

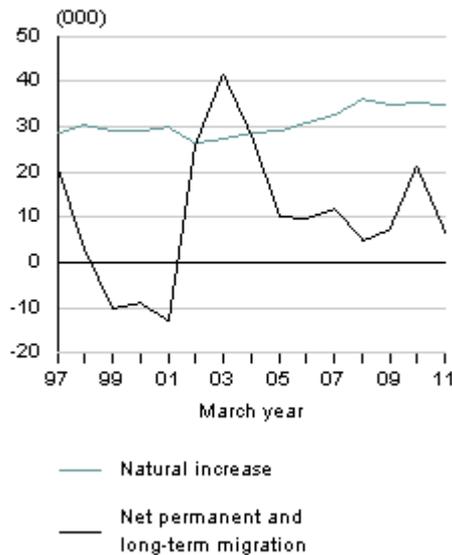
# National Population Estimates: March 2011 quarter

Embargoed until 10:45am – 13 May 2011

## Highlights

- The estimated resident population of New Zealand was 4.40 million at 31 March 2011.
- Population growth was 41,200 (0.9 percent) during the March 2011 year.
- Natural increase and net migration contributed 34,700 and 6,600, respectively, to the growth during the March 2011 year.
- The median ages for males and females were 35.6 and 37.8 years, respectively, at 31 March 2011.

Components of annual population change  
1997–2011



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Estimated resident population			
Age group (years)	At 31 March 2010	At 31 March 2011 P	Percentage change 2010–11 P
All ages	4,361,800	4,403,000	0.9
Under 15	894,200	895,200	0.1
15–39	1,498,400	1,503,200	0.3
40–64	1,404,700	1,421,900	1.2
65+	564,500	582,800	3.2

Symbol: P provisional

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# Commentary

## Background

This release contains estimates of the resident population of New Zealand at 31 March 2011. 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 from [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.

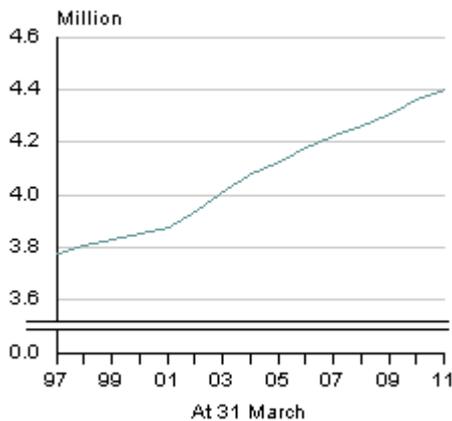
The estimates in this release are provisional. They incorporate provisional estimates of the number of births and deaths that occurred in the March 2011 quarter. Final estimates will be released in August 2011. Due to potential late birth and death registrations following the Christchurch earthquake in February 2011, the final population estimates for the December 2010 quarter will also not be released until August 2011. In addition, population estimates after 30 June 2006 will be revised following results from the next Census of Population and Dwellings.

In this release, a special topic analyses the growing number of people aged 85 and over. Recent releases have included special topics on the growing number of centenarians, mean, median, and modal age of the population, 1970–2010, components of population change, 1970–2010, median age of the population aged 65 years and over, and trends in the number of children (aged 0–14 years), 1969–2009.

## Estimated resident population

The estimated resident population of New Zealand was 4,403,000 at 31 March 2011, comprising 2,163,400 males and 2,239,600 females. At 31 March 2011, there were 97 males for every 100 females. The estimated resident population for the mean year ended 31 March 2011 was 4,381,100.

**Estimated resident population**  
1997–2011



Source: Statistics New Zealand

## Annual population change

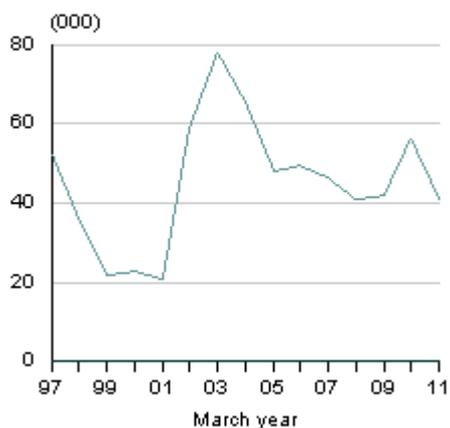
In the March 2011 year, the estimated resident population grew by 41,200 (0.9 percent), compared with 56,000 (1.3 percent) in the previous March year. The population growth in the March 2011 year was less than the average annual increase of 52,600 (1.3 percent) recorded during the 10-year period to March 2011.

