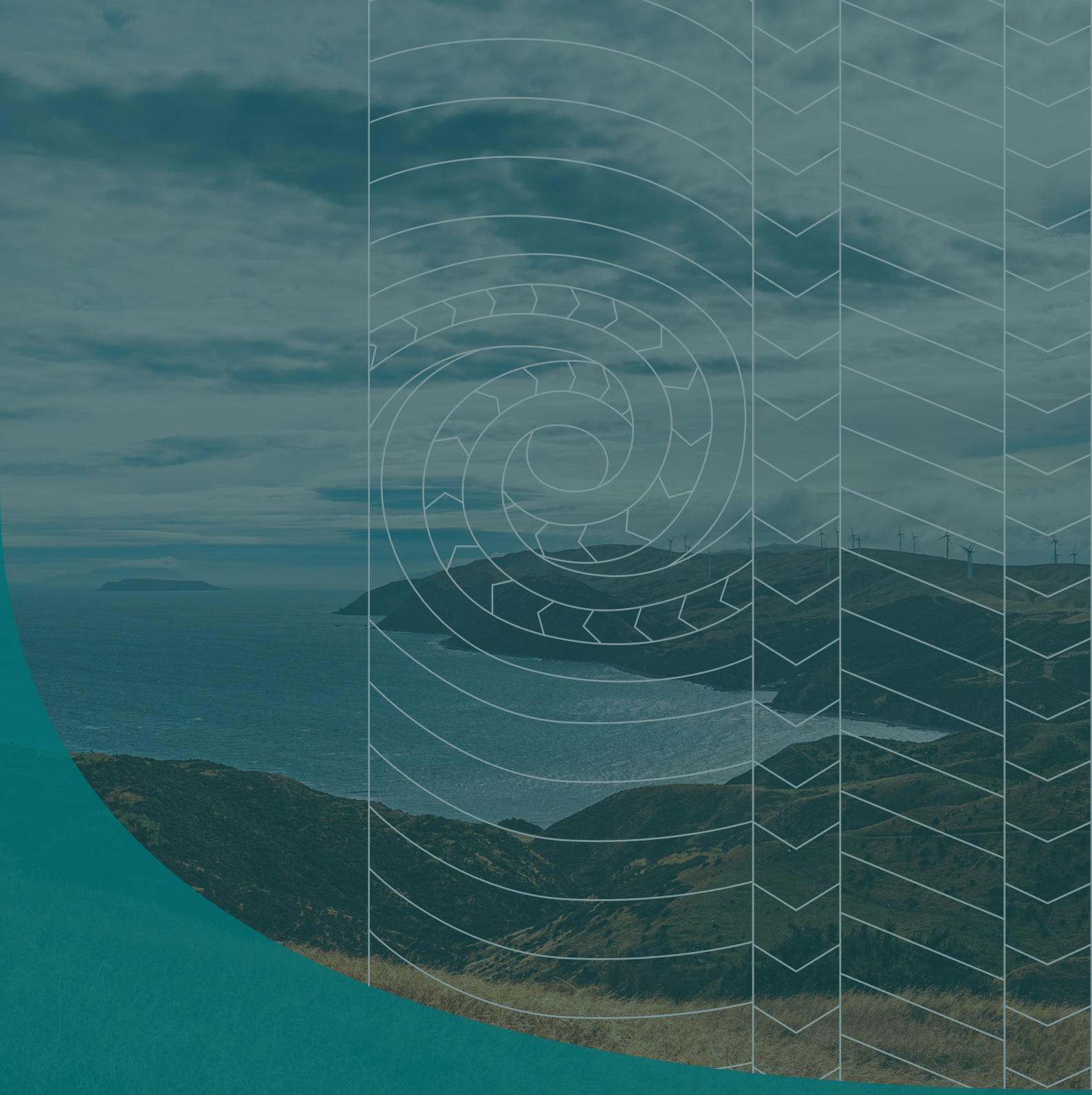


Māori Economy in the Greater Wellington Region

April 2026

TE MATARAU A MĀUI

TE AMOKURA CONSULTANTS

RĀRANGI UPOKO | CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
REGIONAL OVERVIEW	6
CULTURAL AND SOCIAL WELLBEING	10
ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE	17
CONCLUSION	22
APPENDIX A	23

Te Matarau a Māui

Te Matarau a Māui is the Māori economic development agency for Te Ūpoko o Te Ika, the Greater Wellington region. It was established following a call from a collective of mana whenua leaders across the region, to give effect to a shared, region-wide strategy for Māori economic development, developed with and for mana whenua, mātāwaka, Māori business networks, rangatahi and community partners. Te Matarau a Māui delivers a coordinated portfolio of kaupapa Māori-led initiatives that advance Māori enterprise, leadership, innovation and wellbeing, while supporting the goals of the Wellington Regional Economic Development Plan and Te Whāriki, the Greater Wellington Regional Council's Māori Outcomes Framework.

Our strategy

Te Matarau a Māui gives effect to **Te Matarau: Collaborative Pathways to Māori Economic Futures**, the first regional Māori economic development strategy of its kind for Te Ūpoko o Te Ika, under the vision *Mahia te kaheru matarau, utilise the spade of a hundred blades*. The strategy is grounded in kaupapa tuku iho: manaakitanga, wairuatanga, ūkaipōtanga, whanaungatanga, rangatiratanga, kaitiakitanga, kotahitanga, pūkengatanga, whakapapa and te reo. It is directed toward five goals: tuku ihotanga, whānau, mātauranga Māori, tino rangatiratanga and mana whakahaere, delivered through four strategic pou: Whai Pūkenga (capability, education and pathways), Whai Rawa (Māori enterprise and economic growth), Whai Mana (leadership, governance and collaboration) and Whai Kaha Hapori (strong Māori communities).

