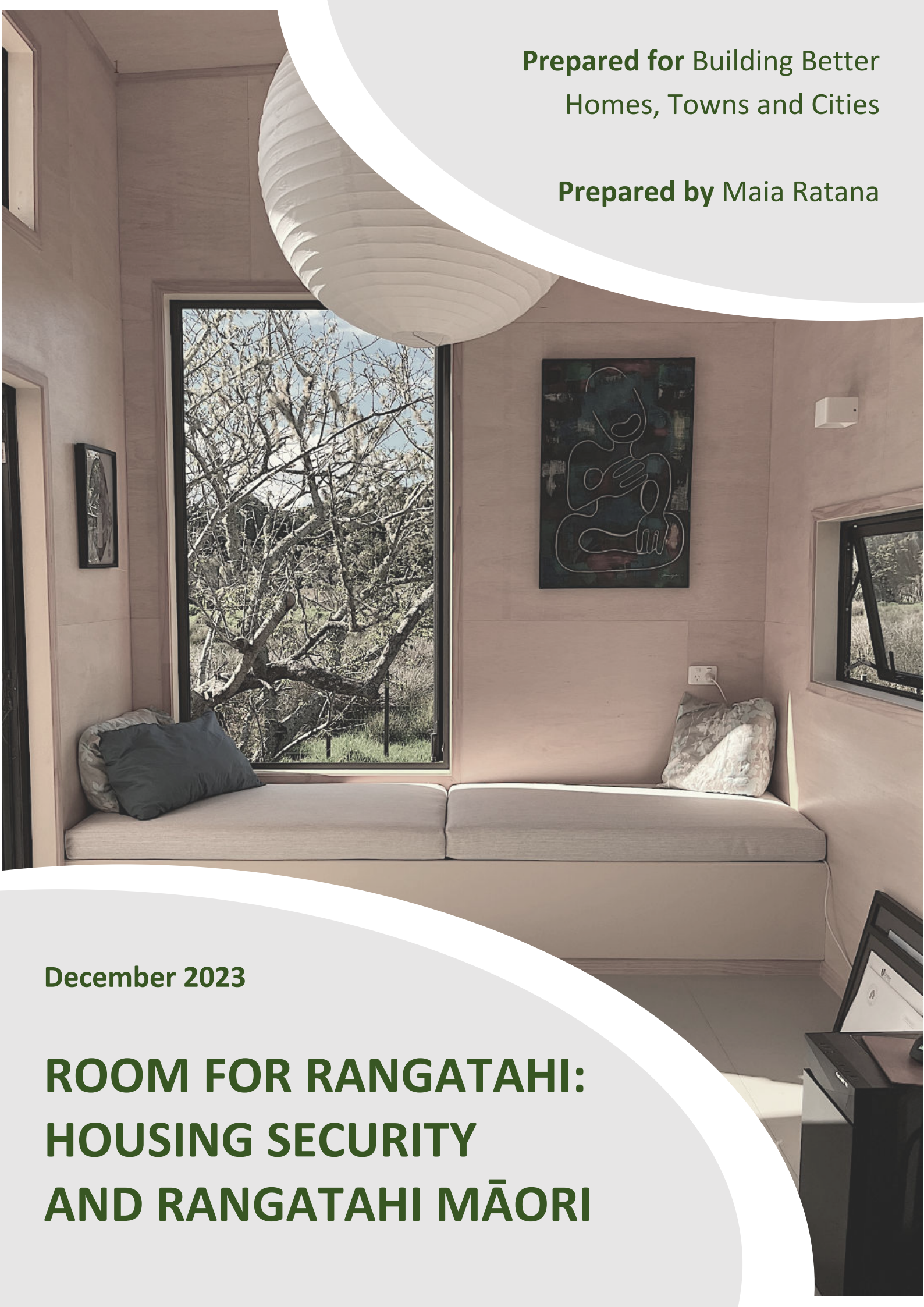


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**Prepared by Maia Ratana**

**December 2023**

**ROOM FOR RANGATAHI:  
HOUSING SECURITY  
AND RANGATAHI MĀORI**



**Front Page image:** Tiny Home Interior. Photo taken by author (2023).



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## **Abstract**

Right now, rangatahi Māori experience some of the worst housing conditions in Aotearoa, and successive Governments have failed to provide policy frameworks that adequately protect the rights of rangatahi and their ability to feel secure in their housing, regardless of tenure type. While the Government has focused predominantly on home ownership schemes as a means to address housing security for young people, many rangatahi are unable to attain home ownership because of the exorbitant cost of housing in Aotearoa, decades of intergenerational inequity and ongoing racial discrimination. These factors have left many rangatahi in rentals or social housing long-term, housing options that, in Aotearoa, provide inadequate security of tenure. This research draws on literature and statistical data to provide insights into how Aotearoa's housing conditions are impacting housing security for rangatahi. Instead of a narrow focus on home ownership, I argue that a broader approach to housing from local and central Government is required. I outline the impacts that the cost of housing, control over decision-making and connection to people and place can have on rangatahi and their ability to live fulfilled and prosperous lives, here in Aotearoa.

## Introduction

For generations, home ownership in Aotearoa has been seen as a rite of passage. Associated with financial equity, intergenerational equity and decision-making power, home ownership provides a broad foundation of social and economic capital not seen in other tenure types (Eaqub & Eaqub, 2015). Research shows that home owners are also more likely to take an interest in and become involved in their community as compared to renters, because they tend to have longevity of tenure and are keen to invest in improving the quality of the area that they live in (Eaqub & Eaqub, 2015; Roskrug, et al., 2011). Up until 20 years ago, house prices were low enough that home ownership was fairly accessible; however, the past two decades have seen faster house price growth in Aotearoa than in any other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) country (New Zealand Infrastructure Commission, 2022), and now, in most areas, houses are unaffordable for many. The high cost of home ownership has meant that many young people find themselves unable to afford to buy a home, and as a result, there is a developing societal move away from owner-occupied homes and into long-term rentals. Renting long-term instead of owning a home can cause a lack of social and financial security (Eaqub & Eaqub, 2015), which could seriously impact the way future generations view and experience housing and impact their overall wellbeing.

