

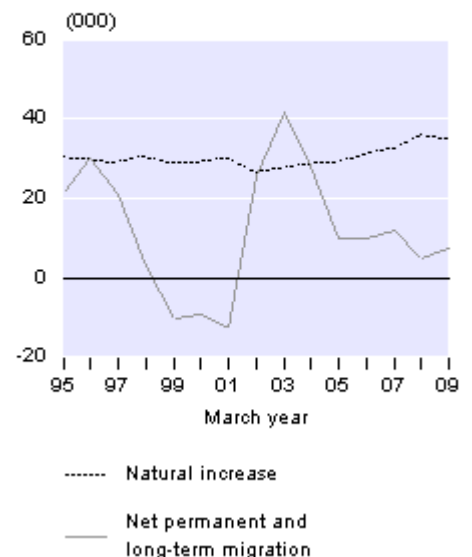
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National Population Estimates: March 2009 quarter

Highlights

- The estimated resident population of New Zealand was 4.31 million at 31 March 2009.
- Population growth was 42,800 (1.0 percent) during the March 2009 year.
- Natural increase and net migration contributed 35,300 and 7,500, respectively, during the March 2009 year.
- The median ages were 35.5 years for males and 37.3 years for females at 31 March 2009.

Components of Annual Population Change
1995–2009



Estimated Resident Population			
Age group (years)	At 31 March 2008	At 31 March 2009 P	Percentage change 2008–09 P
All ages	4,263,600	4,306,400	1.0
Under 15	889,500	891,200	0.2
15–39	1,477,800	1,484,200	0.4
40–64	1,360,800	1,382,100	1.6
65+	535,500	548,900	2.5
P provisional			

Geoff Bascand

Government Statistician

See also *National Population Estimates: March 2009 quarter* – Media release.

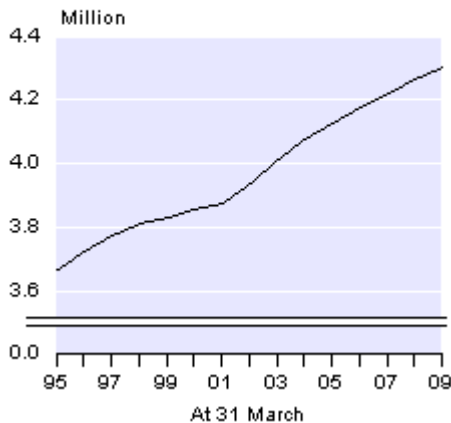
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Commentary

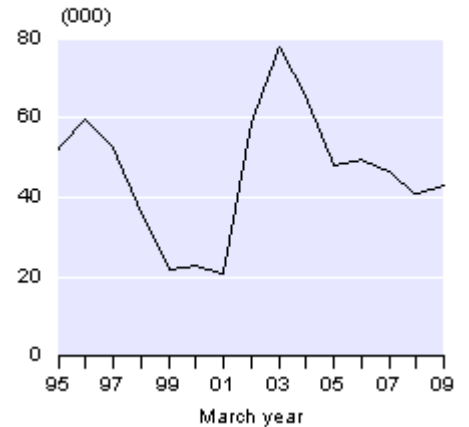
Estimated resident population at 31 March 2009

The estimated resident population of New Zealand was 4,306,400 at 31 March 2009. The estimated resident populations for males and females were 2,112,400 and 2,194,000, respectively. At 31 March 2009, there were 96 males for every 100 females.

Estimated Resident Population
1995–2009



Annual Population Change
1995–2009



Annual population change

In the March 2009 year, the estimated resident population grew by 42,800 (1.0 percent), compared with 40,800 (1.0 percent) in the previous March year. The population growth in the March 2009 year was slightly lower than the average annual increase of 47,300 (1.2 percent) recorded during the 10-year period ended 31 March 2009.

