

# Eskimo

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**Eskimo** or **Eskimos** are the indigenous circumpolar peoples who have traditionally inhabited the northern circumpolar region from eastern Siberia (Russia) to Alaska (United States), Canada, and Greenland.<sup>[1][2]</sup> The two main peoples known as "Eskimo" are the Inuit—including the Alaskan Iñupiat peoples, the Greenlandic Inuit, and the mass-grouping Inuit peoples of Canada—and the Yupik of eastern Siberia<sup>[3]</sup> and Alaska. A third northern group, the Aleut, is closely related to both. They share a relatively recent common ancestor and a language group (Eskimo-Aleut). The Chukchi People, from Siberia, are also the closest living relatives of Inuit, and Yupik people.

The non-Inuit sub-branch of the Eskimo branch of the Eskimo-Aleut language family consists of four distinct Yupik languages, two used in the Russian Far East and St. Lawrence Island, and two used in western Alaska, southwestern Alaska, and the western part of Southcentral Alaska. The extinct language of the Sirenik people is sometimes argued to be related to these.

The word "Eskimo" comes from the Montagnais word for "snowshoe-netter" according to scholars at the Smithsonian Institution.<sup>[4]</sup> The governments in Canada<sup>[5]</sup> and Greenland have ceased using it in official documents.

## Description

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Etymologically,<sup>[6]</sup> the word Eskimo comes from Innu-aimun (Montagnais) *ayaškimew* meaning "a person who laces a snowshoe" and is related to "husky" (a breed of dog), and does not have a pejorative meaning in origin.<sup>[7][8][9][2]</sup>

In Canada and Greenland, the term "Eskimo" is predominantly seen as pejorative and has been widely replaced by the term "Inuit" or terms specific to a particular group or community.<sup>[10][11][12]</sup> This has resulted in a trend whereby some Canadians and Americans believe that they should not use the word "Eskimo" and use the Canadian word "Inuit" instead, even for Yupik people.<sup>[13]</sup> Section 25<sup>[14]</sup> of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and section 35<sup>[15]</sup> of the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982, recognized the Inuit as a distinctive group of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

Under U.S. and Alaskan law (as well as the linguistic and cultural traditions of Alaska), "Alaska Native" refers to all indigenous peoples of Alaska.<sup>[16]</sup> This includes not only the Iñupiat (Alaskan Inuit) and the Yupik, but also groups such as the Aleut, who share a recent ancestor, as well as the largely unrelated<sup>[17]</sup> indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast and the Alaskan Athabaskans. As a result, the term Eskimo is still in use in Alaska.<sup>[1]</sup> Alternative terms, such as *Inuit-Yupik*, have been proposed,<sup>[18]</sup> but none has gained widespread acceptance.

## History

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Several earlier indigenous peoples existed in the northern circumpolar regions of eastern Siberia, Alaska, and Canada (although probably not in Greenland<sup>[19]</sup>). The earliest positively identified Paleo-Eskimo cultures (Early Paleo-Eskimo) date to 5,000 years ago. They appear to have developed in Alaska from people related to the Arctic small tool tradition in eastern Asia, whose ancestors had probably migrated to Alaska at least 3,000 to 5,000 years earlier. Similar artifacts have been found in Siberia that date to perhaps 18,000 years ago.

The Yupik languages and cultures in Alaska evolved in place, beginning with the original pre-Dorset indigenous culture developed in Alaska. Approximately 4000 years ago, the Unangan culture of the Aleut became distinct. It is not generally considered an Eskimo culture.

Approximately 1,500–2,000 years ago, apparently in northwestern Alaska, two other distinct variations appeared. Inuit language became distinct and, over a period of several centuries, its speakers migrated across northern Alaska, through Canada and into Greenland. The distinct culture of the Thule people developed in northwestern Alaska and very quickly spread over the entire area occupied by Eskimo people, though it was not necessarily adopted by all of them.

## Origin

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The most commonly accepted etymological origin of the word "Eskimo" is derived by Ives Goddard at the Smithsonian Institution, from the Montagnais (see Algonquian languages) word meaning "snowshoe-netter"<sup>[7]</sup> or "to net snowshoes".<sup>[6]</sup> The word *assime-w* means "she laces a snowshoe" in Montagnais. Montagnais speakers refer to the neighbouring Mi'kmaq people using words that sound like *eskimo*<sup>[20][21]</sup>

In 1978, Jose Mailhot, a Quebec anthropologist who speaks Montagnais, published a paper suggesting that Eskimo meant "people who speak a different language".<sup>[22][23]</sup> French traders who encountered the Montagnais in the eastern areas, adopted their word for the more western peoples and spelled it as *Esquimau* in a transliteration.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

Some people consider *Eskimo* derogatory because it is popularly perceived to mean<sup>[7][23][24][25]</sup> "eaters of raw meat" in Algonquian languages common to people along the Atlantic coast.<sup>[6][26][27]</sup> One Cree speaker suggested the original word that became corrupted to Eskimo might have been *askamiciw* (which means "he eats it raw"); the Inuit are referred to in some Cree texts as *askipiw* (which means "eats something raw").<sup>[26][27][28][29]</sup> The continued use of "*Eskimo*" as apposed to *Inuit* or other preferred name implies and reinforces a perception that the *Inuit* are unimportant and remote.<sup>[30]</sup> The use of *Eskimo* in this context is often viewed as offensive.<sup>[31]</sup>

One of the first printed uses of the French word 'Esquimaux' comes from Samuel Hearne's *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean in the Years 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772* first published in 1795

## General Character

In Canada and Greenland, the term *Eskimo* has largely been supplanted by the term *Inuit*. While *Inuit* can be accurately applied to all of the Eskimo peoples in Canada and Greenland, that is not true in Alaska and Siberia. In Alaska the term *Eskimo* is commonly used, because it includes both Yupik and Iñupiat. *Inuit* is not accepted as a collective term and it is not used specifically for Iñupiat (although they are related to the Canadian Inuit peoples).<sup>[6]</sup>

In 1977, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) meeting in Utqiagvik, Alaska, officially adopted Inuit as a designation for all circumpolar native peoples, regardless of their local view on an appropriate term. As a result, the Canadian government usage has replaced the (locally) defunct term Eskimo with *Inuit* (*Inuk* in singular). The preferred term in Canada's Central Arctic is *Inuinnaq*,<sup>[34]</sup> and in the eastern Canadian Arctic *Inuit*. The language is often called *Inuktitut*, though other local designations are also used. Despite the ICC's 1977 decision to adopt the term *Inuit*, this was never accepted by the Yupik peoples, who likened it to calling all Native American Indians *Navajo* simply because the Navajo felt that that's what all tribes should be called.

