

Ageing Population Effects

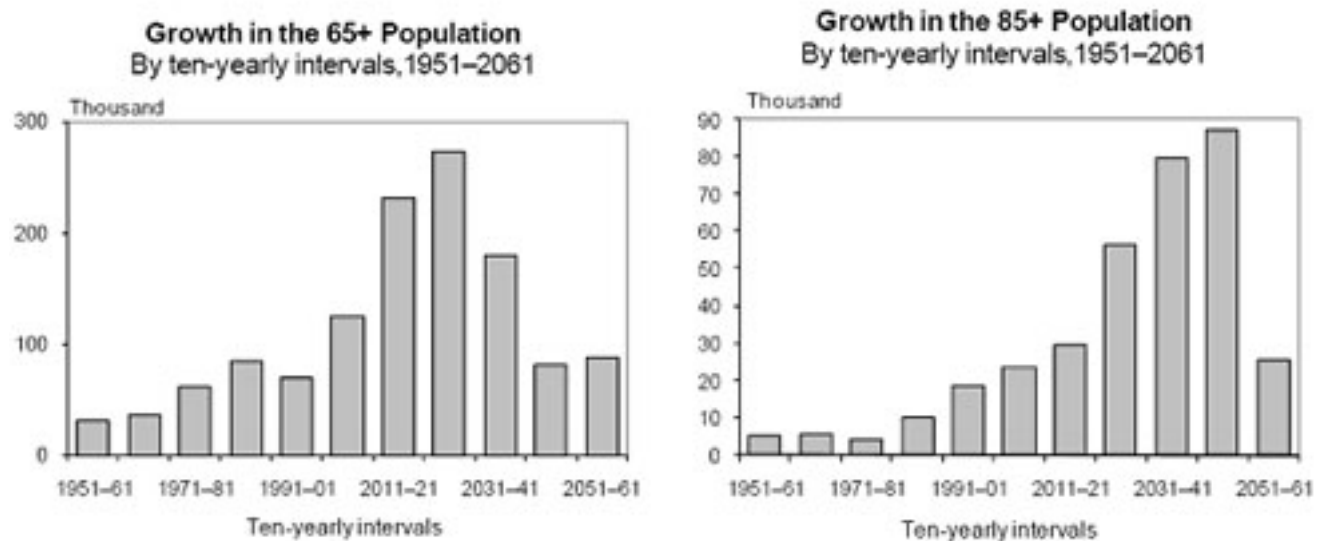
New Zealand, like many countries, has an ageing population, with an increasing proportion of people in the older age groups and a declining proportion of children. The proportion of the population under 15 years of age has declined from around 33 percent in the early 1960s to 21 percent in 2009 and is expected to fall to 18 percent by 2031.

The population aged 65 years and over has increased from 11 percent of the total population in 1991 to 13 percent in 2009. It is expected to reach 21 percent by 2031. The number of people aged 65 years and over is projected to increase from around 550,000 in 2009 to 1 million in the late 2020s, when they will outnumber children.

The ageing of the New Zealand population reflects the combined impact of lower fertility (achieved through access to effective birth control); increasing longevity (thanks to advances in medical technology and increased survival rates from life-threatening diseases); and the movement of the large number of people born during the 1950s to early 1970s into the older ages.

By 2031, the last of these large birth cohorts (the “baby boomers”) will have turned 65 and population ageing will begin to slow because of the plateau in birth numbers reached 65 years earlier. However, as the baby boomers begin turning 85 in 2031, the ageing of the population aged 65 years and over will accelerate. The number of people aged 85 years and over is projected to increase from 67,000 in 2009 to 144,000 in 2031, then more than double to about 330,000 by 2061. By 2061, people aged 85 and over will make up about one in four of the population aged 65 years and over, compared with one in eight in 2009 and 2031.

