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New Zealanders' engagement with Matariki

December 2023



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Background and method

Background



This research report provides **Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage** with a robust and representative understanding of the nation's attitudes, perceptions, and engagement with Matariki, the Māori New Year and the public holiday. Many of the questions in the survey were built on the prior Cultural Participation in 2022* Research, commissioned by Manatū Taonga.

The objectives of the 2023 research are to provide a benchmark understanding of:

- Awareness and knowledge of Matariki
- Perceived relevance and what Matariki means to New Zealanders
- Attitudes towards Matariki
- If and how New Zealanders are celebrating Matariki including public holiday activities
- The barriers to participation

Note that the Matariki data reported in the Cultural Participation 2022 report is not directly comparable to the data in this report. This is due to a different make up of survey sample and revised question phrasing for many of the questions. Therefore 2022 data is not included in this report. However, a summary of similarities and differences to the Cultural Participation 2022 survey is found below:

- Familiarity with Matariki remains the same (87% have at least a basic understanding in 2022 and 2023)
- Participation in Matariki is up on 2022; in 2023, 60% of New Zealanders did something to celebrate Matariki (compared to 51% in 2022)
- Understanding of Matariki and why we celebrate is similar between years (57% in 2023, compared to 59% in 2022)
- Personal relevance of Matariki is fairly similar between years (39% in 2023, compared to 37% in 2022)
- Having ideas about how to celebrate Matariki is slightly higher (53% in 2023, compared to 49% in 2022)
- No difference in the number who want to do more to celebrate Matariki next year (46% in 2023, compared to 48% in 2022).

Method

SAMPLE

We conducted an online survey of 1,653 New Zealanders aged 18 years and over. The maximum margin of error on a sample of this size is +/-2.4%.

We over-sampled Māori, Pacific peoples and Asian peoples to enable more detailed subgroup analysis for these groups.

For more details on the sample composition please refer to the Appendix.

METHOD

Online survey using Kantar's consumer panel.

All surveys took place between the 9th and 19th October 2023.

Participants were given the option of completing the survey in English or te reo Māori. In total 14 respondents completed the survey in te reo.

WEIGHTING

To ensure the sample profile is representative of all New Zealanders aged 18 plus, a weight was created for each respondent. Weighting targets were set for four sets of variables: ethnicity, region, household income within household size, and age within gender.

The weighting corrects for the over-sampling of Māori, Pacific peoples and Asian New Zealanders.

Note, all subgroup differences noted in the report are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.



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Key insights



Key Insights

Most New Zealanders (87%) are aware of Matariki and more than half (57%) understand what it is and why we celebrate it in Aotearoa New Zealand.

For many New Zealanders, Matariki is about connection and national identity:

- Nearly 3 in 4 New Zealanders (70%) think Matariki is a chance to celebrate the culture, people, and stories of Aotearoa New Zealand
- 2 in 3 (66%) think Matariki is for all New Zealanders
- 72% see it as an opportunity to connect with Māori culture
- 68% think it brings people and communities together
- 65% see it as an opportunity for intergenerational story telling and knowledge sharing
- 55% feel Matariki encourages people to do something to connect with the natural environment

6 in 10 New Zealanders celebrated Matariki this year, and while the ways of celebrating varied, getting together with friends and whānau for kai and going outside to view the Matariki star cluster were the most popular activities.

The Matariki public holiday also encouraged various activities over the long weekend for 64% of New Zealanders - from spending time with friends and whānau, going out for a meal or drink, attending an event, festival, or concert (Matariki and non-Matariki specific), to shopping, day trips, and getting away for the long weekend.

There is a sense of momentum behind Matariki; 67% of New Zealanders think it is growing every year and nearly half (46%) want to do more to celebrate next year.

For the 1 in 4 New Zealanders (25%) who do not intend to celebrate Matariki next year, the main reason is a perceived lack of personal or cultural relevance.





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Awareness and knowledge

The majority of New Zealanders have at least a basic understanding of Matariki, however there is opportunity to improve knowledge with only 17% who feel their understanding is good. There is greater understanding of Matariki among Māori. Note, fewer than 2% of respondents who entered the survey said they had never heard of Matariki before. These respondents were screened out of the survey and are not included in the results.

% Awareness of Matariki

Māori are more likely to have a good understanding of Matariki (38%, vs. 14% of non-Māori)



- I've got a good understanding
- I've got a basic idea
- I have seen or heard the name, but I don't know what it's about



Most people (57%) understand why Matariki is celebrated; Māori and Pacific peoples are more likely than average to agree they have a good understanding of what Matariki is and why we celebrate it.

% Understanding about why we celebrate Matariki

The following groups are more likely than average to agree they have a good understanding of what Matariki is and why we celebrate it:

- Māori (78%, vs. 57%)
- Pacific peoples (65%, vs. 57%)

57% Total agreement

15% Total disagreement

I have a good understanding of what Matariki is and why we celebrate it

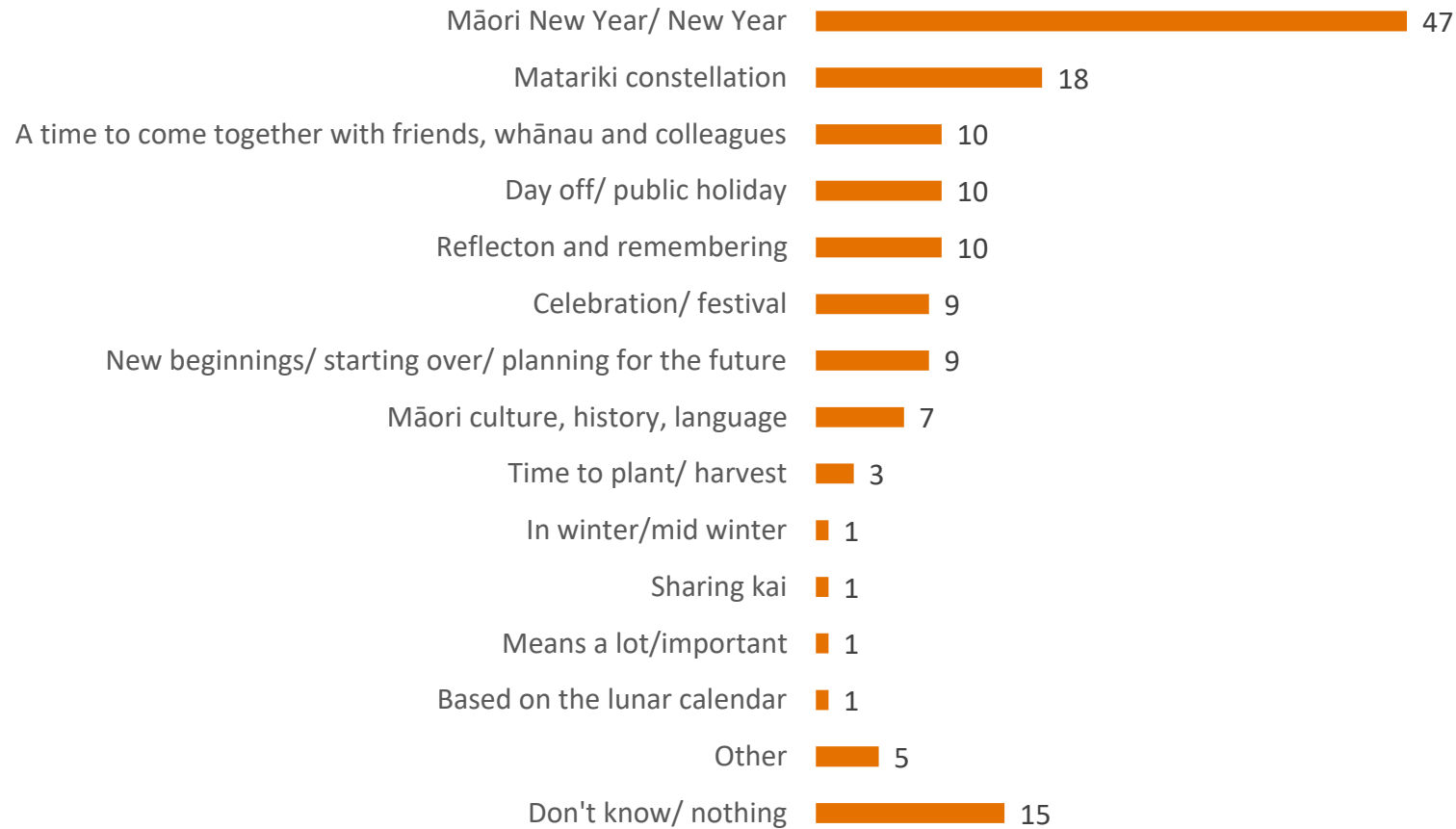


■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Don't know

Nearly half (47%) of New Zealanders who feel they have at least a basic understanding of Matariki associate it with the start of the Māori New Year, and 18% mention the Matariki constellation. Some also mentioned Matariki is a time to reflect and remember, come together with friends, whānau and colleagues or have a day off (each 10%).



