

Embargoed until 10:45am – 23 October 2009

## Subnational Population Estimates: At 30 June 2009

### Highlights

- All New Zealand's 16 regions recorded population growth in the June 2009 year.
- The fastest-growing regions in the June 2009 year were Auckland (up 1.5 percent) and Canterbury (up 1.2 percent).
- The fastest-growing territorial authority areas in the June 2009 year were Selwyn district (up 2.8 percent) and Queenstown-Lakes district (up 2.6 percent).
- Over half of all New Zealanders (53 percent) were living in four main urban areas (Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, and Christchurch) at 30 June 2009.

### Regional Population Change

Year ended 30 June 2009



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23 October 2009  
ISSN 1178-0673

# Commentary

## Background

This release contains estimates of the total population of regional council areas, territorial authority areas (cities and districts), and main and secondary urban areas in New Zealand, at 30 June 2009. Estimates by age-sex for regional council areas, territorial authority areas and area units ('suburbs') will be available on the Statistics NZ website (via [Table Builder](#)) on 18 December 2009.

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 June 2009 year. Final estimates will be available by 30 November 2009. In addition, population estimates after 30 June 2006 will be revised following results from the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings.

## National population change

New Zealand's estimated resident population was 4,315,800 at 30 June 2009, an increase of 46,900 (1.1 percent) over the June 2008 figure. The population growth recorded in the June 2009 year was slightly lower than the average annual increase of 48,100 (1.2 percent) recorded during the 10 years ended June 2009.

The population growth for the June 2009 year resulted from a natural increase (excess of births over deaths) of 34,400 people, and a net permanent and long-term migration gain of 12,500 people. The level of net permanent and long-term migration in the June 2009 year (12,500) was higher than in the June 2008 year (4,700), due to an increase in permanent and long-term arrivals (up 4 percent) and a decrease in permanent and long-term departures (down 6 percent).

## North and South Islands

The population of the North Island continued to grow at a slightly faster rate than that of the South Island. In the June 2009 year, natural increase was the dominant component in the North Island's population growth, accounting for about four-fifths of total growth. In contrast, natural increase and net migration made similar contributions to population growth in the South Island.

An estimated 3,287,600 people lived in the North Island at 30 June 2009, an increase of 36,900 (1.1 percent) from 30 June 2008. The estimated resident population of the South Island grew by 10,100 (1.0 percent) in the June 2009 year to reach 1,027,500. At 30 June 2009, 76 out of every 100 New Zealand residents lived in the North Island.

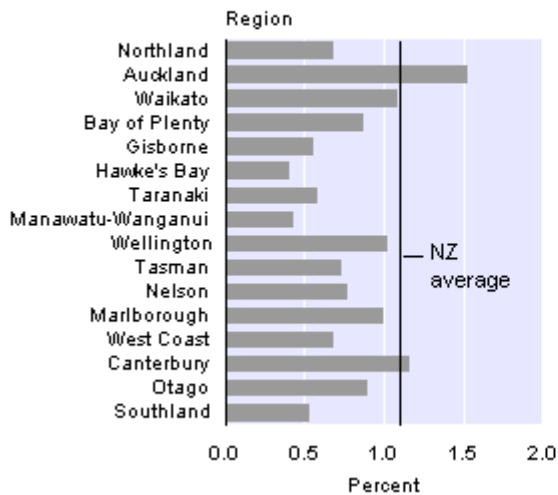
## Regions

All New Zealand's 16 regions recorded population increases during the June 2009 year. Auckland was New Zealand's fastest-growing region, with population growth of 1.5 percent. Canterbury (up 1.2 percent) also had a growth rate above the national average of 1.1 percent. The largest numerical increases in population were in Auckland (21,700), Canterbury (6,400), Wellington (4,800), and Waikato (4,400).

