

Language that may offend in broadcasting

Broadcasting Standards Authority
Te Mana Whanonga Kaipāho

17 February 2022





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Introduction and methodology



Introduction

Background

- The Broadcasting Act 1989 imposes a responsibility on all broadcasters to maintain standards, including the observance of good taste and decency, the maintenance of law and order, the privacy of the individual, the protection of children, the requirement for broadcasts to be accurate, fair and balanced, and safeguards against programmes which encourage denigration or discrimination against sections of the community.
- BSA's research into community attitudes is one of the ways of determining community norms, which in turn helps to guide its deliberative processes, thereby enhancing the integrity of decision making. BSA has been monitoring perceptions of offensive language via research since 1999 to guide its primary activities.
- There has been further fragmenting and proliferation of media choices since the last survey was undertaken in 2018. Therefore, it is likely that the public's exposure to offensive language such as swear words, blasphemies and other derogatory language has changed.
- This may have had an impact on community attitudes in terms of what is acceptable.

Research objectives

The survey:

- Measured what New Zealanders **think** about the use of potentially offensive language on television or radio – such as swear words, blasphemies and other potentially derogatory or offensive language
- Focused on derogatory language that may be offensive due to **cultural / ethnic** context, or from a **gender / sexual orientation** perspective
- Measured whether / how public **views are changing** in relation to the use of particular language in broadcasting
- Explored whether there are any areas of **increasing concern** in the community about offensive language in broadcasting to inform BSA decision-making.

Methodology



Questionnaire

- Questionnaire updated from 2018
- BSA consulted and sought input from various agencies in updating the words assessed
- **31 words** were assessed, including 8 new words added in 2021 and 8 removed
- Offensiveness was tested in **12 scenarios** for different broadcasting contexts.



Method

- Online panel survey of 1,505 randomly selected individuals aged 18 plus.



Fieldwork

- Survey conducted 18 November to 10 December 2021.
- Median survey completion time was 17.4 minutes.
- Verbatim responses to open ended questions indicate that many respondents put effort into providing considered feedback.



Sample

- Total respondents: **1,505**
- Maximum margin of error of $\pm 2.5\%$ at a 95% confidence interval.



Weighting

- Results were weighted to be representative of the New Zealand population by region, age group, gender and ethnicity.

31 words tested in 12 broadcast scenarios

As in previous years, thirty one words were assessed. Eight words were replaced with new ones, as outlined below.

Arsehole	Fuck	Retard	Hori
*Dyke	Get fucked	*Tranny	Pōkokohua (Te Reo Māori: boil your head)
Bitch	*Nutter	Slut	Kai a te kurī (Te Reo Māori: dog's food)
Cock	*Spastic	*Whore	Puaaelo (Samoan: stinking pig)
Cocksucker	Jesus Fucking Christ	*Curry Muncher	E te fai la'u mea e ai (Samoan: you're my slave/prepare my meals for me)
Cunt	Mother fucker	Pussy	Chink
*Mental	Nigger	Gook	Homo
Faggot	*Nappy-head	Coconut	

Note re inclusion and removal of words compared with previous surveys

- 8 new words were added to 2021 survey (indicated with *)
- 8 words included in previous surveys were removed in 2021: bastard, dick, God, hoe, Jesus Christ, prick, shit, wanker

Broadcast scenario	Description
People being interviewed (TV or Radio)	People being interviewed or asked to give opinion in news, documentaries, and current events programmes on TV or radio
Host / presenter in news, documentaries, current events (TV or radio)	When used by a host/presenter in news, documentaries and current events programmes on TV or radio (added 2021)
TV drama (after 8.30pm)	In a television drama screened after 8.30pm (e.g. Criminal Minds, Why Women Kill, Victoria)
TV drama (between 7pm & 8.30pm)	In a television drama, soap or comedy screened between 7pm and 8.30pm (e.g. Shortland Street, Modern Family, Family Guy)
Stand-up Comedy (after 8.30pm on TV or Radio)	Comedians in stand-up comedy programmes played on radio or shown on TV after 8.30pm (e.g. Live at the Apollo)
Reality TV	In a reality television programme (e.g. The Block, The Great Kiwi Bake Off, Beauty and the Geek, Celebrity Treasure Island)
Music video (TV)	A music, hip hop or rap video played on television
Caller to talkback	When used by a caller to a talkback radio station
Radio host on talkback	When used by a radio host on a talkback radio station
Radio host in a breakfast programme	When used by a radio host in a breakfast programme
Song played on the radio	When used in a song or rap played on radio
During a sports commentary (TV or Radio)	When used during a sports commentary programme on TV or radio (added 2018)



Key findings

Key findings - 1

Acceptability of words in broadcasting

- The top seven most totally unacceptable words across all broadcasting contexts, each considered totally unacceptable by at least half the sample, are primarily racial and cultural insults. They include the top two ranked words in 2018 and 2013 (*Nigger* and *Cunt*), three words whose unacceptability has increased slightly (*Chink*, *Faggot*, *Gook*), a new word *Curry muncher*, and *Cocksucker*.
- *Nigger* is the most unacceptable word in 2021 (65% considering it totally unacceptable across all scenarios), which likely reflects heightened awareness of racial discrimination generated by the Black Lives Matter campaign.
- There has been a softening in attitude toward blasphemous words like *Jesus Fucking Christ* (declining from third to eleventh position). However, while declining in overall ranking, *Cocksucker* and *Mother fucker* still appear in the top eight.

New words in 2021

- Eight new words have been assessed in 2021. Racial words are considered more unacceptable than new words relating to sexual identity or physical and mental health. *Curry muncher* is considered highly unacceptable, ranking second equal with *Cunt*, while *Nappy-Head* ranks eighth equal.
- Terms relating to sexual identity and gender discrimination – *Tranny* and *Dyke* – and a sexist word – *Whore* – ranked toward the lower end of unacceptability overall, but they are considered highly unacceptable in some specific broadcasting contexts.
- *Spastic* is considered reasonably unacceptable (mid level unacceptability, ranking slightly below *Retard*), but the two other new words relating to mental/physical health (*Mental* and *Nutter*) are considered least contentious overall.

What's changed since 2018

- The overall order of words from most unacceptable to least unacceptable is reasonably consistent with 2018, although significant declines in unacceptability are noted for *Jesus Fucking Christ* and other variations of *Fuck*.
- While there is no significant change in the perceived unacceptability of nearly half (ten) of the 23 words assessed in both years, intolerance of much potentially offensive language in broadcasting appears to be increasing rather than decreasing.
- There appears to be increased unacceptability for eight words since 2018. The biggest increases in unacceptability (by more than eight percentage points) are for racist terms, including *Gook* (52% - 8 percentage point increase), *Hori* (43% - a 9 percentage point increase), *Coconut* (47% - an 8 percentage point increase) and *Kai a te kūrī* (39% - an 8 percentage point increase).
- Attitudes have softened toward five potentially offensive words, with the greatest decline apparent for the blasphemy *Jesus Fucking Christ* (46% - a 10 percentage point decline since 2018). There has been a smaller but significant decline in the perceived offensiveness of derogatory words *Cunt* (57% - a six percentage point decrease), *Get fucked* (41% - a 6 percentage point decrease) and *Mother fucker* (47% - a 4 percentage point difference).

Key findings - 2

Acceptability according to context

- Each of the 31 words was assessed in twelve broadcasting contexts. As in previous years, the levels of unacceptability are highest for more fact-based broadcasting settings with a host/presenter, and/or sports commentary. An increased intolerance to the use of offensive language is apparent.
- There is high intolerance toward the use of offensive language in talk back radio (by both the host and callers). High levels of unacceptability are also apparent for the use of offensive language in reality television programmes.
- The timing of the television programmes is important, as potentially offensive words are considered more unacceptable on programmes (e.g. dramas) before 8.30pm than after.
- The use of potentially offensive language by stand-up comedians after 8.30pm, and in music, songs and rap on television or radio is generally considered more acceptable than in the contexts above.
- *Nigger* is consistently the most unacceptable word across all contexts. Other words *Cunt*, *Curry muncher* and *Chink* generally appear in the top five most unacceptable.
- The acceptability of some language is highly context specific. While most words are more unacceptable in some contexts, potentially offensive sexist and/or sexual or gender identity based words like *Slut*, *Whore*, *Bitch*, *Pussy*, *Tranny* and *Dyke* are considered particularly unacceptable if used by a host in a fact-based programme, in talk back radio or in sports commentary (relative to their perceived total unacceptability).
- The unacceptability of *Retard* is also context specific, being considered least acceptable in use in sports commentary and more acceptable than average in use by comedians.

Acceptability across audience

- Younger people generally find the use of offensive language in broadcasting more acceptable than those aged 55 years and over. The 25 to 34 age group are most accepting. However, as in 2018, a higher proportion of those aged 18 to 24 years than any older age group consider words relating to gender or sexual orientation (for example, *Tranny*, *Homo* and *Dyke*) to be unacceptable in broadcasting. They are most accepting of variations of *Fuck*, with relatively low proportions considering their use unacceptable.
- The 65 plus age group generally finds the use of offensive language less acceptable than younger age groups. The three words they find most unacceptable are the more traditional sexual and religious based terms: *Cunt*, *Mother fucker* and *Jesus Fucking Christ*.
- Pacific peoples are least accepting of the use of potentially offensive language in broadcasting. *Nigger* is strongly offensive to Pacific peoples (82% total unacceptability compared with 71% across the total sample). Compared with those of European or Asian ethnicity, Māori find words like *Homo*, *Coconut*, *Slut*, *Whore* and *Tranny* particularly unacceptable.
- Those who identified as Asian and New Zealand European or European are typically more accepting of the use of words that Māori or Pacific peoples consider offensive.
- For people of Asian ethnicity, two words (*Cocksucker* and *Arsehole*) are considered less acceptable in broadcasting (compared with those of European or Māori ethnicity). People of Asian ethnicity are more accepting of racially based terms such as *Nigger*, *Nappy head*, *Curry muncher* and *Coconut*.
- As in previous years, females find the use of potentially offensive words more unacceptable than do males.



What words are considered unacceptable and why

The most unacceptable words in broadcasting in 2021

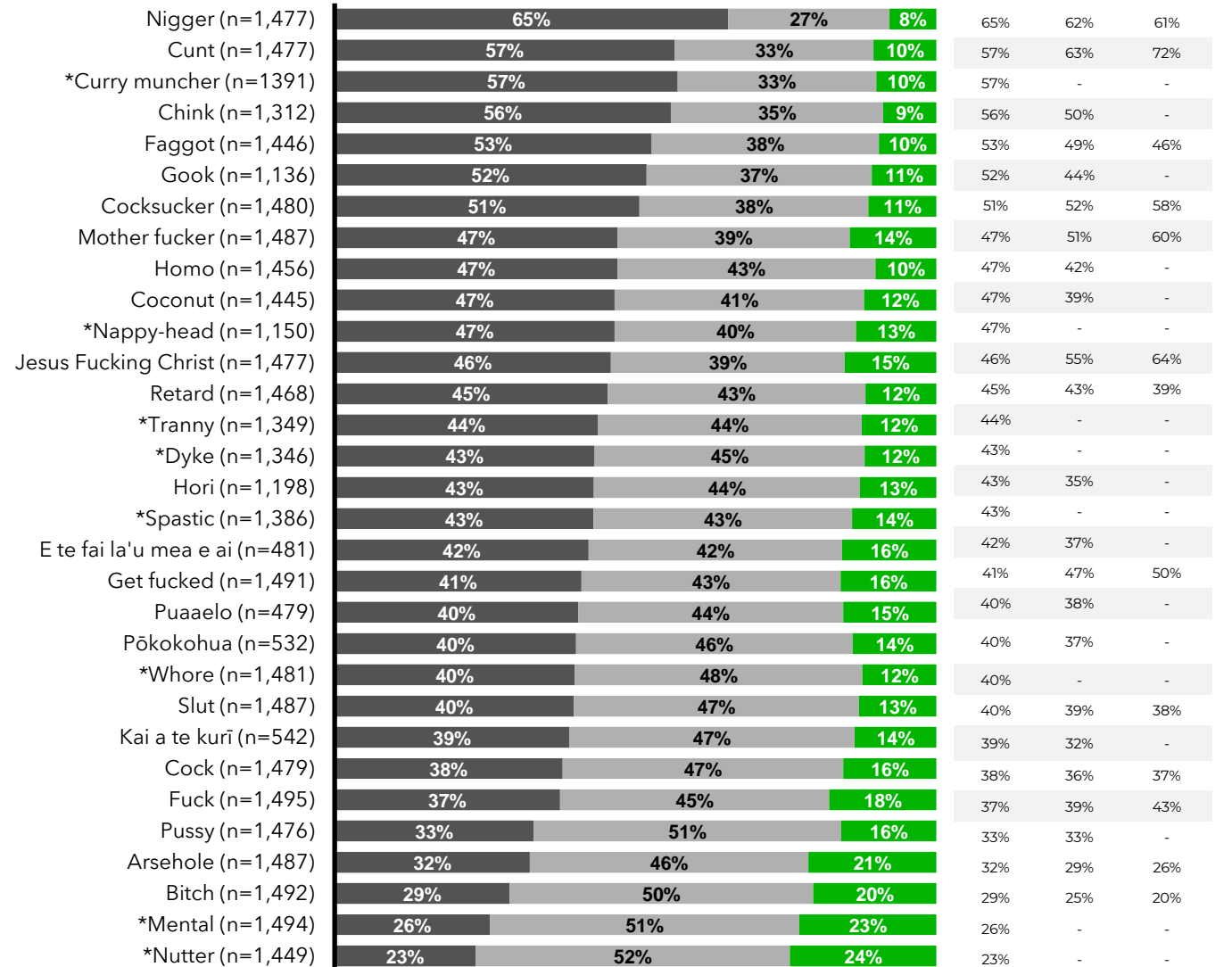
- The top seven most totally unacceptable words across all contexts (considered totally unacceptable by half the sample) are primarily racial and cultural insults. They include a mix of words that ranked in the top two in 2018 and 2013 (*Nigger* and *Cunt*), three words whose unacceptability has increased slightly (*Chink*, *Faggot* and *Gook*) and two others, *Curry Muncher* (new in 2021) and *Cocksucker*.
- In 2021, *Nigger* is the most unacceptable word (likely reflecting heightened awareness of racial discrimination arising out of the Black Lives Matter campaign). 65% consider it totally unacceptable across all scenarios, and only 8% consider it acceptable in all scenarios.
- Cocksucker* and *Mother fucker* still appear in the top seven most unacceptable words, although their relative rankings have softened.
- The proportion considering the blasphemous term *Jesus Fucking Christ* to be totally unacceptable has declined from third to eleventh position.
- One of the new words assessed in 2021 – the culturally inappropriate *Curry Muncher* ranks second-equal in unacceptability, while *Nappy-Head* ranks eighth equal. Pejorative terms for gender and sexual identity (*Tranny* and *Dyke*) appear half way down the list of unacceptable words. Two new mental health related insults (*Mental* and *Nutter*) are considered to be the least totally unacceptable words across all contexts, while *Spastic* ranks in the middle group close behind *Retard*.