Our mahi

Te Matarau a Māui is the Māori economic development agency for Te Ūpoko o Te Ika, the Greater Wellington region. We give effect to Te Matarau: Collaborative Pathways to Māori Economic Futures, the region's first Māori economic development strategy, developed with and for mana whenua, mātāwaka, Māori business networks, rangatahi and community partners. Our work is grounded in kaupapa tuku iho: manaakitanga, wairuatanga, whanaungatanga, rangatiratanga, kaitiakitanga and te reo among them, and delivered through four pou: Whai Pūkenga, Whai Rawa, Whai Mana and Whai Kaha Hapori.

Day to day, this looks like walking alongside pakihi Māori through Te Aka Pakihi, our tuakana/teina mentoring kaupapa; strengthening the region's Māori procurement pathways through Te Ara Hokohoko; building a shared data and knowledge base for the Māori economy through Te Kotahitanga and the emerging He Kete Mātauranga resource hub; and supporting rangatahi, civic participation and community connection through initiatives such as Whakaaro ki te Pōti and our Mātāwaka Engagement work.

We work through relationship, not in isolation. Our delivery model runs through the region's Māori Business Networks, formalised through the Mahitahi Whakaaetanga, and we hold close working relationships with Greater Wellington Regional Council, Wellington City Council, Te Puni Kōkiri and a growing circle of partners across business, technology and community. Tipu Pakihi, our annual celebration of Māori enterprise, brings this network together each year to mark the depth, creativity and resilience of Māori business across the region.

We are governed by a Board of Trustees drawing on deep and long-standing ties to the Māori economy of Te Ūpoko o Te Ika, supported by Te Rōpū Pūkenga and a small operations team. Our commitment is simple: that the Māori economy in this region, and the whānau, hapū and communities it sustains, continues to flourish for generations to come. Mahia te kaheru matarau - utilise the spade of a hundred blades.

Our people

Te Matarau a Māui is governed by a Board of Trustees, supported by Te Rōpū Pūkenga and a small operations team.

Name	Role	Iwi affiliations
Dr Jesse Pirini	Pouwhakahaere Matua, the Executive Chair	Te Whakatōhea, Ngāti Tūwharetoa
Daphne Luke	Trustee, Member Paihere Tangata Committee	Ngāti Kahungunu, Rongomaiwahine, Rangitāne o Tamaki nui a Rua
Narida Hooper	Trustee, member Audit & Risk	Ngāruahine, Ngāti Porou
Te Rangipai Renata	Trustee, Member Paihere Tangata Committee	Tūwharetoa
Te Puritanga Jefferies	Trustee, Chair Audit & Risk	
Johannah Katene-Burge	Trustee, Member Audit & Risk	Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Tama, Ngāti Koata

- **Te Rōpū Pūkenga:** Aimee Porteners, Herani Demuth, Shane Royal (Paihere Tāngata Chair), Te Rau Kupenga, Trevor Moeke and Dr Kathie Irwin.
- **Operations team:** Dr Jesse Pirini (Pouwhakahaere Matua) and Vanessa Eldridge (Kaiwhakahaere Tari), who brings governance and project management experience across the health and Māori community sectors.

Our Regional Network Partnerships

Te Matarau a Māui works in close partnership with the four Māori business networks across the region, each grounded in and led by their own communities: Te Awe, the Wellington Māori Business Network; Awarua, Te Pākihi Māori o Porirua; Māori in Business Wairarapa; and Te Rōpū Pakihi, the Kāpiti and Horowhenua Māori Business Network. Together with Te Matarau, these networks form the Mahitahi Whakaaetanga, a shared accord that brings the region's Māori business community together to coordinate effort, share learnings and grow pakihi Māori across Te Ūpoko o Te Ika. This network-led approach ensures our mahi stays close to the ground, connected to the people and places it serves, while working alongside mana whenua across the region and the Greater Wellington Regional Council to ensure our collective work reflects the aspirations of iwi, hapū and Māori communities throughout the rohe.

Introduction

1. Te Matarau a Māui, in conjunction with Te Amokura Consultants, were engaged by the Greater Wellington Regional Council to provide insights into the Māori economy in Te Ūpoko o te Ika, the Greater Wellington region.

2. This report asks: *what does the Māori economy in Greater Wellington look like today, and what conditions —economic, cultural and environmental— will allow it to flourish for generations to come?* The Māori economy includes Māori employers and employees, Māori-owned businesses and assets held by iwi, collectives, trusts, and incorporations. It is also shaped by the people who contribute to and benefit from it.

3. The Māori economy is a growing and increasingly influential part of the region's economic, social and cultural landscape. It is grounded in values connected to whenua, whakapapa and tikanga Māori. It is often led by individuals, Māori organisations, hapū and iwi that are driven by enduring responsibilities to their people and to future generations.

4. Importantly, Māori economic activity in Wellington is not limited to mana whenua. Many Māori businesses are owned and operated by individuals who whakapapa to iwi outside the region. This reflects the diversity, inclusive and interconnected nature of the Māori economy.

