

# National Population Estimates: At 30 June 2015

Embargoed until 10:45am – 14 August 2015

## Key facts

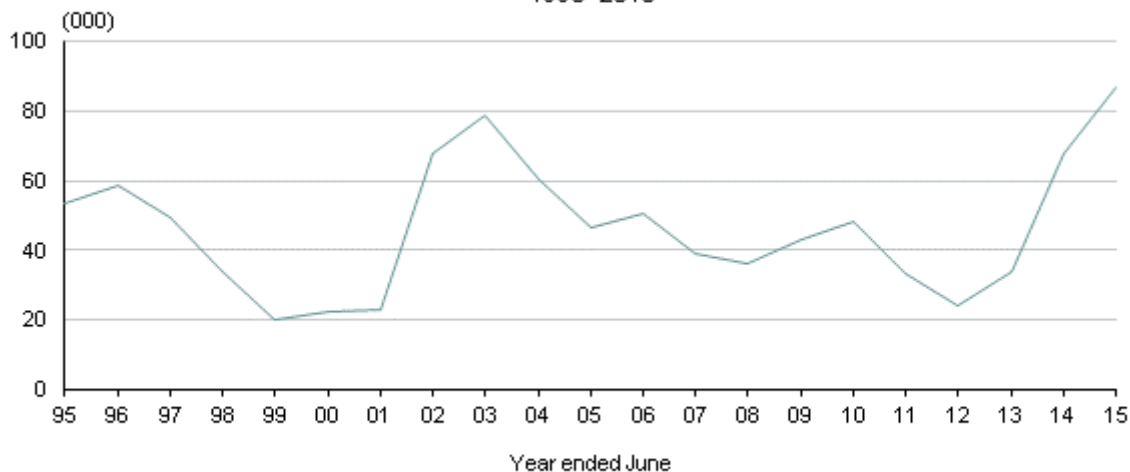
During the June 2015 year:

- New Zealand's population grew by 86,900 (1.9 percent).
- Natural increase was 28,700 and net migration gain was 58,300.

At 30 June 2015:

- New Zealand's estimated resident population was 4.60 million.
- There were 2.26 million males and 2.34 million females, equivalent to 97 males for every 100 females.
- The median age for males and females was 36.0 and 38.6 years, respectively.

**Annual population change**  
1995–2015



Source: Statistics New Zealand

<b>Estimated resident population</b>			
Age group (years)	At 30 June 2014	At 30 June 2015 P	Percentage change 2014–15 P
0–14	911,100	915,300	0.5
15–39	1,481,100	1,528,600	3.2
40–64	1,467,100	1,478,500	0.8
65+	650,400	674,400	3.7
All ages	4,509,700	4,596,700	1.9

**Symbol:** P provisional

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## Commentary

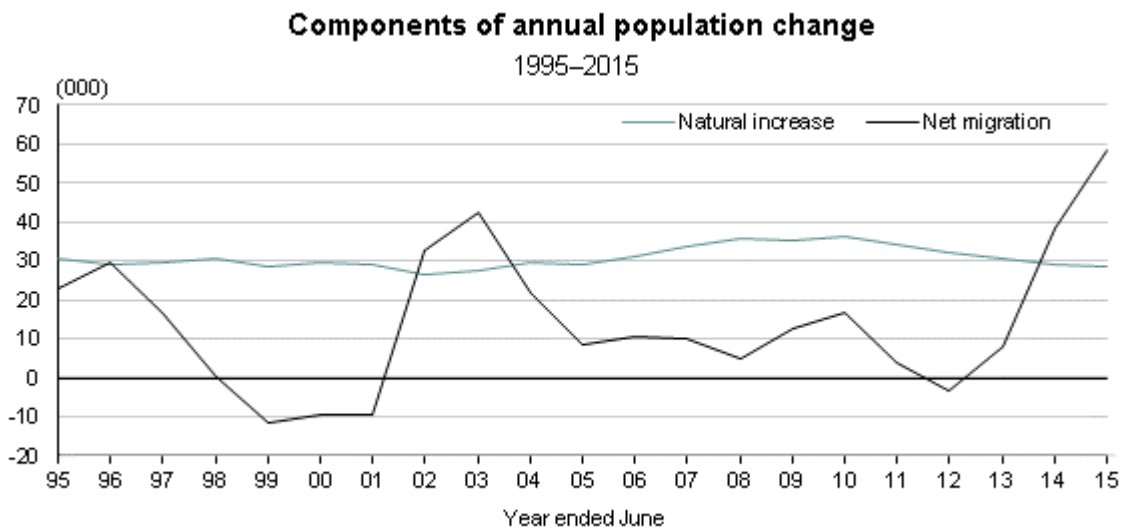
- [Population growth at almost 2 percent](#)
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- [Changes in age structure in year ended 30 June 2015](#)
- [Changes in age structure in the last two decades](#)
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This information release contains provisional estimates of the resident population of New Zealand at 30 June 2015. These national population estimates give the best available measure of the size and age-sex structure of the population usually living in New Zealand.

