



Irirangi Te Motu  
**NZ On Air**

# Diversity Report 2021

NOVEMBER | 2021

GENDER AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN  
CONTENT FUNDED BY NZ ON AIR

*CREAMERIE*, FLAT 3 PRODUCTIONS,  
KEVIN AND CO, FOR TVNZ 2

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## Introduction

It's important that content funded by NZ On Air reflects Aotearoa's diversity. To do this, we need to see a range of different New Zealanders involved in its creation. NZ On Air, as a key funder of local content, is in a unique position to report industry trends. To that end, NZ On Air publishes a Diversity Report as both a response to, and a contribution towards, discussions about gender, ethnicity and regional production representation in the local screen sector. Now in its sixth year, this report monitors gender and ethnic diversity among key personnel of NZ On Air-funded screen content, as well as the regional spread of production companies. While 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 six years (March 2016-March 2021) of comparable Scripted and Factual screen content data which allows us to assess emerging trends and notable data shifts. In 2021, data collection was extended to the end of June to align this survey with the financial year. This increased the number of productions surveyed over previous years but made no significant variance to the percentage splits across gender or ethnicity.

Other changes implemented this year included gathering data on age and disability. This is the first year this data has been collected so while it is included in this report there is no comparison data from which changes or trends can be extrapolated.

The 2021 survey included location of principal photography as well as location of production company to better reflect the regional spread of where production activity is taking place.

We are now reporting diversity in funded Music separately and hope to share these results in early 2022.

## Executive summary

The 2021 Diversity Report includes survey responses from 178 Scripted and Factual screen projects funded by NZ On Air and delivered between March 2020 and the end of June 2021. Having six 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:

- Women continue to be well represented among producers, filling 61% of roles. They are reasonably equitably represented among writers, taking up 48.8% of positions this year. However, the gender imbalance among directors continues – with 42.7% of directors identifying as female in the latest survey compared to 57.8% male.
- Male directors have outnumbered women in the genres of drama, documentary and children’s programming across the previous four years of this report. Male directors were responsible for 59.1% of drama content and 58.1% of children’s content, in this year’s report. Women number 48.6% of documentary directors.
- In 2021, 23% of producers identified as Māori, which is close to last year’s total (an increase on the previous year).
- Asian creatives are consistently under-represented in all three roles surveyed: producer, director and writer/researcher.
- Auckland still dominates as the centre of production and remains the most ethnically diverse of the main centres regarding the key creatives surveyed.

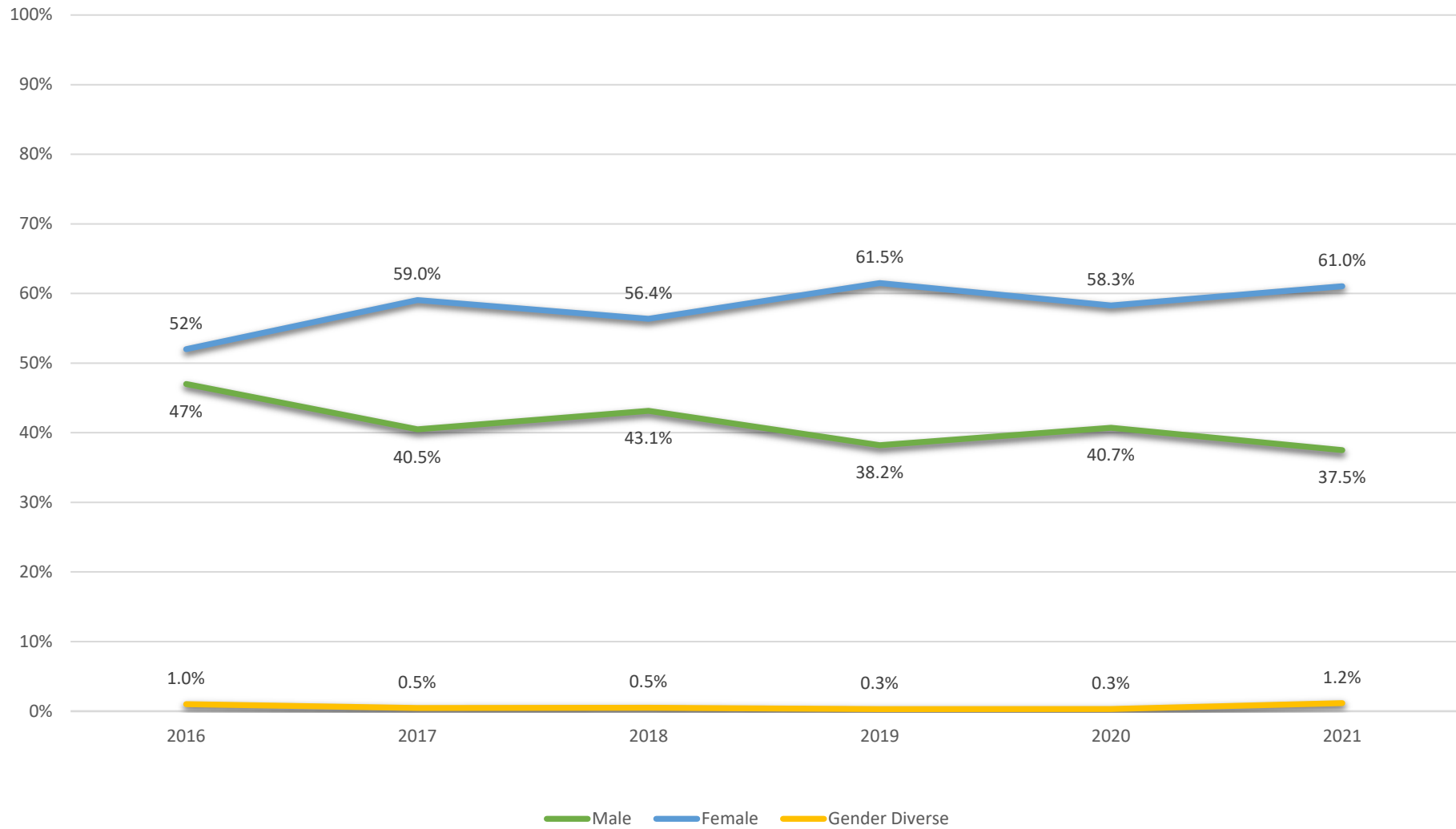
## Scripted and Factual Content

### Producers of funded content – gender and ethnic diversity

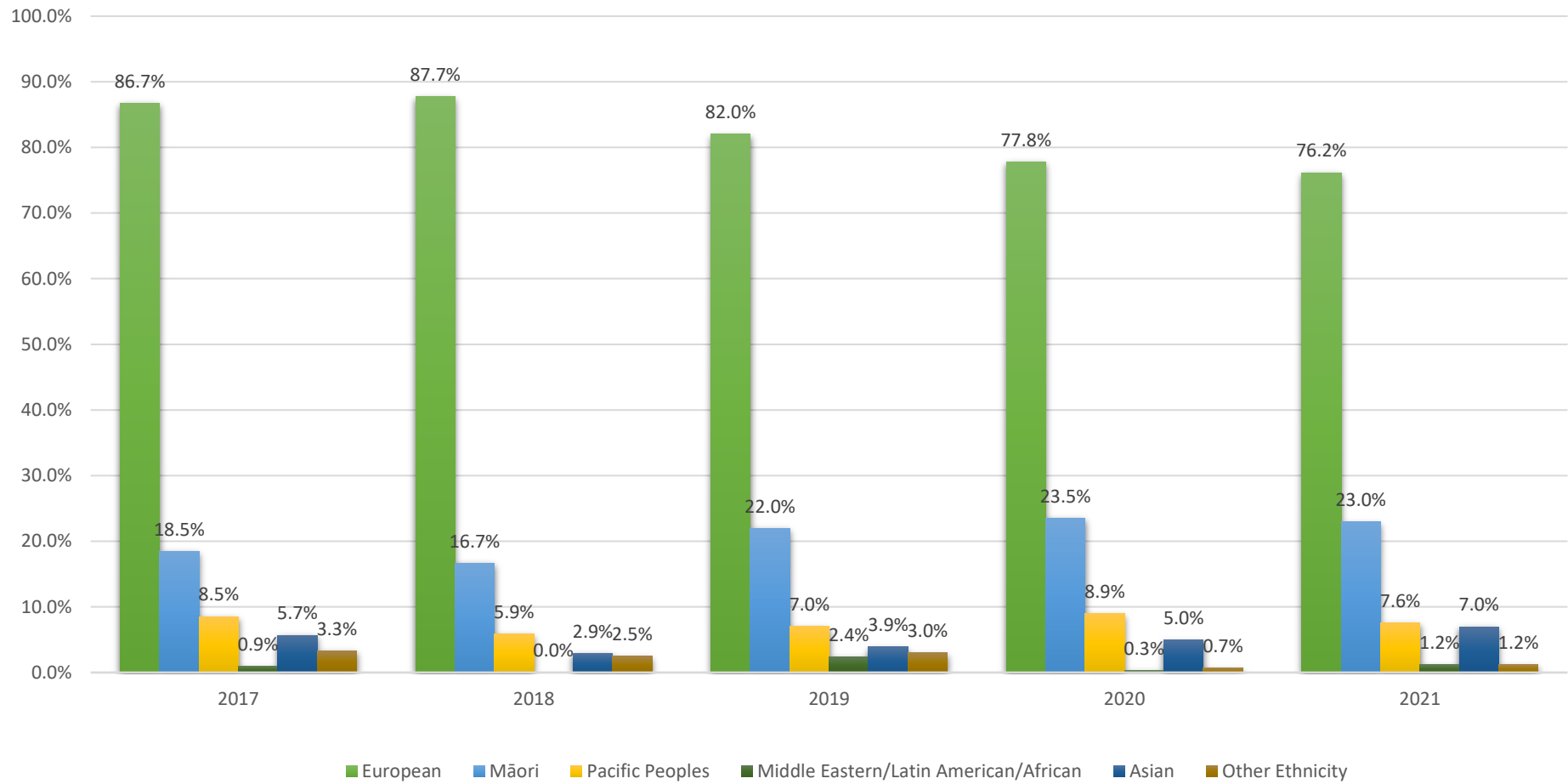
178 projects were surveyed this year, which included 256 individual producers performing 344 producer roles.