5. This report builds an evidence base to understand the characteristics, scale and trajectory of the Māori economy in Greater Wellington.

Methodology

6. This report aligns with the framework established through the regional Māori economic development strategy **Te Matarau: Collaborative Pathways to Māori Economic Futures**, which identifies five key pillars of a thriving Māori economy.

   The five key pillars are:
   Cultural – this pillar refers to connections to language, culture and identity.
   Social – the social pillar is about social groups and communities including marae.
   Political – the political pillar involves participation, partnerships and contribution to decision making forums at the local, regional and national levels, including among local marae, iwi, and business forums.
   Economic – the economic pillar refers to contributing to and benefiting economically from business, enterprise and employment.
   Environmental – the environmental pillar is about the health, protection and sustainability of the natural environment and resources.

7. These pillars have guided the structure and analysis within this report.

8. Data sources include:
   - 2023 Census data;
   - Regional datasets (see Appendix A); and
   - Qualitative insights via survey from approximately 12 Māori individuals in the community from different sectors and age groups. These insights provide lived experience to complement the quantitative data.

Regional Overview

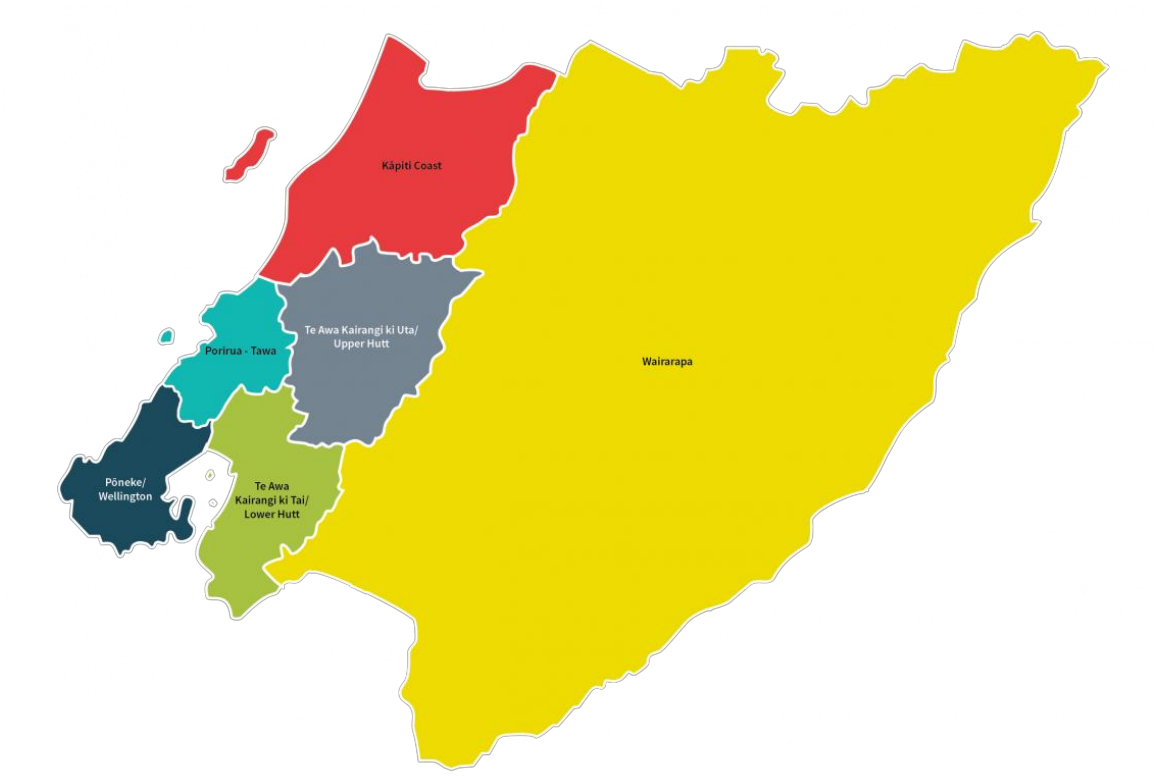


Figure 1: Regional boundaries for greater Wellington.

9. The Greater Wellington region includes a diverse Māori population and a mix of urban, peri-urban, and rural environments. The region is home to six iwi:

Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o te Ika

Ko Taranaki te maunga
Ko Te whanganui ā-Tara te moana
Ko Tokomaru te waka

Rohe: The Port Nicholson Block covers the upper reaches of Upper Hutt City to the Remutaka Ranges south to Turakirae on the south east coast. It covers Hutt City, Upper Hutt City, and Wellington City. It includes the harbour, foreshore and seabed, and extends from the south west coast to Kiokio, returning to Tawa.

Marae:

3

Hapū:

0

Membership:

14,500



Ngāti Toa Rangatira

Ko Whitireia te maunga
Ko Parirua te awa
Ko Raukawakawa te moana
Ko Tainui te waka

Rohe: This rohe map represents the contemporary area over which Ngāti Toa Rangatira exercises kaitiakitanga for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991. The historical Area of Interest agreed between Ngāti Toa Rangatira and the Crown in the Deed of Settlement signed on 7 December 2012 is more extensive.