The population growth for the March 2011 year resulted from a natural increase (excess of births over deaths) of 34,700 and a net permanent and long-term (PLT) migration gain of 6,600. The level of net PLT migration has decreased by around 14,400 since the previous March year.

Historically, natural increase has been the dominant component of population growth. Over the last 40 years, natural increase has accounted for around 80 percent of New Zealand's total population growth. During the March 2011 year, natural increase accounted for 84 percent of population growth.

### Annual population change

1997–2011



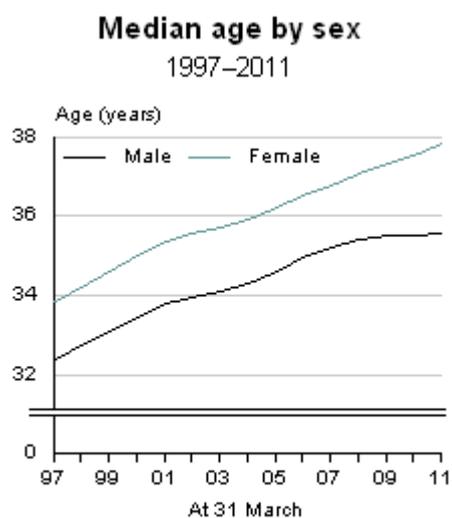
Source: Statistics New Zealand

## Quarterly population change

During the March 2011 quarter, New Zealand's estimated resident population grew by 9,500 (0.2 percent). This growth resulted from a natural increase of 8,600 and a net PLT migration gain of 900. In the March 2010 quarter population growth was higher than the current quarter, at 14,600 (0.3 percent). This increase was largely due to a net PLT gain of 4,800, while natural increase contributed 9,800.

## 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 across other countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). At 31 March 2011, half of New Zealand's population was over 36.8 years, compared with a median age of 34.6 years a decade earlier. The median age for males is now 35.6 years, while for females it is 37.8 years. The lower median age for males largely reflects their lower life expectancy of 78.8 years, compared with 82.7 years for females (New Zealand abridged life table, 2008–10). Latest national population projections (2009 base–2061 update) indicate that the median age of the New Zealand population will be 43.5 years in 2061 (series 5).



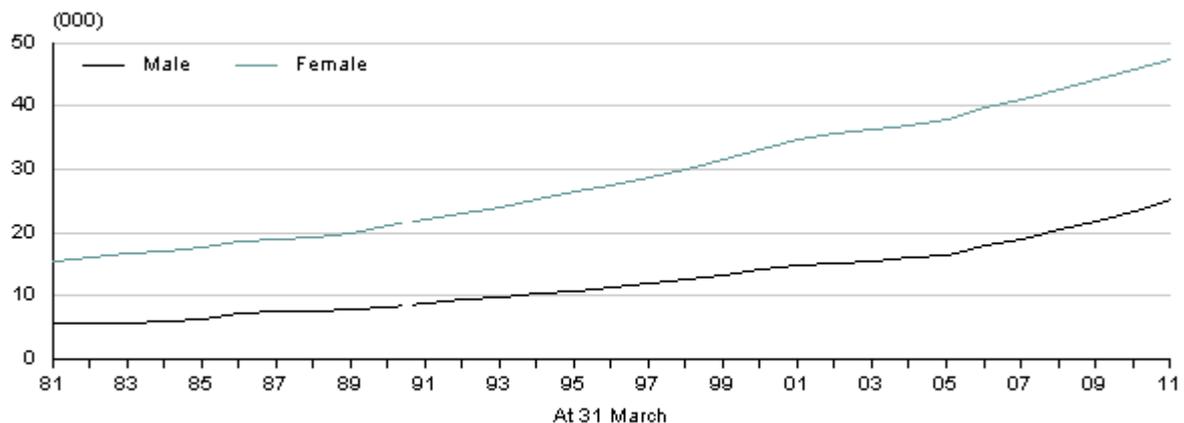
Source: Statistics New Zealand

## Trends in the population aged 85 years and over, 1981–2011

During the 30-year period ended March 2011, New Zealand's population aged 85 years and over (85+) has more than trebled, increasing from 21,300 in March 1981 to 72,500 in March 2011. As a result, the proportion of New Zealand's population aged 85+ has increased. Thirty years ago, 1 out of every 149 New Zealanders was aged 85+. However, at 31 March 2011, the 85+ population accounted for 1 out of every 61 New Zealanders.