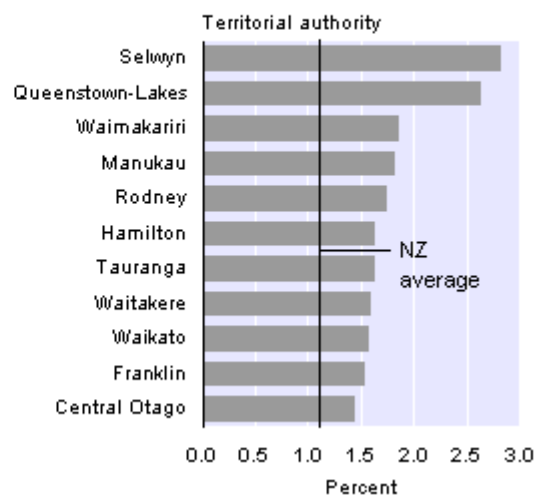
In the June 2009 year, all 16 regions had gains from natural increase (excess of births over deaths) and 11 regions had gains from net migration (international and internal migration combined). There were two regions that received more than half their population growth through net migration (Marlborough and Otago). Five regions had losses, with the largest net migration loss being in Hawke's Bay (400 people).

Auckland, with an estimated resident population of 1,436,400 at 30 June 2009, 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) New Zealand's population. Canterbury, with an estimated resident population of 559,200, was home to 54 percent of South Island residents.

