

# Supporting Family Wellbeing: juggling work and family life

Agencies for Nutrition Action Conference

Gregory Fortuin, Commissioner

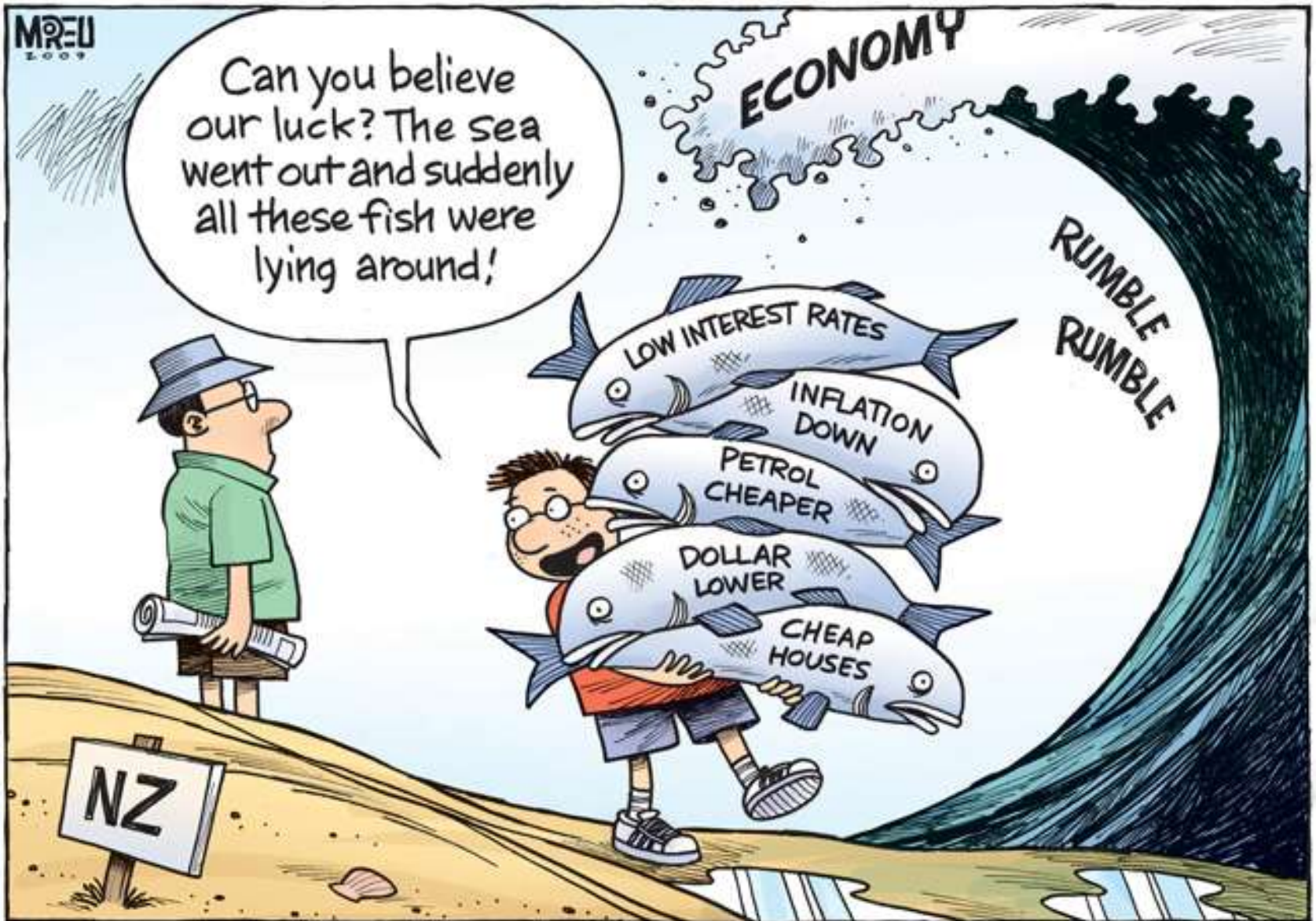


# STUFF HAPPENS

**families** commission  
kōmihana ā **whānau**

> Giving New Zealand families a voice: *Te reo o te whānau*