The Inuit of Greenland refer to themselves as "Greenlanders" and speak the Greenlandic language.<sup>[35]</sup>

Because of the linguistic, ethnic, and cultural differences between Yupik and Inuit peoples, it seems unlikely that any umbrella term will be acceptable. There has been some movement to use *Inuit*, and the Inuit Circumpolar Council, representing a circumpolar population of 150,000 Inuit and Yupik people of Greenland, Northern Canada, Alaska, and Siberia, in its charter defines *Inuit* for use within that ICC document as including "the Inupiat, Yupik (Alaska), Inuit, Inuvialuit (Canada), Kalaallit (Greenland) and Yupik (Russia)".<sup>[36]</sup>

In 2010, the ICC passed a resolution in which they implored scientists to use "Inuit" and "Paleo-Inuit" instead of "Eskimo" or "Paleo-Eskimo".<sup>[37]</sup> American linguist Lenore Grenoble has explicitly deferred to this resolution and used "Inuit–Yupik" instead of "Eskimo" with regards to the language branch.<sup>[38]</sup> In a 2015 commentary in the journal *Arctic*, Canadian archaeologist Max Friesen argued fellow Arctic archaeologists should follow the ICC and use "Paleo-Inuit" instead of "Paleo-Eskimo".<sup>[39]</sup>

But, in Alaska, the Inuit people refer to themselves as *Iñupiat*, plural, and *Iñupiaq*, singular (their North Alaskan Inupiatun language is also called *Iñupiaq*). They do not commonly use the term Inuit. In Alaska, *Eskimo* is in common usage.<sup>[6]</sup>

Alaskans also use the term Alaska Native, which is inclusive of all Eskimo, Aleut and other Native Americans of Alaska. It does not apply to Inuit or Yupik people originating outside the state. The term *Alaska Native* has important legal usage in Alaska and the rest of the United States as a result of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971.

The term "Eskimo" is also used in linguistic or ethnographic works to denote the larger branch of Eskimo–Aleut languages, the smaller branch being Aleut.

## Languages

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The Eskimo–Aleut family of languages includes two cognate branches: the Aleut (Unangan) branch and the Eskimo branch.

The number of cases varies, with Aleut languages having a greatly reduced case system compared to those of the Eskimo subfamily. Eskimo–Aleut languages possess voiceless plosives at the bilabial, coronal, velar and uvular positions in all languages except Aleut, which has lost the bilabial stops but retained the nasal. In the Eskimo subfamily a voiceless alveolar lateral fricative is also present.

The Eskimo sub-family consists of the Inuit language and Yupik language sub-groups.<sup>[40]</sup> The Sireniki language, which is virtually extinct, is sometimes regarded as a third branch of the Eskimo language family. Other sources regard it as a group belonging to the Yupik branch.<sup>[40][41]</sup>

Inuit languages comprise a dialect continuum, or dialect chain, that stretches from Unalakleet and Norton Sound in Alaska, across northern Alaska and Canada, and east to Greenland. Changes from western (Iñupiaq) to eastern dialects are marked by the dropping of vestigial Yupik-related features, increasing consonant assimilation (e.g., *kumlu*, meaning "thumb", changes to *kuvlu*, changes to *kublu*,<sup>[42]</sup> changes to *kulluk*,<sup>[42]</sup> changes to *kulluq*<sup>[42]</sup>), and increased consonant lengthening, and lexical change. Thus, speakers of two adjacent Inuit dialects would usually be able to understand one another, but speakers from dialects distant from each other on the dialect continuum would have difficulty understanding one another.<sup>[41]</sup> Seward Peninsula dialects in western Alaska, where much of the Iñupiat culture has been in place for perhaps less than 500 years, are greatly affected by phonological influence from the Yupik languages. Eastern Greenlandic, at the opposite end of the Inuit range, has had significant word replacement due to a unique form of ritual name avoidance.<sup>[40][41]</sup>

The four Yupik languages, by contrast, including Alutiiq (Sugpiaq), Central Alaskan Yup'ik, Naukan (Naukanski), and Siberian Yupik, are distinct languages with phonological, morphological, and lexical differences. They demonstrate limited mutual intelligibility.<sup>[40]</sup> Additionally, both Alutiiq and Central Yup'ik have considerable dialect diversity. The northernmost Yupik languages – Siberian Yupik and Naukan Yupik – are linguistically only slightly closer to Inuit than is Alutiiq, which is the southernmost of the Yupik languages. Although the grammatical structures of Yupik and Inuit languages are similar, they have pronounced differences phonologically. Differences of vocabulary between Inuit and any one of the Yupik languages are greater than between any two Yupik languages.<sup>[41]</sup> Even the dialectal differences within Alutiiq and Central Alaskan Yup'ik sometimes are relatively great for locations that are relatively close geographically.<sup>[41]</sup>

# Maasai people

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The **Maasai** (/mɑːˈsaɪ, ˈmɑːsaɪ/<sup>[3][4]</sup>) are a Nilotic ethnic group inhabiting northern, central and southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. They are among the best known local populations internationally due to their residence near the many game parks of the African Great Lakes, and their distinctive customs and dress.<sup>[5]</sup> The Maasai speak the Maa language (ɔl Maa),<sup>[5]</sup> a member of the Nilotic language family that is related to the Dinka, Kalenjin and Nuer languages. Except for some elders living in rural areas, most Maasai people speak the official languages of Kenya and Tanzania, Swahili and English. The Maasai population has been reported as numbering 1,189,522 in Kenya in the 2019 census,<sup>[1]</sup> compared to 377,089 in the 1989 census.<sup>[6]</sup>

The Tanzanian and Kenyan governments have instituted programs to encourage the Maasai to abandon their traditional semi-nomadic lifestyle, but the people have continued their age-old customs.<sup>[7]</sup> Many Maasai tribes throughout Tanzania and Kenya welcome visits to their villages to experience their culture, traditions, and lifestyle, in return for a fee