The population growth for the March 2009 year resulted from a natural increase (excess of births over deaths) of 35,300, and a net permanent and long-term migration gain of 7,500. Natural increase was down slightly from the previous year (36,100), which had the highest level of natural increase for a March year since 1973. In contrast, the net migration gain was higher than in the March 2008 year (4,700). Historically, natural increase has been the dominant element in population growth. During the March 2009 year, natural increase accounted for 83 percent of population growth.

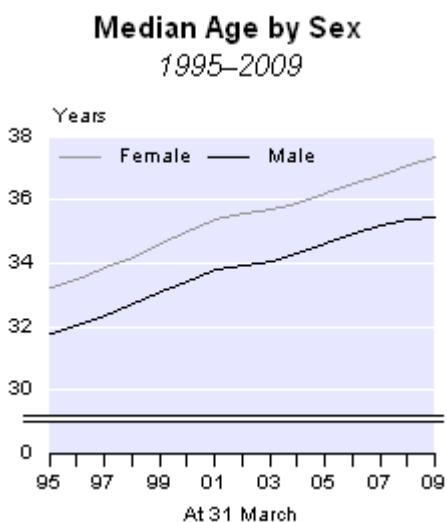
Quarterly population change

During the March 2009 quarter, New Zealand's estimated resident population grew by 14,800 (0.3 percent). This growth resulted from a natural increase of 9,700, and a net permanent and long-term migration gain of 5,100. By comparison, in the March 2008 quarter, net migration (1,400) was significantly less while natural increase (9,600) was similar, resulting in a quarterly population growth of 11,000 (0.3 percent).

Median age

New Zealand has an ageing population because of a shift to sustained low fertility and low mortality rates. This is observed in other OECD countries also. At 31 March 2009, half of the New Zealand population was over the age of 36.5 years, compared with a median age of 33.9 years a decade earlier.

The median age for males is now 35.5 years, while for females it is 37.3 years. Over the past decade, the median age has increased 2.4 years for males and 2.7 years for females. The lower median age for males reflects their lower life expectancy of 78.0 years, compared with 82.2 years for females (Complete period life tables 2005–2007).



Changes in age composition

The age composition of New Zealand's population has changed over the past decade. Between the 1999 and 2009 March years, the number of children (aged 0–14 years) grew to 891,200, an average annual increase of 1,400 (0.2 percent). The increase for the year ended 31 March 2009 of 1,700 (0.2 percent) was just above the annual average for the decade. At 31 March 2009, children accounted for 21 percent of the New Zealand population, down from 23 percent at 31 March 1999.

At 31 March 2009, the population aged 15–39 years reached 1,484,200, an increase of 6,300 (0.4 percent) compared with the March 2008 figure. In the 10 years ended March 2009, the average annual increase for this age group was similar, at 6,500 (0.4 percent). The population aged 15–39 years accounted for 34 percent of the New Zealand population at 31 March 2009, down from 37 percent a decade earlier.

Thirty-two percent of the population were aged 40–64 years at 31 March 2009, up from 28 percent in 1999. This age group increased by 21,400 (1.6 percent), to reach 1,382,100 in the year ended 31 March 2009, which was below the average annual increase of 29,200 (2.4 percent) for the 10 years ended March 2009.

During the March 2009 year, the population aged 65–79 years increased by 8,900 (2.3 percent), to reach 404,100. Between the 1999 and 2009 March years the population aged 65–79 years grew at an average annual rate of 1.6 percent (6,100). The proportion of the population aged 65–79 years was 9.4 percent at 31 March 2009, up from 9.0 percent in 1999.