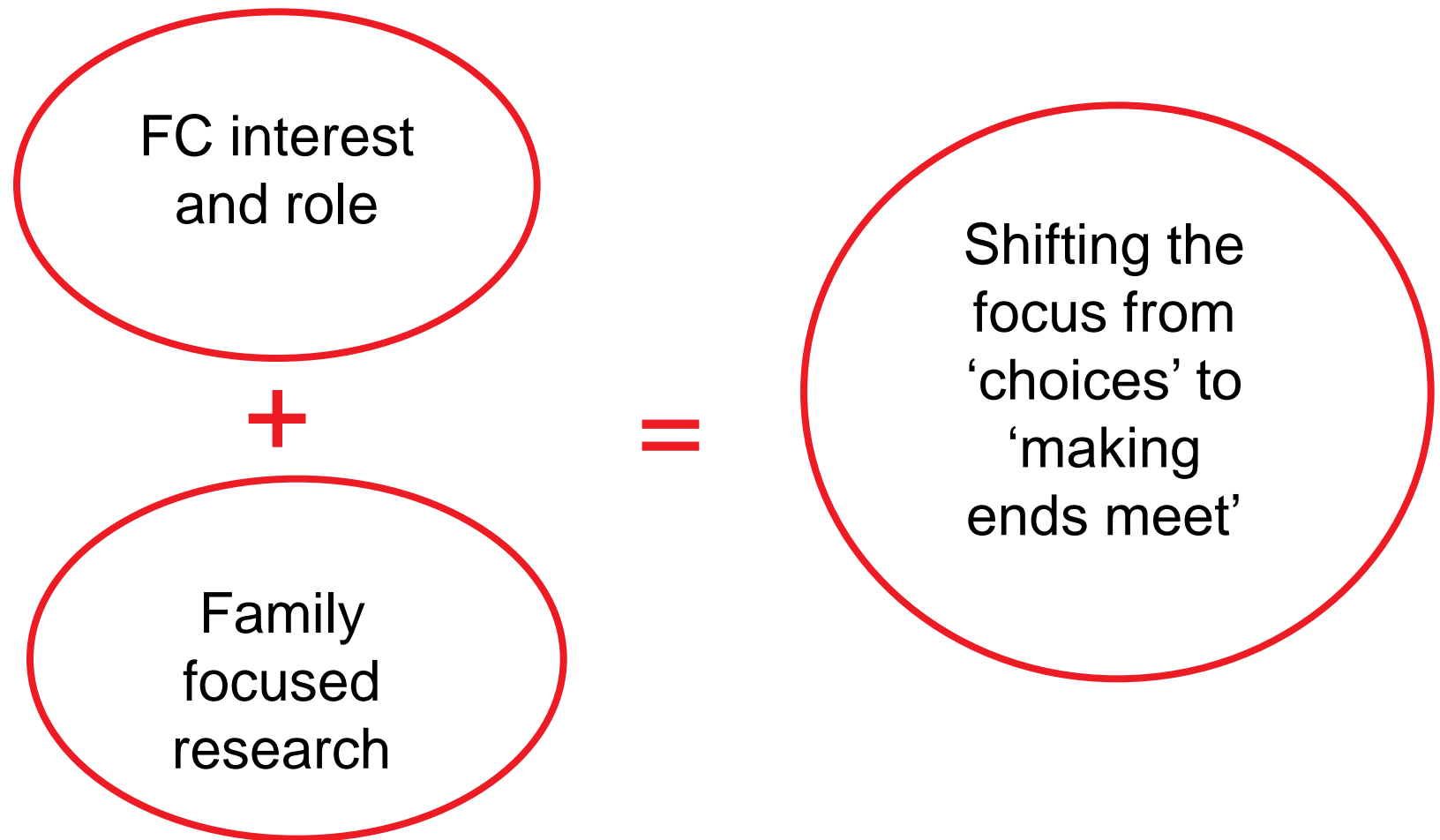




# Outline

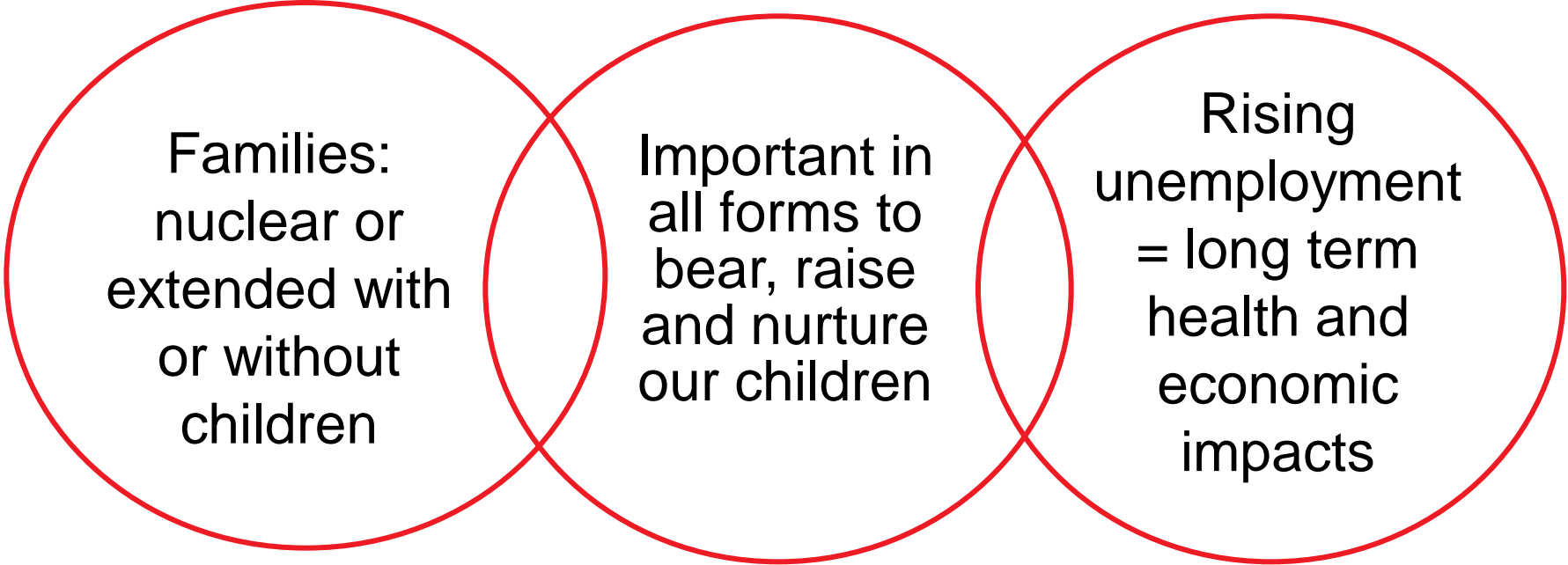
- > **Present** findings from the Commission's research
- > **Highlight** issues for jobs and families in current climate and implications for family wellbeing
- > **Promote** the importance of focusing on families for social and economic wellbeing

# Families Commission Research



# Why Focus on Families?

“To put the world in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must first put the family in order.” Confucius



