

**TE TAUNAKI**  
Public Service Census  
2021



**Te Kāwanatanga  
o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government

# Intersex Deep Dive

August 2023

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**Te Kawa Mataaho**  
Public Service Commission

# Contents

Contents.....	2
Diversity and inclusion in the Public Service.....	3
About the survey.....	4
About the deep dive reports.....	4
From the Cross-Agency Rainbow Network (CARN).....	5
Under the rainbow umbrella .....	7
Intersex .....	7
Reading this report .....	8
How to read the charts in this report .....	8
Open text responses .....	8
Section One: Demographics of intersex people in the Public Service .....	10
Age .....	10
Ethnicity .....	10
Region .....	11
Section Two: Occupations, leadership, and remuneration for intersex public servants.....	13
Occupations .....	13
Leadership.....	14
Remuneration .....	14
Section Three: Intersex public servants’ reasons for joining and staying in the Public Service .....	15
Section Four: Development opportunities and satisfaction with work for intersex public servants ...	18
Development opportunities.....	18
Satisfaction with work .....	19
Section Five: Inclusion for intersex public servants.....	20
Feelings of inclusion.....	20
Conclusion and next steps .....	22

# Diversity and inclusion in the Public Service

Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) is an essential part of the Public Service. We want our Public Service workplaces to value, reflect and understand the communities that we're here to serve. The Public Service Act 2020 supports our D&I commitments with requirements on leaders to promote diversity and inclusiveness within our workforce and workplaces. Everyone in the Public Service is entitled to work in a safe and inclusive workplace, where people treat one another with respect.

For more than five years Te Kawa Mataaho has been focused on building a diverse and inclusive Public Service. We have made some significant gains in that time, but we know that there is still work to do. We value the voices and experiences of our people and collect the data to help give us a better picture of the experience of public servants and ideas of how our workplaces can be more welcoming and inclusive of a wide range of communities.

We are committed to doing more work and Te Taunaki provides an important benchmark and deeper understanding of where the focus needs to be. Today, the Public Service has a comprehensive approach to achieving diversity, equity and inclusion which includes three main work programmes.

- The [Papa Pounamu](#) work programme sets priorities for growing Public Service diversity and inclusion capability;
- the [Kia Toipoto](#) and [Pay Equity](#) work programmes provide plans to address pay gaps and workplace inequities;
- the [Positive and Safe Workplaces](#) programme helps agencies to create work environments where people enjoy working, are respected and can contribute to their potential.

## About the survey

A diverse and inclusive Public Service is essential to the work we do to serve the people and communities of Aotearoa New Zealand. To provide better services that improve the lives of all New Zealanders – and to have their trust and confidence – we must show that we value and reflect our diverse communities.

Te Taunaki | Public Service Census 2021 (Te Taunaki) captured information across a range of demographic and job dimensions, allowing us to explore characteristics of intersex public servants and how included that community felt in the workplace. Understanding this helps us to gain a better picture about what's working well and where we need to do more to be an employer of choice for all of our workers.

Te Taunaki was New Zealand's first Public Service Census. About 60,000 public servants working in 36 agencies (departments and departmental agencies) were asked questions focusing on diversity, inclusion and wellbeing at work, a unified Public Service, and strengthening Māori Crown relationships. The final overall response rate was 63.1%, representing the views and experiences of about 40,000 public servants. New Zealand's first Public Service Census started on 11 May and closed in early June 2021.

## About the deep dive reports

Cross-agency Employee-led Networks (ELNs) were an important stakeholder of Te Taunaki Public Service Census and Te Kawa Mataaho engaged with them in the development and planning stage, consulting on the survey, and they helped increase response rates of members of their communities. After Te Taunaki was completed, we reached out to ELNs to see what questions we could answer for them based on the data that had been gathered in Te Taunaki or the Workforce Data. This proactive approach to information ensured that there was benefit for the ELNs in continuing to be involved in Te Taunaki.

The deep dive research papers that have been produced as part of this process present reporting on topics of interest to ELNs. Te Kawa Mataaho has now completed deep dive research for: We Enable Us (WEU), the Cross-Agency Rainbow Network (CARN), and Government Women's Network (GWN). The research covers the experiences reported in Te Taunaki by disabled public servants, and public servants who are transgender, intersex or of multiple/another gender/s or different sexual identities, and women in the Public Service.

Te Taunaki gives us just a start at understanding the effects of intersectionality on feelings of inclusion, but further work is needed to explore the combined effects of diversity dimensions. We are continuing to learn from what this data tells us, and the experiences of different communities and are working with the cross-agency ELNs on plans and initiatives for the future and to help us achieve our goal of improving inclusion in our workplaces and for New Zealand's public servants.