* New word in 2021

Base: All respondents who have heard this word or phrase (n=479-1,495)

Q8. Keeping in mind the programmes and situations listed on the previous page, how acceptable are each of the following words in these scenarios?

Level of unacceptability across all scenarios



■ Totally unacceptable in ALL scenarios ■ Depends on the scenario ■ Totally acceptable in ALL scenarios

Changes in total unacceptability of potentially offensive words since 2018

- There is a general trend of increased unacceptability (rather than increased acceptability) across the 23 words assessed in both years.
- An increase in unacceptability is apparent for eight words since 2018. The biggest increases in unacceptability are for racial terms, including *Hori* (a 9 percentage point increase), *Gook*, *Coconut* and *Kai a te kurī* (8 percentage points for each).
- There is a decrease in unacceptability for five words. Attitudes have softened toward *Jesus Fucking Christ* (a reduction of ten percentage points since 2018).
- There is no significant change in the perceived unacceptability across all scenarios for ten of the 23 words assessed in both years.

* New word in 2021. Hence NA - no % change available.

Base: All respondents who have heard this word or phrase (n=479-1,495)

Q8. Keeping in mind the programmes and situations listed on the previous page, how acceptable are each of the following words in these scenarios?

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less totally unacceptable than 2018

RANK	WORD OR PHRASE	Totally unacceptable in ALL scenarios 2021* (n=1,505)	Totally unacceptable in ALL scenarios 2018* (n=1,514)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	65%	62%	2	3%
2=	Cunt (n=1,477)	57%	63%	1	▼ -6%
2=	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	57%	-	-	NA
4	Chink (n=1,312)	56%	50%	6	▲ 6%
5	Faggot (n=1,446)	53%	49%	7	▲ 4%
6	Gook (n=1,136)	52%	44%	9	▲ 8%
7	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	51%	52%	4	-2%
8=	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	47%	51%	5	▼ -4%
8=	Homo (n=1,456)	47%	42%	11	▲ 5%
8=	Coconut (n=1,445)	47%	39%	12	▲ 8%
8=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	47%	-	-	NA
12	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	46%	55%	3	▼ -10%
13	Retard (n=1,468)	45%	43%	10	-2%
14	*Tranny (n=1,349)	44%	-	-	NA
15=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	43%	-	-	NA
15=	Hori (n=1,198)	43%	35%	19	▲ 9%
15=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	43%	-	-	
18	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	42%	37%	16=	5%
19	Get fucked (n=1,491)	41%	47%	8	▼ -6%
20=	Puaaelo (n=479)	40%	38%	15	2%
20=	Pōkokohua (n=532)	40%	37%	16=	3%
20=	*Whore (n=1,481)	40%	-	-	NA
20=	Slut (n=1,487)	40%	39%	14	1%
24	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	39%	32%	22	▲ 8%
25	Cock (n=1,479)	38%	36%	18	-2%
26	Fuck (n=1,495)	37%	39%	13	2%
27	Pussy (n=1,476)	33%	33%	20	-
28	Arsehole (n=1,487)	32%	29%	24	▲ 4%
29	Bitch (n=1,492)	29%	25%	25	▲ 4%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	26%	-	-	NA
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	23%	-	-	NA



What makes language offensive?

Respondents were asked open ended questions about words they find unacceptable from a **cultural perspective** and from a **gender or sexual orientation perspective**. Responses help explain changes in the quantitative data. Selected verbatim examples are included on the following two slides that illustrate the points below.

- The themes present in open ended responses go beyond the explicit language itself. What is offensive is rooted in ideology, identity, relationships, historical context, and the communication medium.
- **The informing ideology** behind a choice of words greatly increases its chance of being offensive. Toxic masculinity is referenced as an example. While the phrase “kick like a girl” does not include individually offensive words, the underlying misogyny is offensive to some.
- **Identity** is a strong theme among respondents. Language that undermines how someone identifies is considered highly disrespectful. For the gender non-conforming (GNC) for example, deliberate misuse of pronouns is considered invalidating or dehumanising.
- Some people take issue with the term Pākehā, appearing to feel cognitive dissonance when this term is used to describe them.
- **The speaker and their relationship with the word and the receiver** are also important. ‘Reclaiming’ words is a reoccurring point raised by respondents. Many believe that a word is less offensive if used by someone who represents the relevant oppressed/marginalised group. For example, a woman may be less likely to be offended by another female using the term ‘cunt’ than if a man were to use it; similarly, if an African-American person were to use the term ‘nigger’ vs a white person doing so. Respondents talked of the power inherent in reclaiming a word that has historically been used as a pejorative.
- **Historical context** is also referenced as a factor in offensiveness. Language used to invoke harm against groups of people is more likely considered offensive in the contemporary. Phrases relating to white supremacy carry weight because they invoke real-world violence.
- Finally, **how the message is communicated** can affect its perceived level of offensiveness. Offensive language can be used in a medium where the intent is to build empathy or understanding for those hurt by it. Someone is more likely to accept the word ‘nigger’ in a late night television drama than on a talk show. The context of how and why language is used is significant in whether it offends.

Base: All respondents

Q21. Are there any words or expressions that you would personally find unacceptable from a cultural perspective if used in a broadcast or that may be offensive depending on the cultural context?

Q22. Are there any words or expressions that you would personally find unacceptable from a gender or sexual orientation perspective if used in a broadcast or that may be offensive depending on the context?

What makes a word or phrase offensive?

Is the speaker promoting a harmful idea?

Anything that implies women as inferior is unacceptable. Eg. saying someone is acting like a girl, kicks like a girl, crying like a girl is unacceptable. And anything that promotes toxic masculinity is unacceptable too, e.g. saying someone needs to man up and stop showing emotion.

Female aged 24-29

Calling someone "it" when they don't understand their gender identity, it refers to an object not a person so it is dehumanising.

Female aged 24-29

...Transtrender, Transgender slur. Used to imply that a person's identity is not genuine. Offensive if used to insult a GNC person.

Male aged 18-19

Is the speaker invalidating someone's identity?

...I object to being referred to as Pakeha, as I am not. I am a New Zealander...

Male aged 50-54

What is the speaker's relationship with the language used?

...I also believe people should be able to reclaim words: it is completely unacceptable for 'cunt' to be used as a pejorative, but I myself use the word frequently - as a woman, I find power in reclaiming it. Similarly, I describe myself as queer, which is considered a slur by some. While I would never use the word dyke, I have lesbian friends who self-describe that way and I completely respect their right to do so, including if they were e.g. interviewed or calling in to talkback radio.

Female aged 30-34

Deliberate mispronunciation of an ethnic person's name, as it shows wilful contempt towards the culture in question. Cultural Marxism, Great Replacement, Jews will not replace us and Hitler was right when used without irony or context, because the terms have been invoked by violent extremists to justify their actions.

Female aged 50-54

Is there a history or context of oppression or marginalisation?

...Retard. I have been bullied my entire life for being autistic, so it's a pretty hurtful word for me and others.

Female aged 20-24

What is the communication medium or setting?

Anything racist, homophobic or sexist I would find offensive with the exception of where it is being used to portray and bring understanding to the experience of people who are being hurt by those words...

Female aged 24-29

[Cunt]... This is a word I would find offensive in most scenarios; however, hearing it in a drama/crime programme as part of a particular situation wouldn't seem out of place.

Female aged 50-54

Why is cultural, gender or sexual related language considered offensive?

This slide contains verbatims that speak specifically to the **cultural perspective** and to the **gender or sexual orientation perspective**

Cultural perspective

Just as Muslim people find it offensive to talk about Mohammed in a degrading way, the Christian community finds it equally offensive to hear the name of Jesus, Christ or God used thoughtlessly and as a swear word. Why do people do it when they would never think of using deities from any other religion?

Female aged 75-79

Any word that imputes a racial stereotype on a person or group of people.

Male aged 70-74

Blackie/brownie/darkie/whitie- anything related to skin colour in a derogatory way.

Female aged 35-39

I personally don't like being called Pakeha and will correct anyone describing me as such.

Female aged 70-74

I personally would not use any of the derogatory words for identity, but I understand that words like that are sometimes reclaimed by the very people these words were used against in similar ways to how 'nigger' has become part of the street patois for African Americans.

Female aged 40-44

Racist words such as nigger should be removed from NZ tv shows. Racist word will only incite racial hatred won't do our country any good.

Male aged 45-49



Gender or sexual orientation perspective

A pair of tits/boobs - when referring to a woman, changes the persons' status without acknowledging it is and without her permission, reduces the woman to part of her (sexual) body only.

Female aged 50-54

It was on the list but I find faggot offensive at all times.

Female aged 24-29

Most are in the previous lists. Deliberate misgendering of someone (who has specified their gender identity) is unacceptable to me. Words such as faggot, homo, dyke used by people to refer to themselves - in fact, many words used as slurs by others are acceptable when being reclaimed by the individuals/community to whom they refer.

Female aged 50-54

".....like a girl" used in a derogatory way "you act like a girl", used in a way to demean men, etc Feminazi to describe females who are feminists "Hoes" to describe women

Female aged 20-24

Gender or sexual orientation is up to the individual we are all made differently and so we shall embrace everyone's uniqueness.

Male aged 35-39

Base: All respondents

Q21. Are there any words or expressions that you would personally find unacceptable from a cultural perspective if used in a broadcast or that may be offensive depending on the cultural context?

Q22. Are there any words or expressions that you would personally find unacceptable from a gender or sexual orientation perspective if used in a broadcast or that may be offensive depending on the context?



One in five consider there are other words that are unacceptable in broadcast settings

Respondents were asked to identify any other words, not previously listed, that they would find unacceptable if used in a broadcast.

There has been an increase in mention of racial terms since 2013, with one in five (20%) referencing cultural based / racist words or phrases, such as:

"Slit eyes. Brownie. Blackie. Coolie."

"Sperg, Negro, Great Replacement,... Autist, Goy, Cockroach (in relation to migrants), Spik, Dot Head."

There is a significant level of mention of words or phrases from a sexist / sexual orientation perspective – such as:

"Dick licker, slag."

"Fat Bitch." "Queer." "Transtrender."