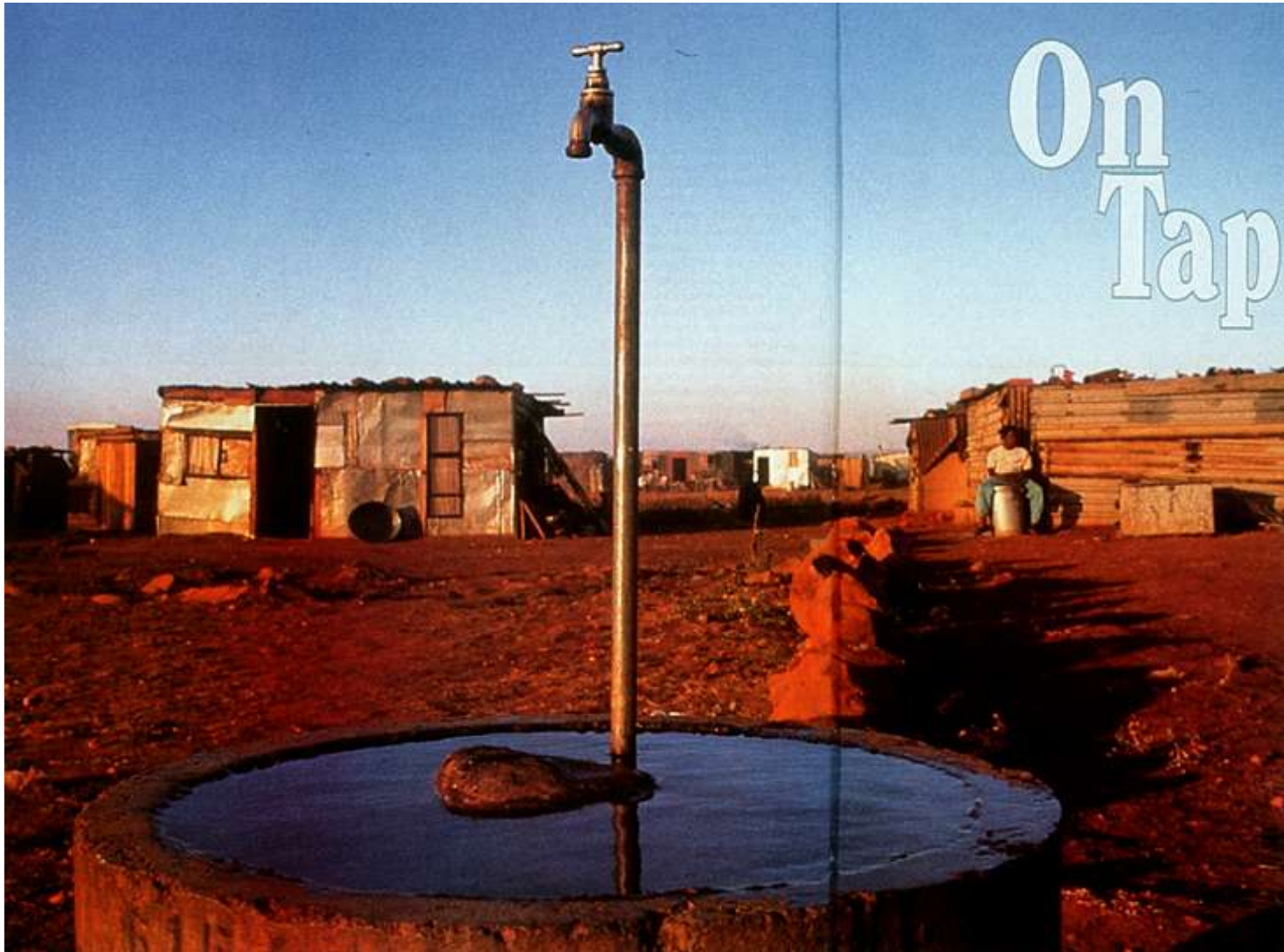
Families:  
nuclear or  
extended with  
or without  
children

Important in  
all forms to  
bear, raise  
and nurture  
our children

Rising  
unemployment  
= long term  
health and  
economic  
impacts

## Income adequacy

- > The effects of poverty often have a knock-on effect on other aspects of family life
- > Individuals in materially deprived families have a higher risk of ill-health
- > This is in part mediated through poor nutrition



