

## Internal Migration

# Māori mobility in New Zealand

## Overview of Māori migration

### How many Māori moved?

More than 60 percent of people of Māori ethnicity have moved at least once within New Zealand between 2001 and 2006.

In 2006, there were 565,300 people who identified Māori as one of their ethnicities. Of these, 541,100 people told us where they had lived five years earlier, at the time of the 2001 Census.

**Table 1**

<b>People of Māori ethnicity</b> <i>By address five years ago</i> 2006 Census			
	Number of people of Māori ethnicity		
Address five years ago	Male	Female	Total
Same as usual residence	86,316	90,819	177,135
Elsewhere in New Zealand or no fixed abode	135,453	150,765	286,218
Not born five years ago	34,071	32,352	66,423
Overseas	5,706	5,610	11,316
Not stated	13,314	10,920	24,234
Total	274,860	290,469	565,329

Among the people aged five years and over who gave us this information, 60 percent had moved at least once in NZ within the previous five years, 37 percent had not moved and 2 percent had arrived or returned from overseas.

## Māori increasingly mobile

In the 20 years from 1986 to 2006, Māori have become increasingly mobile. Less than half (47 percent) had moved within New Zealand between 1981 and 1986 compared with over 60 percent in 2006. A number of factors contribute to this. Among these are the fact that the population as a whole has become much more mobile, improved economic conditions and employment opportunities have enabled more mobility, and increasing inter-ethnic, inter-regional and inter-iwi partnering.

**Table 2**

<b>People of Māori ethnicity</b> <i>By address five years ago, percentage distribution</i> 1986–2006 Censuses					
	Census year				
Address five years ago	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006
	<b>Percent of Māori population</b>				
Same as usual residence	51.7	45.8	44.5	40.2	37.3
Elsewhere in New Zealand	46.6	52.5	53.3	57.9	60.3
Overseas	1.7	1.7	2.2	1.9	2.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100
	<b>Percent of Maori internal migrants</b>				
Stayers	52.6	46.6	45.5	38.7	38.2
Movers within New Zealand	47.4	53.4	54.5	61.3	61.8
Total internal migrants	100	100	100	100	100

# Māori movers and non-movers

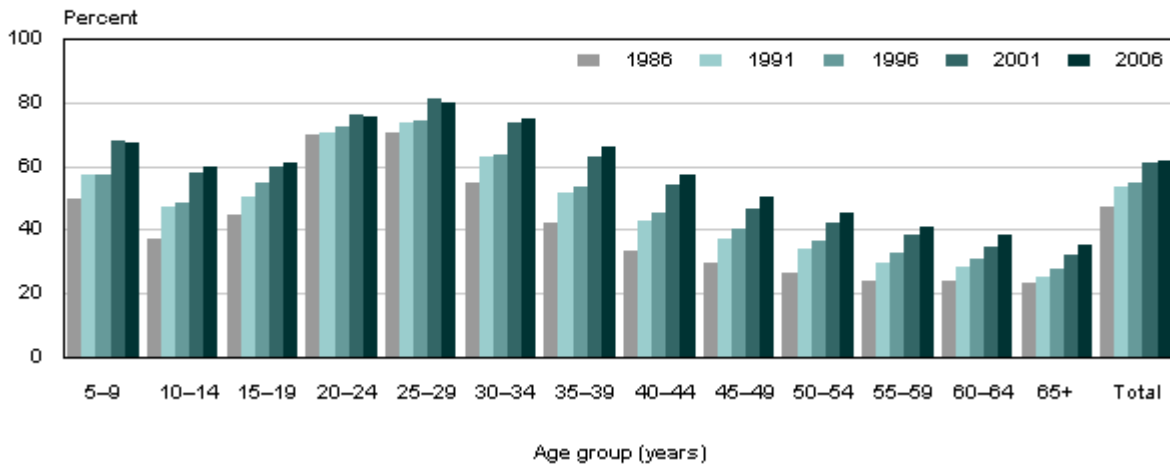
## Movers

The proportion of the people who stated that they lived elsewhere in New Zealand five years earlier steadily increased over the period 1986 to 2006.

