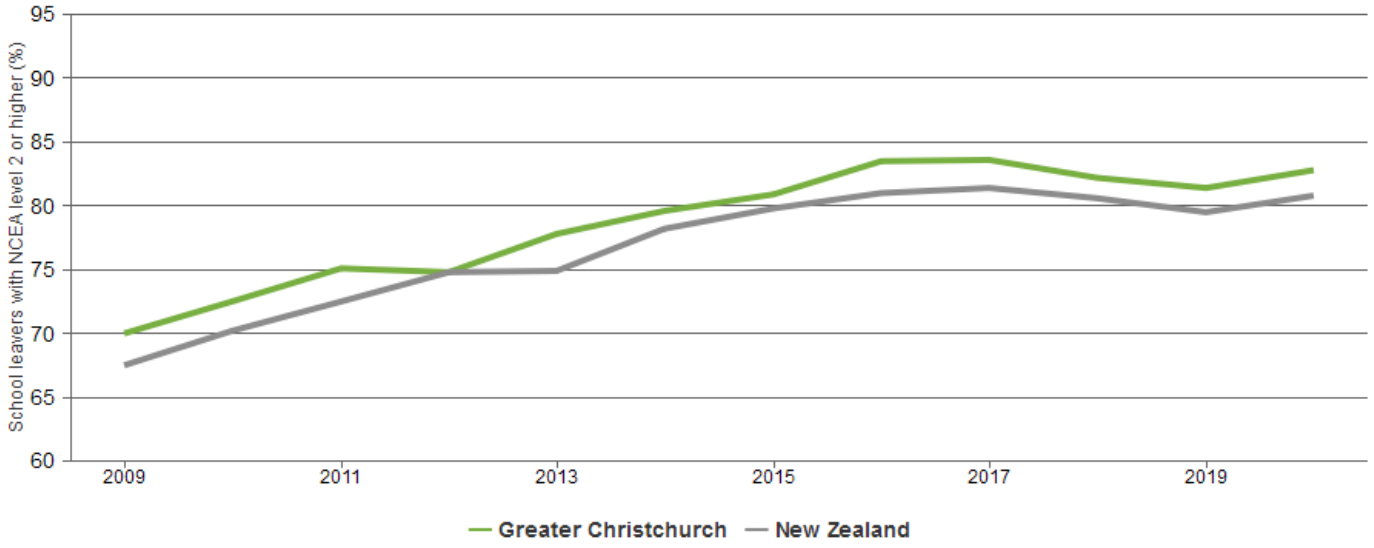
Education: NCEA Level 2 achievement

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A formal school qualification is a measure of the extent to which young adults have completed a standardised prerequisite for higher education and training and many entry-level jobs. The main qualification available to secondary school students in New Zealand is the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA). NCEA Level 2 is often a necessary requirement for entry-level employment opportunities. In 2016, New Zealanders with no qualifications had an unemployment rate approximately 50 percent higher than those whose highest qualification was a school qualification [11]. One of the Government's priorities is to increase the proportion of 18 year-olds with NCEA Level 2 (or an equivalent qualification).

This indicator presents NCEA achievement, defined as the proportion of school leavers who achieved NCEA Level 2 or higher.

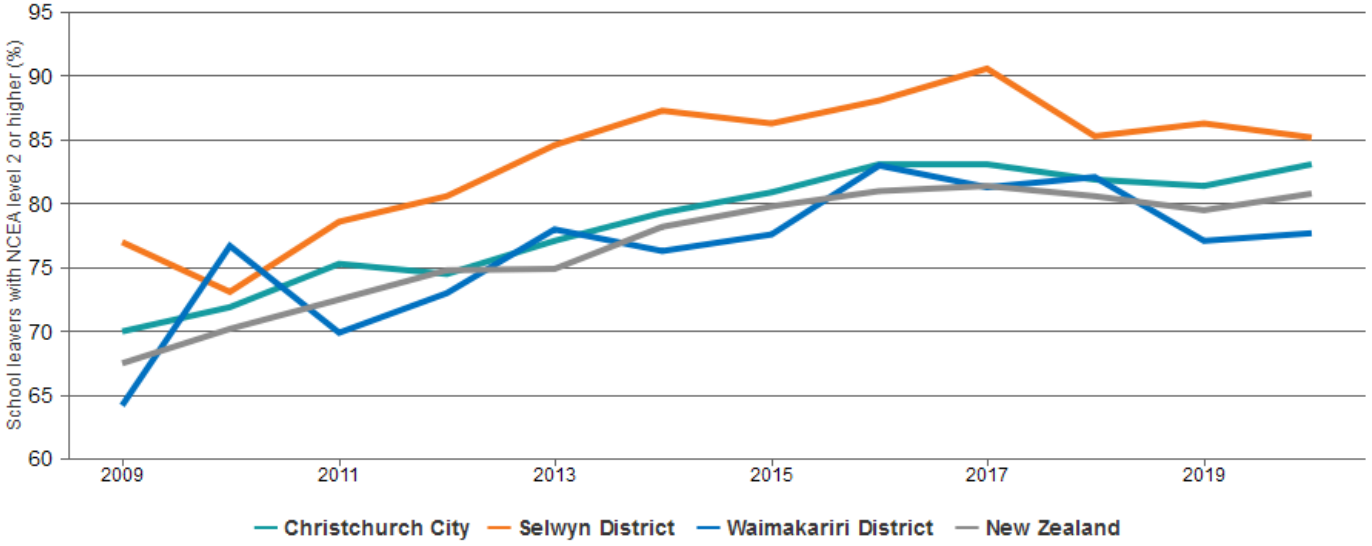
Figure 2.1: Proportion of school leavers who achieved NCEA Level 2 or higher, for greater Christchurch and New Zealand, 2009–2020



