



10 August 2023

Tēnā koe

On 20 July 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Data on the number of people aged 16 to 24 who have received a benefit at some point in these age groups, since 2016

Data on the number of people aged 16 to 24 who have received a benefit for more than half the years they were in this age group, since 2016

Data on the number of people aged 16 to 24 who have received a benefit for all of the years they were in this age group, since 2016

You asked for all three datasets to be broken down by the following:

*Year
Age
Ethnicity
Region
Type of benefit*

On 26 July 2023, the Ministry contacted you via phone to let you know that we could not provide you with the information the way you had asked for it, as we do not report on the amount of time a client has been part of an age group. Instead, you agreed to the proposed refinement to include continuous duration as a replacement category.

Please find attached **Appendix One**, containing:

- Table One: Number of clients aged 16-24 receiving a main benefit as at the end of each quarter from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2023, broken down by age group
- Table Two: Number of clients aged 16-24 receiving a main benefit as at the end of each quarter from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2023, broken down by ethnicity

- Table Three: Number of clients aged 16-24 receiving a main benefit as at the end of each quarter from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2023, broken down by region
- Table Four: Number of clients aged 16-24 receiving a main benefit as at the end of each quarter from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2023, broken down by benefit type
- Table Five: Number of clients aged 16-24 receiving a main benefit as at the end of each quarter from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2023, broken down by continuous duration

From December 2021, we introduced a new reporting approach to ethnicity called 'total response'. Making this change means we recognise all aspects of someone's ethnicity and allows us to represent the full diversity of communities, whānau, and people in Aotearoa. This reflects our clients more accurately, aligns our approach with Statistics NZ's reporting, and reflects best practice.

The total response ethnicity percentages are calculated by dividing the number of people who identify with each ethnic group by the total unique number of people with a reported ethnicity (this excludes people who have not specified an ethnicity). Total response ethnicity means people can appear more than once in our reporting, so ethnic group totals will add to more than 100 percent. The number of people receiving a benefit each quarter has not changed, but the way we represent them has.

Ethnicity is about people's identity and sense of belonging. Ethnicity measures cultural affiliation, rather than race, ancestry, nationality, or citizenship. Ethnicity is self-perceived and people can identify with more than one ethnic group. Previously, we reported ethnicity using an approach called 'prioritised ethnicity'. Prioritised ethnicity meant that we allocated people to a single ethnic group in an order of priority. The priority previously used by MSD was Māori, Pacific Peoples, Other, and NZ European. For more information please see: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/tools/how-we-report-ethnicity.html

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by

publishing this letter and attachments on the Ministry's website. Your personal details will be deleted, and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

Bridget Saunders

Bridget Saunders
**Manager Issue Resolution
Service Delivery**