

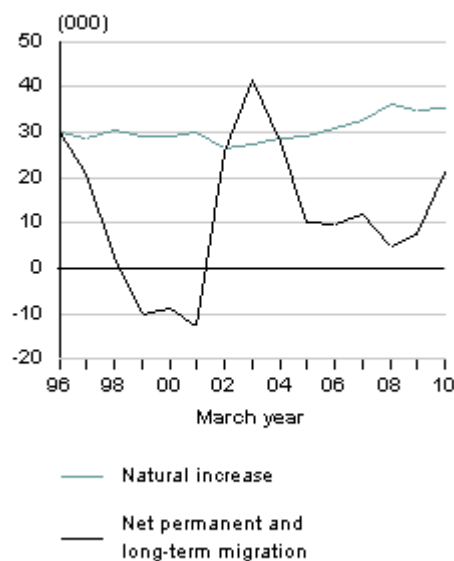
Embargoed until 10:45am – 14 May 2010

National Population Estimates: March 2010 quarter

Highlights

- The estimated resident population of New Zealand was 4.36 million at 31 March 2010.
- Population growth was 56,300 (1.3 percent) during the March 2010 year.
- Natural increase and net migration contributed 35,300 and 21,000, respectively, during the March 2010 year.
- The median ages for males and females were 35.5 and 37.5 years, respectively, at 31 March 2010.

Components of annual population change
1996–2010



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Estimated resident population			
Age group (years)	At 31 March 2009	At 31 March 2010 P	Percentage change 2009–10 P
All ages	4,305,700	4,362,000	1.3
Under 15	890,400	894,400	0.4
15–39	1,484,200	1,498,400	1.0
40–64	1,382,200	1,404,700	1.6
65+	549,000	564,500	2.8

Symbol: P provisional

Geoff Bascand
Government Statistician

14 May 2010
ISSN 1178-0576

Commentary

Background

This release contains estimates of the total population of New Zealand at 31 March 2010. Tables are included at the end of this release with estimated resident population and population change, estimated resident population by broad age group and sex, and by five-year age group and sex. Estimates by single-year of age are available via [Infoshare](#) on the Statistics New Zealand website (Demography Age Estimates in the 'Population' category).

Population estimates give the best available measure of the size and age-sex structure of the population usually living in an area. Estimates are based on the latest census data and on births, deaths, and migration since the census. National population estimates are published quarterly and subnational population estimates are published annually.

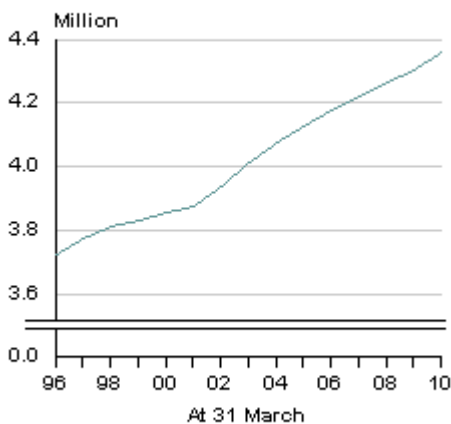
The estimates in this release are provisional. They incorporate provisional estimates of the number of births and deaths that occurred in the March 2010 quarter. Final estimates will be released on 13 August 2010. In addition, population estimates after 30 June 2006 will be revised following results from the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings.

In this release, a special topic analyses the median age of the population aged 65 years and over (65+). Previous releases have included special topics on trends in the number of children (0–14 years) between 1969 and 2009 ([December 2009 quarter](#)), trends in the working-age population ([September 2009 quarter](#)), an international comparison of the percentage of population aged 65+ ([June 2009 quarter](#)), and trends in the components of population change ([March 2009 quarter](#)).

Estimated resident population at 31 March 2010

The estimated resident population of New Zealand was 4,362,000 at 31 March 2010, comprising 2,141,700 males and 2,220,300 females. At 31 March 2010, there were 96 males for every 100 females.

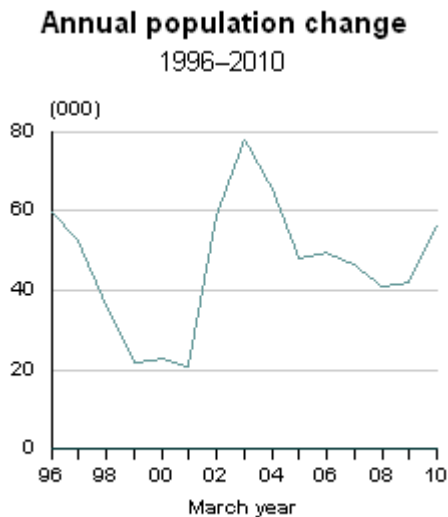
Estimated resident population
1996–2010



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Annual population change

In the March 2010 year, the estimated resident population grew by 56,300 (1.3 percent), compared with 42,200 (1.0 percent) in the previous March year. The population growth in the March 2010 year was higher than the average annual increase of 50,600 (1.2 percent) recorded during the 10-year period to March 2010, and the highest growth for a March year since 2004, when it was 65,400 (1.6 percent).



