

**Football in Aotearoa:  
Responding to Diversity,  
Becoming More  
Inclusive**

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**Paul Spoonley**

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Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley is the Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Massey University. He is the author of a wide range of books (28 in total) and a number of reports, including an ARPASS report on sport and immigrants in Auckland, as well as another on participation in football. He has been the lead researcher on a number of programmes, including the Integration of Immigrants Programme and Nga Tangata Oho Mairangi (on demographic change in New Zealand). He is currently the lead researcher on Capturing the Diversity Dividend of Aotearoa/New Zealand (\$5.5 million, MBIE, 2014-2020). He is a former football player, coach and manager.

## Preamble

In 1986-87, New Zealand changed its immigration legislation and policy. This has resulted in a quite different ethnic mix, with Asian source countries dominating. Hong Kong Chinese, Korean and Taiwanese arrived in the 1990s but the numbers of these communities has either dropped or remained flat since. There was small gap in arrivals in the late 1990s but this changed after 2000 with significant further changes to policy. Since 2000, the countries which dominate inflows (skilled migrant category, family, study visas) are China and India. Numbers were soft during the GFC (2008-2012) but since 2012, the numbers arriving have hit historic highs.

**In recent years, the Permanent and Long Term arrivals are extremely high:**

- **120,000 – 130,000 (since 2000, the numbers have tended to range from 85,000 to 95,000)**
- **Current net gains: +69,000 (the long run average has been +12,000)**

**Plus there is a significant temporary immigrant population resulting from:**

- **International students: 100,000+**
- **Temporary workers: 209,000 (30,000 more than 2015)**

These numbers have remained at high levels since 2014, and will decline but for the moment, these record numbers are significantly changing the ethnic mix of New Zealand and its communities. Immigrants from India, China and the Philippines dominate arrivals and these three countries provide more than 40% of all arrivals.

The result is that a quarter of all New Zealanders were born overseas (one of the highest in the world) with Auckland a particularly superdiverse city (The World Migration Report listed Auckland as the fourth most diverse city in the world in 2016, behind Brussels, Dubai and Toronto). Forty percent of all Aucklanders have been born overseas with significant and growing numbers of locally-born ethnic minority

communities. In the 2013 Census, 23% of Auckland’s residents identified as members of one of the city’s Asian communities (75% born overseas) and this is anticipated to grow to 28-30%. Auckland’s demography is important because it is home to a third of all New Zealanders and this is projected to 40% over the next decades.

In the future, most population growth will occur in Auckland (60% of all population growth will occur in Auckland over the next two decades) while two-thirds of New Zealand’s territorial authorities will experience population stagnation or decline. In these regions, those aged over 65 will dominate (65+ age group will outnumber 0-14 year olds). Fertility will continue to decline and immigration will be the major source of population growth (it currently accounts for two-thirds of Auckland’s growth).

As a result, New Zealand will become much more ethnically diverse in the future. Growing diversity will characterise New Zealand much more than it does now. This will be very apparent in the country’s major cities and some provinces (eg. Southland) – and have very little impact on other regions.

The figures on ethnicity for those participating in football (New Zealand Football) show that the following ethnic groups are under-represented in New Zealand.

	<b>Player No’s 2015</b>	<b>% of NZ Population</b>
<b>Asian</b>	2%	11.8%
<b>Maori</b>	5%	14.9%
<b>Pasifika</b>	2%	7.4%

This is not the case for MELAA: 1.2% of New Zealand are MELAA but 2% of players come from these groups. The “Insights” figures for the sport nationally, and each federation, indicate that registered players, in terms of ethnicity, show that football does not see player registrations at levels proportionate to the size of ethnic communities. One issues is there a lot of informal involvement (non-official tournaments or competitions) that is not reflected in these figures.