### Population growth at almost 2 percent

In the June 2015 year, the estimated resident population grew by 86,900 (1.93 percent) to 4,596,700. This follows an increase of 67,600 (1.52 percent) for the June 2014 year. The 2015 percentage increase was the highest since 2003 when the increase was 1.99 percent.

Population growth in the year to June 2015 was due to a net international migration gain of 58,300 and a natural increase (more births than deaths) of 28,700. Compared with the previous June year, net international migration increased by 19,900, while natural increase fell by 600. The natural increase for the year to June 2015 was the lowest since 2003.



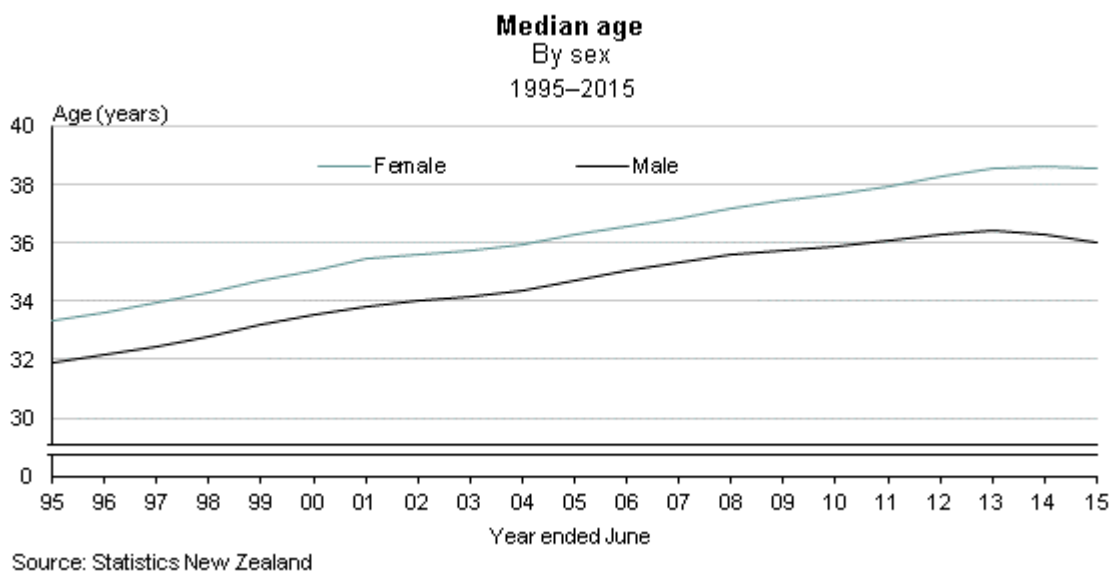
Source: Statistics New Zealand

### Median age down slightly

At 30 June 2015, half of New Zealand's population was over 37.3 years. This is slightly lower than the median age of 37.5 years at 30 June 2014. This reduction was mainly due to high net migration of more than 25,000 in the 20–29 year age group. During the June 2015 year the male median age reduced from 36.3 to 36.0 years, and the female median age remained unchanged at 38.6 years.