In 1986, less than half of Māori stated that they had moved in the previous five years. By 2006, over 60 percent had moved in the previous five years. Proportionally, the greatest increases in mobility have been seen in the age groups aged 35 years and over and among the 10–14 year age group who tend to be children of parents aged over 35 years. More than half of the 45–49 year age group, for example, had moved in 2006 compared with less than 30 percent 20 years earlier in 1986.

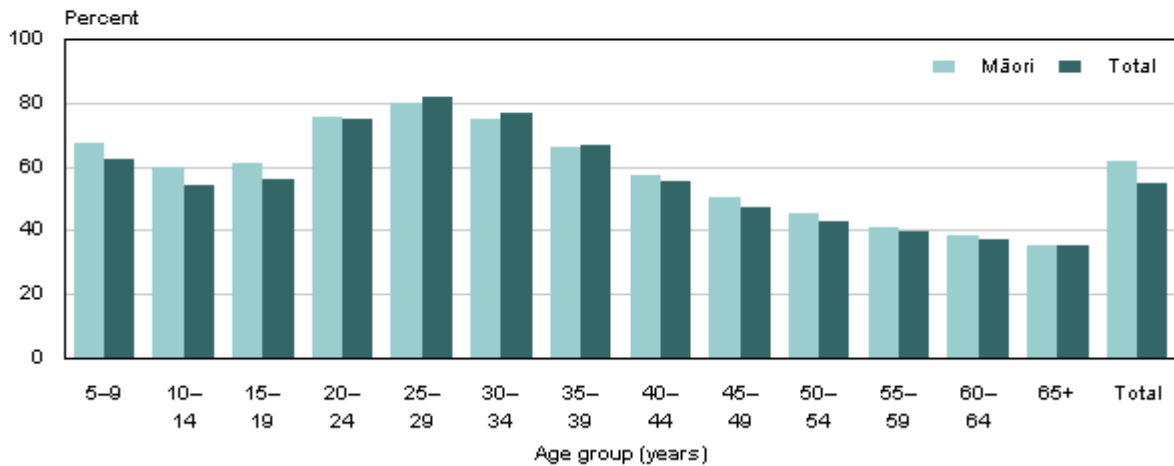
Figure 1

**Māori Ethnic Group Internal Migrant Movers**  
*Percentage of each age group*  
 1986–2006 Censuses



The high level of mobility among Māori is almost entirely attributable to the age structure of the population. While Māori have a higher proportion of movers in the population than the total New Zealand population, Māori appear to be less mobile for ages 25–39 years. Māori have only slightly higher mobility in other age groups. The younger age structure of Māori results in an overall higher mobility.

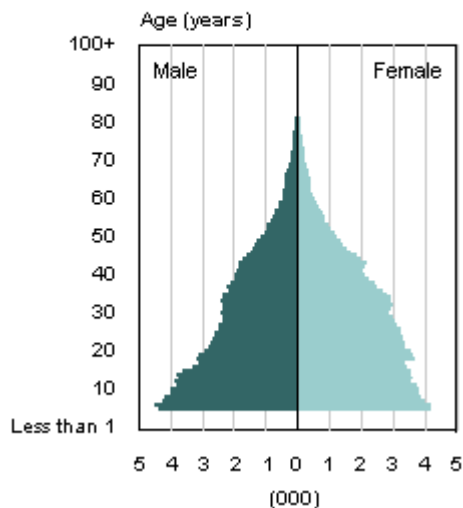
**Figure 2**  
**Māori Ethnic Group and Total New Zealand Internal Migrant Movers**  
*Percentage of each age group*  
 2006 Census



### Age and sex of movers

Māori movers make up the vast majority of the Māori population among children and young adults. The sex imbalance of movers is more pronounced than for non-movers, reflecting the sex imbalance in the Māori population as a whole, especially among young adult ages. Overall, the movers account for more than 15,300 of the 15,600 excess females in the Māori population count in the 2006 Census.