Marae:

4

Hapu:

0

Membership:

7038



Rangitāne o Wairarapa

Ko Tararua te maunga
Ko Ruamahanga te awa
Ko Kurahaupō te waka

Rohe: This rohe map represents the area over which Rangitāne o Manawatū and Rangitāne o Wairarapa & Rangitāne o Tāmaki nui-ā-Rua exercise kaitiakitanga for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991 and is based on the areas of interest agreed between Rangitāne o Wairarapa & Rangitāne o Tāmaki nui-ā-Rua and the Crown in the Deed of Settlement signed on 14 November 2015, and Rangitāne o Manawatū and the Crown in the Deed of Settlement signed on 6 August 2016.

Marae:

16

Hapū:

17

Membership:

3,180 (Wairarapa & Hawkes Bay)

Map



Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa

Ko Tararua te maunga
Ko Ruamāhanga te awa
Ko Tākitimu te Waka

Rohe:
This rohe map represents the area over which Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa - Tāmaki nui-ā-Rua exercises kaitiakitanga for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991 and is based on the Area of Interest agreed between Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa - Tāmaki nui-ā-Rua and the Crown in the Deed of Settlement initialled with the Crown on 22 March 2018.

Marae:

9

Hapū:

Over 100

Membership:

14,409

Map



Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga

Ko Maungatautari te maunga
Ko Manawatū te awa
Ko Tainui te waka

Rohe: Mai i Waitapu ki Rangataua. Mai i Miria te Kakara ki Kukutauaki (ko te rohe pōtae o Ngāti Raukawa).

This rohe map represents the area over which Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga exercises kaitiakitanga for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Marae:

20

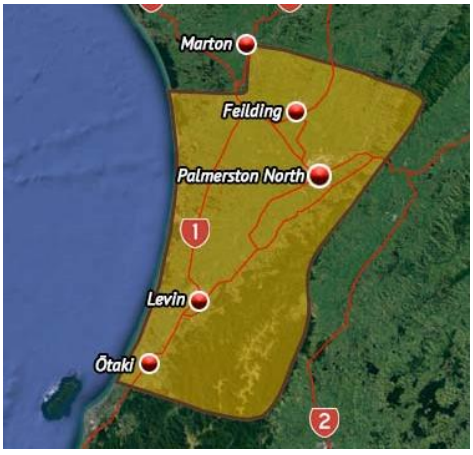
Hapū:

22

Membership:

25,020

Map



Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai

Mai Kukutauaki ki Whareroa, tatu atu ki Paripari. Rere whakauta ngā tini tapu ko Wainui, Ko Maunganui, Pukemore, Kapakapanui, Pukeatua ungutu atu. Ki te pou whakararo ki Ngawhakangutu Ko Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai e.

Rohe:

This rohe map represents the area over which Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai, as mana whenua, exercises kaitiakitanga for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Marae:

1

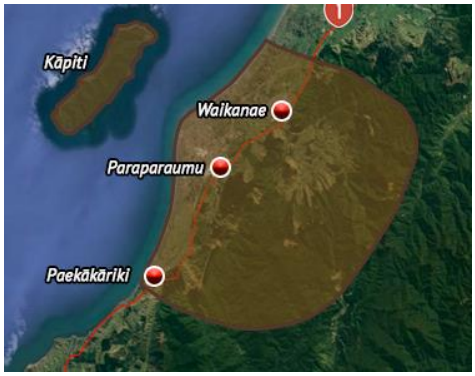
Hapū:

0

Membership:

1,614

Map



Cultural and Social Wellbeing

Cultural Foundations of the Māori Economy

10. The Māori economy in the Greater Wellington region is underpinned by cultural values that shape both decision-making and outcomes. These include connections to whenua, whakapapa, and tikanga Māori, alongside principles such as whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and kaitiakitanga.

11. Unlike conventional economic models that prioritise individual wealth accumulation, Māori economic activity is often oriented toward collective wellbeing and intergenerational benefit. This is evident across whānau, hapū, iwi, and Māori organisations, where economic decisions are closely linked to cultural identity and responsibility.

12. These foundations influence not only how economic activity is undertaken, but also how success is defined, extending beyond financial return to include cultural, social, and environmental outcomes.

    'Teitei te mana o ngai Maori e kitea ana te huhua o ana mahi i waenganui i nga iwi whanui o Poneke'
    'There's a lot of pride, mana in being Maori and playing an active role in the wider Wellington community.'

Population and Demographic Context.

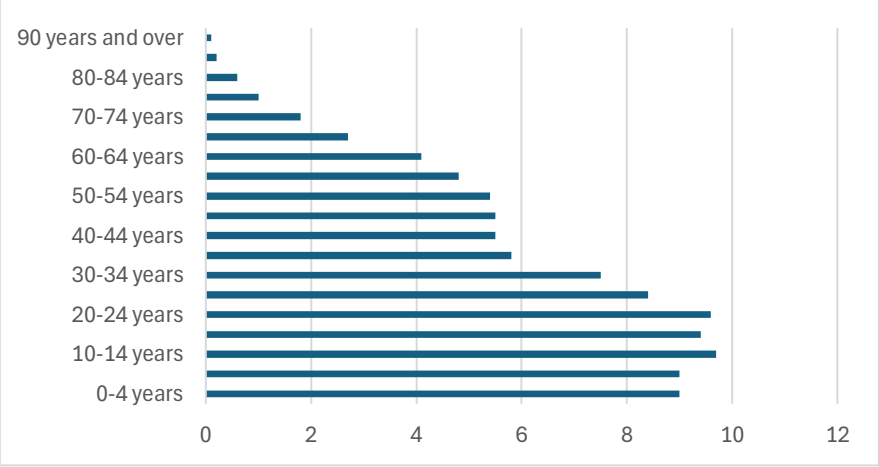
13. The Māori population in the Wellington region was 80,613 at the 2023 census, steadily growing over the 10 years from 2013.