**Regional Population Change**  
Year ended 30 June 2009



**Fastest-growing Territorial Authority Areas**  
Year ended 30 June 2009

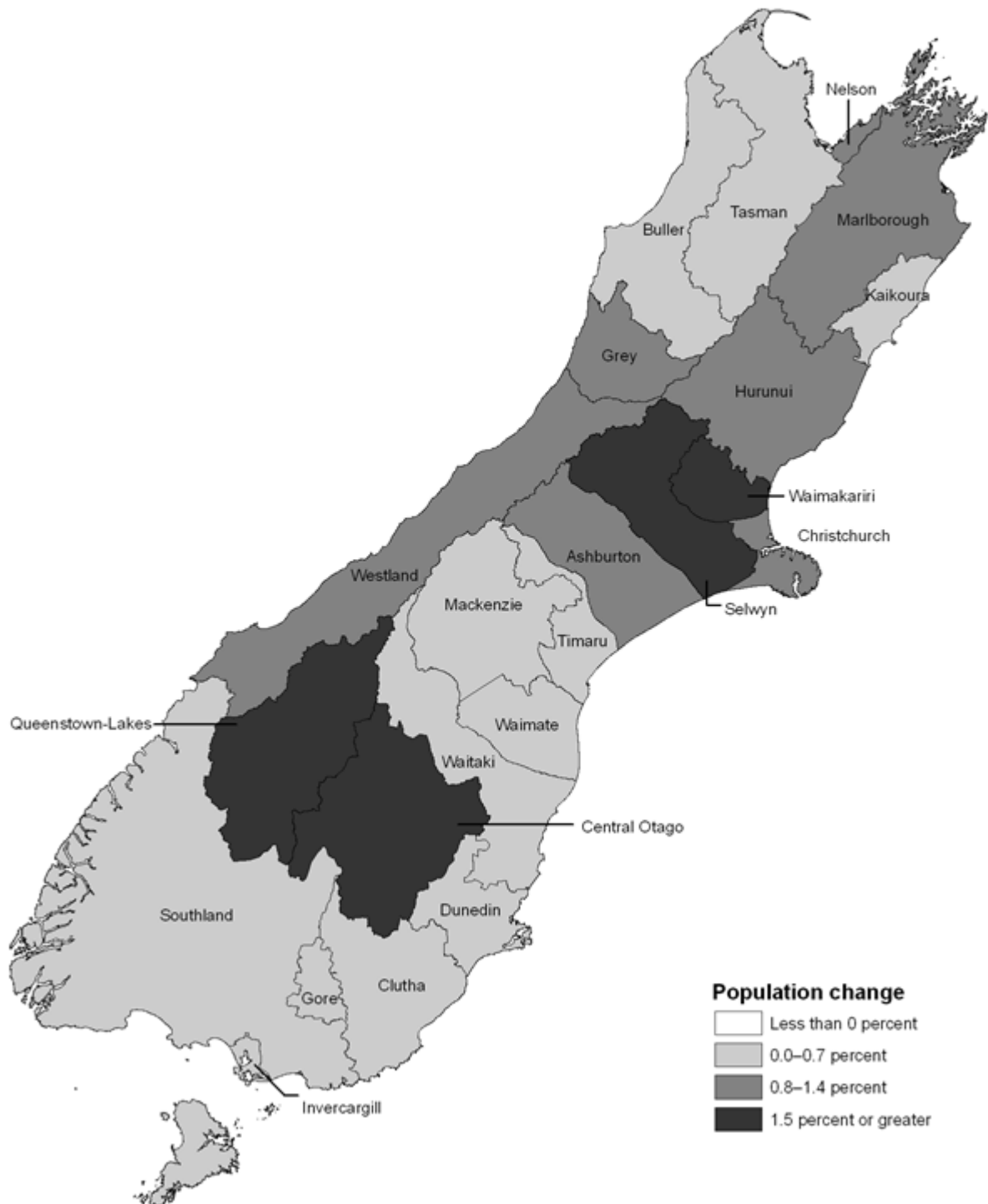


## Territorial authority areas

In the June 2009 year, 65 of the 73 territorial authority areas had population increases, and 20 had growth rates at or above the 1.1 percent national average. The highest rates of growth were in Selwyn district (2.8 percent) and Queenstown-Lakes district (2.6 percent).



**Annual Population Change**  
South Island territorial authority areas  
Year ended 30 June 2009



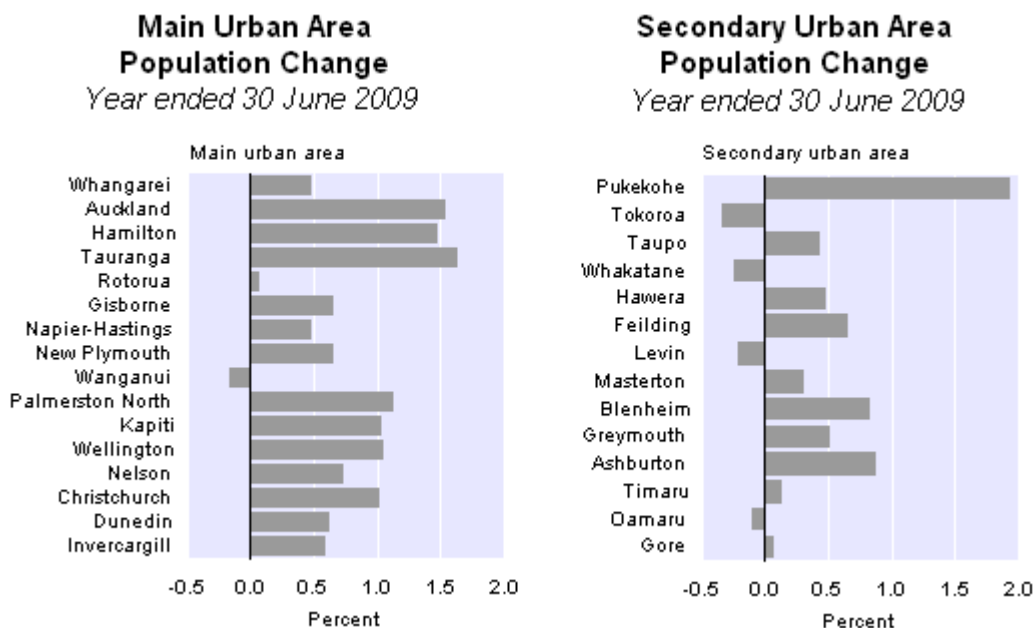
There were contrasting changes among the territorial authority areas. Those that grew at the fastest rate during the June 2008 year (including Selwyn, Queenstown-Lakes, and Waimakariri districts), grew at a slower rate in the 2009 year. However, the rate of population growth increased for most territorial authority areas. In addition, a number of areas had a small population increase in the June 2009 year compared with a population decrease in the June 2008 year. Among these were Otorohanga, South Waikato, South Taranaki, and Gore districts, all of which recorded a small population increase for the first time in over a decade.