#### **From the Cross-Agency Rainbow Network (CARN)...**

*We know that without data, we cannot be counted. As the Cross-Agency Rainbow Network, representing rainbow public servants across the motu, we want to see data being collected about us that paints a picture of the state of the public sector when it comes to rainbow inclusion. We want to see our successes, the challenges we face and where we as a community and the public sector can do more.*

*CARN aims to create a wide, deep and sustainable shift in strengthening the participation, representation and respect of people with diverse SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics) throughout the public sector. As a network, CARN endeavours to be accessible, inclusive, welcoming and representative of all SOGIESC-diverse communities. CARN stands by members of our rainbow communities, and strives to promote the dignity, respect, and safety of these people in our network, across our public sector, and in the communities we serve.*

*The key to building a diverse and inclusive Public Service, is building data and information. That's why we were excited to collaborate with Te Kawa Mataaho to produce these four deep dives focussed on the rainbow community. The experience of rainbow public servants is not uniform across groups, and without analysing the data in more detail, we aren't able to see the full picture. We were able to work alongside the teams at Te Kawa Mataaho to identify that separate deep dives were needed, focussing on sexual identity, and public servants who were trans, intersex, or of multiple/other genders.*

*We note also the importance of intersectionality and the range of experiences for different communities within our broader rainbow whānau.*

*We hope these deep dives will be a valuable resource to draw on as the Public Service takes a focussed approach to rainbow inclusion going forward.*

For this report on intersex public servants, the relevant questions or topic areas from Te Taunaki that were socialised with CARN were:

- How representative is the Public Service of the wider community/communities in New Zealand? (and what aggregate of communities would be useful?)
- How many people from these communities are working in the Public Service?
- More information on number of people for groups within the communities (i.e., intersectionality with iwi, ethnicity, etc)
- How are these communities represented across regions within the Public Service?
- What kinds of roles do these communities have? Any over representation in occupational grouping?
- Are members of these communities well represented in leadership positions?
- Are these communities paid what others in the Public Service are? (by age / tenure median pay band)
- Do members of these communities have access to training and career development opportunities?
- Why did members of these communities join the Public Service? Why do they stay?
- Do members of these communities feel included at work? If not, what would they like to have their agency do (based on the qualitative questions in the Census)?
- Do members of these communities feel satisfied with their job?
- What differences in experience across age / tenure are there within these communities and between others?
- How similar/different are the barriers/enablers/positives described by these communities?

# Under the rainbow umbrella

Te Taunaki | Public Service Census 2021 collected information on experiences of working in the Public Service for people in rainbow communities. Rainbow is a broad umbrella term that covers a diversity of sexual identities as well as gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

Te Taunaki results indicate that rainbow communities make up 9.4% of Public Service staff, and that the experience of working in the Public Service can be less positive for some people within these communities, including those who are intersex.

Prior to Te Taunaki, the WeCount 2019 survey was developed to address a lack of available workforce data about the New Zealand Public Service Rainbow community and is a useful further source for more specific information around rainbow experiences in the New Zealand Public Service.

## Intersex

Te Taunaki asked if people had an intersex variation. Intersex is an umbrella term used to describe people born with physical or biological sex characteristics (including sexual anatomy, reproductive organs, hormonal patterns and/or chromosomal patterns) that are more diverse than stereotypical definitions for male or female bodies. Like all people, intersex people may identify as male, female or non-binary and can have any sexual orientation.<sup>2</sup>

Te Taunaki results indicate that 0.2% of the Public Service are intersex, with a quarter (25.4%) of intersex public servants indicating they were also transgender.

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<sup>1</sup> The information collected for rainbow communities in Te Taunaki followed the Stats NZ standards for sex, gender, sexual identity, and for variations of sex characteristics.

<sup>2</sup> The way that intersex was defined for respondents for Te Taunaki can be found in question 11d in [Questionnaire-Te-Taunaki-Public-Service-Census-2021.pdf \(publicservice.govt.nz\)](https://publicservice.govt.nz/questionnaire-te-taunaki-public-service-census-2021.pdf)

The experiences of people who are intersex are the focus of this report, with further publications looking at other rainbow groups.

## Reading this report

### How to read the charts in this report

The charts in this report show the way intersex public servants are distributed across groups in various key areas such as demographics, qualifications, and feelings of inclusion. This means that for each section of the graph, the different coloured bars will show what proportion of intersex public servants are in that group so that comparisons can be made to those not in those groups. For example, in Figure 1 below, the light blue bar shows the proportion of intersex public servants who are in each age group, where the dark blue bars show the proportions for those public servants who are not intersex for comparison. This shows that the smallest proportions of each group are in the youngest and oldest age groups, with a relatively high proportion of intersex public servants in the 25 to 34 years age group.

In some charts, variables are missing. This is because either there is no-one in the grouping or the number of people is too small to pass our confidentiality requirements and maintaining the privacy of respondents to Te Taunaki was vitally important for the integrity of the survey. For example, in the ethnicity chart, no figures are included for the MELAA or Other ethnicity groupings – in both cases the numbers are either zero or fail the test for confidentiality.

### Open text responses

Te Taunaki gave respondents two open-ended questions. One was what the ‘agency/department could do to make you feel more comfortable about being yourself at work?’. There was also an opportunity to identify if there was ‘anything else about your experience of working for the New Zealand Public Service you would like to comment on?’. A total of 42 comments were made by intersex public servants across the two



questions. Where possible we have included quotes and summaries of the comments in the sections below.

The results in this report represent the responses from those intersex public servants who responded to the survey. Where their answers differ from intersex public servants who did not participate, the results are biased away from what they would have been if everybody responded. As such, the results in this report should be seen as representative of those who completed the survey, and only indicative of all public servants.

