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## Subnational Population Estimates: At 30 June 2008

### Highlights

- All of New Zealand's 16 regions recorded population growth in the June 2008 year.
- The fastest-growing regions were Auckland (up 1.5 percent), Marlborough (up 1.2 percent) and Canterbury (up 1.1 percent) in the June 2008 year.
- Queenstown-Lakes District (up 3.8 percent) and Selwyn District (up 3.2 percent) were the fastest-growing territorial authorities in the June 2008 year.
- Over half of all New Zealanders (53 percent) were living in four main urban areas (Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch) at 30 June 2008.

### Regional Population Change

Year ended 30 June 2008



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See also [Subnational Population Estimates: At 30 June 2008 – Media release](#).

## Commentary

### National population change

New Zealand's estimated resident population was 4,268,600 at 30 June 2008, an increase of 40,300 (1.0 percent) over the June 2007 figure. The population growth in the June 2008 year was lower than the average annual increase of 45,400 (1.1 percent) recorded during the 10-year period ended 30 June 2008.

The population growth for the June 2008 year resulted from a natural increase (excess of births over deaths) of 35,600 people, and a net international migration gain of 4,700 people. The level of natural increase was the highest for a June year since 1973. In contrast, the level of net international migration was the lowest for a June year since 2001.

### North Island and South Island populations

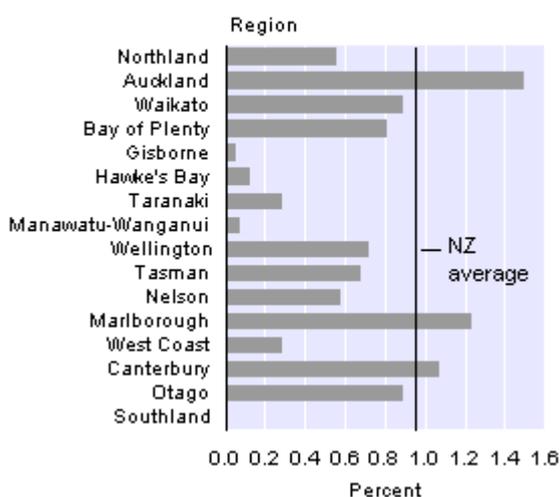
The population of the North Island continued to grow at a slightly faster rate than that of the South Island. An estimated 3,250,700 people lived in the North Island at 30 June 2008, an increase of 31,500 (1.0 percent) from 30 June 2007. The estimated resident population of the South Island grew by 8,900 (0.9 percent) in the June 2008 year to reach 1,017,300. At 30 June 2008, 76 out of every 100 New Zealand residents lived in the North Island.

### Regional population change

All of New Zealand's 16 regions recorded population increases during the June 2008 year. Auckland retained its position as New Zealand's fastest-growing region, recording population growth of 1.5 percent. Marlborough (1.2 percent) and Canterbury (1.1 percent) also had growth rates above the national average of 1.0 percent. The largest numerical increases in population were in Auckland (20,800), Canterbury (5,900), Waikato (3,600) and Wellington (3,400).

#### Regional Population Change

*Year ended 30 June 2008*



As in the June 2007 year, all 16 regions recorded a natural increase (an excess of births over deaths). However, for 13 regions the level of natural increase was higher in the June 2008 year than in the preceding June year. In numerical terms, the greatest rises in natural increase were in Auckland (up 1,000 from the June 2007 year) and Manawatu-Wanganui (up 300 from the June 2007 year).

In the June 2008 year, seven regions gained population through net migration (international and internal migration combined), while nine regions had a net migration outflow. For the majority of regions, the level of net migration was lower in the June 2008 year than in the preceding June year. However, there was a small increase in the level of net migration for six regions (Gisborne, Taranaki, Manawatu-Wanganui, Nelson, Marlborough and Southland).