## History

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The Maasai inhabit the African Great Lakes region and arrived via the South Sudan.<sup>[8]</sup> Most Nilotic speakers in the area, including the Maasai, the Turkana and the Kalenjin, are pastoralists, and are famous for their fearsome reputations as warriors and cattle-rustlers.<sup>[9]</sup> The Maasai and other groups in East Africa have adopted customs and practices from neighboring Cushitic-speaking groups, including the age set system of social organization, circumcision, and vocabulary terms

## Origin, migration and assimilation

According to their oral history, the Maasai originated from the lower Nile valley north of Lake Turkana (Northwest Kenya) and began migrating south around the 15th century, arriving in a long trunk of land stretching from what is now northern Kenya to what is now central Tanzania between the 17th and late 18th century. Many ethnic groups that had already formed settlements in the region were forcibly displaced by the incoming Maasai,<sup>[12]</sup> while other, mainly Southern Cushitic groups, were assimilated into Maasai society. The Nilotic ancestors of the Kalenjin likewise absorbed some early Cushitic populations.<sup>!</sup>

## Settlement in East Africa

The Maasai territory reached its largest size in the mid-19th century, and covered almost all of the Great Rift Valley and adjacent lands from Mount Marsabit in the north to Dodoma in the south.<sup>[14]</sup> At this time the Maasai, as well as the larger Nilotic group they were part of, raised cattle as far east as the Tanga coast in Tanganyika (now mainland Tanzania). Raiders used spears and shields, but were most feared for throwing clubs (orinka) which could be accurately thrown from up to 70 paces (appx. 100 metres). In 1852, there was a report of a concentration of 800 Maasai warriors on the move in what is now Kenya. In 1857, after having depopulated the "Wakuafi wilderness" in what is now southeastern Kenya, Maasai warriors threatened Mombasa on the Kenyan coast.<sup>[15][16]</sup>

Because of this migration, the Maasai are the southernmost Nilotic speakers. The period of expansion was followed by the Maasai "Emutai" of 1883–1902. This period was marked by epidemics of contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, rinderpest (see 1890s African rinderpest epizootic), and smallpox. The estimate first put forward by a German lieutenant in what was then northwest Tanganyika, was that 90% of cattle and half of wild animals perished from rinderpest. German doctors in the same area claimed that "every second" African had a pock-marked face as the result of smallpox. This period coincided with drought. Rains failed completely in 1897 and 1898.<sup>[17]</sup>

The Austrian explorer Oscar Baumann travelled in Maasai lands between 1891 and 1893, and described the old Maasai settlement in the Ngorongoro Crater in the 1894 book *Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle* ("Through the lands of the Maasai to the source of the Nile"): "There were women wasted to skeletons from whose eyes the madness of starvation glared ... warriors scarcely able to crawl on all fours, and apathetic, languishing elders. Swarms of vultures followed them from high, awaiting their certain victims." By one estimate two-thirds of the Maasai died during this period.<sup>[18]</sup>

Starting with a 1904 treaty,<sup>[19]</sup> and followed by another in 1911, Maasai lands in Kenya were reduced by 60% when the British evicted them to make room for settler ranches, subsequently confining them to present-day Samburu, Laikipia, Kajiado and Narok districts.<sup>[20]</sup> Maasai in Tanganyika (now mainland Tanzania) were displaced from the fertile lands between Mount Meru and Mount Kilimanjaro, and most of the fertile highlands near Ngorongoro in the 1940s.<sup>[21][22]</sup> More land was taken to create wildlife reserves and national parks: Amboseli National Park, Nairobi National Park, Maasai Mara, Samburu National Reserve, Lake Nakuru National Park and Tsavo in Kenya; and Lake Manyara, Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tarangire<sup>[23]</sup> and Serengeti National Park in what is now Tanzania.

Maasai are pastoralist and have resisted the urging of the Tanzanian and Kenyan governments to adopt a more sedentary lifestyle. They have demanded grazing rights to many of the national parks in both countries.

The Maasai people stood against slavery and lived alongside most wild animals with an aversion to eating game and birds. Maasai land now has East Africa's finest game areas. Maasai society never condoned traffic of human beings, and outsiders looking for people to enslave avoided the Maasai.<sup>[24]</sup>

Essentially there are twenty-two geographic sectors or sub tribes of the Maasai community, each one having its own customs, appearance, leadership and dialects. These subdivisions are known as 'nations' or 'iloshon'in the Maa language: the Keekonyokie, Damat, Purko, Wuasinkishu, Siria, Laitaiok, Loitai, Kisonko, Matapato, Dalalekutuk, Loodokolani, Kaputiei, Moitanik, Ilkirasha, Samburu, Lchamus, Laikipia, Loitokitoki, Larusa, Salei, Sirinket and Parakuyo.

## Genetics

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Recent advances in genetic analyses have helped shed some light on the ethnogenesis of the Maasai people. Genetic genealogy, a tool that uses the genes of modern populations to trace their ethnic and geographic origins, has also helped clarify the possible background of the modern Maasa

## Culture

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Maasai society is strongly patriarchal in nature, with elder men, sometimes joined by retired elders, deciding most major matters for each Maasai group. A full body of oral law covers many aspects of behavior. Formal capital punishment is unknown, and normally payment in cattle will settle matters. An out-of-court process is also practiced called *amitu*, 'to make peace', or *arop*, which involves a substantial apology.<sup>[32]</sup> The monotheistic Maasai worship a single deity called *Enkai* or *Engai*. Engai has a dual nature: Engai Narok (Black God) is benevolent, and Engai Na-nyokie (Red God) is vengeful.<sup>[33]</sup> There are also two pillars or totems of Maasai society: Oodo Mongi, the Red Cow and Orok Kiteng, the Black Cow with a subdivision of five clans or family trees.<sup>[34]</sup> The Maasai also have a totemic animal, which is the lion; however, the animal can be killed. The way the Maasai kill the lion differs from trophy hunting as it is used in the rite of passage ceremony.<sup>[35]</sup> The "Mountain of God", Ol Doinyo Lengai, is located in northernmost Tanzania and can be seen from Lake Natron in southernmost Kenya. The central human figure in the Maasai religious system is the **laibon** whose roles include shamanistic healing, divination and prophecy, and ensuring success in war or adequate rainfall. Today, they have a political role as well due to the elevation of leaders. Whatever power an individual laibon had was a function of personality rather than position.<sup>[36]</sup> Many Maasai have also adopted Christianity and Islam.<sup>[37]</sup> The Maasai are known for their intricate jewelry and for decades, have sold these items to tourists as a business.



