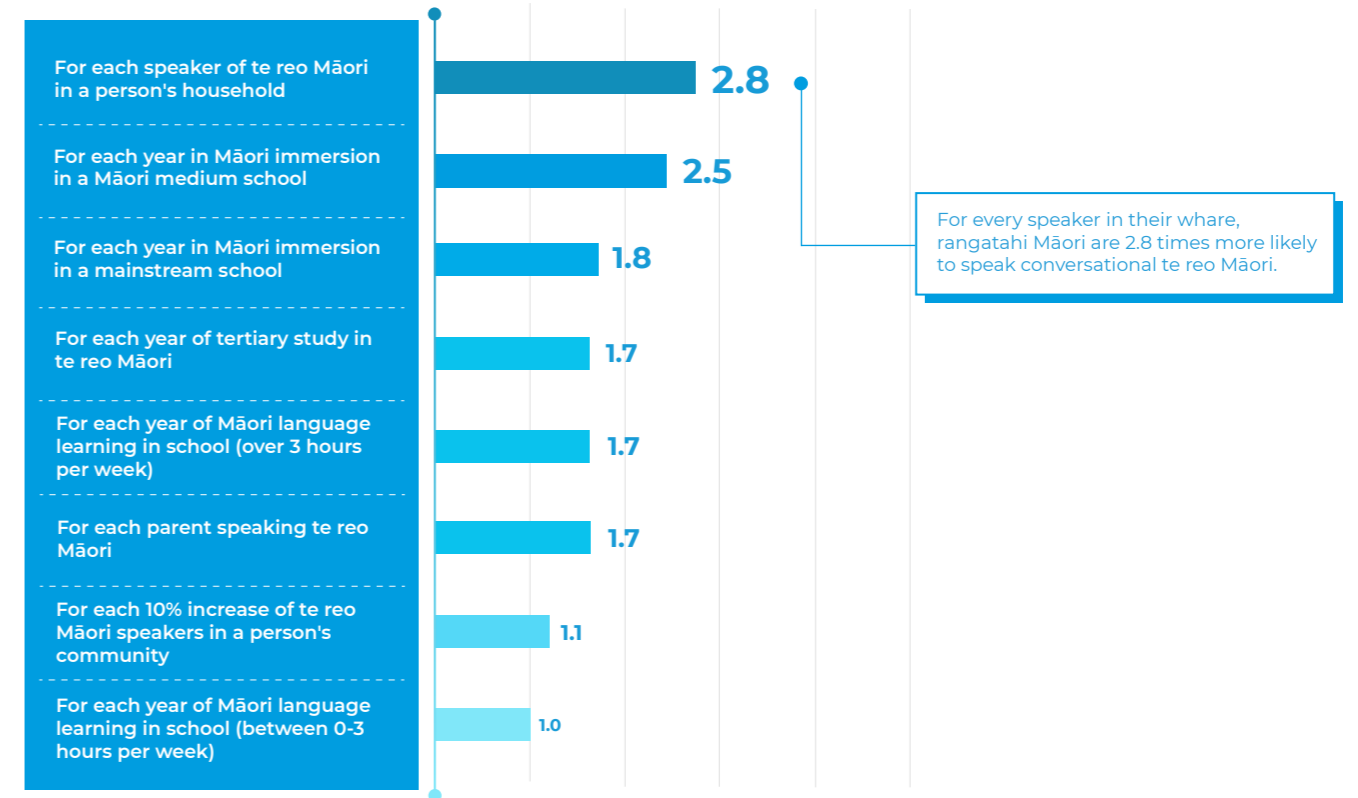
A Māori person is more likely to speak te reo Māori. This consideration helps to explain why the impacts of additional external drivers, as shown in the plots on the following page, appear to have a greater impact for non-Māori. As non-Māori are starting from a lower baseline, external drivers will appear to have a larger impact when compared to the impact external drivers have on

Māori speaking te reo Māori.