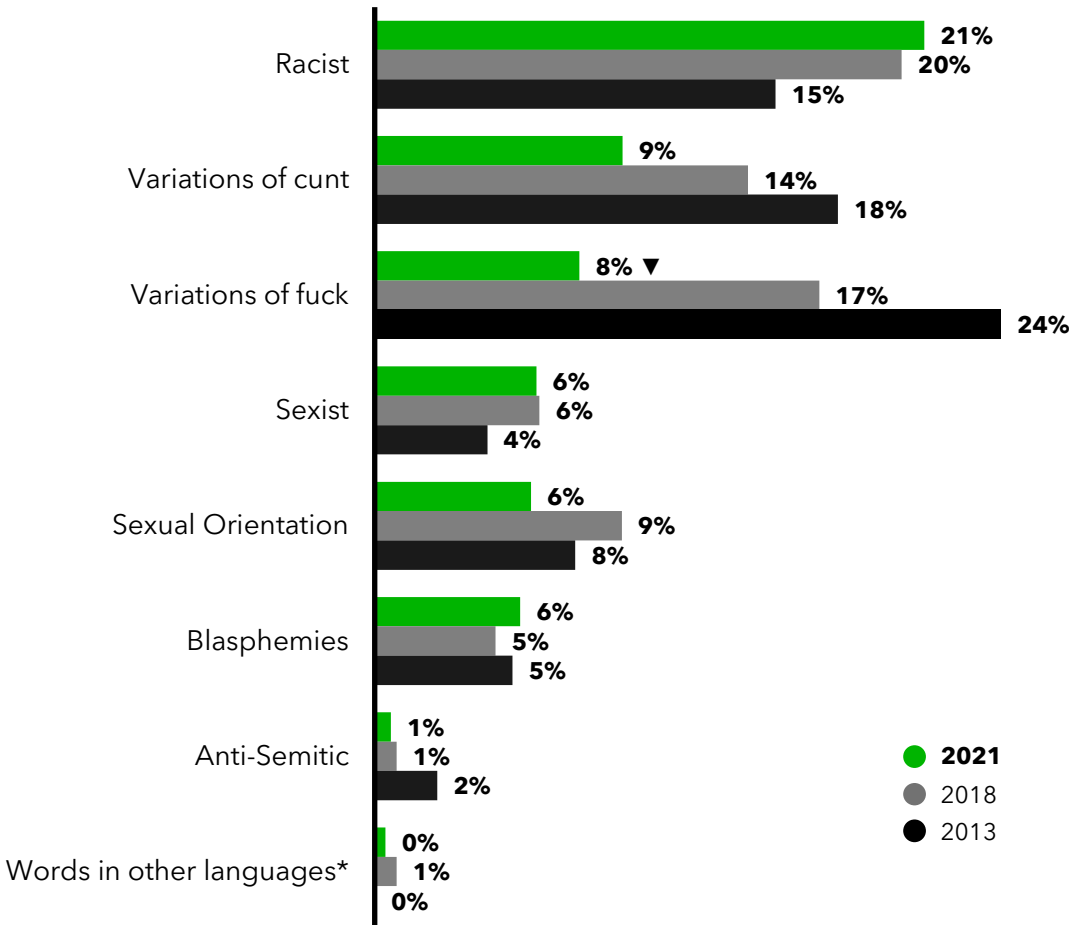
Mentions of variations of 'cunt' and 'fuck' have declined since 2013.

Fewer than one percent of respondents mentioned words that are in other languages that they would find unacceptable. Criticism was directed at use of Te Reo Māori by broadcasters.

"All the pathetic woke attempts to speak Te Reo Maori by inept TV news readers, who not only insult the language through their silly pronunciation but leave their listeners in complete ignorance of their meaning."

Specific other words and phrases respondents consider unacceptable that were not assessed in the questionnaire are included overleaf.

Themes of additional words identified



▲ ▼ Significantly more/fewer comments than in 2018

Base: All respondents excluding None/Don't Know (2021, n=488); (2018, n=479); (2013, n=210)
Q13. Are there any words, not on the earlier list, that you would personally find unacceptable if used in a broadcast?



Other offensive terms and phrases not in the questionnaire


Respondents named many specific words when asked if there are additional phrases not listed in the questionnaire that they find offensive. Specific mentions are included below.

Note: several of the words respondents mentioned were present in the questionnaire. Some commented that they were aware the term is included in the questionnaire, but felt the need to emphasise the offensiveness of the term.

Other generic responses
All language usage depends on context
Fuck / F word(s) / Fuck face / fuck me / fucking hell / fucking nutter / fucking shit/fucktard
Stupid / idiot / moron / dumb / backward
God / oh my god / goddamned / for god sake
Bloody / bloody hell
Jesus Christ / Christ / for Christ sake / Christ almighty / Jesus
Shit / shit head / shit hole / shit puncher
Piss off / crap / bullshit
Anything/all

Other racist words/phrases
Nigger / nigger shit / darkie / black
Pākehā
Chink / ching chong / chinga
Coconut
Honky / honky shit
Anti-Semitism
Currys / curry munchers
Hori
Wog / gollywog
Kefe

Other gender and sexuality words
Gay / gaybo / gayass
Queer / bent
Fag / faggot
Homo / homosexual innuendo
Cunt head / cunt sucker / cunt face
Dick / dick head / dick wacker / dick sucker
Wanker
Lesbian / lesbo / lezzie
Poof / poofa
Bitch
Tran / tranny / transtrender
Whore / hoe / hoe bag
Dyke / bull dyke
Cock sucker / cock smoker / cock maggot / cock head
Arse / arsehole / arsewipe / arse bandit / licker / fucker
Pussy / pussy licker / puncher / pussy fuck

 Darker = higher frequency of mention

Base: All respondents (n=1,505)

Q13. Are there any words, not on the earlier list, that you would personally find unacceptable if used in a broadcast?



Demographic differences in acceptability of offensive language

Younger people are more accepting of offensive language use in broadcasting than older people are

Younger people generally find the use of offensive language in broadcasting more acceptable than those aged 55 years and over. The 25 to 34 age group are most accepting of such language.

However, as in 2018, a higher proportion of those aged 18 to 24 years than any older age group consider words relating to gender or sexual orientation – for example, *Tranny*, *Homo* and *Dyke* unacceptable, while showing high tolerance toward traditional offensive language such as variations of *Fuck*.

The 65 plus age group generally finds the use of offensive language less acceptable than younger people. The three words they find most unacceptable are a combination of sexual and religious slurs: *Cunt*, *Mother fucker* and *Jesus Fucking Christ*.

^ Note: the number range for each age group reflects the differing number of people responding to each word.

Base: Respondents who have heard this word or phrase (n=479-1,495)

Q6. Firstly, imagine each word being used in a television movie screened after 8.30pm, in a scene where police have chased and are arresting a criminal. The criminal is swearing at the police.

How acceptable or unacceptable do you personally feel each word is in this situation.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Word or phrase	Total 2021	18-24 (n=31-89)^	25-34 (n=122-347)	35-44 (n=130-348)	45-54 (n=76-252)	55-64 (n=52-201)	65+ (n=55-261)
Nigger (n=1,477)	71%	77%	64%	71%	72%	71%	75%
Cunt (n=1,477)	63%	46%	48%	60%	63%	71%	80%
*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	61%	69%	57%	61%	59%	62%	65%
Faggot (n=1,446)	59%	67%	52%	61%	58%	58%	62%
Chink (n=1,312)	59%	60%	56%	58%	62%	56%	62%
Gook (n=1,136)	56%	46%	50%	59%	57%	56%	61%
Homo (n=1,456)	55%	67%	48%	55%	53%	56%	60%
Cocksucker (n=1,480)	54%	44%	37%	55%	54%	59%	68%
Mother fucker (n=1,487)	53%	34%	36%	54%	51%	58%	74%
Retard (n=1,468)	53%	56%	48%	52%	46%	58%	61%
Slut (n=1,487)	53%	51%	46%	56%	50%	57%	58%
*Spastic (n=1,386)	53%	54%	40%	53%	47%	59%	68%
*Tranny (n=1,349)	53%	69%	51%	52%	48%	49%	56%
Hori (n=1,198)	52%	49%	41%	48%	52%	59%	63%
*Dyke (n=1,346)	52%	65%	51%	50%	50%	52%	53%
Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	51%	40%	36%	50%	49%	55%	70%
Coconut (n=1,445)	51%	32%	44%	48%	55%	58%	62%
*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	51%	49%	45%	46%	50%	57%	62%
*Whore (n=1,481)	51%	53%	44%	51%	49%	57%	56%
Get fucked (n=1,491)	49%	32%	34%	49%	43%	56%	67%
Pōkokohua (n=532)	49%	49%	45%	48%	52%	55%	51%
Fuck (n=1,495)	46%	25%	31%	48%	42%	53%	64%
Puaaello (n=479)	45%	41%	40%	51%	40%	54%	41%
Cock (n=1,479)	44%	36%	31%	50%	40%	46%	56%
Pussy (n=1,476)	43%	37%	34%	48%	41%	47%	47%
Kai a te kurī (n=542)	42%	39%	39%	42%	36%	49%	49%
E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	42%	39%	40%	48%	32%	44%	43%
Arsehole (n=1,487)	41%	40%	29%	45%	34%	45%	50%
Bitch (n=1,492)	41%	41%	31%	46%	34%	45%	49%
*Mental (n=1,494)	37%	31%	33%	36%	30%	39%	48%
*Nutter (n=1,449)	33%	35%	28%	36%	27%	34%	40%

/ Significantly more/less unacceptable than total 2021

Pacific peoples are least accepting of potentially offensive language

Pacific peoples are least accepting of the use of potentially offensive language in broadcasting. *Nigger* is the most offensive term for them (82% totally unacceptable), as for all other ethnicities.

Compared with those of European or Asian ethnicity, Māori find words like *Homo*, *Coconut*, *Slut*, *Whore* and *Tranny* particularly unacceptable.

Those who identified as Asian and New Zealand European or European are typically more accepting of the use of words that are potentially offensive in broadcasting than Māori or Pacific peoples.

For people of Asian ethnicity, two words (*Cocksucker* and *Arsehole*) are considered less acceptable in broadcasting (compared with those of European or Māori ethnicity). People of Asian ethnicity are more accepting of racially based terms such as *Nigger*, *Nappy head*, *Curry muncher* and *Coconut*.

Those identifying as New Zealand European or European, like Māori and Pacific peoples, find *Coconut* more offensive than do people of Asian ethnicity.

^ Note: the number range for each age group reflects the differing number of people responding to each word.

Base: Respondents who have heard this word or phrase (n=479-1,495). Note: respondents could select more than one ethnicity.

Q6. Firstly, imagine each word being used in a television movie screened after 8.30pm, in a scene where police have chased and are arresting a criminal. The criminal is swearing at the police.

How acceptable or unacceptable do you personally feel each word is in this situation.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Word or phrase	Total 2021	NZ European / European (n=251-973)^	Māori (n=99-233)	Pacific peoples (n=46-110)	Asian (n=77-222)
Nigger (n=1,477)	71%	72%	73%	82%	63%
Cunt (n=1,477)	63%	63%	62%	77%	56%
*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	61%	62%	67%	76%	46%
Faggot (n=1,446)	59%	58%	62%	77%	53%
Chink (n=1,312)	59%	59%	60%	75%	60%
Gook (n=1,136)	56%	56%	61%	77%	52%
Homo (n=1,456)	55%	56%	63%	74%	42%
Cocksucker (n=1,480)	54%	51%	57%	71%	61%
Mother fucker (n=1,487)	53%	50%	55%	70%	58%
Retard (n=1,468)	53%	53%	57%	72%	40%
Slut (n=1,487)	53%	51%	61%	78%	52%
*Spastic (n=1,386)	53%	54%	54%	61%	36%
*Tranny (n=1,349)	53%	53%	60%	67%	41%
Hori (n=1,198)	52%	52%	55%	70%	43%
*Dyke (n=1,346)	52%	51%	56%	69%	42%
Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	51%	48%	55%	75%	57%
Coconut (n=1,445)	51%	54%	62%	63%	33%
*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	51%	53%	57%	55%	36%
*Whore (n=1,481)	51%	49%	61%	68%	49%
Get fucked (n=1,491)	49%	46%	51%	65%	53%
Pōkokohua (n=532)	49%	52%	44%	72%	41%
Fuck (n=1,495)	46%	43%	45%	63%	52%
Puaaelo (n=479)	45%	46%	45%	66%	40%
Cock (n=1,479)	44%	41%	52%	62%	46%
Pussy (n=1,476)	43%	39%	48%	66%	48%
Kai a te kūrī (n=542)	42%	42%	39%	62%	38%
E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	42%	42%	42%	54%	31%
Arsehole (n=1,487)	41%	37%	45%	60%	48%
Bitch (n=1,492)	41%	38%	47%	58%	47%
*Mental (n=1,494)	37%	35%	46%	53%	26%
*Nutter (n=1,449)	33%	30%	43%	45%	33%

■ / ■ Significantly more/less unacceptable than total 2021

Females are less accepting of the use of offensive language in broadcasting than males

Gender based differences

Females find the use of potentially offensive words more offensive than do males, with significantly higher levels of unacceptability for all but one word (*Pōkokohua*). They consider *Nigger* and *Curry muncher* most offensive, along with *Faggot*, *Cunt*, *Chink* and *Homo*.

Religious based differences

Those who are Christian are less accepting than respondents of other religions or those with no specific faith, with higher or significantly higher levels of unacceptability for most words. Note: there were relatively small subsamples for people of other religions, and differences were not statistically significant.

Those of no religion are more accepting of the use of potentially offensive words in broadcasting, than those with a nominated religion. However, *Nigger* is as offensive to those with no faith as it is to those of Christian faith (66% and 67% respectively), although less offensive to those of other faiths (less than 50% considering it totally offensive).

