

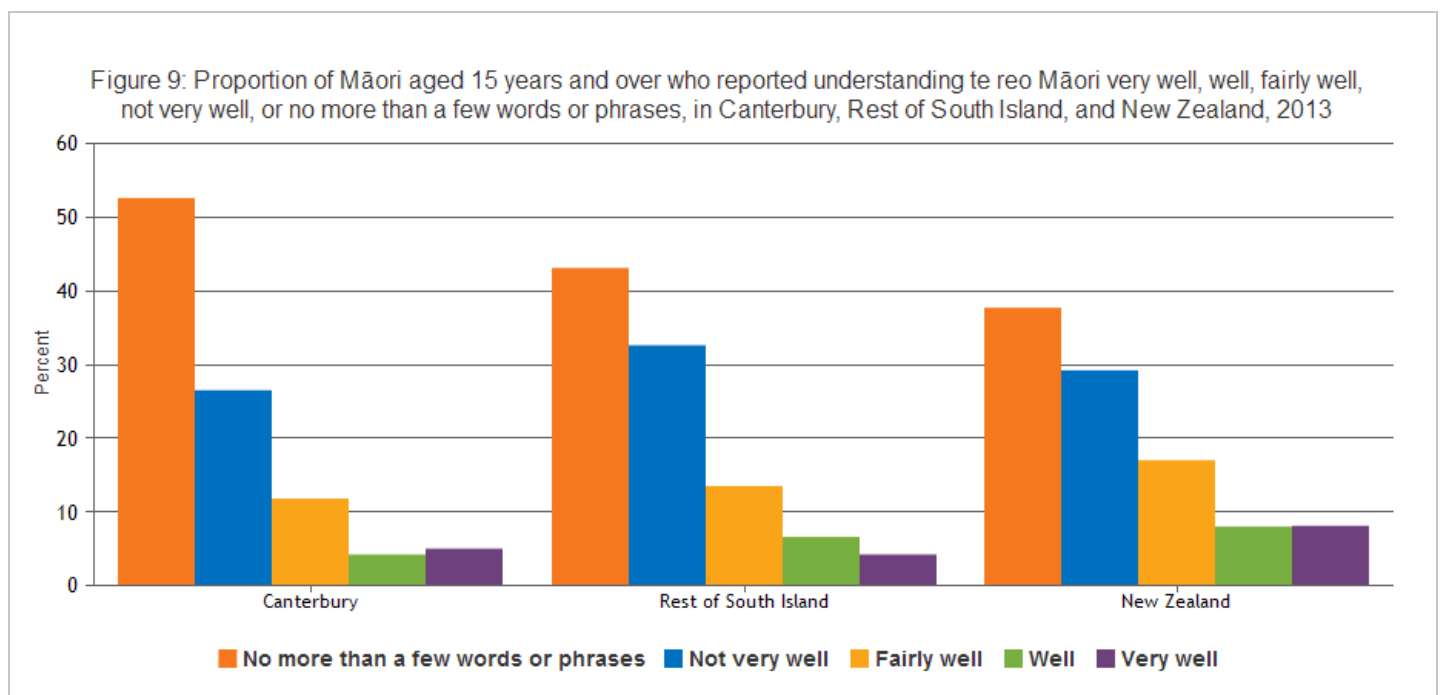
He Tohu Ora: Te reo Māori understanding

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Māori language is recognised as an important cultural resource which contributes to an individual’s cultural identity and sense of ‘being Māori’ [1]. For Māori, high levels of cultural efficacy (including speaking te reo Māori, Māori heritage, and tikanga me kawa (protocols and processes, including marae protocol) have been found to be associated with better emotional wellbeing [19]. While some Māori may feel whakamā (shy or embarrassed) about speaking te reo Māori – if they are not fluent and are fearful about getting it wrong, particularly those learning later in life – they may still take pride in hearing and understanding the language [22]. This indicator reports on te reo Māori understanding, rather than speaking, noting the distinction between these two aspects of wellbeing.

Te Kupenga 2013 asked respondents how well they are able to understand Māori in day-to-day conversation [12]. The questions had five response options ranging from no more than a few words or phrases to very well.

This indicator presents the proportion of respondents that reported understanding te reo Māori very well, well, fairly well, not very well, or no more than a few words or phrases.



In 2013, higher proportions of respondents reported understanding te reo Māori very well (8.1%), well (8%), or fairly well (17%) at the national level compared with Canterbury and the rest of the South Island. Five percent of Canterbury respondents reported understanding te reo Māori very well, compared with 4.2 percent for the rest of the South Island. A majority of respondents (52.6%) from Canterbury reported understanding no more than a few words or phrases, a proportion that was higher than the rest of the South Island and New Zealand (by 9.5 and 14.9 percentage points, respectively).

Data Sources

Source: Statistics New Zealand.

Survey/data set: Te Kupenga 2013. Access publicly available data from the Statistics New Zealand website www.archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/maori/te-kupenga.aspx

Source data frequency: Updated in 2018 and then 10-yearly.

Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/index-data>

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