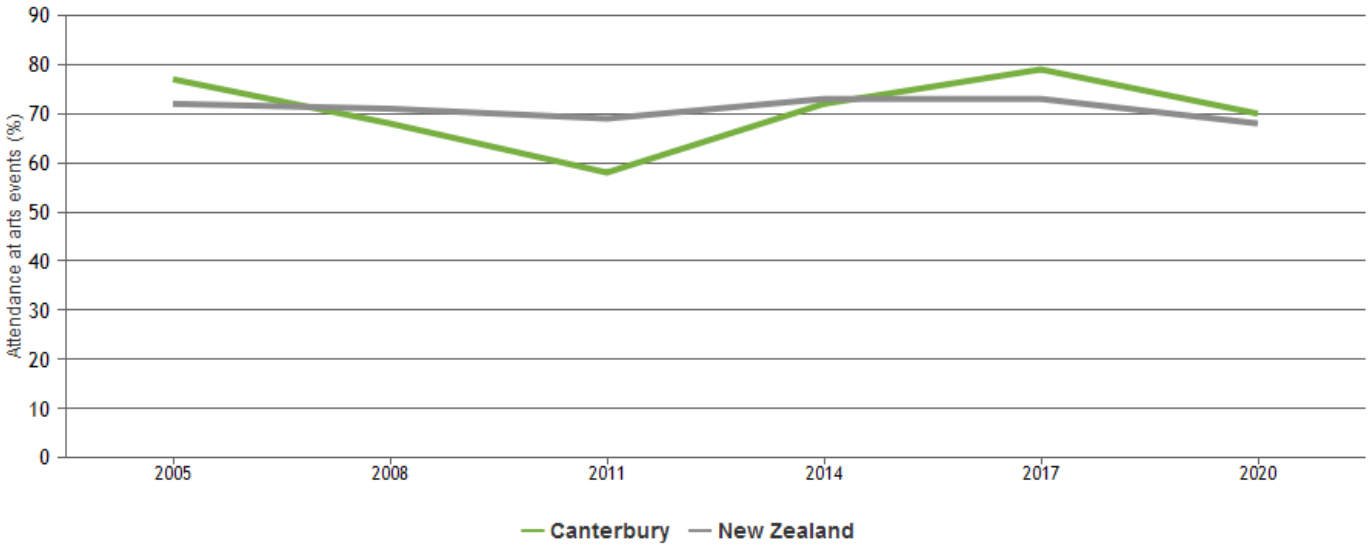
Social Capital: Arts attendance

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Regular attendance at arts events and activities is associated with greater life satisfaction and general happiness [23]. Arts activities and venues, such as museums and historical sites, are also sources of cultural and economic value [24]. The social, cultural, educational, and health impacts of arts and cultural activities are supported by a substantial evidence base, in particular, with respect to wellbeing [25,26]. Research suggests that engaging in passive activities (for example attending museums, historical sites and arts events) and/or arts activities that involve active participation (such as playing an instrument or acting in a play) all have positive effects on wellbeing [27]. Information about attendance can also provide insights for arts organisations about the levels of cultural engagement, which can help in the development of marketing programming and income generation strategies [28].

This indicator presents overall attendance for the arts and is based on all those who have attended the following art forms in the last 12 months: visual arts, performing arts, craft and object arts, Ngā Toi Māori, Pacific arts, and Literary arts. Attendance is defined as going to: art galleries or exhibitions or online galleries or film festivals; performances in theatres, contemporary dance, ballet, concerts or circuses; poetry or book readings, or literary festivals; cultural performances, festivals, exhibitions; or celebrations of Pacific or Māori arts.

Figure 6.1: Proportion of those aged 15 years and over who have attended at least one arts event in the last 12 months, in Canterbury and New Zealand, 2005–2020



The figure shows that 70 percent of respondents in Canterbury had attended at least one arts event or location in the 12 months before November 2020. This compares to 68 percent for all respondents (i.e., New Zealand overall), although the difference is not statistically significant.

The 2020 New Zealanders and the Arts Survey [29] indicates that the most popular art form in Canterbury was visual arts. Half of all Canterbury respondents had attended a visual arts event in the 12 months prior to November 2020. This was followed by performing arts (45%), craft and object arts (37%), Ngā Toi Māori (25%), and Pacific arts (14%). Attendance at performing arts events has significantly dropped from 59% in 2017 to 45% in 2020, which is likely a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

restrictions. The least attended art form was literary arts (8%), although this proportion will be affected by the traditionally low frequency of available literary arts events. Attendance for individual art forms in Canterbury is broadly in line with the national picture except for Pacific arts attendance, which is lower in Canterbury compared with New Zealand overall (14% vs. 18% respectively; New Zealand data not shown).

Data Sources

Source: Creative New Zealand.
Survey/data set: New Zealanders and the Arts survey to 2020. Access publicly available data from the Creative New Zealand website www.creativenz.govt.nz/development-and-resources/new-zealanders-and-the-arts-2020
Source data frequency: Every three years.

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

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