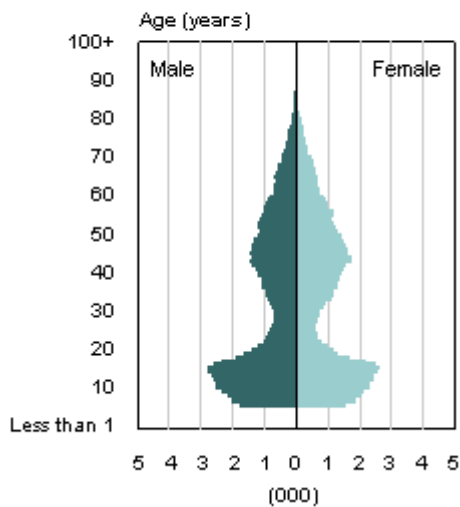
**Figure 3**  
**Age-sex Pyramid of Māori Ethnic Group Movers**  
*2006 Census population*



## Age and sex of non-movers

Māori who did not move between 2001 and 2006 tended to be families with children in secondary education. The adult non-movers were concentrated in the middle adult years with relatively many fewer non-movers in their late twenties and early thirties. Associated with these adult non-movers were younger teenage children in secondary education ages. However, the number of Māori parents who did not move (38,000 people) was smaller than the number who did (55,000). Many of these were parents of young families formed in the previous five years.

**Figure 4**  
**Age-sex Pyramid of**  
**Māori Ethnic Group Non-movers**  
*2006 Census population*



# Where are Māori moving to?

## Regional migration

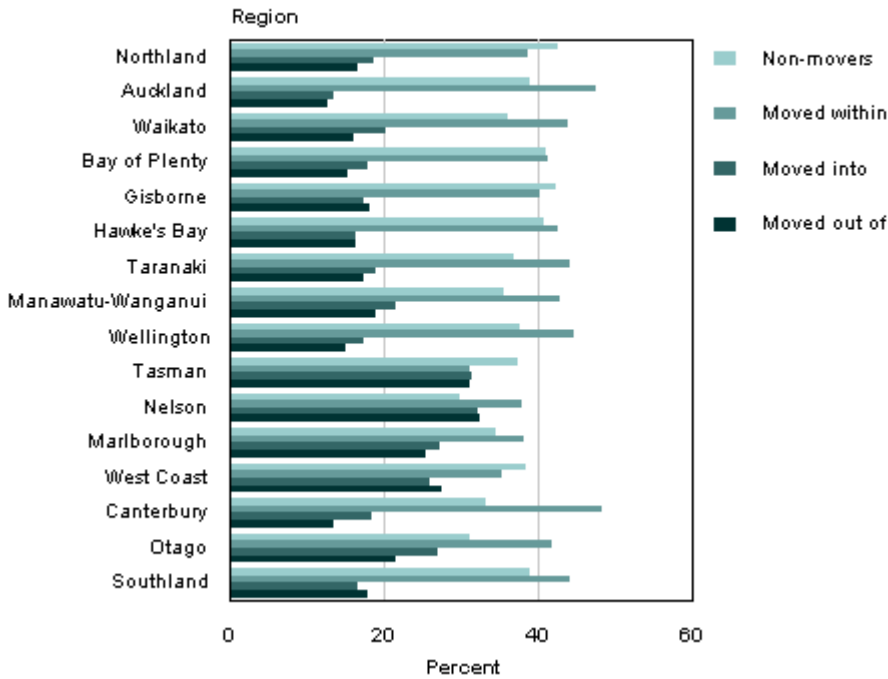
Between 2001 and 2006, 38 percent of the Māori population who had been living in New Zealand in 2001 had not moved and a further 44 percent moved within the same regional council area. Inter-regional movers accounted for 18 percent of the Māori population aged five years and older who had not been overseas in 2001.

Auckland region dominates less for Māori than for the Pacific or Asian populations because of the lower proportion of the Māori population living in that region (just under one-quarter, in contrast to two-thirds for the other two ethnic groupings). However, Māori in Auckland are more mobile than either Pacific or Asian. Between 2001 and 2006, only 39 percent of the Māori population in Auckland who had been living in New Zealand in 2001 had not moved, whereas 48 percent had moved within the region. The exchange of people between Auckland and other regions was the largest numerically, but only marginally the largest as a percentage of the population, of all regions. Māori are much more likely than other groups to move inter-regionally. Auckland lost 13 percent of its Māori population to other regions, while other regions contributed 14 percent of the Auckland Māori population

Movement between other regions was significant for Māori. Auckland region accounted for only 18 percent of the inflows in inter-regional migration, not far behind the Waikato and Bay of Plenty Regions (15 and 12 percent respectively). Auckland contributed 20 percent of the total inter-regional outflows.