^ Note: the number range for each age group reflects the differing number of people responding to each word.
Base: Respondents who have heard this word or phrase (n=479-1,495)
Q6. Firstly, imagine each word being used in a television movie screened after 8.30pm, in a scene where police have chased and are arresting a criminal. The criminal is swearing at the police.
 How acceptable or unacceptable do you personally feel each word is in this situation.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	Total 2021	Male (n=209-583)^	Female (n=259-911)
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	71%	62%	80%
2	Cunt (n=1,477)	63%	57%	68%
3	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	61%	51%	72%
4	Faggot (n=1,446)	59%	48%	69%
5	Chink (n=1,312)	59%	51%	67%
6	Gook (n=1,136)	56%	51%	64%
7	Homo (n=1,456)	55%	44%	67%
8	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	54%	46%	61%
9	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	53%	49%	57%
10	Retard (n=1,468)	53%	41%	65%
11	Slut (n=1,487)	53%	43%	63%
12	*Spastic (n=1,386)	53%	46%	60%
13	*Tranny (n=1,349)	53%	42%	63%
14	Hori (n=1,198)	52%	43%	60%
15	*Dyke (n=1,346)	52%	43%	61%
16	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	51%	46%	56%
17	Coconut (n=1,445)	51%	43%	60%
18	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	51%	42%	61%
19	*Whore (n=1,481)	51%	41%	62%
20	Get fucked (n=1,491)	49%	45%	52%
21	Pōkokohua (n=532)	49%	47%	53%
22	Fuck (n=1,495)	46%	41%	51%
23	Puaaelo (n=479)	45%	42%	49%
24	Cock (n=1,479)	44%	37%	51%
25	Pussy (n=1,476)	43%	35%	51%
26	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	42%	38%	47%
27	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	42%	38%	46%
28	Arsehole (n=1,487)	41%	36%	45%
29	Bitch (n=1,492)	41%	36%	46%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	37%	30%	44%
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	33%	27%	39%

/ Significantly more/less unacceptable than total 2021



Scenario analysis: Acceptability across 12 specific broadcasting contexts

Nigger is not considered an acceptable word to use in any context

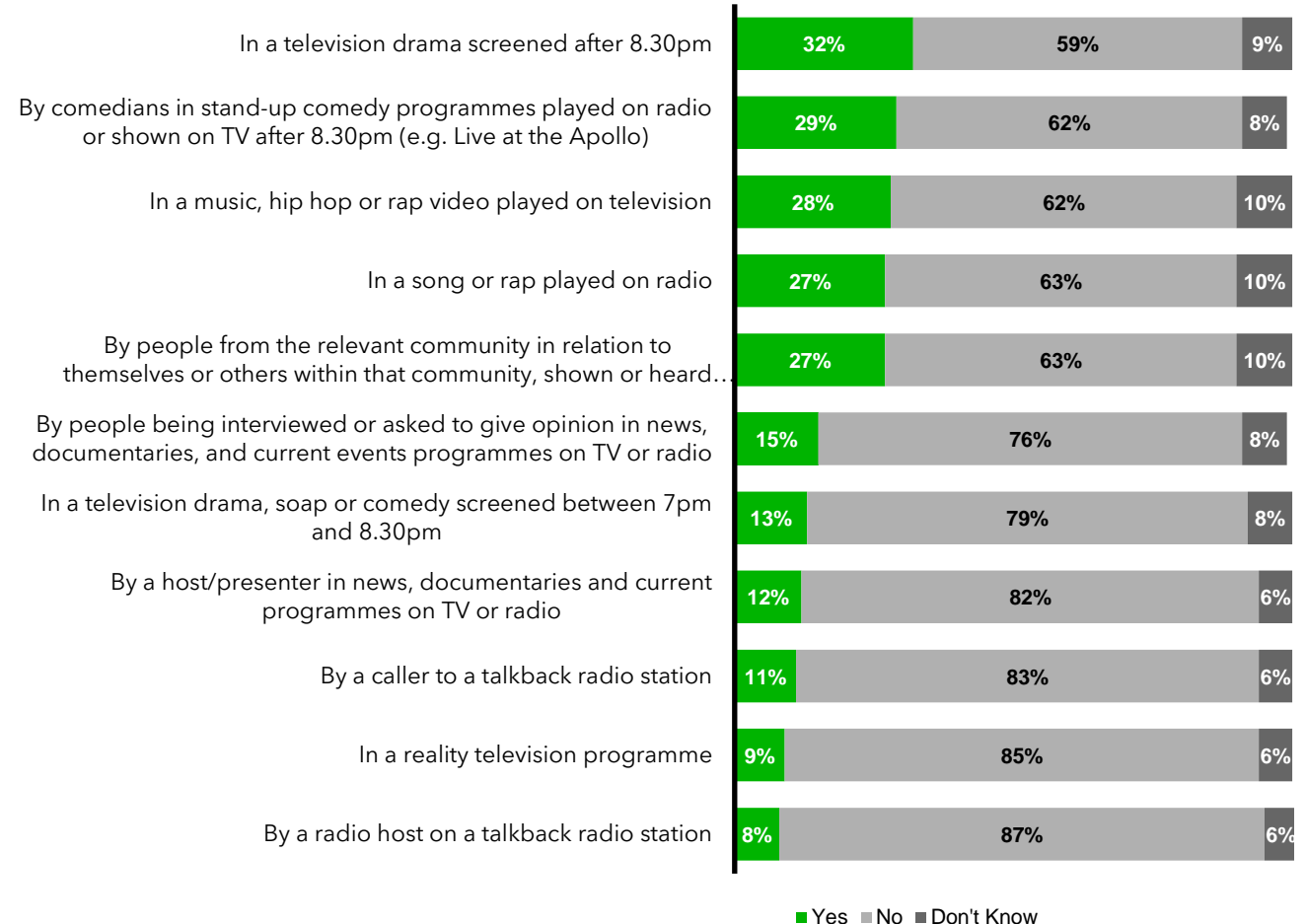
Respondents were asked to focus on the word *Nigger* and to say whether its use is ever acceptable in eleven contexts. (Note: the scenario list differed slightly from the full list of 12 scenarios on the following slides.)

Nigger is not generally considered acceptable, with over half the respondents considering it unacceptable for each of the contexts. However, the word is more acceptable in more forgiving contexts, or where it is used as a reclaimed word.

Use of the word *Nigger* is considered slightly more acceptable in television dramas (after 8.30pm), by comedians and in music videos or songs. acceptable in news, documentaries and/or current events programmes.

Its use is considered least acceptable in radio (whether used by host or callers on talk back) or in reality television programmes.

Acceptability of the word *Nigger* in 11 contexts



Base: All respondents excluding None/Don't Know (2021, n=1,015)

Q23. Now please focus on just one word from the list seen in one of the previous questions. That word is '**nigger**'. Do you think it is ever acceptable for this word to be used:



Which words are more unacceptable in different broadcast contexts?

Broadcast scenario	Description
People being interviewed (TV or Radio)	People being interviewed or asked to give opinion in news, documentaries, and current events programmes on TV or radio
Host / presenter in news, documentaries, current events (TV or radio)	When used by a host/presenter in news, documentaries and current events programmes on TV or radio
TV drama (after 8.30pm)	In a television drama screened after 8.30pm (e.g. Criminal Minds, Why Women Kill, Victoria)
TV drama (between 7pm & 8.30pm)	In a television drama, soap or comedy screened between 7pm and 8.30pm (e.g. Shortland Street, Modern Family, Family Guy)
Stand-up Comedy (after 8.30pm on TV or Radio)	Comedians in stand-up comedy programmes played on radio or shown on TV after 8.30pm (e.g. Live at the Apollo)
Reality TV	In a reality television programme (e.g. The Block, The Great Kiwi Bake Off, Beauty and the Geek, Celebrity Treasure Island)
Music video (TV)	A music, hip hop or rap video played on television
Caller to talkback	When used by a caller to a talkback radio station
Radio host on talkback	When used by a radio host on a talkback radio station
Radio host in a breakfast programme	When used by a radio host in a breakfast programme
Song played on the radio	When used in a song or rap played on radio
During a sports commentary (TV or Radio)	When used during a sports commentary programme on TV or radio (added 2018)

The table on the following slide compares the proportion of respondents who consider each word fairly or totally unacceptable for each of the 12 scenarios, with further trend data for each scenario on subsequent slides.

The contexts in which these words are considered to be more potentially unacceptable (than overall) relate to their use in talk back radio and/or in sports commentary or in a fact based setting with a host or presenter.

The timing of the broadcast is important, as potentially offensive words are considered more unacceptable on programmes before 8.30pm than after.

Potentially offensive words are generally considered more unacceptable when used in reality television programmes than in drama and/or news/current affairs contexts.

There is greater acceptability of the use of potentially offensive words in music and or rap videos on television or songs on the radio than in other types of programming.

Respondents are also more accepting of language used in comedy or a humorous context.

The comparison highlights that the acceptability of some language is highly context specific. While most words are more unacceptable in some contexts, potentially offensive sexist and/or sexual or gender identity based words like *Slut*, *Whore*, *Bitch*, *Pussy*, *Tranny* and *Dyke* are considered particularly unacceptable if used by a host in a fact-based programme, in talk back radio or in sports commentary (relative to their perceived total unacceptability across all contexts).

The unacceptability of *Retard* is also context specific.



% Fairly or Totally unacceptable for each scenario

RANK (2021)	WORD OR PHRASE	People interviewed (TV/radio) %	Host/ presenter (TV/radio) %	TV drama after 8.30pm %	TV drama 7.00- 8.30pm %	Comedians after 8.30pm (TV) %	Reality TV programme %	Music (TV) %	Song (Radio) %	Host on talkback radio %	Caller to talk back radio %	Radio host on breakfast programme %	Sports commentator (TV or radio) %
1	Nigger (n=1477)	81	84	74	80	74	82	77	78	84	84	82	84
2=	Cunt (n=1477)	74	81	67	75	66	78	72	73	80	81	78	79
2=	*Curry muncher (n=1391)	74	79	67	72	67	76	71	71	79	79	77	79
4	Chink (n=1312)	73	79	66	72	66	76	69	70	78	80	75	78
5	Faggot (n=1446)	73	80	63	72	64	77	69	69	81	81	77	80
6	Gook (n=1136)	71	78	64	71	64	75	68	69	77	78	75	77
7	Cocksucker (n=1480)	75	79	60	70	60	75	65	67	78	80	76	78
8=	Mother fucker (n=1487)	72	77	57	69	56	72	63	63	75	76	72	74
8=	Homo (n=1456)	69	76	59	68	59	74	64	65	77	77	72	77
8=	Coconut (n=1445)	67	73	59	65	58	70	61	61	74	74	70	74
8=	*Nappy-head (n=1150)	64	68	56	61	55	64	59	59	68	68	65	68
12	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1477)	67	74	55	66	55	70	63	64	73	76	71	73
13	Retard (n=1468)	68	74	58	66	58	71	64	65	74	75	71	78
14	*Tranny (n=1349)	62	70	55	62	54	68	60	60	71	72	67	72
15=	*Dyke (n=1346)	65	72	53	62	53	69	60	61	73	74	69	74
15=	Hori (n=1198)	63	70	56	62	54	67	59	60	69	70	65	70
15=	*Spastic (n=1386)	62	68	55	60	55	64	61	60	68	70	64	69
18	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	51	52	49	52	50	53	52	52	54	55	53	54
19	Get fucked (n=1491)	67	75	51	65	52	69	58	59	73	74	69	72
20=	Puaaelo (n=479)	52	57	51	54	51	55	53	51	57	58	55	58
20=	Pōkokohua (n=532)	53	60	53	57	54	59	55	53	59	60	57	60
20=	Whore* (n=1481)	66	72	51	61	52	70	60	60	74	75	70	74
20=	Slut (n=1487)	68	75	52	62	52	70	61	61	74	75	72	76
24	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	63	58	51	55	51	57	52	53	57	59	55	57
25	Cock (n=1479)	62	70	48	59	46	62	54	55	68	70	63	67
26	Fuck (n=1495)	61	70	46	61	45	63	54	54	68	70	64	69
27	Pussy (n=1476)	58	67	46	55	44	60	51	52	65	68	61	66
28	Arsehole (n=1487)	53	65	38	50	38	52	45	49	60	64	54	62
29	Bitch (n=1492)	54	64	36	47	37	53	42	45	62	65	55	63
30	*Mental (n=1494)	40	47	34	40	35	45	39	39	50	50	45	49
31	*Nutter (n=1449)	37	45	32	36	31	41	34	36	43	46	39	44



People being interviewed or giving opinions on TV or radio

Scenario: People being interviewed or asked to give opinions in news, documentaries and current events programmes on TV or radio

The use of potentially offensive language when people are interviewed on television and/or radio interviews is considered slightly less acceptable than in previous years. The level of unacceptability ranges from 81% for use of the word *Nigger* to 37% for *Nutter*.

The unacceptability of twelve words has increased significantly in the context of TV and/or radio interviews. The greatest increases are apparent for racist terms *Coconut* (13 percentage point increase) *Gook* and *Kai a te kurī* (11 percentage point increases respectively).