Internationally, the question of diversity recognition and inclusiveness in football has become a significant issue in the last decade. There are a range of responses in Europe and North America. Earlier this year, the Chair of US Soccer's Diversity Task Force, Doug Andreassen, noted that gifted African American and Latino players are being left behind; football in the USA is dominated by the largely white middle class. The result is that the former communities play in alternative and often informal competitions such as "ligas Latinos" in San Francisco. The Andreassen taskforce will see the establishment of a national leadership academy to give communities underserved by football the support to build participation. (This repeats the model developed by a former San Antonio mayor to establish teams but at low cost). The key to increasing participation is to get local principals, pastors and coaches to develop leagues that operate like suburban associations, and these local leaders would be supported to raise funds and to understand how to rent fields. The "Just Play" programme in Porirua and Gisborne echoes these US initiatives to increase participation levels in certain communities.

The growing diversity of countries, including New Zealand, brings into sharp focus the need to address diversity as a way of increasing participation and inclusivity, and of responding to demographic change. There is a primary focus in the above comments on the growing **ethnic** diversity of New Zealand. This invites a sharper focus for the game locally but diversity should be read as including – and therefore addressing – the diversity associated with gender, range of abilities, Lesbian Gay Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT). FIFA has spent some time considering these issues and recently produced an extensive report.

## **FIFA: Diversity and Anti-Discrimination**

The FIFA “Good Practice Guide on Diversity and Anti-Discrimination” provides a comprehensive guide to the FIFA-approach to issues of diversity recognition and inclusion but there are some aspects that do not easily fit with a New Zealand environment. Nevertheless, it is an excellent starting point.

FIFA has identified a number of key pillars of its work in relation to social responsibility and sustainability, including:

- **Anti-discrimination as a central pillar and a holistic issue**
- **Anti-discrimination as a sustainable social responsibility**
- **Football as a tool to promote diversity and anti-discrimination in society**

These were elaborated in the FIFA Task Force Against Racism and Discrimination, with an emphasis on education, prevention and sanctions.

- **Discrimination “covers the degradation and prejudice against groups and people on the basis of attributes, whether they be perceived or genuine”.**
- **Discrimination leads to inequality and social exclusion.**
- **Discrimination can be intentional but also unintentional.**

FIFA goes on to note that “diversity means enrichment...and creates chances and opportunity and it allows creativity and innovation to develop”.

FIFA's overall strategic approach is to:

- Regulate (disciplinary code, safety and security, employment and recruitment policy);
- Controls and sanctions (identifying risk matches, match monitoring, referee's duties, training of match officials and security personnel, compliance with a legal basis);
- Diversity and anti-discrimination through communications (branding, publications, ambassadors, awards, events);
- Diversity and anti-discrimination through education (basic education, specialist training, projects and campaigns, documentation, evaluation); and
- Diversity and anti-discrimination through networking and cooperation (working group, project cooperation, conferences and publications, involvement of spectators, international exchanges).

This is a comprehensive list and an assessment needs to take place in order to identify what might be appropriate to football in New Zealand – and what else might be needed.

## New Zealand Football's Approach and Vision

Is it clear from organisational statements and documents, or the comments and activities of key officials, what the approach to diversity is of the national organisation, constituent regional organisations or clubs?

A review of the documents (Strategic Plan, 2016-2025; Whole of Football Plan; Beyond Football) for New Zealand Football, regional organisations and a range of clubs shows that there is minimal to no reference to diversity. The Quality Club Mark does require those seeking accreditation and endorsement to address "Equal Opportunities" (see 5s and 5b). Given the issues raised elsewhere, there is a need to update and expand the "Whole of Football Plan" to include diversity recognition and inclusion. Aspects of the latter are implicit but need to be made more explicit in this, or any future plan for encouraging participation or performance.

For example, the "Whole of Football Pathway" identifies the key elements/participants: administration; referees; coaches; and players. The 7 key elements are fine but do not address inclusivity or diversity; they need to. Similarly, these issues need explicit recognition in the "Roll Out" and "Achievable Goals".