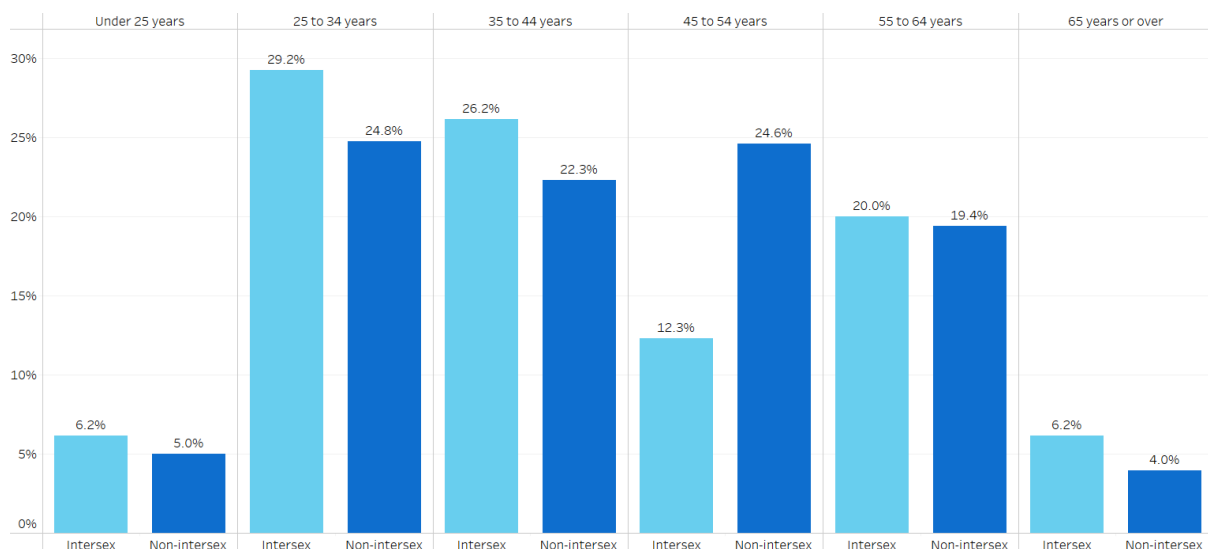
# Section One: Demographics of intersex people in the Public Service

Overall, Te Taunaki results indicate that 0.2% of the Public Service are intersex.

## Age

Intersex people in the Public Service tended to be slightly younger than their non- intersex colleagues.<sup>3</sup> The largest proportion of intersex public servants were in the 25 to 34 age group.