While Māori are significantly impacted by high house prices, other factors such as intergenerational inequity and continued racial discrimination has seen Māori home ownership rates drop at a more significant rate than for Pākehā (Rout et al., 2021). The decline in current levels of Māori home ownership, and consequently, land ownership, can be traced to the early 1990s when major neoliberal reforms were introduced by the then Government (Rout et al., 2021). However, there is no doubt that colonial approaches from the earliest periods of European settlement continue to influence the current housing context for Māori, many of whom, over generations, have become disenfranchised, impoverished and more often than not, tenants on their own land. These compounding circumstances have caused rangatahi Māori (described fully in “Defining the Term Rangatahi Māori”) to be amongst those who are the most likely to experience housing insecurity.

Considering these housing dynamics, in this paper, I identify some of the issues rangatahi Māori face when accessing and managing housing security. To do this, I first provide a brief overview of the research methodology before discussing what the term “rangatahi” means in the current research. From there, I examine what housing security is before tracing historic housing trends, including the impacts of colonisation and consequent land loss, which continue to shape the housing experiences of rangatahi Māori. Through this discussion, I unpack the realities of what rangatahi face in order to attain housing security in the context of today’s housing market. In doing so, I provide a clear rationale for greater Government attention to housing security for rangatahi Māori in Aotearoa beyond home ownership alone.

### Methodology

This paper is part of a larger programme of research called *Urban Intergenerational Kāinga Innovations* (UIKI) (Pūrangakura, 2023) and is funded by the National Science Challenges: Building Better Houses, Towns and Cities (National Science Challenges, 2023). The present research focuses on the potential of kāinga innovations to support the housing aspirations and diverse needs of Māori whānau, hapū, iwi and marae in Tāmaki Makaurau through a series of kaupapa Māori research projects. This paper is written as part of a sub-project under UIKI titled, *He Tātai Whetu ki te Rangi, he Rangatahi ki te Kāinga: Rangatahi Pathways to Safe, Secure and Affordable Homes* (RKTk). UIKI adopts kaupapa Māori theory as the key methodological approach, which at its core is research that is “for, by and with Māori” (Tuhivai Smith, 2012, p. 298). It is undertaken in line with key principles of kaupapa Māori theory such as “tino rangatiratanga”, which identifies the need for Māori autonomy and decision-making power that ensure Māori control of Māori culture and aspirations; “kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kāinga”, which aims to alleviate the disadvantages experienced by Māori; and “ako Māori”, which considers the knowledge and teaching that is unique to Māori (Smith, 1997). The RKTk project is also uniquely by rangatahi and for rangatahi, meaning rangatahi are not only the subject, but are also the researchers and the participants, ensuring that the research narrative stays within the context of rangatahi Māori.