14. Māori ethnic group population of Wellington Region, 2013–2023:

Category	Census usually resident population count (Wellington Region)
2013	58335
2018	72252
2023	80613

15. The Māori population in Wellington is relatively young, with 55% under the age of 30. The median age was 26.9 years at the 2023 census.

16. Percentage of Māori ethnic group population by five-year age group, Wellington Region, 2023 Census:



17. This demographic profile presents a significant opportunity for future economic growth, with a large cohort of rangatahi entering or preparing to enter the workforce. However, it also places pressure on systems such as education, housing, and employment to ensure that this population is adequately supported.

18. The long-term trajectory of the Māori economy in the region will be shaped in part by how effectively this young population is supported to transition into sustainable and high value employment, leadership roles, and entrepreneurship. There are a range of initiatives in place to support rangatahi into these pathways and a longer term joined up approach linking these initiatives into regional economic development plans would support strategic investment and longer-term outcomes.

Income, Cost of Living and Whānau Wellbeing.

19. Percentage of Māori ethnic group population by age, by total personal income ($), Wellington Region, 2023 Census:

Category	15-29 years (Wellington Region)	30-64 years (Wellington Region)	65 years and over (Wellington Region)
$10,000 or less	28.9	8.1	6.1
$10,001-$20,000	14.2	7.7	16
$20,001-$30,000	11.3	10.8	35.2
$30,001-$50,000	20.6	17	18.3
$50,001-$70,000	16.4	19.7	9.7
$70,001-$100,000	6.6	18.1	8.6
$100,001 or more	1.9	18.7	6

20. Median personal income ($) of the Māori ethnic group population, by age, Wellington Region, 2013–2023 Censuses:

Category	2013 (Wellington Region)	2018 (Wellington Region)	2023 (Wellington Region)
15-29 years	11900	15500	25800
30-64 years	37800	41100	56400
65 years and over	20400	22800	27800

21. Percentage of Māori ethnic group population by New Zealand index of socioeconomic deprivation, Wellington Region and New Zealand, 2023 Census:

Category	Wellington Region	New Zealand
1 - Least deprived	8.6	4.3
2	8.9	5
3	8.2	5.7
4	8.9	6.4
5	8.5	7.3
6	11	8.4
7	10.2	10.2
8	10.6	12.2
9	11.1	16.2
10 - Most deprived	14	24.3

22. Cost of living pressures are a dominant theme shaping the lived experience of Māori in Wellington through to 2026. While there are examples of success at both individual and iwi levels, many whānau are experiencing significant financial strain.

23. Rising costs across essential areas are placing increasing pressure on household budgets, including:
    - Food, Housing, Transport and Energy.

24. These pressures are not only financial but also social and emotional. Survey respondents described a sense of being “in survival mode”, with limited capacity to plan for the future or invest in opportunities for growth.

25. Transport costs are a key contributor, with a high reliance on private vehicles for both work and education. This creates additional vulnerability to fuel price increases and broader economic shifts.

26. Percentage of Māori ethnic group population by main means of travel to work, people living in Wellington Region and New Zealand, 2023 Census:

Category	Wellington Region	New Zealand
Work at home	14.4	13.5
Drive a private car, truck or van	46.7	59.6
Drive a company car, truck or van	10.3	11.2
Passenger in a car, truck, van or company bus	5.5	5.7
Public bus	7.3	2.5
Train	6.2	1
Bicycle	1.3	1.2
Walk or jog	6.7	3.9
Ferry	0.1	0.1
Other	1.6	1.4

27. Percentage of Māori ethnic group population by main means of travel to education, people living in Wellington Region and New Zealand, 2023 Census:

Category	Wellington Region	New Zealand
Study at home	7.9	7.3
Drive a car, truck or van	8.4	9.1
Passenger in a car, truck or van	42.1	45.3
Bicycle	2.2	2.6
Walk or jog	18.6	17.2
School bus	8.1	11.9
Public bus	8	4.5
Train	3.4	0.9
Ferry	0	0.1
Other	1.2	1.2

28. Developing transport strategies responsive to the activities and aspirations of Māori communities may be an efficient investment in growing the regional economy by easing access to high value opportunities and reducing cost of living burdens.

29. The cumulative effect of these cost of living pressures is a reduction in overall wellbeing, with impacts on mental health, community participation, and long-term aspirations.

'Māori can only give and fight so much before morale becomes low and we see the social impacts, which naturally trickle down to our tamariki and pakeke.'

30. Kaupapa Māori health providers throughout the region support whānau by delivering health and social services that are designed by Māori, for Māori, grounded in tikanga, mātauranga Māori and whānau-centred practice. These practices are often categorised as Very Low Cost clinics and provide wrap-around care with significant community outreach to un-enrolled populations, hard to reach people and non-Māori people alike.

