Tokelauan People in New Zealand

Tokelauan People in New Zealand is one of a set of seven profiles on Pacific peoples based on results from the 2001 Census of Population and Dwellings. Comparisons are made between Tokelauan people born in New Zealand and those born overseas, as well as with the total Pacific and total New Zealand resident populations.

- In 2001, Tokelauan people were the sixth largest Pacific ethnic group living in New Zealand, comprising 6,200 or 3 percent of New Zealand's Pacific population (231,800).
- The Tokelauan population increased by 1,300 or 26 percent between 1996 and 2001.
- More than half (53 percent) of Tokelauan people in New Zealand lived in the Wellington urban area in 2001.
- Tokelauan people born in New Zealand accounted for 66 percent of the total Tokelauan population in New Zealand in 2001 – up from 55 percent in 1991.
- In 2001, 44 percent of Tokelauan people (with a language) were able to hold an everyday conversation in Tokelauan – down from 53 percent in 1996.
- I te 2001 ko tino Tokelau e tu ono ki e ti tokalahi o atumotu o te Pahefika e nonofo i Niu Hila aofakiga 6,200 pe 3 pahene o Pahefika i Niu Hila faitauga (231,800).
- Na hikitia te aofaki o tino Tokelau e 1,300 pe 26 pahene i te va ote 1996 ma te 2001.
- E hilia i te afa (53 pahene) o tino Tokelau i Niu Hila e nonofo i te hikomaga o Ueligitone i te 2001.
- I te 2001, 44 pahene o tino Tokelau (ma he gagana) nae mafai ke faitala i te faka-Tokelau – he pakuga mai te 53 pahene i te 1996.
1. Population

The information presented in this profile is based on the census usually resident population count. The Tokelauan population includes those people who stated Tokelauan as their sole ethnicity or as one of several ethnic groups. The Pacific population refers to all those who stated a Pacific ethnicity.

- In 2001, Tokelauan people were the sixth largest Pacific ethnic group living in New Zealand, comprising 6,200 or 3 percent of New Zealand’s Pacific population (231,800).
- The largest Pacific ethnic group was Samoan (50 percent), followed by the Cook Island Maori (23 percent), Tongan (18 percent), Niuean (9 percent) and Fijian (3 percent) groups. The Tuvaluan group (1 percent) followed the Tokelauan in size.
- The Tokelauan population increased by 1,300 or 26 percent between 1996 and 2001. During the same five-year period, the Pacific population increased by 15 percent. Between 1991 and 1996, the Tokelauan population increased by 19 percent.
- In the decade to 2001, the Tokelauan population increased by 50 percent, as figure 1.1 shows.

Figure 1.1


![Graph showing Tokelauan population in New Zealand from 1991 to 2001. Source: Statistics New Zealand]

Age and sex distribution

- The Tokelauan population is very youthful, as figure 1.2 illustrates. In 2001, 43 percent of Tokelauans were under 15 years of age, compared with 23 percent of the New Zealand population. Three percent of Tokelauan people were aged 65 years and over, compared with 12 percent of the New Zealand population.
- In 2001, the median age, or midpoint of the Tokelauan age distribution, was 18.8 years. By comparison, the median ages for the Pacific and New Zealand populations were 21.0 years and 34.8 years respectively.
- Overall, the male and female Tokelauan populations are evenly balanced, with Tokelauan females (3,200) and Tokelauan males (3,100) making up 51 percent and 49 percent respectively of the Tokelauan population. Tokelauan women tend to outnumber Tokelauan males in the older age groups – a reflection of their longer life expectancy.

Place of birth

- New Zealand-born Tokelauan people accounted for 66 percent of the total Tokelauan population in New Zealand in 2001, up from 60 percent in 1996. In 1991, 55 percent of Tokelauan people living in New Zealand were New Zealand-born.

