

2024 Diversity Report

Irirangi Te Motu
NZ On Air



December | 2024

Miles From Nowhere,
The Gibson Group, for Sky Open

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Introduction

NZ On Air is tasked with reflecting Aotearoa's identity and culture onscreen. An effective way to support this goal is to have diversity within the creative sectors that produce local media. For the past nine years, we have collected information about the **gender** and **ethnic diversity of the above-the-line¹ key personnel of NZ On Air-funded screen content**, as well as the **regional spread of their production companies**.²

This information is made available in our annual Diversity Reports, which identify industry trends and contribute to the wider discourse around gender, ethnic, and regional production representation across the local screen industry. Although our funded content comprises a small amount of total local output, we do not expect the trends overall to be significantly different.

We have now gathered comparable Scripted and Factual/Non-Fiction screen content data from March 2016 to June 2024. In 2021, data collection was extended to the end of June to align this survey with the relevant financial year. This increased the number of productions surveyed over previous years but had no significant effect on the percentage splits across gender or ethnicity for that year. Other changes implemented in 2021 included gathering data on **age** and **disability**. The 2021 survey also included **locations of principal photography** and **locations of production companies** to better reflect the regional spread of production activity. We have now collected this data over three years and are able to provide our first sets of comparisons.

The 2023 Diversity Report used population data from the 2018 Census. In June 2024, the results of the 2023 Census were released to the public, and this report uses those latest figures. This means that we were unable to make direct comparisons with the population statistics in the 2023 report because the population benchmarks for ethnicities and gender have changed.

We now report on diversity in funded Music in a separate report.

¹ Above-the-line roles are directors, writers/researchers, and producers.

² All information is provided directly by the personnel with their informed consent and is de-identified within this Report.

Executive summary

The 2024 Diversity Report includes survey responses from **212** Scripted and Factual/Non-Fiction screen projects funded by NZ On Air and delivered between July 2023 and the end of June 2024. Having nine consecutive years of data means we can report on consistent trends in several areas of the NZ On Air funded production sectors.

The key findings are:

Ethnicity

- Māori and Pacific, along with Middle Eastern, Latin American or African (MELAA) representation is improving.
- Māori creatives made up 27% of producers and 33% of directors, the highest rates in both categories since reporting began, and exceeding the population benchmark of 18%.
- The percentage of Pacific directors (18%) and writers (20%) reached all-time highs, with both figures doubling the population benchmark of 9%.
- MELAA representation has increased, with 3.1% of producers, 3% of writers, and 2% of directors coming from MELAA backgrounds. These results are equal-to or above the MELAA population benchmark of 2%. However, these results are likely inflated by the inclusion of *Miles from Nowhere*, a scripted show which featured multiple MELAA key creatives.
- Asian creatives are under-represented. Asian representation fell below the population benchmark (17%) in producer, director, and writer roles.
- The historical over-representation of European³ creatives is decreasing but still constitutes over 50% of all roles in all categories. The proportion of European directors has been declining since 2018, from 81% to 56% and European writers made up 52% of writing roles, the lowest figure since reporting began. However, 100% of roles in the 'Event' genre were performed by European creatives. Additionally, 68% of producers were European. This is statistically proportionate to the number of New Zealanders from European backgrounds, who make up 68% of the population.

³ The European category also includes NZ European

Gender

- Females outnumbered males in six genres – Children, Current Affairs, Development, Documentary, Drama, and General Factual, with male creatives outnumbering females in Comedy and Event genres.
- For the ninth consecutive year, female producers have outnumbered their male counterparts.
- Writing is the category with the most gender parity, with males taking 47.5% of roles, women taking 48.5% of roles, and gender diverse writers occupying the remaining 2%.

Geography

- Auckland remains the predominant locale for principal photography and production companies, though the region has seen a drop in representation from 2023.

Producers of Funded Content – Gender and Ethnic Diversity

212 projects were surveyed this year (1 July 2023 to June 30 2024), which included **244** individual producers performing **357** producer roles.

Gender

- Female producers of funded content continued to outnumber male producers for the ninth consecutive year. Females filled 60% of producing roles, very slightly down from the previous year's 62%.
- Male producers performed 38% of roles, up marginally from 37% in 2023.
- Gender diverse producers made up 2% of roles, a minor increase from 1% in 2023. This result is slightly higher than the Census average for gender diverse New Zealanders which is 1.1%.⁴
- Since 2017, the wide split between the male and female producers has remained relatively consistent, ranging from the smallest gap of 13% in 2018 to the widest gap of 25% in 2023. It remains much wider than the split reported in the 2023 Census, which indicates that females (constituting 50.3% of society) outnumber males (who make up 49.3%) by only 0.5%.

Ethnic Diversity

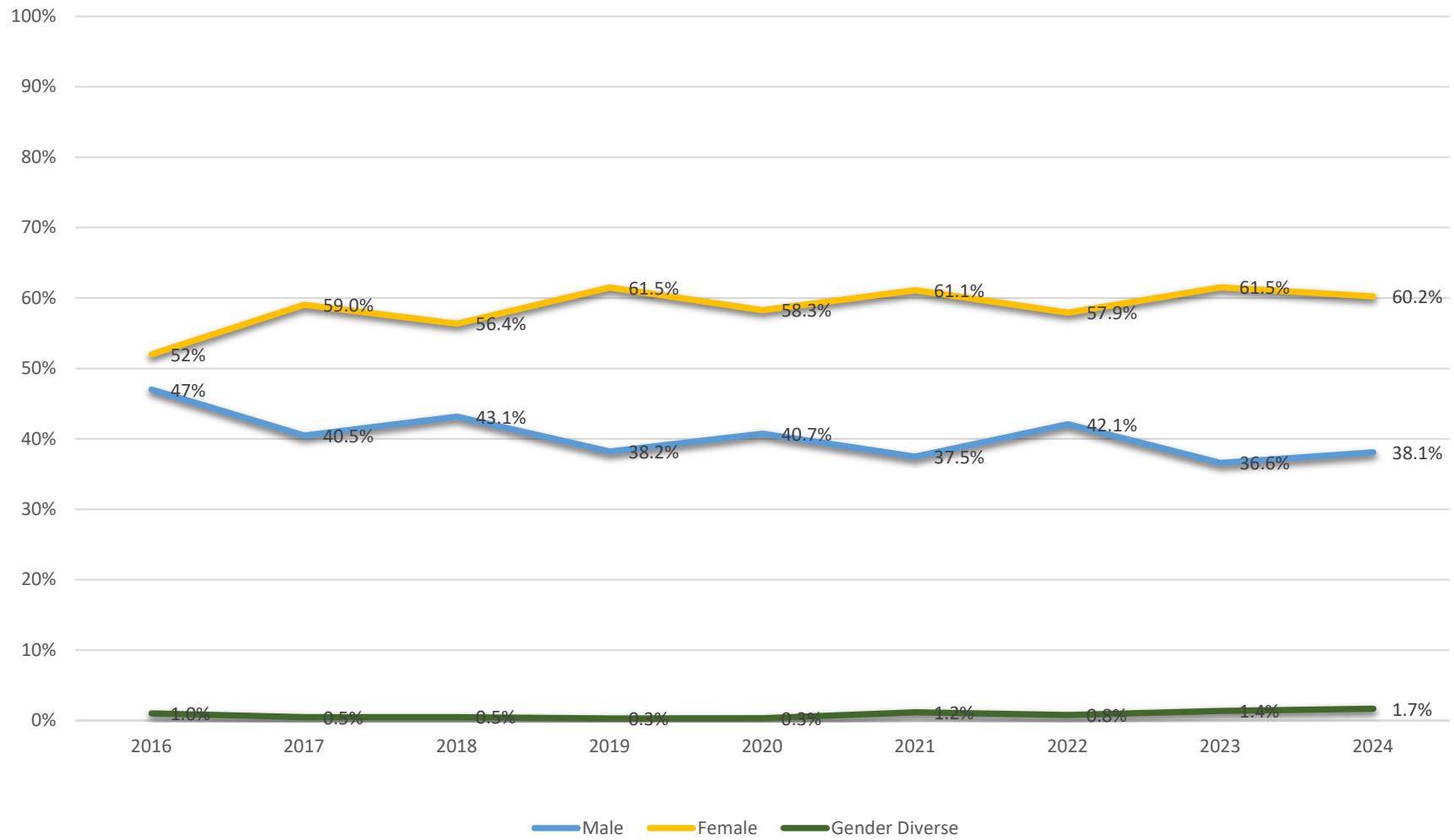
- After a drop in 2023 to 61%, the proportion of European producers increased by 7 points to 68%. This percentage is exactly in line with 2023 Census statistics, which show that 68% of the population are of European descent. 2024 is the first year since 2018 to have seen an increase in European producers (on the previous year).
- 2024 saw the highest rate of Māori producers (27%) since reporting began, up 4 points from 2023. Census figures show that 17.7% of the population identifies as Māori.
- Pacific producers made up 14%, up two points from last year. Pacific Peoples make up 8.9% of the overall New Zealand population.
- The number of producers identifying as Asian dropped slightly to 10%, which is lower than the 17% of New Zealanders who identify as one or more Asian ethnicity, but this result is the second-highest since reporting began.

⁴ The only options for gender identification in the 2018 Census were 'male' and 'female' which is why the population statistics in these two categories total 100%. The option to add a 'gender diverse' category was implemented in the 2023 census. This figure includes people who selected 'intersex' and/or 'gender diverse'.