The 2014 UEFA "Respect Diversity" conference identified the key ambitions, including:

**"...the need to tackle racism and homophobia, give voice to minority groups, promote gender and ethnic diversity in leadership positions and empower players to be role models in fighting discrimination..."**



As Karen Espelund (UEFA Executive member) noted:

**Diversity is the driving force for the development of all organisations, whether it is a club, a league or an association, we really need different cultures to make progress and to make sure that everyone has the chance to participate.**

Workshops concluded that the following needed to occur:

- New sanctioning rules;
- Female and minority ethnic representation in leading positions;
- Tackling homophobia and promoting the LGBT community;
- National Association action plans.

The issue is getting some recognition as the meeting of national sports organisations in New Zealand in 2016 made clear (“Sports commit to diversity and inclusion through sport for everyone”). The basic aim articulated at this meeting was to “encourage greater diversity and inclusion across sport”, and diversity is defined as including gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and ability.

Andy Martin added to this by stating that “there was no room for discrimination in the sporting culture of New Zealand”. (This is discussed elsewhere in this report).

The “Diversity and Inclusion Commitment Statement, 31 May 2016” that was generated earlier in the year when sporting codes came together in Auckland provides guidance on aims and actions, including:

- **Developing and implementing policies, programmes and practices that encourage greater diversity and inclusion;**
- **Discrimination be eradicated from sport;**
- **That a framework for diversity and inclusion be established by 31 December 2016 by individual organisations.**

This is helpful but needs refinement to better reflect the reality and ambitions of football in New Zealand in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Following on from the growing international and local focus on diversity, the following represent some initial recommendations to New Zealand Football. They are supplemented by further recommendations through this report.

### **Recommendations**

- That a clear statement on New Zealand Football's approach to diversity, inclusion and discrimination be developed and published. While a primary focus here is on the growing ethnic diversity, a more encompassing definition of diversity (gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and ability) is recommended.
- New Zealand Football makes it clear that it is committed to developing standards and expectations that recognise the diversity of New Zealand and ensure an inclusive environment and outcomes.
- New Zealand Football is committed to confronting and eliminating prejudice and discrimination. It will be made clear that harassment, bullying, abuse or discriminatory comments will not be tolerated.
- A programme to ensure that there is ongoing awareness and training to encourage inclusiveness and to eradicate discrimination will be essential to implementing New Zealand Football's commitment.

A draft vision statement is provided below.

## Draft Vision Statement

New Zealand Football believes that recognising diversity gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and ability is crucial to the future of the code in this country and to the well-being of communities.

We will vigorously promote a culture of diversity and inclusiveness in all our organisations, teams and communities that are involved in football in New Zealand.

The following diagram identified some of the key issues and actors in a proactive approach to diversity recognition and inclusion. It is important:

- That there is a commitment by New Zealand Football to provide leadership on these issues;
- That there is a clear, unequivocal statement provided of this commitment that indicates New Zealand Football's vision and implementation plan;
- That there is community representation and involvement in the development of this vision and plan. It would be disastrous to develop either without those groups and communities who are directly involved are not included from the beginning;
- That those who are responsible for the everyday running of the game – coaches, referees, officials, clubs – are not recruited to contribute to the goals of recognising diversity;
- That there is recognition that there is goodwill amongst many communities and that their goodwill and support needs to be understood and recruited to help New Zealand football achieve its objectives;
- That the above is implemented and reinforced by appropriate educational campaigns and awareness training.



## Tangata Whenua

If diversity is to be a key focus for New Zealand Football, it would be inappropriate to overlook Maori as a key client and community group. I finish this report with an invitation to work together (E whakatau mai kokiri tatou) and it is essential that Maori representatives be involved in developing a diversity strategy and plan. Their participation and contribution is a distinctive element of contemporary New Zealand – and adds an important and very positive element to what is proposed here. There are some options with the Aotearoa Football Charitable Trust/Maori Football NZ but much could be done, especially given the past and ongoing role of Heremaia Ngata, Vaughan Coveny, Winston Reid, the Rufers and a younger cohort of players coming through.

## **Diversity and Football: Key Considerations**

If diversity recognition and inclusion is to be realised, then a number of key aspects of the game need to be considered.