Figure 1.2

Age-Sex Distribution of the Tokelauan Population, 2001

![Age-Sex distribution chart showing the percentage distribution of the Tokelauan population by age group and sex. Source: Statistics New Zealand]

- In 2001, 75 percent of overseas-born Tokelauan people in New Zealand gave Tokelau as their birthplace.
- Between 1996 and 2001, the New Zealand-born Tokelauan population grew more quickly than the overseas-born Tokelauan population (38 percent compared with 10 percent).
- The New Zealand-born Tokelauan population has a much younger age structure than the overseas-born Tokelauan population. In 2001, 60 percent of the New Zealand-born Tokelauan population were under the age of 15 years, whereas 10 percent of the overseas-born population were under 15 years.
- Less than 1 percent of New Zealand-born Tokelauan people were aged between 45 and 64 years, whereas 29 percent of the overseas-born population were in this age group in 2001.

Duration of residence

- More than half (55 percent) of Tokelauan people born overseas had been living in New Zealand for more than 20 years at the time of the 2001 Census, while a further 18 percent had been resident for between 10 and 20 years.
- Four percent of the overseas-born Tokelauan population had been in New Zealand for less than one year – down 2 percentage points since 1996.

Geographical distribution

- In 2001, 90 percent of all Tokelauan people lived in the main urban areas (populations of 30,000 or more) – a proportion almost unchanged from 1996 (89 percent).
- The geographical distribution of Tokelauan people was also similar to 1996. In 2001, the greatest concentration of the Tokelauan community was in the Wellington urban area – 53 percent (unchanged from 1996).
One-third (33 percent) of the total Tokelauan population lived in Porirua, while 15 percent lived in Lower Hutt.

Outside of the Wellington urban area, the next largest concentration of Tokelauan people was in the Auckland urban area (24 percent – up 1 percentage point from 1996).

The largest Tokelauan community in the South Island in 2001 was based in the Dunedin urban area, numbering 90 people or 1 percent of the Tokelauan population in New Zealand.

Figure 1.3

Geographical Distribution of the Tokelauan Population, 2001
By urban area

Source: Statistics New Zealand

2. Language

Tokelauan

- In 2001, 44 percent of Tokelauan people (with a language) were able to hold an everyday conversation in Tokelauan – down from 53 percent in 1996.
- A higher proportion of the overseas-born Tokelauan population was able to speak Tokelauan (71 percent of those with a language) than the New Zealand-born Tokelauan population (29 percent of those with a language).
- The proportion of the New Zealand-born Tokelauan population able to speak Tokelauan in 2001 was lower than in 1996 (37 percent of those with a language).

English

- English is the most widely spoken language among the Tokelauan population. The proportion of Tokelauan people not able to speak English decreased from 9 percent (of those with a language) in 1996 to 4 percent in 2001.
- In 2001, the majority (88 percent) of Tokelauan people unable to speak English were born overseas. Of those born overseas and unable to speak English, 60 percent had been in New Zealand for more than 10 years.
- Eighty-four percent of non-English speaking Tokelauan people were over 20 years of age in 2001.

3. Religion

- In 2001, 91 percent of Tokelauan people reported an affiliation with a Christian religion. The most common religious affiliations were Catholic and Presbyterian (each forming 41 percent of those with an affiliation), followed by Pentecostal (3 percent), Methodist (2 percent) and Latter-day Saints (2 percent).
- Overseas-born Tokelauans were more likely to report a religious affiliation than New Zealand-born Tokelauans (98 percent versus 88 percent respectively). The older age structure of the overseas-born population may be a contributing factor.
- Higher proportions of Tokelauan people in older age groups reported having a religious affiliation than their younger counterparts, as figure 3.1 shows. In 2001, 99 percent of Tokelauans aged between 45 and 64 reported a religious affiliation, whereas the equivalent proportion for those aged between 25 and 34 years was 93 percent.
- In 2001, 9 percent of Tokelauan people stated they had no religious affiliation. Among the Pacific population, the equivalent figure in 2001 was 12 percent, whereas almost a third of the New Zealand population stated they had no religious affiliation in 2001.

Figure 3.1

Tokelauan Population with a Religious Affiliation, 2001
By age

Source: Statistics New Zealand
4. Families and households

Families

A family is defined as a couple with or without child(ren), or one parent and their child(ren), living in the same household.