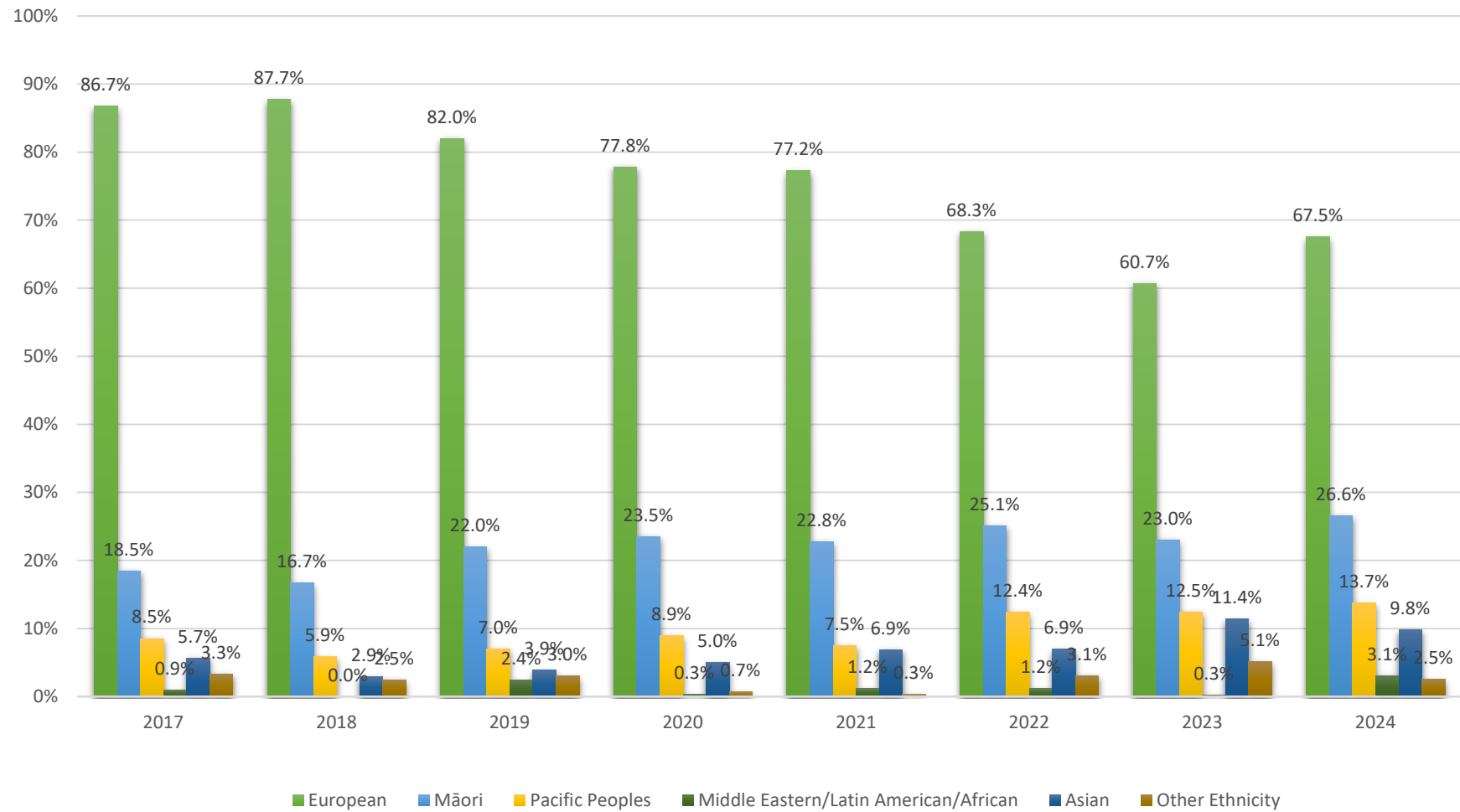
- 3.1% of producers (totalling 11 individuals) identified as Middle Eastern, Latin American or African (MELAA), the highest ever in nine years. This is above the census MELAA population figure of 1.9% and a rise from 2023, where only one producer (1% of the total) came from a MELAA background.⁵

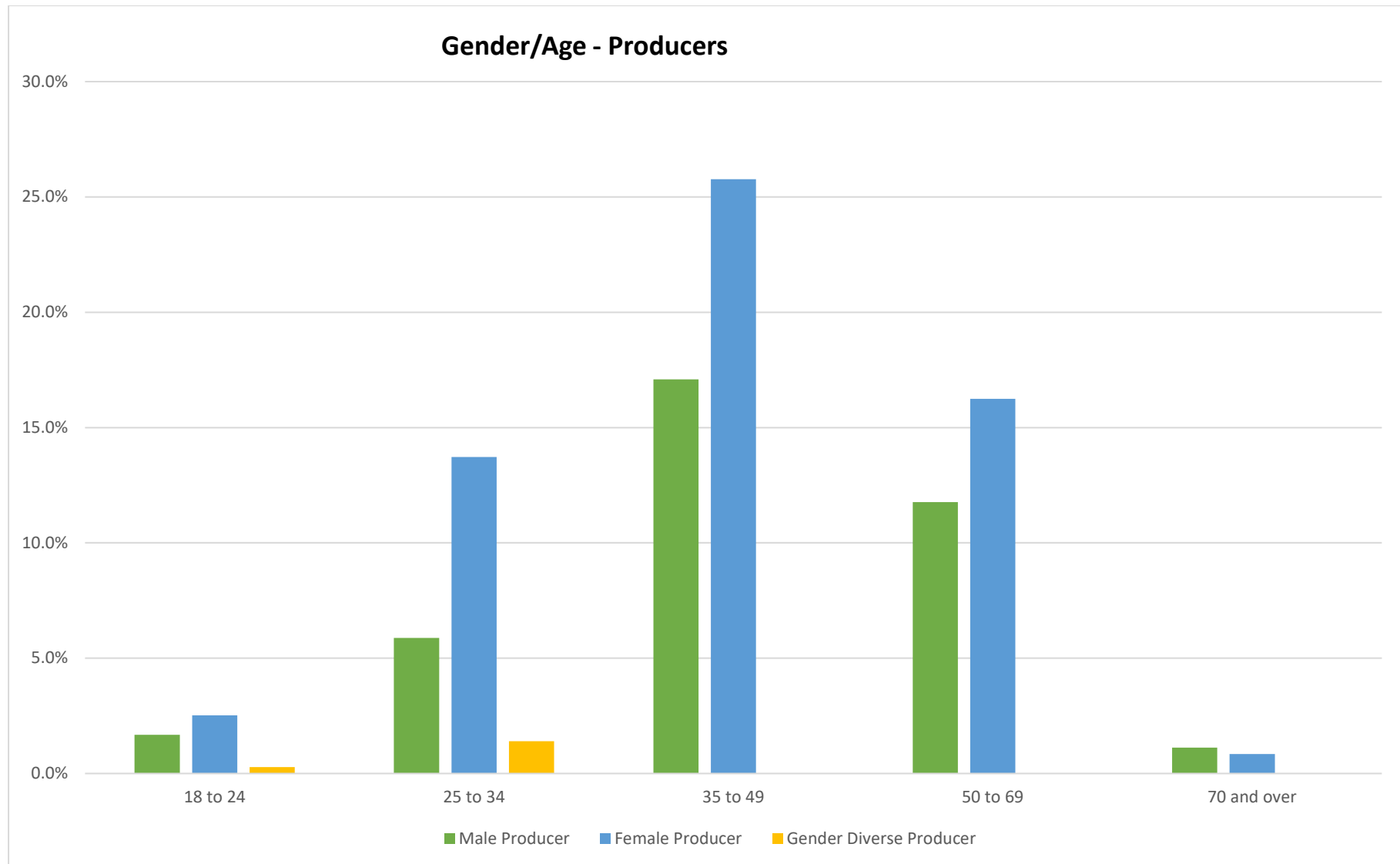
⁵ As mentioned prior, *Miles from Nowhere* accounted for a large portion of this figure

Producers by Gender



Producers by Ethnicity





Directors of Funded Content – Gender and Ethnic Diversity

This year's survey includes **210** unique directors performing 247 director roles.

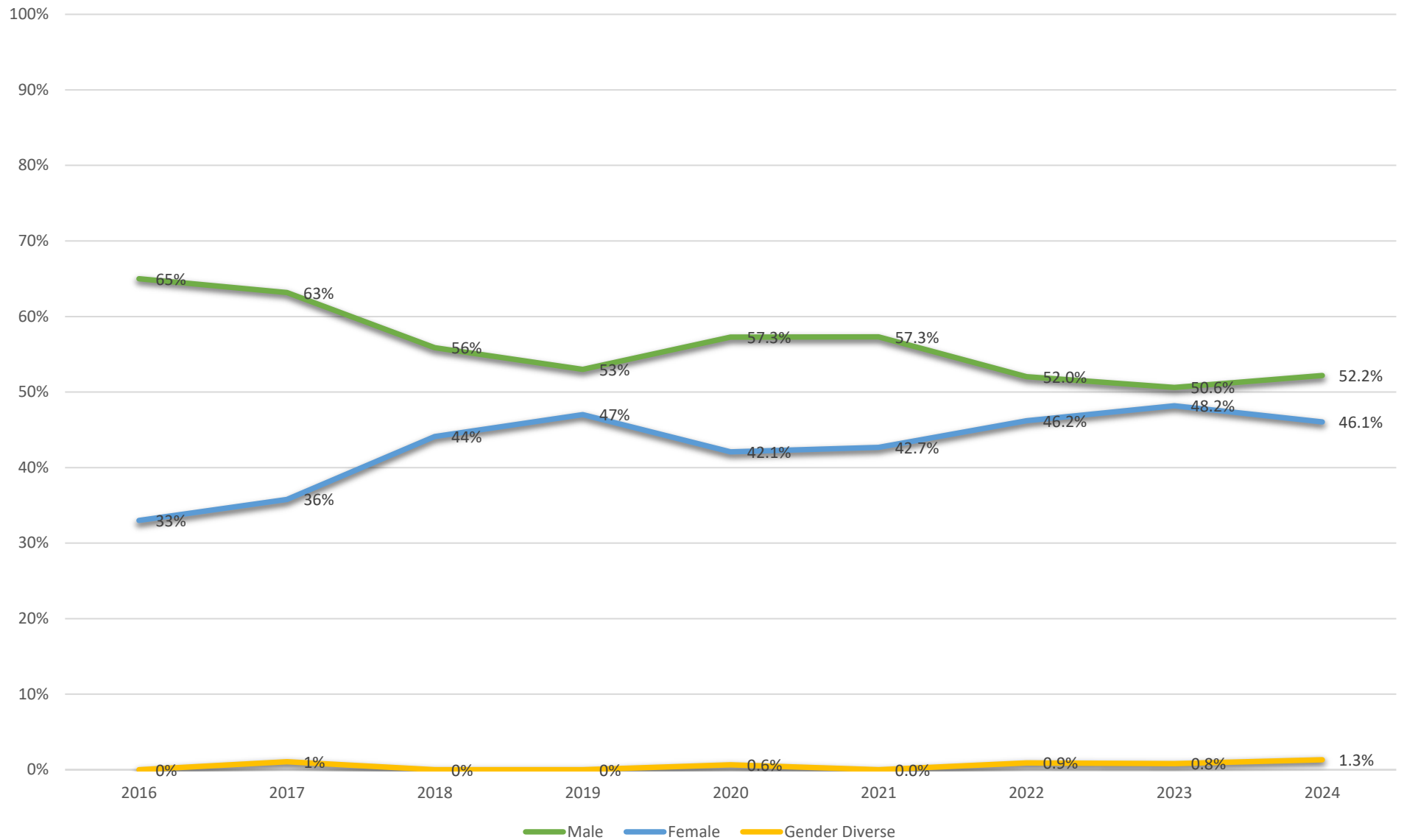
Gender

- Male directors continue to outnumber female directors, with 52% being male and 46% being female (an equal result to 2022's figures) but this is the second-smallest gap between the genders. 2023 had the smallest ever difference (of 2.4%) but the figures were impacted by the inclusion of one project (*Kāinga*) on which eight female directors had collaborated.
- 2024 had the highest number and proportion of gender diverse directors ever at 1.3%, up from 0.8% in 2023.