There were eight territorial authority areas – all located in the North Island – that had a decrease in population in both the 2008 and 2009 June years. For almost all these areas, the rate of decrease eased in the June 2009 year. The largest rates of population decrease in the June 2009 year were in Kawerau district (0.6 percent) and Wairoa district (0.8 percent).

### Urban areas

At 30 June 2009, the estimated resident population of the 16 main urban areas was 3,122,500 (72 percent of New Zealand's population). A further 252,200 people lived in secondary urban areas (6 percent of New Zealand's population). The main and secondary urban populations increased by 37,000 (1.2 percent) and 1,100 (0.5 percent), respectively, during the June 2009 year.

The four largest urban areas – Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, and Christchurch – were home to 53 percent of New Zealand residents at 30 June 2009. The population of Wellington and Christchurch urban areas remained very close in size, at 386,000 and 386,100, respectively. In the June 2009 year, Tauranga remained the fastest-growing main urban area (up 1.6 percent), followed by Auckland and Hamilton (both up 1.5 percent).



Ten of the 14 secondary urban areas recorded positive growth rates during the June 2009 year, ranging from 0.1 percent (Timaru and Gore) to 1.9 percent (Pukekohe). Four secondary urban areas had small population decreases, ranging from 0.1 percent (Oamaru) to 0.3 percent (Tokoroa).

The criteria for defining urban and rural areas are currently being considered as part of the Review of the New Zealand Standard Geographic Classification. For information about this review, or to provide feedback, contact [geography@stats.govt.nz](mailto:geography@stats.govt.nz).

## **Geographic distribution of the population**

At 30 June 2009, New Zealand had a population density of 16 people per square kilometre. It is important to note, however, that this national average masks considerable variation in the geographic distribution of the population.

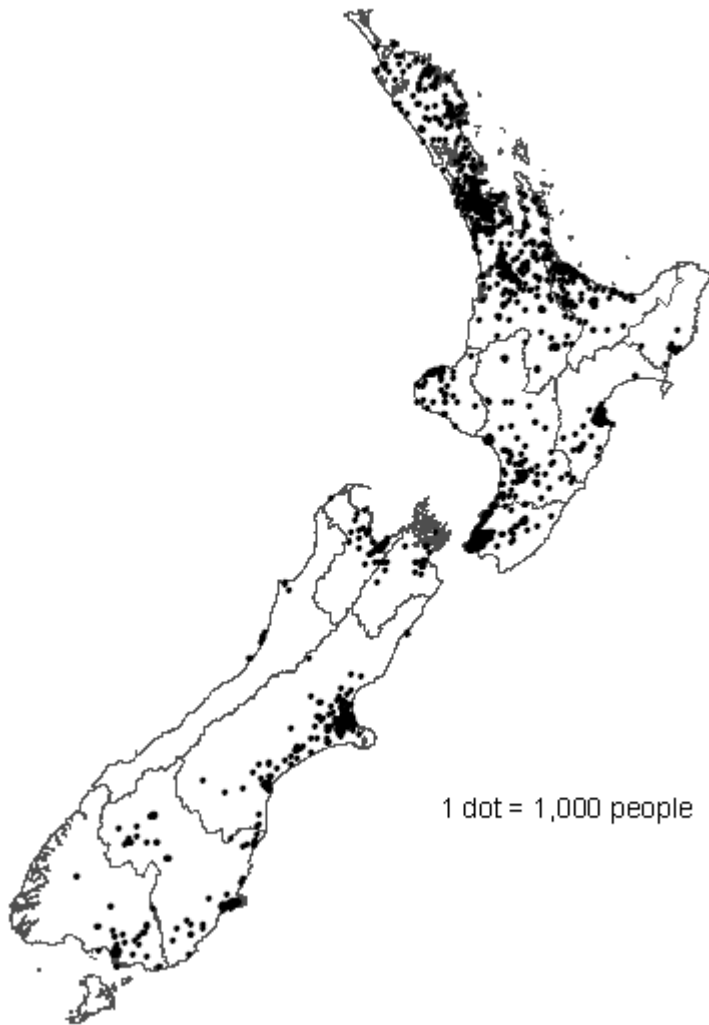
New Zealand's population is highly urbanised. At 30 June 2009, 72 of every 100 New Zealand residents lived in one of New Zealand's 16 main urban areas. Of these 16 main urban areas, 13 are near the coast with only 3 being located inland (Hamilton, Rotorua, and Palmerston North).