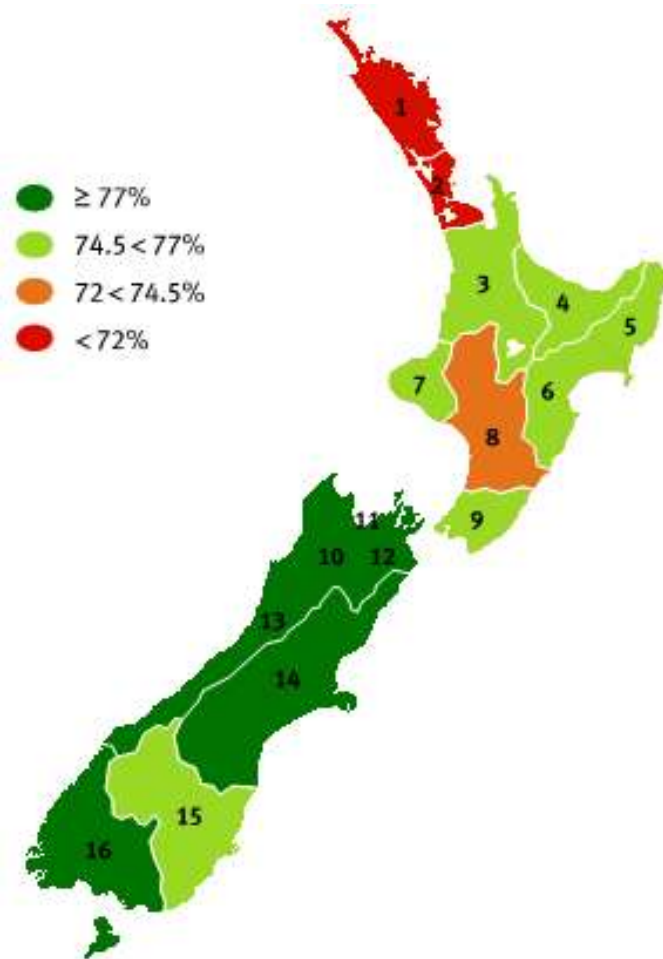


# Paid Employment

(Social Report 2006)