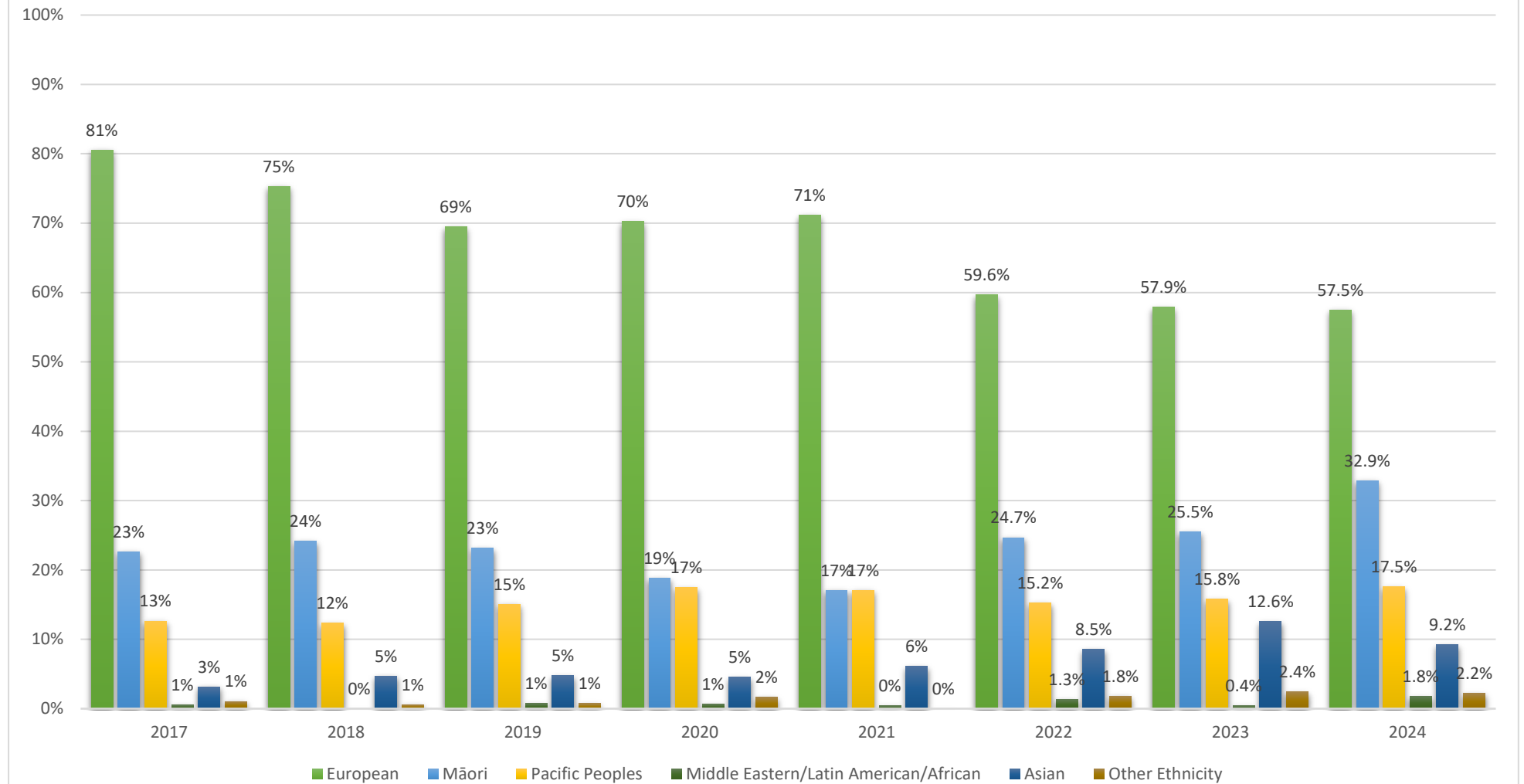
Ethnic Diversity

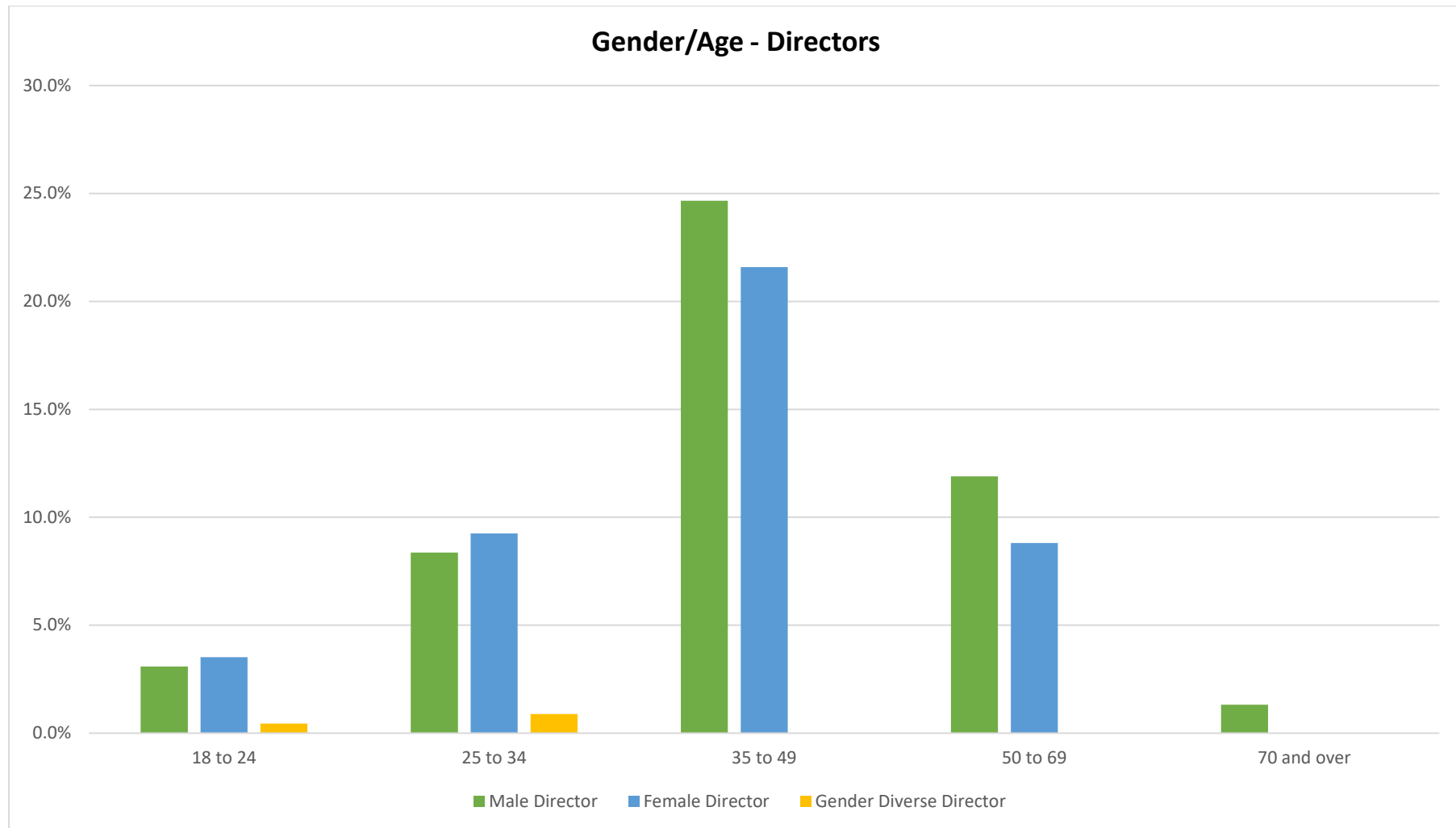
- 2024 had the lowest proportion of directors identifying as European (57.5%) over the past nine years of reporting, down a marginal 0.4% from 2023. 2017 had the highest proportion at 81% and this figure declined progressively between 2018 (75%) – 2020 (70%), increasing slightly in 2021 (71%) before dropping 11 points in 2022 (60%).
- This year, 33% of directors of funded content identified as Māori, the highest percentage since reporting began. This figure is almost double the Census population figures for Māori which are 17.8%, and a 7-point increase from 2023.
- 2024 also had the highest percentage of Pacific directors at 18%, slightly above 16% in 2023, and almost double the Census population figures for Pacific peoples (9%).
- The proportion of Asian-identifying directors dropped to 9% from 2023's 12.6%. However, as discussed above, 2023's directorial figures were influenced by one project which accounted for eight individual Asian directors. 9% remains the second-highest figure (tied with 2022) yet this is still below the Asian population benchmark of 17%.
- 2% of directors came from Middle Eastern/Latin American/African backgrounds, up from 0.4% in 2023.
- Ethnicities in the 'Other' category made up the remaining percentage of 2.4%.