**Figure 5**

**Māori Ethnic Group Inter-regional Migration**  
*2006 Census*



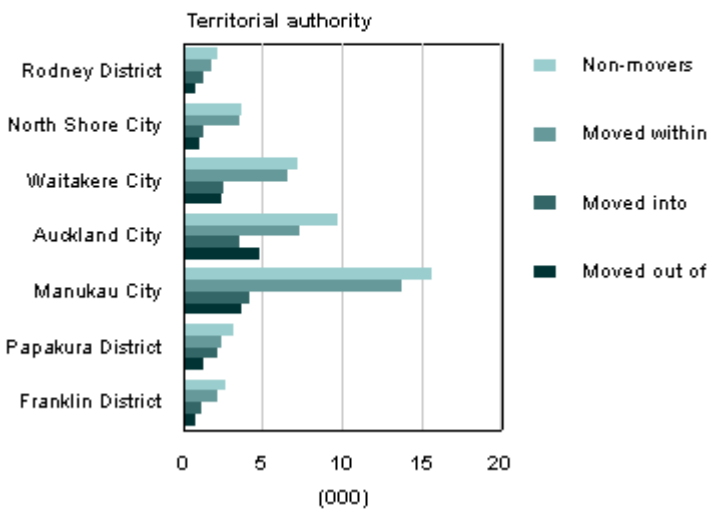
**Mobility within Auckland region**

Auckland region is home to 24 percent of people of Māori ethnicity living in New Zealand. While non-movers and movers within the same territorial authority (TA) account for the majority of the population, there was significant movement between the areas, with net gains to each of the TAs other than Auckland City.

**Figure 6**

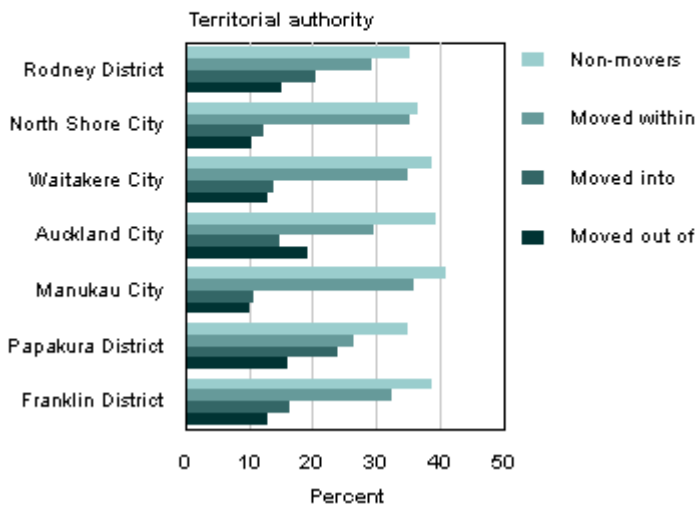
**Movement of Māori Ethnic Group Between Territorial Authorities Within Auckland Region**

*2006 Census*



When we consider the proportion of the Māori population in each TA, we see that Papakura and Rodney Districts had gained a larger proportion of their population from other TAs but also contributed a larger proportion of their population than other TAs.

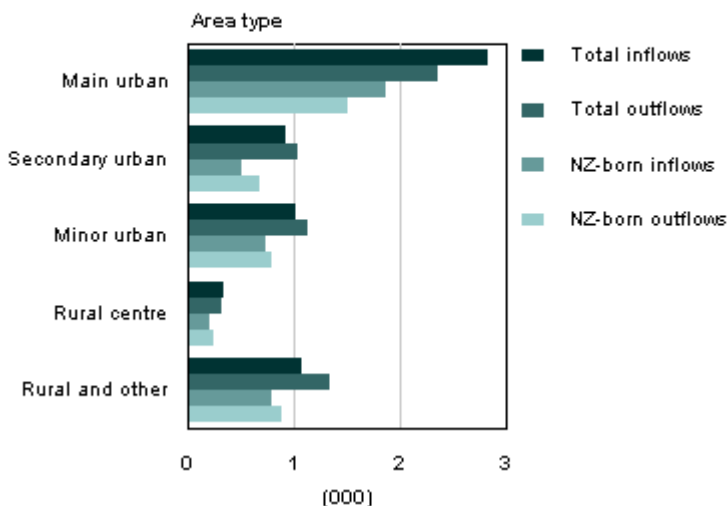
**Figure 7**  
**Movement of Māori Ethnic Group Between Territorial Authorities Within Auckland Region**  
*Percentage of usually resident Māori population*  
 2006 Census