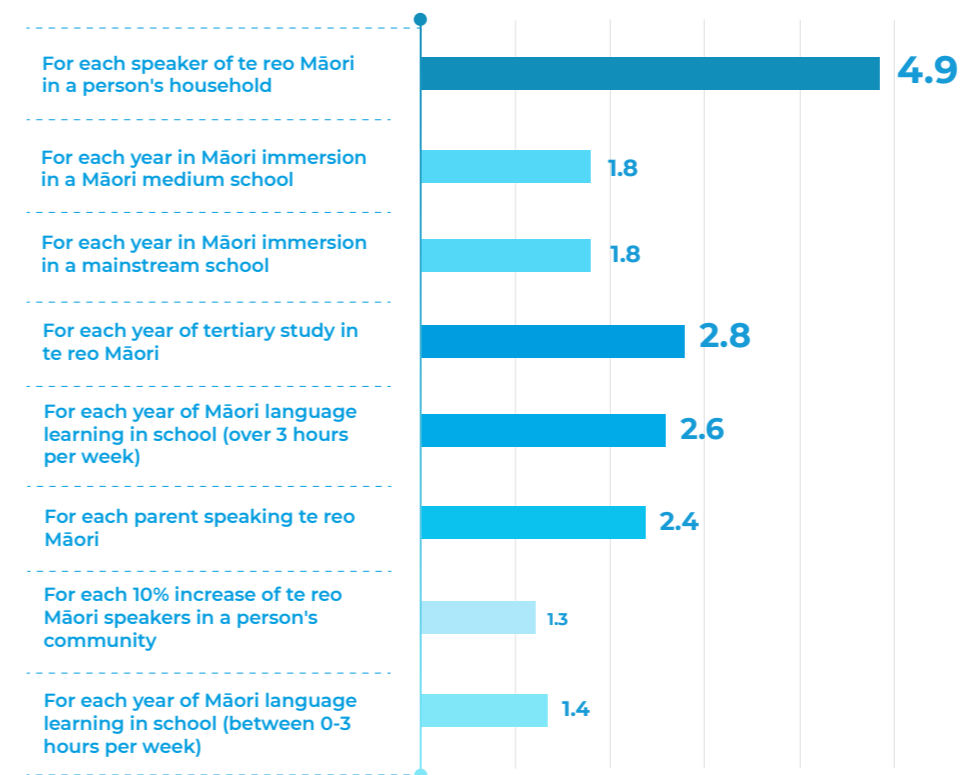
The plots on the following page are for conversational speakers as, due to higher numbers of conversational speakers than fluent speakers, there is greater confidence in statistical forecasting. This is explained in further detail in the technical details section of this report.

Drivers that make learning te reo Māori more likely

Māori young adults* are more likely to become **conversational** speakers when influenced by the following drivers



Non-Māori young adults* are more likely to become **conversational** speakers when influenced by the following drivers



*young adults refer to persons aged 19-25

Ko te Ara Whakamua

The pathway forward

What is our current path?

He Ara Poutama mō te reo Māori forecast show us the numbers of te reo Māori speakers is expected to continue to increase beyond 2021. This is largely driven by the young Māori population.