- In 2001, Tokelauan people were more likely to live in a family situation (84 percent) than the New Zealand population (75 percent).

- A two-parent family with children remains the most common family type for Tokelauan people. Of those living in a family in 2001, nearly two-thirds (65 percent) were living in a two-parent family – a drop of 9 percentage points since 1991. The comparable figures for the Pacific and New Zealand populations were 65 percent and 57 percent respectively.

- Twenty-nine percent of Tokelauan people living in a family were in a one-parent family – 7 percentage points higher than in 1991. By comparison, 28 percent of the Pacific population and 17 percent of the New Zealand population were living in a one-parent family in 2001.

- The proportion of Tokelauan people living as a couple without children increased slightly from 4 percent (of those living in families) in 1991 to 6 percent in 2001. The equivalent proportions for the Pacific and New Zealand populations in 2001 were 8 percent and 26 percent respectively – the older age structure of the national population being a contributing factor to this difference.

**Figure 4.1**

| Family Type of the Tokelauan, Pacific and New Zealand Populations, 2001 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| **Percent**                | Two-parent family | One-parent family | Couple without children |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Tokelauan                  | 70                         | 20                         | 10                      |
| Pacific                    | 65                         | 30                         | 15                      |
| New Zealand                | 70                         | 25                         | 25                      |

[Source: Statistics New Zealand]

- The proportion of dependent Tokelauan children living in two-parent families decreased from 76 percent in 1991 to 65 percent in 2001. Over the same period, the proportion of dependent Tokelauan children living in one-parent families rose from 24 percent to 35 percent.

- In 2001, 32 percent of Tokelauan people were living in extended family situations – down from 40 percent in 1996. By comparison, 29 percent of the Pacific population and 8 percent of the New Zealand population were living in extended families in 2001.

- The average (mean) size of families with at least one Tokelauan member decreased slightly from 4.3 in 1991 to 3.9 in 2001. The average family size for the New Zealand population was 3.0 in 2001.

Households

A household is defined as either one person who lives alone or two or more people who usually reside together and share facilities such as eating, cooking and bathroom facilities.

- Nearly three-quarters (74 percent) of Tokelauan people were living in one-family households in 2001 – down from 79 percent in 1991.

- Following the national trend, the proportion of Tokelauan people living in households with two or more families rose in the first part of the decade from 19 percent in 1991 to 27 percent in 1996, before declining to 23 percent in 2001. The equivalent proportions of the Pacific and New Zealand populations living in households with two or more families in 2001 were 20 percent and 5 percent respectively.

- In 2001, the overseas-born Tokelauan population (28 percent) was more likely to live in households with two or more families than New Zealand-born Tokelauans (21 percent).

- One percent of Tokelauan people were living in one-person households in 2001 – a similar proportion to the Pacific population overall (3 percent). The equivalent figure for the New Zealand population was 9 percent.

- In the decade to 2001, the average (mean) size of households with at least one Tokelauan member declined slightly from 5.0 in 1991 to 4.7 in 2001. The average household size for the New Zealand population in 2001 was 2.7.

**Figure 4.2**

<p>| Tokelauan Population by Household Type, 1991–2001 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Percent</strong></th>
<th>One-family household</th>
<th>Two or more family household</th>
<th>Other multiperson household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Source: Statistics New Zealand]

5. Education

The adult Tokelauan population includes all those aged 15 years and over.

- In 2001, 60 percent of Tokelauan adults held a formal educational qualification – 4 percentage points below the equivalent figure of 64 percent for the Pacific population.

- Forty-three percent of the adult Tokelauan population listed a school qualification as their highest qualification in 2001, while a further 17 percent held a post-school qualification. By contrast, 32 percent of the New Zealand population held a post-school qualification in 2001.
Young Tokelauan adults are more likely to hold a post-school qualification than their older counterparts, as figure 5.1 illustrates. In 2001, 23 percent of Tokelauan people aged 20–24 years held a post-school qualification, while the equivalent figure for those aged 45–65 years was 10 percent.

