

SOCIAL CONNECTION

Why is this important?

Social connection refers to people's sense of belonging in the community. Social trust, co-operation and participation in community affairs are important to the quality of life of all residents. Research has shown a positive relationship between social connection and various social outcomes including health, safety and education.

Social connection indicators

- Unpaid work outside the home.
- Telephone and internet access in the home.
- Perceptions of community spirit.
- Trust in strangers.
- Acceptance of cultural diversity.
- Maori language speakers

How are we doing



About twenty percent of Rotorua residents undertake help or voluntary work through an organisation, group or marae.

The proportion of households in the Rotorua District with access to a telephone was 96.7% in 2006. This includes cell phones that are in the home all, or most of the time.

In 2012, 61% of surveyed citizens rated Rotorua's community spirit as good or very good compared with 71% in 2011.

Forty-nine percent of Rotorua residents feel they can trust strangers.

More than half of all surveyed citizens feel cultural diversity makes Rotorua a better place to live.

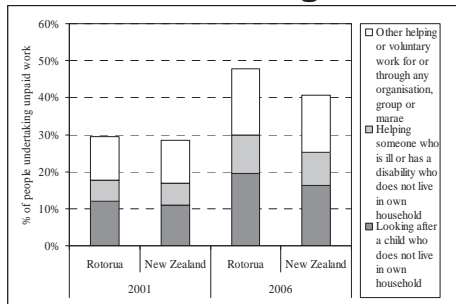
Rotorua has an above average proportion of Maori language speakers when compared to the national average.

Unpaid Work Outside the Home

Why is this important?

Unpaid work makes a significant but often unseen contribution to community wellbeing. Voluntary work is a fundamental aspect of social connection.

How are we doing?



Unpaid work, Rotorua District and New Zealand, 2001 - 2006

Source: Statistics New Zealand/Census

Note: Similar questions from earlier census years are not directly comparable

The 2006 census asked about unpaid activities undertaken over the previous four weeks. The results show that the proportion of Rotorua residents who looked after a child who does not live in their own household increased to 19.5% in 2006, compared to 12.0% in 2001. The proportion of residents who helped someone who was ill or had a disability, and who did not live in their own home also increased in 2006 to 10.3%, compared to 5.7% in 2001. Similarly, the proportion of residents who did other help or voluntary work for, or through an organisation, group or marae increased to 17.9% in 2006 compared to 11.7% in 2001.

Based on the 2001 census results, females were more likely than males to be engaged in unpaid activities:

- 15.3% of Rotorua females looked after a child who lived in another household compared with 8.5% of males,
- 7.3% of females looked after someone ill or with a disability compared with 4.0% of males, and
- 13.2% of females did other help or voluntary work compared with 10.0% of males.

The 2001 census results also show that people of Maori ethnicity were more likely than other ethnic groups to undertake child-minding and other unpaid activities outside the home.

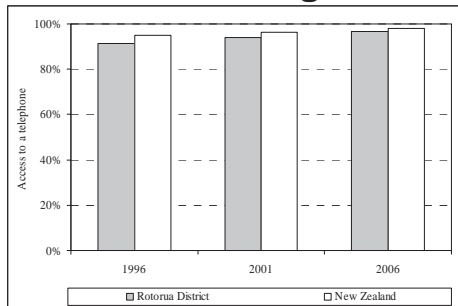
NOTE: NO COMPARABLE 2006 DATA AVAILABLE FOR THIS ITEM.

Telephone and Internet Access in the Home

Why is this important?

Access to a telephone in the home is an indicator of social connection and access to emergency services. Access to telecommunications is likely to become increasingly important in the future due to greater provision of services and information through the internet, and call centres.

How are we doing?



Access to a telephone in the home, Rotorua District and New Zealand, 1996-2006

Source: Statistics New Zealand/Census

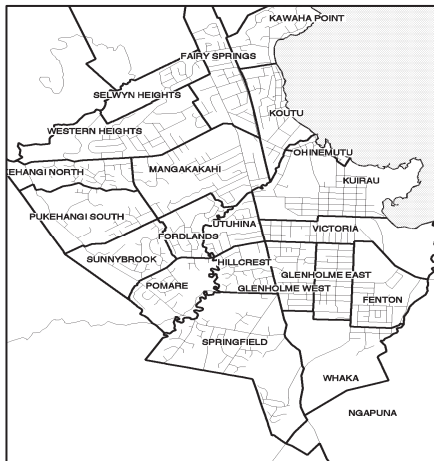
Note: Includes cell phones that are in the home all or most of the time

The proportion of households in the Rotorua District with a telephone increased to 96.7% in 2006 from 94.0% in 2001. The comparable 2006 figure for New Zealand as a whole was 97.9%.