Maasai people and huts with enkang barrier in foreground - eastern Serengeti, 2006

A once high infant mortality rate among the Maasai has led to babies not truly being recognized until they reach an age of 3 months *ilapaitin*.<sup>[38]</sup> Educating Maasai women to use clinics and hospitals during pregnancy has enabled more infants to survive. The exception is found in extremely remote areas. For Maasai living a traditional life, the end of life is virtually without ceremony, and the dead are left out for scavengers.<sup>[39]</sup> A corpse rejected by scavengers is seen as having something wrong with it, and liable to cause social disgrace; therefore, it is not uncommon for bodies to be covered in fat and blood from a slaughtered ox.<sup>[40]</sup> Burial has in the past been reserved for great chiefs, since it is believed to be harmful to the soil.

## Influences from the outside world

A traditional pastoral lifestyle has become increasingly difficult due to outside influences of the modern world. Garrett Hardin's article, outlining the "tragedy of the commons", as well as Melville Herskovits' "cattle complex" helped to influence ecologists and policy makers about the harm Maasai pastoralists were causing to savannah rangelands. This concept was later proven false by anthropologists but is still deeply ingrained in the minds of ecologists and Tanzanian officials.<sup>[45]</sup> This influenced British colonial policy makers in 1951 to remove all Maasai from the Serengeti National Park and relegate them to areas in and around the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA). The plan for the NCA was to put Maasai interests above all else, but this promise was never met. The spread of HIV was rampant.

Due to an increase in Maasai population, loss of cattle populations to disease, and lack of available rangelands because of new park boundaries and the incursion of settlements and farms by other tribes (this is also the chief reason for the decline in wildlife-habitat loss, with the second being poaching), the Maasai were forced to develop new ways of sustaining themselves. Many Maasai began to cultivate maize and other crops to get by, a practice that was culturally viewed negatively.<sup>[45]</sup> Cultivation was first introduced to the Maasai by displaced WaArusha and WaMeru women who were married to Maasai men; subsequent generations practiced a mixed livelihood. To further complicate their situation, in 1975 the Ngorongoro Conservation Area banned cultivation practices. In order to survive they are forced to participate in Tanzania's monetary economy. They have to sell their animals and traditional

medicines in order to buy food. The ban on cultivation was lifted in 1992 and cultivation has again become an important part of Maasai livelihood. Park boundaries and land privatisation has continued to limit grazing area for the Maasai and have forced them to change considerably.<sup>[46]</sup>



Maasai women repairing a house in Masai Mara (1996)

Over the years, many projects have begun to help Maasai tribal leaders find ways to preserve their traditions while also balancing the education needs of their children for the modern world.<sup>[47]</sup>

The emerging forms of employment among the Maasai people include farming, business (selling of traditional medicine, running of restaurants/shops, buying and selling of minerals, selling milk and milk products by women, embroideries), and wage employment (as security guards/ watchmen, waiters, tourist guides), and others who are engaged in the public and private sectors.<sup>[48]</sup>

Many Maasai have moved away from the nomadic life to positions in commerce and government.<sup>[49]</sup> Yet despite the sophisticated urban lifestyle they may lead, many will happily head homewards dressed in designer clothes, only to emerge from the traditional family homestead wearing a shuka (colourful piece of cloth), cow hide sandals and carrying a wooden club (o-rinka) - at ease with themselves

## Social organization

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The central unit of Maasai society is the age-set. Young boys are sent out with the calves and lambs as soon as they can toddle, but childhood for boys is mostly playtime, with the exception of ritual beatings to test courage and endurance. Girls are responsible for chores such as cooking and milking, skills which they learn from their mothers at an early age.<sup>[50]</sup> Every 15 years or so, a new and individually named generation of Morans or Il-murran (warriors) will be initiated. This involves most boys between 12 and 25, who have reached puberty and are not part of the previous age-set. One rite of passage from boyhood to the status of junior warrior is a circumcision ceremony performed without anaesthetic. In modern times, boys living close to towns with doctors may endure the ceremony in safer conditions, but still without anaesthetic because they must endure the pain that will lead them to manhood. This ritual is typically performed by the elders, who use a sharpened knife and makeshift cattle hide bandages for the procedure. The Maa word for circumcision is emorata.<sup>[51]</sup> The boy must endure the operation in silence. Expressions of pain bring dishonor, albeit temporarily. Any exclamations can cause a mistake in the delicate and tedious process, which can result in lifelong scarring, dysfunction, and pain. The healing process will take 3–4 months, during which urination is painful and nearly impossible at times, and boys must remain in black clothes for a period of 4–8 months.<sup>[52]</sup>

During this period, the newly circumcised young men will live in a "manyatta", a "village" built by their mothers. The manyatta has no encircling barricade for protection, emphasizing the warrior role of protecting the community. No inner kraal is built, since warriors neither own cattle nor undertake stock duties. Further rites of passage are required before achieving the status of senior warrior, culminating in the eunoto ceremony, the "coming of age".<sup>[53]</sup>

When a new generation of warriors is initiated, the existing Il-murran will graduate to become junior elders, who are responsible for political decisions until they in turn become senior elders.<sup>[54][55]</sup> This graduation from warrior to junior elder takes place at a large gathering known as Eunoto. The long hair of the former warriors is shaved off; elders must wear their hair short. Warriors are not allowed to have sexual relations with circumcised women, though they may have girlfriends who are uncircumcised girls. At Eunoto, the warriors who managed to abide by this rule are specially recognized.<sup>[56]</sup>

The warriors spend most of their time now on walkabouts throughout Maasai lands, beyond the confines of their sectional boundaries. They are also much more involved in cattle trading than they used to be, developing and improving basic stock through trades and bartering rather than stealing as in the past.<sup>[57][58]</sup>

One myth about the Maasai is that each young man is supposed to kill a lion before he is circumcised. Lion hunting was an activity of the past, but it has been banned in Southeast Africa – yet lions are still hunted when they maul Maasai livestock,<sup>[59]</sup> and young warriors who engage in traditional lion killing do not face significant consequences.<sup>[60]</sup> Increasing concern regarding lion populations has given rise to at least one program which promotes accepting compensation when a lion kills livestock, rather than hunting and killing the predator.<sup>[61]</sup> Nevertheless, killing a lion gives one great value and celebrity status in the community.