Only one word (*Jesus Fucking Christ*) is significantly more acceptable than previously in this context.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	81%	79%	77%	2	2%
2	Cunt (n=1,477)	77%	80%	86%	1	-3%
3	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	75%	73%	78%	3=	2%
4	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	74%	-	-	-	-
5	Faggot (n=1,446)	73%	70%	65%	6=	3%
5=	Chink (n=1,312)	73%	68%	-	8	▲ 5%
7	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	72%	73%	80%	3=	-1%
8	Gook (n=1,136)	71%	60%	-	13=	▲ 11%
9	Homo (n=1,456)	69%	63%	-	10	▲ 6%
10	Slut (n=1,487)	68%	63%	61%	10=	▲ 5%
10=	Retard (n=1,468)	68%	62%	57%	12	▲ 6%
12	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	67%	73%	79%	3=	▼ -6%
12=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	67%	70%	74%	6=	-3%
12=	Coconut (n=1,445)	67%	54%	0%	15	▲ 13%
15	*Whore (n=1,481)	66%	-	-	-	-
16	*Dyke (n=1,346)	65%	-	-	-	-
17	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	64%	-	-	-	-
18	Hori (n=1,198)	63%	53%	-	16=	▲ 10%
19	Cock (n=1,479)	62%	60%	59%	13=	2%
19=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	62%	-	-	-	-
19=	*Tranny (n=1,349)	62%	-	-	-	-
22	Fuck (n=1,495)	61%	64%	68%	9	-3%
23	Pussy (n=1,476)	58%	53%	-	16=	▲ 5%
24	Bitch (n=1,492)	54%	50%	40%	19=	▲ 4%
25	Arsehole (n=1,487)	53%	48%	50%	21=	▲ 5%
25=	Pōkokohua (n=532)	53%	45%	-	24	▲ 8%
25=	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	53%	42%	-	25	▲ 11%
28	Puaaelo (n=479)	52%	48%	-	21=	4%
29	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	51%	46%	-	23	5%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	40%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	37%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018

Host/presenter in news/documentary on TV or radio

Scenario: When used by a host/presenter in news, documentaries and current events programmes on TV or radio

The use of potentially offensive language by hosts/presenters in news, documentaries and current events programmes on television or radio is not considered acceptable, and is less acceptable than in use by people interviewed on these media.

A hardening of attitudes is apparent in this broadcast setting. Public tolerance for the use of all the words assessed in 2018 and 2021 has decreased, with significant increases in perceived unacceptability for all.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	84%	62%	61%	2	▲ 22%
2	Cunt (n=1,477)	81%	63%	72%	1	▲ 18%
3	Faggot (n=1,446)	80%	49%	46%	7	▲ 31%
4=	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	79%	52%	58%	4	▲ 27%
4=	Chink (n=1,312)	79%	50%	-	6	▲ 29%
4=	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	79%	-	-	-	-
7	Gook (n=1,136)	78%	44%	-	9	▲ 34%
8	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	77%	51%	60%	5	▲ 26%
9	Homo (n=1,456)	76%	42%	-	11	▲ 34%
10=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	75%	47%	50%	8	▲ 28%
10=	Slut (n=1,487)	75%	39%	38%	12=	▲ 36%
12=	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	74%	55%	63%	3	▲ 19%
12=	Retard (n=1,468)	74%	43%	39%	10	▲ 31%
14	Coconut (n=1,445)	73%	39%	-	12=	▲ 34%
15=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	72%	-	-	-	-
15=	*Whore (n=1,481)	72%	-	-	-	-
17=	Cock (n=1,479)	70%	36%	38%	18	▲ 34%
17=	Fuck (n=1,495)	70%	39%	43%	12=	▲ 31%
17=	Hori (n=1,198)	70%	35%	-	19	▲ 35%
17=	*Tranny (n=1,349)	70%	-	-	-	-
21=	Spastic (n=1,386)	68%	-	-	-	-
21=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	68%	-	-	-	-
23	Pussy (n=1,476)	67%	33%	-	20	▲ 34%
24	Arsehole (n=1,487)	65%	29%	26%	22	▲ 36%
25	Bitch (n=1,492)	64%	25%	20%	23	▲ 39%
26	Pōkokohua (n=532)	60%	37%	-	16=	▲ 23%
27	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	58%	32%	-	21	▲ 26%
28	Puaaelo (n=479)	57%	38%	-	15	▲ 19%
29	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	52%	37%	-	16=	▲ 15%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	47%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	45%	-	-	-	-



In a TV drama screened after 8.30pm

Scenario: In a television drama screened after 8.30pm (e.g. *Criminal Minds*, *Why Women Kill*, *Victoria*)

Acceptability of the use of potentially offensive language in a television drama after 8.30pm is mostly consistent with 2018.

The unacceptability of six words has increased significantly in this context with large increases for racist terms *Gook*, *Coconut* and *Kai a te kurī* (10 percentage point increases each) and *Hori* (8 percentage point increase).

Significant decreases in perceived unacceptability are apparent for blasphemies and variations of *Fuck* - *Jesus Fucking Christ* (down 10 percentage points) and *Get fucked* (down 7 percentage points).

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	74%	72%	71%	2	2%
2=	Cunt (n=1,477)	67%	72%	79%	1	▼-5%
2=	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	67%	-	-	-	-
4	Chink (n=1,312)	66%	62%	-	6	4%
5	Gook (n=1,136)	64%	54%	-	11	▲10%
6	Faggot (n=1,446)	63%	59%	56%	7	▲4%
7	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	60%	62%	66%	4	-2%
8	Homo (n=1,456)	59%	55%	-	10	4%
8=	Coconut (n=1,445)	59%	49%	-	14	▲10%
10	Retard (n=1,468)	58%	55%	50%	9	3%
11	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	57%	62%	69%	5	▼-5%
12=	Hori (n=1,198)	56%	48%	-	16	▲8%
12=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	56%	-	-	-	-
14=	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	55%	65%	71%	3	▼-10%
14=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	55%	-	-	-	-
14=	*Tranny (n=1,349)	55%	-	-	-	-
17=	Pōkokohua (n=532)	53%	44%	-	20	▲9%
17=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	53%	-	-	-	-
19	Slut (n=1,487)	52%	51%	50%	12	1%
20=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	51%	58%	61%	8	▼-7%
20=	Puaaelo (n=479)	51%	48%	-	15	3%
20=	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	51%	41%	-	21	▲10%
20=	*Whore (n=1,481)	51%	-	-	-	-
24	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	49%	47%	-	18	2%
25	Cock (n=1,479)	48%	47%	48%	17	1%
26=	Fuck (n=1,495)	46%	50%	54%	13	▼-4%
26=	Pussy (n=1,476)	46%	46%	-	19	0%
28	Arsehole (n=1,487)	38%	35%	33%	22	3%
29	Bitch (n=1,492)	36%	35%	27%	23	1%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	34%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	32%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018

In a TV drama screened between 7pm and 8.30pm

Scenario: In a television drama screened between 7pm and 8.30pm (e.g. *Shortland Street*, *Modern Family*, *Family Guy*)

There is lower tolerance for the use of potentially offensive language before 8.30pm than later. Acceptability of the use of potentially offensive language in a television drama between 7.00pm and 8.30pm is generally consistent with 2018.

The unacceptability of nine words has increased significantly in the context of television dramas screened between 7pm and 8.30pm with increases for racist words *Gook* and *Coconut* (an 11 percentage point increase for each), *Hori* and *Pōkokohua* (10 percentage point increase for each).

Attitudes have softened for two words only - *Jesus Fucking Christ* (unacceptability reduced by 6 percentage points) and *Get fucked* (reduced by 5 percentage points).

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	80%	77%	78%	2	3%
2	Cunt (n=1,477)	75%	78%	86%	1	-3%
3=	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	72%	-	-	-	-
3=	Faggot (n=1,446)	72%	68%	64%	7	▲ 4%
3=	Chink (n=1,312)	72%	67%	-	8	▲ 5%
6	Gook (n=1,136)	71%	60%	-	13	▲ 11%
7	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	70%	70%	78%	5	-
8	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	69%	72%	81%	4	-3%
9	Homo (n=1,456)	68%	62%	-	11	▲ 6%
10=	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	66%	72%	82%	3	▼ -6%
10=	Retard (n=1,468)	66%	61%	56%	12	▲ 5%
12=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	65%	70%	77%	6	▼ -5%
12=	Coconut (n=1,445)	65%	54%	-	15	▲ 11%
14=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	62%	-	-	-	-
14=	*Tranny (n=1,349)	62%	-	-	-	-
14=	Slut (n=1,487)	62%	62%	62%	10	-
14=	Hori (n=1,198)	62%	52%	-	17	▲ 10%
18=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	61%	-	-	-	-
18=	*Whore (n=1,481)	61%	-	-	-	-
18=	Fuck (n=1,495)	61%	64%	73%	9	-3%
21	*Spastic (n=1,386)	60%	-	-	-	-
22	Cock (n=1,479)	59%	57%	60%	14	2%
23	Pōkokohuaa (n=532)	57%	47%	-	20	▲ 10%
24=	Pussy (n=1,476)	55%	53%	-	16	2%
24=	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	55%	46%	-	22	▲ 9%
26	Puaaelo (n=479)	54%	49%	-	18	5%
27	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	52%	49%	-	19	3%
28	Arsehole (n=1,487)	50%	46%	50%	21	4%
29	Bitch (n=1,492)	47%	45%	38%	23	2%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	40%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	36%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018

Comedians in stand-up comedy after 8.30pm on TV or radio

Scenario: Comedians in stand-up comedy programmes played on radio or shown on TV after 8.30pm (e.g. *Live at the Apollo*)

Patterns of response for stand up comedians on air after 8.30pm are similar to those for television dramas aired after 8.30pm. Typically, respondents do not take the same level of offence to words used in this context, with the perceived level of unacceptability ranging from 74% (for *Nigger*) down to 31% (for *Nutter*).

As for television drama, the number of words with increased unacceptability outweighs the number with decreased unacceptability (nine to two). The greatest increases are for the same racist words as for television drama – *Gook*, *Pōkokohua*, *Kai a te kurī* and *Coconut*.

The same pattern of softening towards the blasphemy *Jesus Fucking Christ* is apparent (with an 8 percentage point decline in unacceptability).

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	74%	72%	71%	1	2%
2	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	67%	-	-	-	-
3=	Cunt (n=1,477)	66%	70%	78%	2	▼-4%
3=	Chink (n=1,312)	66%	61%	-	5	▲5%
5=	Faggot (n=1,446)	64%	60%	55%	6	▲4%
5=	Gook (n=1,136)	64%	53%	-	11	▲11%
7	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	60%	61%	64%	4	-1%
8	Homo (n=1,456)	59%	54%	-	10	▲5%
9=	Retard (n=1,468)	58%	54%	50%	9	▲4%
9=	Coconut (n=1,445)	58%	48%	-	14	▲10%
11	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	56%	59%	67%	7	-3%
12=	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	55%	63%	70%	3	▼-8%
12=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	55%	-	-	-	-
12=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	55%	-	-	-	-
15=	Hori (n=1,198)	54%	45%	-	17	▲9%
15=	Pōkokohua (n=532)	54%	43%	-	20	▲11%
15=	*Tranny (n=1,349)	54%	-	-	-	-
18	*Dyke (n=1,346)	53%	-	-	-	-
19=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	52%	55%	59%	8	-3%
19=	Slut (n=1,487)	52%	51%	49%	12	1%
19=	*Whore (n=1,481)	52%	-	-	-	-
22=	Puaaelo (n=479)	51%	44%	-	19	7%
22=	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	51%	40%	-	21	▲11%
24	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	50%	47%	-	15	3%
25	Cock (n=1,479)	46%	45%	46%	16	1%
26	Fuck (n=1,495)	45%	48%	52%	13	-3%
27	Pussy (n=1,476)	44%	44%	-	18	0%
28	Arsehole (n=1,487)	38%	34%	34%	23	4%
29	Bitch (n=1,492)	37%	35%	28%	22	2%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	35%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	31%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018



In a reality TV programme

Scenario: In a reality TV programme (e.g. *The Block, The Great Kiwi Bake Off, Beauty and the Geek, Celebrity Treasure Island*)

Respondents have become less accepting of the use of potentially offensive language in reality television programmes, with increased levels of unacceptability for sixteen of the 23 words common to 2021 and 2018.