## Urban-rural exchange of people

Just over half (57 percent) of Māori internal migrants who moved between 2001 and 2006 moved within or between main urban areas. The remaining 43 percent involved the exchange of people between the various urban and rural area types. The main urban areas gained more internal migrants than they lost to other area types. The majority of the net gain to main urban areas was from population moving between main urban and minor urban areas. This contrasts with small net losses to other area types. However, in general the size of the outflows is very similar to the size of the inflows, indicating a significant exchange of people between areas.

**Figure 8**  
**Māori Ethnic Group Internal Migrants: Inflows and Outflows**  
*By area type and birthplace*  
 2006 Census

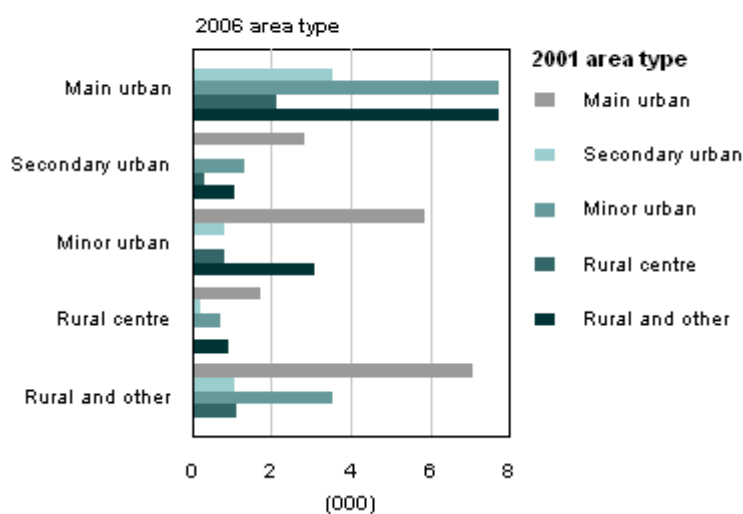




The significance of the exchange of people between area types becomes clear when we consider the source of internal migrants for each area type. By far the largest inflows for main urban areas were those from minor urban areas and rural areas, with much smaller contributions from secondary urban areas and rural centres. Similarly, main urban areas were by far the largest source of people moving to minor urban areas and rural areas. Movers to minor urban areas and rural areas on the peripheries of the cities make up the majority of this migration.

**Figure 9**  
**Māori Ethnic Group Internal Migrants 2006 Area Type**

*By 2001 source area type*  
 2006 Census



## Gains from overseas

International migration has a significant relationship with internal migration. People who migrate or return to New Zealand tend to settle initially in the major centres – primarily in Auckland but also in significant numbers in Christchurch and Hamilton. Many subsequently move, contributing to internal migration patterns. Similarly, other people may choose to move to another country rather than to another part of New Zealand.

An increasing number of Māori are born overseas or return to New Zealand after a period of residence overseas. While the vast majority live in main urban areas, it is noteworthy that as a percentage of the resident Māori population in 2006, almost the same percentage of people in each area had been overseas in 2001.