This paper is the result of a comprehensive literature review that aims to better understand the housing needs of rangatahi Māori. The literature review highlighted the lack of information specifically concerning rangatahi and housing that is available, and the need to undertake more rangatahi-focused research that will better serve future generations of Māori. In light of the limited information available, a search across a broad spectrum of topics and disciplines — such as youth mental health, Māori wellbeing, policy and legislation — was necessary to locate research and data relevant to rangatahi. Furthermore, policy reports, Government publications and media articles have been cited because of the lack of academic literature related to rangatahi.

### **Defining the Term Rangatahi**

Rangatahi is commonly translated to mean youth or young people and is used widely across New Zealand Government policy and within literature. Māori scholar Josie Keelan (2014) described rangatahi as “a stage of development that can be associated with age but is not bound by it” (p. 8). This framing suggests that a person may be a rangatahi in some instances but not in others, depending on the context and stage of learning. Another well-known Māori academic, Hinekura Smith (personal communication, 17 February 2022) referred to rangatahi as “a phase in life where people should come together”. She said that “ranga-tahi” (weave together) can be interpreted similarly to terms such as “kōrero-tahi” (talk together), “kai-tahi” (eat together) and “moe-tahi” (sleep together) (Hinekura Smith, personal communication, 17 February 2022), suggesting rangatahi can be a powerful collective when supported by their wider communities.

The whakataukī “ka pu te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi” is used frequently by Māori leaders and academics to describe the role of rangatahi. It commonly translates to “the old net is cast aside as the new net is put to use” and is often attributed to Sir Apirana Ngata (Keelan, 2014). The whakataukī is usually used to encourage rangatahi into positions of leadership and responsibility, learning from older generations, all the while ensuring they will teach those generations still to come. “Ka pu te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi” has also been associated with the way in which Māori have had to adapt over generations to better suit changing contexts, communities and collective needs (Kukutai & Webber, 2017). In this



sense, the term rangatahi can be used to describe a person's transition through different life stages, changes in circumstances, movement into leadership roles and a person's position within a family unit. It is also an expression of Māori identity and life experience.

While it is important that we continue to recognise the metaphorical nature of the word rangatahi, it has been argued that there is a need for a more consistently defined age structure for rangatahi within Government agencies (Keelan, 2014) in order to realise legislative impact. For example, the Ministry of Youth Development defines a youth as someone aged between 12 and 24 years, while Te Puni Kōkiri refers to rangatahi as aged between 15 and 24 years (Keelan, 2014), making it difficult to create cross-agency policy and programmes pertaining specifically to rangatahi. A clear age structure could ensure that the needs of rangatahi are genuinely considered in decision-making spaces at local and central Government level. Bearing in mind the complexities of the term rangatahi and the ambiguity inherent in Government age structures, for the purposes of the present research project, the term rangatahi has been used to refer to Māori who are aged between 17 and 35 years. This period of life spans the late teen years as well as early adulthood and can include major contemporary life transitions such as moving from childhood to adulthood, secondary school to tertiary education or employment, the family home to one's own home and early parenthood.

### **Housing Trends in Aotearoa and Their Impact on Rangatahi**

It is not surprising that housing policies over the past century have failed to reflect Māori notions of wellbeing: they are inherently underpinned by a legacy of Crown policies and practices that sought to alienate Māori from their traditional lands (Boulton et al., 2021) for the benefit of Pākehā settlers. Exclusive boundaries were rare before colonial settlement, and when Māori offered areas of land to early Pākehā settlers, they did not realise that Pākehā expected complete, sole ownership of the land (McAloon, 2008). Pākehā at that time made the most of these transactions, and "sales" of this nature increased hugely as settlers feared transactions at this scale would not be possible once Aotearoa became a British colony (McAloon, 2008). These sales, as well as subsequent colonial interventions such as Government and private purchases, land confiscations and

discriminatory legal mechanisms, resulted in 99% of the South Island being acquired by the Crown and the New Zealand Company by 1965. By the year 2000, it was estimated that only 4% of the North Island remained under Māori title (Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2007). Subsequently, Māori have faced significant social, cultural and economic hardship because of such intensive land loss, including a disconnection from whakapapa, a lack of intergenerational economic wellbeing and loss of access to sites of significance such as urupā, ngāhere and wāhi tapū (Berghan, 2020).