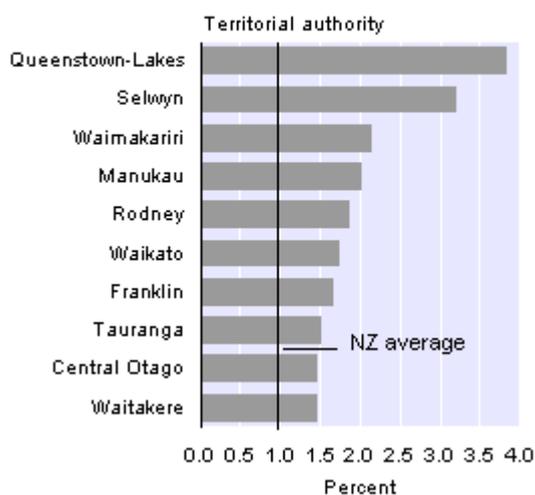
At 30 June 2008, Auckland, with an estimated resident population of 1,414,800, was home to about one-third of New Zealand residents. The four northernmost regions (Northland, Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty) contained just over half (53 percent) of New Zealand's population. Canterbury, with an estimated resident population of 552,800, was home to 54 percent of South Island residents.

## Population of territorial authorities

In the June 2008 year, 59 of the 73 territorial authorities had population increases, and 19 had growth rates at or above the 1.0 percent national average. The highest rates of population growth were in Queenstown-Lakes District (3.8 percent), Selwyn District (3.2 percent), Waimakariri District (2.2 percent), Manukau City (2.0 percent) and Rodney District (1.9 percent).

### Fastest-growing Territorial Authorities

*Year ended 30 June 2008*



There were 14 territorial authorities that had a decrease in population. Of these 14 territorial authorities, 12 were located in the North Island and two were located in the South Island. Rates of population decrease ranged from 0.1 percent (Taupo, Whakatane and Buller districts) to 1.2 percent (Wairoa District).

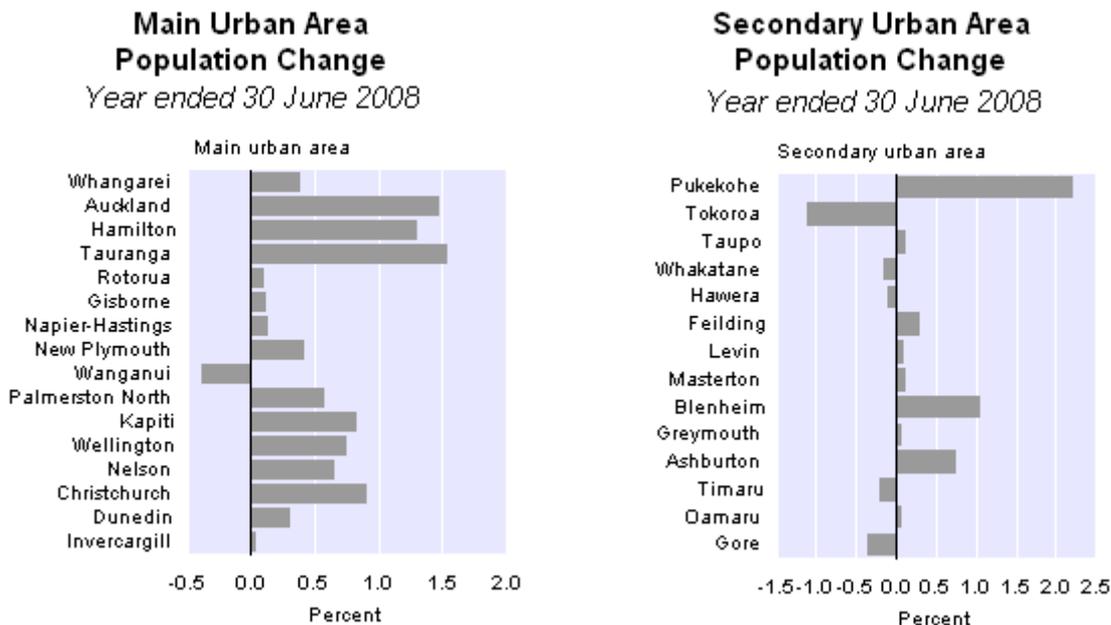
During the June 2008 year, the population of Waitakere City grew by 2,900 (1.5 percent) to reach 201,400, exceeding 200,000 for the first time. Waitakere City is now one of five territorial authorities that has a population greater than 200,000. The other territorial authorities are Auckland City (438,100), Christchurch City (368,900), Manukau City (362,000) and North Shore City (223,000).

Two maps are included at the end of this commentary. The maps illustrate population change in New Zealand's territorial authority areas during the June 2008 year.