Source: Statistics New Zealand

The population growth for the March 2010 year resulted from a natural increase (excess of births over deaths) of 35,300 and a net permanent and long-term (PLT) migration gain of 21,000, and was higher than recent years largely because of a drop in PLT departures. The level of net PLT migration was the highest for a March year since 2004 (28,000).

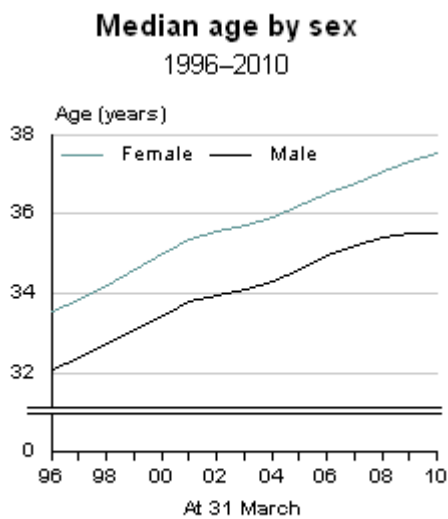
Historically, natural increase has been the dominant component of population growth. Over the last 40 years, natural increase accounted for four-fifths of New Zealand's total population growth. During the March 2010 year, natural increase accounted for a little over three-fifths of population growth.

Quarterly population change

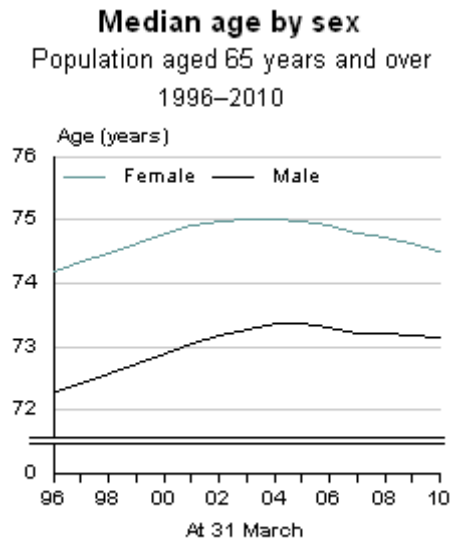
During the March 2010 quarter, New Zealand's estimated resident population grew by 14,800 (0.3 percent). This growth resulted from a natural increase of 10,000 and a net PLT migration gain of 4,800. In comparison, for the March 2009 quarter, natural increase was lower at 9,100 while net migration was higher at 5,100, resulting in a quarterly population growth of 14,200 (0.3 percent).

Median age

New Zealand has an ageing population because of a shift to sustained low fertility and low mortality rates. This shift is also observed in other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. At 31 March 2010, half of New Zealand's population was over the age of 36.6, compared with a median age of 34.2 years a decade earlier. The median age for males is now 35.5 years, while for females it is 37.5 years. The lower median age for males largely reflects their lower life expectancy of 78.4 years, compared with 82.4 years for females (New Zealand abridged life table, 2007–09). Latest national population projections (2009 base–2061 update) indicate that the median age will be 43.5 years in 2061 (series 5).



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Median age of the population aged 65 years and over

The median age of the population aged 65 years and over (65+) was 73.3 at 31 March 1996 and rose to 74.2 in 2005 before dropping to 73.8 years at 31 March 2010. In the long term, the rising median age of the older population reflects the increasing number of people in the oldest age groups. In the short term, however, the median age of the 65+ population has dropped, which reflects the growth in the 65–69 year age group. The median age of the male 65+ population is 73.1 years, up from 72.3 years in 1996. The female population aged 65+ had a median age of 74.5 years at 31 March 2010, up from 74.2 years in 1996.

In 1996 there were 428,900 people aged 65+. Of these, 2.7 percent were aged 90 years and over (11,600). At 31 March 2010, 3.9 percent of the population aged 65+ (564,500) were aged 90 years and over (21,900).

Changes in age composition

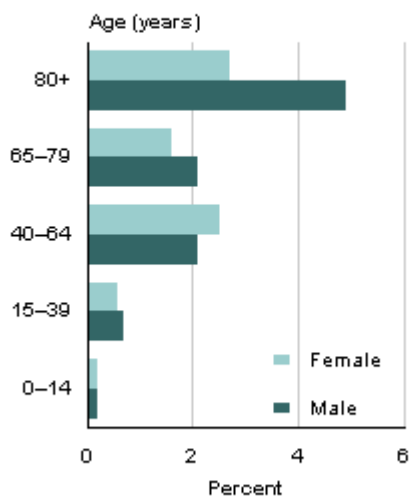
The age composition of New Zealand's population has changed over the past decade. In the 10 years ended 31 March 2010, the number of children (aged 0–14 years) grew to 894,400, an average annual increase of 1,600 (0.2 percent). For the year ended 31 March 2010, the increase of 4,000 (0.4 percent) in the number of children was above the annual average for the decade. At 31 March 2010, children accounted for 21 percent of the New Zealand population, down from 23 percent at 31 March 2000.