The figure shows that the proportion of school leavers in greater Christchurch achieving NCEA Level 2 or above has increased substantially over the period 2009 to 2020 (from 70% in 2009 to 82.8% in 2020). National figures have shown a similar pattern over this time period. However, while NCEA Level 2 or above achievement has improved overall over the time period shown, the proportion of school leavers achieving NCEA Level 2 or higher decreased between 2017 and 2019, for both greater Christchurch and New Zealand, before increasing again between 2019 and 2020.

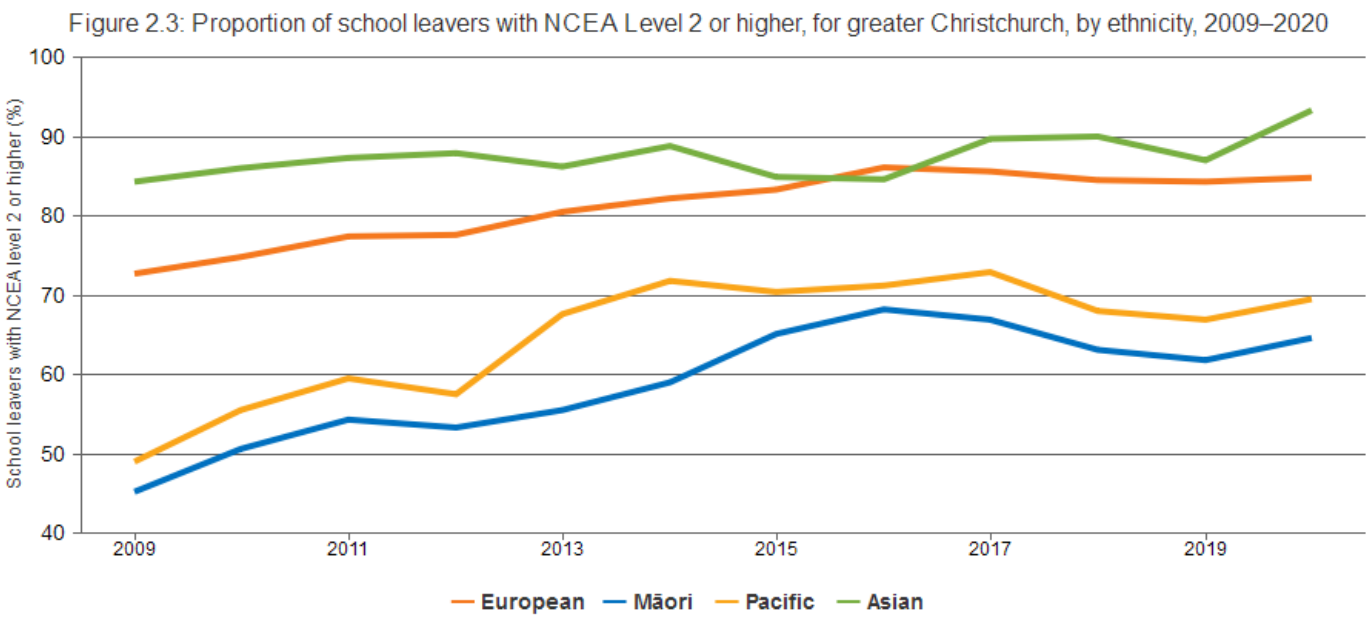
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Breakdown by Territorial Authority



The figure shows that the proportion of Christchurch City students achieving NCEA Level 2 or higher has been consistently rising over the last few years, except for the period 2017-2019. The proportion for Christchurch City has generally been similar to the proportion for New Zealand overall (83.1% and 80.8% respectively, in 2020). Selwyn District has had a notably high proportion of students achieving NCEA level 2 or higher (85.2% in 2020), and the proportion in the Waimakariri District (77.7% in 2020) has generally been similar to the proportion for New Zealand overall.