## Urban areas

At 30 June 2008, the estimated resident population of the 16 main urban areas was 3,085,200 (72 percent of New Zealand's population). A further 251,000 people lived in secondary urban areas (5.9 percent of New Zealand's population). The main and secondary urban populations increased by 31,800 (1.0 percent) and 800 (0.3 percent), respectively, during the June 2008 year.

The four largest urban areas – Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch – were home to 53 percent of New Zealand residents at 30 June 2008. The Auckland Urban Area is now home to 40 out of every 100 North Island residents. The Christchurch Urban Area is home to 38 out of every 100 South Island residents.



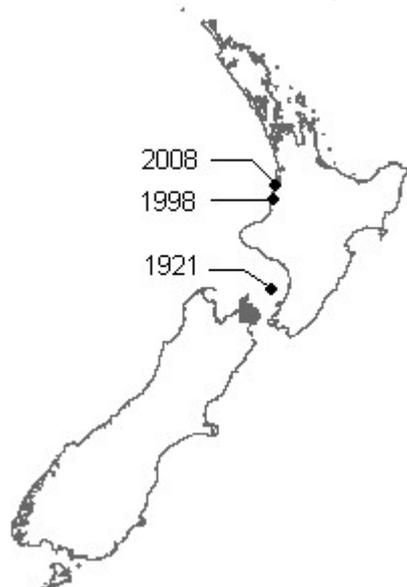
In the June 2008 year, Auckland and Tauranga (1.5 percent each) were the fastest-growing main urban areas, followed by Hamilton (1.3 percent). Twelve main urban areas recorded positive growth rates below the national average of 1.0 percent, and one main urban area (Wanganui) had a population decrease.

Nine of the 14 secondary urban areas recorded positive growth rates in the June 2008 year. The fastest-growing secondary urban area was Pukekohe (2.2 percent). Five secondary urban areas recorded population decreases, ranging from 0.1 percent (Whakatane and Hawera) to 1.1 percent (Tokoroa).

## Median centre of population

The median centre of population is a measure that describes the spatial distribution of the population. It is the point of intersection of two lines, one equally dividing the population north and south, the other equally dividing the population east and west.

## Median Centre of Population



At the time of the 1921 Census, New Zealand's median centre of population lay off the coast of Horowhenua (174°43' East, 40°33' South), approximately 40 kilometres west of Waitarere. At this time, New Zealand's population was 1.27 million and the population of the North Island (791,900) and the South Island (479,800) were more evenly balanced.

Since 1921, New Zealand's median centre of population has moved northward. At 30 June 1998 it was located southeast of Waikawau in the Waitomo District (174°45' East, 38°30' South), approximately 230 kilometres north of its 1921 location. In the 10-year period ended 30 June 2008, the median centre of population moved another 40 kilometres northward, to lie about five kilometres southeast of Taharoa in the Waitomo District (174°45' East, 38°10' South).

The northward movement of the median centre of population is a reflection of different population growth rates across the country. The population of the North Island has grown faster than that of the South Island, and there has been relatively rapid population growth in the Auckland Region. In the 10-year period ended 30 June 2008, the Auckland Region accounted for 54 percent of New Zealand's population growth.