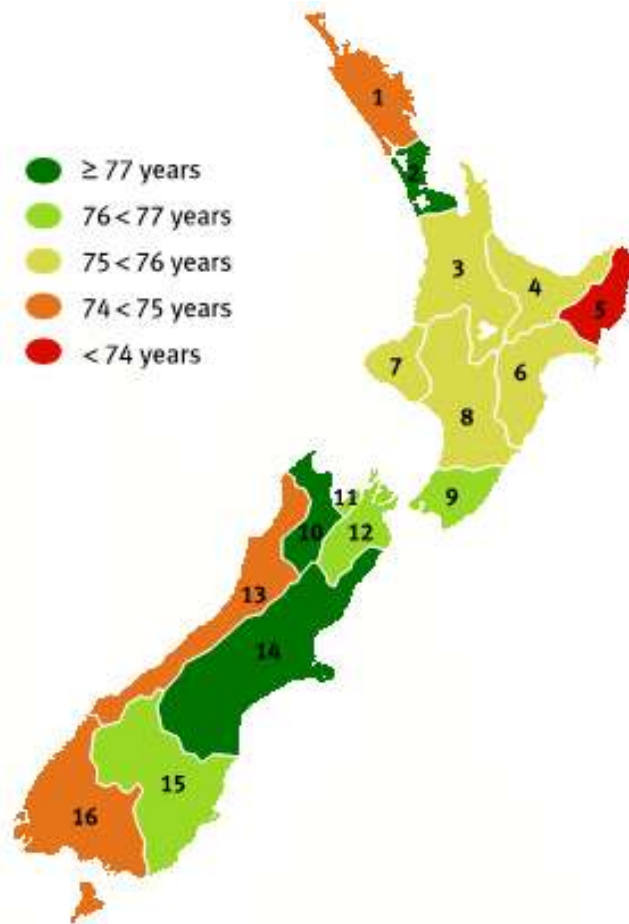
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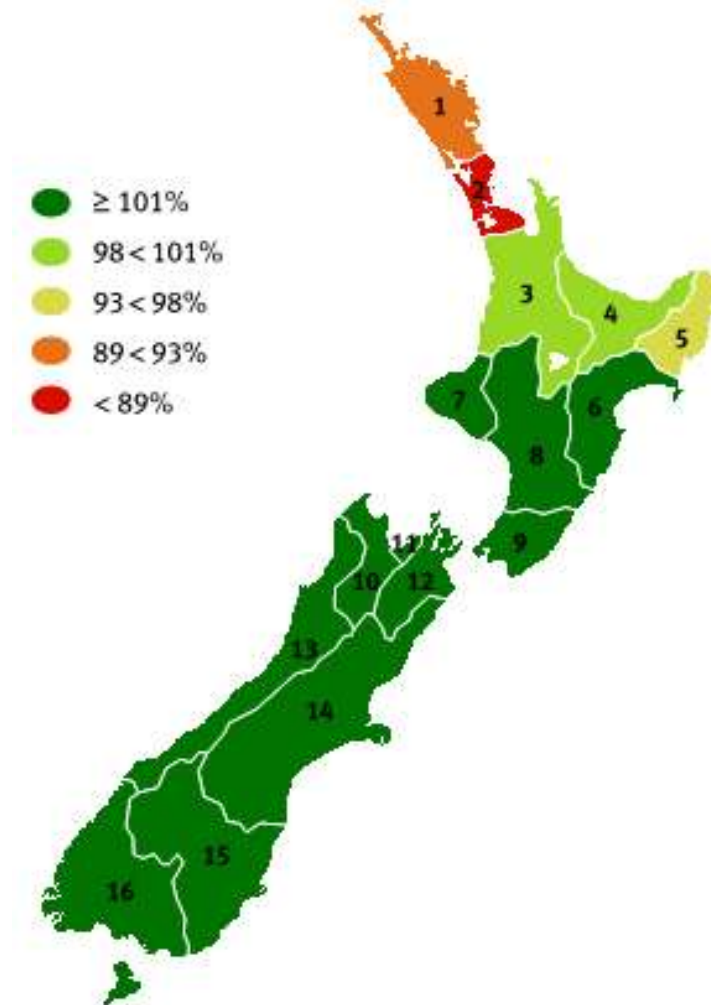
# LIFE EXPECTANCY – Males 2002

(Social Report 2006)



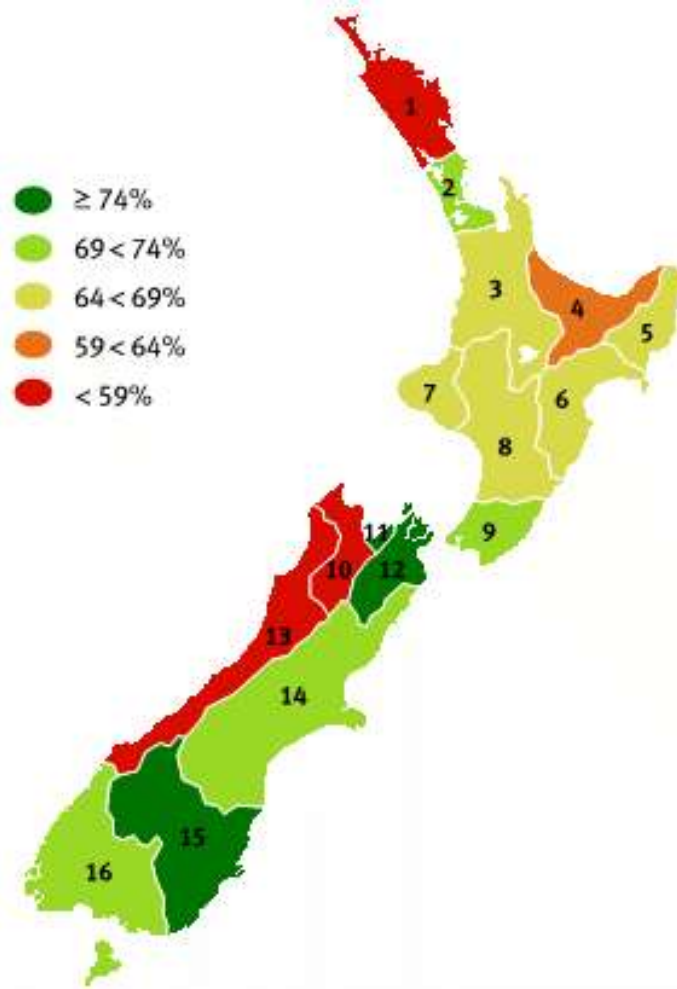
# Early Childhood Education Participation – ages 3 and 4