Figure 1: Age groups by intersex/ non-intersex

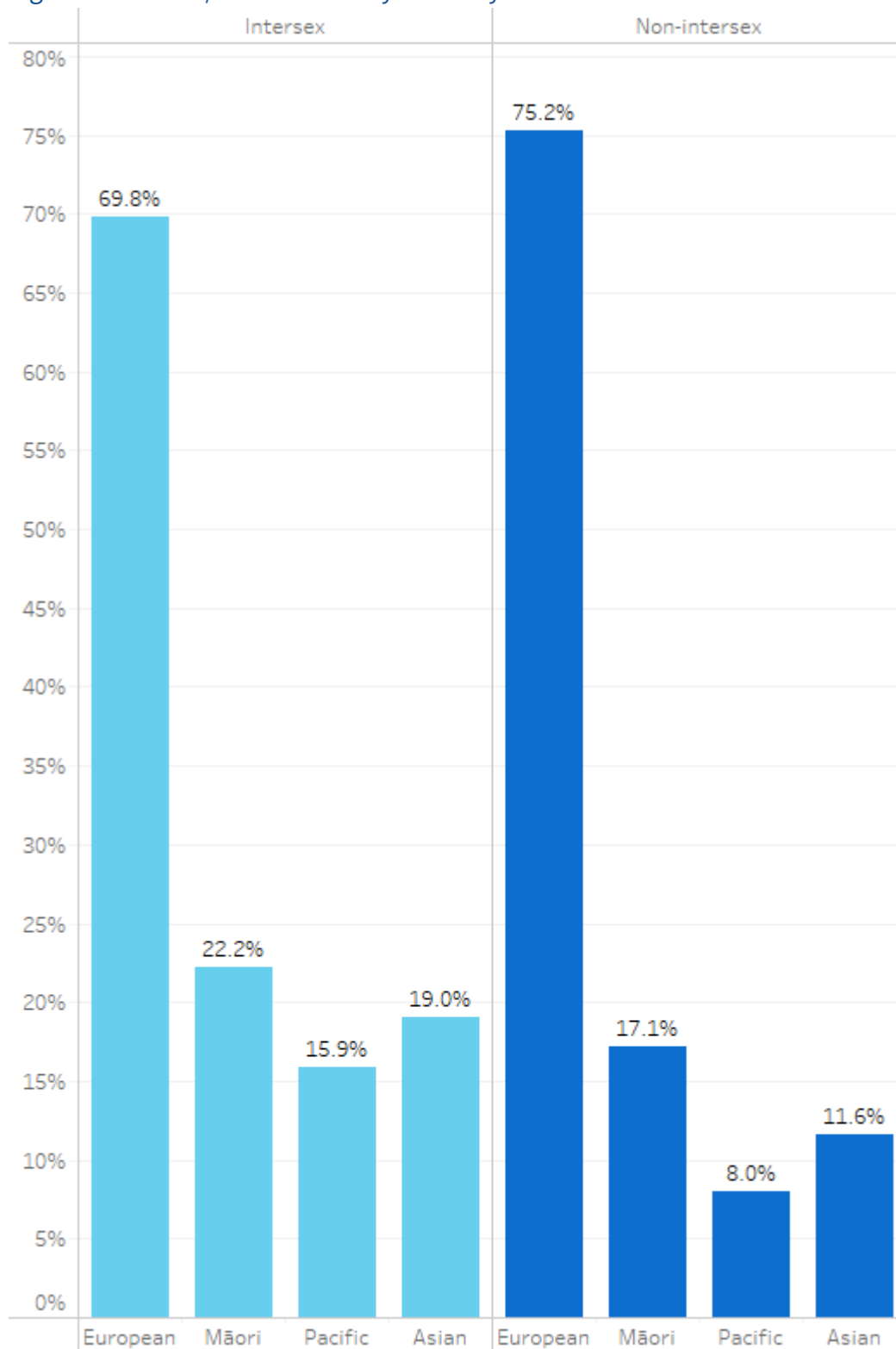


## Ethnicity

The proportion of intersex public servants varied by ethnicity. There was a smaller proportion of intersex public servants who were of European ethnicity (69.8%) than of those who were not intersex (75.2%) while there were higher proportions of Māori (22.2% compared to 17.1% of non-intersex), Pacific (15.9% compared to 8.0% of non-intersex), and Asian (19.0% compared to 11.6% of non-intersex) ethnicities.

<sup>3</sup> Please note that currently Stats NZ does not currently have information available on the intersex population of New Zealand for us to compare with the proportion from Te Taunaki but this pattern of age distribution is similar to what is seen in Aotearoa’s LGBT+ population overall (Stats NZ).

Figure 2: Intersex/non-intersex by ethnicity



**Region**

48.7% of intersex public servants in Te Taunaki worked in Wellington, compared to 45.5% of their non-intersex colleagues. The most notable difference, however, was in Auckland,

with 41.0% of intersex public servants, compared to just 17.2% of non-intersex staff. All other regions had either no intersex staff or numbers too small to report due to privacy considerations.

## Section Two: Occupations, leadership, and remuneration for intersex public servants

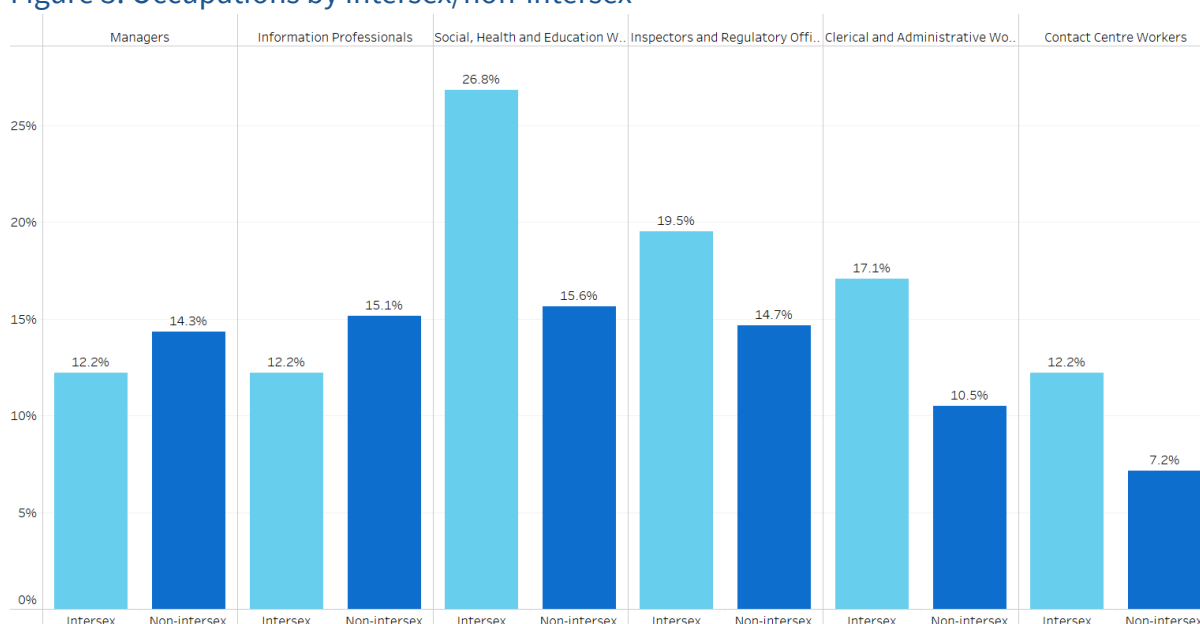
### Occupations

The highest proportion of intersex public servants were Social, Health and Education Workers (26.8%), which was also the occupation group where the proportion of intersex workers was most noticeably higher than for their non-intersex colleagues (15.6% for Social, Health and Education Workers).

Intersex public servants were also more likely than non-intersex staff to be in Clerical and Administrative roles (17.1% compared to 10.5%), Contact Centre workers (12.2% compared to 7.2%) or Inspectors and Regulatory Officers (19.5% compared to 14.7%), but less likely to be Information Professionals (12.2% compared to 15.1%) or Managers (12.2% compared to 14.3%).