% What does Matariki mean to New Zealanders? (unprompted)



Differences by ethnicity

Māori are more likely than average to:

- Think Matariki is a time:
 - For whānau and friends to come together (22%, vs. 10%)
 - For reflection and remembering (22%, vs. 10%)
 - For new beginnings and starting over (22%, vs. 9%)
 - To plant/ harvest (7%, vs. 3%).

Differences by gender

Women are more likely than men to have a personal connection to Matariki.

Proportion who agree Matariki is a time for:

- whānau and friends to come together (15%, vs. 4% of men)
- reflection and remembering (15%, vs. 4% of men)
- new beginnings and starting over (13%, vs. 6% of men).

What Matariki means, in their own words...



“A new start for the Māori year to reflect, rest and acknowledge the past including those we have lost and embrace the future. Good to reconnect with self and others dear to us”
Man, 18-29, Auckland, Māori

“The arising of the Matariki constellation in the morning sky so a marker in time of new beginnings”
Man, 70 plus, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand European

“It’s a celebration of Māori New Year and renewal. Matariki is known as Pleiades to the rest of the world”
Woman, 60-69, Otago / Southland, New Zealand European, Māori

“It is a time to celebrate the Māori New year with family and friends”
Woman, 60-69, Otago / Southland, Indian

“Celebration of the Māori Stars and its relevance to their culture and history”
Man, 60-69, Northland, Other European

“A time to celebrate the Māori New Year, based on the stars in our skies”
Woman, 40-49, Wellington, New Zealand European, Māori

“A group of stars that indicate the Māori new year. It’s a time of celebration of life”
Man, 60-69, Otago / Southland, Māori

“Coming together and celebrating loved ones who have left us and the new ones coming in”
Woman, 30-39, Wellington, Māori, Other European

“A group of stars that indicate the Māori new year. It’s a time of celebration of life”
Man, 50-59, Auckland, Samoan, Niuean

“New Year for the Māori culture, stars in the sky representing Matariki”
Woman, 40-49, Auckland, Niuean

“A way of coming together to give thanks and hopes for the year of harvesting and reproduction”
Woman, 30-39, Tasman / Nelson / Marlborough / West Coast, New Zealand European, Māori, Indian

“Proper acknowledgement of our environment, seasons and place in the world and the recognition of indigenous knowledge”
Woman, 50-59, Wellington, Māori

“Meet up with whanau and being able to view the star cluster and to celebrate a new year and honour the dead, celebrate the present and plan for the future”
Woman, 60-69, Otago / Southland, New Zealand European, Māori

“The star layout for the time of the year that the Māori people call the end and start of the new year”
Man, 50-59, Auckland, New Zealand European

“It’s a time to harvest and prepare for winter, gather as a family to share”
Man, 18-29, Waikato, Tongan

“A time where Māori get to share our culture, a time where we reflect where we have been and where we are going, a time to celebrate being Māori”
Woman, 18-29, Canterbury, New Zealand European

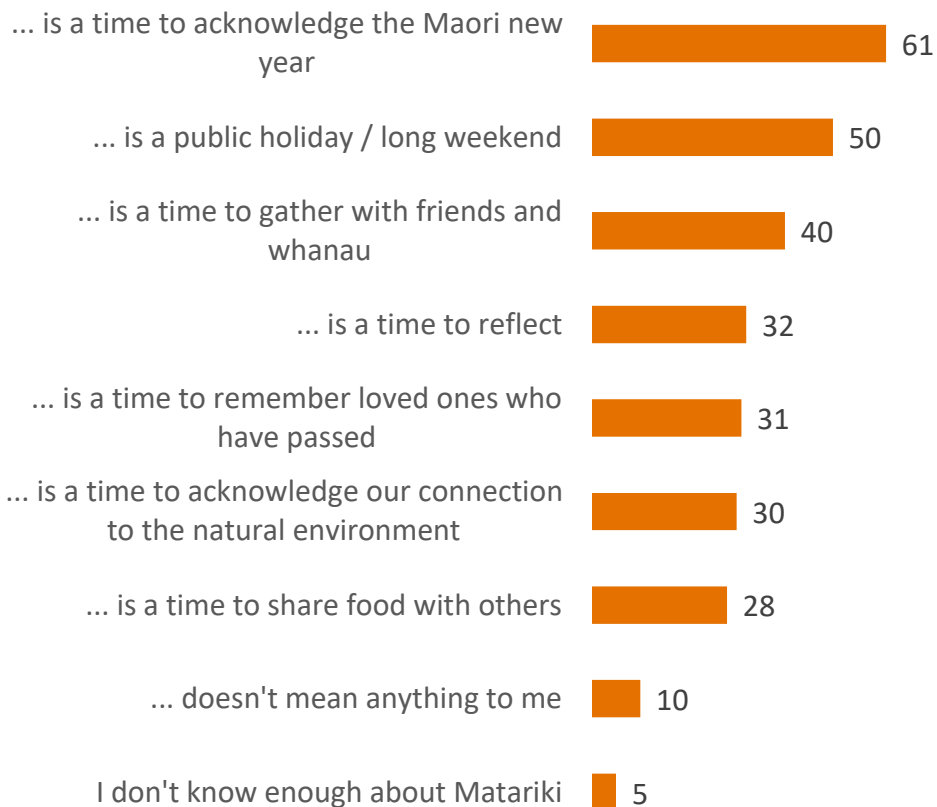
“A Māori cultural event/celebration with regards to a cluster of stars at a certain time of year”
Woman, 50-59, Tasman / Nelson / Marlborough / West Coast, New Zealand European



When prompted, most people have some knowledge about Matariki; 61% think Matariki is a time to acknowledge the Māori New Year, 50% understand it to be a public holiday, and 40% think it is a time to gather with friends and whānau. Some also understand Matariki is about remembrance (31%), connecting to the environment (30%) and sharing kai (28%).

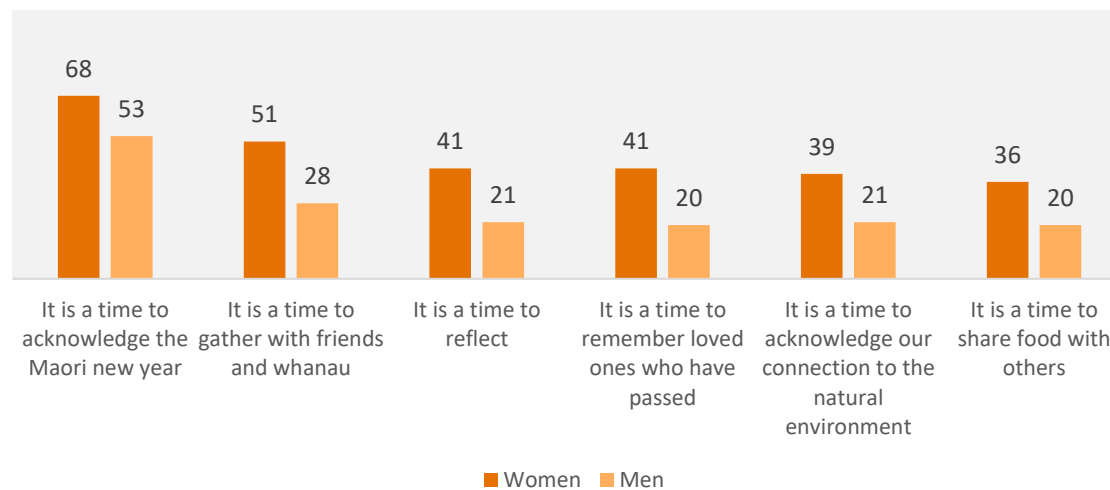
% What do New Zealanders think about Matariki?

Matariki...



