



EXAMINING SUPER-DIVERSITY ON A GLOBAL SCALE

How communities and institutions – from the police and community groups to political parties – adapt to Auckland’s – or New Zealand’s – ‘super-diversity’ is the focus of a major study involving the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Massey University and German research institute, the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity.



Sociologist, Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley is a principal investigator along with colleagues Associate Professor Robin Peace, Professor Natalie Jackson, Dr Trudie Cain and Dr Angelique Praat in a six-year, \$5.5m study into the impacts of massive demographic changes in New Zealand. Funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), the study focus will be primarily in Auckland, where one in four people were born outside the country.

Super-diversity is the “new reality” that defines Auckland, Professor Spoonley says. And it is the reason the city is included in an international, German-based study on understanding the implications of urban super-diversity. Other cities in the study are New York, Singapore and Johannesburg.

Professor Spoonley says the speed and scale of population change in Auckland is having a profound impact on the way people live. Being able to eat yum cha for lunch, hear people chat in Mandarin, Spanish or Arabic on the bus, or opting to seek treatment from a Chinese herbal medicine practitioner are all manifestations of the “everyday cosmopolitanism” that is now intrinsic to life in super-diverse Auckland, he says.

According to Statistics New Zealand’s latest census from 2013, there are 213 ethnic groups represented in New Zealand. Significant changes were the size of the non-majority populations, with 23 per cent of Auckland now Asian.



Professor Spoonley says the \$5.5m in MBIE funding for the Waikato University and Massey University project on diversity in New Zealand (titled Capturing the Diversity Dividend, or CaDDANZ) will be used for a range of projects that will ultimately provide new insights to help guide policy development.

One recent project named Nga Tangata Oho Mairangi, which has been managed by Dr Trudie Cain (School of People, Environment and Planning), maps the regional impacts of demographic and economic change in New Zealand now and in the future. It investigates how communities negotiate the social changes and possible tensions that arise when migrants move to an area, exploring issues like job security, cultural and societal values, and how best to create social cohesion between New Zealand-born citizens and migrants.

CaDDANZ will begin by focussing on a notably ethnically diverse suburb to interview and film residents about how they perceive, interact with and understand other cultures in their neighbourhood.

“What does it mean to be a New Zealander – or and Aucklander – in the 21st century? The question is the same [as in the 1970s and 1980s], but the answer is going to be different,” Professor Spoonley says.

Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley is the Pro Vice-Chancellor for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Massey University. He is one of New Zealand’s leading academics and a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Dr Trudie Cain is a Senior Lecturer in the School of People, Environment and Planning. Before joining Massey University she worked for the Auckland Council.

DIVERSITY AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN NEW ZEALAND