31. Kaupapa Māori health providers are primary care and community Hauora providers:

Region	Number of Kaupapa Māori health providers
Wellington	34
Hutt Valley	18
Wairarapa	12

Source: www.healthpoint.co.nz

Housing and Equity

32. Percentage of households with at least one Māori ethnic group member, by tenure type, Wellington Region, 2018–2023 Censuses:

Category	2018 (Wellington Region)	2023 (Wellington Region)
Owned	42.9	44.1
In family trust	7	6
Not owned	50.1	49.9

33. Māori home ownership rates increased in 2023 (from 2018). However 49.9% of Māori do not own their home. Housing remains one of the most significant structural challenges facing Māori in the region.

> *'Financial inequity for Māori is system produced. Māori face systemic barriers such as bias, discrimination and racism which has resulted in things like Māori home ownership rates being significantly lower than others. Home ownership is the main way people build wealth. Access to resources and power are a major problem.'*

34. The consequences extend beyond financial outcomes. Housing insecurity affects:

- Stability for whānau;
- Educational outcomes for Tamariki; and
- Overall health and wellbeing

35. At the same time, there are emerging opportunities through kaupapa Māori approaches to housing. Papakāinga developments, collective ownership models, and iwi-led initiatives are providing alternative pathways that align with Māori values and priorities. Strategic investment to understand this space and enable it through a joined up approach may offer significant impact for the region.

36. Ngati Toa established Toa Developments in 2022 to develop residential and commercial property projects across the Ngāti Toa rohe.
Projects include:
-Large scale residential land development (Kenepuru Landing)
-Commercial office redevelopment (Hagley Street Precinct)
-Retail and mixed use spaces (Commercial Corner, Superette)
-Early childcare centre (ECE opened Feb 2026)
- Papakāinga housing (11 kaumātua units at Te Hiko Street)
- Medical centre refurbishment

Education and Skills

37. Education is a key enabler of long-term economic participation and wellbeing. Data indicates that educational attainment among Māori in Wellington is improving, with more individuals achieving higher-level qualifications.

38. Percentage of Māori ethnic group population by highest qualification, Wellington Region, 2023 Census:

Category	Wellington Region
No qualification	17.4
Level 1 certificate	11.8
Level 2 certificate	13.2
Level 3 certificate	19.2
Level 4 certificate	9.7
Level 5 diploma	5.8
Level 6 diploma	3.2
Bachelor degree and Level 7 qualification	11.8
Post-graduate and honours degrees	4
Masters degree	2.9
Doctorate degree	0.4
Overseas secondary school qualification	0.4

In comparison with 2018 census data*:

- the percentage of Māori attaining a qualification has increased (those with no qualifications has declined from 27% in 2018 to 17.4% in 2023).

- the percentage of Māori achieving a level 3-6 qualification increased from 29% (2018) to 37.9% (2023).

39. This shift reflects increased access to education pathways, including those provided by Māori tertiary institutions such as Te Wānanga o Raukawa and Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (see Appendix A).

40. Kaupapa Māori education provision is present across the Wellington region in the early childhood, primary and secondary sectors. There are approximately 2,503 tamariki enrolled across early childhood through to year 13:

Education Provider	Number	Estimated Number Enrolled*
Kōhanga Reo/Puna reo/rūmaki reo	37	922
Rūmaki Unit years 1-8	5	312
Kura/Wharekura years 1-13	6	1,269
	Total	2,503

*All data has been sourced from education provider websites and are waiting to be confirmed by the Ministry of Education. Some Rūmaki numbers have been estimated based on the number of class rooms.

''Education is key for me, making sure that our kids achieve in the best mix of future oriented subjects in Te Reo/mainstream.'

41. Financial barriers remain a challenge for some whānau. The cost of education-related activities, including school trips and cultural participation, can place additional strain on whānau. This can limit access to opportunities and reinforce existing inequities.

'Parents just don't have the money despite fundraising. As a result, our kura will be left with the shortfall. This is has become the normal. At the end of the day our kids are missing out.'

42. Ensuring equitable access to education — including culturally grounded pathways — will be critical to unlocking the potential of the region's young Māori population. Waitlists are common across the Kaupapa Māori education sectors from kōhanga to wānanga.

'The Ministry has a formula for deciding where to build a school, how to resource it. Whereas kura operate from a values base, have a kaupapa that drives them. Whānau who want to go to a kura are sometimes inhibited by the resources available. In terms of time and money it can be inhibitive to access the kura you want, so you end up going to whatever is closest. Because the Ministry can't build more of what we want in our area'

Community, Marae and Social Infrastructure

43. Māori communities in Wellington are characterised by strong networks of support and a deep commitment to collective wellbeing. Informal systems of reciprocity and mutual support play a significant role in sustaining communities, particularly during times of economic hardship.

"People are getting on with it and helping each other… that's part of our economy that we don't often see."

44. Marae are central to this social infrastructure. There are many marae across the Wellington region, including 9 non-tribal marae.

45. Marae across the greater Wellington region reflect two main histories. Some are long-established marae of tangata whenua, shaped by generations of whakapapa and connection to their whenua. Others were established in the twentieth century to support Māori who moved to the city during the rural-to-urban migration of the 1960s.

46. For tangata whenua, the marae is often the heart of tribal life and an important place of belonging, or tūrangawaewae. These marae are closely connected to the surrounding landscape, including important mountains, rivers or the sea, and other meaningful places.

47. Marae serve as hubs for cultural, social, health, wellbeing, spiritual and economic activity. They provide spaces for:

- Cultural expression and identity
- Community gatherings and events
- Delivery of health, wellbeing and education services and programmes

48. In both traditional and urban contexts, marae continue to play a vital role in maintaining connection, identity, and resilience. Given the diversity of roles played by marae in community life, their location and role should be considered regarding infrastructure, transport planning, and strategic economic initiatives.