The younger age profile of intersex public servants is likely contributing to some of these differences. For example, we know from the Workforce Data collected by Te Kawa Mataaho that managers are the oldest occupational group in the Public Service.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 3: Occupations by intersex/non-intersex



<sup>4</sup> <https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/research-and-data/workforce-data-diversity-and-inclusion/workforce-data-age-profile/>

Intersex staff are represented across nearly all occupation groups but because of privacy rules, specific reporting cannot be provided for some groups.

### **Leadership**

Intersex public servants are represented across the leadership levels, including senior leaders but because of small numbers and the associated privacy rules, no specific reporting can be provided.

### **Remuneration**

In Te Taunaki, the average full-time equivalent annual salary for intersex public servants was \$81,700 compared to \$90,100 for non-intersex public servants.<sup>5</sup>

The small size of sub-groups meant more in-depth robust analysis using variables such as age was not possible.

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<sup>5</sup> The number of intersex public servants in Te Taunaki is too small to look more in-depth at remuneration eg. By pay bands, occupation, role level etc.

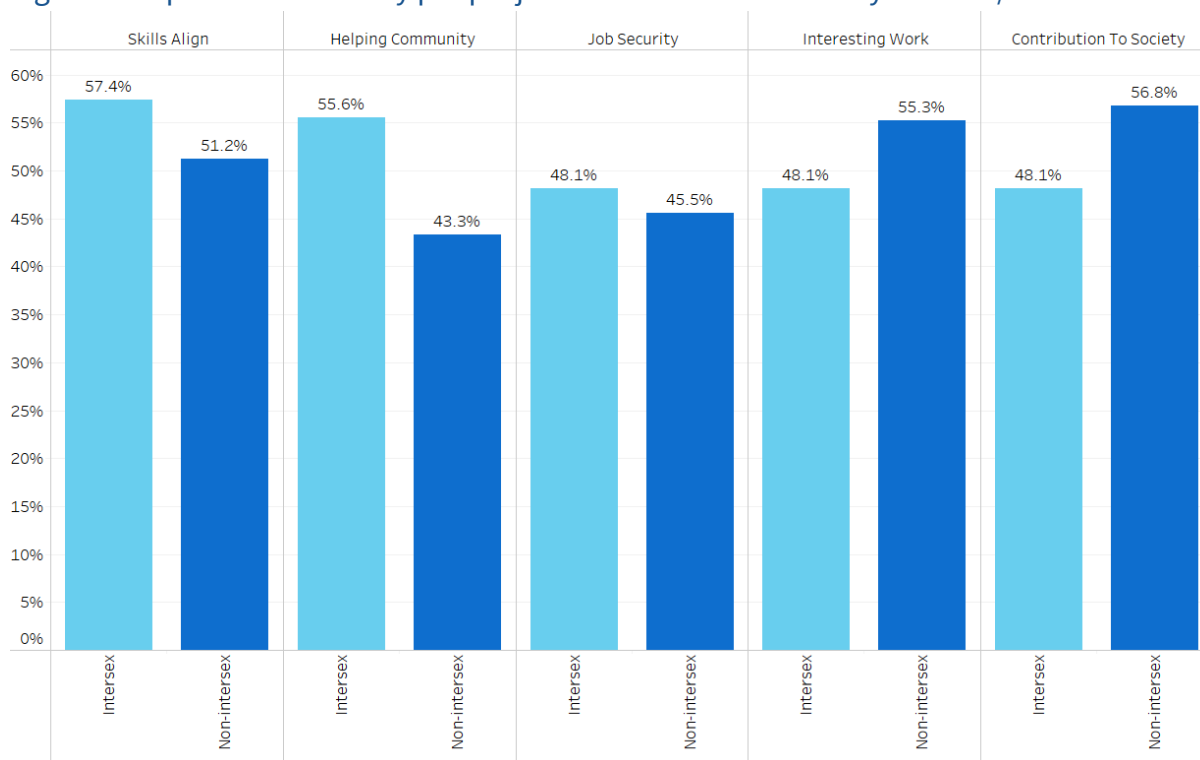
## Section Three: Intersex public servants’ reasons for joining and staying in the Public Service

The top five reasons for intersex people being attracted to working in the Public Service were:

- The work is aligned with their job skills, experience or training (57.4%)
- It’s work that helps people in their community (55.6%)
- There’s job security (48.1%)
- It’s interesting work (48.1%)
- It’s work that contributes positively to society (48.1%)

While these were also the top five reasons given by non-intersex public servants, considerably higher proportions of intersex public servants were attracted to it being work that helps people in their community (55.6% compared to 43.3% of non-intersex) and was aligned with their job skills, experience or training (57.4% compared to 51.2% of non-intersex).

Figure 4: Top five reasons why people joined the Public Service by intersex/non-intersex



When it came to reasons for staying in the Public Service, intersex public servants valued similar things to what had attracted them in the first place:

- Work that contributes positively to society (90.7%)
- Job security (87.0%)
- Interesting work (87.0%)
- Work that helps people in my community (83.3%)
- Quality of workplace relationships and social environment at work (81.5%)

Intersex public servants were one of only two rainbow groups who had quality of workplace relationships and social environment in their top five reasons for staying<sup>6</sup>. This reason was considered important by 71.9% of non-intersex staff (the 7<sup>th</sup> most important reason).