The lower median age for males compared with females partly reflects their lower life expectancy. Based on death rates in 2012–14, males can expect to live 79.5 years, compared with 83.2 years for females (see [New Zealand period life tables, 2012–14](#)).

New Zealand's population has been gradually ageing, due to sustained low fertility and increasing life expectancy. Since 1995, the median age has risen by 5.2 years for females and 4.1 years for males.



## Changes in age structure in year ended 30 June 2015

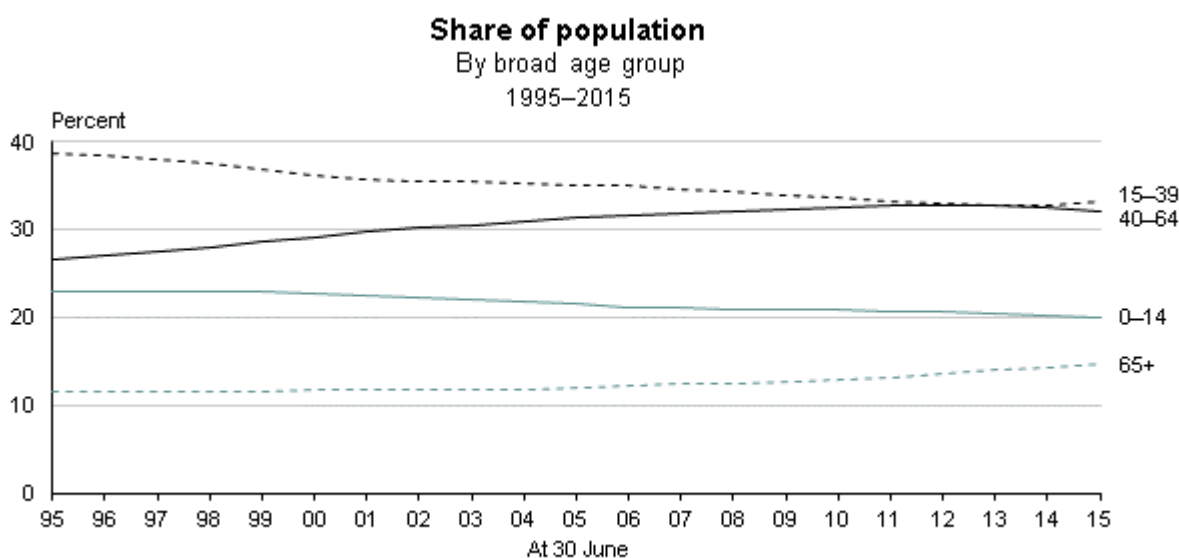
- **Children (aged 0–14 years)** accounted for 19.9 percent (915,300) of the population at 30 June 2015, down from 20.2 percent in 2014.
- **The younger working-age population (aged 15–39 years)** accounted for 33.3 percent (1,528,600) of the population, up from 32.8 percent in 2014. Between 2014 and 2015, the population aged 15–39 years increased by 3.2 percent (47,400), mainly due to high migration. This meant the younger working-age population was slightly larger than the older working-age population at 30 June 2015.
- **The older working-age population (aged 40–64 years)** accounted for 32.2 percent (1,478,500) of the population, down from 32.5 percent in 2014.
- **The population aged 65 years and over** accounted for 14.7 percent (674,400) of the population, up from 14.4 percent in 2014.

## Changes in age structure in the last two decades

The age structure of New Zealand's population has changed considerably over the last two decades:

- **Children (aged 0–14 years)** accounted for 19.9 percent (915,300) of the population at 30 June 2015, down from 23.1 percent in 1995. Between 1995 and 2015, the population aged 0–14 years increased by 8 percent.
- **The younger working-age population (aged 15–39 years)** accounted for 33.3 percent (1,528,600) of the population, down from 38.7 percent in 1995. Between 1995 and 2015, the population aged 15–39 years increased by 8 percent.