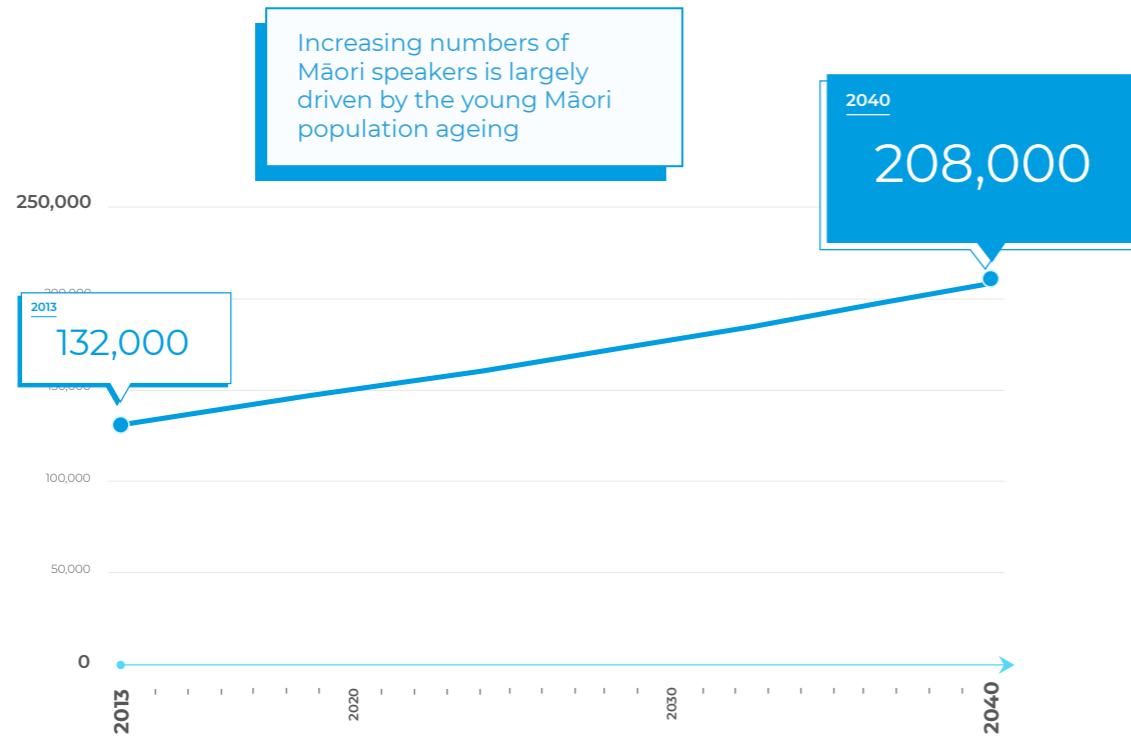
In 2040, on the current path, the number of Māori and non-Māori who can speak te reo Māori at a conversational level is expected

to increase to 260,000. In 2040, on the current path, the number of people who can speak te reo Māori at a fluent level is expected to increase to 100,000. Around 90% of those fluent speakers are expected be Māori.

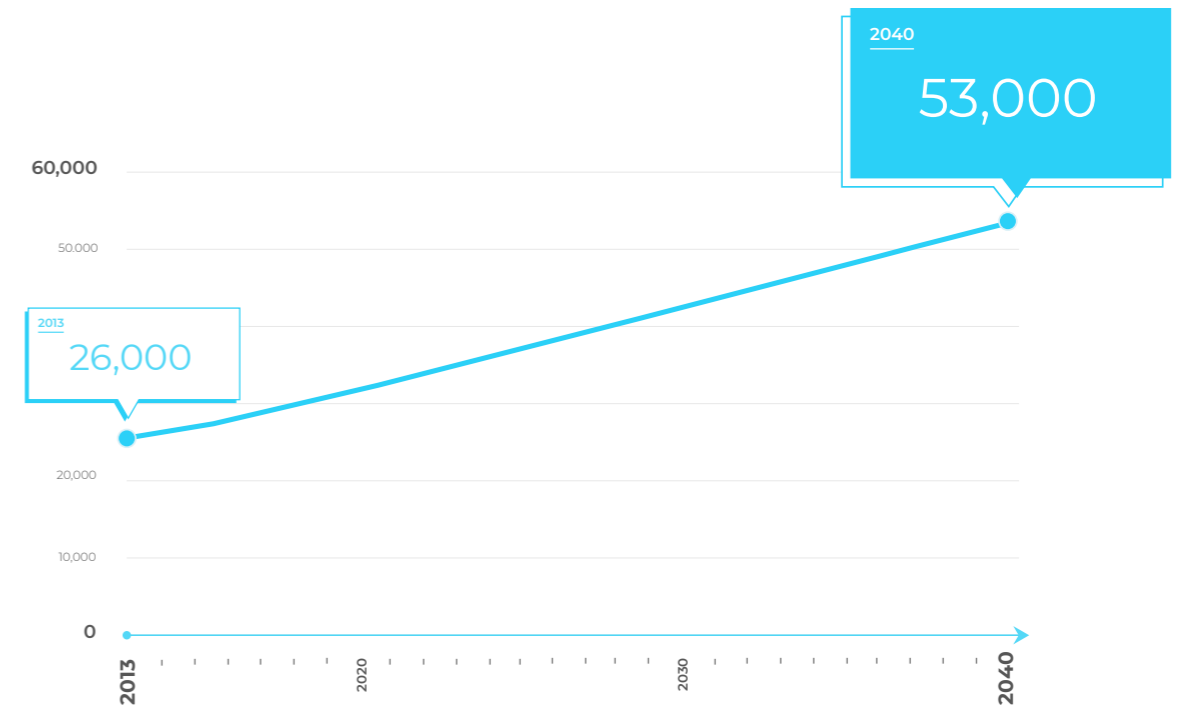
Māori Conversational Speakers - 2013-2040