- Female producers of funded content outnumbered male producers for the sixth consecutive year. Women filled 61% of producing roles, while 37.5% were performed by men and 1.2% by producers identifying as gender diverse. According to Statistics NZ's 2018 Population Indicators, 51% of the New Zealand population is female and 49% is male.
- This gender split between producers has remained reasonably consistent over the six years of this report.
- The proportion of producers identifying as Pākehā or another European ethnicity is 76.2%, 1.6 points lower than last year and getting slightly closer to the 2018 Census (where 70.2% of New Zealand's population identified with one or more European ethnicity).
- Just over 1% (1.2%) of producer roles were filled by individuals identifying as Middle Eastern, Latin American or African (MELAA). This is now closer to previous reports in which 1% to 2% of producers have identified as MELAA, a level more in line with the general population statistic of 1.5%.
- The number of producers identifying as Asian is at its highest since the report began, at 7%. However, this is still low when compared to the 15.1% of New Zealanders who identify as one or more Asian ethnicity according to the 2018 Census. In 2020 this number was 5%, up from 4% in 2019 and 3% in 2018. These years were all down on 2017, which showed 6%.
- In this year's survey 23% of producers identified as Māori, slightly down on 23.5% in 2020. The most recent census figures show 16.5% of New Zealanders identify as Māori.
- Producers who identified as Pacific Peoples dropped to 7.6% (down from 9% in 2020). Pacific Peoples make up 8.1% of the overall New Zealand population.