Among the 85+ population females significantly outnumber males. In March 1981 the female 85+ population exceeded the male 85+ population by 9,700. In March 2011 this increased to 22,200. Of the 85+ population at 31 March 1981, there were almost three females per male. Due to the increasing proportion of males, in March 2011 there were around two females per male. The increasing proportion of males over this period is due to male longevity increasing more than female longevity (Life expectancy).

## Estimated population aged 85+ by sex 1981–2011



Note: The break in series between 1990 and 1991 denotes a change from the de facto to the resident population concept.

Source: Statistics New Zealand

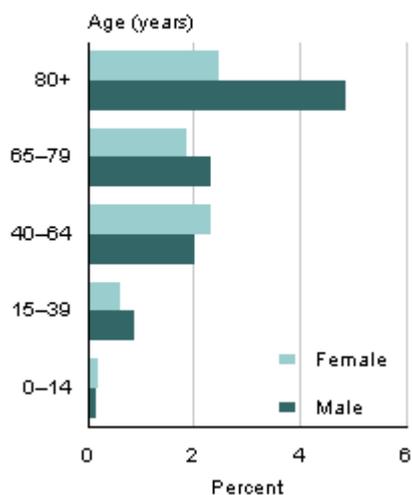
## Changes in age composition

The age composition of New Zealand's population has changed over the past decade. In the 10 years ended 31 March 2011, the number of children (aged 0–14 years) grew to 895,200, an average annual increase of 1,700 (0.2 percent). For the year ended 31 March 2011, the increase of 1,000 (0.1 percent) in the number of children was less than the average annual increase for the decade. At 31 March 2011, children accounted for 20 percent of the New Zealand population, down from 23 percent at 31 March 2001.

At 31 March 2011, the population aged 15–39 years remained the largest population group, accounting for 34 percent of the total population, down from 36 percent a decade earlier. This age group reached 1,503,200 in March 2011, up by 4,800 (0.3 percent) compared with the March 2010 figure. In the 10 years ended March 2011, the average annual increase for this age group was 11,000 (0.8 percent).

## Average annual population change

By age group and sex  
10 years ended March 2011



Source: Statistics New Zealand

The population aged 40–64 years also remained a large proportion of the population, increasing from 30 percent to 32 percent in the decade ended 31 March 2011. This age group increased by 17,300 (1.2 percent) in the year ended 31 March 2011, to reach 1,421,900. The increase was below the average annual increase of 27,500 (2.2 percent) for the 10 years ended March 2011.

The proportion of the population aged 65–79 years was 9.7 percent at 31 March 2011, up from 9.0 percent in 2001. During the March 2011 year, the population aged 65–79 years increased by 3.1 percent (13,000) to reach 428,000. In the 10 years ended March 2011, this age group grew at an average annual rate of 2.1 percent (8,000).

In the 10 years ended March 2011, there was also an increase in the proportion of the population aged 80 years and over (80+), from 2.9 percent to 3.5 percent. The 80+ population reached 154,800 at 31 March 2011, an average annual increase of 3.3 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 was 4.9 percent, compared with 2.5 percent for females. In the year ended 31 March 2011, the male population in the 80+ age group increased by 4.8 percent (2,800) to reach 61,000, while the female population increased by 2.7 percent (2,400) to 93,900.

## 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](http://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.

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### Next release...

*National Population Estimates: June 2011 quarter* will be released on 12 August 2011.

## 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. De facto population estimates are available via [Infoshare](#) on the Statistics NZ website.

### Resident population estimates

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 to revise 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.

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.

## Mean population

The average number of people in an area during a given period.

## 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 December 2010 and March 2011 quarters. Due to potential late birth and death registrations following the Christchurch earthquake in February 2011, the final population estimates for the December 2010 quarter will not be released until August 2011, to coincide with the June 2011 quarter release. 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 December 2010 and 31 March 2011 will be available in August 2011. 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 [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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## **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