At the regional level, Auckland region's population density (240 people per square kilometre) is more than double that of any other region. At 30 June 2009, the Auckland region accounted for about one-third of New Zealand's estimated resident population but only 2 percent of New Zealand's land area. In contrast, the West Coast region, with a population density of 1 person per square kilometre, at 30 June 2009, had the lowest population density of the 16 regions. Located in the South Island and bounded in the east by the Southern Alps, the West Coast region includes the urban areas of Westport, Greymouth, and Hokitika, but also large expanses of forested area.

The geographic distribution of New Zealand's population is illustrated in the following map. To achieve precision, the map was produced using area unit population estimates at 30 June 2008. Area unit population estimates at 30 June 2009 will be freely available on Statistics NZ's website on 18 December 2009.

## Population Distribution

At 30 June 2008



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**Next release ...**

*Subnational Population Estimates: At 30 June 2010 will be released in October 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 an area in New Zealand is a count of all people present in that area on a given census night. This count includes visitors from elsewhere in New Zealand and visitors from overseas who are counted in that area on census night, but excludes residents of that area who are temporarily elsewhere in New Zealand or overseas on census night.

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

The estimated resident population of an area in New Zealand is an estimate of all people who usually live in that area at a given date. This estimate includes all residents of that area 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 elsewhere in New Zealand or 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. The 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 each area at 30 June 2006 is based on the census usually resident population count from the 2006 Census (held on 7 March 2006), with adjustments for:

1. net census undercount
2. residents temporarily overseas on census night
3. births, deaths, and net migration between census night and 30 June 2006
4. reconciliation with demographic estimates at ages 0–4 years.

## **Resident population estimates**

Subnational resident population estimates were derived by updating the estimated resident population of each area at 30 June 2006 for births, deaths, net international migration, and net internal migration. Owing to delays between the occurrence of births and deaths and their registration, it is necessary to estimate births and deaths to produce timely resident population estimates. International migration is based on permanent and long-term migration statistics, which are primarily determined by the passenger's response, on the arrival or departure card, to the questions on where they live and their length of stay or absence. Symptomatic data series (eg residential building consents and electoral enrolments) are used to estimate the internal migration component.

Estimated natural increase (excess of births over deaths) and net migration for regional council areas are included in table 4 of this release. Components of population change for territorial authority areas and urban areas are available on request (email: [demography@stats.govt.nz](mailto:demography@stats.govt.nz)).

## **Boundaries**

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

Subnational population estimates at 30 June 2001–09 are based on regional council area, territorial authority area, and urban area boundaries at 30 June 2009. The population estimates take into account a boundary change that occurred in December 2008, in which part of the Kaimai area unit was transferred from Western Bay of Plenty district to Tauranga city.

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 2001–09 fall below the 10,000 population mark.

## **Rounding**

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

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

## **Final figures**

The estimates in this release are provisional. They incorporate provisional estimates of the number of births and deaths that occurred in the June 2009 year. Final estimates for regional council areas, territorial authority areas, 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 2009. In addition, population estimates after 30 June 2006 will be revised following results from the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings.

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

Final estimates, by five-year age group and sex, for regional council areas, territorial authority areas, and area units, will be made freely available on the Statistics NZ website (via [Table Builder](#)) on 18 December 2009.

Final estimates for wards, community boards, subdivisions, constituencies, and district health boards (at the total population level) will be available on the Statistics NZ website by 29 January 2010.

Estimates for other subnational areas (eg minor urban areas) will be available on request from January 2010 (email: [demography@stats.govt.nz](mailto:demography@stats.govt.nz)).

Subnational population estimates at 30 June 1996–2009 are available on the Statistics NZ website. The population series is also available on our online database [Infoshare](#) (demography population estimates in the Population category).

## **More information**

For more information, refer to [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).

National population estimates for the [Māori ethnic group](#) are updated twice a year 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 authority areas
3. Estimated resident population, urban areas
4. Components of population change, regional council areas