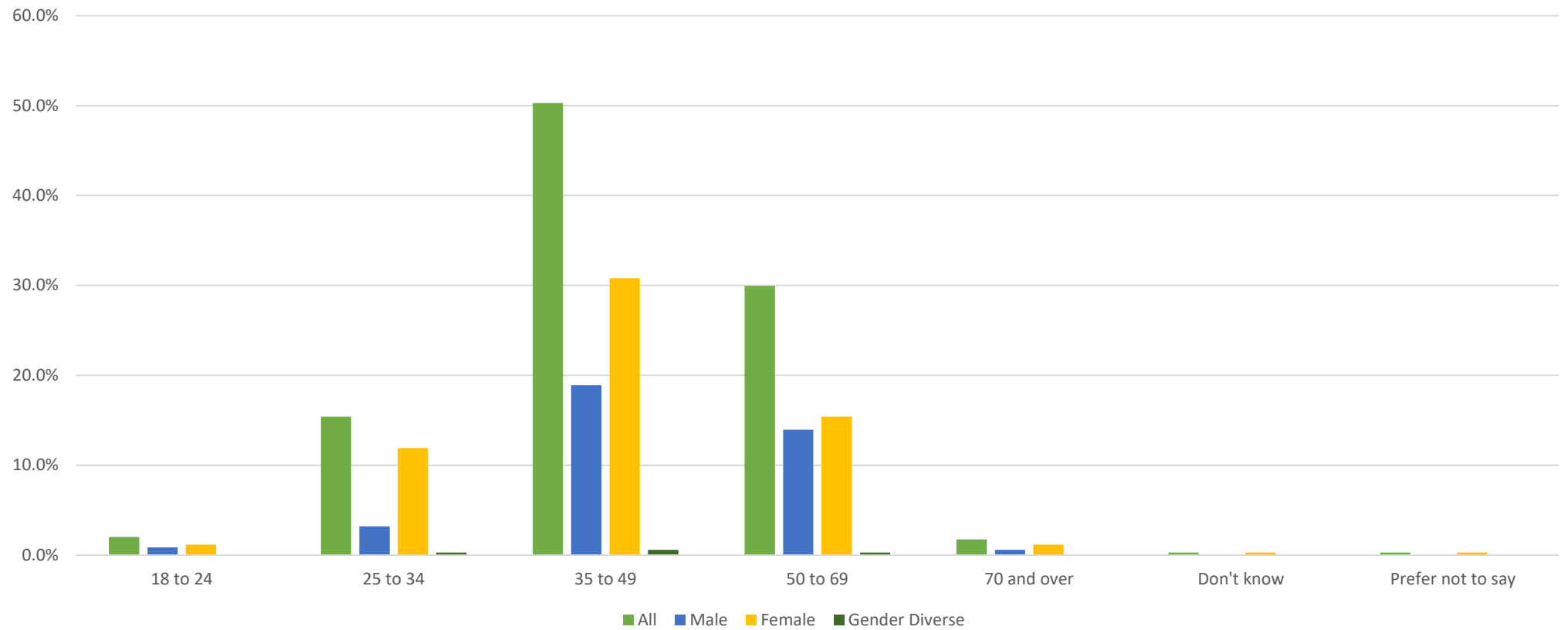
## Producer Gender



## Producer Ethnicity



**Age Distribution - Producers**

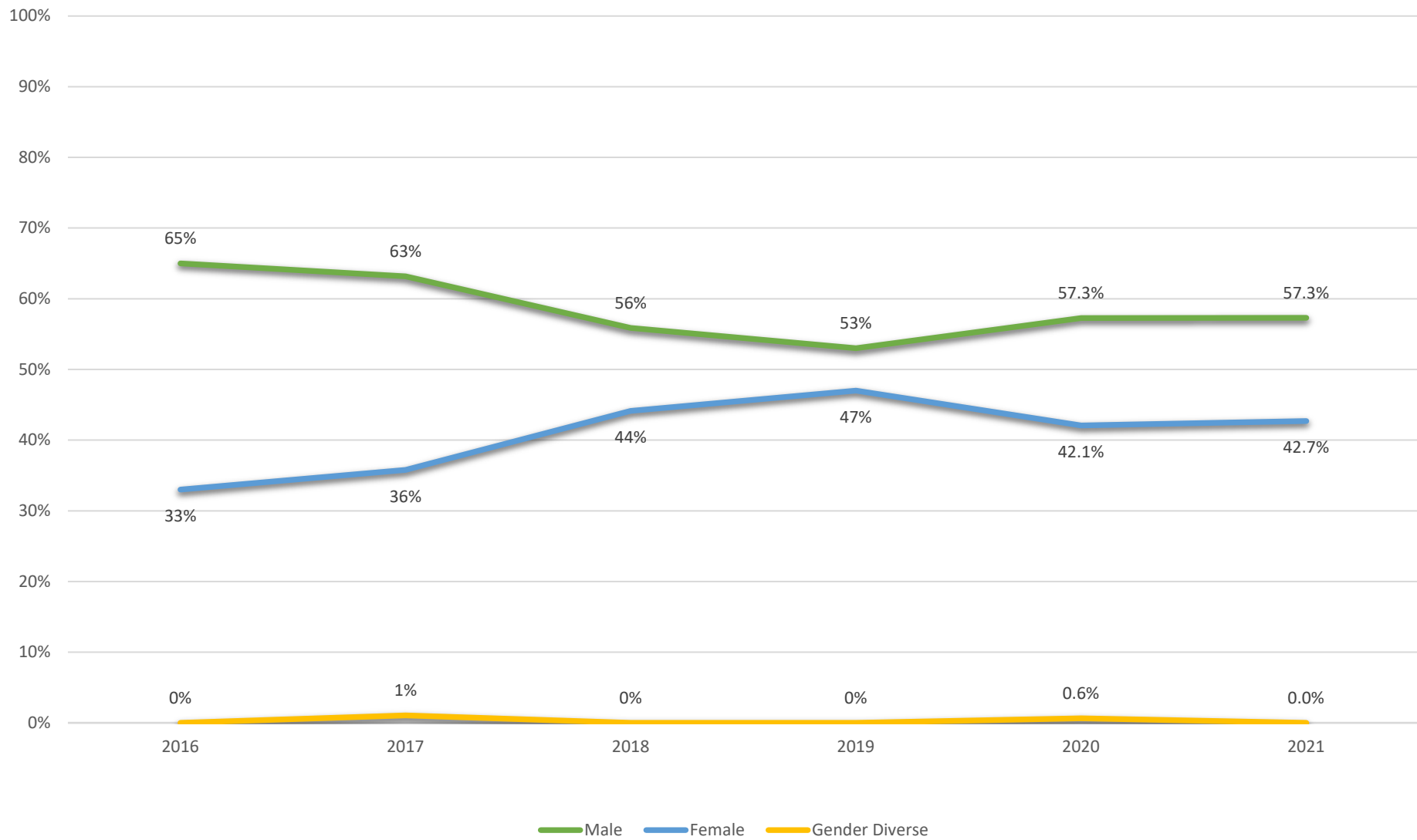


## Directors of funded content – gender and ethnic diversity

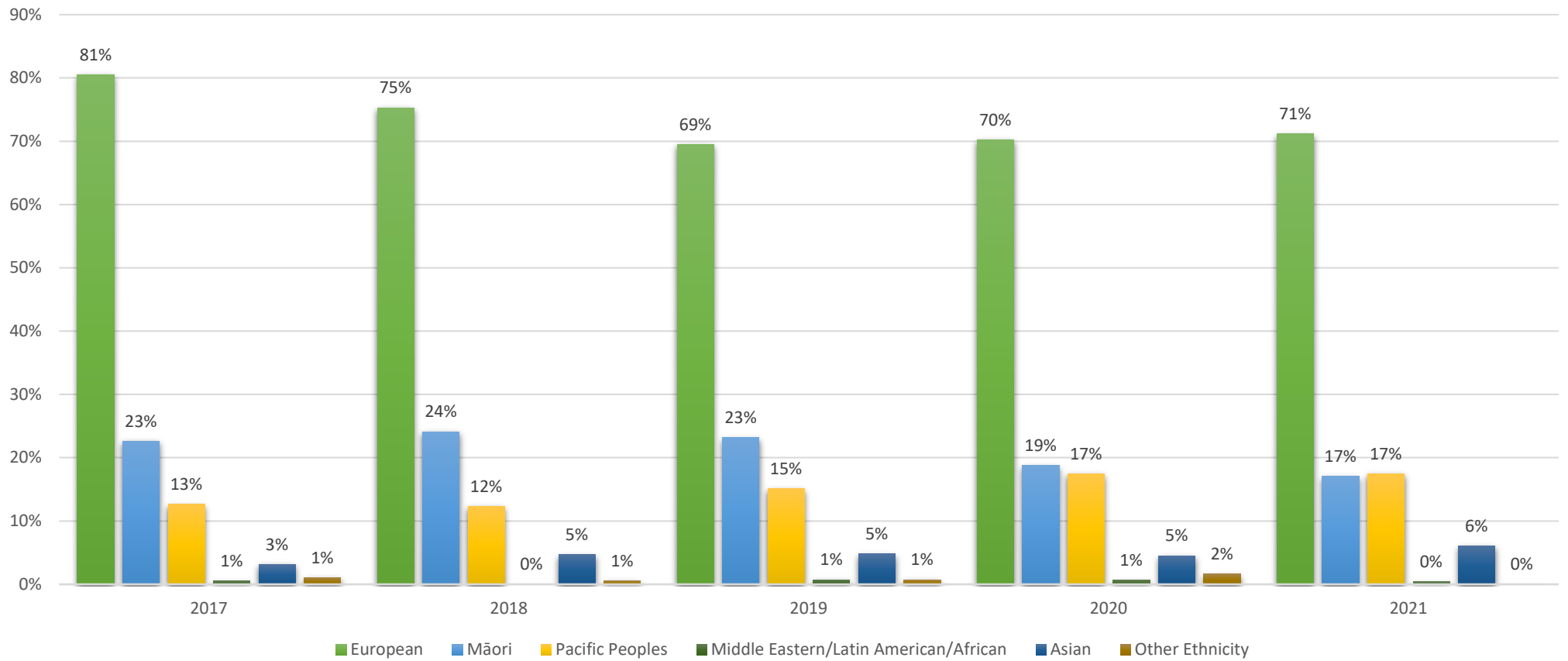
This year's survey includes 205 unique directors performing 246 director roles.

- In this year's survey, 42.7% of directors identify as female and 57.3% as male. Of the three key creative roles surveyed over the first three years of this report, the director role has consistently shown the largest disparity between men and women. This follows some ups and downs since our data collection began.
  - In 2016 and 2017, roughly two-thirds of the director roles of content funded by NZ On Air were filled by men. This started to even out in 2018; 44% of directors identified as women though it was recognised that a single project skewed this figure. In 2019, several projects contributed to the closing of this gap to 47% female and 53% male. In 2020, the numbers were slightly further apart: 41.2% of director roles were performed by women.
- 0.7% of directors identified as gender diverse in 2020, but there were none in 2021.
- The gender split between directors of different genre is notable and discussed in more detail later.
- The proportion of directors identifying as Pākehā or another European ethnicity was 71.1%, roughly the same as in 2020 and close to general population statistics. This year 17.1% of directors of funded content identified as Māori and 17.5% of directors identified as one or more Pacific ethnicity.
- The proportion of Asian directors increased from 5% to 6.1% this year, still notably lower than the 15.1% of the New Zealand population that identifies with one or more Asian ethnicity. 0.4% of directors identified as Middle Eastern, Latin American or African (MELAA).