Differences by gender

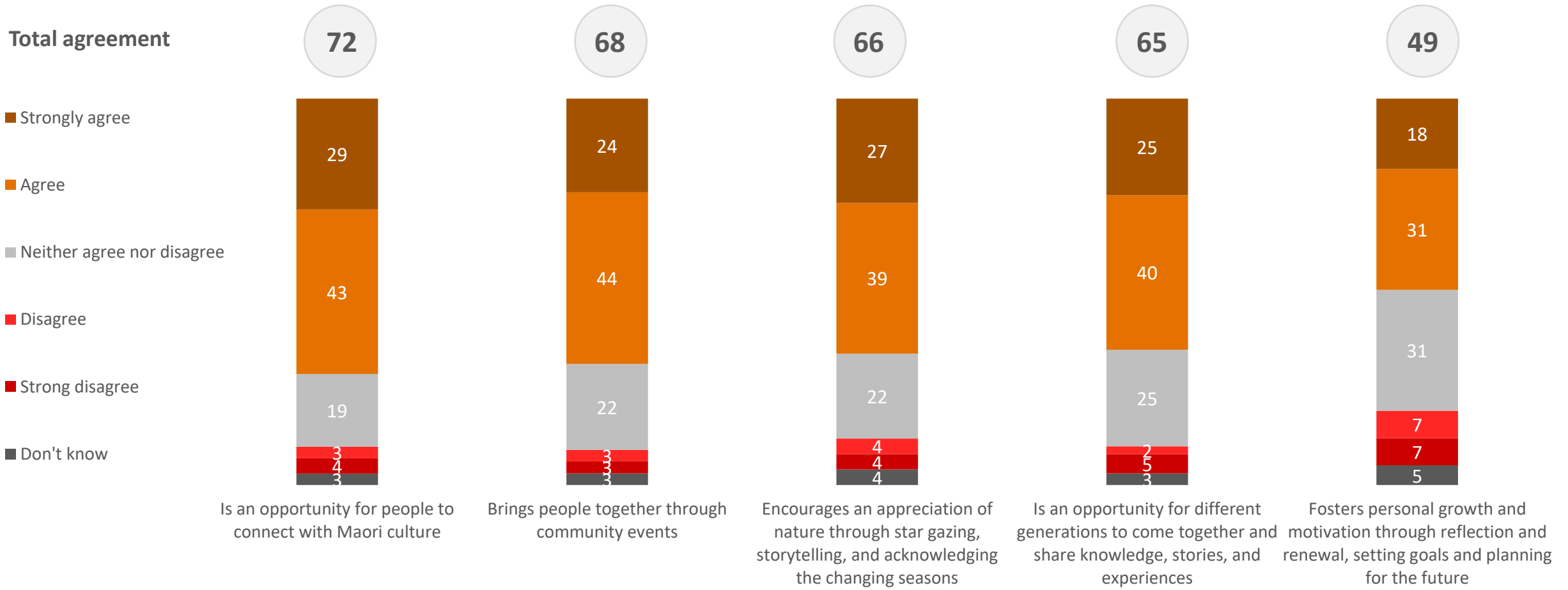
On average, women have more knowledge about Matariki than men.



The majority of New Zealanders (between 65% and 72%) think Matariki provides an opportunity to connect with Māori culture, brings communities together, encourages an appreciation of nature and knowledge sharing. About half (49%) think of Matariki as a time for personal growth, reflection and goal setting.



% Perceptions



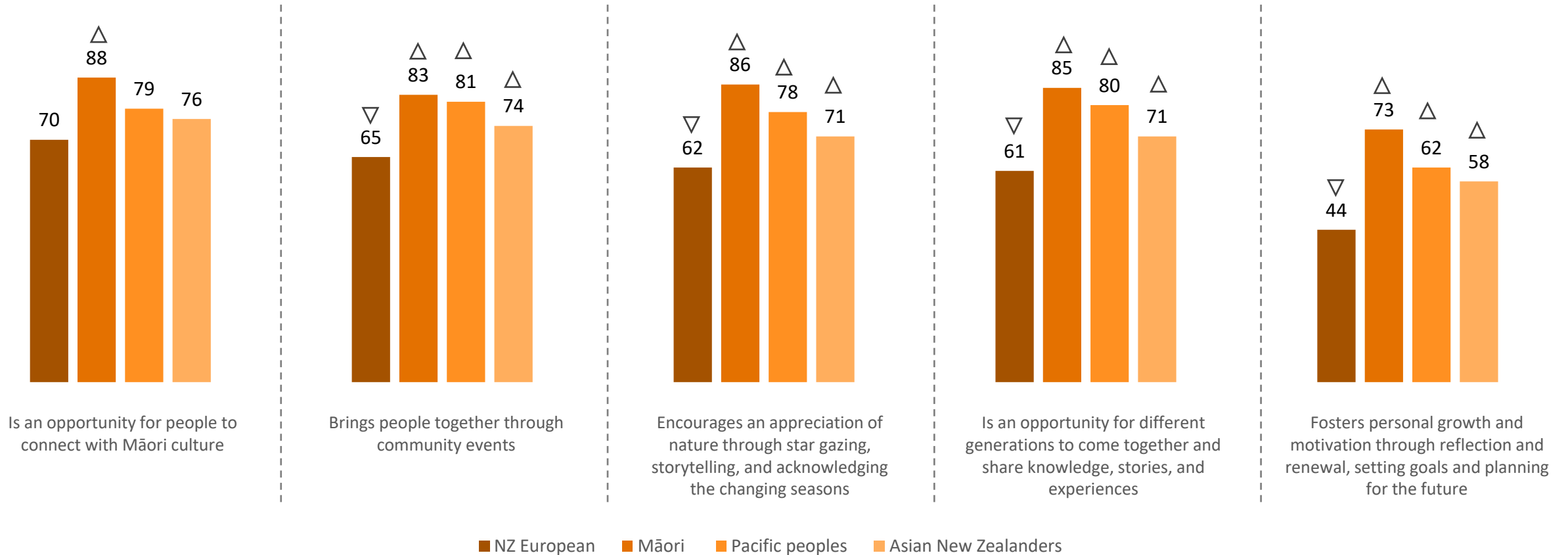
Base: All respondents (n=1,653)
 Q6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Matariki?

Māori have the strongest knowledge and understanding of Matariki, followed by Pacific peoples and Asian New Zealanders. New Zealand Europeans have the least knowledge, particularly about Matariki being a time for renewal and planning for the future.



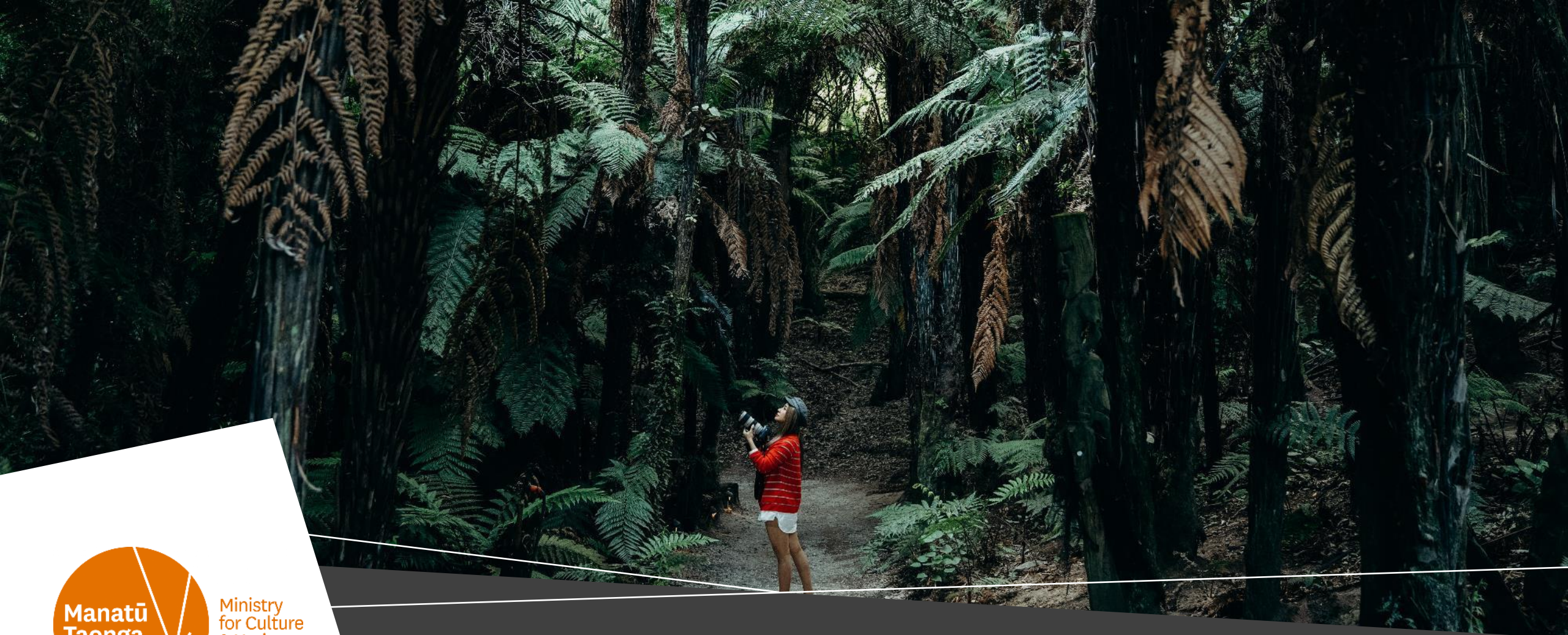
Perceptions - differences by ethnicity

% who agree with each statement about Matariki



Base: All respondents with don't know responses excluded (base sizes range from 194 to 750)
 Q6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Matariki?

