



Arts, Culture and Heritage

What is this?

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage considers culture to include arts, heritage, broadcasting, sport and recreation.

Why is it important?

Art and culture help to build diverse communities and improve quality of life, inspire education, boost the economy and add to the vibrancy of cities.¹ Increasing recognition is now given to the importance of the arts and culture in the daily lives of New Zealanders. Our sense of who we are is dependent to a significant extent on our experiences of our culture and heritage.

An appreciation of the unique aspects of New Zealand's culture, particularly Māori culture, contributes positively to economic growth, national identity, social connectedness, and the acceptance and encouragement of cultural diversity. Both local and central government have placed increasing emphasis on the place and role of culture in developing and enhancing social wellbeing. For example, through support for arts and cultural organisations and events.^{2,3} There is also a growing body of evidence showing how creativity and arts can make a significant difference to people's health and wellbeing.^{4,5,6,7} Māori performing arts, in particular kapa haka, is seen as a medium for fostering a richer, more cohesive and inclusive society New Zealand and can lead to social, health and educational benefits.⁸

An important aspect of art and culture is heritage. Heritage refers to what has been inherited from the past and guides us toward the future. Heritage values may be tangible and embodied in the physical environment, such as buildings, places, spaces, objects, archaeological, ecological and wāhi tapu sites. Heritage may also be intangible, comprising of cultural traditions, knowledge and skills that have been passed down from previous generations. Acknowledging and conserving our heritage sites, artefacts and traditions is important as they give a sense of how our city and our communities have grown and help commemorate and respect the past.

Data

The Cultural Experiences Survey 2003⁹ provided a snapshot of New Zealanders' engagement with cultural activities. This survey covered a very broad range of activities including listening to popular music, visiting museums, visiting marae and buying original art and craft works. It found a high level of engagement with 93% having experienced at least one activity during the survey period. This survey has not been repeated and given its age, its findings may be outdated.



The New Zealanders and the Arts Survey undertaken in 2014 had fewer participants and defined arts and culture activities less broadly. It found that overall participation rates were still high with 89% of New Zealanders involved in the arts as attendees and/or participants in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Arts and culture have an important role in Christchurch and are considered part of a high quality of life. In the 2016 Quality of Life Survey, 60% of Christchurch residents agreed that Christchurch has a rich and diverse art scene.¹⁰ 68% of Christchurch residents say they are involved in the arts and 41% say they attend the arts just as much as prior to the earthquakes.⁸ Christchurch is a creative city with a unique and diverse blend of historic art, public spaces, festivals and cultural events. The Christchurch City Council is a strong supporter of the arts, cultural events and festivals. Some of the events it organises include the New Zealand Cup and Show Week, the Chinese Lantern Festival, Culture Galore, Heritage Week, Matariki celebrations, KidsFest and more.¹¹ These events are well attended by residents and visitors.

Christchurch also has several galleries which showcase a range of works and are drawcards for local and overseas visitors. The Christchurch Art Gallery reopened in December 2015 after being closed for almost 5 years following the February 2011 earthquake. There were over 10,000 visitors over the opening weekend and 65,800 during the first month.¹² The gallery preserves the legacy of artistic achievement for the people of Canterbury and New Zealand through collecting, presenting, interpreting and conserving quality works of art. It is the largest art institution in the South Island and is the home of one of New Zealand's most important public art collections, with over 6,000 items including paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures, ceramics, textiles, glass, metalwork and photography.

The Canterbury Museum has a rich history and includes the world's greatest collection of artefacts from the heroic age of discovery in Antarctica and the Māori collections in the *Iwi Tawhito* and *Ngā Taonga* galleries. The Canterbury Museum's innovative exhibitions and events attract diverse audiences. Significant artefacts are being added to the collection and its curators are contributing to internationally recognised research. The museum welcomed a record 666,000 visitors during the 2014-2015 year.¹³

Impact on inequalities

The Cultural Experiences Survey 2003 identified that those with educational qualifications, those who are employed and those earning middle to high incomes, were more likely to participate in cultural events and activities. The survey also showed that, nationally, those in main urban areas were more likely than others to visit art galleries and museums, go to the movies, hire videos or DVDs, and attend ethnic cultural performances. Experiencing taonga tuku iho (Māori culture) was more common among those living in minor urban and rural areas. Younger people were more likely to visit movie cinemas and live performances while older people were more likely to attend opera and musical theatres.⁷



The 2014 New Zealanders and the Arts Survey reported similar findings. Men and people in towns/rural areas are less likely to attend while women and people with higher household incomes are more likely to attend. Trends by ethnic group vary between art forms. New Zealand Europeans are more likely to attend visual arts and less likely to attend literary, Māori and Pacific arts. Māori and Pacific people are more likely to attend Māori and Pacific arts. The main reported barriers to involvement have been consistent since 2008. These include people not having enough time for creative activities, not being able to afford to be involved as much as they would like and thinking they are not very good at creative things.¹⁴

Solutions

While there are already high arts attendance and/or participation rates in New Zealand there are still a number of ways to increase and diversify this. To ensure the community has equal opportunities to attend events, they need to be organised in places that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities by a variety of transport options. The Christchurch City Council has an Accessible Events Checklist to encourage organisers to think about the accessibility of their events.¹⁵ Arts Access Aotearoa advocates for people in New Zealand who experience barriers to participation in the arts, as both creators and audience members. They work with people with physical, sensory or intellectual impairments, people experiencing mental ill-health and prisoners.¹⁶

Event costs also need to be tailored to ensure the community has a variety of choices of good quality, affordable and culturally diverse events. Events can also be place-centred (e.g. Farmers Markets, Lyttelton Festival of Lights) to provide options for those living nearby. Community organised events allow locals to plan and support events tailored to their community. The Creative Communities Scheme run through the City Council supports and encourages local communities to create and present a range of art and culture activities within Christchurch.¹⁷

Data limitations

As the Cultural Experience Survey 2003 has not been repeated, recent data drawn from a large nationally representative sample is not available.

Connections with other issues

Social Connectedness.



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Read about the Te Pae Mahutonga Māori Health Model at
<http://www.hauora.co.nz/resources/tepaemahutongatxtvers.pdf>