The greatest increases in perceived unacceptability were apparent for racial words: *Coconut, Gook, Kai a te kurī, Hori* and *Pōkokohua*. There was also a significant increase for the homophobic term *Homo*.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	82%	79%	76%	1	▲ 3%
2	Cunt (n=1,477)	78%	77%	82%	2	1%
3	Faggot (n=1,446)	77%	69%	59%	6	▲ 8%
4=	Chink (n=1,312)	76%	68%	-	8	▲ 8%
4=	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	76%	-	-	-	-
6=	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	75%	71%	70%	4	▲ 4%
6=	Gook (n=1,136)	75%	62%	-	12	▲ 13%
8	Homo (n=1,456)	74%	64%	-	9	▲ 10%
9	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	72%	71%	74%	5	1%
10	Retard (n=1,468)	71%	63%	53%	10	▲ 8%
11=	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	70%	73%	75%	3	-3%
11=	Slut (n=1,487)	70%	63%	57%	11	▲ 7%
11=	Coconut (n=1,445)	70%	55%	-	15	▲ 15%
11=	*Whore (n=1,481)	70%	-	-	-	-
15=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	69%	68%	66%	7	1%
15=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	69%	-	-	-	-
17	*Tranny (n=1,349)	68%	-	-	-	-
18	Hori (n=1,198)	67%	54%	-	17	▲ 13%
19=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	64%	-	-	-	-
19=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	64%	-	-	-	-
21	Fuck (n=1,495)	63%	61%	59%	13	2%
22	Cock (n=1,479)	62%	55%	51%	14	▲ 7%
23	Pussy (n=1,476)	60%	54%	-	16	▲ 6%
24	Pōkokohua (n=532)	59%	47%	-	20	▲ 12%
25	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	57%	44%	-	23	▲ 13%
26	Puaaelo (n=479)	55%	49%	-	19	6%
27=	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	53%	50%	-	18	3%
27=	Bitch (n=1,492)	53%	45%	32%	21	▲ 8%
29	Arsehole (n=1,487)	52%	44%	38%	22	▲ 8%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	45%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	41%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018

Music, hip hop or rap video played on TV

Scenario: In a music, hip hop or rap video played on television

Respondents are more accepting of the use of potentially offensive language in the context of music, hip hop or rap videos on television than they are for other types of television programming.

While there are some increases in perceived unacceptability, the level of increase is typically smaller than for other contexts. Increases are apparent for racist words *Gook*, *Coconut*, *Pōkokohua*, *Kai a te kurī* and *Hori*.

Attitudes have softened toward use of variations of *Fuck*: *Jesus Fucking Christ*, *Get fucked* and *Fuck* as well as for *Cunt*.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	77%	77%	76%	2	-
2	Cunt (n=1,477)	72%	77%	84%	1	▼-5%
3	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	71%	-	-	-	-
4=	Faggot (n=1,446)	69%	67%	65%	6	2%
4=	Chink (n=1,312)	69%	67%	-	7	2%
6	Gook (n=1,136)	68%	60%	-	12	▲8%
7	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	65%	69%	75%	4	-4%
8=	Retard (n=1,468)	64%	61%	58%	9	3%
8=	Homo (n=1,456)	64%	61%	-	10	3%
10=	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	63%	71%	79%	3	▼-8%
10=	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	63%	68%	78%	5	▼-5%
12=	Slut (n=1,487)	61%	60%	61%	11	1%
12=	Coconut (n=1,445)	61%	53%	-	15	▲8%
12=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	61%	-	-	-	-
15=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	60%	-	-	-	-
15=	*Tranny (n=1,349)	60%	-	-	-	-
15=	*Whore (n=1,481)	60%	-	-	-	-
18=	Hori (n=1,198)	59%	52%	-	17	▲7%
18=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	59%	-	-	-	-
20	Get fucked (n=1,491)	58%	66%	73%	8	▼-8%
21	Pōkokohua (n=532)	55%	47%	-	20	▲8%
22=	Fuck (n=1,495)	54%	59%	67%	13	▼-5%
22=	Cock (n=1,479)	54%	55%	58%	14	-1%
24	Puaaelo (n=479)	53%	48%	-	19	5%
25=	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	52%	50%	-	18	2%
25=	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	52%	43%	-	23	▲9%
27	Pussy (n=1,476)	51%	52%	-	16	-1%
28	Arsehole (n=1,487)	45%	46%	49%	21	-1%
29	Bitch (n=1,492)	42%	43%	38%	22	-1%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	39%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	34%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018

Song or rap played on the radio

Scenario: When used in a song or rap played on the radio

As with music/hip hop and rap aired on television, respondents are more accepting of the use of potentially offensive language when in a song or rap played on the radio. The patterns of response are similar for most words.

However, *Arsehole* is considered less acceptable in a song played on the radio than in television music.

Increases are apparent for some terms, mainly for the same ones that show increased intolerance in television music.

As with music played on television, attitudes have softened toward use of the sexually based terms *Jesus Fucking Christ*, *Get fucked*, *Fuck* and *Cunt*.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	78%	77%	77%	2	1%
2	Cunt (n=1,477)	73%	77%	85%	1	▼-4%
3	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	71%	-	-	-	-
4	Chink (n=1,312)	70%	67%	-	8	3%
5=	Faggot (n=1,446)	69%	68%	67%	6	1%
5=	Gook (n=1,136)	69%	61%	-	12	▲8%
7	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	67%	69%	76%	4	-2%
8=	Homo (n=1,456)	65%	63%	-	9	2%
8=	Retard (n=1,468)	65%	61%	59%	11	▲4%
10	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	64%	72%	80%	3	▼-8%
11	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	63%	69%	78%	5	▼-6%
12=	Slut (n=1,487)	61%	62%	61%	10	-1%
12=	Coconut (n=1,445)	61%	54%	-	15	▲7%
12=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	61%	-	-	-	-
15=	Hori (n=1,198)	60%	53%	-	17	▲7%
15=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	60%	-	-	-	-
15=	*Tranny (n=1,349)	60%	-	-	-	-
15=	*Whore (n=1,481)	60%	-	-	-	-
19=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	59%	67%	74%	7	▼-8%
19=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	59%	-	-	-	-
21	Cock (n=1,479)	55%	56%	59%	14	-1%
22	Fuck (n=1,495)	54%	60%	68%	13	▼-6%
23=	Pōkokohua (n=532)	53%	46%	-	21	▲7%
23=	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	53%	44%	-	23	▲9%
23=	Pussy (n=1,476)	52%	53%	-	16	-1%
23=	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	52%	48%	-	20	4%
27	Puaaelo (n=479)	51%	48%	-	19	3%
28	Arsehole (n=1,487)	49%	48%	51%	18	1%
29	Bitch (n=1,492)	45%	45%	40%	22	0%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	39%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	36%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018



Radio host on a talkback radio station

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Scenario: When used by a radio host on a talk back radio station

The level of unacceptability for the 31 words is higher than average when used by a radio host on a talk back radio station. Half or more considered thirty of the words to be fairly or totally unacceptable in this context.

As with other scenarios, language that is typically directed at a person or group is considered least acceptable. *Faggot* is the second most unacceptable word in this context.

Thirteen words are significantly more unacceptable to respondents than in 2018. The biggest increases in perceived unacceptability are apparent for racist terms *Coconut*, *Gook*, *Kai a te kurī*, *Pōkokohua* and *Hori*.

There has been no significant softening in attitude toward any of the terms since 2018.

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	84%	82%	81%	2	2%
2	Faggot (n=1,446)	81%	75%	71%	6	▲6%
3	Cunt (n=1,477)	80%	82%	87%	1	-2%
4	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	79%	-	-	-	-
5=	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	78%	75%	81%	5	3%
5=	Chink (n=1,312)	78%	72%	-	8	▲6%
7=	Homo (n=1,456)	77%	70%	-	11	▲7%
7=	Gook (n=1,136)	77%	67%	-	13	▲10%
9	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	75%	77%	84%	4	-2%
10=	Slut (n=1,487)	74%	70%	68%	10	▲4%
10=	Retard (n=1,468)	74%	69%	62%	12	▲5%
10=	Coconut (n=1,445)	74%	61%	-	16	▲13%
10=	*Whore (n=1,481)	74%	-	-	-	-
14=	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	73%	77%	84%	3	-4%
14=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	73%	74%	81%	7	-1%
14=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	73%	-	-	-	-
17	*Tranny (n=1,349)	71%	-	-	-	-
18	Hori (n=1,198)	69%	60%	-	17	▲9%
19=	Fuck (n=1,495)	68%	70%	76%	9	-2%
19=	Cock (n=1,479)	68%	65%	65%	14	3%
19=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	68%	-	-	-	-
19=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	68%	-	-	-	-
23	Pussy (n=1,476)	65%	61%	-	15	4%
24	Bitch (n=1,492)	62%	57%	49%	18	▲5%
25	Arsehole (n=1,487)	60%	56%	60%	19	▲4%
26	Pōkokohua (n=532)	59%	50%	-	21	▲9%
27	Puaaelo (n=479)	57%	50%	-	22	▲7%
27=	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	57%	47%	-	23	▲10%
29	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	54%	51%	-	20	3%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	50%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	43%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018

Radio host in a breakfast programme

Scenario: When used by a radio host in a breakfast programme

A similarly high level of unacceptability is apparent for use of any the 31 words when used by a radio host in a breakfast programme. Again, half or more considered thirty of the words to be fairly or totally unacceptable in this context.

Faggot ranks second equal with *Cunt* in unacceptability in this context.

Fourteen words are significantly more unacceptable to respondents than in 2018. The biggest increases in perceived unacceptability are apparent for *Coconut*, *Hori*, *Kai a te kurī*, *Gook* and *Pōkokohua*.

There has been no significant softening in attitude toward any of the terms since 2018.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	84%	83%	82%	1	1%
2=	Cunt (n=1,477)	81%	82%	88%	2	-1%
2=	Faggot (n=1,446)	81%	76%	73%	6	▲ 5%
3=	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	80%	77%	82%	3	3%
3=	Chink (n=1,312)	80%	73%	-	8	▲ 7%
6	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	79%	-	-	-	-
7	Gook (n=1,136)	78%	67%	-	14	▲ 11%
8	Homo (n=1,456)	77%	71%	-	11	▲ 6%
9	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	76%	77%	85%	4	-1%
9=	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	76%	77%	85%	5	-1%
11=	Slut (n=1,487)	75%	72%	70%	9	▲ 3%
11=	Retard (n=1,468)	75%	69%	63%	12	▲ 6%
11=	*Whore (n=1,481)	75%	-	-	-	-
14=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	74%	75%	81%	7	-1%
14=	Coconut (n=1,445)	74%	61%	-	16	▲ 13%
14=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	74%	-	-	-	-
17	*Tranny (n=1,349)	72%	-	-	-	-
18=	Fuck (n=1,495)	70%	71%	78%	10	-1%
18=	Cock (n=1,479)	70%	67%	68%	13	3%
18=	Hori (n=1,198)	70%	60%	-	17	▲ 10%
18=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	70%	-	-	-	-
22=	Pussy (n=1,476)	68%	63%	-	15	▲ 5%
22=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	68%	-	-	-	-
24	Bitch (n=1,492)	65%	59%	51%	19	▲ 6%
25	Arsehole (n=1,487)	64%	59%	63%	18	▲ 5%
26	Pōkokohua (n=532)	60%	50%	-	21	▲ 10%
27	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	59%	47%	-	23	▲ 12%
28	Puaaelo (n=479)	58%	50%	-	22	▲ 8%
29	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	55%	51%	-	20	4%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	50%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	46%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018

Caller to a talk back radio station

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Scenario: When used by a caller to a talk back radio station

Respondents appear slightly more forgiving of offensive language used by a caller to talkback radio (compared with the host using such language).

The biggest increase in perceived unacceptability is apparent for racial slurs: *Coconut*, *Gook*, *Hori*, *Kai a te kurī* and *Pōkokohua*.

There has been no significant softening of attitudes towards the use of any of these potentially offensive words or phrases since 2018.

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	82%	81%	79%	1	1%
2	Cunt (n=1,477)	78%	80%	86%	2	-2%
3=	Faggot (n=1,446)	77%	72%	66%	6	▲ 5%
3=	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	77%	-	-	-	-
5	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	76%	73%	78%	5	3%
6=	Chink (n=1,312)	75%	69%	-	8	▲ 6%
6=	Gook (n=1,136)	75%	64%	-	13	▲ 11%
8=	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	72%	74%	81%	4	-2%
8=	Slut (n=1,487)	72%	67%	64%	9	▲ 5%
8=	Homo (n=1,456)	72%	66%	-	10	▲ 6%
11=	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	71%	74%	81%	3	-3%
11=	Retard (n=1,468)	71%	64%	59%	12	▲ 7%
13=	Coconut (n=1,445)	70%	57%	-	15	▲ 13%
13=	*Whore (n=1,481)	70%	-	-	-	-
15=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	69%	72%	77%	7	-3%
15=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	69%	-	-	-	-
17	*Tranny (n=1,349)	67%	-	-	-	-
18=	Hori (n=1,198)	65%	55%	-	17	▲ 10%
18=	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	65%	-	-	-	-
20=	Fuck (n=1,495)	64%	65%	72%	11	-1%
20=	*Spastic (n=1,386)	64%	-	-	-	-
22	Cock (n=1,479)	63%	60%	59%	14	3%
23	Pussy (n=1,476)	61%	56%	-	16	▲ 5%
24	Pōkokohua (n=532)	57%	48%	-	22	▲ 9%
25=	Bitch (n=1,492)	55%	51%	41%	18	▲ 4%
25=	Puaaelo (n=479)	55%	49%	-	21	6%
25=	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	55%	46%	-	23	▲ 9%
28	Arsehole (n=1,487)	54%	49%	51%	20	▲ 5%
29	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	53%	51%	-	19	2%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	45%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	39%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018

During sports commentary on TV or radio

Scenario: When used during a sports commentary on TV or radio

The use of potentially offensive language is not considered acceptable during sports commentary on television and/or radio, with most words considered highly unacceptable.