(Social Report 2006)



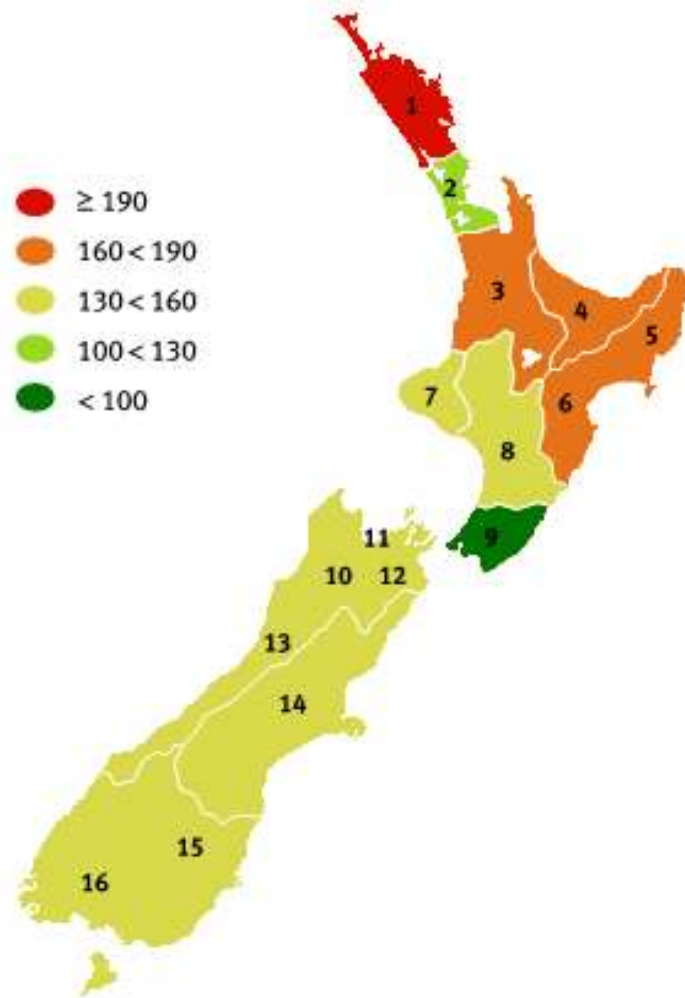
# School Leavers with Higher Education

(Social Report 2006)