△▽ Significantly higher / lower than average



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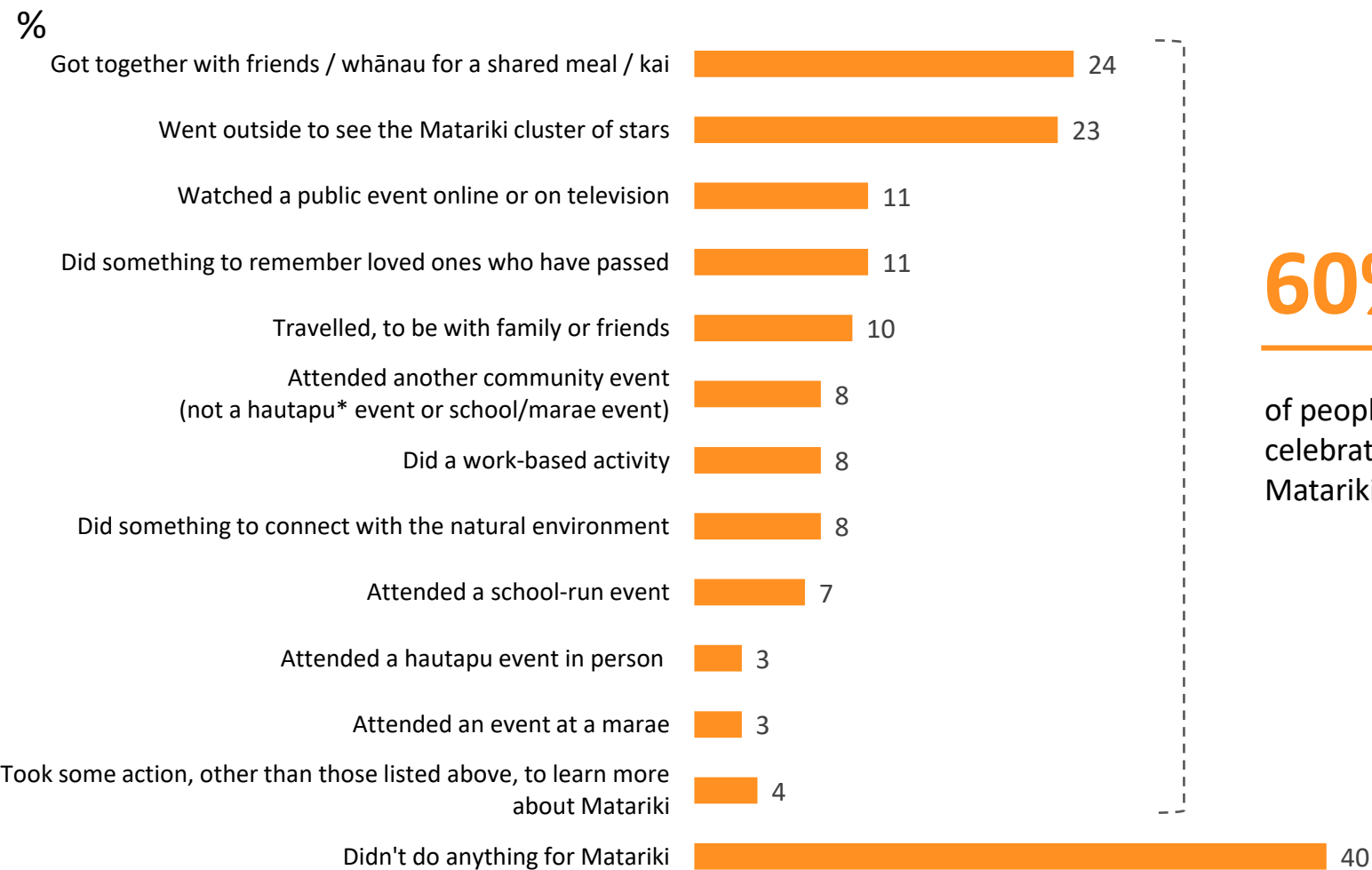
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Participation

Three in five people celebrated Matariki in 2023. The most common activities include sharing kai with friends and whānau (24%), viewing the Matariki cluster of stars (23%), watching a public event (11%), remembering loved ones who have passed (11%) and travelling to be with family or friends (10%). Women, people aged 30-39 and Māori are much more likely than average to have celebrated Matariki this year.

What did New Zealanders do to celebrate Matariki?



60%

of people celebrated Matariki in 2023



The following groups are **more** likely than average to have celebrated Matariki this year:

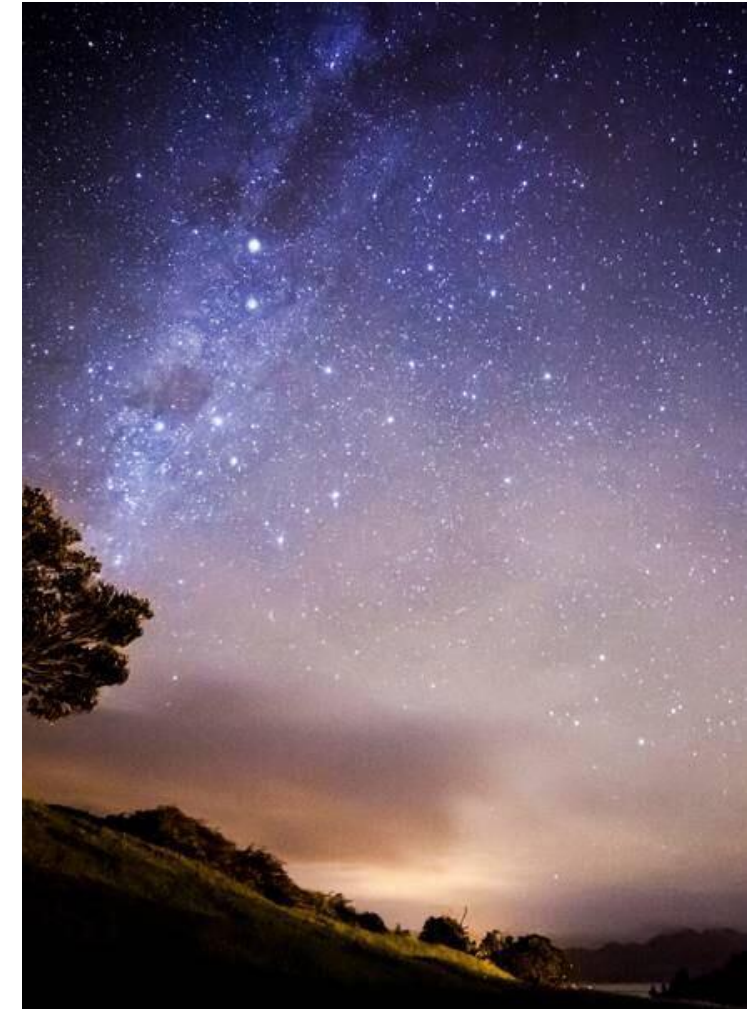
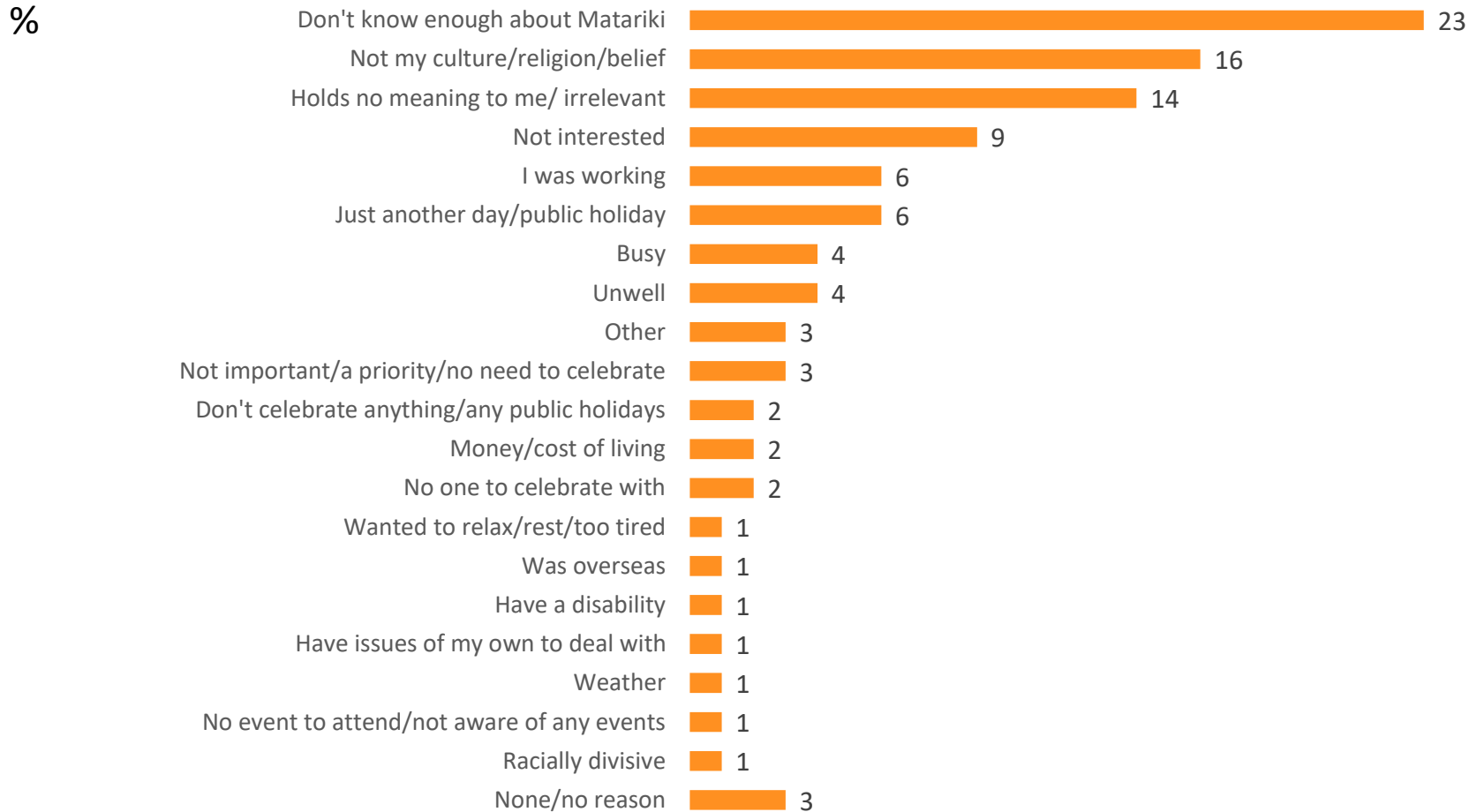
- Women (66%)
- Those aged 30-39 (80%)
- Māori (79%)
- Households with income of \$100k plus (68%)
- Those living in large towns (68%)