### **The Contribution of Communities, Volunteers and Fans**

One key area that deserves attention are the sporting interests and activities (including informal competitions and participation) of the range of communities that now constitute New Zealand. There is relatively little information on these communities and what they seek from a sport like football – and this is an evidence gap that will inhibit effective action. There is also the need to include these communities in the way that the sport is run or developed, especially the role of volunteers in contributing to the vitality of the code, and the interests and actions of fans.

#### **a) Community Competitions and Participation**

The research that was done as part of the ARPASS (2009) report involved focus groups with immigrant communities. They were clear that some sports were seen as unattractive. Sports like rugby and rugby leagues were not part of the sports history of their origin countries (this was especially true of Asian immigrants); they felt the sports were too physical; and they prioritised education rather than sport, and felt that involvement in sports competitions were a distraction.

They were also critical of sports organising bodies and their reluctance to recognise the sporting interests and requirements of immigrant communities. These concerns might range from food/alcohol/behaviour at after-match functions through to the ability to alter uniform requirements (the reluctance of netball to consider a uniform that might meet the requirements of Muslim girls and women) or the reluctance to provide material in the native language of potential players and communities.

Some Regional Sports Organisations (RSOs) or National Sports Organisations (NSOs) were identified as having responded appropriately: these included table tennis (80% of players and coaches in Auckland are now Asian and there is a separate Chinese competition) and badminton. Golf would be an example of a sport that has significant Korean investment and participation, an example of bottom (community)-up involvement.

The willingness of RSOs or NSOs to explicitly interact with immigrant and minority ethnic communities, or girls/women, differently abled or LGBT, in order to undertake genuine consultation, to make a serious effort to understand the sporting needs of those communities and to provide a sporting product/service that meets these needs is a key first step.

The communities themselves already organise their own sporting competitions and activities; a quick trip around Auckland on a Sunday soon provides evidence as all-weather pitches host a range of informal games between immigrant teams for example.

## **b) Volunteers**

New Zealand Football already has an interest in developing a pathway for volunteers (The Volunteer Cycle). Given that at pre-school, school and club levels, the game absolutely relies on volunteers, this is a critical aspect of maintaining the game.

The question here is whether the work that has been done so far has taken into account the diversity of contemporary New Zealand. In relation to ethnic and immigrant diversity, the following questions arise:

- Are there particular roles that minority ethnic and immigrant community members might feel more comfortable doing? What are they?
- Are there language considerations? How important is it to have bilingual speakers who can then talk to those whose English is limited or provide documentation in languages other than English (including Maori)?

- Minority ethnic and immigrant communities are already well organised and are involved in a range of community organisations. How do football organisations work with these existing community organisations to encourage volunteer activity that would benefit football?

Similar questions apply to the diversity issues related to gender, ability and LGBT.

## Best Practice Examples

- New Zealand Communities Football Cup brings together regional ethnic football teams. Note the proactive role of the New Zealand Police in establishing this tournament in 2008 and the support of the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils.
- There are some examples of international good practice that parallel the above: Manchester City FCs “One Community” tournament, underscored by the “Next 20” Ambassadorial role. They also supported the “Football People” fortnight to challenge discrimination and celebrate diversity, with Yaya Toure playing a key role.
- The UK-programmes “Kick It Out”, “Show Racism the Red Card” and Football Homophobia (FVH) all provide some guidance on what has worked (in a very different cultural and political setting).
- LGBT has rarely featured as an issue in sport in New Zealand – and yet it is an important issue in terms of diversity recognition. In 2014, Manchester City officially recognised “Canal Street Blues” (LGBT Supporters Club) and the “Gay Football Supporters Network” (GFSN) and flew the rainbow flag at Etihad Stadium.



## Recommendations

- Establish a Working Party involving minority ethnic and immigrant representatives, to discuss options and preferences with key target communities. A similar process would need to occur in order to address issues and options relating to gender, ability and LGBT communities.
- Invite this Working Party to consult with their communities to explore being part of – or adapting – the UEFA/FARE/FIFPro RESPECT programme as a way of confirming New Zealand Football's commitment.
- Review communication strategies to ensure that non-English language communities and options. [This not only improves communication but sends a clear message about the responsiveness of New Zealand Football]

### c) Racism and Homophobia

The aim of recognising diversity and creating an inclusive approach needs to be accompanied by a clear approach to anything that might exclude or denigrate.