Young women also undergo excision ("female circumcision", "female genital mutilation," "emorata") as part of an elaborate rite of passage ritual called "Emuratara," the ceremony that initiates young Maasai girls into adulthood through ritual circumcision and then into early arranged marriages.<sup>[62]</sup> The Maasai believe that female circumcision is necessary and Maasai men may reject any woman who has not undergone it as either not marriageable or worthy of a much-reduced bride price. In Eastern Africa, uncircumcised women, even those highly educated members of parliament like Linah Kilimo, can be accused of not being mature enough to be

taken seriously.<sup>[63]</sup> To others the practice of female circumcision is known as female genital mutilation, and draws a great deal of criticism from both abroad and many women who have undergone it, such as Maasai activist Agnes Pareyio. It has recently been replaced in some instances by a "cutting with words" ceremony involving singing and dancing in place of the mutilation. However, the practice remains deeply ingrained and valued by the culture. The Maa word for circumcision, "emorata," is used for both female and male genital mutilation. Female genital cutting is illegal in both Kenya and Tanzania.<sup>[64]</sup> These circumcisions are usually performed by an invited 'practitioner' who is often not Maasai, usually from a Dorobo group. The knives and blades which make the cut are fashioned by blacksmiths, il-kunono, who make their weapons for the Maasai who do not make their own:(knives, short swords (ol alem or simi or seme), spears, etc.). Similarly to the young men, women who will be circumcised wear dark clothing, paint their faces with markings, and then cover their faces on completion of the ceremony.<sup>[65]</sup>

Married women who become pregnant are excused from all heavy work such as milking and gathering firewood.<sup>[66]</sup> Sexual relations are also banned and there are specific rules applied to pregnant women.



Maasai school in Tanzania

The Maasai are traditionally polygynous; this is thought to be a long-standing and practical adaptation to high infant and warrior mortality rates. Polyandry is also practiced. However, today this practice is usually abandoned. A woman marries not just her husband but the entire age group. Men are expected to give up their bed to a visiting age-mate guest; however, today this practice is usually abandoned. The woman decides strictly on her own if she will join the visiting male. Any child which may result is the husband's child and his descendant in the patrilineal order of Maasai society. "Kitala", a kind of divorce or refuge, is possible in the house of a wife's father, usually for gross mistreatment of the wife. Repayment of the bride price, custody of children, etc., are mutually agreed upon

## MAORI

The **Māori** (/ˈmaʊri/; Māori pronunciation: [ˈmaːɔɾi] listen<sup>[6]</sup>) are the indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand. Māori originated with settlers from eastern Polynesia, who arrived in New Zealand in several waves of *waka* (canoe) voyages roughly between 1320 and 1350.<sup>[7]</sup> Over several centuries in isolation, these settlers developed their own distinctive culture, whose language, mythology, crafts and performing arts evolved independently from other eastern Polynesian cultures.

The arrival of Europeans in New Zealand, starting in the 17th century, brought enormous changes to the Māori way of life. Māori people gradually adopted many aspects of Western society and culture. Initial relations between Māori and Europeans were largely amicable, and with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, the two cultures coexisted. Rising tensions over disputed land sales led to conflict in the 1860s, and massive land confiscations. Social upheaval, and epidemics of introduced disease took a devastating toll on the Māori population, which fell dramatically. By the start of the 20th century, the Māori population had begun to recover, and efforts have been made to increase their standing in wider New Zealand society and achieve social justice.

Traditional Māori culture has thereby enjoyed a significant revival, which was further bolstered by a Māori protest movement that emerged in the 1960s. However, disproportionate numbers of Māori face significant economic and social obstacles, and generally have lower life expectancies and incomes compared with other New Zealand ethnic groups. They suffer higher levels of crime, health problems, and educational under-achievement. A number of socioeconomic initiatives have been instigated with the aim of "closing the gap" between Māori and other New Zealanders. Political and economic redress for historical grievances is also ongoing (see Treaty of Waitangi claims and settlements).

In the 2018 census, there were 775,836 people in New Zealand identifying as Māori, making up 16.5 per cent of the national population. They are the second-largest ethnic group in New Zealand, after European New Zealanders ("*Pākehā*"). In addition, more than 140,000 Māori live in Australia. The Māori language is spoken to some extent by about a fifth of all Māori, representing 3 per cent of the total population. Māori are active in all spheres of New Zealand culture and society, with independent representation in areas such as media, politics and sport.

## Etymology

In the Māori language, the word *māori* means "normal", "natural" or "ordinary". In legends and oral traditions, the word distinguished ordinary mortal human beings—*tāngata māori*—from deities and spirits (*wairua*).<sup>[8][9]</sup> Likewise, *wai māori* denotes "fresh water", as

opposed to salt water. There are cognate words in most Polynesian languages,<sup>[9]</sup> all deriving from Proto-Polynesian *\*ma(a)qoli*, which has the reconstructed meaning "true, real, genuine"

## Naming and self-naming

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Early visitors from Europe to New Zealand generally referred to the indigenous inhabitants as "New Zealanders" or as "natives".<sup>[12]</sup> The Māori used the term *Māori* to describe themselves in a pan-tribal sense.<sup>[1]</sup> Māori people often use the term *tangata whenua* (literally, "people of the land") to identify in a way that expresses their relationship with a particular area of land; a tribe may be the *tangata whenua* in one area, but not in another.<sup>[13]</sup> The term can also refer to the Māori people as a whole in relation to New Zealand (*Aotearoa*) as a whole.

Who is considered Māori has not always been clear from a Pākehā perspective. For electoral purposes before 1974, the government required documented ancestry to determine the status of "a Māori person" and only those with at least 50% Māori ancestry were allowed to choose which seats they wished to vote in. The Māori Affairs Amendment Act 1974 changed this, allowing individuals to self-identify as to their cultural identity. Similarly, until 1986 the census required at least 50 per cent Māori 'blood' to claim Māori affiliation. Currently in all contexts authorities generally require some documentation of ancestry or continuing cultural connection (such as acceptance by others as being of the people); but no minimum "blood" requirement.