Tokelauan females were more likely than Tokelauan males to have a school qualification as their highest qualification (45 percent and 41 percent respectively). Tokelauan females were also more likely than their male counterparts to have post-school qualifications (19 percent and 16 percent respectively).

Forty-nine percent of New Zealand-born Tokelauan people reported a school qualification as their highest qualification, while a further 18 percent held a post-school qualification. The equivalent figures for Tokelauan people born overseas were 38 percent and 18 percent respectively.

Sixty-three percent of Tokelauan adults were participating in the labour force at the time of the 2001 Census – up from 59 percent in 1996. The respective labour force participation rates of the Pacific and the New Zealand populations were 65 percent and 67 percent.

The New Zealand-born Tokelauan population had a higher rate of labour force participation (67 percent) than the overseas-born Tokelauan population (59 percent) in 2001.

Tokelauan men were more likely to participate in the labour force than Tokelauan women in 2001 (70 percent and 56 percent respectively) – a pattern repeated across all five-year age groups.

Labour force participation among the Tokelauan population was lower than that of the New Zealand population across all age groups. The respective labour force participation rates widen after the 30–34 year age group, before converging again among those aged 65 years and over. (See figure 6.1)
Employment

The employment rate is the proportion of the adult population (aged 15 years and over) who are employed in either full-time or part-time paid work.

- At the time of the 2001 Census, 49 percent of the Tokelauan adult population were employed – continuing the upward trend from 45 percent in 1996 and 36 percent in 1991. In 2001, 55 percent of the Pacific population were employed, while the equivalent figure for the New Zealand population was 62 percent.
- Employment among the Tokelauan population rose from being equivalent to 67 percent of the New Zealand employment rate in 1991 to 79 percent in 2001, as can be seen in figure 6.2.
- New Zealand-born Tokelauans (51 percent) had a higher employment rate than those born overseas (46 percent) in 2001.

Figure 6.2


Unemployment

The unemployment rate is the proportion of the labour force who are unemployed, available for work and actively seeking employment.

- Five hundred Tokelauan adults, or 22 percent of the Tokelauan labour force, were unemployed at the time of the 2001 Census. The unemployment rate for the Pacific population was 16 percent – more than double that for the New Zealand population in 2001 (7 percent).
- The Tokelauan unemployment rate continued to drop from 24 percent in 1996 and 28 percent in 1991.
- New Zealand-born Tokelauans had a higher unemployment rate (24 percent) than their overseas-born counterparts (21 percent) in 2001 – with the younger age profile of the New Zealand-born Tokelauan population a possible contributing factor.
- Tokelauan women had a higher rate of unemployment (26 percent) than Tokelauan men (20 percent) in 2001.
- The unemployment rate among the Tokelauan population is higher than the New Zealand population across all age groups, as figure 6.3 illustrates. The disparities tend to be greatest among the younger age groups and among those aged 45 years and over – age groups where Tokelauan people experienced high unemployment.

Figure 6.3

Unemployment Rates for the Tokelauan and New Zealand Populations, 2001

By age

Source: Statistics New Zealand
Occupation

- In 2001, the most common occupations for employed Tokelauan adults were service and sales workers (20 percent), clerks (16 percent) and plant and machine operators and assemblers (14 percent).

- In the decade to 2001, Tokelauan people were increasingly employed in 'white collar' occupations. The proportion of Tokelauan adults employed as professionals increased by 5 percentage points between 1991 and 2001 to 9 percent, while those employed as technicians and associate professionals rose 3 percentage points to 10 percent in 2001. Conversely, the proportion of Tokelauan adults employed in 'blue collar' occupation categories, such as plant and machine operators and assemblers, declined between 1991 and 2001, as figure 6.4 illustrates.

New Zealand-born Tokelauans were more likely than their overseas-born counterparts to be employed in 'white collar' occupations, such as legislators, administrators and managers (5 percent and 3 percent respectively), and as clerks (21 percent and 11 percent).

Tokelauans born overseas were more likely than their New Zealand-born counterparts to be employed as trades workers (11 percent and 8 percent respectively), plant and machine operators and assemblers (18 percent and 11 percent) and in elementary occupations (15 percent and 8 percent).