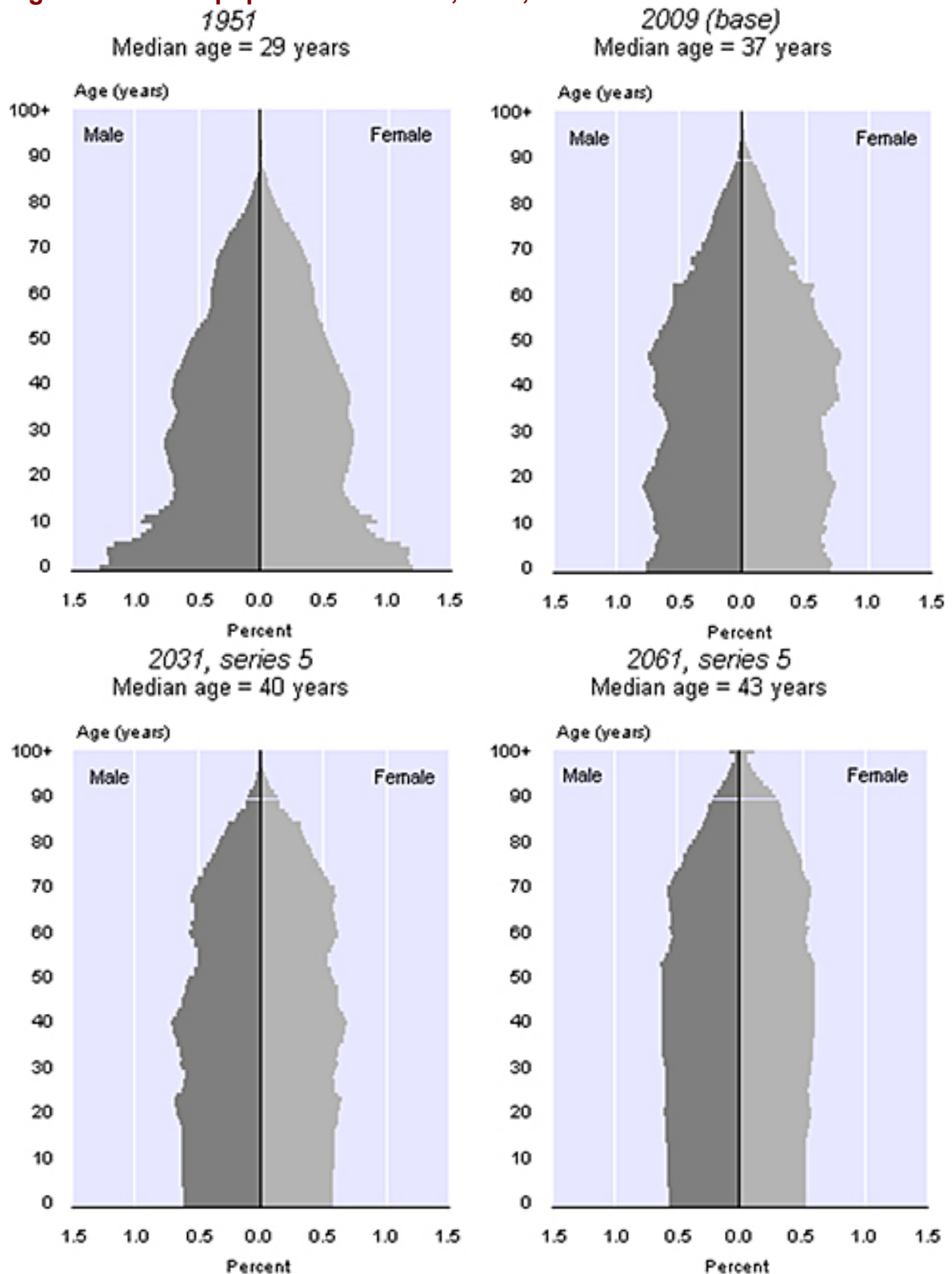
Growth in the population aged 65 years and over and 85 years and over, 1951 to 2061



Source: Statistics New Zealand (2009) Impact of structural population change

Age pyramids for 1951, 2006, 2031 and 2061 illustrate the transition from a youthful population with relatively high fertility to an older population with low fertility and greater longevity.