## History

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### Origins from Polynesia

The Māori originated from settlers who migrated to New Zealand from eastern Polynesia.<sup>[15]</sup> Polynesian people settled a large area encompassing Samoa, Tahiti, Hawaii, Easter Island (*Rapa Nui*) – and finally New Zealand.<sup>[16]</sup>

There may have been some exploration and settlement before eruption of Mount Tarawera in about 1315, based on finds of bones from Polynesian rats and rat-gnawed shells,<sup>[17]</sup> and evidence of widespread forest fires in the decade or so earlier;<sup>[18][19]</sup> but the most recent evidence points to the main settlement occurring as a planned mass migration somewhere between 1320 and 1350.<sup>[20]</sup>

This broadly aligns with analyses from Māori oral traditions, which describe the arrival of ancestors in a number of large ocean-going canoes (*waka*) in around 1350.

### Early history

The earliest period of Māori settlement, known as the "Archaic", "Moahunter" or "Colonisation" period, dates from c. 1300 to c. 1500. The early Māori diet included an abundance of moa and other large birds and fur seals that had never been hunted before. This Archaic period is known for its distinctive "reel necklaces",<sup>[23]</sup> and also remarkable for the lack of weapons and fortifications typical of the later "Classic" Māori.<sup>[24]</sup> The best-known and most extensively studied Archaic site, at Wairau Bar in the South Island,<sup>[25][26]</sup> shows evidence of occupation from early-13th century to the early-15th century.<sup>[27]</sup> It is the only known New Zealand archaeological site containing the bones of people who were born elsewhere.<sup>[27]</sup>



Model of a *pā* (hillfort) built on a headland. *Pā* proliferated as competition and warfare increased among a growing population.

Factors that operated in the transition to the Classic period (the culture at the time of European contact) include a significantly cooler period from 1500,<sup>[28]</sup> and the extinction of the moa and of other food species.<sup>[29][30][31][32][33]</sup>

The Classic period is characterised by finely-made *pounamu* (greenstone) weapons and ornaments; elaborately carved war canoes and *whareniui* (meeting houses).<sup>[34]</sup> A fierce warrior culture included hillforts known as *pā*<sup>[35]</sup> and cannibalism.<sup>[36][37][38]</sup>

Around the year 1500 a group of Māori migrated east to the Chatham Islands and developed into a people known as the Moriori,<sup>[39]</sup> with pacifism a key part of their culture

## Demographics

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In the 2013 census, 598,605 people identified as being part of the Māori ethnic group, accounting for 14.9 per cent of the New Zealand population, while 668,724 people (17.5 per cent) claimed Māori descent.<sup>[73]</sup> Of those identifying as Māori, 278,199 people

identified as of sole Māori ethnicity while 260,229 identified as of both European and Māori ethnicity, due to the high rate of intermarriage between the two cultures.<sup>[74]</sup> Under the Māori Affairs Amendment Act 1974, a Māori is defined as "a person of the Māori race of New Zealand; and includes any descendant of such a person".<sup>[75]</sup>

According to the 2013 census, the largest *iwi* by population is Ngāpuhi (125,601), followed by Ngāti Porou (71,049), Ngāi Tahu (54,819) and Waikato (40,083). However, over 110,000 people of Māori descent could not identify their *iwi*.<sup>[73]</sup> Outside of New Zealand, a large Māori population exists in Australia, estimated at 155,000 in 2011.<sup>[76]</sup> In 2007 the Māori Party suggested a special seat should be created in the New Zealand parliament representing Māori in Australia.<sup>[77]</sup> Smaller communities also exist in the United Kingdom (approx. 8,000), the United States (up to 3,500) and Canada (approx. 1,000)

## Culture

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### Traditional culture

Julius von Haast incorrectly interpreted the earliest archaeological remains as belonging to a pre-Māori Paleolithic people; later researchers, notably Percy Smith, magnified such theories into an elaborate scenario with a series of sharply-defined cultural stages which had Māori arriving in a Great Fleet in 1350 and replacing the so-called "moa-hunter" culture with a "classic Māori" culture based on horticulture.<sup>[80]</sup> However, the archaeological record indicates a gradual evolution of culture.<sup>[81]</sup> In the course of a few centuries, the growing population led to competition for resources and an increase in warfare and an increased frequency of fortified pā. Various systems also arose aimed to conserve resources; most of these, such as *tapu* and *rāhui*, used religious or supernatural threats to discourage people from taking species at particular seasons or from specified areas.

Warfare between tribes was common, and Māori would sometimes eat their conquered enemies.<sup>[82]</sup> Performing arts such as the haka developed from their Polynesian roots, as did carving and weaving. Regional dialects arose, with differences in vocabulary and in the pronunciation of some words but the language retained enough similarities to other Eastern Polynesian languages for Tupaia, the Tahitian navigator on James Cook's first voyage in the region to act as an interpreter between Māori and the crew of the *Endeavour*.

### Belief and religion

Traditional Māori beliefs have their origins in Polynesian culture. Many stories from Māori mythology are analogous with stories across the Pacific Ocean. Polynesian concepts such as *tapu* (sacred), *noa* (non-sacred), *mana* (authority/prestige) and *wairua* (spirit) governed everyday Māori living. These practices remained until the arrival of Europeans, when much of Māori religion and mythology was supplanted by Christianity. Today, Māori "tend to be followers of Presbyterianism, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), or Māori Christian groups such as Rātana and Ringatū",<sup>[84]</sup> but with Catholic, Anglican and Methodist groupings also prominent.<sup>[85][86]</sup> Islam is estimated as the fastest growing religion among Māori,<sup>[87]</sup> yet Māori Muslims constitute a very small proportion of Māori.

At the 2013 New Zealand census, 8.8 per cent of Māori were affiliated with Māori Christian denominations and 39.6 per cent with other Christian denominations; 46.3 per cent of Māori claimed no religion. Proportions of Christian and irreligious Māori are comparable with European New Zealanders.<sup>[88]</sup>

### Performing arts

*Kapa haka* (literally "*haka* team") is a traditional Māori performance art, encompassing many forms, that is still popular today. It includes *haka* (posture dance), *poi* (dance accompanied by song and rhythmic movements of the *poi*, a light ball on a string), *waiata-ā-ringa* (action songs) and *waiata koroua* (traditional chants). From the early 20th century *kapa haka* concert parties began touring overseas.

