

# RACE AND RAGE: EXAMINING RISING ANTI-MĀORI RACISM AND WHITE SUPREMACIST IDEOLOGIES IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

A SNAPSHOT REPORT: JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2023

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Our research shows that Aotearoa New Zealand is experiencing rising anti-Māori racism, and growth in white supremacist ideologies.

Racism is being amplified, normalised, and spread through disinformation networks, as well as through mainstream groups and individuals, including politicians.

**Specifically, the growth of anti-Māori racism is centred on:**

- The promotion of a possible ‘civil war’ in Aotearoa New Zealand, which disinformation promoters and producers present as the inevitable result of moves towards Te Tiriti justice, and co-governance.
- The converging, and linked narratives of anti-co-governance, ‘white genocide’, and ‘The Great Replacement’ which seek to drive division, radicalise individuals and communities, and harm Aotearoa New Zealand’s social cohesion.
- Disinformation used to justify the denial of Māori indigeneity, and Māori identity.
- Disinformation groups are emboldened by high-profile people such as Elon Musk and political leaders repeating or amplifying false, and revisionist ideas of history.
- A growing connection between targeted harassment, and abuse online, including presentations of or incitement to violence, and offline consequences which include stalking, abuse, and physical violence.
- The sustained, high-volume, networked targeting of high-profile wāhine Māori, including:
  - The threats of violence, sexual violence, and death.
  - Misogynistic harassment about their actions and appearance.
  - Offline instances of violence and stalking of wāhine Māori politicians.
  - Our research first captured targeted harassment aimed at Te Pāti Māori candidate Hana-Rawhiti Maipi-Clarke on 30 June. On 29 September it was reported that her home was invaded, and a threatening letter was left on the premises. Conservatively, it took only 90 days for racist dangerous speech to inform offline violence in this instance.
- The significant prevalence, and persistence of harms, including instigation of violence against wāhine Māori, on Twitter/X.

Our research also found that anti-co-governance rhetoric in Aotearoa New Zealand has cross-over with the highly active campaign in Australia to discredit the ‘Voice to Parliament’ and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in the Parliament of Australia.

**In addition to anti-Māori racism, Muslim, and Jewish communities are experiencing a rise in racism. Our research has shown:**

- A higher prevalence of anti-Muslim rhetoric, including the distribution of footage of the Christchurch Masjidain Attacks, is far more evident in 2023, than it was in 2019 immediately after the attacks.
- The discoverability of footage, and related content, much of which is classified as objectionable in Aotearoa New Zealand, and is therefore illegal to access, possess or engage with, has increased year-on-year around the time of the anniversary of the attacks.
- The promotion of ideas that the Christchurch Masjidain Attacks were part of a government ‘false flag’ event. This idea has been amplified by mainstream disinformation producers, their influential networks, and other organisations in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- ‘White genocide’, and ‘The Great Replacement’ theories, which also target Māori, are actively used to target the country’s Muslim and Jewish communities.
- A significant rise in anti-Jewish rhetoric through a growth of Holocaust denial, the use of slurs, and overt antisemitism, which had previously been implied or coded. Public and explicit harms have grown, with producers emboldened by a culture of impunity on social media platforms.
- Muslim, and Jewish communities in Aotearoa New Zealand have felt the impacts of this rise in hatred.
- Measurable harm is likely to continue and worsen at pace, especially in relation to upcoming inquiries/appeals relating to the Christchurch Masjidain Attacks.