Directors by Gender



Directors by Ethnicity

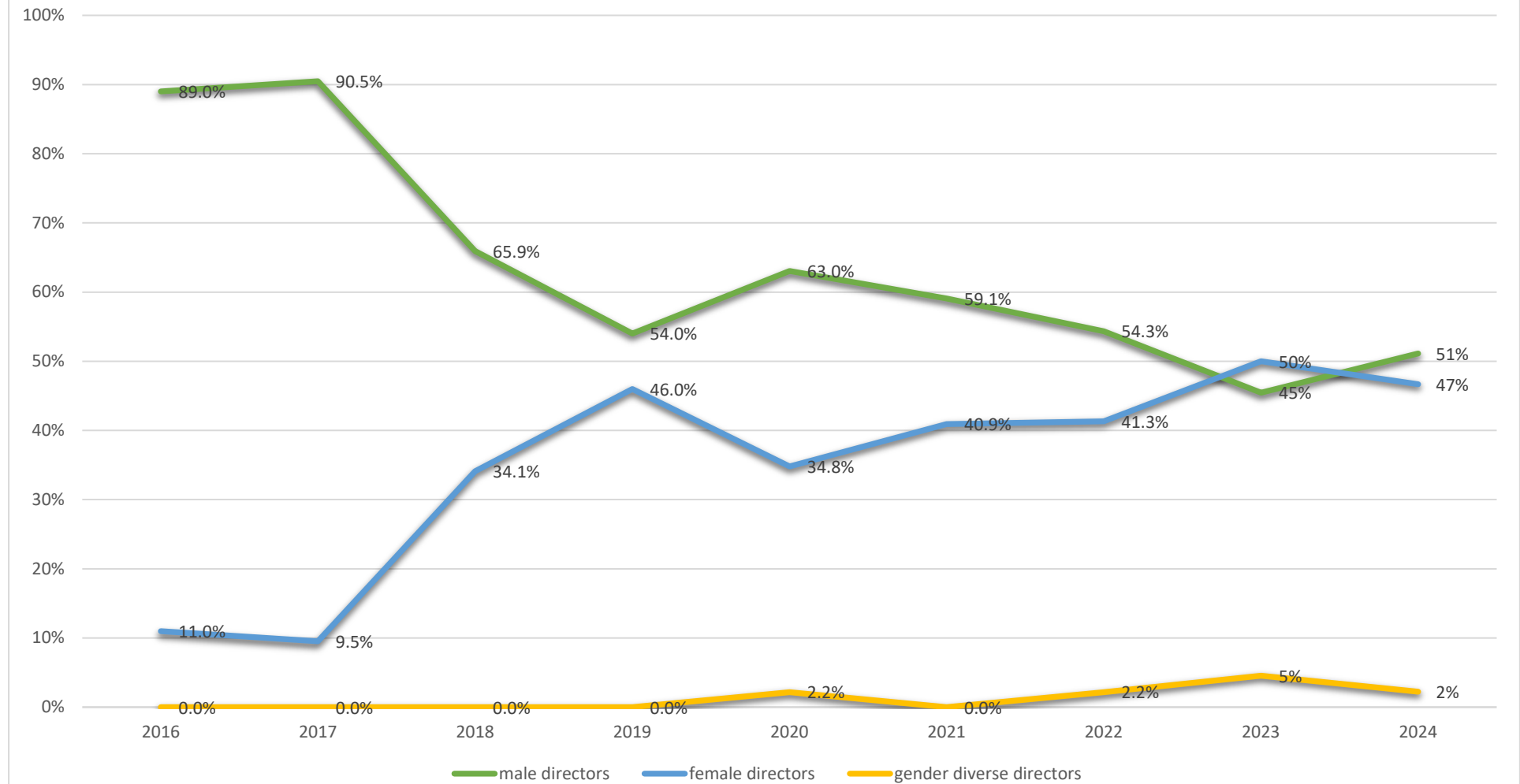




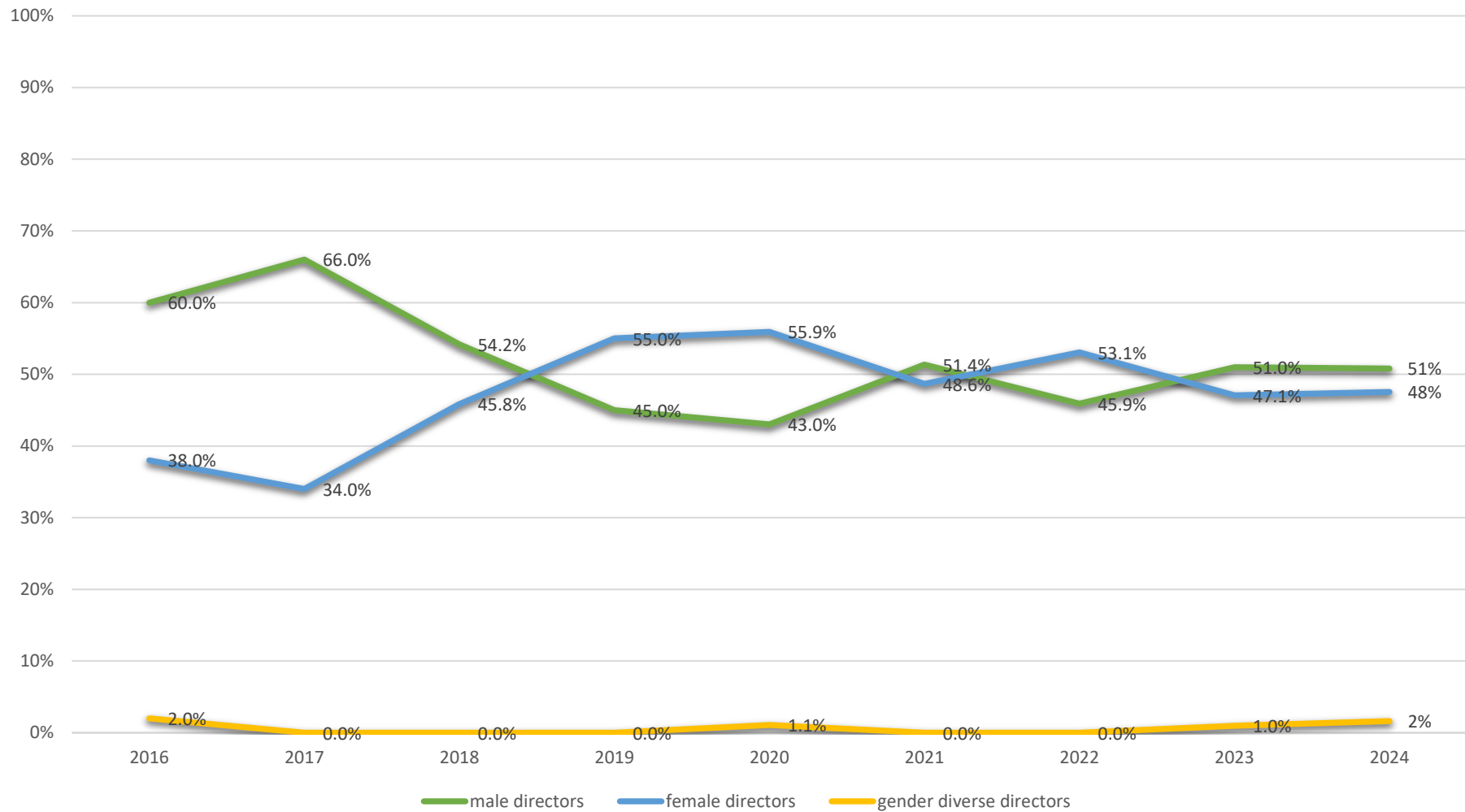
Directors of Funded Content – Gender by Genre

- Last year, female-identifying directors of Drama projects (including Comedy) outnumbered male-identifying directors for the first time in the history of this report. This figure was partly attributable to one project, *Kāinga*, which featured contributions from eight pan-Asian female directors. This year, female directors dropped 3 points to 47%, which is still the second-highest number recorded. Male directors of Drama and Comedy projects rose to 51%, up 6 points from 2023.
- Since 2018, Documentary projects have seen the most even split between male and female directors. In 2024, female directors made up 48% of Documentary projects and male directors constituted 51%.
- This year saw an increase in the gap between the number of male and female directors of Children's content, with female directors going from 45% in 2023 to 41% in 2024, and male directors rising from 55% to 59%.
- Across all genres, directing has consistently seen low-to-no rates of gender diverse participants, with 2% of all Drama and Documentary directors being gender diverse and no gender diverse directors in the Children's content genre.