Age structure of population for 1951, 2006, 2031 and 2061



Source: Statistics New Zealand (2009) National Population Projections 2009 (base) - 2061

Age structure by ethnic group

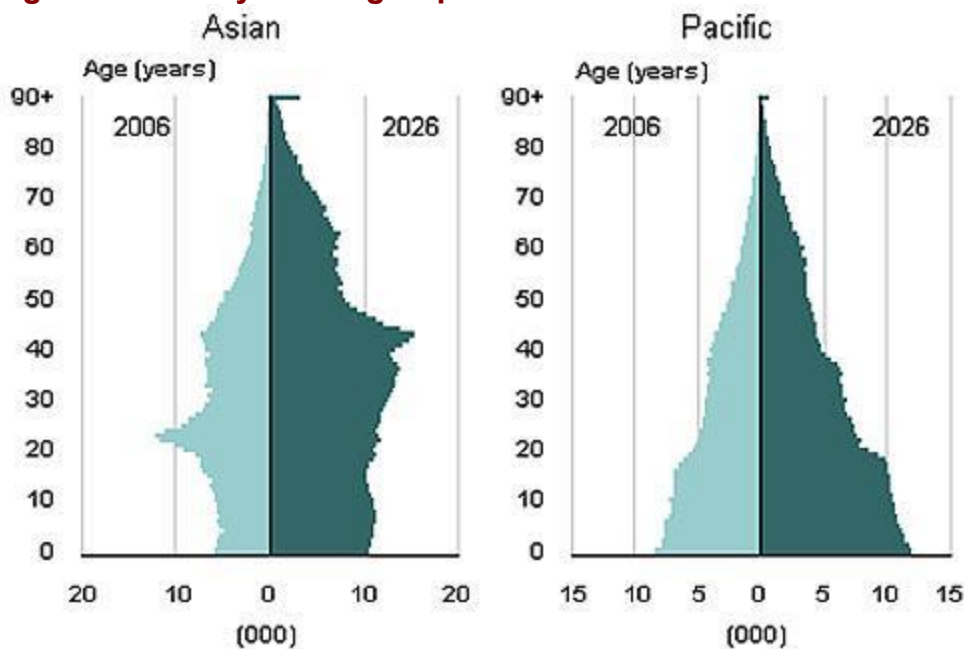
Māori and Pacific populations have younger age structures than the European/Other population because they have higher fertility and mortality rates, although these are both declining. Māori and Pacific populations are also ageing, but they will continue to have a younger age structure than the European/Other population.