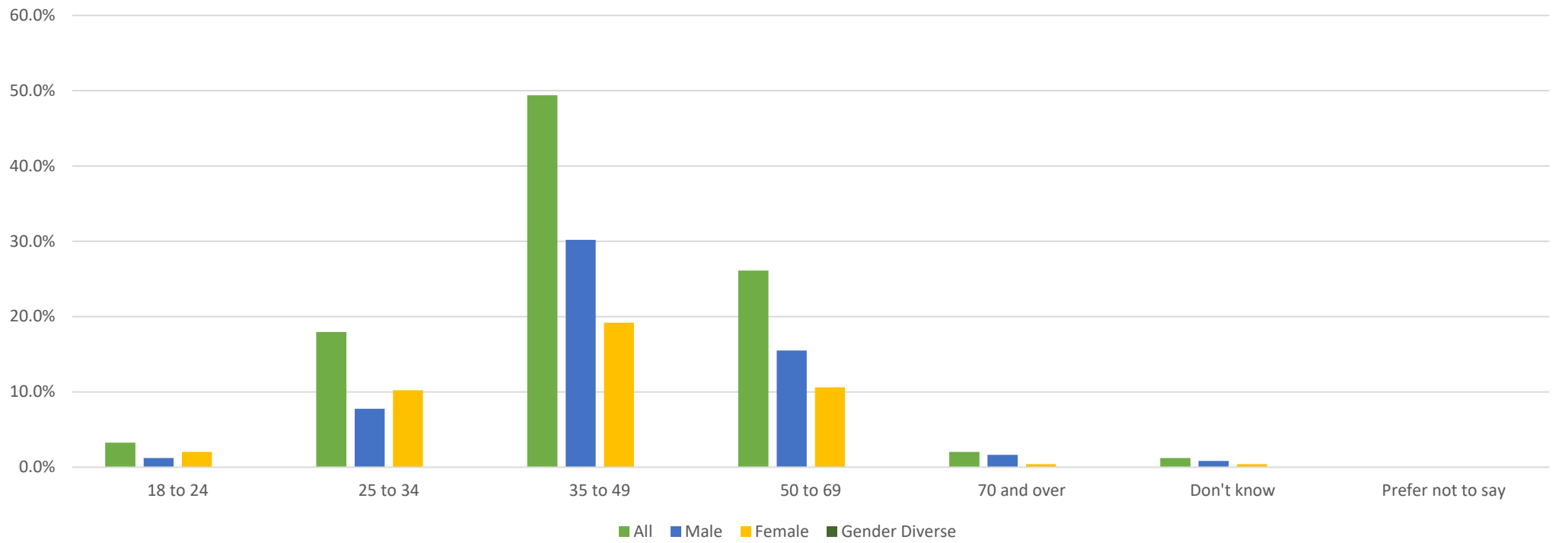
## Directors by Gender



## Directors by Ethnicity



**Age Distribution - Directors**

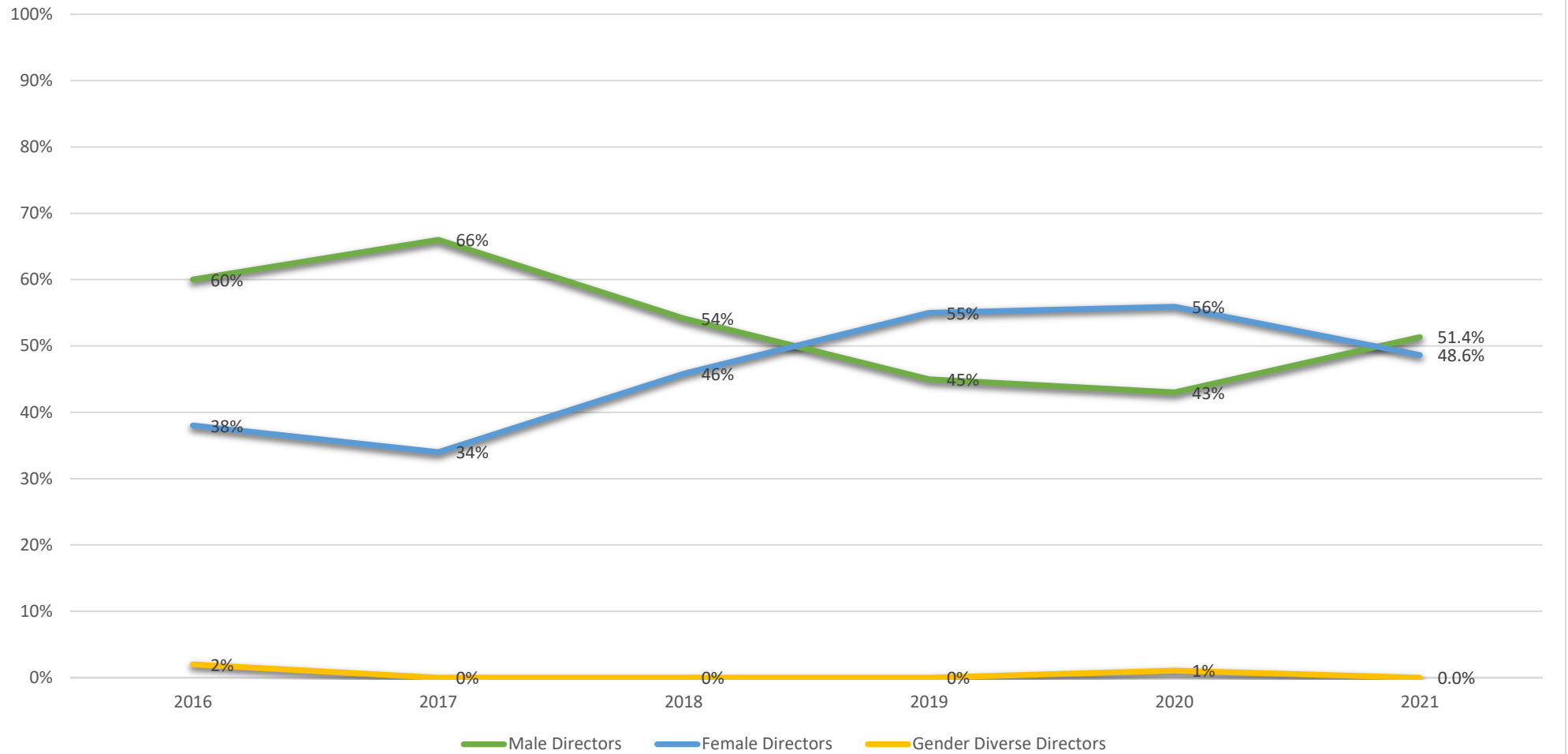


## Directors of funded content – gender by genre

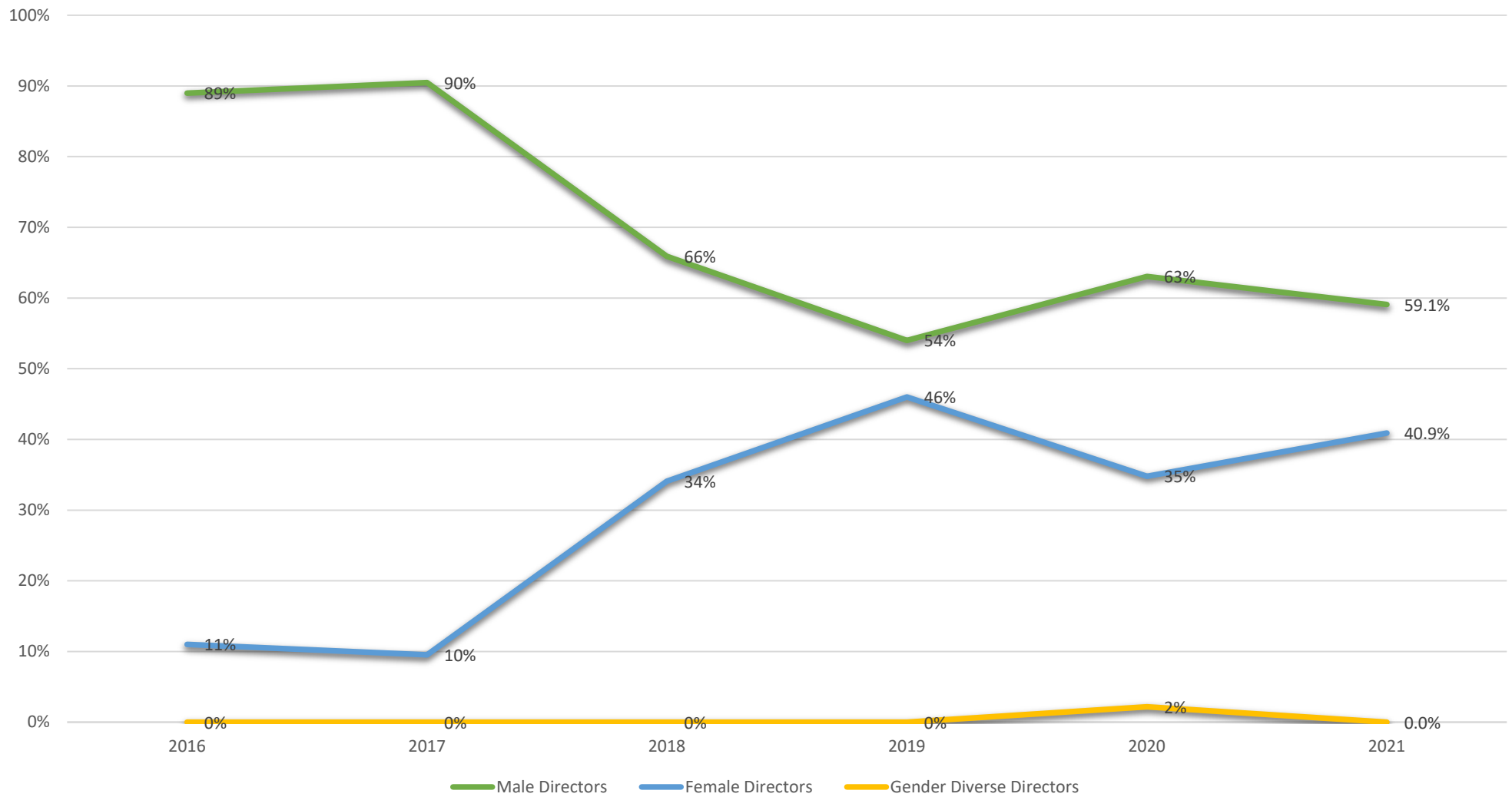
The historic under-representation of female directors, observed both in previous years of this report and wider industry research, means a closer look at this data has been necessary. It will continue to be closely examined despite the gradual equalisation shown in the 2019 report

- In this year's survey, 40.9% directors of drama projects identified as female and 59.1% were male. Directors of children's shows had similar numbers, with a 41.9% female/58.1% male split. The documentary split reverted this year to being slightly predominantly male (51.4% male to 48.6% female).
- During 2016 to 2017 there was a clearly observable trend in the under-representation of women directors in Scripted productions, particularly drama and comedy. Women accounted for only 11% of drama directors in 2016 and 20% in 2017.
- In the 2018 report, women made up a higher proportion of drama directors at 34%. However, that year's data included the eight female directors of the feature film *Waru*. The film's collaborative directorial structure is unlike other scripted projects included in previous years of this report. If those eight women were instead counted as one, 22% of drama directors in 2018 were women.
- To allow clarity on the actual figures, NZ On Air's diversity database now includes the ability to look at the gender diversity minus a specific project that may skew the data in a similar way. That said, the 2021 figures for gender diversity for directors of drama are more even.
- In 2019 Drama - including comedy - there were 77 projects, and the split was 48% female directors, 52% male directors. Out of the 27 children's projects funded, 48% were directed by females and 52% by males. The split on documentary projects was 55% female directors to 45% male.
- In the 2020 report, the gender divide for drama directors increased with 35% female, 2% gender diverse and 63% male. The split for directors of children's content increased with 36% female compared to 64% male. Documentary remained the stronger area for women with 55% female, 43% male and 1% gender diverse among directors.