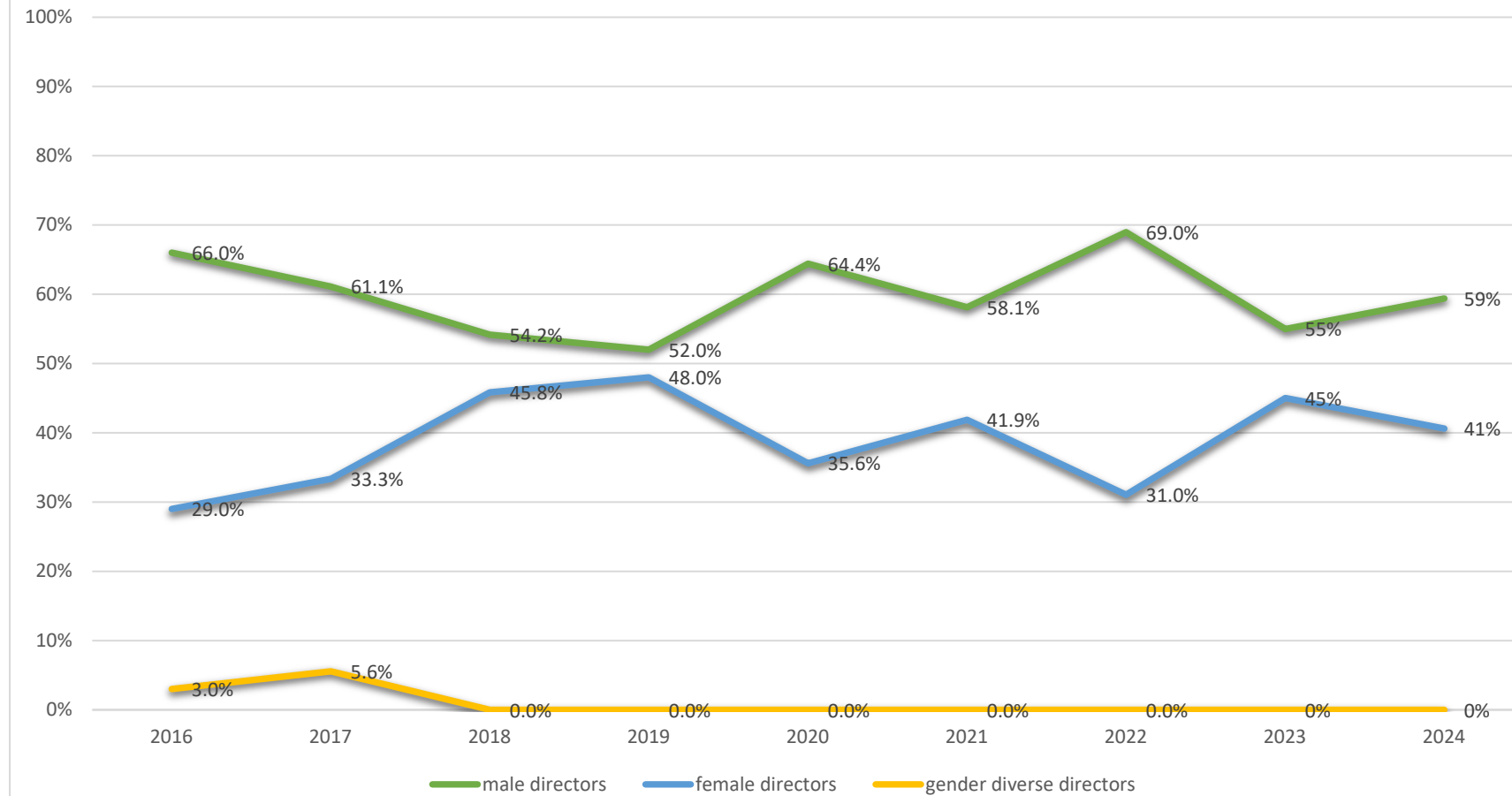
Directors by Gender - Drama



Directors by Gender - Documentary



Directors by Gender - Children's



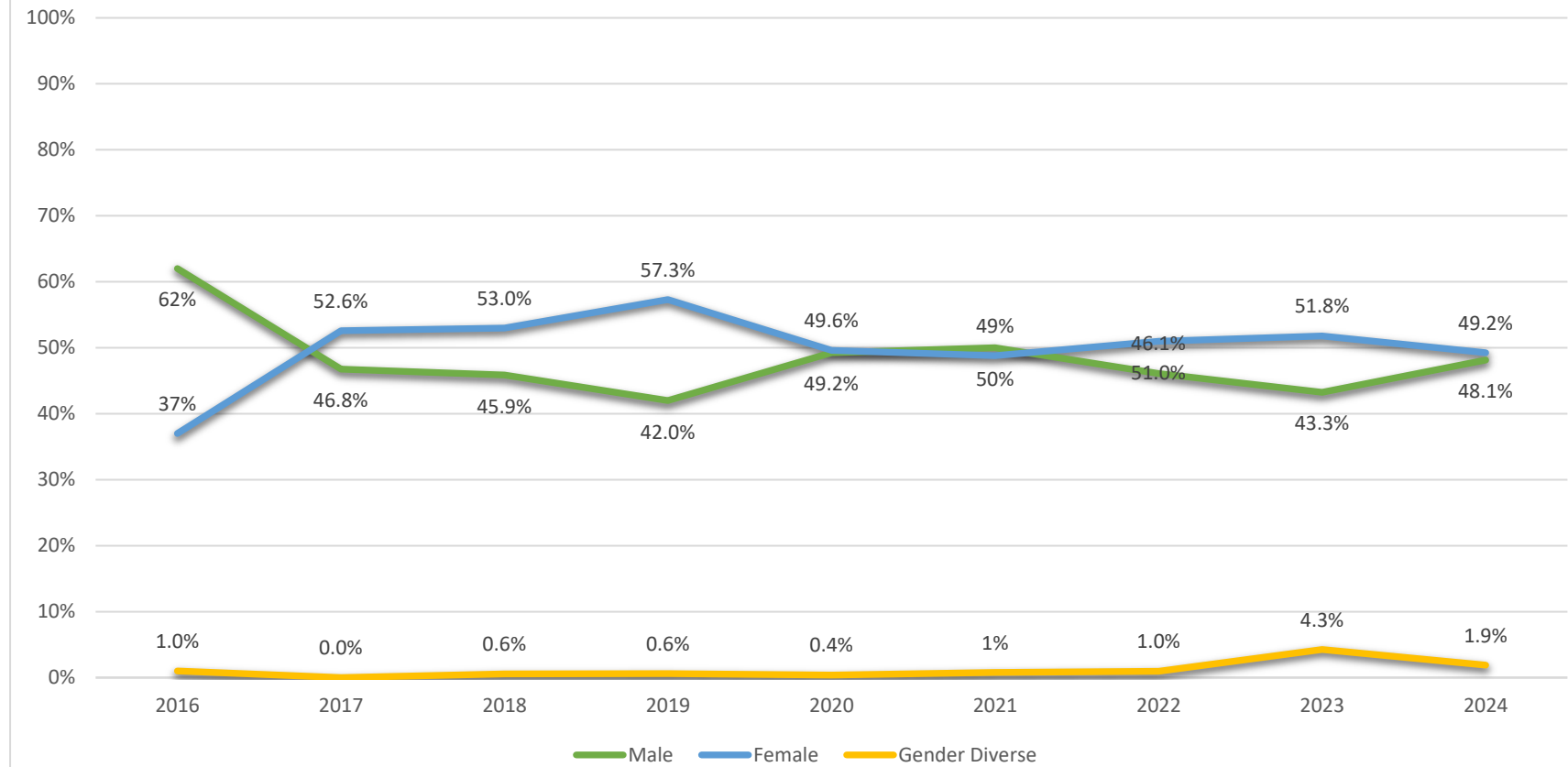
Writers of Funded Content – Gender and Ethnic Diversity

This year's survey involved **244** unique writers performing **266** writing (or researching) roles.

Gender

- In 2024, male writers made up 47.5% of roles, female writers made up 48.5%, and gender diverse writers constituted the remaining 2%.
- Female writers continue to outnumber male writers by a small margin, which is consistent with each year of data except 2021, where males represented 50% of writers and females made up 48.8%.
- The percentage of gender diverse writers dropped from 2023's record high of 4.3% to 2%, the second-highest recorded result.