## Final figures

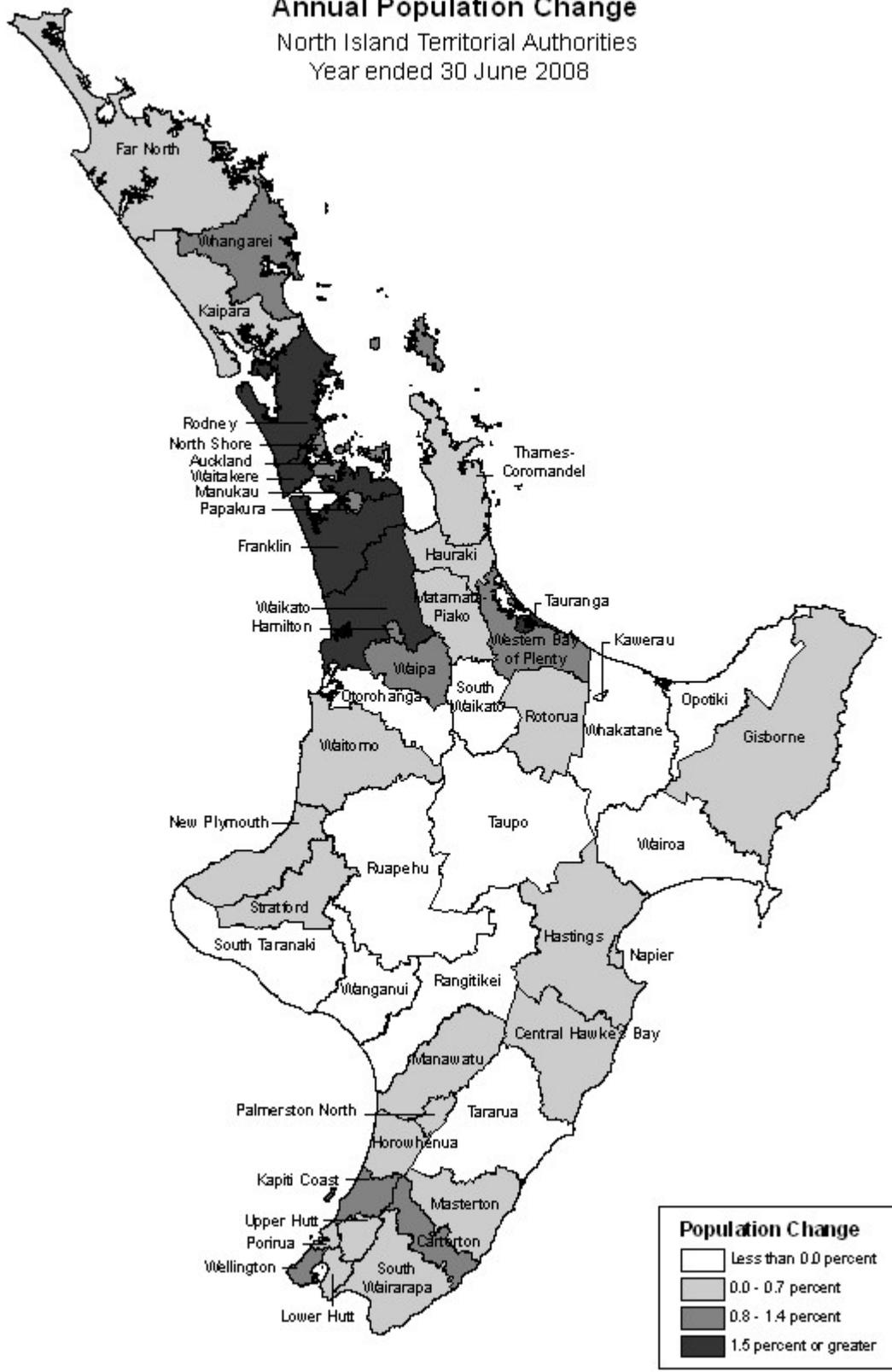
The population estimates for the June 2008 year quoted above and contained in the appended tables are provisional. Processing of final statistics will be completed in November 2008.