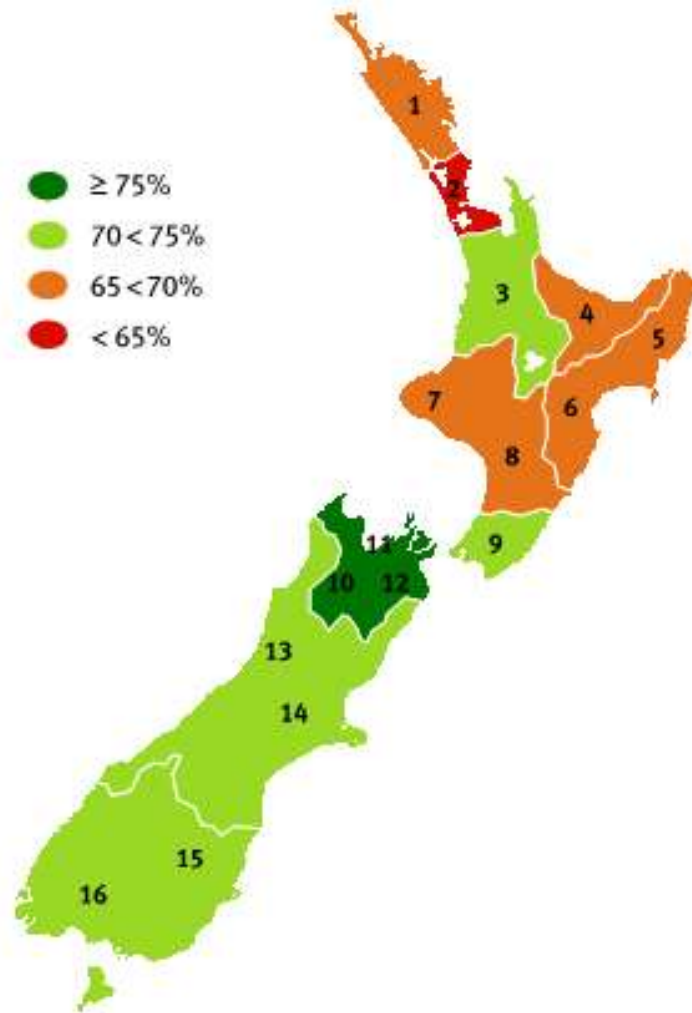
# WORKPLACE INJURIES

(Social Report 2006)



# Participation in Sport – ages 5 - 17

(Social Report 2006)



# Flexible work

- > Over 75% of NZ employees report having ‘a lot’ or a ‘fair amount’ of flexibility in their jobs
- > Used a way of allowing parents to participate in children’s sporting pursuits
- > Allowing breastfeeding for longer even when mothers have to go back to work for financial reasons

# Working long hours



- > New Zealand working hours are amongst the highest in the world
- > high levels of stress related illness and unhealthy lifestyles
- > taking care of more specific health issues was a struggle
- > common for children miss out on participating in sport

# Working long hours

Impacts of long hours very relevant in current climate:

- > Couch poll on the effects of the recession one in five respondents said they were now working longer hours to make ends meet
- > Staff cuts resulting in remaining staff to picking up extra work

# Paid parental leave

- > Importance of financial support for families at time of birth, while establishing breastfeeding and caring for babies
- > We want to see parents provided with more paid time off work after the baby is born and with parental leave paid at a higher rate
- > Promote maternal health and child health and development

## Summary: looking after families

Financial assistance policies for families promote maternal and child health, positive outcomes for children, and protect family living standards



Even so, many working families struggle financially, many live in poverty, some have problem debt. More needs to be done



Working together to look after families is more important during a recession to avoid these issues escalating

# Faster alone, further together



- > Our work is informed by the experiences of families and research
- > We consult, advise and share our work government, community organisations and the public

# Fortuin's TIPS for SUCCESS

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# FAMILIES MATTER

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# ATTITUDE Matter

- > Individual
- > Community / Society
- > National
- > International



# PERSEVERANCE Matter

## **27 YEAR JAIL-WALK TO FREEDOM**

(facing death in 1964 + freedom in 1990)

“During my Lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and achieve. But, if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.”

# WORKING TOGETHER Matter



## “ENEMIES” WORKING TOGETHER



# GETTING THERE MATTERS

