

National Population Estimates: At 30 June 2016

Embargoed until 10:45am – 12 August 2016

Key facts

During the June 2016 year:

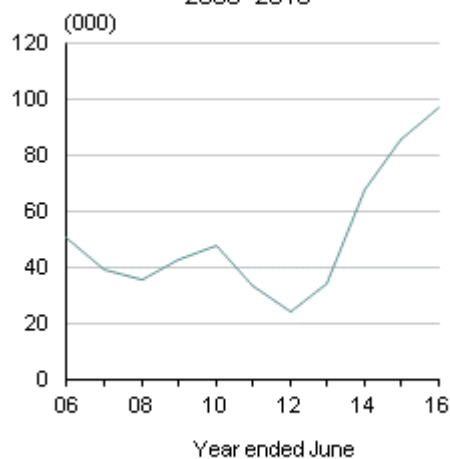
- New Zealand's population grew by 97,300 (2.1 percent).
- Natural increase (births minus deaths) was 28,200 and net migration gain (arrivals minus departures) was 69,100.

At 30 June 2016:

- New Zealand's estimated resident population was 4.69 million.
- There were 2.31 million males and 2.38 million females, equivalent to 97 males for every 100 females.
- The median age for males and females was 35.8 and 38.4 years, respectively.

Annual population change

2006–2016



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Estimated resident population			
Age group (years)	At 30 June 2015	At 30 June 2016 P	Percentage change 2015–16 P
0–14	914,300	921,500	0.8
15–39	1,528,500	1,583,400	3.6
40–64	1,478,500	1,489,800	0.8
65+	674,300	698,400	3.6
All ages	4,595,700	4,693,000	2.1

Symbol: P provisional

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Commentary

- Population growth is highest ever
- Growth rate changes over time
- Median age moves down slightly
- Age structure changes in year ended 30 June 2016
- Age structure changes in the last two decades

This information release contains provisional estimates of the resident population of New Zealand at 30 June 2016. These national population estimates give the best available measure of the size and age-sex structure of the population usually living in New Zealand.

Population growth is highest ever

In the June 2016 year, the estimated resident population recorded the largest ever annual growth of 97,300 (2.1 percent) to reach 4,693,000. This follows an increase of 86,000 (1.9 percent) for the June 2015 year. To put this in context, in the previous 20 years (1995–2014), New Zealand's population grew by an average of 44,500, or 1.1 percent, a year.

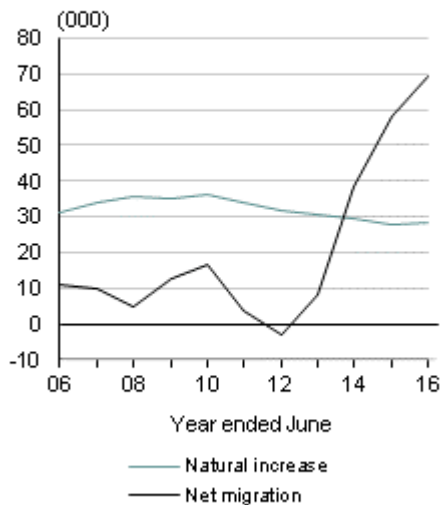
The last time New Zealand experienced population growth over 2 percent was in 1974, and before that, at the peak of the baby boom in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Population growth in the year to June 2016 was due to a net international migration gain of 69,100, and a natural increase (more births than deaths) of 28,200. Compared with the previous June year, net international migration increased by 10,800, while natural increase grew by 500.

The international migration gain for the year ended June 2016 was the highest ever recorded.

Components of annual population change

2006–16

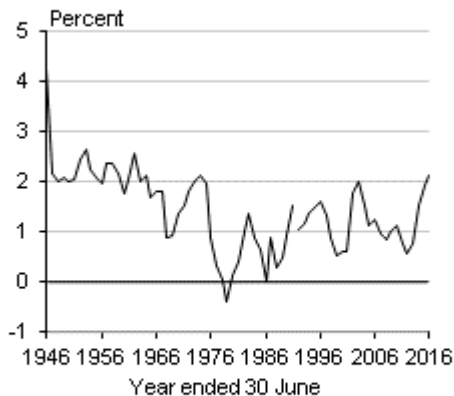


Source: Statistics New Zealand

Growth rate changes over time

While the size of the population change in the year ended June 2016 is unprecedented, the rate of growth in 2016 has been exceeded on several occasions in recent history. The tendency of the growth rate to oscillate is in part due to the volatility of international migration patterns. In the long term however, the rate of population growth is projected to decrease.