The following groups are **more** likely than average (40%) to **not** have celebrated Matariki this year:

- Those living in small towns (52%)
- Households with income of \$50k or less (45%)
- Men (47%)
- Those aged 60+ (59%)

For the 40% of New Zealanders who did not celebrate Matariki this year, a lack of knowledge is the most common reason for not celebrating; this is the top reason for both Māori and non-Māori who did not celebrate this year. Feeling Matariki is not part of their culture (more so for non-Māori) and Matariki being irrelevant are the second most common reasons for not celebrating Matariki.

Reasons for not celebrating Matariki (unprompted)



Base: All respondents who did not celebrate Matariki this year (n=627)
 Q4. What are the main reasons you did not celebrate Matariki this year?

Reasons for not celebrating Matariki, in their own words...



“Don't know anything about it really”
Man, 30-39, Auckland, Chinese

“Do not know enough about it”
Woman, 50-59, Auckland, New Zealand European

“No one around me celebrates Matariki”
Man, 30-39, Canterbury, Chinese

“Really busy with Household things in life - doing extra jobs to feed my family in tough inflation”
Man, 30-39, Auckland, Indian

“I don't know the real reason for celebrate Matariki as I am not a Māori or even related”
Woman, 70 plus, Auckland, Chinese

“Not my culture. Don't know much about it either”
Woman, 18-29, Gisborne / Hawke's Bay, New Zealand European

“I'm not Māori so it means nothing to me”
Man, 18-29, Wellington, New Zealand European

“No relevance to me”
Woman, 60-69, Otago / Southland, Chinese

“Had to work, 'day off' wasn't a thing for me”
Man, 40-69, Auckland, New Zealand European

“It doesn't mean anything to me ”
Man, 50-59, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand European

“Don't know enough about it and Māori customs do not feature in our lives at all”
Man, 70 plus, Waikato, New Zealand European

“I don't relate to it. Feels like something that the government is pushing that I'm not into”
Female, 18-29, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand European, Other Asian

“We do not celebrate Matariki and none of my Māori friends invited me over”
Man, 18-29, Auckland, Other Asian

“I am an immigrant with no Māori ancestry ”
Man, 60-69, Auckland, Other European

“We celebrated at work in that week but nothing on the day”
Man, 50-59, Auckland, Indian

“I'm not familiar Matariki day as we (my family) grow up in the different countries. We don't know how we can celebrate. We don't have kids and any families in NZ. If community does something, we are happy to attend”
Woman, 40-49, Canterbury, Other Asian

“Too focussed on looking for work/saving ”
Female, 18-29, Auckland, New Zealand European, Māori

“It's just a plain public holiday like the others ”
Man, 18-29, Auckland, Indian

“Combo of work and lack of resonation. I think Matariki is really neat and interesting, but I didn't celebrate for the same reason I didn't celebrate Diwali”
Another gender, 18-29, Auckland, New Zealand European

“I don't really celebrate the Chinese New Year either and if am going to celebrate an event it will be one that I am more culturally affiliated with”
Woman, 50-59, Canterbury, Samoan, Chinese



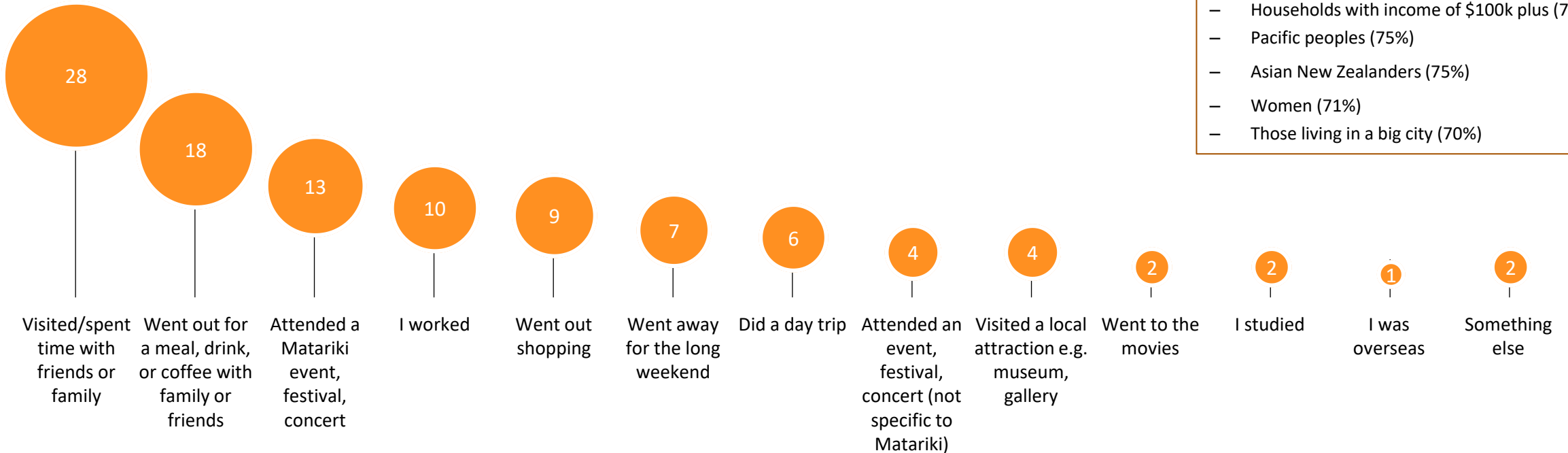
Two thirds (64%) of people did something over the Matariki public holiday/ long weekend. Most commonly, people spent time with friends and family, dined out or attended a Matariki festival, event or concert. One in ten people had to work over the long weekend.

