



29 JUL 2016

On 13 June 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Breakdown of benefit numbers for European Ethnic Group and Asian ethnic group from 2003 onwards.*

As communicated to you on 15 June 2016 the Ministry of Social Development is able to provide you with an 'Other Ethnicity' category breakdown from the benefit factsheets which includes Chinese, Indian, Other European and Other. However, the Ministry is unable to provide 'European' and 'Asian' as the Ministry does not report on these groups specifically.

To meet the public interest in benefit uptake, the Ministry publishes quarterly national and regional benefit factsheets on its website which provide information on all working age people receiving main benefits, as well as an overall view of recent trends. This information can be accessed on the Ministry's website www.msdc.govt.nz.

Please find enclosed a table in response to your request. The table provides information on the number of working age people in receipt of a main benefit, broken down by ethnic group, as at the end of March 2003 to the end of March 2016.

Please note that Asian includes clients who identify themselves as Chinese or Indian. There may be clients who identify themselves as other Asian ethnicities, which will be included under 'Other' and not the Asian ethnic group.

It is not mandatory for clients to identify their ethnicity. The group 'Other' includes those who have not identified an ethnicity and those where no ethnicity is recorded. It is important to note that the Ministry is only able to report on the primary ethnicity of Work and Income clients which may not be their only ethnicity.

I hope you find this information helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman
PO Box 10-152
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely

Ruth Bound
Deputy Chief Executive

Number of working-age recipients of main benefits broken down by ethnicity as at the end of March 2003 to March 2016

Year as at end of March	Ethnicity												Total
	Chinese	Indian	NZ European	Other European	NZ Maori	Cook Islands Maori	Niuean	Samoaan	Tokelauan	Tongan	Unspecified	Other	
2003	2,157	2,993	158,765	14,049	100,995	6,221	1,702	12,662	634	3,666	4,072	26,450	334,366
2004	2,284	2,430	146,125	13,438	95,421	5,793	1,572	11,802	601	3,455	4,647	25,139	312,707
2005	2,217	2,244	135,997	12,103	89,963	5,410	1,451	10,931	559	3,275	4,675	23,133	291,958
2006	2,382	2,363	131,191	11,397	88,386	5,254	1,395	10,699	577	3,327	4,957	21,656	283,584
2007	2,282	2,275	122,341	10,685	82,642	4,938	1,348	10,047	549	3,181	4,988	20,471	265,747
2008	2,328	2,219	116,397	10,070	80,472	4,788	1,320	9,687	511	3,187	5,260	19,515	255,754
2009	2,996	2,757	129,458	11,376	91,187	5,620	1,500	11,595	581	3,950	6,901	21,038	288,959
2010	3,503	3,279	143,853	12,760	103,199	6,500	1,715	13,764	611	4,743	8,275	22,612	324,814
2011	3,631	3,335	145,962	13,314	107,607	6,515	1,662	13,497	656	4,671	8,210	22,469	331,529
2012	3,674	3,449	139,920	13,254	107,094	6,320	1,606	13,101	580	4,602	7,456	21,895	322,951
2013	3,438	3,336	133,469	12,626	104,405	6,155	1,515	12,261	571	4,412	6,839	21,119	310,146
2014	3,387	3,193	125,999	12,150	100,841	5,860	1,426	11,310	517	4,126	6,390	20,121	295,320
2015	3,169	3,089	120,076	11,955	98,348	5,687	1,326	10,680	520	3,918	6,089	19,403	284,260
2016	3,637	3,010	112,661	12,982	98,441	6,017	1,817	10,258	768	4,064	6,201	20,035	279,891

Note:

- This table includes working age only (18 to 64 years).
- Main Benefits exclude NZ Superannuation, Veteran's Pension, Non-Beneficiary assistance, Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit.
- The ethnicity classification used to construct this table does not necessarily align with the current Statistics New Zealand classification of ethnicity. Ethnicity classification details recorded in the Ministry's systems have been gathered under a variety of classification schemes as clients came into contact with the Ministry.