- **The older working-age population (aged 40–64 years)** accounted for 32.2 percent (1,478,500) of the population, up from 26.7 percent in 1995. Between 1995 and 2015, those aged 40–64 years increased by 51 percent.
- **The population aged 65 years and over** accounted for 14.7 percent (674,400) of the population, up from 11.5 percent in 1995. Between 1995 and 2015, the population aged 65+ years increased by 59 percent.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

## More aged 65+ relative to those aged 15–64

Even though the number of people aged 5–64 years increased by 2.0 percent in the year ending 30 June 2015, the 65+ dependency ratio (the number of people aged 65+ per 100 people aged 15–64 years) increased from 22.1 to 22.4. This is because the number of people in the 65+ age group increased by 3.7 percent.

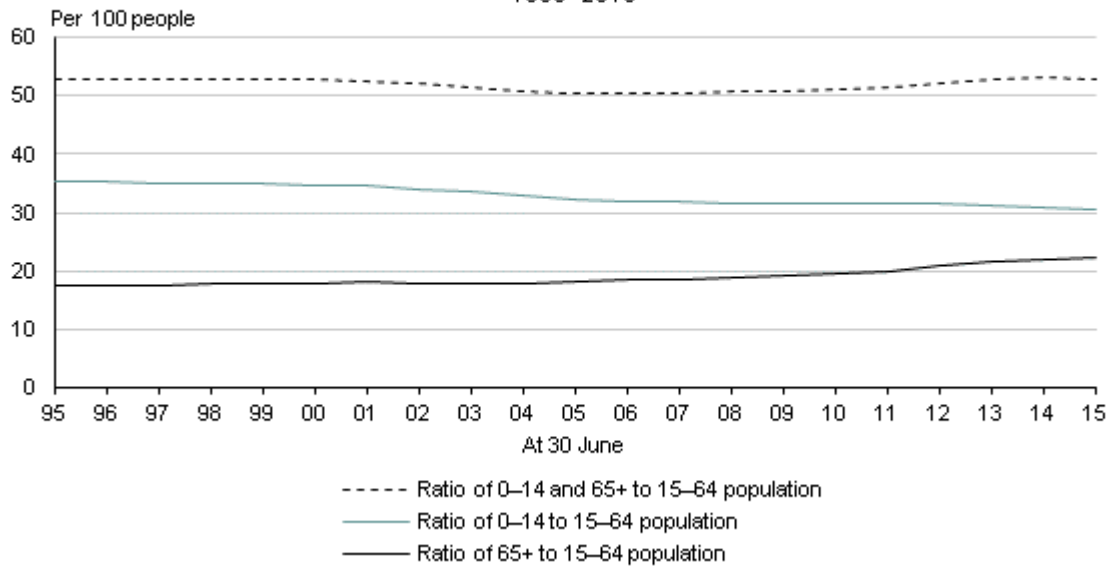
The 65+ dependency ratio has risen from 17.6 in 1995 to 22.4 in 2015. The latest [national population projections](#) indicate this is likely to increase significantly, with the ratio expected to be closer to 37.7 in 2035, and 47.3 in 2065. This means that for every person aged 65+, there will be about 2.7 people aged 15–64 in 2035 and 2.1 in 2065, compared with 4.5 people in 2015 and 5.7 in 1995.

In contrast, the 0–14 dependency ratio (the number of people aged 0–14 years per 100 people aged 15–64 years) decreased from 35.3 to 30.4 in the last 20 years. This downward trend will probably continue, with the projected ratio expected to be about 29.3 in 2035, and 27.6 in 2065.

Although the 0–14 and 65+ ratios have changed, the total dependency ratio (sum of the 0–14 and 65+ dependency ratios) was the same in 1995 as it is now, both 52.9. This is projected to increase to 67.1 in 2035, and 74.9 in 2065.

### Dependency ratios

1995–2015



Source: Statistics New Zealand

For more detailed data see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

## Definitions

### About national population estimates

National population estimates give the best available measure of the size and age-sex structure of the population usually living in New Zealand. Estimates of the resident population are based on the latest available census adjusted for residents who are temporarily overseas, net census undercount, and data on births, deaths, and migration between census night and the estimate.