Māori land loss was further compounded by urbanisation in the 20th Century, which involved significant numbers of Māori migrating from their rural homes to urban centres (Allport et al, 2017; Haami, 2018; Mulholland, 2006; Williams, 2016). Post World War II, successive Governments actively promoted the migration of Māori to the cities because it was a way to detribalise Māori and assimilate them into Western society (Emery, 2008). The Government believed that “in order for Māori to ‘progress’, Māori collectivism had to be stamped out and replaced with Western individualism” (Emery, 2008, p. 1). According to Meredith (2015), approximately 26% of the total Māori population lived in urban centres by 1945. By 1986, this number had risen to nearly 80%, causing a huge shift in Māori social, economic and cultural structures. As Keiha and Moon (2008) observed, “where the efforts of colonising governments and war had failed, urbanisation, driven by economic necessity, has perhaps been the most effective instrument by which Māori society, its communities, its language, and its identity has found the most threat” (p. 5). Cities across Aotearoa were not prepared for such large changes in Māori demographics, and during the first half of the 20th Century, health and social outcomes were dire for Māori, who often lived in slum conditions, particularly in central Tāmaki Makaurau (Rout et al., 2021).

It was not until the 1960s that Government initiatives were established to provide Māori similar housing opportunities as Pākehā, such as access to mainstream state housing (Rout et al., 2021). The supply of State-provided housing increased dramatically during the mid-20th Century, whereby the Government set out to give “tenants a security of tenure equal to home ownership” (Schrader, 2012, p. 2). There were also income-related rents that ensured families would not spend more than 25% of their income on housing (Murphy,

2004), and almost 86% of housing finance for Māori home ownership was provided as Department of Māori Affairs loans (Howden-Chapman et al., 2013) between the 1960s and 1980s. These statistics imply that while Māori had been disconnected from their homelands, for a short amount of time, Māori experienced relatively good housing security in urban centres through State-owned housing that was accessible and affordable, and that offered a clear pathway to home ownership for tenants.

The Government's significant investment in Māori housing over this period also saw an increase in Māori health and wellbeing (Rout et al., 2021). Māori home ownership rates rose slightly between the 1980s and 1990s, however they were still well below Pākehā home ownership rates (Statistics New Zealand, 2021). The 1991 National Government budget, however, was a turning point for the New Zealand economy, whereby major neoliberal reforms were introduced and home ownership rates began to fall dramatically across the entire population. The new National Government, who held power from 1990–1999, believed that there was no longer a need for Māori-specific housing resources and began putting pressure on State-owned entities such as Housing New Zealand to make a profit (Rout et al., 2021). As a result, Māori home ownership decreased significantly (57% in 1991 down to 43% in 2013), much more than Pākehā ownership (down from 79.3% to 70.1%) (Statistics New Zealand, 2021). There is no question that housing security for Māori declined rapidly when housing became more privatised, and conversely, ownership increased significantly during times of State intervention (Rout et al., 2021).

Since the major housing reforms in the 1990s, the once relatively clear pathway to home ownership has become much more difficult to navigate (Eaqub & Eaqub, 2015). Despite some Government support through first home buyer initiatives, the current housing market, rising living costs and the inability to save enough for a house deposit means that young people today struggle to become home owners. Statistics New Zealand (2020a) reported that the average house sale price in mid-2020 in Tāmaki Makaurau was 11.5 times the median household income, and that 25–29-year-olds living in owner-occupied homes dropped from 61% in 1991 to 44% in 2018 (Statistics New Zealand, 2020b). For those in their late thirties, this number went down from 79% to 59% over the same period (Statistics New

Zealand, 2020b). As individual home ownership becomes less of an option, young people are having to rely on intergenerational support and family resources (Druta & Ronald, 2016). Consequently, private rentals are becoming a long-term housing option rather than a stepping stone.