As for talk back radio and breakfast programmes, there is particular negativity toward the use of sexist and/or sexual identity based words like *Slut*, *Whore*, *Bitch*, *Pussy*, *Tranny* and *Dyke*. *Retard* also ranks highly in this context.

The greatest increase in unacceptability is apparent for *Coconut* (13 percentage point increase).

There has been no significant softening of attitudes towards the use of any of these potentially offensive words or phrases since 2018.

% Fairly or Totally unacceptable

Rank	Word or phrase	2021 (n=1,505)	2018 (n=1,514)	2013 (n=1,500)	Rank 2018	Change + / -
1	Nigger (n=1,477)	84%	82%	61%	2	2%
2	Faggot (n=1,446)	80%	76%	46%	5	▲ 4%
3=	Cunt (n=1,477)	79%	82%	72%	1	-3%
3=	*Curry muncher (n=1,391)	79%	-	-	-	-
5=	Cocksucker (n=1,480)	78%	76%	58%	4	2%
5=	Chink (n=1,312)	78%	72%	-	8	▲ 6%
7=	Homo (n=1,456)	77%	71%	-	10	▲ 6%
7=	Gook (n=1,136)	77%	68%	-	13	▲ 9%
9	Slut (n=1,487)	76%	71%	38%	9	▲ 5%
10	Retard (n=1,468)	75%	69%	39%	12	▲ 6%
11=	Mother fucker (n=1,487)	74%	77%	60%	3	-3%
11=	Coconut (n=1,445)	74%	61%	-	16	▲ 13%
11=	*Dyke (n=1,346)	74%	-	-	-	-
11=	*Whore (n=1,481)	74%	-	-	-	-
15	Jesus Fucking Christ (n=1,477)	73%	76%	63%	6	-3%
16=	Get fucked (n=1,491)	72%	74%	50%	7	-2%
16=	*Tranny (n=1,349)	72%	-	-	-	-
18	Hori (n=1,198)	70%	61%	-	17	▲ 9%
19=	Fuck (n=1,495)	69%	70%	43%	11	-1%
19=	Spastic (n=1,386)	69%	-	-	-	-
21	*Nappy-head (n=1,150)	68%	-	-	-	-
22	Cock (n=1,479)	67%	65%	38%	14	2%
23	Pussy (n=1,476)	66%	62%	-	15	▲ 4%
24	Bitch (n=1,492)	63%	58%	20%	19	▲ 5%
25	Arsehole (n=1,487)	62%	58%	26%	18	4%
26	Pōkokohua (n=532)	60%	51%	-	20	▲ 9%
27	Puaaalo (n=479)	58%	49%	-	22	▲ 9%
28	Kai a te kurī (n=542)	57%	48%	-	23	▲ 9%
29	E te fai la'u mea e ai (n=481)	54%	51%	-	21	3%
30	*Mental (n=1,494)	49%	-	-	-	-
31	*Nutter (n=1,449)	44%	-	-	-	-

▲ ▼ Significantly more/less unacceptable than 2018

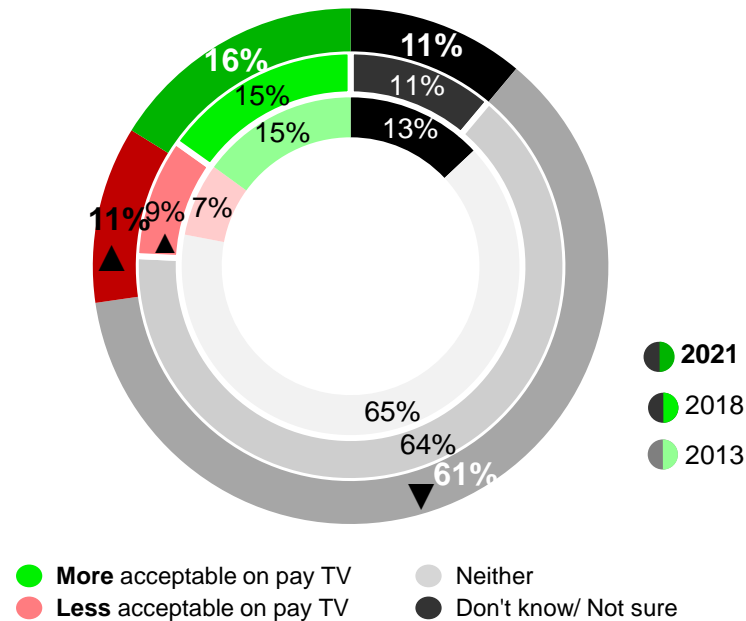


Acceptability of language on pay TV

Six in ten indicate that the use of offensive language is neither more or less acceptable on pay TV than on free-to-air

To differentiate free-to-air television and pay TV, respondents were asked 'would any of your answers have been different if the words were used on television shows that had been on pay TV (e.g. SKY)?'.

The proportion of respondents saying that the use of offensive language on pay TV is **less acceptable** than on free-to-air has increased since 2013 (from 7% to 11%), while the proportion saying it is **more acceptable** has remained consistent over time.



Those **significantly more** likely to indicate the use of offensive language is **more acceptable (19%)** on pay TV than on free-to-air are:

- ▶ Males (21% cf. 12% Females)
- ▶ Those who subscribe to pay TV (21%)

Those **significantly more** likely to indicate the use of offensive language is **less acceptable (11%)** on pay TV than on free-to-air are:

- ▶ Those aged 18 to 24 (21% cf. 9% on average)
- ▶ Those of Asian/Indian ethnicity (19%)
- ▶ Those responsible for children (16%)
- ▶ Those who identify as Hindu (28%).

Base: All respondents who have heard this word or phrase (2021, n=1505); (2018, n=1514); (2013, n=1500))

Q11. Would any of your answers have been different if the words were used on television shows that had been on pay TV (e.g. SKY)?

Would you say the words would be...?

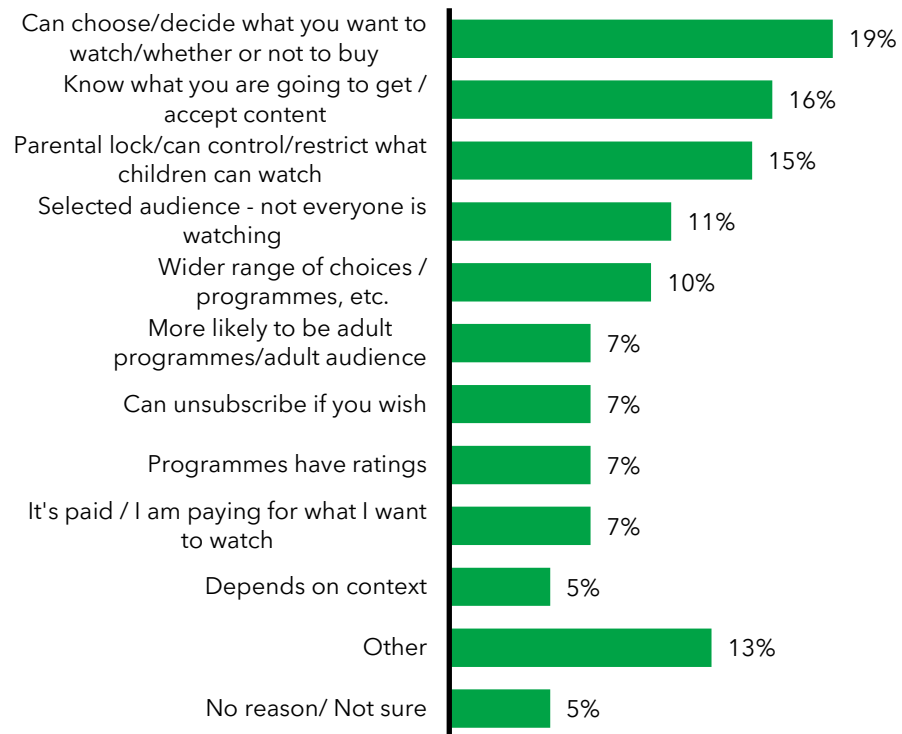
Reasons for offensive language being more or less acceptable on pay TV

Generally, respondents who consider that the use of offensive language on pay TV is more acceptable consider that they have choice about whether to buy pay TV and what they watch on pay TV, and therefore they have greater discretion over the content.

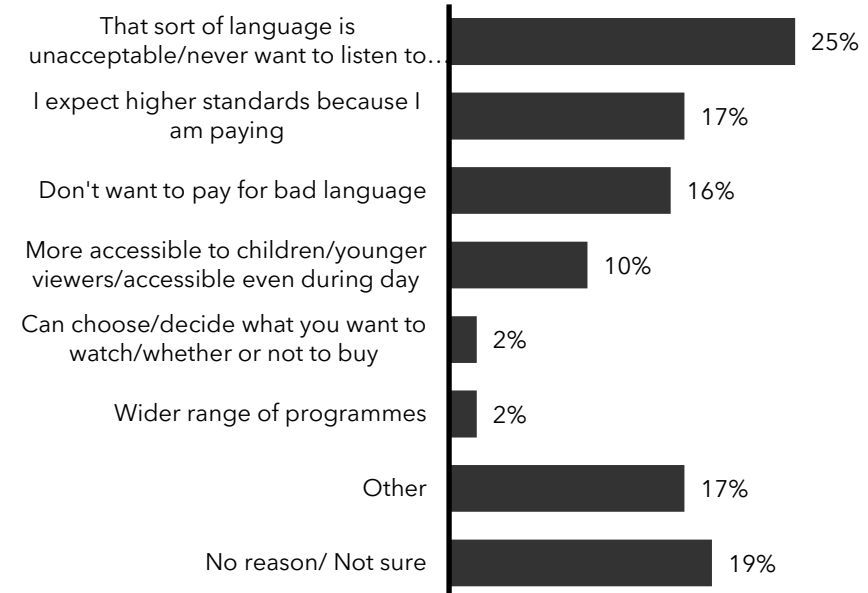
Those who think this type of language is less acceptable on pay TV generally expect higher standards because they are paying, and they do not want to pay for bad language. One in four comment that bad language is never acceptable.

Some express concern about the accessibility of pay TV to children at certain times of day, noting that some who consider offensive language is more acceptable on pay TV talked about using the parental lock to control what children can watch.

Why it would be more acceptable (n=232)



Why it would be less acceptable (n=165)





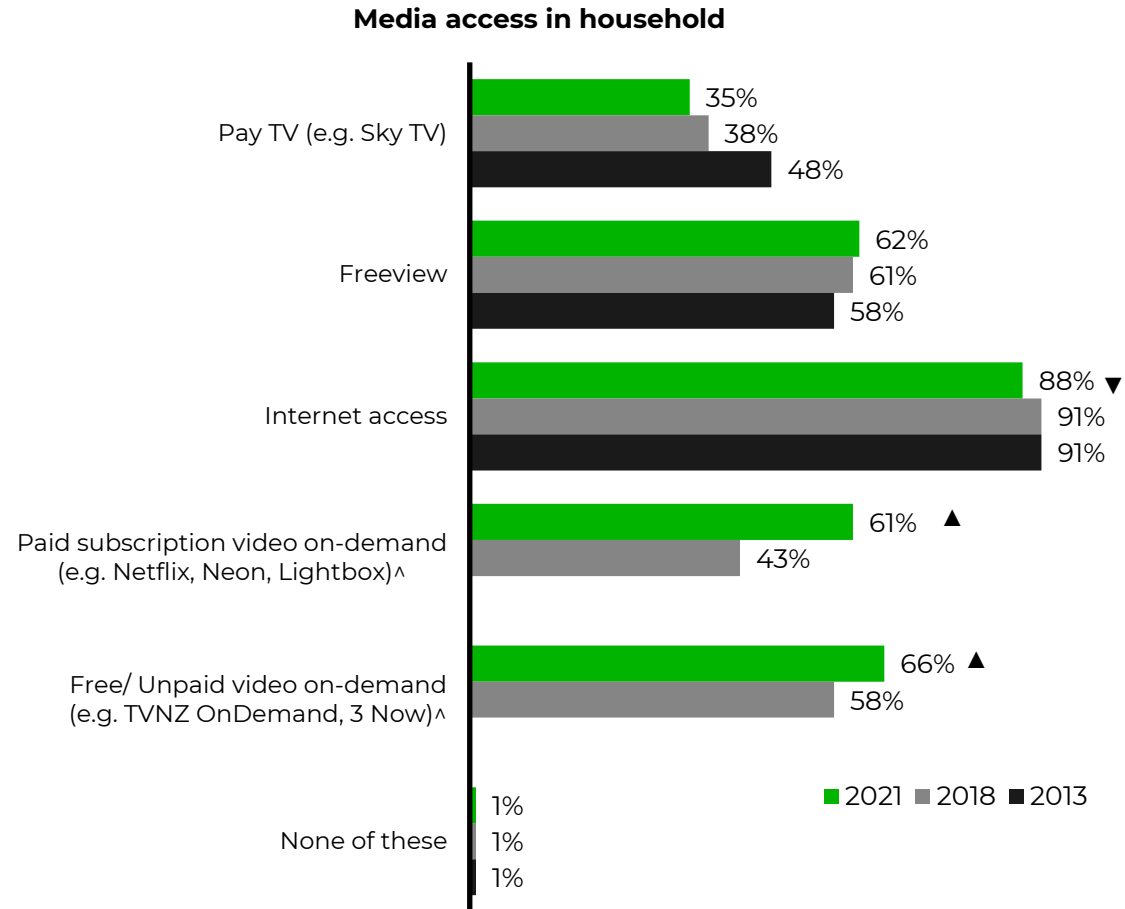
Appendices

- Media usage
- Respondent profile
- Notes to report

Media access: More households are accessing on-demand content

More households are accessing on-demand content, both paid and unpaid.