Activities engaged in over the Matariki public holiday long weekend

%

64%

of people did something for the Matariki long weekend in 2023



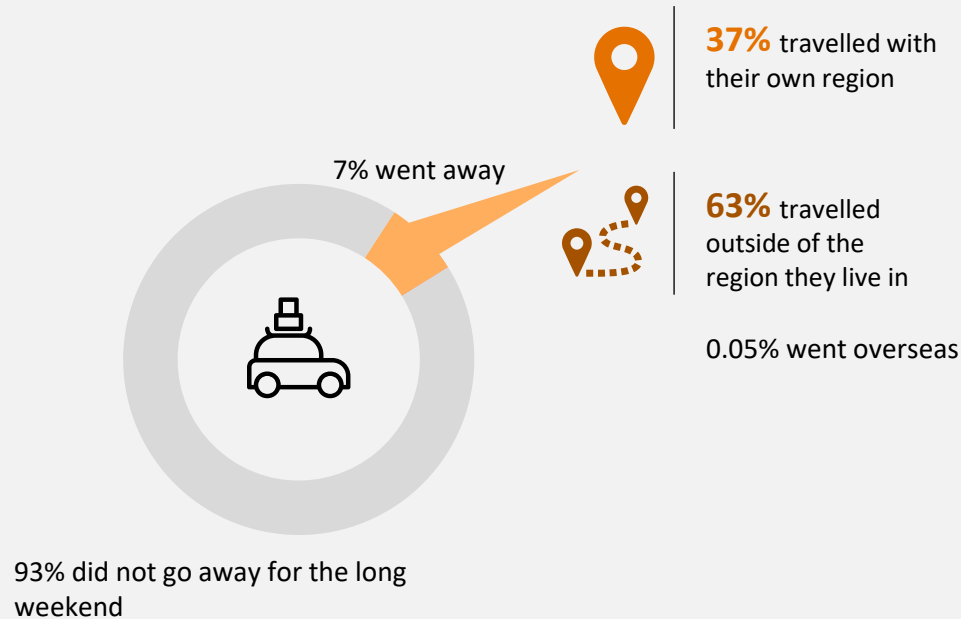
The following groups are **more** likely than average to have celebrated Matariki over the long weekend this year:

- Māori (81%)
- Those aged under 40 (78%)
- Households with income of \$100k plus (78%)
- Pacific peoples (75%)
- Asian New Zealanders (75%)
- Women (71%)
- Those living in a big city (70%)

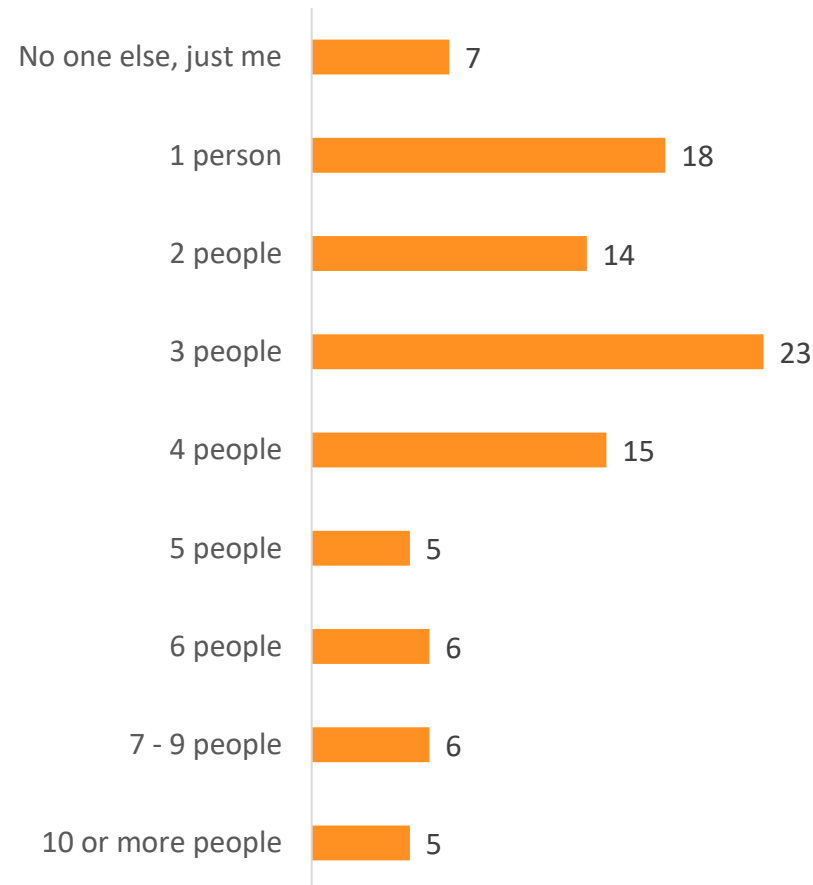
Seven percent of people went away for the Matariki long weekend. Of those, most remained in New Zealand with a third staying local and two thirds travelling further afield. Most travelled with others and the majority (70%) travelled in groups of two to five people. About one in three of those who travelled stayed in paid accommodation.

Snapshot of New Zealanders who went away for the Matariki long weekend

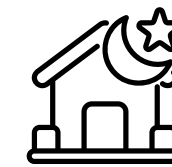
7% of New Zealanders went away over the Matariki long weekend, most within Aotearoa New Zealand.



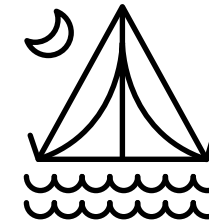
% Number of people they went away with



Accommodation



60% stayed at the home of a friend/ whānau or family member



35% stayed in paid accommodation e.g. motel, hotel, camping ground, Air BnB, bed and breakfast



5% stayed at a bach or holiday home



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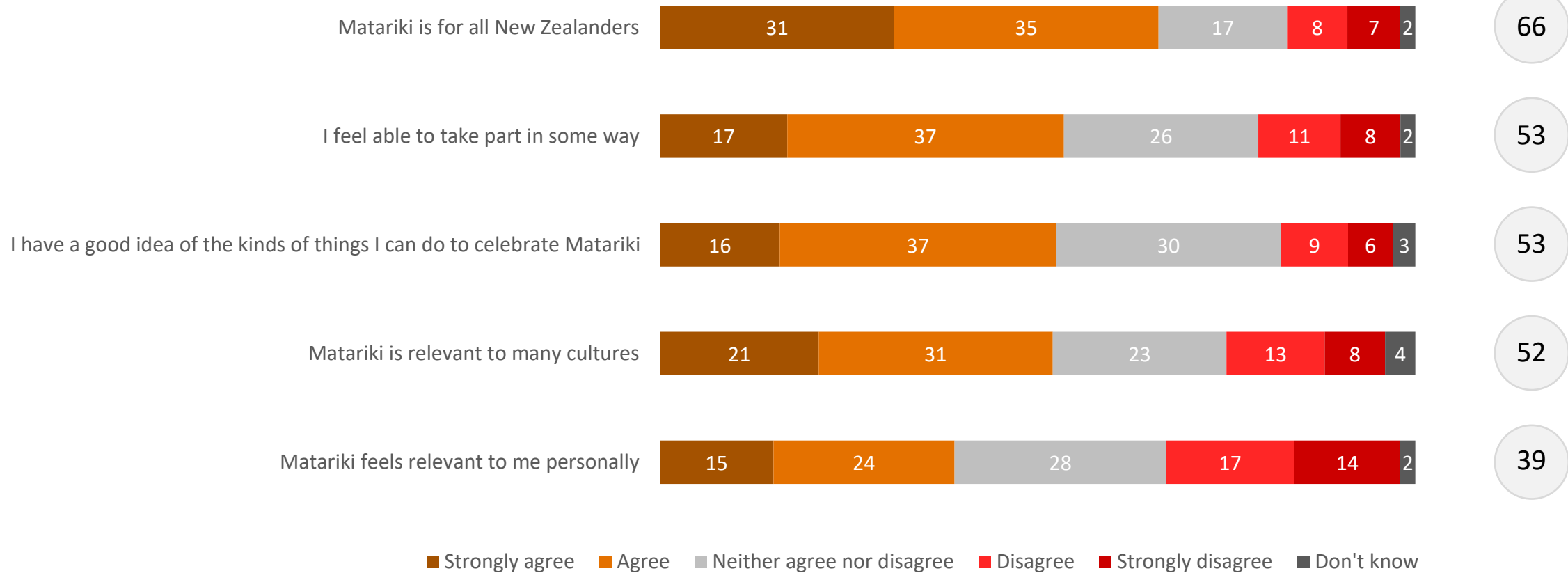
Attitudes toward Matariki

Generally, Matariki is seen as relevant for many people in New Zealand. Two thirds of people agree Matariki is for all New Zealanders. Over half of people agree they feel able to take part in some way, have a good idea of what they can do to celebrate and that Matariki is relevant to many cultures. However, personal relevance is more polarising; 39% agree Matariki is relevant to them personally while 31% disagree.

% Attitudes towards Matariki (relevance)

%

% Total agreement



The majority of people in New Zealand agree Matariki is a chance to celebrate Aotearoa (70%) and an opportunity to learn about Māori culture, beliefs, traditions and language (64%). Fifty-five percent agree Matariki encourages people to connect with the environment.