New Zealand population growth rate
1946–2016



Note: The break in data between 1991 and 1992 denotes a change from the de facto population concept to the resident population concept.

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Median age moves down slightly

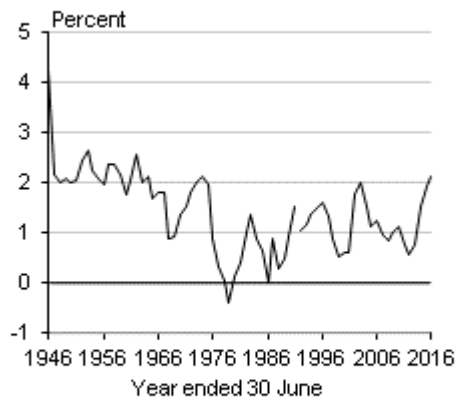
At 30 June 2016, half of New Zealand's population was over 37.1 years. This is slightly lower than the median age of 37.3 years at 30 June 2015 because of the impact of migration. People aged under 35 accounted for nearly 80 percent of net migration, and those aged 18–29 accounted for almost half. During the June 2016 year the male median age reduced from 36.0 to 35.8 years, and the female median age reduced from 38.6 to 38.4 years.

The lower median age for males than for females partly reflects their lower life expectancy. Based on death rates in 2013–15, males can expect to live 79.7 years, compared with 83.3 years for females.

[See New Zealand abridged life tables, 2013–15](#)

New Zealand's population has been gradually ageing, due to sustained low fertility and increasing life expectancy. Since 1995, the median age has risen 5.1 years for females and 3.9 years for males. However, since 2013 the median age has been relatively stable for females, and decreased 0.6 years for males. In the long term, it is expected that the median age will continue to trend upward as migrants, and the general population, age.

New Zealand population growth rate 1946–2016



Note: The break in data between 1991 and 1992 denotes a change from the de facto population concept to the resident population concept.

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Age structure changes in year ended 30 June 2016

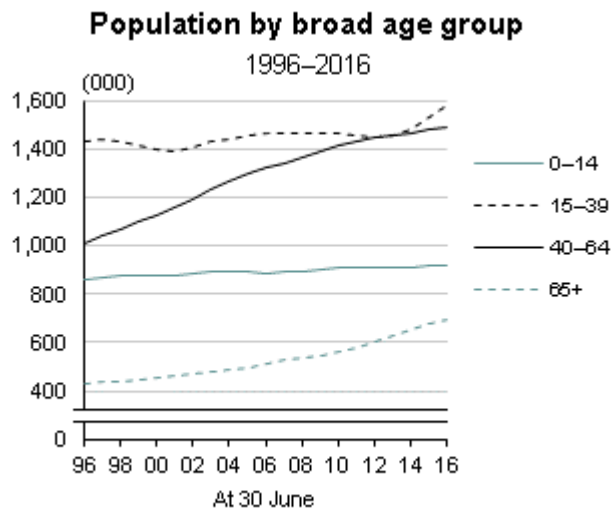
While all broad age groups grew in size in the last year, their shifting proportions have affected the structure of the total population.

- **Children (aged 0–14 years)** were 19.6 percent (921,500) of the population at 30 June 2016, down from 19.9 percent in 2015.
- **The younger working-age population (aged 15–39 years)** was 33.7 percent (1,583,400) of the population, up from 33.3 percent in 2015. Between 2015 and 2016, the population aged 15–39 years increased 3.6 percent (54,900), mainly due to migration. This meant the younger working-age population was slightly larger than the older working-age population at 30 June 2016.
- **The older working-age population (aged 40–64 years)** was 31.7 percent (1,489,800) of the population, down from 32.1 percent in 2015.
- **The population aged 65+** was 14.9 percent (698,400) of the population, up from 14.7 percent in 2015.

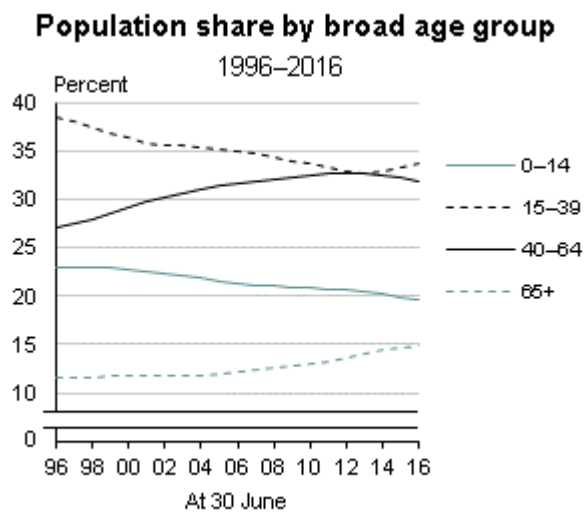
Age structure changes in the last two decades