With greater access to content, there has been a decrease in the proportion who have pay TV (35% cf. 38% in 2018 and 48% in 2013), while the proportion accessing on-demand content has increased over time. Paid on-demand subscription has increased (61% cf. 43% in 2018), and free/unpaid on-demand has also increased (66% cf. 58% in 2018).



Base: All respondents 2021 (n=1505)

Q3. Do you have access to any of the following in your household?

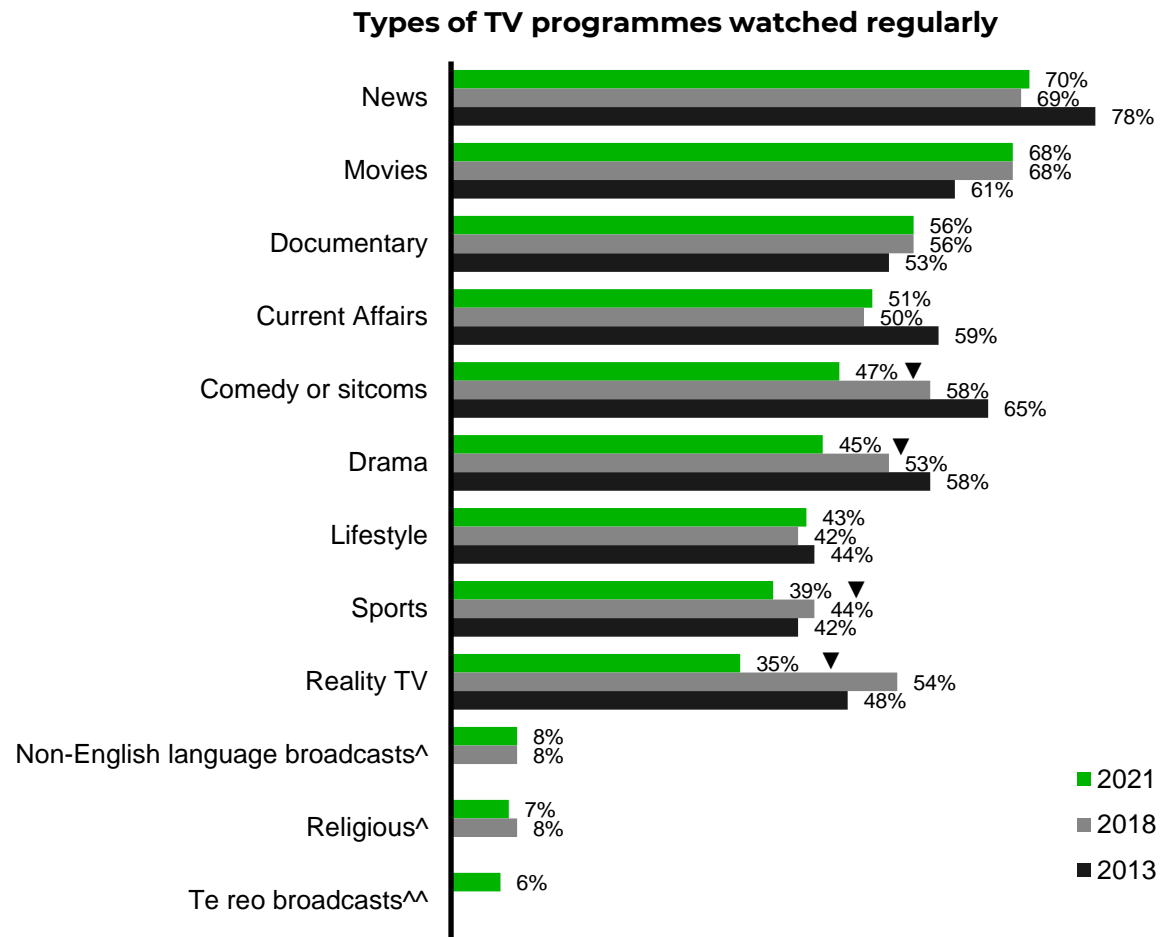
[^] Not asked in 2013



TV programmes: News and movies are the most commonly watched programmes

Respondents' regular TV programme viewing habits have been changing. Note: these changes may reflect the options available as well as changing viewer preferences.

A significantly lower proportion say they watch *reality TV* (35% cf. 54% in 2018), *comedy or sitcoms* (47% cf. 58% in 2018), *drama* (45% cf. 53% in 2018), or *sports* (39% cf. 44% in 2018).



Base: All respondents 2021 (n=1505)

Q1. What kinds of TV programmes do you watch regularly?

^ Not asked in 2013

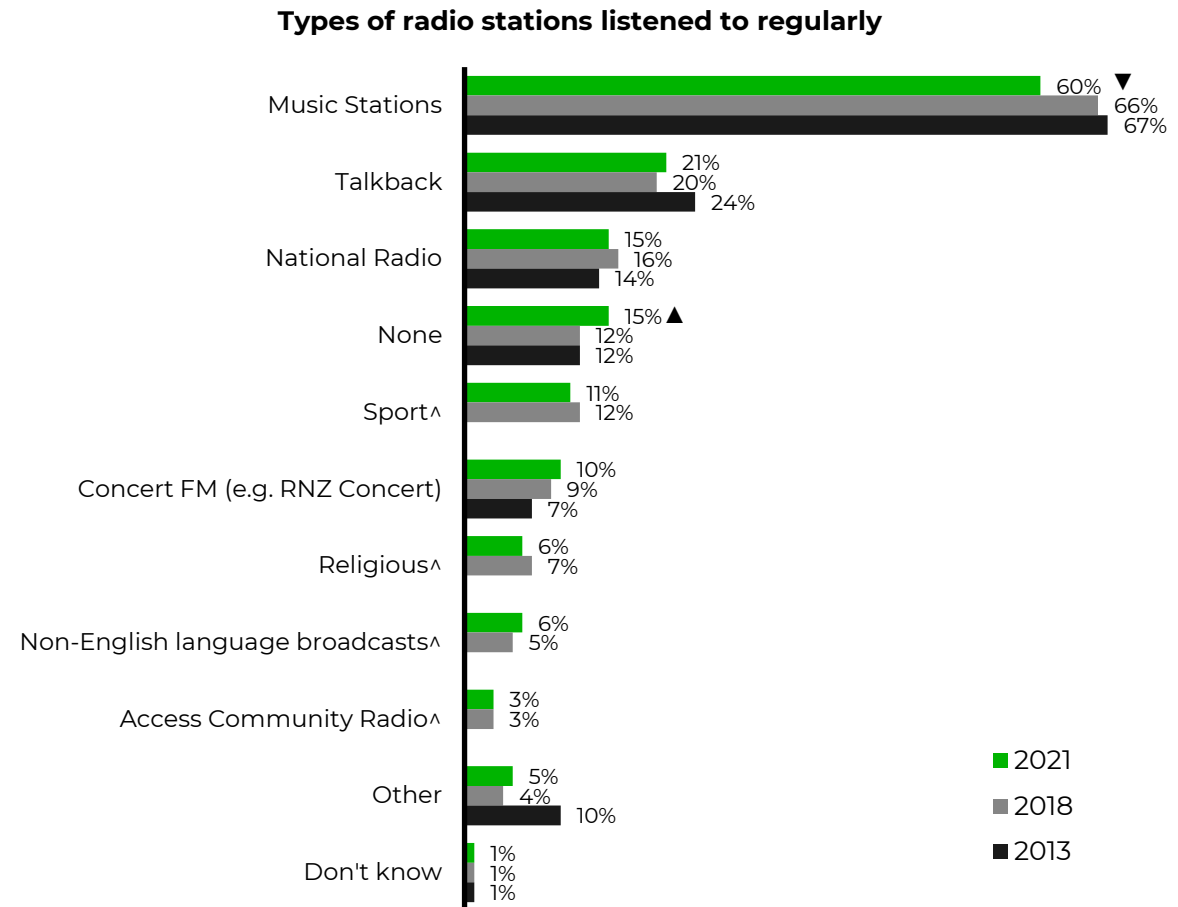
^^ Not asked in 2013 or 2018



Radio listening: Fewer households are listening to radio

In 2021, a significantly higher proportion of respondents do not listen to radio regularly (15% cf. 12% in 2018).

Music stations remain the most prominent type of radio stations that are listened to regularly. However the proportion who listen has decreased (60% cf. 66% in 2018).



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower proportion of respondents than 2018

Base: All respondents (n=1505)
Q2. What kinds of radio stations do you listen to regularly?
^ Not asked in 2013



Demographic profile

Gender	Weighted proportion (%)	Number (unweighted)
Male	49%	586
Female	51%	916
Age		
18 to 24	7%	89
25 to 34	21%	349
35 to 44	21%	351
45 to 54	17%	254
55 to 64	14%	201
65 and over	20%	261
Ethnicity		
NZ European / European	73%	975
Māori	12%	233
Pasifika	6%	110
Samoan	3%	43
Tongan	1%	15
Asian	11%	224
Indian	4%	92
Other	2%	31

Household income	Weighted proportion (%)	Number (unweighted)
Up to and including \$30,000	16%	231
Over \$30,000 to \$50,000	16%	230
Over \$50,000 to \$70,000	13%	211
Over \$70,000 to \$100,000	18%	273
Over \$100,000	24%	367
Don't know/prefer not to answer	13%	193
Religion		
Buddhist	2%	31
Christian	36%	542
Hindu	4%	73
Muslim	1%	26
Jewish	<1%	5
Other	6%	94
No religion	46%	665
Don't know/ prefer not to answer	4%	69
Responsible for children (14 and under)		
Yes	29%	499
No	71%	999
Don't know	0%	7

Region	Weighted proportion (%)	Number (unweighted)
Whangarei / Northland	4%	57
Auckland / Rodney	35%	537
Hamilton / Waikato	8%	113
Tauranga / Bay of Plenty	5%	59
Rotorua / Taupō	2%	24
Gisborne / East Coast	1%	8
Napier / Hastings / Hawkes Bay	3%	50
New Plymouth / Taranaki	2%	38
Whanganui / Palmerston North / Manawatu	6%	100
Wellington / Wairarapa	10%	187
Nelson / Tasman / Marlborough	3%	35
West Coast	0%	5
Canterbury / Christchurch	14%	206
Dunedin / Otago	5%	64
Invercargill / Southland	2%	22

Note: Results were weighted to be re representative of the New Zealand population.
As respondents could select more than one ethnicity the total may not add to 100%.



Notes to the report

Interpreting unacceptable: When a result is discussed in relation to the proportion who found a particular word **unacceptable**, this refers to the word being rated as either 'Fairly unacceptable' or 'Totally unacceptable'.

Statistically significant differences: Statistically significant differences are highlighted or commented on in this report. Where no highlighting has been used (or no commentary about a sub-group included), it may safely be assumed that differences are not statistically significant or they are not pertinent.

Statistically significant differences in this report are significant at the 95% confidence level. That is, we are 95% confident results are not just normal expected variances that result from talking to a different sample within the same population (note: the smaller the sample size, the higher the expected variance between samples and less likely that there will be statistically significant differences).

Rounding of figures

All percentages are rounded from two decimal places and, therefore, some 'Total' results may not add to 100%.

Comparisons with previous years

Changes to the makeup of the survey, including words listed and scenarios, impact direct comparability with previous measures in 2018, 2013, 2009, 2005 and 1999. Respondents were presented with 31 words as in previous studies. However, eight words were removed and replaced to be reflective of New Zealand society in 2021.

Words removed in 2021: bastard, dick, God, hoe, Jesus Christ, prick, shit, wanker. New words in 2021 were Curry muncher, Nappy-head, Tranny, Dyke, Spastic, Whore, Mental and Nutter.

A new scenario 'When used by a host/presenter in news, documentaries and current programmes on TV or radio', was added in 2021.

Definitions

- E te fai la'u mea e ai - You prepare my meals for me (Samoan)
- Kai a te kurī - Dog's food (Te Reo Māori)
- Pōkokohua - Boil your head (Te Reo Māori)
- Puaaelo - Stinking pig (Samoan)

