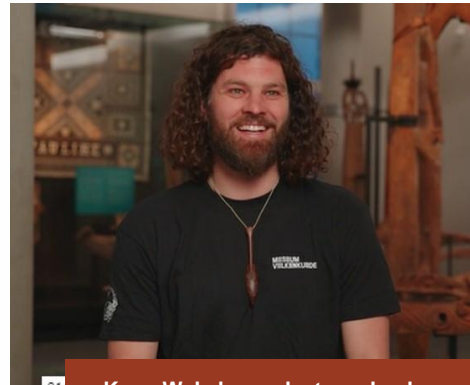


# Paddling Māori culture through the Europe

Te Hono ki Aotearoa, which means "the link to Aotearoa" is a 14-metre ceremonial canoe (waka) gifted on permanent loan to the national ethnology museum in Leiden, in the Netherlands.

It is used by a crew of over 50 paddlers in Leiden. It is the only Māori waka permanently outside of New Zealand, and has become known as 'The Waka of Europe'.

Te Hono ki Aotearoa is used during special events all over Europe and members of the crew travel regularly to New Zealand so they can upskill in paddling and tikanga Māori (traditions).



Koos Wakabe: waka team leader

**“WE CAN LEARN A LOT FROM MĀORI CULTURE TO SEE THAT THERE IS A BIGGER WORLD THAN JUST THE DUTCH WORLD. SO MAKING SURE WE TEACH STUDENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE THAT THERE ARE MULTIPLE WAYS OF DOING THINGS IN THE WORLD AND THAT WE CO-EXIST IS REALLY IMPORTANT.”**

**- Koos Wakabe, Waka team leader**

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## Building cross-cultural understanding

Koos Wabeke is one of the founder members of the waka group at Leiden University's Njord Royal Student Rowing Club, which was set up in 2010 to crew and maintain the waka taua, Te Hono ki Aotearoa.

Koos believes the waka project has changed his outlook and given him a new understanding of the world. As he says, “The whole feeling of more ‘we’, than just ‘I’, is really important to look after the group of people that surround you now; not just family but everybody that you can help.”



“THE COUNTRY IS ABSOLUTELY STUNNING. BUT THAT ALSO GOES FOR THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE THERE. EVERY TIME I HAVE VISITED OR WHEN I AM IN CONTACT WITH NEW ZEALAND IT FEELS LIKE I’M IN CONTACT WITH MY FAMILY.”

- Koos Wakabe, Waka team leader

## **EU/NZ: STRONGER TOGETHER**

New Zealand’s relationship with the EU is significant. The EU is an important partner for New Zealand; we share values, perspectives and interests that make us closer than geography would suggest.

**LEARN MORE TE HONO KI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND’S PARTNERSHIP WITH THE EU**

[www.mfat.govt.nz/closetoEU](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/closetoEU)



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