For rangatahi Māori, the ability to acquire suitable, secure housing is even further restricted. Firstly, Māori are considerably younger than the general population, with the median age of Māori being 25.8 years for males and 27.9 years for females compared with national median ages of 37.0 and 39.0 years respectively (Statistics New Zealand, 2023), meaning rangatahi are less likely to be individual homeowners than the general population based on the statistics above. Furthermore, studies found that Māori are twice as likely not to own a home if they look Māori and less likely to engage with the financial sector (based on their own perceptions) (Houkamau & Sibley, 2015). Māori are also more likely to live in lower-quality homes and in deprived communities, sometimes as a choice to avoid social isolation (Andersen et al., 2014). Discrimination is rife in the rental market, where Māori are often denied housing because they are Māori. A whānau services organisation reported in 2020 that they received weekly complaints from whānau Māori about racism from landlords and property managers and that a property management company had once disclosed to them that they refuse to rent to Māori (Johnsen, 2020). In addition to this kind of racist treatment, Māori are less likely to be able to rely on whānau for equity when buying their first home because of low home ownership rates across generations. These compounding issues have resulted in Māori making up half of the applicants currently on the social housing register (Ministry of Social Development, 2022), Māori having to move more frequently (Statistics New Zealand, 2021) and Māori are four times more likely to be homeless than Pākehā (Amore, 2016). These facts paint a concerning picture by which too many Māori, and in particular, rangatahi Māori, are at risk of becoming tenants or homeless on their own land, unable to attain adequate housing security and mana motuhake.

### **Defining Housing Security**

Security is one of the key elements that a house or home can provide, but security is absent for many rangatahi in our contemporary housing context. Security can be defined as

“a feeling of being safe and free from worry” (Collins Dictionary, n.d.). When someone feels secure, they are able to make decisions knowing they have some control over their surroundings or circumstances. “Ontological security”, more specifically, acknowledges the relationship between uncertainty and identity (Mitzen, 2006) and is becoming more commonly used in housing contexts. Laing (1964) described an ontologically secure person as someone who has “a sense of his [sic] presence in the world as a real, alive, whole, and, in a temporal sense, a continuous person” (p. 39). This sense of personal identity enables a person to cope with life’s obstacles, whereas a lack of ontological security means that even “the ordinary circumstances of everyday life constitute a continual and deadly threat” (Laing, 1964, p. 42). Feeling ontologically secure is based on trust in the constancy of surroundings, the continuity of self-identity, the functional reliability of material objects used in the practice of the routines of daily life, and the pervasive and stable nature of habit (Dupuis, 2012, p. 156).

In Aotearoa, housing security is considered attainable only if you own your own home. However, as mentioned in the above section, *Housing Trends in Aotearoa and Their Impact on Rangatahi*, home ownership is becoming less achievable, particularly for young people (Eaqub & Eaqub, 2015). While some good Government policies between the 1960s and 1980s protected renters, they have been severely inadequate ever since. This lack in housing security has seen a push for better housing policies for renters by several advocacy groups (Lai et al., 2023; Mathias, 2023; Renters United, 2023). As a result, the Healthy Homes Standards were developed and the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 underwent some changes to improve housing conditions and housing standards for private rental and public housing stock, as per the Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2020 (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2020; Willis, 2023). However, these standards are not being enforced, and deadlines for landlords to comply are continuously being extended (Mathias, 2023; Willis, 2023).

While for many, our physical homes represent comfort, security and wellbeing, for Māori, what forms a place of wellbeing is not always embodied by the physical houses in which we dwell (Boulton et al., 2022). Instead, home for Māori relates to both the home

that we build as well as the home that we belong to, and that can be located using significant landmarks such as maunga, moana and marae. Kāinga broadly describes Māori living environments beyond a house or a home. The concept is also associated with other words such as hau (kāinga), one's true home; papa (kāinga), one's original home or village; or (kāinga) noho, the place where one resides (Te Aka Māori dictionary, n.d.). Therefore, kāinga can include the home that we came from, the home we reside in or the home we regularly return to. Kāinga goes beyond notions of housing as a means of financial growth and security, and instead, includes broader concepts of Māori wellbeing, such as the health of whānau, the teaching and use of te reo Māori, looking after the whenua and manaakitanga (Statistics New Zealand, 2021). Kāinga in plural represent the fundamental genealogical, ordered relationship of belonging that anchors tangata to whenua and are symbolic statements of mana (ancestral authority) over the surrounding whenua (Tapsell, 2021). They represent our traditional ways of living on papakāinga, whereby whānau lived collectively, sharing their skills and resources.