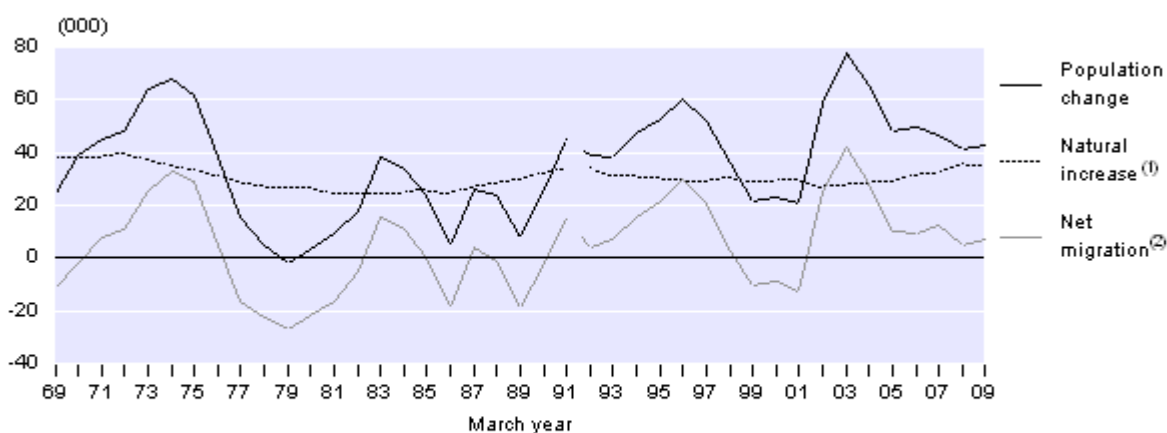
There was also a slight increase in the proportion of the population aged 80 years and over (80+), from 2.7 to 3.4 percent in the 10 years ended March 2009. The 80+ population reached 144,800 at 31 March 2009, an average annual increase of 4,200 (3.4 percent) over the decade. The rate of growth in this age group varied significantly by sex. The average annual increase for males for the decade was 4.8 percent, compared with 2.7 percent for females. In the year ended 31 March 2009, the male population in the 80+ age group increased by 4.9 percent (2,600), to reach 55,500, while the female population increased by 2.1 percent (1,900), to 89,300.

Trends in the components of population change 1969–2009

The two components of population change are natural increase and net migration. Between 1969 and 2009, the majority of New Zealand's population growth came from natural increase. From a high of 39,400 in the March 1972 year, annual natural increase fell to a low of 24,300 in 1986 and then rose to 34,300 in the March 1992 year before falling back to around 30,000 during 1993–2001. In the 2002 March year natural increase fell to 26,600, before rising to over 35,000 in the 2008 and 2009 years.

Net migration's contribution to annual population change between 1969 and 2009 fluctuated significantly, ranging from a net gain of 41,600 in the March 2003 year to a net loss of 26,500 in 1979. Overall, net migration provided one-fifth of New Zealand's total population growth between 1969 and 2009. Annual net migration gain contributed strongly to population growth during 1973–75, 1983, 1995–97, and 2002–04, accounting for more than one-third of the total population increase in these March years. Conversely, significant annual net migration losses were recorded in the 1977–81, 1986, 1989, and 1999–2001 March years, which partly offset the population gains from natural increase in these years.

Components of Annual Population Change
1969–2009



(1) Excess of births over deaths.

(2) Excess of all arrivals over all departures for 1969–91; excess of permanent and long-term arrivals over permanent and long-term departures for 1992–2009.

Note: Population change and natural increase for 1969–91 refers to the de facto population, while from 1992 onwards refers to the resident population.

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](http://www.stats.govt.nz/) can be viewed on the Statistics NZ website, <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>.

Different population concepts

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 of this release.

Final figures

The population estimates for the March 2009 year quoted above, and contained in the appended tables, are provisional. Processing of final statistics will be completed in August 2009. In addition, population estimates after 30 June 2006 will be revised following results from the next Census of Population and Dwellings.

For technical information contact:
Joel Watkins or Esther Hogenhout
Christchurch 03 964 8700

Email: demography@stats.govt.nz

Next release ...

National Population Estimates: June 2009 quarter will be released on 14 August 2009.

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. It includes visitors from overseas who are present 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.

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 that published.

Median age

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

Final figures

Final figures for the estimated resident population at 31 March 2009 will be available in August 2009. In addition, population estimates after 30 June 2006 will be revised following results from the next 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.

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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 groups
3. Estimated resident population, by five-year age groups