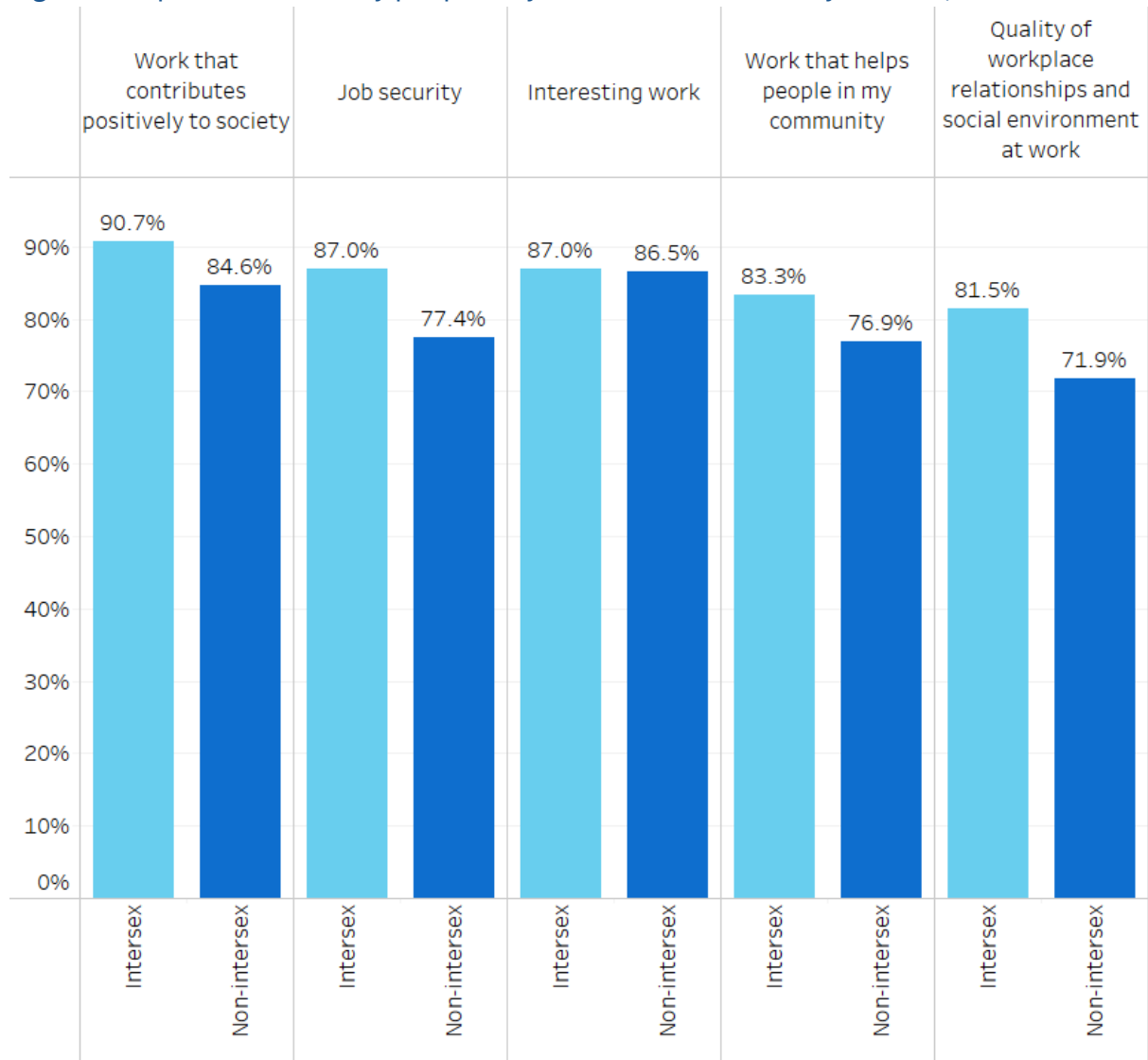
A high proportion of intersex public servants also placed importance on work aligned with their job skills, experience or training (79.2%), good remuneration (79.2%), an inclusive work environment (79.2%), quality of leadership and management (77.4%), and belief in the purpose and principles of the New Zealand Public Service (76.5%).

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<sup>6</sup> The other rainbow group who had this in their top five was public servants of multiple genders.



Figure 5: Top five reasons why people stay in the Public Service by intersex/non-intersex