The age structure of New Zealand's population has changed considerably over the last two decades:

- **Children (aged 0–14 years)** were 19.6 percent (921,500) of the population at 30 June 2016, down from 23.0 percent in 1996. Between 1996 and 2016, this population increased 7.2 percent.
- **The younger working-age population (aged 15–39 years)** was 33.7 percent (1,583,400) of the population, down from 38.4 percent in 1996. Between 1996 and 2016, this population increased 10.4 percent.
- **The older working-age population (aged 40–64 years)** was 31.7 percent (1,489,800) of the population, up from 27.0 percent in 1996. Between 1996 and 2016, this population increased 47.7 percent.
- **The population aged 65 years and over** was 14.9 percent (698,400) of the population, up from 11.5 percent in 1996. Between 1996 and 2016, this population increased 62.4 percent.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

For more detailed data see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

Definitions

About national population estimates

National population estimates give the best available measure of the size and age-sex structure of the population usually living in New Zealand. Estimates of the resident population are based on the latest available census adjusted for residents who are temporarily overseas, net census undercount, and data on births, deaths, and migration between census night and the estimate.

National population estimates are published quarterly and subnational population estimates are published annually.

More definitions

International migration: migration into or out of New Zealand. International migration statistics are based on 'permanent and long-term' migration statistics. These are primarily determined by passengers' responses on arrival and departure cards – about how long they intend to be in or away from New Zealand, and where they last lived or intend to live for 12 months or more.

- **International migrant arrivals:** people from overseas arriving intending to live in New Zealand for 12 months or more (including permanently), and New Zealanders returning after an absence of 12 months or more. (Referred to as permanent and long-term arrivals in international migration statistics.)
- **International migrant departures:** New Zealanders departing for an intended absence of 12 months or more (including permanently), and people from overseas departing after a stay of 12 months or more in New Zealand. (Referred to as permanent and long-term departures in international migration statistics.)
- **Net migration:** the difference between the number of people who have moved to, and departed from, New Zealand. At the national level this is equivalent to international migrant arrivals minus international migrant departures.

Median age: half the population is younger, and half older, than this age.

Natural increase or decrease: natural increase is an excess of births over deaths. Natural decrease is an excess of deaths over births.

Population measures: Statistics New Zealand commonly produces three population measures, the census night population count, census usually resident population count, and estimated resident population:

- **Census night population count:** 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.
- **Census usually resident population count:** 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.
- **Estimated resident population:** 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), an adjustment for residents missed or counted more than once by the census (net census undercount), and births, deaths and migration between census night and the date of the estimate. Visitors from overseas are excluded.

Related links

Next release

National population estimates: At 30 September 2016 – tables (Infoshare) will be released on 14 November 2016.

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See [NZ.Stat](#) for the base populations for estimates and projections.

[Population projections](#) provide a summary of the projected population of New Zealand at a national and subnational level, based on different combinations of fertility, mortality, and migration assumptions.

[Interactive population pyramid](#) for New Zealand shows New Zealand's changing age-sex distribution over time. It delivers insight into our population history and what our future may look like.

Data quality

This section contains information that does not change between releases.

- [Base population](#)
- [Accuracy of the data](#)
- [Provisional and final estimates](#)
- [Population clock](#)
- [Rounding](#)
- [More information](#)

Base population

The estimated resident population at 30 June 2013 forms the base population for deriving post-censal population estimates.

We derived the estimated resident population of New Zealand at 30 June 2013 (4.442 million) from the 2013 census usually resident population count at 5 March 2013 (4.242 million), with adjustments for:

- residents missed or counted more than once by the census (net census undercount) (+104,200)
- residents temporarily overseas on census night (+81,700)
- births, deaths, and net migration between census night and 30 June 2013 (+9,300)
- reconciliation with demographic estimates at ages 0–9 years (+4,800).

We derive quarterly national population estimates from September 2013 onwards by updating the estimated resident population at 30 June 2013 for births, deaths, and net migration during the following period.

Accuracy of the data

Official national population estimates give the best available measure of how many people usually live in New Zealand. We produce national population estimates using a component methodology, where a base population is updated for the components of population change (births, deaths, and international migration).