Non-Māori Conversational Speakers - 2013-2040

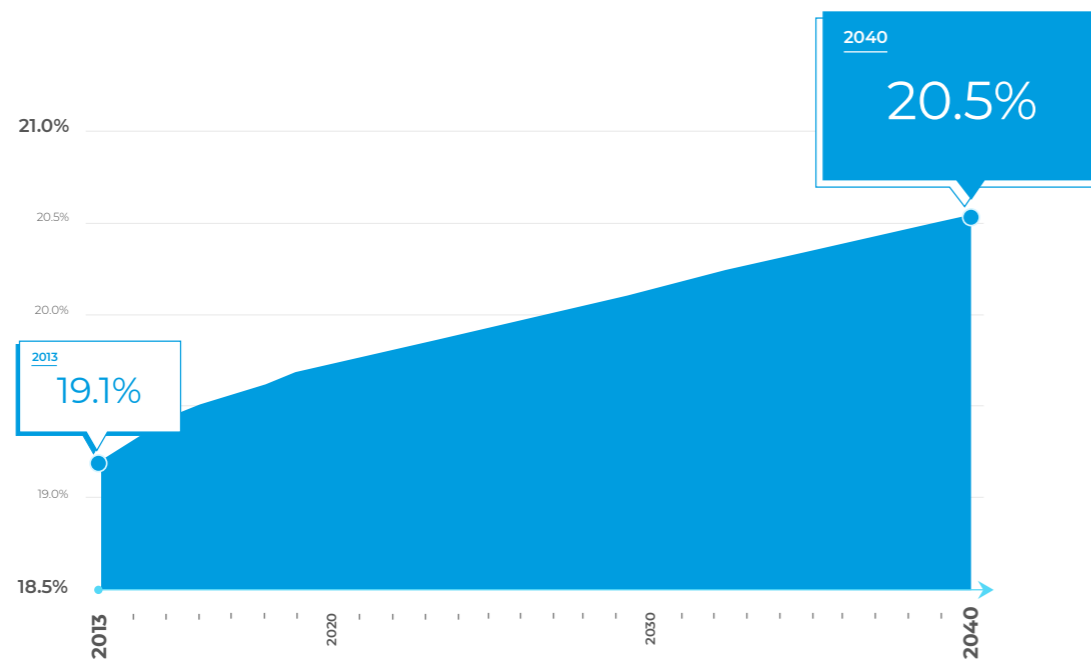
Number of Māori Speakers



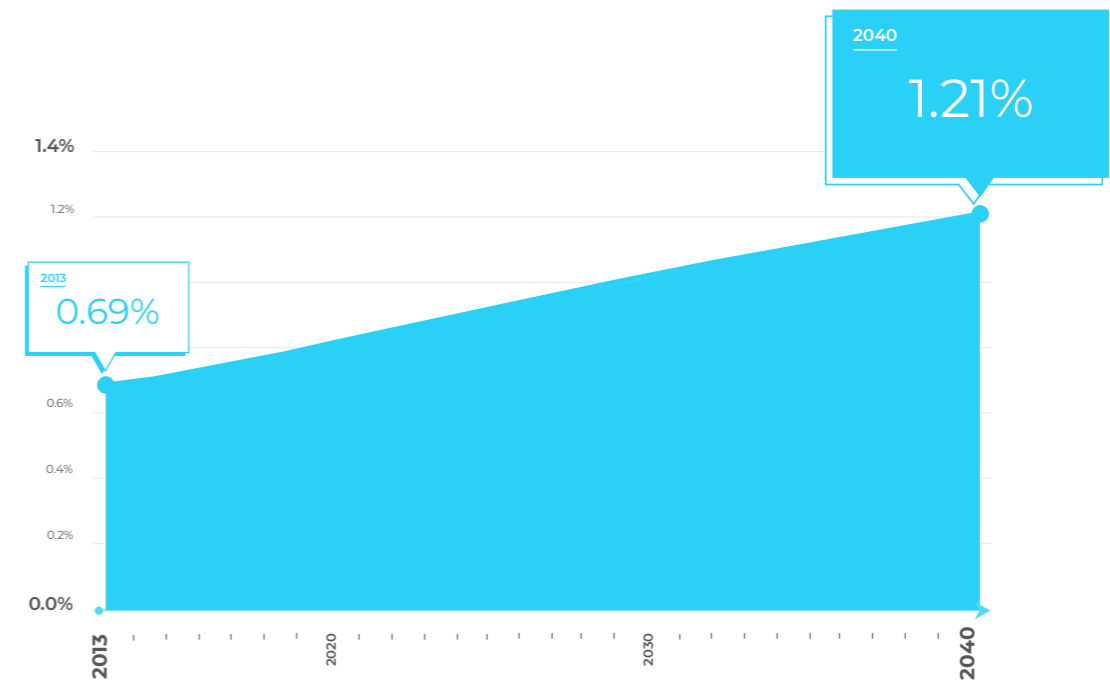
Number of Non-Māori Speakers



% of Māori Population

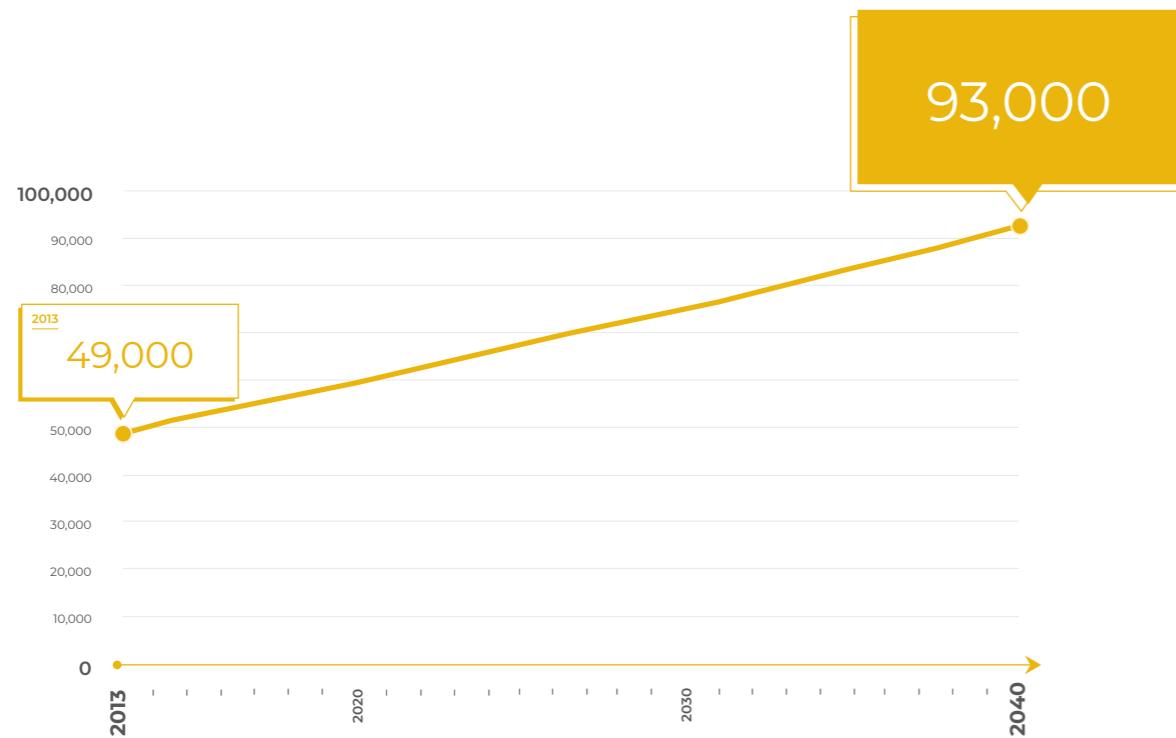