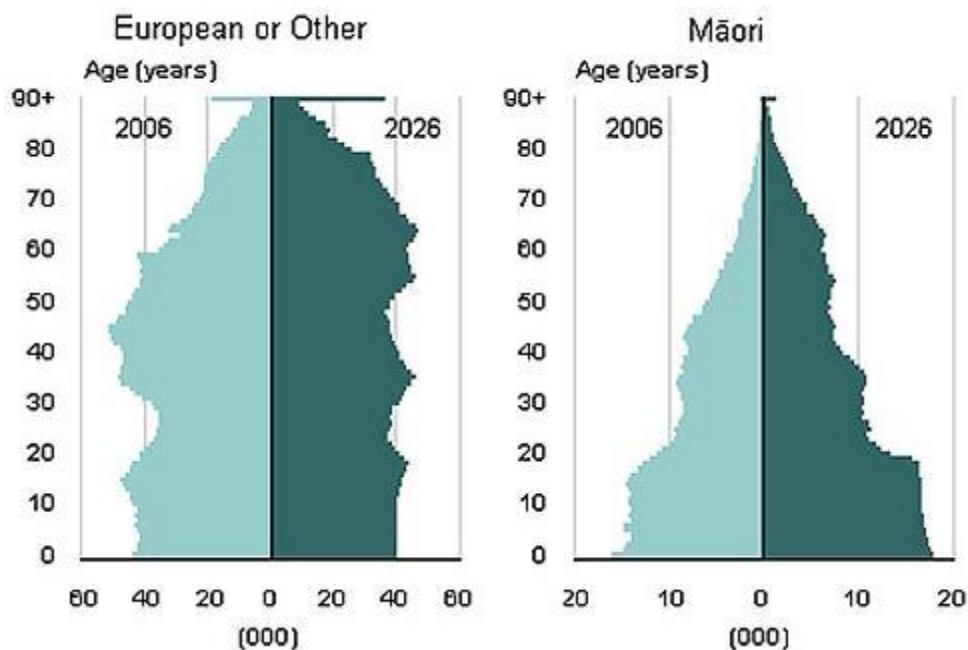
The Asian population also has a younger age profile because many are relatively recent immigrants to New Zealand, who came as young people or families with children.

Ethnic distribution of older people

Older people in New Zealand are predominantly European, but their share of the older population is projected to decline. Among people aged 65 years and over in 2006, those who identified at least one of their ethnic groups as European or Other made up 91 percent, Māori 5 percent, Asian peoples 4 percent, and Pacific peoples 2 percent. According to the 2010 ethnic population projections, in 2026 older people with a European or Other ethnicity will make up 82 percent of all people aged 65 years and over, Māori 7 percent, Asian peoples 9 percent and Pacific peoples 3 percent.

Age structure by ethnic group for 2006 and 2026





Source: Statistics New Zealand (2010) National Ethnic Population Projections 2006 (base) – 2026

Technical note:

The total population projections presented here are from National Population Projections, 2009(base) - 2061, mid-range Series 5, assuming medium fertility, medium mortality, long-term annual net migration gain of 10,000.

Projections for ethnic groups are from National Ethnic Population Projections, 2006(base) – 2026 (2010 update).

Population Projections

In the short term the projections indicate:

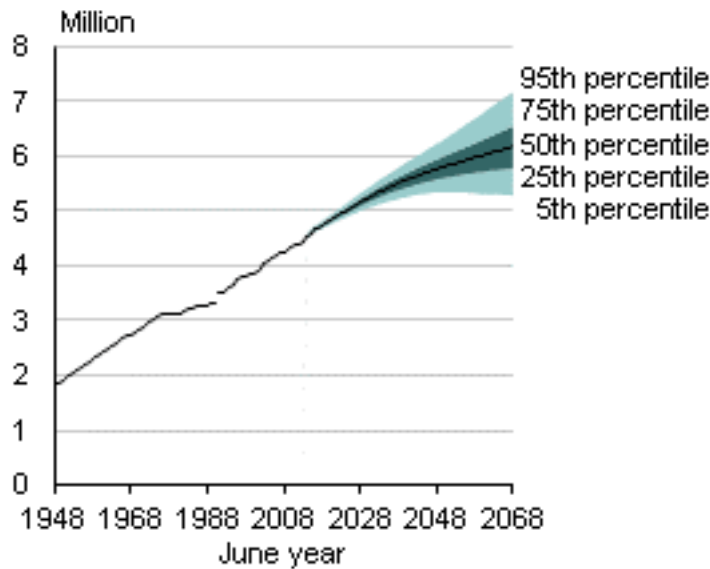
- Annual population growth of 1.6–2.0 percent in 2015 and 1.1–1.6 percent in 2016 reflecting significant gains from net migration.
- New Zealand's population (4.51 million in 2014) has a 90 percent probability of increasing to 4.68–4.82 million in 2018 and to 4.91–5.16 million in 2025.