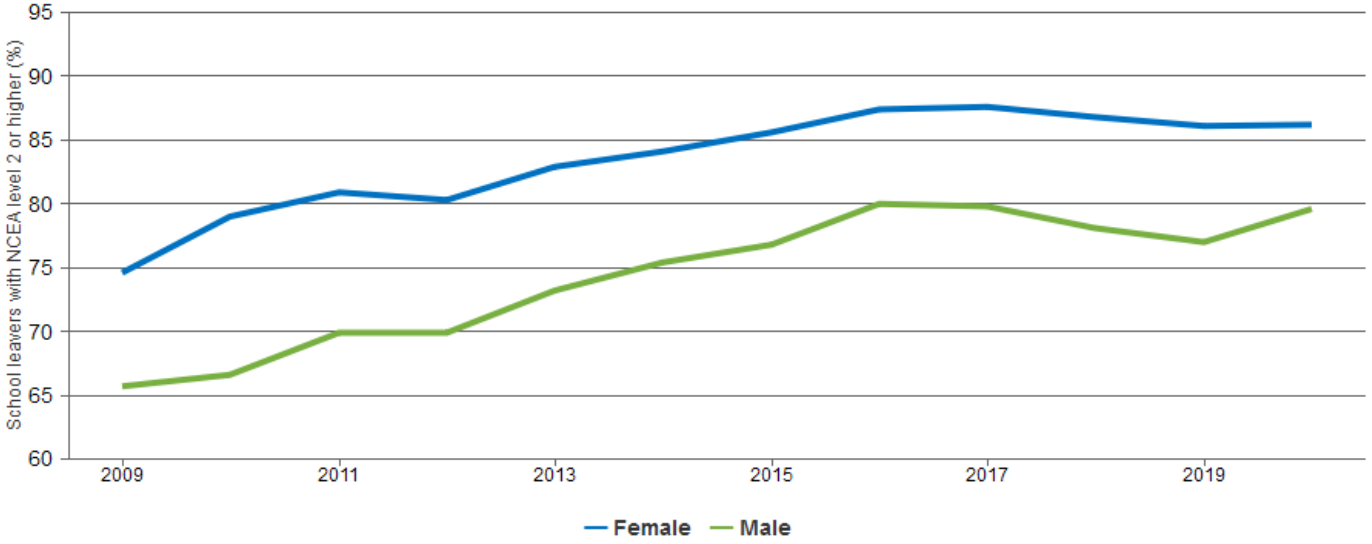
Breakdown by ethnicity



This breakdown highlights the substantial disparity between the NCEA Level 2 achievement of Māori and Pacific students and other ethnicities. Between 2009 and 2020, school leaver NCEA Level 2 achievement for European/Pākehā students in greater Christchurch increased from 72.7 percent to 84.8 percent. By comparison, Māori and Pacific school leaver NCEA Level 2 achievement has improved from 45.2 percent and 49 percent, respectively, to 64.6 percent and 69.5 percent of students over the same time period.

While there may have been some convergence between Māori and European/Pākehā students' outcomes between 2014 and 2017, the difference between Māori and European/ Pākehā NCEA Level 2 achievement has increased from 18.7 percentage points in 2017 to 20.2 percentage points in 2020 (Māori 64.6% vs European/Pākehā 84.8% in 2020). Pacific school leaver NCEA Level 2 achievement shows a similar pattern to that for Māori, although generally maintaining a level approximately five percentage points higher. Asian students' NCEA Level 2 achievement has generally been above that of European/Pākehā students and has increased from 84.3 percent in 2009 to 93.3 in 2020.

Breakdown by gender



The proportion of school leavers gaining NCEA Level 2 or above has consistently been higher for female students than for male students. In greater Christchurch, 86.2 percent of female school leavers gained Level 2 NCEA or above in 2020 compared to 79.6 percent of male school leavers. This pattern is also evident for all of New Zealand (data not shown).

Data Sources

Source: Ministry of Education.
Survey/data set: Ministry of Education ENROL Database. Access publicly available data from the Education Counts website: www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/indicators/main/education-and-learning-outcomes/1781
Source data frequency: Annually.

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

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