Attitudes towards Matariki (connection)

%

Total agreement

Matariki is a chance to celebrate the culture, people, and stories of Aotearoa New Zealand



70

Learning about Matariki helps me learn about Māori culture, beliefs, traditions, and language



64

It encourages people to connect with the environment



55

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Don't know



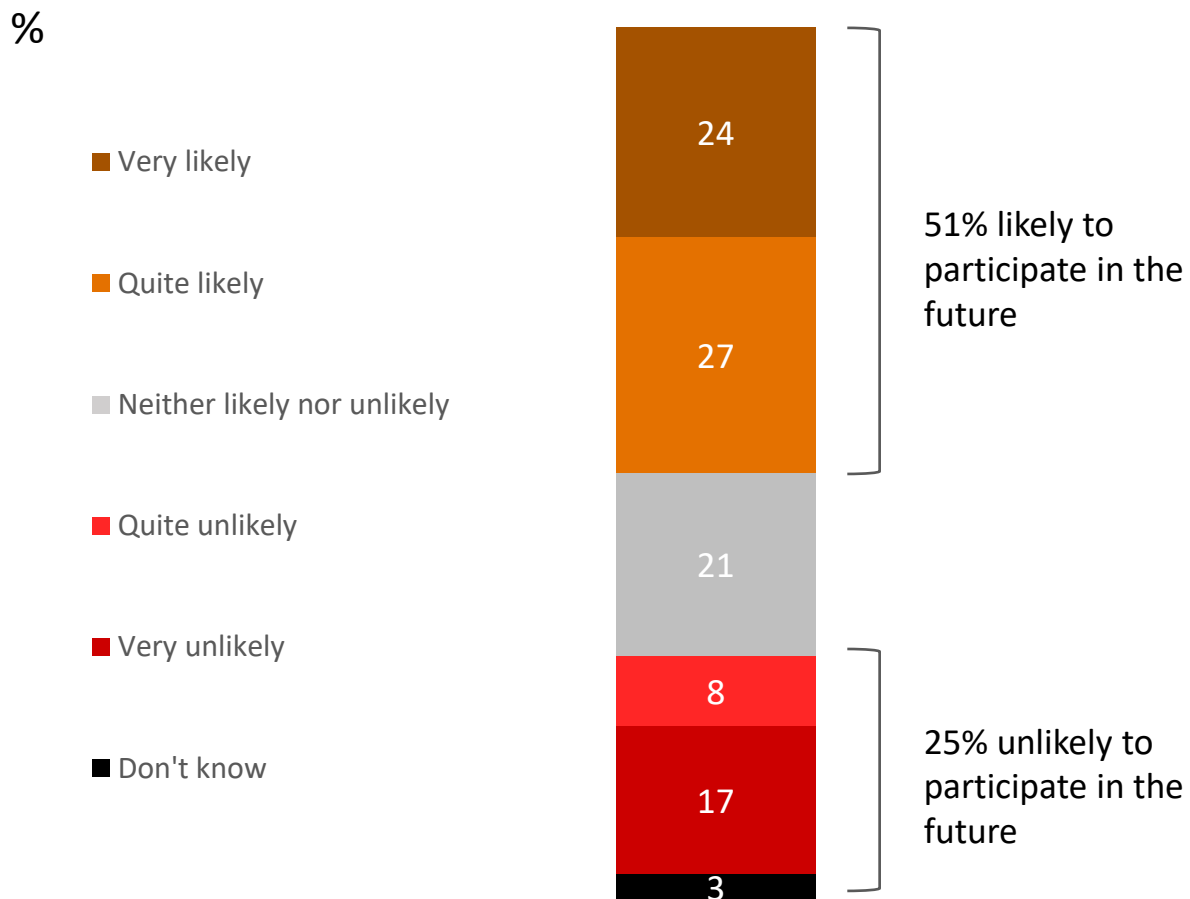
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Looking forward



People are more likely than not to celebrate Matariki in 2024; 51% are likely versus 25% who are not likely.

Future participation



Subgroup differences



The following groups are **more** likely than average to say they are **likely** to celebrate Matariki next year:

- Māori (78%)
- Those who celebrated Matariki in 2023 (76%)
- Those aged 30-39 (70%)
- Bay of Plenty residents (66%)
- Pacific peoples (61%)
- Households with incomes \$100k or more (59%)
- Women (58%)

The following groups are **more** likely than average to say they are **unlikely** to celebrate Matariki next year:

- Those who didn't celebrate Matariki in 2023 (55%)
- Those aged 60+ (39%)
- Households with incomes \$50k or less (33%)
- Men (31%)

The majority (67%) of people in New Zealand agree Matariki is growing every year and about half think more people are celebrating the event. Just under half would like to do more to celebrate Matariki next year.

Momentum

%

Total agreement

It feels like it's growing every year



67

More and more people I know are celebrating Matariki



51

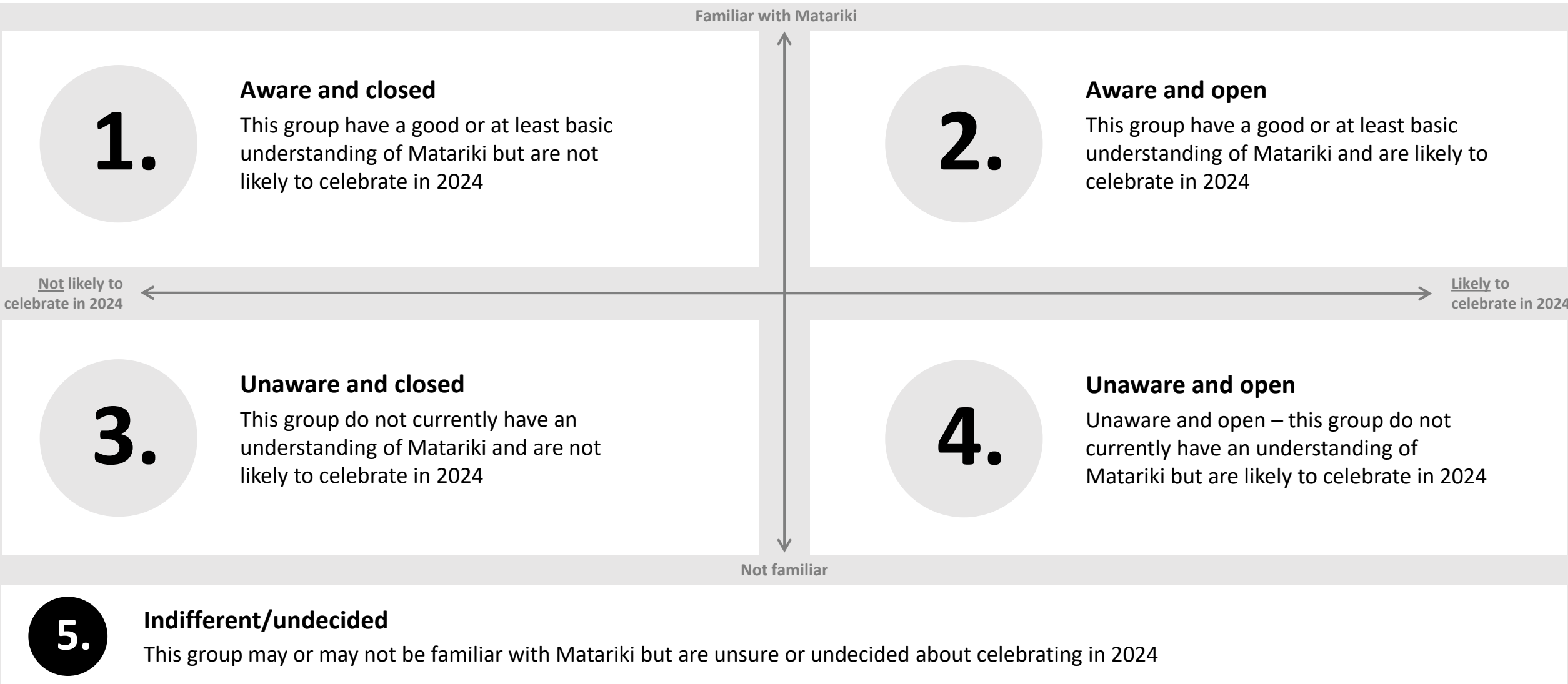
I want to do more to celebrate Matariki next year



46

■ Strongly agree
■ Agree
■ Neither agree nor disagree
■ Disagree
■ Strongly disagree
■ Don't know

We grouped New Zealanders on two dimensions; the first being their familiarity with Matariki and the second being their likelihood to celebrate Matariki in 2024. The outcome was five groups of New Zealanders who differ in their understanding, perceptions and attitudes towards Matariki.