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**Next release ...**

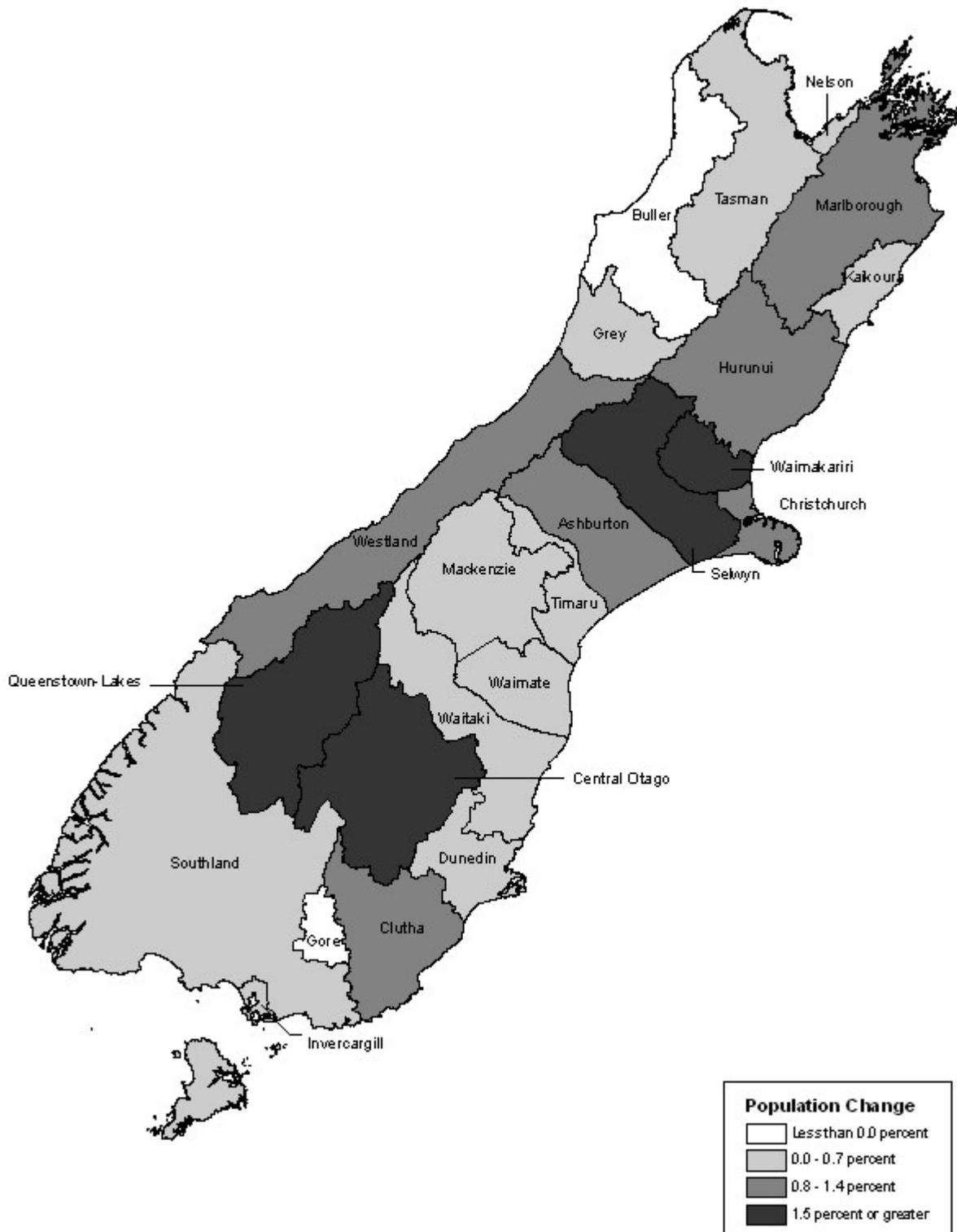
*Subnational Population Estimates: At 30 June 2009 will be released in October 2009.*

**Annual Population Change**  
 North Island Territorial Authorities  
 Year ended 30 June 2008



# Annual Population Change

South Island Territorial Authorities  
Year ended 30 June 2008



# Technical notes

## Population measures

There are three population measures commonly produced by Statistics New Zealand: census night population count, census usually resident population count and estimated resident population.

The census night population count of New Zealand is a count of all people present in New Zealand on a given census night. This count includes visitors from overseas who are counted on census night, but excludes residents who are temporarily overseas on census night.

The census usually resident population count of New Zealand is a count of all people who usually live in New Zealand, and are present in New Zealand, on a given census night. This count excludes visitors from overseas and residents who are temporarily overseas on census night.

The estimated resident population of New Zealand is an estimate of all people who usually live in New Zealand at a given date. This estimate includes all residents present in New Zealand and counted by the census (census usually resident population count), residents who are temporarily overseas (who are not included in the census), and an adjustment for residents missed or counted more than once by the census (net census undercount). Visitors from overseas are excluded.

Users of Statistics NZ's Hot Off The Press and media releases need to be aware that the population counts published in any release of 1996, 2001 or 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings data will differ from the estimated resident population.

The reference date for subnational population estimates is 'at 30 June', which is in line with international practice. This release contains the estimated resident populations of regional council areas, territorial authorities (cities and districts), and main and secondary urban areas in New Zealand.

## Base population

The estimated resident population at 30 June in the year of the latest available census forms the base population for deriving the estimated resident population at a given date after the latest census. The base population is also used in the revision of the intercensal population estimates for the five-year period prior to the latest census.