There were considerable occupational differences between the sexes, as shown in figure 6.5. In 2001, Tokelauan women were more likely than men to be employed in 'white collar' categories such as professionals, technicians and associate professionals, service and sales workers and as clerks. Conversely, Tokelauan men were more likely to be employed as trades workers and as plant and machine operators and assemblers.

As increasing numbers of the Tokelauan population gain formal qualifications, young Tokelauan people are becoming less likely to be employed in 'blue collar' jobs and are gradually moving into 'white collar' occupations. In 2001, Tokelauans aged 25–34 years were more likely than those aged 35–44 years to be employed as clerks and less likely to be employed as plant and machine operators and assemblers.

Figure 6.5

Occupations of the Employed Tokelauan Population, 2001

By sex

Performance Data:

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Industry

- Just over a fifth (21 percent) of employed Tokelauan adults worked in manufacturing in 2001. As figure 6.6 shows, retail trade (12 percent) and health and community services (11 percent) were the next most common industries.

Tokelauans born overseas were more likely than those born overseas to work in certain industries, such as retail trade (16 percent and 8 percent respectively), property and business services (11 percent and 8 percent) and the accommodation, restaurant and cafe industry (8 percent and 5 percent).

Tokelauans born overseas were more likely than their New Zealand-born counterparts to work in the manufacturing industry (24 percent and 17 percent respectively) and in health and community services (14 percent and 8 percent).
8. Income

Median annual income

Includes income from all sources – including income support.

- The Tokelauan adult population had a median annual income of $13,200 in the year to March 2001 – $1,600 below the median annual income of the Pacific adult population. The median annual income for the New Zealand adult population was $18,500. (See figure 8.1)

- The median annual income of Tokelauan adults who were in employment in the week preceding the 2001 Census was $22,500 – equivalent to 81 percent of that of the New Zealand population ($27,700).
The real median annual income (adjusted for inflation to 2001 dollars) of Tokelauan people increased by 20 percent from $11,000 in 1991 to $13,200 in 2001. Over the same period, the real median annual income of the Pacific population and the New Zealand population increased by 16 percent and 11 percent respectively.

Overseas-born Tokelauans had a higher median annual income ($13,600) than Tokelauans born in New Zealand ($12,800).

In 2001, the median annual income of Tokelauan women was equivalent to 70 percent of that of Tokelauan men ($11,300 compared with $16,200). The gap between the sexes narrows for those in employment – with the median annual income of employed Tokelauan women equating to 84 percent of that of employed men ($20,300 compared with $24,200).

Figure 8.2 shows that Tokelauan women are proportionately more likely to be in income bands under $20,001, while Tokelauan men are more likely to be in bands of $20,001 and over.

Income sources

- Wages and salaries were received by 53 percent of Tokelauan adults in the year to 2001. The equivalent proportions among the Pacific and New Zealand populations were 58 percent and 57 percent respectively, as figure 8.3 shows.
- Income from self-employment or a self-owned business was received by 3 percent of Tokelauan adults – the same proportion as the Pacific population in 2001. By comparison, 17 percent of the New Zealand population received income from this source.
- Three percent of Tokelauans received income from interest, dividends, rent or investments in 2001 – a similar level to the Pacific population (4 percent). Just over a quarter (26 percent) of the New Zealand population received income from these sources in 2001.

Forty-two percent received some form of income support at some stage during the 12 months prior to the 2001 Census. ‘Income support’ refers to monetary support from the government, excluding ACC payments and New Zealand Superannuation.

New Zealand-born and overseas-born Tokelauans were equally as likely to have received income support in 2001 (both 42 percent). The comparable figures for the Pacific and New Zealand populations were 33 percent and 19 percent respectively.

Tokelauan women (46 percent) were more likely to have received income support than Tokelauan men (36 percent) in 2001.