**Table 3**

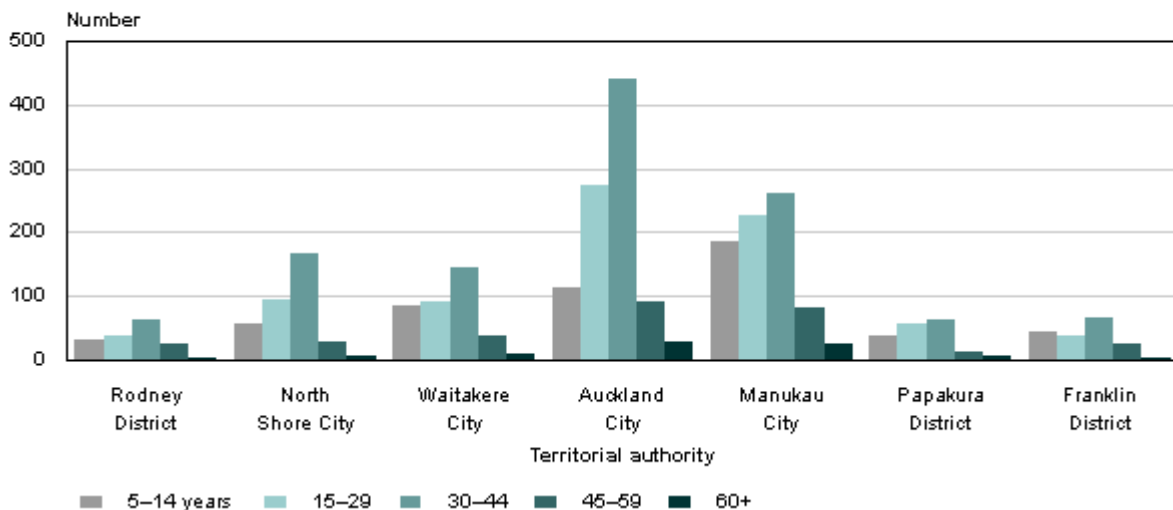
<b>People of Māori ethnicity aged five years and over</b> <i>By urban-rural area type and percent overseas five years ago</i> 2006 Census					
	Main urban	Secondary urban	Minor urban	Rural centre	Rural and other
Resident Māori population <sup>(1)</sup>	306,831	32,853	60,609	15,630	58,749
Percent overseas five years ago	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.3
(1) Excludes people who did not state their address five years ago					

Auckland is the key point of entry for the majority of people arriving in or returning to New Zealand. However, in 2006, Auckland accounted for only 26 percent of Māori who had been living overseas five years ago. Waikato region attracted 14 percent of those who had been overseas five years earlier, with Bay of Plenty region (11 percent) and Wellington region (10 percent) also significant destinations.

The age distribution of those who were overseas five years ago who were living in the Auckland territorial authorities shows quite distinct location preferences. Auckland City attracted more people in the young adult student and working ages than other areas, though the relationship between the 5–14 years ago group and the 30–49 years age group suggests that family migration was likely to provide people to Manukau City and Papakura District.

**Figure 10**

**Māori Ethnic Group Who Were Overseas Five Years Ago**  
*By territorial authority and age group in Auckland region*  
2006 Census



## **Information sources**

1986, 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006 Censuses of Population and Dwellings

## **Glossary**

Please refer to [Glossary](#).

## **Further information**

This page is part of a web-based analytical report by Statistics New Zealand.

The report includes more than 10 topics. To see the other topics, go to the [Internal Migration report](#) introduction page.

## Tables

The following tables can 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. Internal migrant status, people of Māori ethnicity and New Zealand total population, by sex, five-year age groups and single year of age, Census 2006
2. Internal migrant status, people of Māori ethnicity, by sex, birthplace and age group, Census 2006
3. Diversity and internal migrant status, people of Māori ethnicity, by sex and combinations of ethnic groupings, Census 2006
4. Māori internal migrant movers, by age group, 1986–2006 Censuses
5. Māori and total internal migrant movers as percentage of each age group, Census 2006
6. Inter-regional migration, people of Māori ethnicity, Census 2006
7. Mobility between territorial authorities within Auckland region, people of Māori ethnicity, Census 2006
8. Inflows and outflows by area type and birthplace, people of Māori ethnicity, Census 2006
9. Internal migrants, urban-rural source area type, by current urban-rural area type, people of Māori ethnicity, Census 2006
10. People of Māori ethnicity living in Auckland region and overseas five years ago, by territorial authority of usual residence, Census 2006



[Māori mobility in New Zealand tables 1–10 \(Excel, 83 KB\)](#)