Economic and Political Landscape

Political Context and Māori–Crown Relationships

49. The political landscape plays a significant role in shaping the Māori economy. The relationship between iwi and the Crown, grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, continues to influence economic development pathways.

50. In the Wellington region, several iwi have settled Treaty claims, providing a foundation for asset development and economic growth. Others remain in ongoing settlement processes.

51. Settlements have enabled:

- The growth of iwi asset bases
- Increased governance capability
- Greater participation in regional economic development

52. At the same time, recent policy changes and shifts in government priorities have had direct impacts on employment and economic conditions, particularly in the public sector.

Iwi Economic Base and Investment Priorities

53. Iwi across the Greater Wellington region are significant economic actors, managing a diverse and growing asset base. These assets span multiple sectors, including property, infrastructure, environmental resources, and social services.

54. While asset levels vary between iwi, there is a shared emphasis on long-term sustainability and intergenerational benefit. Investment decisions are guided by Māori values, ensuring that economic growth aligns with cultural and social priorities.

Iwi	**Mana whenua Entity**	**Post settlement entity**	**Total equity 2025 ($ millions)**
Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o te ika	Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust	Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust	62
Ngāti Toa Rangatira	Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Inc	Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Inc	437
Rangitāne o Wairarapa	Rangitāne o Wairarapa Inc	Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā Trust	59
Ngāti Kahungunu o Wairarapa	Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa Charitable Trust	Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa Tāmaki nui-a-Rua Settlement Trust	178
Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga	Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki	Not applicable	Not publicly available
Te Atiawa ki Whakarongotai	Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust	Not applicable	6.45

55. Common priorities include*:

- Strengthening financial independence
- Expanding housing provision
- Creating employment opportunities for whānau
- Developing long-term income streams

*Source: Annual reports, see Appendix A.

There is also increasing diversification into areas such as renewable energy (Tū Mai Rā Energy) and commercial development (Toa Developments), reflecting both opportunity and strategic adaptation to changing economic conditions.

Workforce Dynamics and Employment Trends

56. Māori descent indicator, work and labour force status, age, and gender for the census usually resident population count aged 15 years and over, (RC, TALB, SA2, Health), 2013, 2018, and 2023 Censuses in the Wellington region:

Census year	2013	2018	2023
Work and labour force status			
Total - work and labour force status	44,463	56,784	64,488
Employed Full-time	21,792	28,950	34,845
Employed Part-time	6,033	8,304	8,622
Unemployed	4,245	4,398	3,468
Not in the Labour Force	12,390	15,129	17,550

57. Statistics show a reduction in the number of Māori unemployed between 2013 to 2023.

58. Percentage of Māori ethnic group population by industry, Wellington Region and New Zealand, 2023 Census:

Category	Wellington Region	New Zealand
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	2	5.7
Mining	0.1	0.3
Manufacturing	5.6	10.1
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1.1	1
Construction	12.5	11.8
Wholesale Trade	3	4
Retail Trade	8.2	8.6
Accommodation and Food Services	6.5	6.3
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	3.9	4.8
Information Media and Telecommunications	1.7	1.1
Financial and Insurance Services	2.7	1.9
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	1.9	1.9
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	7.5	6
Administrative and Support Services	4.5	4.7
Public Administration and Safety	15.3	7.6
Education and Training	7.8	8.7
Health Care and Social Assistance	9.3	9.5
Arts and Recreation Services	2	1.8
Other Services	4.2	4.1

59. The Māori workforce in Wellington clusters in several key industries, particularly public service/administration and construction.

60. Recent economic shifts have significantly impacted these sectors. The contraction of the public sector has reduced job availability and increased competition, while a slowdown in construction has limited demand for labour.

61. These changes have created a more uncertain employment environment, characterised by:

- Reduced job security
- Increased competition for roles
- Greater financial instability for households

'Major policies cut by govt is having a negative impact on work, and hence financial wellbeing.'

62. Survey respondents described a highly competitive labour market, with more individuals competing for fewer opportunities.

63. These workforce dynamics have broader implications for the Māori economy, particularly in terms of income stability and long-term economic participation.

Māori Enterprise and Business Activity

64. Māori businesses are a critical driver of economic activity and resilience within the region. Despite challenging conditions, many Māori enterprises continue to operate and adapt, often supported by strong networks and a commitment to collective success.

65. Growth of Māori businesses:

Year	Number of Māori businesses*
2013	1350
2015	1377
2017	1479
2019	1641
2021	1647
2023	1872

*Source: Te Matapaeroa Data Tables

66. The number of Māori businesses in the Wellington region has grown over the ten year period to 2023.

67. Māori businesses are typically characterised by:

- Values-based decision-making
- Long-term perspectives
- Strong connections to community

68. They operate across a wide range of sectors, including construction, hospitality, technology, tourism, and creative industries.

'An enormous opportunity exists to grow and support more Māori SMEs. The economy does well when Māori businesses are thriving.'

69. Te Matarau a Māui provides regional coordination and strategic support across the Māori economic development ecosystem. Te Matarau connects Māori enterprise with iwi, government, and industry partners, and leads initiatives in areas like business development, rangatahi pathways, and innovation.