Figure 8.3

Sources of Annual Personal Income of the Tokelauan, Pacific and New Zealand Populations, 2001

- Forty-two percent received some form of income support at some stage during the 12 months prior to the 2001 Census. ‘Income support’ refers to monetary support from the government, excluding ACC payments and New Zealand Superannuation.
- New Zealand-born and overseas-born Tokelauans were equally as likely to have received income support in 2001 (both 42 percent). The comparable figures for the Pacific and New Zealand populations were 33 percent and 19 percent respectively.
- Tokelauan women (46 percent) were more likely to have received income support than Tokelauan men (36 percent) in 2001.
9. Housing

Tenure

- In 2001, 22 percent of Tokelauan people aged 15 years and over stated that they owned or partly owned their own home – below the level of 26 percent for the Pacific population. The comparable figure for the New Zealand population was 55 percent.
- Tokelauan men (23 percent) were as likely as Tokelauan women (22 percent) to own the home in which they lived.
- Tokelauan people in the older age groups had a higher home ownership rate than their younger counterparts. In 2001, 55 percent of Tokelauans aged between 45 and 64 years owned their own home, whereas among those aged between 25 and 44 years the equivalent proportion was 21 percent.
- Tokelauans born overseas were far more likely to own their own home (33 percent) than New Zealand-born Tokelauan people (10 percent). The older age structure of the overseas-born Tokelauan population is a contributing factor to this difference.

Rental housing

- The proportion of Tokelauan people living in rental accommodation increased from 47 percent in 1991 to 56 percent in 1996 and to 62 percent in 2001. Conversely, the proportion of the Tokelauan population living in dwellings owned (with or without a mortgage) by a member of the household decreased from 53 percent in 1991 to 44 percent in 1996 and to 38 percent in 2001.
- The trend away from home ownership mirrors the national situation, with the proportion of the New Zealand population living in rental housing increasing from 25 percent in 1991 to 33 percent in 2001.

Among those Tokelauans living in rental accommodation, 54 percent were living in Housing New Zealand accommodation in 2001 – a decrease from 65 percent in 1996.
- Proportionately more overseas-born Tokelauan people living in rental housing were in Housing New Zealand accommodation than those born in New Zealand (66 percent and 48 percent respectively).
- Of those Tokelauans living in rented accommodation in 2001, more than half (53 percent) were living in households paying less than $150 a week. By comparison, the equivalent proportion for the New Zealand population was 38 percent.
- The levels of weekly rent paid by Tokelauan people are illustrated in figure 9.2.

Figure 9.2

Weekly Rent Paid by Households, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly rent paid ($)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>250–299</td>
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<td>300–349</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>350–399</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 and over</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Households with at least one Tokelauan member. 2 Households with at least one Pacific member.

Source: Statistics New Zealand
10. Access to amenities

Motor vehicles

- Tokelauan people experienced an improvement in motor vehicle access in the decade from 1991. In 2001, 78 percent of Tokelauans lived in households with access to a motor vehicle – up from 68 percent in 1996 and 66 percent in 1991. The comparable proportions for the Pacific and New Zealand populations in 2001 were 86 percent and 93 percent respectively.

- The New Zealand-born and overseas-born Tokelauan populations in New Zealand had similar levels of household motor vehicle access in 2001 (74 percent and 81 percent respectively).

Telecommunications

- In 2001, 87 percent of Tokelauan people were living in households with access to a telephone – the same proportion as the Pacific population (87 percent). Among the New Zealand population, household telephone access was 95 percent.

- Similar proportions of New Zealand-born and overseas-born Tokelauan people lived in households with telephone access in 2001 (87 percent and 86 percent respectively).

Seventeen percent of Tokelauan people were living in households with access to the Internet in 2001 – slightly below the Pacific population (20 percent). The equivalent proportion among the New Zealand population was 43 percent.

- New Zealand-born Tokelauan people were more likely to live in households with Internet access (18 percent) than overseas-born Tokelauans (14 percent).

Figure 10.1

Access to Amenities among the Tokelauan, Pacific and New Zealand Populations, 2001

Source: Statistics New Zealand
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- birthplace
- ethnic group
- language
- marital status
- education/qualifications
- income
- occupation
- industry
- hours worked
- means of travel to work
- number of occupants
- home ownership
- number of rooms
- means of heating
- number of motor vehicles
- ... to name just a few.

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