Writers by Gender

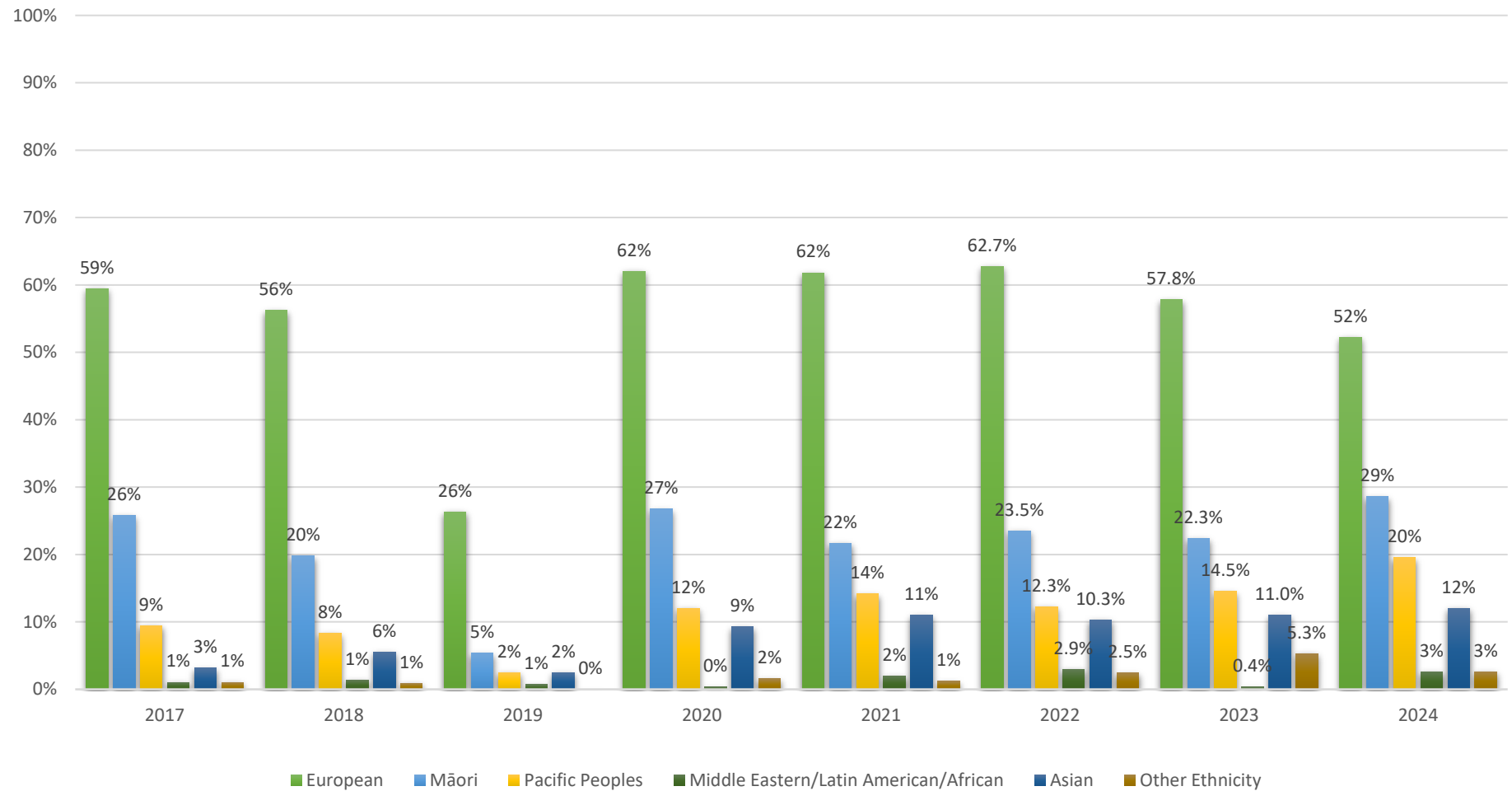


Ethnic Diversity

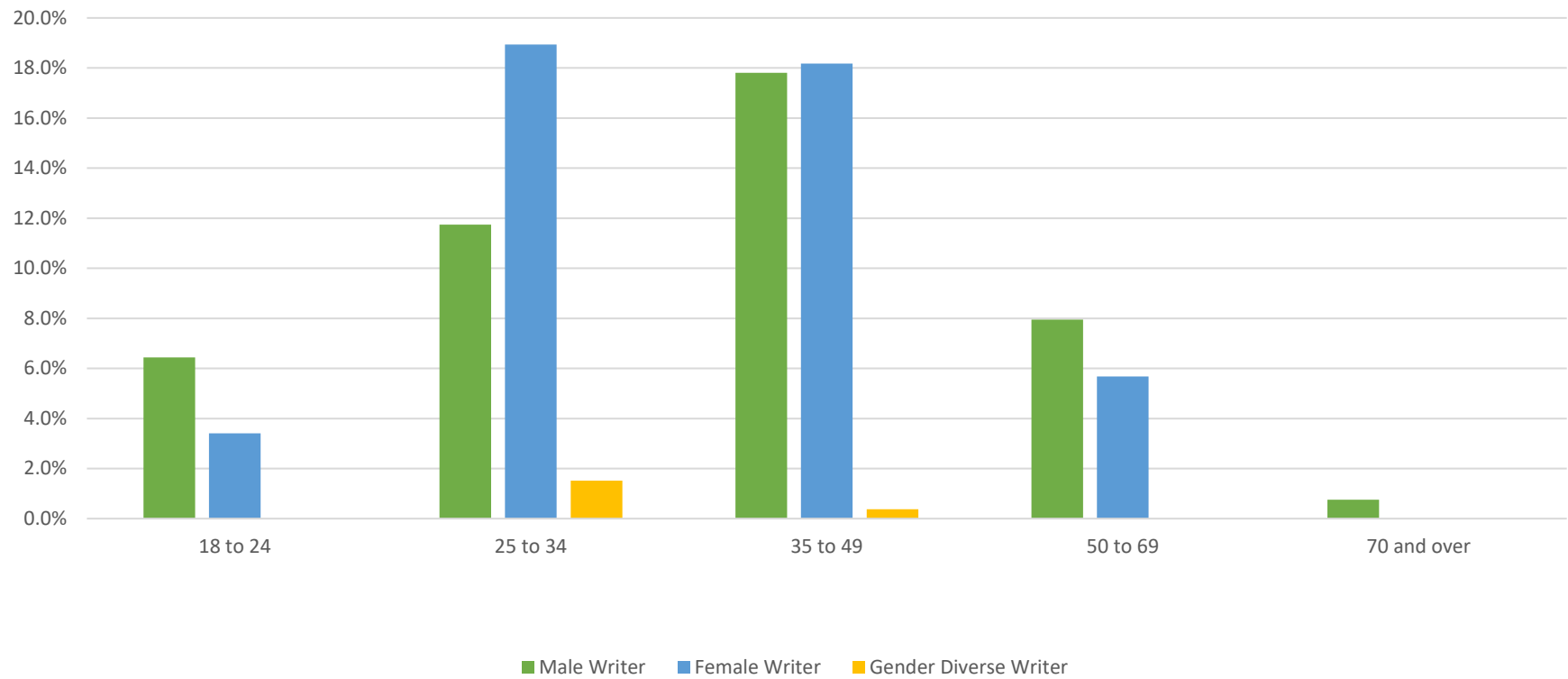
- 52% of writers identified as being of European ethnicity, which is the lowest figure recorded since reporting began.
- Māori-identifying writers increased from 22% in 2023 to 29% in 2024. This is the highest percentage ever recorded for Māori writers, with the second nearest figure being 27% in 2020. Even at the lowest rate of representation (20% in 2018), Māori writers have consistently exceeded the 2023 Census population figures which put Māori at 18% of the population.
- Pacific Peoples in writer roles increased to 20%, up 5.5 points from 2023, which is the highest percentage ever recorded in this category. This is the second year in a row that this percentage has increased. Pacific writer figures have remained between 12 – 14.5% since 2020, exceeding the 2023 Census figures for Pacific Peoples (9%), with all years beforehand sitting below 10%.
- Asian-identifying writers made up 12% of writing roles, up 1 point from the previous year, and the highest figure to date. Prior to 2022, the proportion of Asian writers had grown steadily from 3% in 2017 to 11% in 2021. These figures remain below the Census statistics that show the Asian population at 17%.
- 3% of writers were from Middle Eastern, Latin American, or African (MELAA) backgrounds, up from 0.4% in 2023, and above the 2023 census statistics (2%)⁶.
- Writers from other ethnicities made up the remaining 3%.

⁶ As mentioned prior, *Miles from Nowhere* contributed to this figure

Writers by Ethnicity



Gender/Age - Writers



Key Creatives (Producers, Directors and Writers) by Age

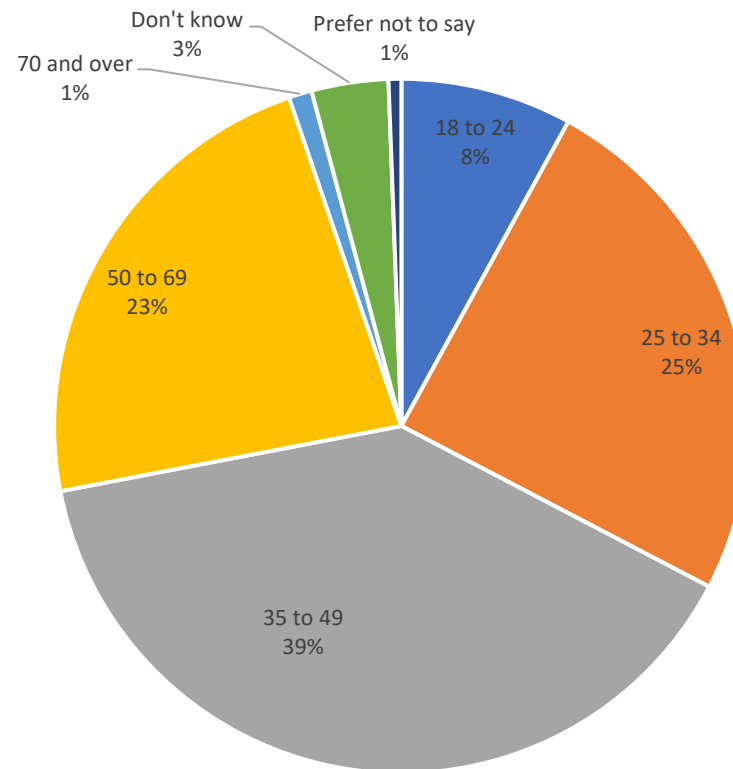
2024 is the fourth year that this survey has asked the age of participants. This data was gathered by age ranges/bands (18-24, 25-34, 35- 49, 50-69, 70 and over) rather than specific ages⁷. Participants could also state 'Prefer not to say' or 'Don't know'⁸.

- The most populated age band continues to be 35-49, with 39% of key creatives falling into that range, though this is down four points from 2023.
- The second-highest age band was 25-34 (25%) followed closely by 50-69 (23%).
- 8% of key creatives fell into the 18-24 category, up 3 points from 2023.
- These trends were consistent across the Director and Producer categories, though Writer roles had a more even split between the 25-39 and 35-49 age bands.

⁷ These bands are consistent with those used by Statistics NZ regarding engagement with industry and employment.

⁸ The 'Don't know' option is in the instance that the production company submitting the survey did not know the age range of a key creative.

Age Bands 2024



Key Creatives by Disability Status

This is the fourth year that the survey has asked about disability status. Participants were asked if they had a long-term impairment that restricts their participation in everyday activities.⁹

- According to the most recent Stats NZ figures on disability, 24% of New Zealanders have a physical, sensory, learning, mental health or other disability.¹⁰
- This year, 97% of respondents answered No, 1.6% said Yes, and 1.2% did not give an answer. These figures are almost identical to the results in 2023.

⁹ This question aligns with the phrasing used by Statistics NZ around disability-related questions.

¹⁰ The most recent nationwide figures are from a 2013 Stats NZ survey. A follow-up survey was conducted in 2023 but the results had not been released at the time of writing this report nor had they been included in the 2023 Census reports.