70. Four Māori business networks operate across the Wellington region. The four key networks are — Te Awe in Wellington, Awarua in Porirua, Te Rōpū Pakihi in Kāpiti–Horowhenua, and Māori in Business Wairarapa in Wairarapa. Each network supports Māori enterprise in their local areas and builds a regional ecosystem with the support of Te Matarau a Māui. Their priorities are clear:

- Strengthening whanaungatanga,
- Building Māori business capability,
- Creating opportunities for collaboration, and
- Uplifting Māori economic growth.

The networks create opportunities to collaborate. Through hui, mentoring, workshops, and community-driven support, these networks help Māori businesses grow confidence, skills, and visibility. Together, they reinforce a growing Māori economy across the region.

71. A strong example of cross-sector collaboration is BizHub Porirua, a business support initiative delivered through a partnership between Ngāti Toa, Porirua City Council, WellingtonNZ and Te Matarau a Māui. BizHub provides accessible business development support for enterprises in the Porirua area, reflecting the kind of joined-up investment that strengthens local Māori economic participation.
72. Sample of Māori business profiles:

Mills Albert Limited is a Māori- and family-owned civil construction and forestry company based on the Kāpiti Coast, delivering earthmoving, roading, flood-resilience, forestry, and rock supply projects across the lower North Island. Founded in 2000, it has grown into a major regional contractor guided by Māori values, with a strong focus on health and safety, sustainability, workforce development, and community wellbeing.

Puku Pies & Kai is a Māori-owned pie shop in Wellington serving hearty, honest kai grounded in manaakitanga and caring for people. Since opening in 2025, the business has expanded to multiple locations, putting community and generosity ahead of profit.

Parangarehu is a boutique eco-retreat on the Wellington South Coast located on whenua Māori held by the Tupoki Takarangi whānau since the early 1830s. Opened in May 2025, the retreat is operated on behalf of the Tupoki Takarangi Trust and developed under a 25-year strategic plan.

Regional Economic Development Infrastructure

73. Māori economic development in the region is supported by a wider institutional infrastructure. WellingtonNZ, the regional economic development agency, works alongside Te Matarau a Māui to deliver the Māori chapter of the Wellington Regional Economic Development Plan. Greater Wellington Regional Council plays a foundational role through strategic investment and partnership, including funding for WellingtonNZ and Te Matarau a Māui and commissioning work such as this report. Together, these relationships support a joined up regional system that supports Māori enterprise to grow with cultural integrity and economic ambition.

'Māori businesses and organisations are helping and supporting each other to continue despite the odds. Realising that our greatest strength is when we join together and unite against the financial obstacles.'

Conclusion

74. The Māori economy in Greater Wellington is growing and resilient. It is grounded in values connected to whakapapa, whenua and tikanga Māori. Māori businesses and iwi investments contribute across many sectors. They prioritise whānau and collective wellbeing, with a focus on intergenerational outcomes.

75. Significant challenges remain for whānau. Cost of living pressures are high. Housing insecurity continues. Workforce disruption has increased uncertainty. These pressures affect financial stability and overall wellbeing.

76. However, strong foundations exist for the future and there are significant opportunities for growth:

    - The Māori population is young and increasingly skilled.
    - Māori business networks are present and supporting Māori business growth.
    - Iwi investment is growing and long-term focused.

    With sustained partnership and kaupapa Māori approaches, the Māori economy will continue to strengthen the region.

77. A recurring theme across survey insights is the importance of collaboration and collective models of development. Partnerships between iwi, Māori businesses and wider stakeholders are critical to unlocking scale and sustainability.

78. Long-term success will depend on the ability to align these opportunities with the needs and aspirations of whānau, while addressing the structural barriers that continue to limit participation.

''I'm inspired by those who think innovatively and experiment with different ways of doing things. Māori are strong in their value of collective wellbeing, as opposed to having an individualistic view. If Māori are to be financially independent, we must think collectively and work together.

Appendix A:

Information Sources

https://www.tkm.govt.nz/map/

https://www.tpk.govt.nz/en/nga-putea-me-nga-ratonga/maori-enterprise/te-matapaeroa

https://tewhata.io/

https://www.stats.govt.nz/

https://www.gw.govt.nz/

https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/home

https://www.ngahapuootaki.nz/

https://tumaira.nz/

https://www.ngatitoa.iwi.nz

https://berl.co.nz/te-ohanga-maori

https://www.pnbst.maori.nz

https://www.kkwtnr.org.nz/

https://teatiawakikapiti.co.nz/

Whare Wānanga – Māori Tertiary education providers

Te Wānanga o Raukawa, Ōtaki
In 2025, there were 4824 students enrolled. 70% of teaching is at level 5 or above.
In 2024, there were 5,292 students enrolled, 90% were part time. 39 years was the average age of students. 70% identified as Māori.
www.wananga.com

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, nationwide
There are 4 campuses in the region:
Central Wellington (Kīwai Campus), Porirua (Te Ao Mārama Campus), Lower Hutt, Masterton.
Many courses are based online as well.

In 2024 in all of Aotearoa, there were:
27,108 students enrolled, 1,397 kaimahi, 61% of tauira were Māori
www.twoa.ac.nz

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi operates a main campus in Whakatane, with satellite offices in Auckland and Wairoa. Courses are offered nationwide through online offerings as well.
In 2024, there were 5,911 students enrolled nationwide.
https://www.wananga.ac.nz/