In the long term the projections indicate:

- The population aged 65+ (0.65 million in 2014) has a 90 percent probability of increasing to 1.28–1.37 million in 2041 and to 1.58–1.81 million in 2068.
- The proportion of the population aged 65+ (14 percent in 2014) has a 90 percent probability of increasing to 22–25 percent in 2041 and 24–32 percent in 2068.
- The population aged 85+ (78,000 in 2014) has a 90 percent probability of increasing to 220,000–270,000 in 2041 and to 320,000–450,000 in 2068.
- Population growth will slow as New Zealand’s population ages and the gap between the number of births and deaths narrows.

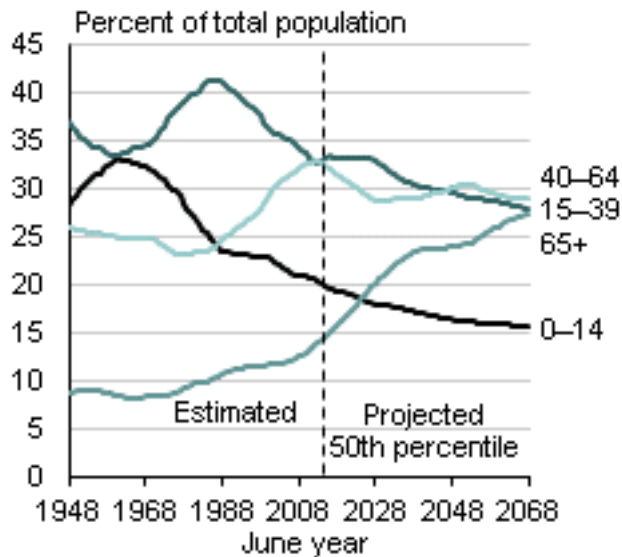
- New Zealand's population (4.51 million in 2014) has a 90 percent probability of increasing to 5.27–5.92 million in 2041 and to 5.28–7.17 million in 2068.

New Zealand population 1948–2068



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Age distribution of population 1948–2068



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Note: The break in data between 1990 and 1991 in the 'New Zealand population' graph denotes a change from the de facto population concept to the resident population concept.

Liz MacPherson, Government Statistician. ISSN 1178-0584. 28 November 2014

Subnational population projections give an indication of the future population of New Zealand's 16 regional council areas (regions), 67 territorial authority areas, and 21 Auckland local board areas (LBAs).

The low, medium, and high growth projections all indicate:

- The population growth rate will slow in all regions, cities, districts, and Auckland LBAs between 2013 and 2043.
- All areas will be home to more people aged 65+ in 2043.
- Deaths will increase relative to births in all areas, as the population ages.

The medium projection indicates:

- All regions will have more people in 2043 than in 2013.
- 26 territorial authority areas will have fewer people in 2043 than in 2013.
- Deaths will outnumber births in two-thirds of TA areas by 2043.
- 51 territorial authority areas will have fewer children in 2043 than in 2013.
- Three-fifths of New Zealand's population growth between 2013 and 2043 will be in Auckland.
- Auckland's population will reach 2 million by 2033.

Projected average annual population change
By regional council area
2013–43



• Source: Statistics New Zealand

Liz MacPherson, Government Statistician, 19 February 2015

Area unit projections

Area unit population projections provide an indication of future changes in the size and age-sex structure of the population usually living in each area unit. You can use this information to see how particular areas will change in the future.

Area units are roughly the size of suburbs, but the 2,020 area units (boundaries at 1 January 2015) cover all of New Zealand and can be aggregated to meet your needs. The median size of area units is 2,000 people, while three-quarters of area units have a population between 100 and 4,000.

Users of projections range from planners to policy analysts, researchers to marketers. Government sector and community organisations use the projections to assess future needs for facilities and services such as housing, transport, schools, and recreation. Businesses can use the projections to analyse the potential market for new products and services, to site the location of new stores, and to develop strategic marketing initiatives.