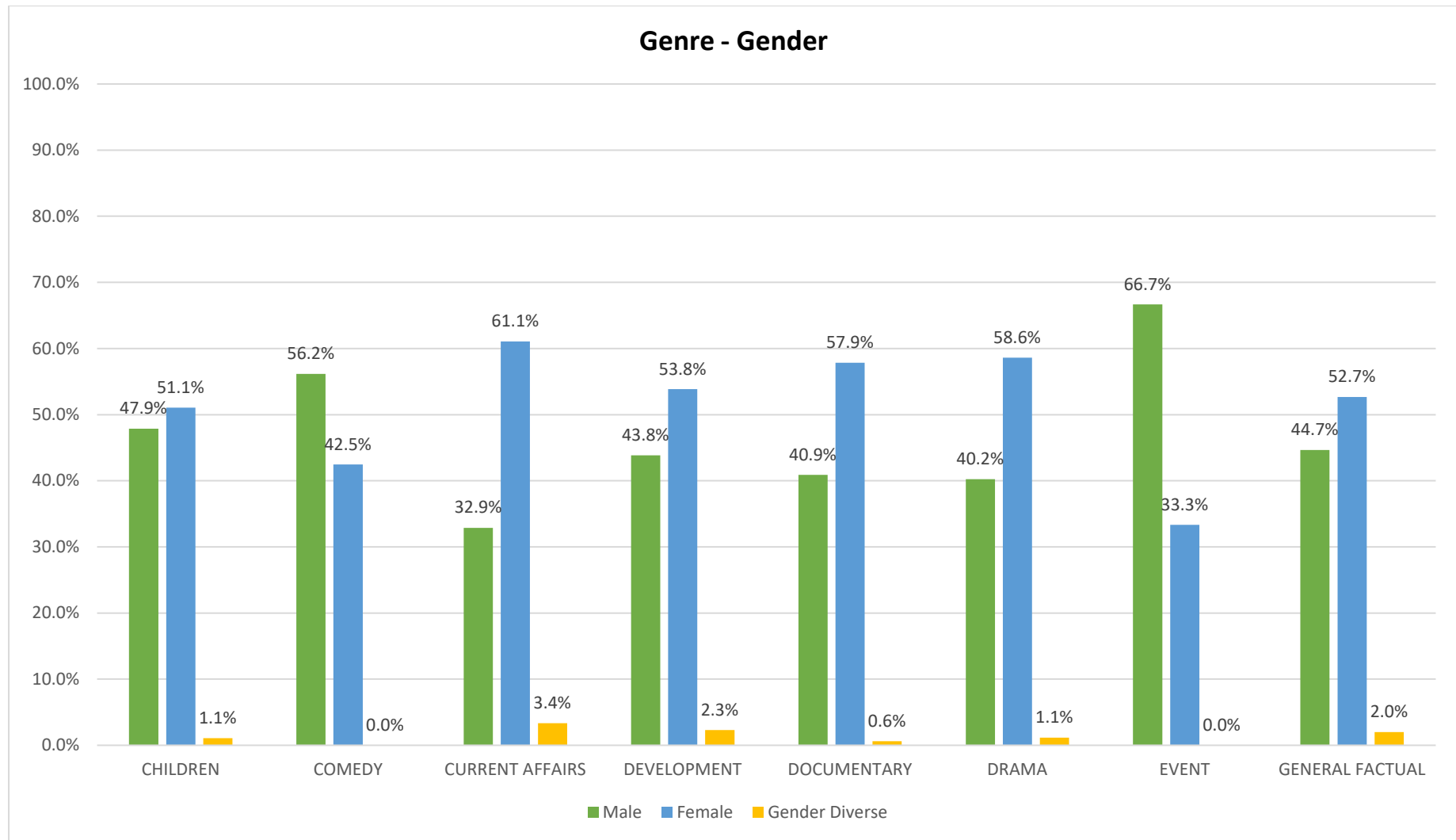
Key Creatives by Genre: Gender and Ethnicity

Gender

The split of the gender and ethnicity of writers, producers and directors across the genre¹¹ of projects can be seen in the charts below.

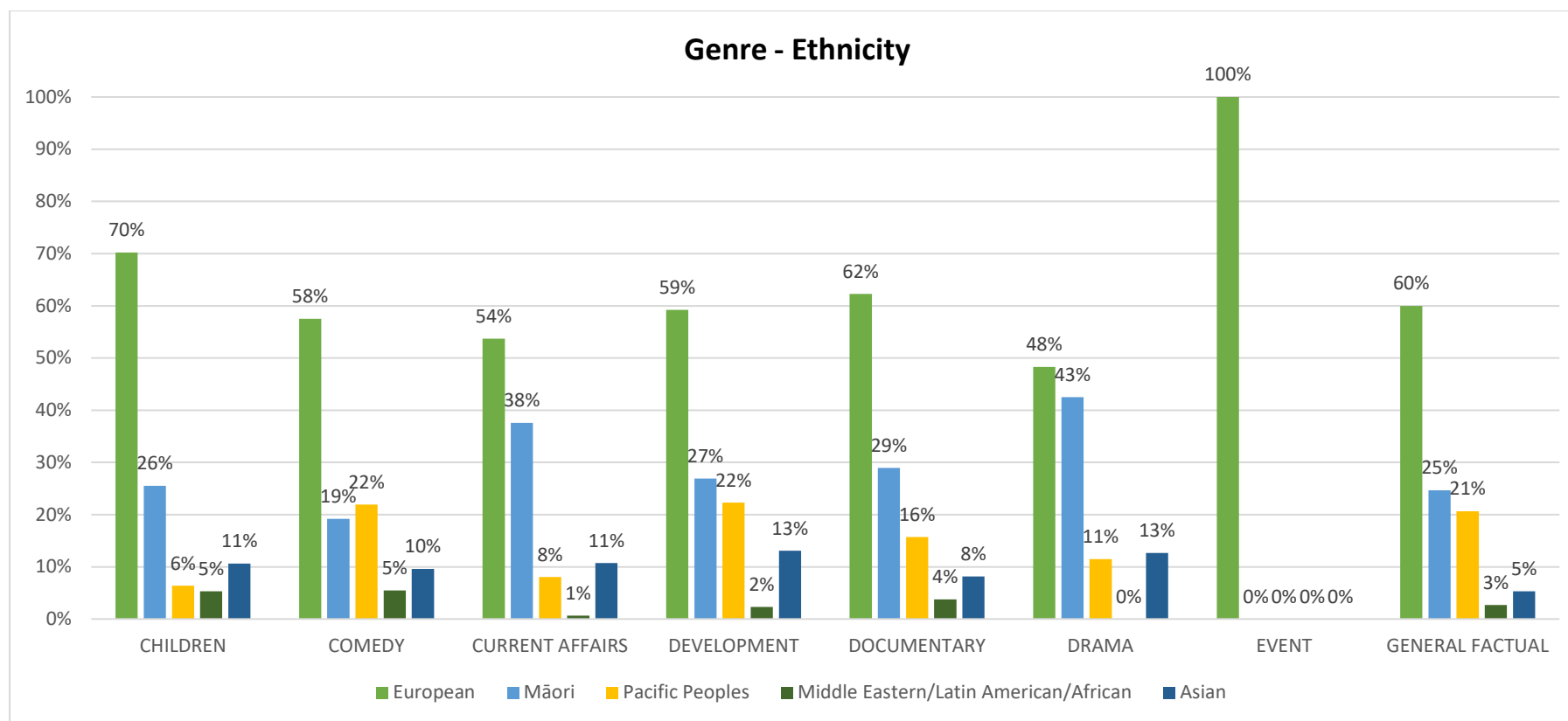
- Females outnumbered males in four genres – Children, Current Affairs, Development, Documentary, Drama, and General Factual, with male creatives outnumbering females in Comedy and Event genres.
- Gender Diverse creatives were represented in six genres (Children, Current Affairs, Development, Documentary, Drama, and General Factual) an increase from 2023, where they were involved across four genres (Children, Development, Documentary, and Drama).

¹¹ For the sake of convenience, the development stream has been included under the umbrella of 'genre'



Ethnicity

- Key Creatives from European backgrounds continue to make up the highest percentages in every genre, with the lowest proportion seen in Drama (48% - up 14 points from 2023). In the Event genre, 100% of creatives identified as European.
- The Drama genre had the highest proportion of Māori creatives with 43%, up significantly from 29% in 2023. The second-highest genre was Current Affairs, which saw Māori in 38% of roles, a 20-point increase from 2023.
- Pacific creatives occupied 22% of roles in the Comedy and Development genres (their highest representation) and 6% of roles in the Children's genre (their second-lowest representation after Events).
- Key creatives from Asian backgrounds made up 13% of the Drama and Development categories, with their lowest representation rate in General Factual (5%).



Regional Spread of Production Companies

For the ninth year in a row, Auckland remained the location with the highest proportion of production companies with NZ On Air-funded projects. However, 2024 saw this lead drop by 8 points, down to 73% from the previous year's 81%. This is the second-lowest Auckland figure since 2018. Auckland continues to be the most populous region in the country (with 1.6 million residents¹²) and contributes 38% of New Zealand's GDP.¹³

Wellington was home to 9% of production companies, up 1 percent from 2023, and Christchurch remained steady at 1%. The remaining 17% of production companies were located in other cities around New Zealand, up 10 points from 2023.

Regional Spread of Principal Photography

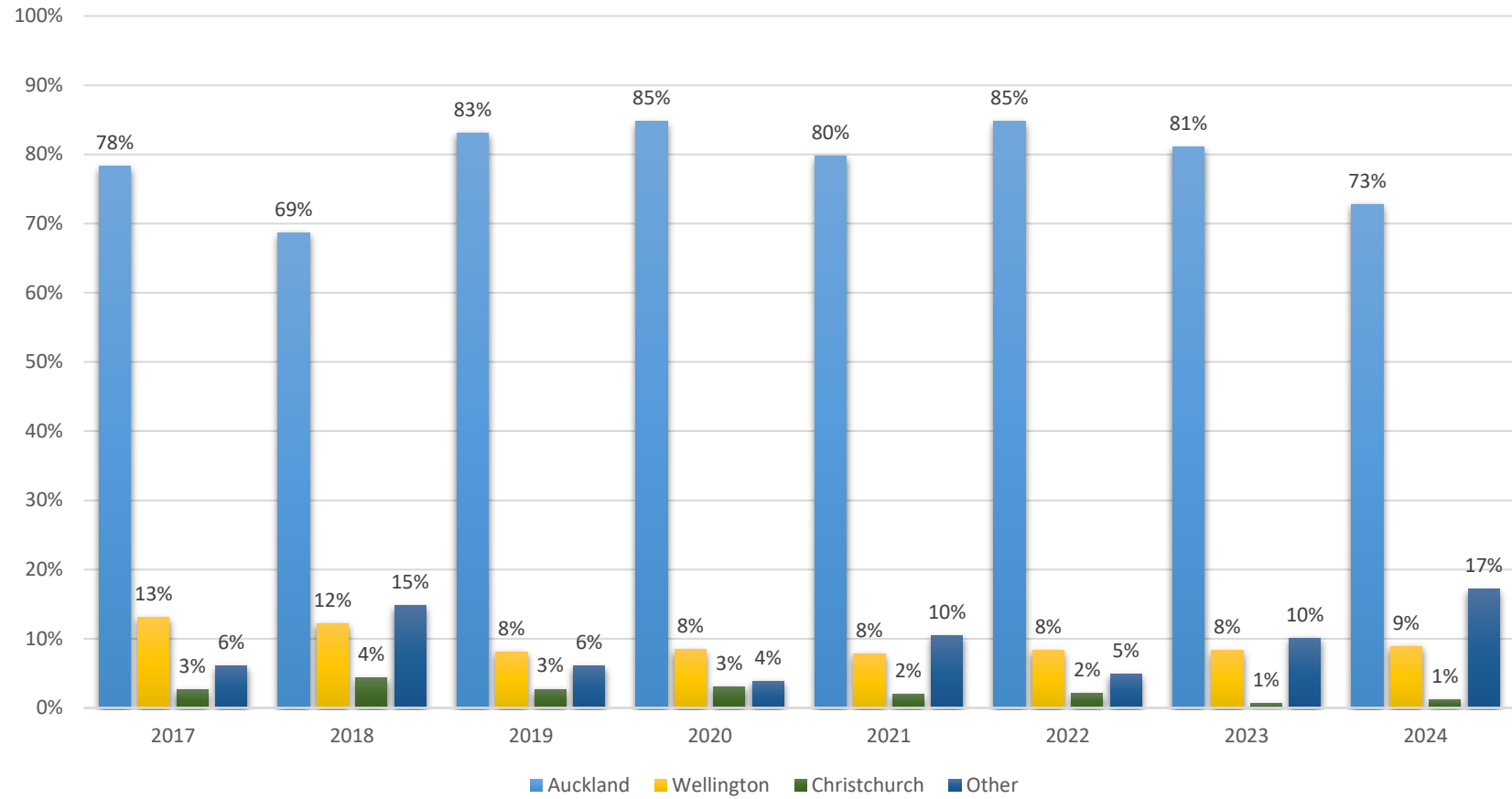
This is the fourth year that production companies were asked to report the main location of their principal photography. This information gives us a better measure of the spread of production activity across the motu.