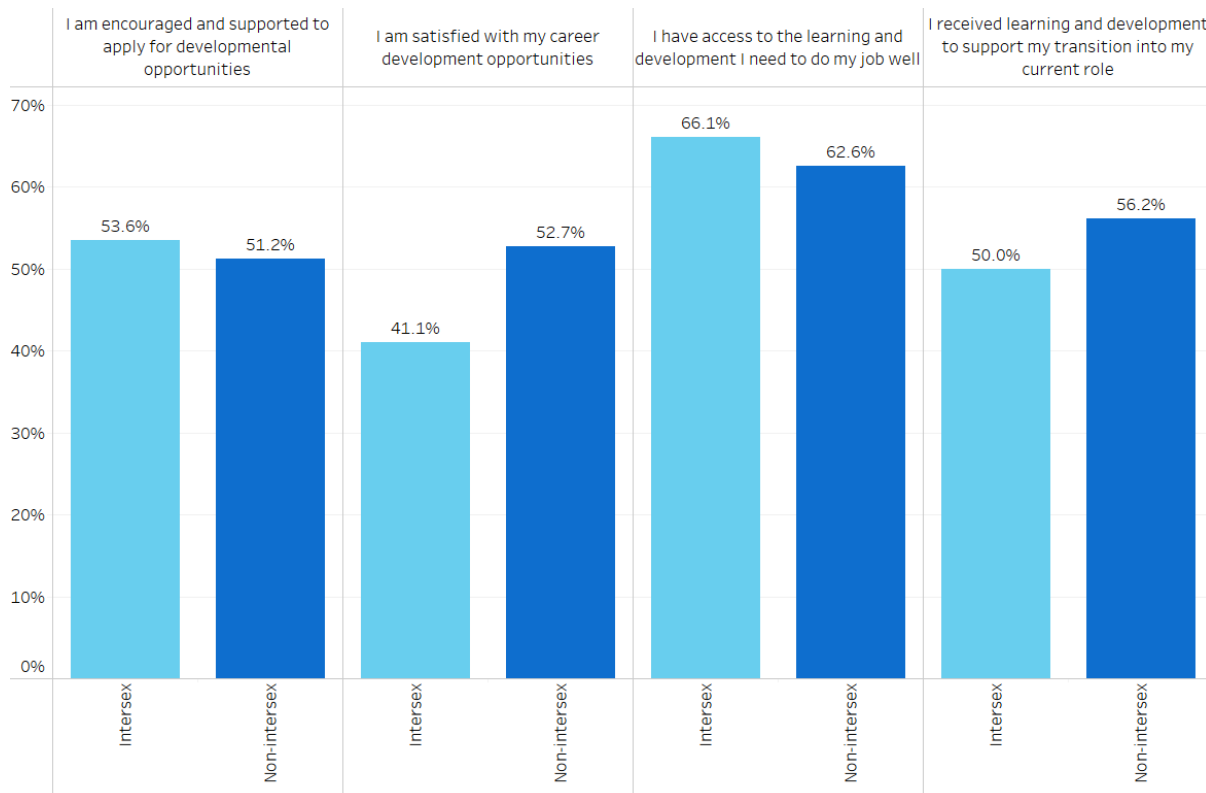
## Section Four: Development opportunities and satisfaction with work for intersex public servants

### Development opportunities

Intersex public servants had mixed levels of satisfaction with their career development opportunities when compared against their non-intersex colleagues. Intersex staff felt slightly more positive about the extent to which they were encouraged and supported to apply for developmental opportunities, and about their access to learning and development needed to do their jobs well.

However, they felt less satisfied with their career development opportunities, and this was the largest difference, with 41.1% of intersex public servants expressing satisfaction, compared to 52.7% of their non-intersex colleagues. They were also less likely to agree that they received learning and development to support transition into their current role.

Figure 6: Proportion agreement with development opportunities by intersex/non-intersex



### **Satisfaction with work**

There was a high level of satisfaction with work amongst intersex public servants and there was very little difference between this group and their non-intersex colleagues (69.8% intersex compared to 69.2% of non-intersex).

“I enjoy working for the agency that I do. I have seen it grow for the betterment of NZ people over the time I have been with them.” – Intersex public servant