% of Non-Māori Population

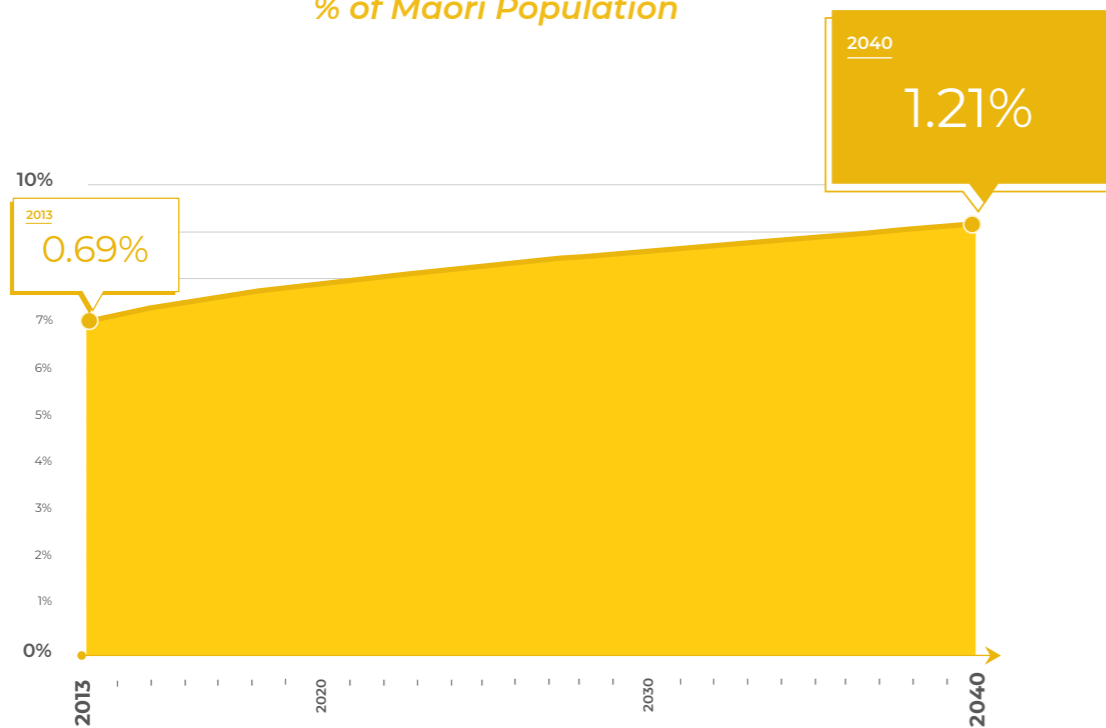


Māori Fluent Speakers - 2013-2040

Number of Māori Speakers

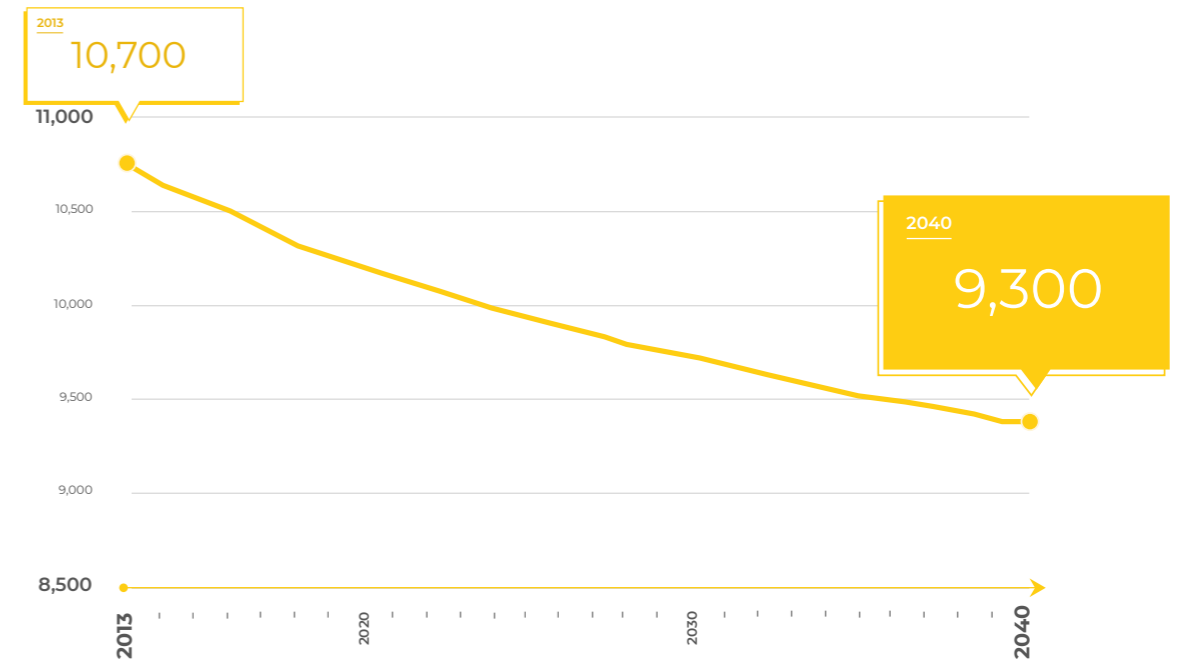


% of Māori Population

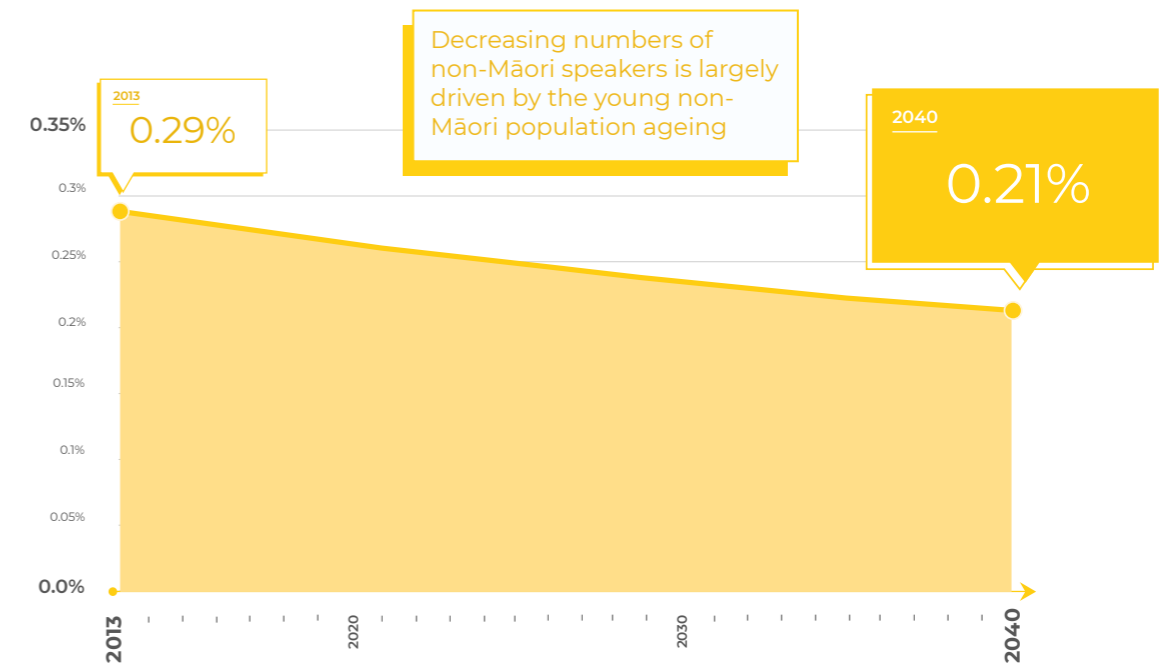


Non-Māori Fluent Speakers - 2013-2040

Number of Non-Māori Speakers



% of Non-Māori Population



What will it take to change our current path?

It takes a generation to see measurable change.

We've shown above how different drivers of te reo Māori have different levels of impact on a person's ability to speak te reo Māori. We can also show how changing these drivers changes the expected number of te reo Māori speakers in the future. We call these levers; these are levers we

can pull to change the course we are currently on. This allows us to ask the question...