Forty-nine percent of people understand and are likely to celebrate Matariki next year (aware and open) and 2% don't feel they understand but still plan on celebrating (unaware and open). Conversely, 7% of people don't feel they understand Matariki and have no intention of celebrating (unaware and closed) and 18% do understand but are still not likely to celebrate (aware and closed). The remaining 24% are unsure or indifferent about celebrating; the majority understand Matariki and have positive perceptions about it but they struggle to see how it is relevant and don't know what they can do to celebrate it.



Familiar with Matariki

1. Aware and closed 18%

New Zealanders who are more likely to:

- Have a weaker understanding of what Matariki is about (despite claiming at least a basic understanding)
- Feel Matariki is not relevant
- Not likely to celebrate in 2024

Tend to be:

- Aged 60 plus
- A man
- On household income of \$50k or less
- Live rurally
- Pākehā

2. Aware and open 49%

New Zealanders who are more likely to:

- Have strong understanding of what Matariki is about
- Have strong positive perceptions and attitudes towards Matariki
- Feel Matariki is relevant to them personally
- Be likely to want to celebrate next year.

Tend to be:

- Aged under 40
- A women
- Have household income of +\$100k
- Māori

Not likely to celebrate in 2024

Likely to celebrate in 2024

3. Unaware and closed 7%

New Zealanders who are more likely to:

- Have the weakest understanding or knowledge of Matariki
- Feel Matariki is not relevant
- Not likely to celebrate in 2024

Tend to be:

- Aged 60 plus
- A man
- On household income of \$50k or less
- Another ethnicity (not Pākehā, Māori, Pacific peoples or Asian)

4. Unaware and open 2%

This small proportion of the population feel they know very little about Matariki overall but have strong positive perceptions about what they do know. They are more likely than average to feel Matariki is growing and see more people they know celebrating. They are also more likely to see learning about Matariki as an opportunity to learn more about Māori culture, beliefs, traditions and languages. They are likely to want to celebrate next year.

Not familiar

5. Indifferent/undecided 24%

These New Zealanders are indifferent or not sure about celebrating Matariki next year (20% understand Matariki, 4% do not). They don't feel Matariki is relevant and don't know what types of things they can do to celebrate, however they differ to people not open to celebrating in their positive perceptions and attitudes towards Matariki. These people tend to be young (aged 18-29), a man, living in Auckland, Pākehā.

Considerations moving forward for increasing engagement with Matariki.



BUILD KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

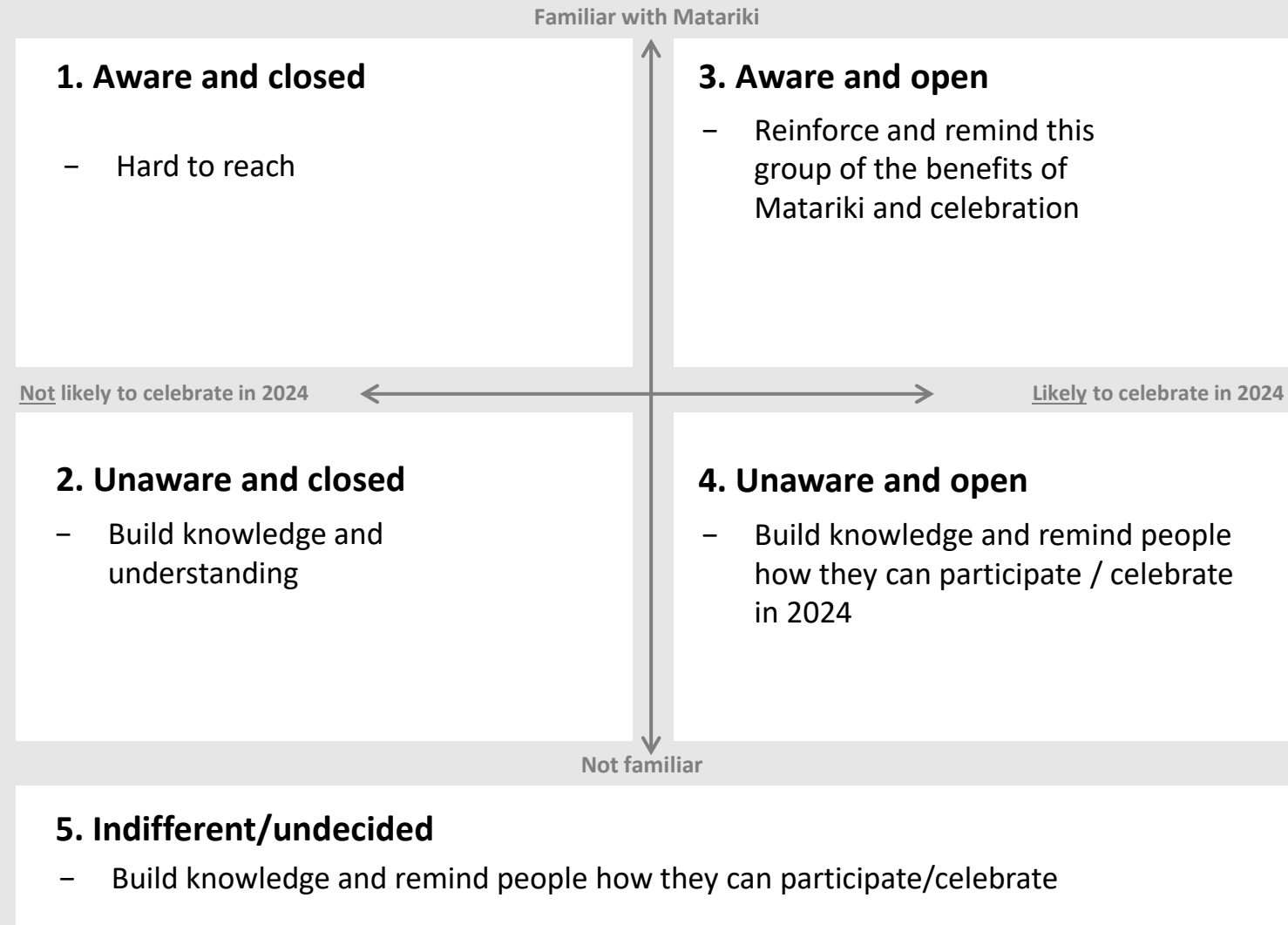
Continue to build knowledge and understanding of Matariki – informing and reminding New Zealanders about the relevance of Matariki to this nation, its people, and te taiao.

REMIND PEOPLE HOW THEY CAN PARTICIPATE / CELEBRATE

Continue to engage with New Zealanders about the different ways they can celebrate Matariki (this is particularly important for those New Zealanders who think positively about Matariki but are not sure how they can take part).

CONNECTIONS TO WHĀNAU, COMMUNITY, & CULTURE

Continue to promote the positive values of connection and culture – already many New Zealanders strongly associate Matariki with people coming together, connecting to Māori culture, connecting with te taiao, and the celebration the people and stories of Aotearoa New Zealand.





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Appendix

2023 Sample profile



	Percentages (unweighted)	Counts (unweighted)	Maximum margin of error
Total	100%	1,653	2.4%
	Percentages (unweighted)	Counts (unweighted)	Maximum margin of error
Men	48%	798	3.5%
Women	51%	849	3.4%
Gender diverse	0.4%	6	40%
	Percentages (unweighted)	Counts (unweighted)	Maximum margin of error
NZ European	48%	768	3.5%
Māori	31%	497	4.4%
Pacific peoples	13%	204	6.9%
Asian peoples	28%	445	4.7%
	Percentages (unweighted)	Counts (unweighted)	Maximum margin of error
18 to 29	24%	402	4.9%
30 to 39	15%	248	6.2%
40 to 49	17%	284	5.8%
50 to 59	17%	282	5.8%
60 to 69	14%	228	6.5%
70 plus	13%	209	6.8%

	Percentages (unweighted)	Counts (unweighted)	Maximum margin of error
Northland	4%	62	12.4%
Auckland	33%	548	4.2%
Waikato	10%	161	7.8%
Bay of Plenty	7%	108	9.4%
Gisborne / Hawke's Bay	5%	75	11.3%
Taranaki / Manawatū-Wanganui	8%	124	8.8%
Wellington	11%	176	7.4%
Tasman / Nelson / Marlborough / West Coast	4%	69	11.8%
Canterbury	13%	212	6.7%
Otago / Southland	7%	118	9.0%
	Percentages (unweighted)	Counts (unweighted)	Maximum margin of error
Big city	52%	861	3.3%
Provincial city or town	23%	374	5.1%
Small town	16%	271	6.0%
Rural area or farm	9%	147	8.0%

Note all data presented on this slide is unweighted. Weighting was used to correct for the over-sampling of Māori, Pacific peoples and Asian peoples and any other variances from the population. Ethnicity was asked as a multiple choice question, therefore the percentages add to more than 100% and the counts add to more than 1,653.



For further information please contact:

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