## Section Five: Inclusion for intersex public servants

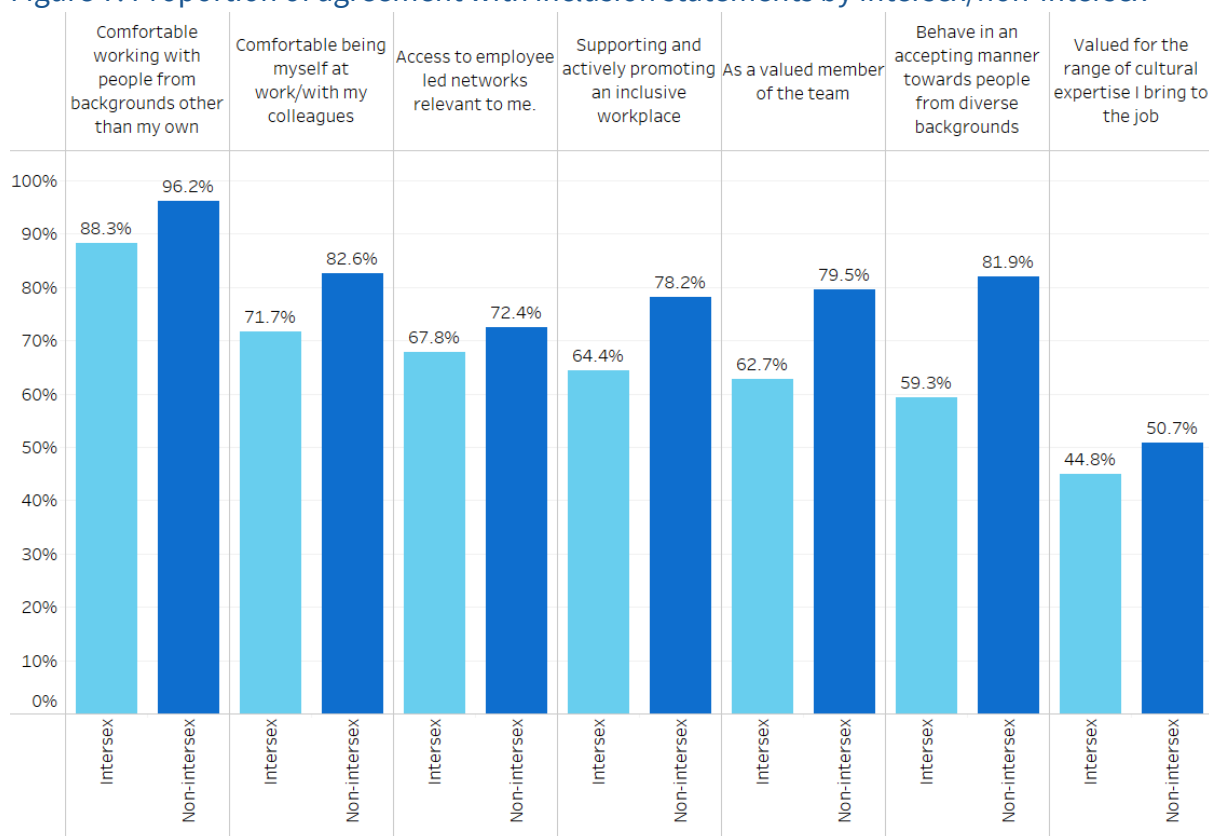
### Feelings of inclusion

83.1% of intersex public servants said everyone or most people gender them correctly, compared to 97.4% of non-intersex public servants.

Intersex public servants reported a less inclusive experience across all the inclusion measures in Te Taunaki. The areas of greatest difference between intersex and non-intersex public servants were in the extent to which people felt that:

- people in their workgroup behaved in an accepting manner towards people from diverse backgrounds (59.3% for intersex compared to 81.9% for non-intersex)
- they were accepted as a valued member of the team (62.7% for intersex compared to 79.5% for non-intersex), and
- the agency they work for supported and actively promoted an inclusive workplace (64.4% intersex compared to 78.2% for non-intersex).

Figure 7: Proportion of agreement with inclusion statements by intersex/non-intersex



Because there were few comments (42) covering all topics, we do not have enough comments to fully explore barriers to inclusion for intersex public servants. Below are the comments from intersex public servants about inclusion relating to rainbow communities. Other topics raised included flexible work, personalisation of workspaces, Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty of Waitangi training, and use of annual leave.

“Reduce the strict code dress; LGBTQ+ training; non binary toilet; extra paid annual leave for other religions holidays.”

“Teaching working groups about unconscious bias and how it impacts on their work.”

“1. Stop hiring bullies, racist, sexist people and people who sexually harass others, 2. Provide networks for like-minded/culturally different people, 3. Do something about bullying, racism, sexism, and sexual harassers instead of just pretending 'it's not that bad', 4. Provide facilities for different people to help them feel safe at work, such as inclusive.”

“It could do more to ensure its message of inclusivity is real in each site. To support this it needs to have active staff to lead this particularly in smaller sites where the culture can end up driven by one or a few people. If no changes are made with having active leaders participating and promoting an inclusive culture in all sites, [Agency] will remain the same as it was in the 80's and 90's having policies and processes that collect dust. Employ leaders who are not afraid to lead teams through new insights every day. We currently have leaders in [place] who don't encourage staff to participate in cultural and language activities. We have leaders who are afraid to challenge their managers to allow staff to participate. This has got to stop! We cannot practice being customer centric if our own people are not looked after.”

## Conclusion and next steps

The Public Service has had a dedicated diversity and inclusion programme in place since 2017. Significant progress has been made across the system, with the Public Service more diverse now than ever before. With strong leadership commitment to ensuring diversity and inclusion across the system, agencies are more focused and connected as they plan and deliver a range of diversity and inclusion initiatives at pace.

The data we have tells us that the diversity of the Public Service workforce is increasing, and most public servants feel included in their workplace. But alongside this, it also shows that people from some communities within our workforce, do not. This cannot be overlooked.

Papa Pounamu continues to develop its work programme based on Te Taunaki and deep dive data and insights (and new insights as they arise). Te Kawa Mataaho also continues to work in partnership with agencies to increase the quality of the data collected and our employee-led networks to help understand it. High-quality data and insights are critical to understanding public servants and their experiences, where progress is being made and where our collective focus should be.

Over a two-year period from 2023-2025, the Papa Pounamu co-leads and Te Kawa Mataaho will work with CARN, Rainbow Chief Executives (i.e. chief executives who champion rainbow inclusion across the system) and agencies on a focused approach to rainbow inclusion.

With a strong system foundation in place, we are well positioned to place collective focus on inclusion for public servants from these communities. Papa Pounamu is committed to supporting agencies to collect and understand their workforce data and to planning and delivering initiatives to effect change.

This approach will focus on increasing the quality and breadth of rainbow data, increasing the numbers and visibility of rainbow public servants and leaders and removing inequities and barriers to inclusion for rainbow public servants. We are ambitious and committed to doing the work we need to, in collaboration with our cross-agency ELNs.

Te Taunaki 2024 will give us more data and insights and enables us to measure the progress we make.

For more information:

- [Papa Pounamu priority areas](#)
- [Te Taunaki Public Service Census 2021](#)
- [Te Taunaki Public Service Census: Inclusion deep dive](#)
- [Workforce data](#)
- [Cross Agency Rainbow Network](#)

- [Employee Led Networks](#)
- [Rainbow inclusive language guide](#)
- [Transitioning and Gender Affirmation in the New Zealand Public Service](#)
- [Pronoun use](#)