Today, papakāinga are being redeveloped as a means to achieving housing security for Māori. This is often done by including a mixture of tenure types in papakāinga, with some homes owned individually and others rented to whānau by iwi groups. Like in times past, modern papakāinga seek to provide safe, secure, affordable and healthy housing options for the entire hapū, not just the individual, with the expectation that everyone who lives on the papakāinga also contributes to the overall wellbeing of the community. The sense of security that papakāinga can provide is often described as mana motuhake, which can be likened to the European concept of ontological security as it describes one's ability to determine their own destiny autonomously and make choices about their future. According to Smiler (2020), many Māori living in deprived circumstances have "little room to practice mana motuhake as poverty and expensive accommodation dictate their actions" (Smiler, 2020, p .6). Smiler's (2020) master's thesis demonstrated how mana motuhake can be applied not only in a political and financial context, but can also be embodied in how we design and build houses that have a stronger communal connection to the whenua and to each other.

The reestablishment and redevelopment of papakāinga is a goal for many Māori whānau, evident at events such as the National Māori Housing Conference (Te Matapihi, 2023); however, while living on papakāinga might represent mana motuhake, for a lot of rangatahi, it is not an option that they can realise. This can be for several reasons. It might be that they are unable to return to their homelands because of obligations to work, whānau or education. In other cases, rangatahi may not have access to whenua on which they can develop papakāinga. As such, it is important that policy does not limit Māori housing initiatives to papakāinga only. Māori will continue to reside in urban centres such as Tāmaki Makaurau regardless of their whakapapa and will always require safe, secure and affordable housing.

Meeting the housing security needs of all rangatahi, regardless of their housing type, will depend on how we as a society perceive housing, and how we treat housing. Moana Jackson (2019) spoke of the difference between a house and a home, describing a home as “a concept of place, a concept of belonging and a concept of being”, and he believed that in order to tackle the housing crisis and the issue of houselessness we are experiencing, we need, as a country, to clarify what a home means to us (Jackson, 2019). For Māori, housing security is not only associated with tenure, but is also strongly connected to land and people. This connection to place has a meaningful impact on Māori wellbeing and identity (Clair, 2019; Groot, 2015), and retaining whenua Māori will affect future generations both physically and spiritually. Home can also be associated with whanaungatanga through relationships and kinship with those around us.

Over the past century, Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori, urban marae and kapa haka groups have played an important role, not only in the preservation of our cultural practices and language in urban centres (Doherty, 2009), but in the building of relationships across tribal groups. Groot (2015) suggests that Māori cultural practices can strengthen the ability to engage in home-making and retain a positive sense of self and place, even when away from one’s own homeland. According to Groot (2015), a strong sense of community and connection to place can provoke the same feelings of security and belonging as going home. For rangatahi, this sense of belonging and connection is integral (Clair, 2019; Groot,

2015; Lai et al, 2023; Ratana, 2020) and impacts the way rangatahi identify with the concept of home today and into the future.

### **Providing Housing Security Across All Tenure Types**

Moana Jackson's (2019) challenge to us to think differently about how we perceive a house and a home might depend on the way we treat housing as a commodity, instead of a human right. Despite the Government committing to several international human rights declarations, which recognise the right to a decent home, many people in Aotearoa are unable to attain safe and secure housing, which is particularly true for Māori (Human Rights Commission [HRC], 2023). The current state of housing in Aotearoa is driven heavily by financial profit, which significantly impacts rangatahi and their housing goals. Rangatahi struggle to access safe and secure housing, not only because of the high cost, but also because of a lack of intergenerational equity, inadequate financial literacy, discrimination and systemic racism (Allott, 2020; Clark et al., 2022; Cram et al, 2023; Houkamau & Sibley, 2015., Lai et al., 2023). While in the early stages of adulthood, more transitory options, such as flatting and boarding, can fulfil a young person's housing needs; yet, renting is not seen as a long-term option in Aotearoa, and regardless of age or circumstance, does not currently provide adequate housing security (Eaqub & Eaqub, 2015). Again, this can impact rangatahi, and in particular, rangatahi who have tamariki because they require a stronger connection to their communities in order to access schools, activities and jobs long term (Cram et al., 2023). As a result, moving house because of housing insecurity can negatively impact their wellbeing, their income and their relationship to people and place. There needs to be significant investment and systems change to enable more inclusive and innovative housing options across tenure types, where the focus is on housing rights, not on housing profit.