Since 1972 there has been a regular competition, the Te Matatini National Festival, organised by the Aotearoa Traditional Māori Performing Arts Society. Māori from different regions send representative groups to compete in the biennial competition. There are also kapa haka groups in schools, tertiary institutions and workplaces. It is also performed at tourist venues across the country.<sup>[89][90]</sup>

### Literature and media

Like other cultures, oral folklore was used by Māori to preserve their stories and beliefs across many centuries. In the 19th century, European-style literacy was brought to the Māori, which led to Māori history documentation in books, novels and later television. Māori language use began to decline in the 20th century with English as the language through which Māori literature became widespread.

Notable Māori novelists include Patricia Grace, Witi Ihimaera and Alan Duff. *Once Were Warriors*, a 1994 film adapted from a 1990 novel of the same name by Alan Duff, brought the plight of some urban Māori to a wide audience. It was the highest-grossing film in New Zealand until 2006,<sup>[91][92]</sup> and received international acclaim, winning several international film prizes.<sup>[93]</sup> While some Māori feared that viewers would consider the violent male characters an accurate portrayal of Māori men, most critics praised it as exposing the raw side of domestic violence.<sup>[94]</sup>

Well-known Māori actors and actresses include Temuera Morrison, Cliff Curtis, Lawrence Makoare, Manu Bennett, and Keisha Castle-Hughes. They appear in films such as *Whale Rider*, *Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith*, *The Matrix*, *King Kong*, *River Queen*, *The Lord of The Rings*, *Rapa Nui*, and others, and famous television series like *Xena: Warrior*

*Princess*, *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, *The Lost World* and *Spartacus: Blood and Sand*. In most cases their roles in Hollywood productions have them portraying ethnic groups other than Māori.

In the 2010s Māori actor-director Taika Waititi rose to global fame with the Marvel Cinematic Universe film *Thor: Ragnarok*, in which he played an alien named Korg,<sup>[95]</sup> and the Academy Award-winning *Jojo Rabbit*,<sup>[96]</sup> in which he played Adolf Hitler as imagined by a ten-year-old Hitler Youth member. Waititi's previous films include *Boy*<sup>[97]</sup> and *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*,<sup>[98]</sup> both of which feature young Māori protagonists.

## Sport

Māori participate fully in New Zealand's sporting culture, and are well-represented in rugby union, rugby league and netball teams at all levels. The New Zealand national rugby union team performs a *haka*, a traditional Māori challenge, before international matches.<sup>[99]</sup> As well as participation in national sports teams, there are Māori rugby union, rugby league and cricket representative teams that play in international competitions.

At the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, 41 of the 199 competitors (20.5 per cent) were of Māori descent in the New Zealand delegation, with the rugby sevens squads alone having 17 Māori competitors (out of 24). There were also three competitors of Māori descent in the Australian delegation.<sup>[100]</sup>

Ki-o-rahi and tapawai are two ball sports of Māori origin. Ki-o-rahi received an unexpected boost when McDonald's chose it to represent New Zealand.<sup>[101]</sup> Waka ama (outrigger canoeing) has also experienced a resurgence of interest in New Zealand since the 1980s.<sup>[102]</sup>

## Language

The Māori language, also known as *te reo Māori* (pronounced [ˈmaːori, te ˈreo ˈmaːori]) or simply *Te Reo* ("the language"), has the status of an official language. Linguists classify it within the Eastern Polynesian languages as being closely related to Cook Islands Māori, Tuamotuan and Tahitian. Before European contact Māori did not have a written language and "important information such as *whakapapa* was memorised and passed down verbally through the generations".<sup>[104]</sup> Māori were familiar with the concept of maps and when interacting with missionaries in 1815 could draw accurate maps of their *rohe* (*iwi* boundaries), onto paper, that were the equal of European maps. Missionaries surmised that Māori had traditionally drawn maps on sand or other natural materials.<sup>[105]</sup>

From about 1890, Māori members of Parliament realised the importance of English literacy to Māori and insisted that all Māori children be taught in English.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Missionaries, who still ran many Māori schools, had been teaching exclusively in Māori but the Māori MPs insisted this should stop. However attendance at school for many Māori was intermittent. In many areas of New Zealand, Māori lost its role as a living community language used by significant numbers of people in the post-war years. In tandem with calls for sovereignty and for the righting of social injustices from the 1970s onwards, New Zealand schools now teach Māori culture and language as an option, and pre-school *kohanga reo* ("language-nests") have started, which teach *tamariki* (young children) exclusively in Māori. These now extend right through secondary schools (*kura tuarua*). Most preschool centres teach basics such as colours, numerals and greetings in Māori songs and chants.<sup>[106]</sup>

Māori Television, a government-funded channel committed to broadcasting primarily in Te Reo, began in March 2004.<sup>[64]</sup> The 1996 census reported 160,000 Māori speakers.<sup>[107]</sup> At the time of the 2013 census 125,352 Māori (21.3 per cent) reported a conversational level of proficiency.<sup>[108]</sup>

## Society

### Historical development

Polynesian settlers in New Zealand developed a distinct society over several hundred years. Social groups were tribal, with no unified society or single Māori identity until after the arrival of Europeans. Nevertheless, common elements could be found in all Māori groups in pre-European New Zealand, including a shared Polynesian heritage, a common basic language, familial associations, traditions of warfare, and similar mythologies and religious beliefs.<sup>[109]</sup>

Most Māori lived in villages, which were inhabited by several *whānau* (extended families) who collectively formed a *hapū* (clan or subtribe). Members of a *hapū* cooperated with food production, gathering resources, raising families and defence. Māori society across New Zealand was broadly stratified into three classes of people: *rangatira*, chiefs and ruling families; *tūtūā*, commoners; and *mōkai*, slaves. *Tohunga* also held special standing in their communities as specialists of revered arts, skills and esoteric knowledge.<sup>[110][111]</sup>

Shared ancestry, intermarriage and trade strengthened relationships between different groups. Many *hapū* with mutually-recognised shared ancestry formed *iwi*, or tribes, which were the largest social unit in Māori society. *Hapū* and *iwi* often united for expeditions to gather food and resources, or in times of conflict. In contrast, warfare developed as an integral part of traditional life, as different groups competed for food and resources, settled personal disputes, and sought to increase their prestige and authority.<sup>[110]</sup>



Māori whānau from Rotorua in the 1880s. Many aspects of Western life and culture, including European clothing and architecture, became incorporated into Māori society during the 19th century.