The estimated resident population of each area at 30 June 2006 is based on the census usually resident population count from the 2006 Census (held 7 March 2006), updated for: net census undercount (as measured by the 2006 Post-enumeration Survey (PES)); the number of residents temporarily overseas on census night; births, deaths and net permanent and long-term migration between 8 March 2006 and 30 June 2006; and reconciliation with demographic estimates at ages 0–4 years.

## **Boundaries**

Subnational population estimates at 30 June 1996–2000 are based on 2001 regional council area, territorial authority and urban area boundaries. The estimates are based on the revised base population at 30 June 1996 and the base population at 30 June 2001.

Population estimates at 30 June 2001–2008 are based on boundaries at 30 June 2006. On 5 March 2006, Banks Peninsula District was amalgamated with Christchurch City and, as a result, estimates for Christchurch City from 2001 onwards have been revised to incorporate this change.

The population of the North Island is the sum of the population of North Island regions, and the population of the South Island is the sum of the population of South Island regions.

Urban areas are defined on the basis of the 1996 Census usually resident population count. Main urban areas have a 1996 Census usually resident population count of 30,000 or more, whereas secondary urban areas have a 1996 Census usually resident population count between 10,000 and 29,999. As a result, Greymouth is still classified as a secondary urban area, even though the 2006 Census usually resident population count and the estimated resident populations at 30 June 2001–2008 fall below the 10,000 population mark.

## **Estimating population change**

Subnational resident population estimates are derived by updating the base population of each area for natural increase (excess of births over deaths), net international migration (also known as net permanent and long-term migration) and net internal migration. Owing to the delays between the occurrence of births and deaths and the registration of the event, it is necessary to estimate births and deaths to produce timely resident population estimates. Symptomatic data series (eg residential building consents and electoral enrolments) are used to estimate the internal migration component.

Estimated natural increase and net migration for regional council areas have been included in table 4 of this release. Components of population change for territorial authorities and urban areas are available on request.

## **Median centre of population**

The median centre of population is the point at which two median lines intersect. A north-south line is placed so that half the population lives north of the line and half south of the line, and an east-west line is placed so that half the population lives east of the line and half west of the line.

The location of the median centre of population in 1921 was published in the General Report of the 1951 Population Census. The locations of the median centre of population at 30 June 1998 and 2008 have been derived using the estimated resident population and centroid of each territorial authority.

Due to limitations in the derivation method, the median centre of population should be considered indicative of the distribution of population and cannot be ascribed to an exact location. To reflect limitations in the derivation method, the coordinates at 30 June 1998 and 2008 have been rounded to the nearest five minutes.

## **Rounding**

All figures in this release have been rounded independently. Population estimates for areas of less than 10,000 have been rounded to the nearest 10. Populations between 10,000 and 20,000 have been rounded to the nearest 50. Populations of 20,000 or more have been rounded to the nearest 100. Population changes have been rounded to the nearest 10.

All derived figures in this release have been calculated using data of greater precision than published.

## **Availability of other subnational population estimates**

The estimates in this release are provisional. Final estimates for regional council areas, territorial authorities and main and secondary urban areas will be available on the Statistics NZ website ([www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)) by 30 November 2008. Final estimates, by five-year age group and sex, for regional council areas, territorial authorities and area units, will be made freely available on the Statistics NZ website (via Table Builder) by January 2009. Estimates for other subnational areas (eg wards and minor urban areas) are available on request from January 2009 (email: [demography@stats.govt.nz](mailto:demography@stats.govt.nz)).

Subnational population estimates at 30 June 1996–2008 are available on the Statistics NZ website ([www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)). The population series is also available on INFOS (DPE) and our online database [Infoshare](#).

## **More information**

For more information, follow the [link](#) from the technical notes of this release on the Statistics NZ website.

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## **Timing**

Timed statistical releases are delivered using postal and electronic services provided by third parties. Delivery of these releases may be delayed by circumstances outside the control of Statistics NZ. Statistics NZ accepts no responsibility for any such delays.

## Tables

The following tables are printed with this Hot Off The Press and can also be downloaded from the Statistics New Zealand website in Excel format. If you do not have access to Excel, you may use the [Excel file viewer](#) to view, print and export the contents of the file.

1. Estimated resident population, regional council areas
2. Estimated resident population, territorial authorities
3. Estimated resident population, urban areas
4. Components of population change, regional council areas