At 31 March 2010, the population aged 15–39 years remained the largest population group, accounting for 34 percent of the New Zealand population, down from 36 percent a decade earlier. This age group reached 1,498,400, an increase of 14,200 (1.0 percent) compared with the March 2009 figure. In the 10 years ended March 2010, the average annual increase for this age group was lower, at 9,100 (0.6 percent).

The population aged 40–64 also remained a large proportion of the population, increasing from 29 percent to 32 percent in the decade ended 31 March 2010. This age group increased by 22,500 (1.6 percent) in the year ended 31 March 2010, to reach 1,404,700. This was below the average annual increase of 28,700 (2.3 percent) for the 10 years ended March 2010.

Average annual population change

By age group and sex
10 years ended March 2010



Source: Statistics New Zealand

The proportion of the population aged 65–79 years was 9.5 percent at 31 March 2010, up from 9.0 percent in 2000. During the March 2010 year, the population aged 65–79 years increased by 2.7 percent (10,800) to reach 414,900. In the 10 years ended March 2010, the population aged 65–79 years grew at an average annual rate of 1.8 percent (6,900).

In the 10 years ended March 2010, there was also an increase in the proportion of the population aged 80 years and over (80+), from 2.8 percent to 3.4 percent. The 80+ population reached 149,600 at 31 March 2010, an average annual increase of 3.5 percent (4,300) over the decade. The size and growth rate of this age group varied significantly by sex. The average annual growth rate for males for the decade ended March 2010 was 4.9 percent, compared with 2.7 percent for females. In the year ended 31 March 2010, the male population in the 80+ age group increased by 4.7 percent (2,600), to reach 58,200, while the female population increased by 2.3 percent (2,100), to 91,400.

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 for the expected number of births, deaths, and net migration during the following quarter. The settings for each component (births, deaths, and net migration) are derived by converting the quarterly estimated totals into a 'per minute' figure, making allowance

for the number of days per quarter. The [population clock](#) can be viewed on the Statistics NZ website: www.stats.govt.nz.

Different population measures

Users of population statistics need to be aware that there are three main population measures produced by Statistics NZ: the census night population count, the census usually resident population count, and the estimated resident population. The population counts published from the census are not comparable with the estimated resident population. The estimated resident population includes adjustments for net census undercount and for New Zealand residents temporarily overseas on census night. For more information see the 'Technical notes' section of this release.

For technical information contact:
Joel Watkins or Esther Hogenhout
Christchurch 03 964 8700
Email: demography@stats.govt.nz

Next release...

National Population Estimates: June 2010 quarter will be released on 13 August 2010.

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. The population counts published from the census are not comparable with the estimated resident population.

De facto population estimates were produced up until the mid 1990s when they were replaced by the estimated resident population measure. The estimated de facto population of New Zealand includes all people present in New Zealand and counted by the census (census night population count). This estimate includes visitors from overseas who are counted on census night, but excludes New Zealand residents who are temporarily overseas.

Base population

The estimated resident population at 30 June 2006 forms the base population for deriving the estimated resident population at a given date following the 2006 Census. This base population is also used in the revision of intercensal population estimates for the five-year period between the 2001 and 2006 Censuses.

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

Resident population estimates

Quarterly estimates from September 2006 onwards were derived by updating the estimated resident population at 30 June 2006 for births, deaths, and net PLT migration during the ensuing period.

Derived figures

Derived figures (for example, percentage annual increase) are calculated using data of greater precision than published.

Median age

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

Provisional figures

The estimates in this release are provisional. They incorporate provisional estimates of the number of births and deaths that occurred in the March 2010 quarter. Changes between the provisional and final population estimates are most apparent at the younger and older age groups due to delayed registrations of births and deaths.

Final figures

Final figures for the estimated resident population at 31 March 2010 will be available on 13 August 2010. In addition, population estimates after 30 June 2006 will be revised following results from the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings.

More information

For more information, refer to the [information about the population estimates](#) on the Statistics NZ website.

Quarterly national population estimates by single-year of age, five-year age groups, and selected age groups are available via [Infoshare](#) on the Statistics NZ website (Demography Age Estimates in the 'Population' category).

Annual population estimates by age and sex for subnational areas are freely available via [Table Builder](#) on the Statistics NZ website.

Population estimates for the [Māori ethnic group](#) are updated twice a year on the Statistics NZ website.

Copyright

Information obtained from Statistics NZ may be freely used, reproduced, or quoted unless otherwise specified. In all cases Statistics NZ must be acknowledged as the source.

Liability

While care has been used in processing, analysing and extracting information, Statistics NZ gives no warranty that the information supplied is free from error. Statistics NZ shall not be liable for any loss suffered through the use, directly or indirectly, of any information, product or service.

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 NZ 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 and population change
2. Estimated resident population, by broad age group
3. Estimated resident population, by five-year age group