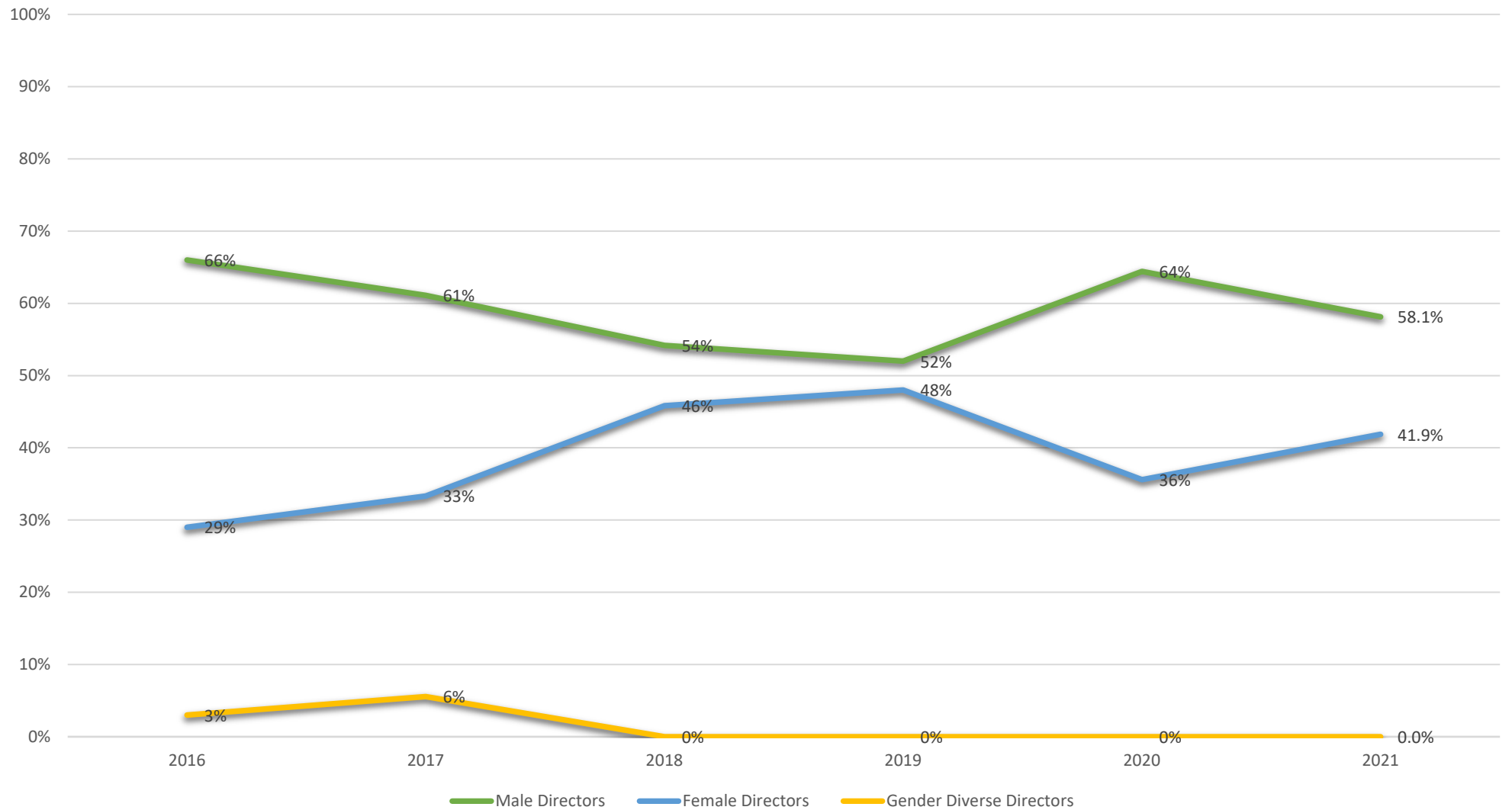
## Directors by Gender - Documentary



## Directors by Gender - Drama



## Directors by Gender - Childrens

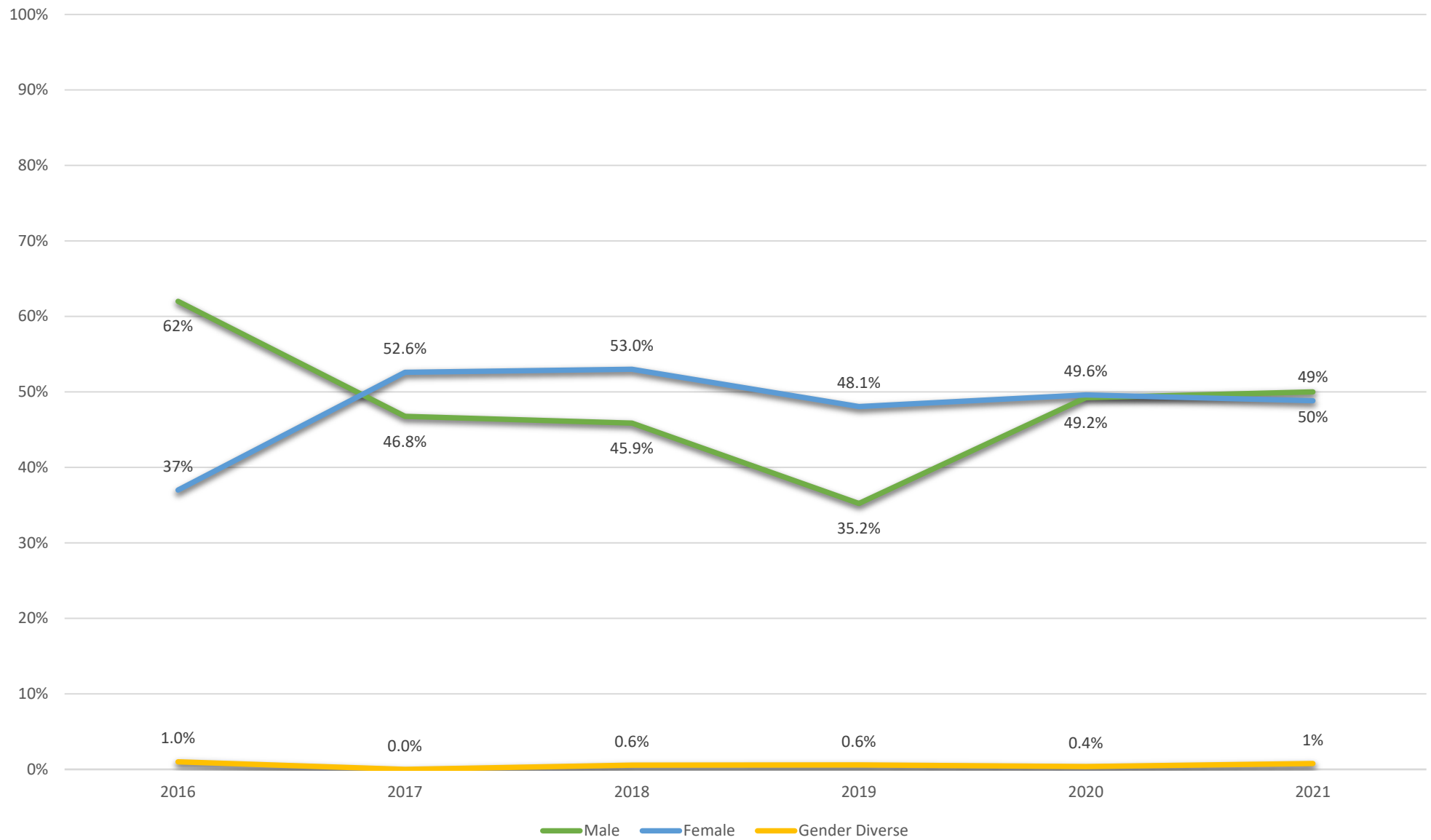


## Writers of funded content – gender and ethnic diversity

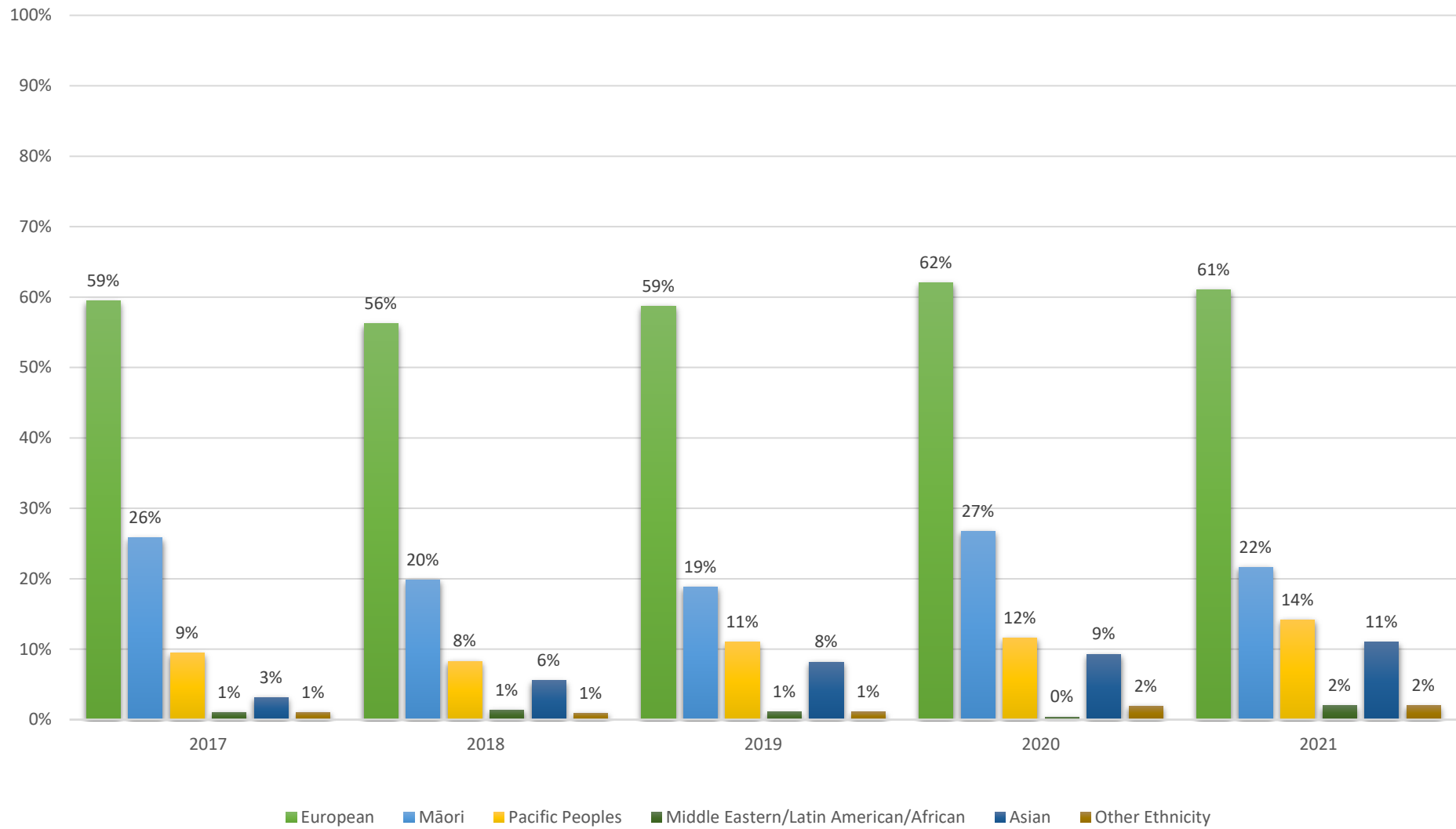
The 178 projects included in this year's survey involved 207 unique writers performing 254 writing (or researching) roles.

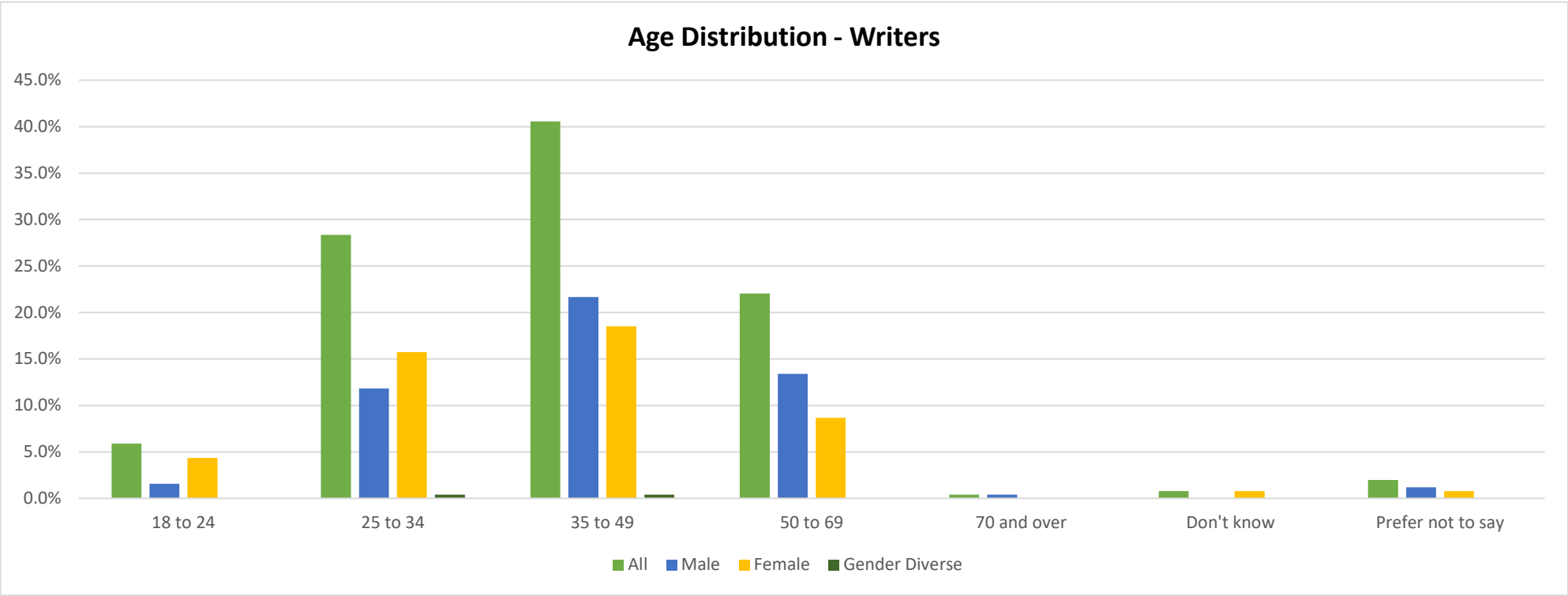
- 48.8% of the writing roles were filled by women and 50% by men. Less than 1% (0.8%) of writers identified as gender diverse. This gender split between writers has been stable over the past three years, trending away from the split in 2016 of 37% female vs. 62% male.
- 61% of writers identified as Pākehā or another European ethnicity, slightly lower than the 70.2% of the population that identifies as such.
- Asian writers increased to 11% of those writing NZ On Air-funded content in 2021. This is up from 4% in previous years and 9% in 2020. This still tracks below the 15.1% of the population who identify as Asian but does show a steady trend upwards.
- The proportion of writers identifying as Māori is 21.7%. This number has fluctuated over the first three years of this report and is up from 20% of writers surveyed in 2020.
- 14.2% of writers identified as Pacific Peoples, up from 12% in 2020. 2.% of writers in this year's report were Middle Eastern, Latin American or African (MELAA). According to the 2018 Census, 1.5% of New Zealanders identify as MELAA.

