

# Maintaining our cultures

The purpose of this activity is for participants to reflect on the difficulties in maintaining a culture which is different from that of the dominant group.

## Activity 24

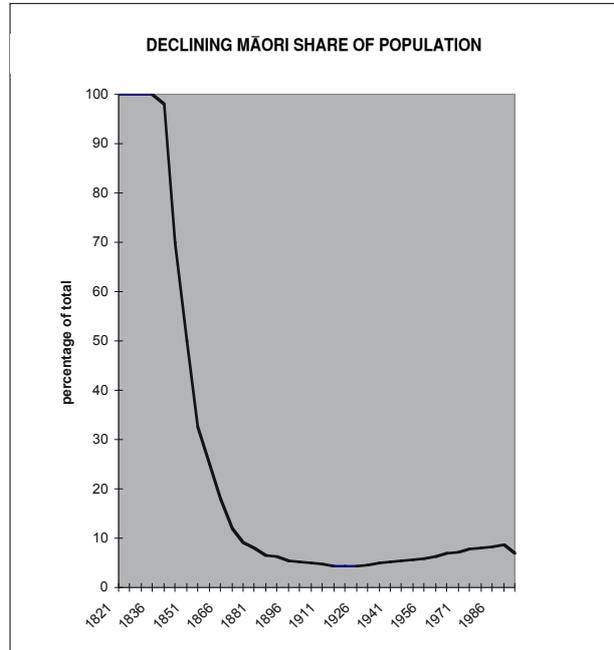
**Time:** 30 – 45 minutes.

**Materials:** Large sheets of paper and marker pens if in small groups, and the handout *Maintaining our cultures*, page 99, which can also be used as an overhead transparency / slide if working with a single large group.

1. Depending on energy and the level of safety within the group, you may choose to do this exercise in the large group or break up into smaller groups.
2. If working with the whole group use the *Maintaining our cultures* slide and brainstorm answers to questions 1 to 4. Record answers using the whiteboard.
3. If working in small groups use the *Maintaining our cultures* slide and ask participants to note their answers on their large sheet of paper.
4. If working in small groups come back into the large group and share answers.
5. Once the questions have been discussed (either together or in small groups) ask the whole group whether they think that Māori view issues of language and culture differently from Pākehā and other migrant groups, and what they think those differences might be.
6. Then together discuss what kind of policies might ensure the Treaty's protection of Māori culture as well as support for all other cultures and languages here.

## Notes

Some Māori leaders have expressed concern about the number of migrants coming into the country because as the population increases in total, Māori become a smaller proportion of that total. The following table indicates historically how this has been the case:



If the facilitator wishes to extend the discussion further the following ideas can be considered:

1. ...the government's immigration policy must be seen for what it is, a covert strategy to suppress the... struggle of the Māori by swamping them with outsiders...  
(Walker, 1995, p292)

Does an increase in migration to Aotearoa / New Zealand threaten Māori culture and status?

2. Are migrants interested in Māori culture? Do migrants relate to aspects of Māori culture?
3. Does supporting Māori culture threaten migrants' cultures and status?

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## Discussion questions:

1. What are your concerns for your children keeping your culture?
2. Do you think that all migrant groups have similar concerns? If not, what are some differences that you know about?
3. What concerns have Māori had about their culture and language in the past?
4. What concerns do you think Māori have for their culture today?