In recent years, several strategies that respond to the housing issues faced by Māori have been developed, although we are yet to see their recommendations implemented fully. One of the more recent strategies, *MAIHI Ka Ora — The Māori Housing Strategy, 2021–2051*, was developed by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MHUD) in partnership with Te Matapihi and Te Puni Kōkiri (MHUD, 2021). The strategy set out a clear direction for the Māori housing system and envisioned that “all whānau have safe, healthy,



affordable homes with secure tenure, across the Māori housing continuum” (in 2014, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) published its *Māori Housing Continuum*, which sets out five tenure types: severe housing deprivation, social housing, assisted private rental, private rental and private ownership (MBIE, 2014)) (MHUD, 2021, p. 5). The document acknowledged the insufficient responses to Māori housing over decades, and the ongoing impact these inadequate responses are having on Māori today and into the future. The document also set out a framework based on Māori principles (mauri, tikanga, whanaungatanga, whakamana, manaakitanga and tino rangatiratanga) (MHUD, 2021), and it identified key workstreams to deliver the outcomes needed for Māori. It also stated that for the strategy to be successful, Māori partnership and kaupapa Māori approaches must be integral (MHUD, 2021). All of this was then brought together under a metaphorical whare wānanga linking together representatives from the Māori housing sector and across Government agencies to ensure “the entire system is better positioned to deliver equity and equality across the housing continuum that places whānau at its centre” (MHUD, 2021, p. 5).

Another housing strategy that is proving to have significant merit is shared equity. While not developed specifically for Māori, it is becoming a popular home ownership pathway for rangatahi Māori, with more than 47% of the residents at Waimihia Inlet (one of the first shared equity developments in Tāmaki Makaurau) identifying as Māori (New Zealand Housing Foundation [NZHF], 2001). Shared equity schemes are set up specifically to help first home buyers who are struggling to get a big enough deposit together to buy a home but earn enough to service a mortgage. The homeowner buys a majority stake in the property, while the other party buys the remaining share. There are now several communities in Tāmaki Makaurau that have been developed using a shared equity model; these are offered through charities, iwi and Government organisations. According to the NZHF, one of the organisations leading this home ownership model, most families are able to buy out the other party within 10 years (NZHF, 2001). Furthermore, a survey conducted at the Waimahia Inlet, which is managed and developed by the NZHF, found that 85% of the residents rated their housing security as being very good or excellent, and 80% felt a sense of community had been established in the development (NZHF, 2017). While the current

work is focused on the need for housing security across all tenure types, shared equity schemes seem to be a good option for those who want to and are able to own a home.

For others, alternative housing options such as tiny homes are also becoming more popular and more commonplace. Tiny homes disrupt standardised housing tenures and challenge notions of individualism, placing more value on the collective because there is more reliance on others to make alternative options possible. For Māori, this is not a new phenomenon. For generations, Māori have managed and governed their land and resources communally, and survival was once perceived as possible only by virtue of belonging to a social group (Berghan, 2020). Building a tiny home might require a person to collaborate with a landowner, combine finances with others to buy land or establish a whānau trust for a papakāinga development. Tiny living also challenges our thinking around how much we consume because it has a focus on living more sustainably and being environmentally conscious. By thinking more innovatively and by sharing resources, the opportunities to create long-term, secure housing become much more achievable. The ability to work, live and socialise alongside others, in systems not bound by high interest rates, tenure policies and 9–5 working weeks, is an alluring option for rangatahi that has the potential to decolonise not only the way rangatahi live, but also how they appreciate and define what home means to them.