## Writers by Gender



## Writers by Ethnicity

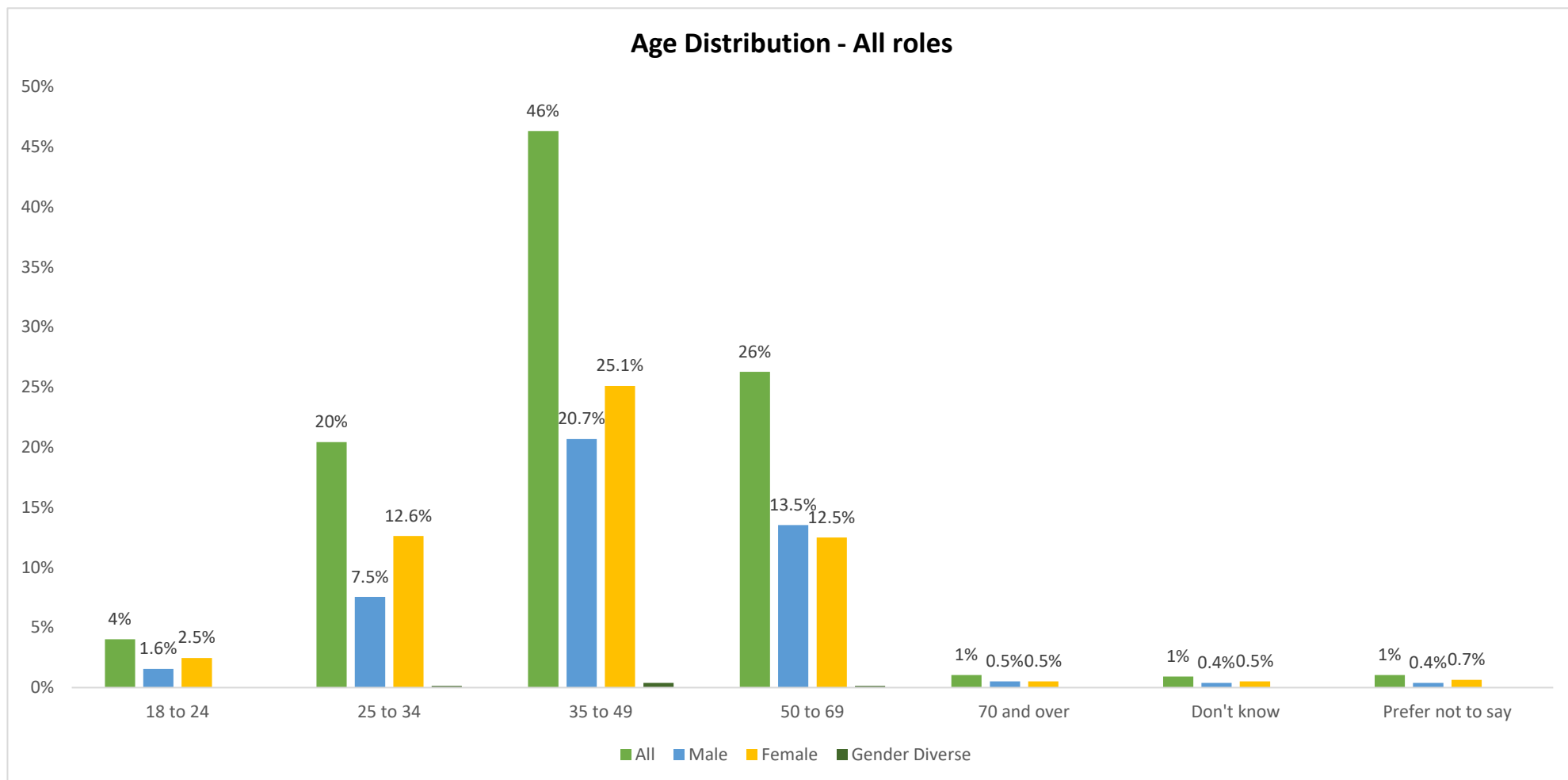




## Age

This is the first year that this survey has asked about 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 ages. These bands were used to be consistent with those used by Statistics NZ regarding engagement with industry and employment. Participants could also state 'Prefer not to say' or 'Don't know' where the production company submitting the survey did not know the age range of a key creative.

- 46% of the key creatives in this year's survey were aged 35- 49. The second highest range was 50-69.
- The trends across these ranges split by gender were fairly consistent.
- The trends across roles were also consistent. Only writers skewed slightly younger; the 25-34 age range was the second largest ahead of 50-69.



## Disability

This year the survey also asked about disability status. Participants were asked if they had a long-term impairment that restricts their participation in everyday activities. As with the age bands above, this question was used to align the survey with the questions used by Statistics NZ. This is the first year that this question has been asked so there are no comparisons to be made against previous years.

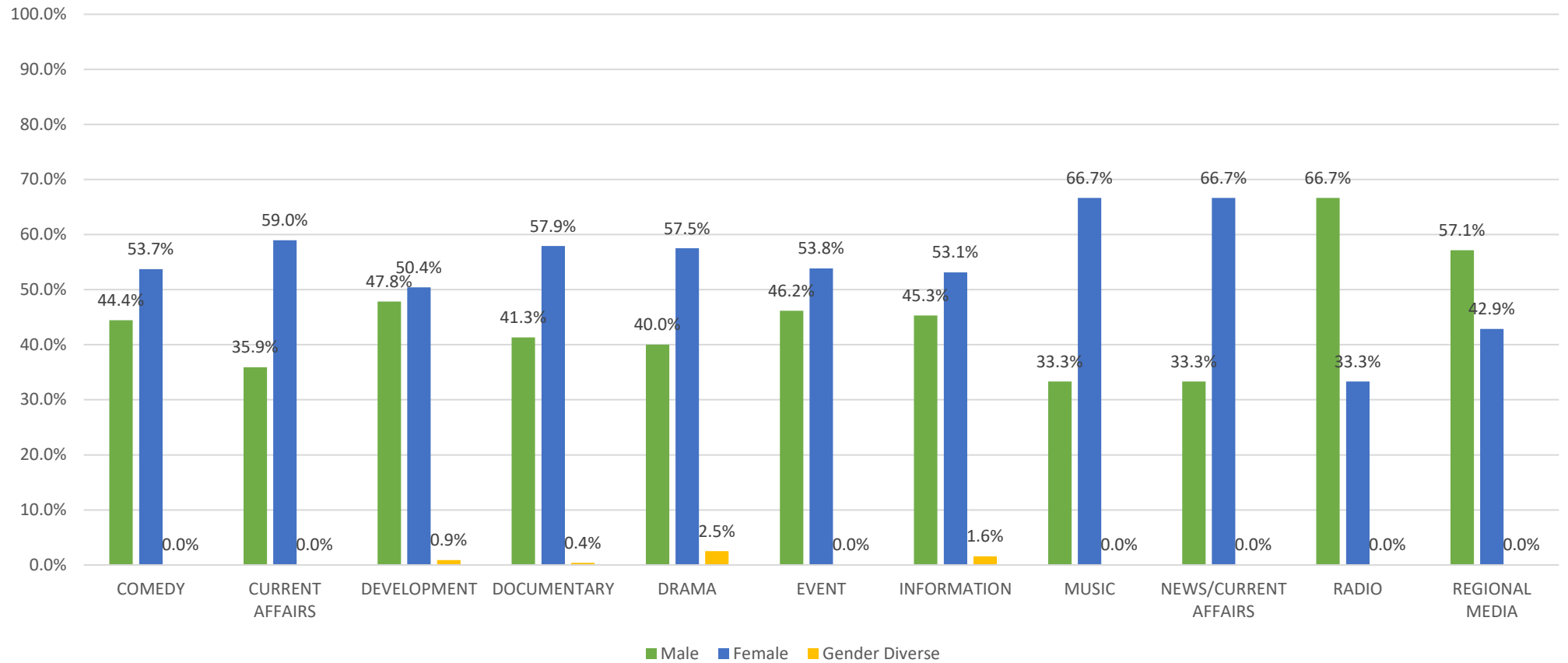
- 93% of respondents answered No, 4% preferred not to say and 2% answered Yes.

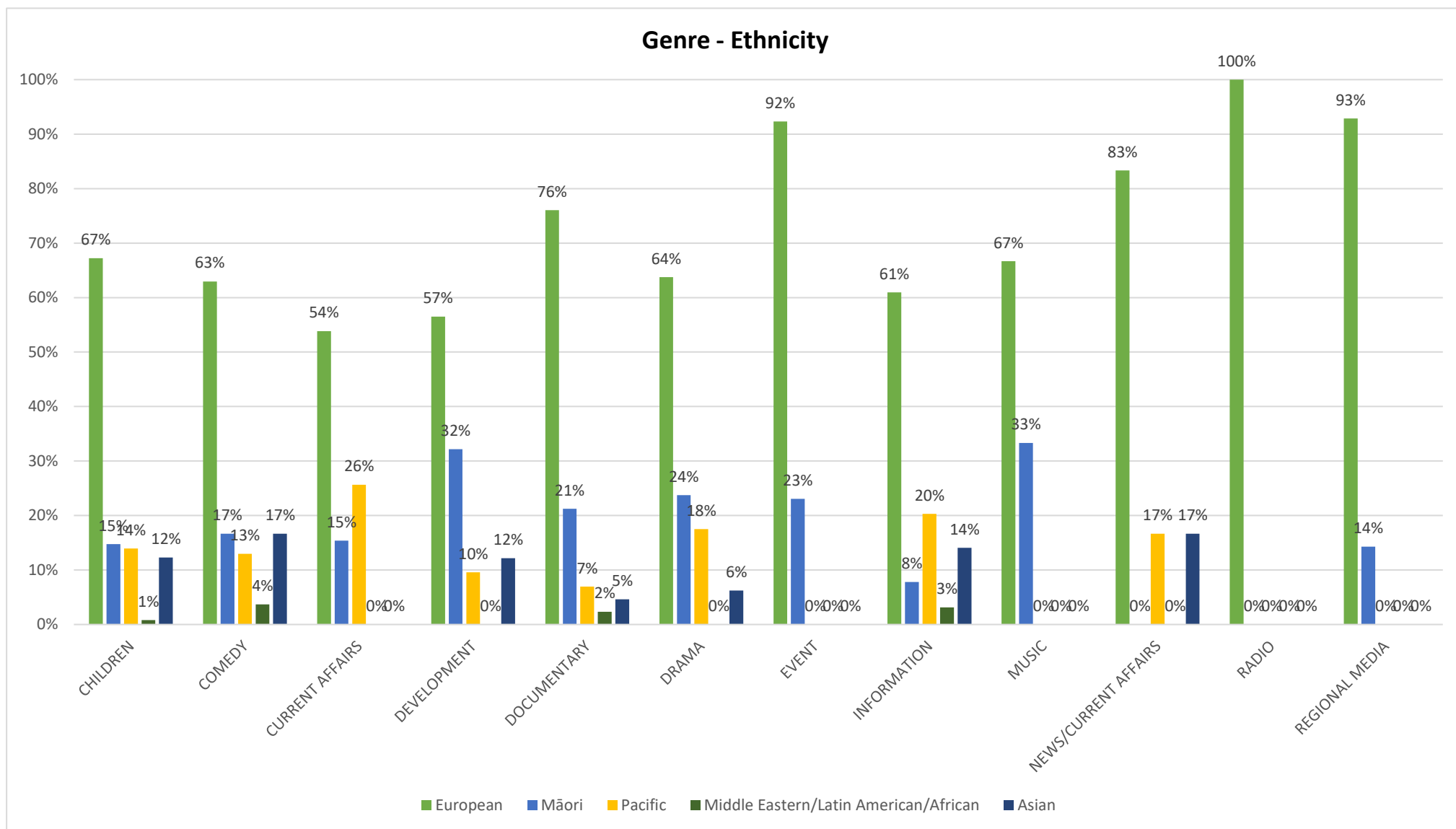
## Genre

The split of the gender and ethnicity of writers, producers and directors across the genre of projects is as in the charts below.