There is a need for a clear and an unequivocal statement – followed by actions – that makes it clear that racism/discrimination and homophobia is unacceptable.

“Kick It Out”, the campaign to counter racism and discrimination in UK football, has Equality Standards, and in 2011, Arsenal were the first club to receive the Advanced Level of the Equality Standard, a fact that Arsenal are very proud of. The club has a number of initiatives that range from community engagement, fan behaviour and the development of player policies and these were grouped under the umbrella, “Arsenal for Everyone”. This is echoed in the FAs “Football for Everyone” and the “Sporting Equals” (promoting greater involvement of black and other minority communities in sport, and especially football). In 2014, “Kick It Out” and the Football Supporters Federation launched “Fans for Diversity” to help target fans and to promote diversity in both professional and the non-league game.

## Recommendations

- Invite the Working Parties identified above to identify key issues and actions for New Zealand Football to consider and implement.
- Produce a clear code as to unacceptable behaviour and comments that includes on-field and off-field behaviour.
- Specify how such behaviour is to be dealt with (mediation and reconciliation options).
- Encourage organisations, clubs and schools to sign up to the code and support initiative.
- Identify and recruit members of the football community – and others<sup>1</sup> - to contribute to good behaviour by acting as ambassadors.

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<sup>1</sup> A range of organisations and people would be keen to support New Zealand Football in both promoting diversity recognition/inclusion and opposing racism and homophobia including: Human Rights Commission, Office of Ethnic Communities, New Zealand Police, Governor-General, New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils, Professional Footballers Association.

## d) Education and Awareness Raising

There is often a reluctance to explicitly recognise that there might be barriers to football participation (“I can do it, why can’t they?”), including both formal and informal racism and homophobia, or unconscious bias.

It is critical that diversity recognition and strategies for inclusion be carefully explained and justified to the football community.

There are some helpful strategies and material. See:

<http://www.kickitout.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Kick-It-Out-and-Southampton-Solent.pdf>

It would also be helpful to talk with following. All are involved in diversity issues and inclusion:

- Bev Cassidy McKenzie, CE, Diversity Works. (It would be helpful to look at the Diversity Awards to see how organisations approach diversity)
- Rakesh Naidoo and Dame Susan Devoy, Human Rights Commission. (Rakesh developed the diversity strategy for New Zealand Police)
- Simon Devoy, Strategic Development Manager, NZRU. (Simon is looking at trends in rugby participation with a special focus on Auckland)

If the strategies and implementation plans are to be effective, then New Zealand Football needs to develop a communications plan, and to invest in an educational strategy and awareness raising. Key questions are:

- Who has responsibility for this?
- What resourcing is available?

## Recommendations

- That New Zealand Football develop an education and awareness raising strategy that helps underpin diversity recognition, that promotes inclusion and which addresses racism and homophobia.
- That there are incentives to participate (the Q Mark and what clubs or event organisers need to address).
- That New Zealand Football consider participating (as an applicant) in the annual Diversity Awards, or establish its own awards for those excelling in diversity recognition/inclusion.
- That the practice of including in event programmes, signage and pre-game statements a statement about diversity and the unacceptability be continued.

## Conclusion

It would be great if New Zealand Football could provide leadership on these issues in terms of sports in New Zealand. A quick look at the organisations that apply for the annual Diversity Awards provides an indication of the excellent work that is being done. But much of what occurs in New Zealand sports tends to be reactive and in response to problems that emerge.

I would strongly urge New Zealand Football to adopt a proactive approach that stresses the positive benefits that come from diversity recognition/inclusion. Addressing racism and homophobia is important but – in my assessment – too often, this is predominantly because the positive elements have not been addressed and footballing bodies are left with having to focus on behaviours that are entrenched and problematic.

E whakatau mai kokiri tatou