While home ownership might continue to be the goal for many rangatahi, housing security must be attainable regardless of tenure type. As such, this paper outlines three key objectives that should be given due consideration. Firstly, the cost of housing has risen significantly since the 1990s, and as a result, rangatahi struggle to afford appropriate housing in today's market (Eaqub & Eaqub, 2015; Rout et al., 2021). Therefore, there is a need for more affordable housing across all tenure types. Secondly, rangatahi need to feel a sense of control, and autonomy, over their living environment, regardless of tenure type, through the implementation of legislation that gives them more rights. Lastly, connection to people and place is extremely important to Māori. Māori feel comfort and stability in knowing that they have a relationship with the land and people around them, and so, this must be a focus when addressing Māori housing. Therefore, regulating *cost*, allowing *control*

and ensuring *connection* when designing, building and allocating housing could provide rangatahi with the sense of security they need to live fulfilled and prosperous lives, here in Aotearoa.

### **Conclusion**

Almost 100 years after Māori began to move to cities in large numbers, the housing situation is once again dire due to the high cost of living and an unaffordable housing market. The COVID-19 pandemic and more recent weather events caused by climate change have only intensified the housing crisis and created further instability for rangatahi Māori.

As a rangatahi in Aotearoa who has lived in student housing, flatted, lived with whānau, rented a house, owned a house, lived in Government-subsidised housing and now lives in a tiny home, I believe that owning a home is not and should not be the only way to achieve housing security. The history of Māori housing in New Zealand over the last century clearly shows that when the Government intervenes and supports Māori in their housing needs and aspirations, Māori housing security improves. It is imperative that Government initiatives focus on enabling housing security across all types of housing tenure. Moreover, it is critical that the Government considers more innovative and accessible pathways towards home ownership, such as providing lending options for tiny homes. This will require the Government to include rangatahi in conversations pertaining to the implementation of housing strategies such as the MAIHI Ka Ora framework because rangatahi will be the ones who will benefit or suffer based on the recommendations or resolutions that are established today.

While home ownership and land ownership continue to be important to rangatahi Māori, the neoliberal concept of a house as a commodity, purely used to accumulate wealth, does not align with Māori understandings of kāinga and mana motuhake, and will not ensure long-term housing security for future generations. Housing strategies and policies must reflect the diverse needs of rangatahi, rather than these strategies remaining focused on one-size-fits-all solutions aimed at the general Māori population. Government policy that reflects the housing security needs of rangatahi could ensure that cost is not a

barrier to good housing and that rangatahi are able to have a sense of control when making housing decisions. Furthermore, the Government could enable rangatahi to build a connection with the communities in which they live through policies that ensure rangatahi have long-term housing security. Rangatahi deserve to feel like they have a future to look forward to, and as tangata whenua, have the right to safe, secure and affordable housing in Aotearoa, now and in the years to come.

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## Glossary

<b>Te reo Māori term</b>	<b>English translation or nearest equivalent</b>
Aotearoa	New Zealand
Hapū	kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe
Hau kāinga	One's true home
Iwi	Tribe
Kāinga	Housing, home, living arrangements beyond the home
Kāinga noho	The place where one resides
Kapa haka	Māori performing group
ka pu te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi	The old net is cast aside as the new net is put to use
Kaupapa Māori	Project work that is for, by and with Māori
Kōhanga Reo	Māori language pre-school
Kura Kaupapa Māori	School that uses Māori philosophy and language for teaching and learning
Mana	Ancestral authority
Manaakitanga	The process of showing respect, generosity and care for others
Mana motuhake	Self-identity, autonomy, control of one's destiny
Moana	Oceans and waterways
Marae	Open area in front of the wharenui but often includes the complex of buildings around the marae
Maunga	Mountains
Mauri	Life principle, life force
Ngāhere	Forests
Pākehā	New Zealanders of European descent
Papakāinga	One's original home, home base or village
Rangatahi	Youth, young adults, the next generation
Tāmaki Makarau	Auckland

<b>Te reo Māori term</b>	<b>English translation or nearest equivalent</b>
Tamariki	Children
Tangata	Person/people
Te Reo Māori	Māori language
Tikanga	Māori customs and practices
Tino rangatiratanga	Self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy
Urupā	Burial ground, graveyard
Wāhi tapu	Sacred sites of significance
Whakamana	To give authority, to enable
Whakapapa	Genealogy, ancestry, family origins
Whakataukī	Māori proverb
Whānau	Family
Whanaungatanga	Relationship, kinship, family connection
Whare wānanga	Place of higher learning
Whenua	Land