The 2006 census results also show that 54% of households in the Rotorua District have internet access compared with 60.5% for all of New Zealand.

In the Rotorua District 3.3% of households still have no telecommunications system of any kind compared with 2% for New Zealand as a whole. Suburbs and rural communities with the highest proportions of dwellings with no access to telecommunications systems are:

- Kaingaroa Forest (where 16.7% or 21 dwellings have no access to a telecommunications system of any kind).
- Fordlands (12.6% or 51).
- Kuirau (9.4% or 33).
- Ngapuna (7.3% or 12).
- Victoria (6.5% or 48).



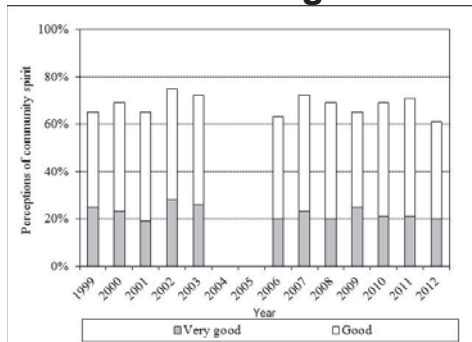
Statistics New Zealand Area Units, Rotorua District Council

Perceptions of Community Spirit

Why is this important?

Community spirit is an important measure of social connection. It contributes to community safety and a general sense of well-being. The level of community spirit affects people's perceptions of Rotorua as a place to live, work and visit. The annual Community Satisfaction survey asks a sample of 400 Rotorua residents to rate their perceptions of community spirit. For the purpose of the survey, community spirit is defined as a sense of belonging or togetherness, a pride in the area, and a good atmosphere among the people.

How are we doing?



Ratings of community spirit, Rotorua District, 1999-2012

Source: NRB Communitrak Surveys and Rotorua District Council Community Satisfaction Survey

Note: Comparable 2004 and 2005 data are not available

Community spirit in the Rotorua District reached a high point of 75% in 2002. In the 2012 survey 61% of respondents rated Rotorua's community spirit as 'good' or 'very good', compared with 72% in 2007. This figure is below both the Peer Group Average (80%) and slightly below the National Average (77%) in 2011.¹⁰

There are no notable differences between areas and between socio-economic groups in terms of those residents who rate the community spirit of Rotorua District as 'very good/good'. However, it appears that the following groups are slightly more likely to feel this way...

- South Area residents,
- Ratepayers.

In 2012, approximately 12% of Rotorua respondents said community spirit was 'poor', or 'not very good', compared to 9 in 2011. The percent saying 'poor', or 'not very good' in 2012, is higher than the comparable figure for New Zealand overall (6%) in 2011.

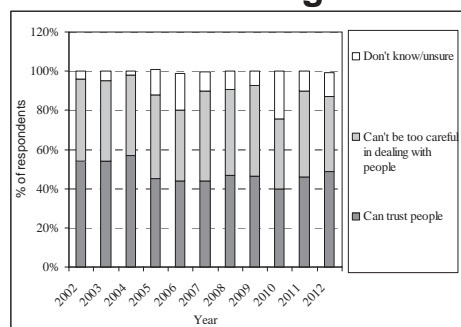
¹⁰ For Rotorua District Council, Peer Group of similar Local Authorities are those comprising a provincial city or town (s), together with a rural component. Examples in this Peer Group include Gisborne District Council, Taupo District Council and Waikato District Council.

Trust in Strangers

Why is this important?

The level of trust in the community is a key indicator of social connection. Trust in strangers is also an indirect measure of community safety.

How are we doing?



Trust in Strangers, Rotorua District, 2002-2012

Source: NRB Communitrak Survey and Rotorua District Perceptions of Safety Survey

A question in the annual Perceptions of Safety Survey for the Rotorua District asks 'In general, do you feel you can trust people or you can't be too careful?' Latest 2012 results show that trust in strangers has slightly gone up to 49% from 46% in 2011, and 44% in 2007. The number of people who believe that one can't be too careful in dealing with people has decreased to 38% in 2012, compared with 44% in 2011. The number of people who could not make a distinction in their trust of other people (ie, 50/50) slightly increased to 11% in 2012 compared with 9% in 2011.

National figures show that most people 'trust a little'. A question in the World Values Survey 2005 asks 'I now want to ask you how much you trust various groups of people...: Trust completely, Trust a little, Not trust very much, Not trust at all...?' Figures from the survey show that:

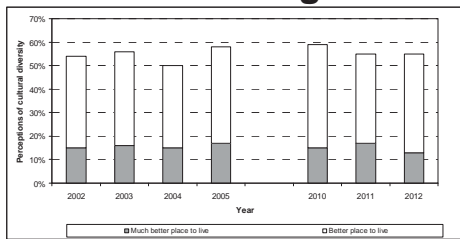
- 13.5% New Zealanders believe they can trust completely
- 71.7% trust a little
- 12.5% do not trust very much
- 2.2 do not trust at all.