All population estimates have some uncertainty around them. Generally, the uncertainty associated with population estimates increases as the estimates move further away from the base (starting point). Uncertainty also increases as population estimates are disaggregated (eg by age or subnationally).

The uncertainty is the net combined effect of:

- uncertainty in the census-based estimates of the population at 30 June of the current or previous census year, including uncertainty in the census counts (eg from respondent errors or census processing) and uncertainty in the adjustments (eg for net census undercount and residents temporarily overseas)
- uncertainty in the estimates of any of the components of population change (births, deaths, and migration) since the previous census.

It is not possible to verify the ongoing accuracy of current national population estimates, as no other independent or authoritative measure of the resident population exists. It is possible to derive retrospective measures of accuracy following the periodic Census of Population and Dwellings.

Following the 2013 Census, we revised national population estimates at 30 June 2013 down by 29,000 (0.7 percent relative to the revised estimate).

International migration estimates

International migration statistics are based on electronic arrival and departure records supplied to Statistics NZ for each international passenger. All arrivals and departures are processed so they can be allocated to one of three passenger types: overseas visitors, New Zealand-resident travellers, and permanent and long-term migrants. The net number of permanent and long-term migrants provides the estimate of international migration that we use in deriving the national population estimates.

Uncertainty arises due to changes in passenger intentions; a person may change their intentions after their arrival or departure, which may mean the recorded passenger type becomes incorrect. We do not currently revise published statistics to adjust for such changes.

Birth and death estimates

There is some uncertainty associated with birth and death data. We use birth and death registrations to estimate the number of births and deaths that occurred during each quarter. Not all births and deaths that occur in a quarter are registered by the end of the quarter, and this delay in registration is taken into account when estimating the number of births and deaths in the current quarter.

Provisional and final estimates

We publish provisional national population estimates in quarterly table updates about six weeks after the end of the reference quarter. An annual information and media release accompanies the June quarter release in mid-August.

Final national population estimates are published in quarterly table updates about five months after the end of the reference quarter. We derive these final estimates when an extra quarter of births and deaths data is available. Changes between the provisional and final estimates are most apparent at the younger and older age groups, due to delayed registrations of births and deaths.

Birth estimates

Final estimates of births in a quarter are less accurate than deaths, as deaths are usually registered more quickly than births. Around 5 percent of births are not registered either in the quarter when the baby was born or in the subsequent quarter. As a result, the birth estimates differ slightly from published birth registrations.

Death estimates

The final estimate of deaths in a quarter is taken as those deaths that occurred in the reference quarter, either registered in the reference quarter or in the subsequent quarter. Final estimates of deaths are very accurate as very few deaths (about 1 death in every 1,000) are registered later

than one quarter after they occurred. As a result, the death estimates differ slightly from published death registrations.

Population clock

Statistics NZ's online [population clock](#) gives a real-time approximation of the estimated resident population of New Zealand. The population clock uses the latest quarterly estimated resident population, and estimates of the expected number of births, deaths, and net migration for the coming quarter. The settings for each component (births, deaths, and net migration) are determined in advance of each quarter, based on recent trends, and will not necessarily reflect actual population change. The quarterly settings are converted into a 'per minute' figure, making allowance for the number of days per quarter.

Rounding

All figures in this release were rounded independently. Estimates of the total population, natural increase, net migration, and broad age groups are rounded to the nearest 100. National population estimates of five-year age groups are rounded to the nearest 10.

All derived figures in this release use data of greater precision than that published.

More information

[See information about the population estimates](#) (DataInfo+) for more detailed information on the methods used to calculate the estimates.

[Principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics](#)

Statistics in this release have been produced in accordance with the Official Statistics System principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics for quality. They conform to the Statistics NZ Methodological Standard for Reporting of Data Quality.

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Tables

See the following excel tables in the 'Downloads' box on this page. If you have problems viewing the files, see [opening files and PDFs](#).

1. Estimated resident population of New Zealand and population change
2. Estimated resident population of New Zealand, by broad age group
3. Estimated resident population of New Zealand, by five-year age group

Access more data on Infoshare

Use [Infoshare](#) to access time-series data specific to your needs. For annual and quarterly national population estimates by single-year of age, five-year age groups, and selected age groups, select the following categories from the Infoshare homepage:

Subject category: **Population**

Group: **Population Estimates – DPE**

The time series can be downloaded in Excel or comma delimited format. See more information [about Infoshare](#).

Next release

National population estimates: At 30 September 2016 – tables (Infoshare) will be released on 14 November 2016.