..."What would happen if?"

What would happen if...

We had an extra **5,000 whānau** involved in **community immersion initiatives** every year until 2040?

BY 2040, THERE WOULD BE

55,000

more conversational speakers

&

46,000

more fluent speakers

of te reo Māori in addition to the increase we're expecting from our current forecast path.

We had an extra **7,500 tamariki** in **Māori medium education** every year until 2040?

BY 2040, THERE WOULD BE

45,600

more conversational speakers

&

30,400

more fluent speakers

of te reo Māori in addition to the increase we're expecting from our current forecast path.

We had an extra **30,000 tamariki** learning **te reo Māori in mainstream education** every year until 2040?

BY 2040, THERE WOULD BE

14,800

more conversational speakers

&

1,100

more fluent speakers

of te reo Māori in addition to the increase we're expecting from our current forecast path.

The time to act is now

These results highlight two important themes in the revival of te reo Māori. Firstly, one lever alone is not enough to have a significant impact on the number of speakers of te reo Māori. Reaching one million

speakers will require many levers to be applied together.

Secondly, it takes a generation to see significant increases in the number of te reo Māori speakers.

Reviving a language takes time,
we must act now.

Te whakanikonikotanga

Technical Details

Method & data sources

To forecast the number of speakers of te reo Māori we used a statistical technique known as a microsimulation. The way this statistical model works is by looking at a person's traits (which include their whānau and communities) and using information about how other people with the same or similar traits have changed their ability to speak te reo Māori. How quickly other people have progressed along their te reo Māori path helps us to forecast how likely a person is to progress on their own path. In this way, He Ara Poutama mō te reo Māori looks at every person in the population every year to forecast the total number of speakers.

The data we used in this microsimulation was a combination of information from Census 2013, Te Kupenga 2013, the New Zealand General Social Survey (NZGSS) and government administrative data held securely by Stats NZ in the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI). We also made use of programme evaluation results for community immersion initiatives held outside the IDI. This includes longitudinal data about:

- Individual characteristics (age, ethnicity, location)
- Education (primary, secondary and tertiary)
- Parents ability to kōrero Māori
- Other members of a households ability to kōrero Māori
- Other members of local communities ability to kōrero Māori

Forecast numbers are never perfect

Forecast numbers, like those in this report, always have some error. We use the best techniques and data we have today, to ensure these errors are as small as possible so we can make decisions now, informed with a view of the future.

Forecast numbers have less error, and therefore we can have more confidence in them, when they are based on more data. As there are more conversational speakers compared with fluent speakers, the conversational forecast numbers in this report have less error. This means we can have more confidence in the exact forecast numbers from the conversational forecast compared with the fluent forecast, but for both we have a high level of confidence in the overall trends.

These forecasts, as with all statistical models, are also based on a range of assumptions. For example, we assume that the likelihood of people to learn te reo Māori based on demographics, will be similar for people of similar demographics in the future. A comprehensive list of the assumptions made can be found in the full technical report for He Ara Poutama mō te reo Māori.

Disclaimer for output produced from the IDI

Microdata disclaimer The results in this report are not official statistics. They have been created for research purposes from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI), managed by Statistics New Zealand. The opinions, findings, recommendations, and conclusions expressed in this report are those of the author(s), not Statistics NZ or individual data suppliers. Access to the anonymised data used in this study was provided by Statistics NZ under the security and confidentiality provisions of the Statistics Act 1975. The results presented in this study are the work of the author, not Stats NZ or individual data suppliers. Only people authorised by the Statistics Act 1975 are allowed to see data about a particular person, household, business, or organisation, and the results in this report have been kept confidential to protect these groups from identification and to keep their data safe. Careful consideration has been given to the privacy, security, and confidentiality issues associated with using administrative and survey data in the IDI. Further detail can be found in the Privacy Impact Assessment for the Integrated Data Infrastructure available from www.stats.govt.nz.

More Information

This report is accompanied by a full, peer-reviewed technical document. For more information please contact:

hello@nicholsonconsulting.co.nz

Attribution

Hebly Fauza/Shutterstock.com (see page 2)

All other images sourced from Pixabay.com

Report design by Mahkaila Jones, Nicholson Consulting.