Acceptance of Cultural Diversity

Why is this important?

The community’s attitude towards cultural diversity is a key indicator of social cohesion. A question in the annual Rotorua NRB survey asks: “Given the increase in the number of people in Rotorua with different lifestyles and from a variety of countries and cultures, do you think this is a good thing or a bad thing?”

How are we doing?



Perceptions of cultural diversity, Rotorua District, 2002-2005 and 2010-2012

Source: NRB Communitrak Survey and RDC Community Satisfaction Survey

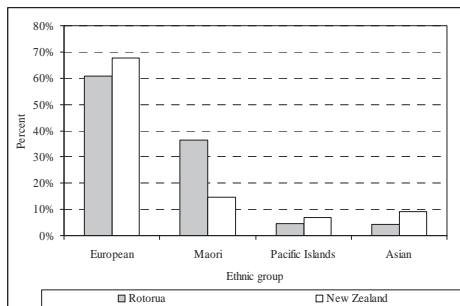
Note: Comparable 2006 - 2009 data are not available

The 2012 Community Satisfaction Survey results show that 55% of residents feel the diversity of cultures and lifestyles in the district, makes it a ‘better,’ or ‘much better’ place to live, this is on par with the 2011 result. This figure remains up from 50% in 2004. Ratepayers are more likely to feel that this diversity makes Rotorua District a ‘much better/better place to live’, than non-ratepayers.

The percent saying ‘much better/better place to live’ (55%) is on par with the Peer Group Average (51% in 2012) and slightly above the National Average (50% in 2012).

These results for Rotorua are slightly below those from surveys of Christchurch City and Auckland City residents in 2010, with 62% respectively saying diversity makes it a ‘better’, or ‘much better’ place to live.

NOTE: NO COMPARABLE 2006 - 2009 DATA AVAILABLE FOR THIS ITEM.



Ethnic groups, Rotorua District and New Zealand, 2006

Source: Statistics New Zealand/Census

“Ethnicity” is a label used to distinguish different groups within the population on the basis of ancestry, language, cultural values, customs, and other common features.

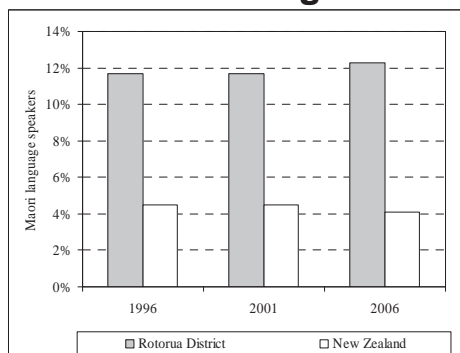
In 2006, a total of 38,076 Rotorua residents (60.9%) said they belong to the European Ethnic Group compared to 67.6% for New Zealand as a whole. A distinguishing feature of the Rotorua District is the high proportion of Maori residents. Overall, 36.4% of the district population identified as Maori in 2006 (22,734 residents) compared to 14.6% for New Zealand as a whole. In contrast, the Rotorua District is home to a smaller proportion of Pacific Island people (4.5%) and Asian people (4.4%) compared to the whole of New Zealand (6.9% and 9.2% respectively). Note that the ethnicity item in the Census questionnaire allows for multiple responses, so these figures sum to more than 100%.

Maori Language Speakers

Why is this important?

Te Reo is a central component of Maori culture and New Zealand's overall cultural heritage. Te Reo is particularly important in the Rotorua District due to the relatively high proportion of Maori residents, especially in younger age groups. The proportion of residents who speak Maori is an important indicator of identity and social participation.

How are we doing?



Maori language speakers, Rotorua District and New Zealand, 1996-2006

Source: Statistics New Zealand/Census

Census results show that the Rotorua District has an above average proportion of Maori language speakers. 2006 Census results show an increase in the number of Maori language speakers in Rotorua from 11.7% (7,032 people) in 2001 to 12.3% (7,587 people) in 2006. This is substantially higher than the national average of 4.1%, and reflects the importance placed on Te Reo.

Notably, the number of Rotorua residents who speak *only* Maori fell from 636 in 1996 to 333 in 2001. A similar trend occurred at the national level during this period, reflecting the passing of members of a generation of older Maori.

Further analysis of Maori language speakers shows that at the national level, an increasing number of young people speak Maori, compared to older people. This will result in an increased overall number of Maori language speakers in future years.