National population estimates are published quarterly and subnational population estimates are published annually.

### More definitions

**International migration:** migration into or out of New Zealand. International migration statistics are based on 'permanent and long-term' migration statistics. These are primarily determined by passengers' responses on arrival and departure cards – about how long they intend to be in or away from New Zealand, and where they last lived or intend to live for 12 months or more.

- **International migrant arrivals:** people from overseas arriving intending to live in New Zealand for 12 months or more (including permanently), and New Zealanders returning after an absence of 12 months or more. (Referred to as permanent and long-term arrivals in international migration statistics.)
- **International migrant departures:** New Zealanders departing for an intended absence of 12 months or more (including permanently), and people from overseas departing after a stay of 12 months or more in New Zealand. (Referred to as permanent and long-term departures in international migration statistics.)
- **Net migration:** the difference between the number of people who have moved to, and departed from, New Zealand. At the national level this is equivalent to international migrant arrivals minus international migrant departures.

**Median age:** half the population is younger, and half older, than this age.

**Natural increase or decrease:** natural increase is an excess of births over deaths. Natural decrease is an excess of deaths over births.

**Population measures:** Statistics New Zealand commonly produces three population measures, the census night population count, census usually resident population count, and estimated resident population:

- **Census night population count:** 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.
- **Census usually resident population count:** 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.
- **Estimated resident population:** 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), an adjustment for residents missed or counted more than once by the census (net census undercount), and births, deaths and migration between census night and the date of the estimate. Visitors from overseas are excluded.

## Related links

### Next release

*National population estimates: At 30 September 2015 – tables (Infoshare)* will be released on 16 November 2015.

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[The release calendar](#) lists all information releases by date of release.

### Past releases

[National population estimates](#) has links to past releases.

## Related information

[Māori population estimates](#) provide estimates of New Zealand's Māori ethnic population, by age and sex.

[Our population clock](#) gives a real-time approximation of the estimated resident population of New Zealand.

[Subnational population estimates](#) provide estimates for the population of territorial authority areas (ie cities and districts), regions, and area units in New Zealand.

See [NZ.Stat](#) for the base populations for estimates and projections.

[Population projections](#) provide a summary of the projected population of New Zealand at a national and subnational level, based on different combinations of fertility, mortality, and migration assumptions.

[Interactive population pyramid](#) for New Zealand shows New Zealand's changing age-sex distribution over time. It delivers insight into our population history and what our future may look like.



## Data quality

This section contains information that does not change between releases.

- [Base population](#)
- [Accuracy of the data](#)
- [Provisional and final estimates](#)
- [Population clock](#)
- [Rounding](#)
- [More information](#)

### Base population

The estimated resident population at 30 June 2013 forms the base population for deriving post-censal population estimates.

The estimated resident population of New Zealand at 30 June 2013 (4.442 million) was derived from the 2013 census usually resident population count at 5 March 2013 (4.242 million), with adjustments for:

- residents missed or counted more than once by the census (net census undercount (+104,200))
- residents temporarily overseas on census night (+81,700)
- births, deaths, and net migration between census night and 30 June 2013 (+9,300)
- reconciliation with demographic estimates at ages 0–9 years (+4,800).

Quarterly national population estimates from September 2013 onwards are derived by updating the estimated resident population at 30 June 2013 for births, deaths, and net migration during the following period.

### Accuracy of the data

Official national population estimates give the best available measure of how many people usually live in New Zealand. We produce national population estimates using a component methodology, where a base population is updated for the components of population change (births, deaths, and international migration).

All population estimates have some uncertainty around them. Generally, the uncertainty associated with population estimates increases as the estimates move further away from the base (starting point). Uncertainty also increases as population estimates are disaggregated (eg by age or subnationally).