- The production of Scripted Drama is 64% European key creatives, with 24% Māori, 18% Pacific Peoples and 6% Asian.
- Current Affairs is 54% European, 15% Māori, 26% Pacific Peoples and 0% Asian.
- The biggest genre (in regard to the number of productions) is Documentary. Its breakdown is 76% European, 21% Māori, 7% Pacific Peoples, 5% Asian and 2% Middle Eastern/Latin American/African.

## Genre - Gender





## Regional spread of production companies

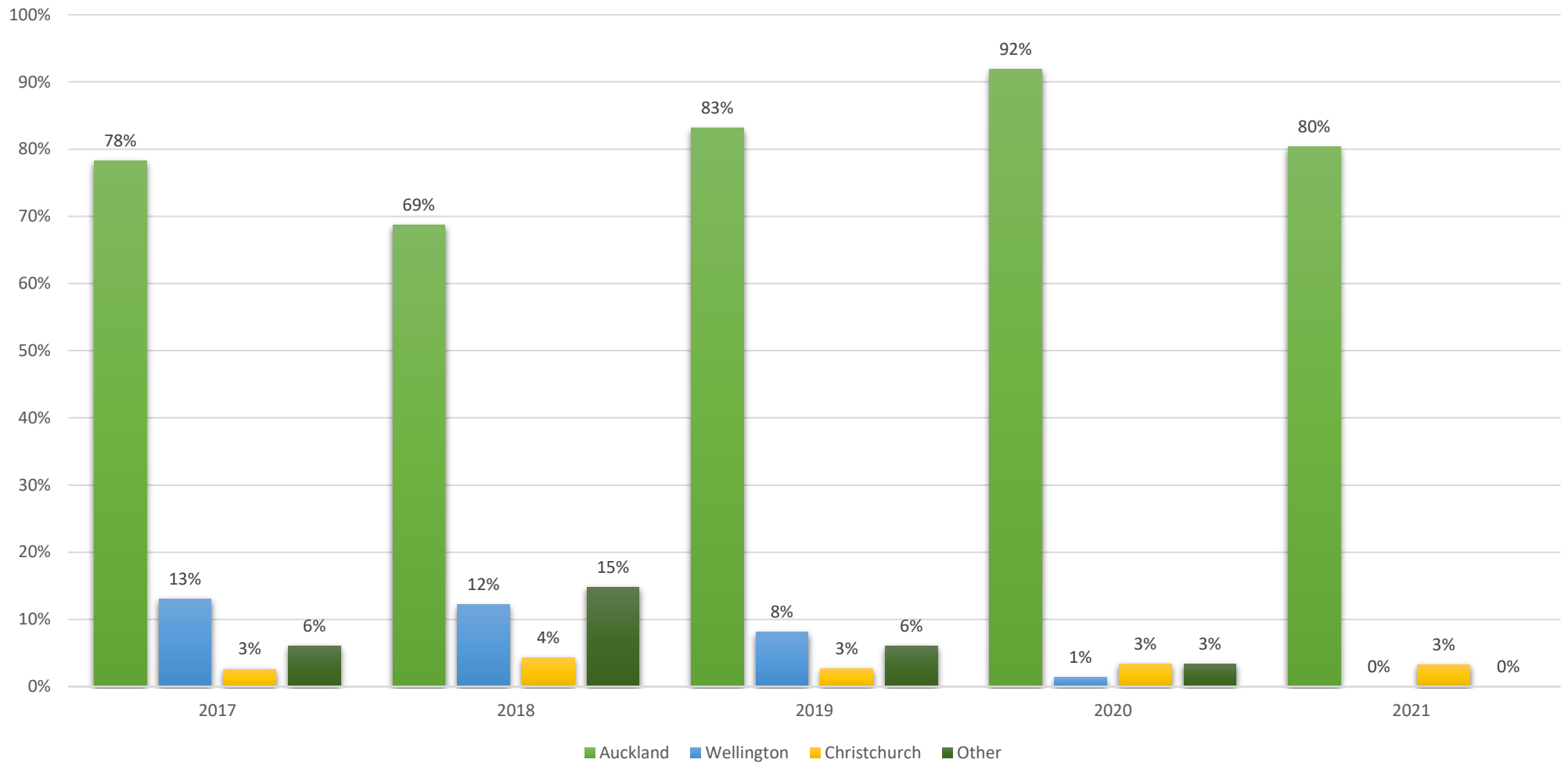
The proportion of production companies that completed NZ On Air funded projects and were based in Auckland in 2021 was 80%, down from 92% in 2020 which was up on all prior years. Statistics NZ's current population estimate is that Auckland has 34.7% of New Zealand's population and 37.9% of the GDP.

In addition to the Scripted and Factual projects that this report surveys, NZ On Air also supports 12 Access Radio stations through our Platform funding stream. This platform funding is not included in this report, but it does go some way to increase the regional spread of supported entities to non-urban areas of New Zealand.

## Regional spread of principal photography

This year was the first survey year that has asked productions to report the main location of principal photography, which gives a better measure of the spread of production activity. While most projects (59.6%) took place in the Auckland region, this is significantly lower than the proportion of production companies from the same region. Of the remainder, 8.2% of productions identified Wellington as the region for principal photography, 3.3% were in Christchurch, 19.7% in other locations and 9.3% of projects filmed nationwide.

## Production Company Locations



## NZ On Air's role: what we will do

### Connecting and reflecting Aotearoa

NZ On Air invests in public media for many audiences. We find and support great audio/visual content that holds a mirror up to New Zealand and our people. Among other responsibilities set down in the Broadcasting Act, we are charged with supporting content of interest to women, minorities in the community (including ethnic minorities), and promoting NZ music.

To be creatively and culturally authentic, funded content must have 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 and music diversity. For our part, NZ On Air will:

- Back and promote diversity and representation in all that we do
- Continue reporting this data to provide accurate information to underpin sector discussion
- Encourage industry guilds to discuss these matters with their members and propose options for change
- Continue prioritising content made by Māori production personnel whenever we can, following the principles of our Rautaki Māori, and report outcomes in our Annual Report.

Regarding gender diversity, we will:

- Add an assessment criterion for applications to our Scripted funding stream. We will ask if the project supports and reflects gender equality both on screen and within the production crew. See our [Scripted Roadmap](#).

Regarding ethnic diversity, we will:

- Prioritise projects from teams that show a commitment to diversity, particularly for projects that are for targeted audiences. Our main areas of interest, based on population size, are Pacific Peoples and Asian audiences.
- Conduct audience research to clarify needs so we can plan to increase output for Pacific Peoples and Asian New Zealanders.
- Continue reporting on Pacific Peoples outcomes in our Annual Report.
- Continue to fund projects from an increasing range of production companies across an evolving range of platforms.

Regarding regional diversity, we will focus our efforts on improving regional media output and audience engagement.

## Moving forward – expanding the scope of this report

NZ On Air is committed to the monitoring and provision of quality diversity information, to help us identify who is working in Aotearoa's screen industry and ensure authentic voices are telling the diverse stories our audiences want to see. This report forms part of a growing body of research into audience and content diversity in Aotearoa. It will be joined in due course by similar reporting looking into Music and the Public Interest Journalism Fund. While we believe the Diversity Report could expand to cover several more areas, this needs to be balanced against the time commitments required from productions to provide the information. The survey questions for the projects delivering ahead of the 2021 Diversity Report now include age range, primary location of principal photography and disability.

Looking ahead, there are a number of additional strands of information we would consider. These include:

- Increasing the crew positions surveyed. The information gathered could include heads of departments, lead presenters and actors. This would be time-consuming and would need careful definitions of who counts as core crew, for example: lead actors vs extras and so on.
- Financial information including the total production budget (allowing the reporting of financial investment by region, and the level of funding that goes towards ethnic groups) and amounts paid to individuals (allowing a calculation of gender pay gaps etc.) Maintaining privacy would be vital here.
- Diversity of content. This would be more complicated to define but the correlation between the diversity of key personal and the subject matter of productions could be informative.
- Applications vs. Funded. The report currently covers the diversity of application vs successful applications in Music funding but doesn't for Factual or Scripted.

Finding the right mix of valid and vital information while managing administrative burden for the sector will require consultation. NZ On Air will be considering these and potentially other additions and will seek feedback from the sector before implementation.

## Appendix 1 - Methodology

For this report we have surveyed Scripted and Factual production and development projects funded between 2014 and 2020 that were fully delivered by end June 2021.

Diversity Reports 2016 and 2017 presented separate survey results for Television and Digital projects, in line with our old funding strategy. In keeping with our new platform-neutral NZ Media Fund, this year's report combines 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 the previous two years presented here.

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 178 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 in 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 as either male or female.

1 This methodology, focussed on completed development and production projects, is different to the NZFC gender report which measures development funding.