Early European settlers introduced tools, weapons, clothing and foods to Māori across New Zealand, in exchange for resources, land and labour. Māori began selectively adopting elements of Western society during the 19th century, including European clothing and food, and later Western education, religion and architecture.<sup>[112]</sup> However, as the 19th century wore on, relations between European colonial settlers and different Māori groups became increasingly strained. Tensions led to widespread conflict in the 1860s, and the confiscation of millions of acres of Māori land. Significant amounts of land were also purchased by the colonial government and later through the Native Land Court.

### 20th century

By the start of the 20th century, a greater awareness had emerged of a unified Māori identity, particularly in comparison to Pākehā, who now overwhelmingly outnumbered the Māori as a whole. Māori and Pākehā societies remained largely separate—socially, culturally, economically and geographically—for much of the 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>[113]</sup> The key reason for this was that Māori remained almost exclusively a rural population, whereas increasingly the European population was urban especially after 1900. Nevertheless, Māori groups continued to engage with the government and in legal processes to increase their standing in (and ultimately further their incorporation into) wider New Zealand society.<sup>[114]</sup> The main point of contact with the government were the four Māori Members of Parliament.

Many Māori migrated to larger rural towns and cities during the Depression and post-WWII periods in search of employment, leaving rural communities depleted and disconnecting many urban Māori from their traditional social controls and tribal homelands. Yet while standards of living improved among Māori, they continued to lag behind Pākehā in areas such as health, income, skilled employment and access to higher levels of education. Māori leaders and government policymakers alike struggled to deal with social issues stemming from increased urban migration, including a shortage of housing and jobs, and a rise in urban crime, poverty and health problems.<sup>[115]</sup>

In regards to housing, a 1961 census revealed significant differences in the living conditions of Māori and Europeans. That year, out of all the (unshared) non-Māori private dwellings in New Zealand, 96.8 per cent had a bath or shower, 94.1 per cent a hot water service, 88.7 per cent a flush toilet, 81.6 per cent a refrigerator, and 78.6 per cent an electric washing machine. By contrast, for all (unshared) Māori private dwellings that same year, 76.8 per cent had a bath or shower, 68.9 per cent a hot water service, 55.8 per cent a refrigerator, 54.1 per cent a flush toilet, and 47 per cent an electric washing machine.<sup>[116]</sup>

While the arrival of Europeans had a profound impact on the Māori way of life, many aspects of traditional society have survived into the 21st century. Māori participate fully in all spheres of New Zealand culture and society, leading largely Western lifestyles while also maintaining their own cultural and social customs. The traditional social strata of *rangatira*, *tūtūā* and *mōkai* have all but disappeared from Māori society, while the roles of *tohunga* and *kaumātua* are still present. Traditional kinship ties are also actively maintained, and the *whānau* in particular remains an integral part of Māori life.<sup>[117]</sup>

## ***Marae, hapū* and *iwi***<sup>[edit]</sup>

Whenuakura Marae in Taranaki. *Marae* continue to function as local community centres in modern Māori society.

Māori society at a local level is particularly visible at the *marae*. Formerly the central meeting spaces in traditional villages, *marae* today usually comprise a group of buildings around an open space, that frequently host events such as weddings, funerals, church services and other large gatherings, with traditional protocol and etiquette usually observed. They also serve as the base of one or sometimes several *hapū*.<sup>[118]</sup>

Most Māori affiliate with one or more *iwi* (and *hapū*), based on genealogical descent (*whakapapa*). *Iwi* vary in size, from a few hundred members to over 100,000 in the case of Ngāpuhi. Many people do not live in their traditional tribal regions as a result of urban migration.

*Iwi* are usually governed by *rūnanga* (governing councils or trust boards) which represent the *iwi* in consultations and negotiations with the New Zealand government. *Rūnanga* also manage tribal assets and spearhead health, education, economic and social initiatives to help *iwi* members.

## Socioeconomic challenges

Māori on average have fewer assets than the rest of the population, and run greater risks of many negative economic and social outcomes. Over 50 per cent of Māori live in areas in the three highest deprivation deciles, compared with 24 per cent of the rest of the population.<sup>[119]</sup> Although Māori make up only 14 per cent of the population, they make up almost 50 per cent of the prison population.<sup>[120]</sup>

Māori have higher unemployment-rates than other cultures resident in New Zealand<sup>[121]</sup> Māori have higher numbers of suicides than non-Māori.<sup>[122]</sup> "Only 47 per cent of Māori school-leavers finish school with qualifications higher than NCEA Level One; compared to 74 per cent European; 87 per cent Asian."<sup>[123]</sup> Although New Zealand rates very well globally in the PISA rankings that compare national performance in reading, science and maths, "once you disaggregate the PISA scores, Pakeha students are second in the world and Māori are 34th."<sup>[124]</sup> Māori suffer more health problems, including higher levels of alcohol and drug abuse, smoking and obesity. Less frequent use of healthcare services mean that late diagnosis and treatment intervention lead to higher levels of morbidity and mortality in many manageable conditions, such as cervical cancer,<sup>[125]</sup> diabetes<sup>[126]</sup> per head of population than non-Māori.<sup>[127]</sup> Although Māori life expectancy rates have increased dramatically in the last 50 years, they still have considerably lower life-expectancies compared to New Zealanders of European ancestry: in 2004, Māori males lived 69.0 years vs. non-Māori males 77.2 years; Māori females 73.2 yrs vs. non-Māori females 81.9 years.<sup>[128]</sup> This gap had narrowed by 2013: 72.8 years for men and 76.5 years for women, compared to 80.2 years for non-Māori men and 83.7 years for non-Māori women.<sup>[129]</sup> Also, a recent study by the New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse showed that Māori women and children are more likely to experience domestic violence than any other ethnic group.<sup>[130]</sup>