The uncertainty is the net combined effect of:

- uncertainty in the census-based estimates of the population at 30 June of the current or previous census year, including uncertainty in the census counts (eg from respondent errors or census processing) and uncertainty in the adjustments (eg for net census undercount and residents temporarily overseas)
- uncertainty in the estimates of any of the components of population change (births, deaths, and migration) since the previous census.

It is not possible to verify the ongoing accuracy of current national population estimates, as no other independent or authoritative measure of the resident population exists. It is possible to derive retrospective measures of accuracy following the periodic Census of Population and Dwellings.

Following the 2013 Census, we revised national population estimates at 30 June 2013 down by 29,000 (0.7 percent relative to the revised estimate).

### **International migration estimates**

International migration statistics are based on electronic arrival and departure records supplied to Statistics NZ for each international passenger. All arrivals and departures are processed so they can be allocated to one of three passenger types: overseas visitors, New Zealand-resident travellers, and permanent and long-term migrants. The net number of permanent and long-term migrants provides the estimate of international migration that we use in deriving the national population estimates.

Uncertainty arises due to changes in passenger intentions; a person may change their intentions after their arrival or departure, which may mean the recorded passenger type becomes incorrect. We do not currently revise published statistics to adjust for such changes.

### **Birth and death estimates**

There is some uncertainty associated with birth and death data. We use birth and death registrations to estimate the number of births and deaths that occurred during each quarter. Not all births and deaths that occur in a quarter are registered by the end of the quarter, and this delay in registration is taken into account when estimating the number of births and deaths in the current quarter.

### **Provisional and final estimates**

We publish provisional national population estimates in quarterly table updates about six weeks after the end of the reference quarter. An annual information and media release accompanies the June quarter release in mid-August.

Final national population estimates are published in quarterly table updates about five months after the end of the reference quarter. We derive these final estimates when an extra quarter of births and deaths data is available. Changes between the provisional and final estimates are most apparent at the younger and older age groups, due to delayed registrations of births and deaths.

### **Birth estimates**

Final estimates of births in a quarter are less accurate than deaths, as deaths are usually registered more quickly than births. Around 5 percent of births are not registered either in the quarter when the baby was born or in the subsequent quarter. As a result, the birth estimates differ slightly from published birth registrations.

### **Death estimates**

The final estimate of deaths in a quarter is taken as those deaths that occurred in the reference quarter, either registered in the reference quarter or in the subsequent quarter. Final estimates of deaths are very accurate as very few deaths (about 1 death in every 1,000) are registered later

than one quarter after they occurred. As a result, the death estimates differ slightly from published death registrations.

## 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 of the expected number of births, deaths, and net migration for the coming quarter. The settings for each component (births, deaths, and net migration) are determined in advance of each quarter, based on recent trends, and will not necessarily reflect actual population change. The quarterly settings are converted into a 'per minute' figure, making allowance for the number of days per quarter.

## Rounding

All figures in this release were rounded independently. Estimates of the total population, natural increase, net migration, and broad age groups are rounded to the nearest 100. National population estimates of five-year age groups are rounded to the nearest 10.

All derived figures in this release use data of greater precision than that published.

## More information

[See information about the population estimates](#) (DataInfo+) for more detailed information on the methods used to calculate the estimates.

Statistics in this release have been produced in accordance with the [Official Statistics System principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics](#) for quality. They conform to the Statistics NZ Methodological Standard for Reporting of Data Quality.

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## Tables

See the following excel tables in the 'Downloads' box on this page. If you have problems viewing the files, see [opening files and PDFs](#).

1. Estimated resident population of New Zealand and population change
2. Estimated resident population of New Zealand, by broad age group
3. Estimated resident population of New Zealand, by five-year age group

## Access more data on Infoshare

Use [Infoshare](#) to access time-series data specific to your needs. For annual and quarterly national population estimates by single-year of age, five-year age groups, and selected age groups, select the following categories from the Infoshare homepage:

Subject category: **Population**

Group: **Population Estimates – DPE**

The time series can be downloaded in Excel or comma delimited format. See more information [about Infoshare](#).

## Next release

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