Auckland remained the leading production location with 51% of shooting occurring there, a decrease from 59% the prior year. Production in Wellington increased to 8% (up 1 point), while Christchurch also increased by 1 point to host 2% of principal photography. New Zealand and 'other' locations comprised the remaining 33%, the same figure as 2023, and a marked rise on 2022, where both categories hosted 16% of productions.

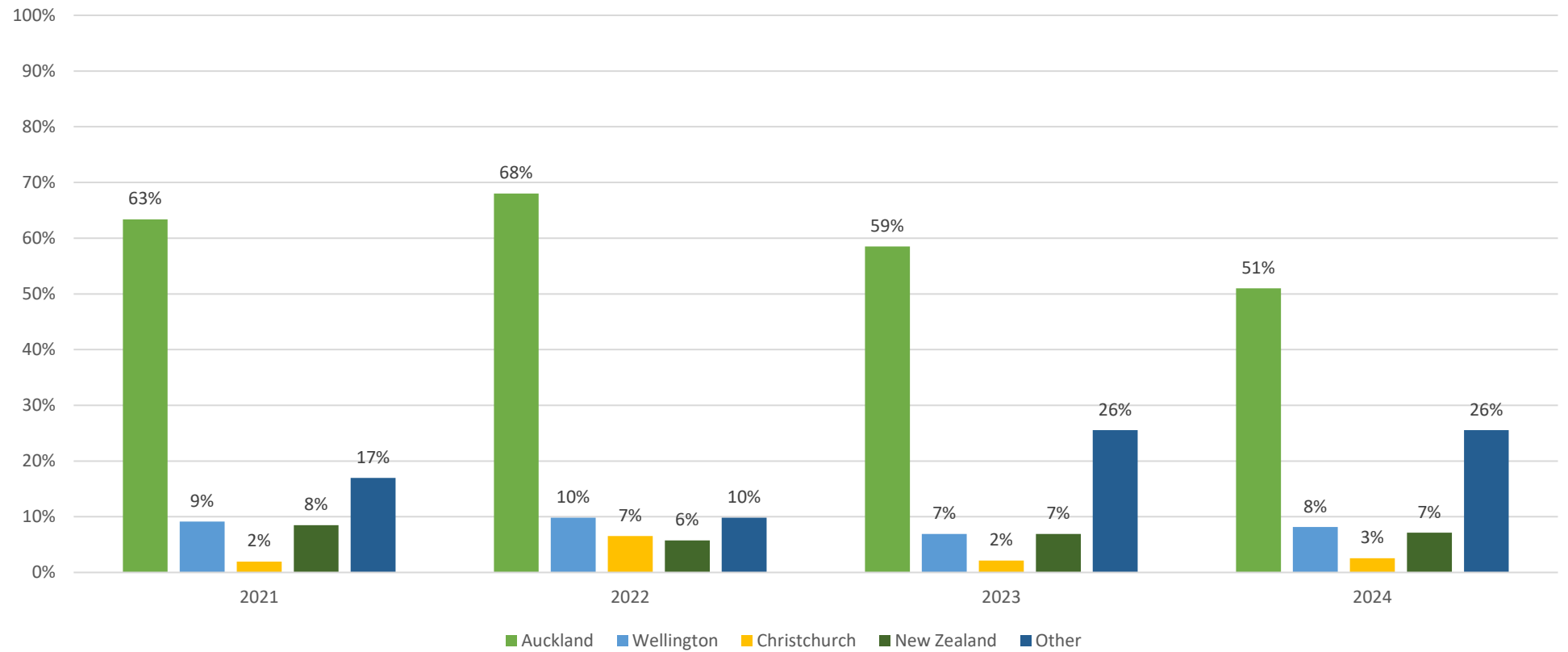
¹² According to the 2023 Census

¹³ According to the July 2024 Auckland Economic Monitor

Production Company Locations



Principal Photography Locations



NZ On Air's role: What We Will Do

New Zealanders connected through our stories and songs.

NZ On Air is an Autonomous Crown Entity established under the Broadcasting Act 1989. Our primary function is to reflect and develop New Zealand identity and culture by promoting (funding) programmes about Aotearoa New Zealand and local interests and promoting Māori language and Māori culture. We are also charged with supporting content of interest to women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, as well as minorities in the community (including ethnic minorities). To be creatively and culturally representative, funded content must ensure stories are told from a diverse range of perspectives, by people who have lived experience of those stories, and also includes adequate numbers of people from diverse backgrounds in key creative roles. There are many views and ideas in the industry around how to improve production team diversity. For our part, NZ On Air will:

- Continue to be guided by our mandate to promote Māori language and culture with regards to funding and strategy decisions and ensure that our Kaupapa is led by Te Pae Tata, our Rautaki Māori.
- Continue to make decisions that are evidence-based and which serve local audiences, with a particular emphasis on audiences outlined in Section 36c of the Broadcasting Act.
- Put research resourcing into wider-reaching and in-depth data collection methods.¹⁴
- Proactively and transparently publish our research for the benefit of the industry and the public at large.
- Keep providing above-the-line data as part of the Diversity Report, so that trends can be identified, targeted initiatives can be introduced, and successes can be measured.
- Continue to provide funding and development opportunities that develop new and existing talent and that reach audiences across a variety of platforms, traditional and otherwise.

¹⁴ NZ On Air is currently collaborating with Te Māngai Pāho and the NZ Film Commission on a demographic survey tool called 'The Everyone Project Aotearoa'. Developed for the screen sector, it aims to provide a comprehensive and accurate picture of the industry by gathering data across a range of categories relating to age, gender, ethnicity, health, language, education and training, health, finances, and domestic situation. The data is de-identified, aggregated, and owned by the individuals who provide it. We anticipate that the reporting generated by The Everyone Project Aotearoa will replace the existing Diversity Survey from 2025-2026.

- Continue to uplift the agency and mana of diverse and minority creatives as part of our assessment and monitoring processes.
- Actively consult with the sector about issues that impact equity and barriers to inclusion.
- Encourage industry guilds to liaise with their members and propose opportunities for positive change, particularly for issues of inequality and access.
- Keep requiring equal employment opportunities for cast and crew.
- Continue prioritising projects from teams that demonstrate a commitment to diversity, particularly for projects aimed at targeted audiences. Some areas of focus for 2025 are content that reaches and represents tamariki, Pacific, and Pan-Asian communities.
- Encourage regional diversity by supporting projects with principal photography locations outside of Auckland.

Appendix - Methodology

This Report surveyed Scripted and Non-Fiction (Factual) production and development projects that were fully delivered by the end of June 2024.

The 2016 and 2017 Diversity Reports presented separate survey results for Television and Digital projects, which was in line with our old funding strategy. Following changes to the strategy from 2017 to become platform-neutral the reports now combine all Television and Digital survey results. To ensure this data is comparable in this report, we have retrospectively merged the Television and Digital data from 2016 and 2017.

We asked respondents to provide gender and ethnicity information about the producers, directors and writers involved in the funded project. Researchers could be included as writers if they performed a significant writing role. Respondents also provided information on where the production company was based.

This report includes data from **212** projects (both Development and Production). As this report focuses on the volume of funded projects, an individual's gender and ethnic identity is counted towards each project they worked on. That means one person's data may be included multiple times within this data set. If a person indicated that they were both, for example, a producer and a director of a funded project, they were counted once in each category.

For the ethnicity section, respondents were asked to identify the top line ethnic groups each key personnel identified with: European, Māori, Pacific Peoples, Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American or African (MELAA), or Other. They were then asked to specify the applicable ethnicities within these groups. For example, the European ethnic group includes NZ European/Pākehā, Australian, British, and other European ethnicities. These ethnic categorisations reflect those used by Statistics New Zealand. The survey is designed so that multiple ethnic groups can be selected for each key personnel. Where a person identifies with more than one ethnic group, they are counted in each applicable group. As a result, the proportions of people belonging to each ethnic group may not add up to 100 percent.

In line with Statistics NZ standards, this survey includes a third gender category, 'Gender diverse', to acknowledge people who do not identify with a male/female binary. We are in the process of reevaluating the sex and gender categories used in our surveys to be more inclusive of gender diversity and non-conformity.

1. This methodology, which focuses on completed development and production projects, is different to the NZ Film Commission gender report, which measures development funding.