

NEW ZEALAND

A
*Regional
Profile*

NORTHLAND

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Preface

New Zealand - A Regional Profile aims to summarise information about all 16 regions in New Zealand into one comprehensive volume.

What do regions mean to New Zealanders? Essentially they are a place to live, a focus for parochialism on the sports field and a source of local identity. If you asked a Southlander, “Do you see yourself as being different to a Nelsonian”, they would answer firmly, “Yes”. Defining regional qualities is, however, rather less definitive. What does it really mean to be a Cantabrian, a Northlander or a Wellingtonian? How does the region of residence affect the individual in terms of employment choices, income, access to health and educational services? This publication explores how the history, topography, social, demographic and economic forces in each region have shaped experiences. While it cannot exactly describe each individual in Northland or Canterbury, the publication can show the most distinctive characteristics of each region.

The publication has a two-fold purpose: to provide a comprehensive source of information about each region in New Zealand; and to analyse each region, comparing differences and similarities, with the aim of celebrating regional diversity in New Zealand. The sixteen chapters examine the history, topography, population characteristics and economy of each region. Information is presented in written, graphic and tabular form.

I would like to acknowledge my appreciation of Dr Rosemary Goodyear, Aaron Green and Rochelle Morgan of the Regional and International Statistics Division who contributed to this report, under the direction of Zane Colville.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Len Cook". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Len" and "Cook" being capitalized and prominent.

Len Cook
Government Statistician

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Northland

Highlights

- Northland is the most rural region in New Zealand with only 52 percent of the population living in urban areas.
- The area is noted for its historical significance. It was host to the first signing of the Treaty of Waitangi on 6 February 1840.
- Northland has a high proportion of Māori, 32.3 percent of all people identify with this group. This compares with 15.1 percent nationally.
- Northland's age structure is young compared with most other regions, and there are fewer people in the 15 to 40-year age group than any other region.
- Northlanders contribute more to unpaid work outside the home than other New Zealanders. Of the working-age population, 6.9 percent contributed more than 30 hours of unpaid work, compared with 5.0 percent nationally.
- Beef cattle farming and fruit growing are major contributors to the agricultural economy. Northland also has extensive areas of both indigenous and exotic forest.



Introduction

Northland was one of the first places to be settled by both Polynesians and, later, Europeans. Although there were early suggestions that the far north was the 'cradle' of Māori settlement, these have not been substantiated. Archaeological evidence reveals, however, that Māori settlement in the region was intensive and long established. Certainly the warm, 'frost-free' climate provided the most hospitable area for growing traditional Polynesian crops such as kumara, although some crops such as breadfruit and coconuts could not be established even in the far north. These settlers gardened, fished and hunted, although they rapidly hunted moa and seal species to extinction. By the eighteenth century the Northland region had the largest Māori population in Aotearoa. It has been calculated that 25 percent of the population lived in the area that stretched from Cape Reinga to the Tamaki Isthmus (Auckland).

Māori in the far north (as well as the far south) experienced the most extensive contact with Europeans prior to 1840. Missionaries first arrived in 1812 and attempted to 'civilise and Christianise' the people, though at first their efforts were unsuccessful. Chiefs tolerated them for the trade they brought, particularly the opportunity to purchase tools and muskets. Traders and whalers also established themselves in the far north.

The settlement of Kororareka (Russell) acquired a notorious reputation for drunkenness and vice. Missionaries feared that the undesirable European presence would corrupt and damage the Māori people. The situation in the far north was one of the factors influencing the British acquisition of New Zealand. The Ngāpuhi people, under Hongi Hika, acquired muskets early on and initiated wars of conquest that began in 1821 and lasted into the 1830s. The British resident, James Busby, declared in 1837 that New Zealand would become 'destitute of a single aboriginal inhabitant'. A combination of factors, including the activities of the New Zealand Company which sought to settle New Zealand, led to the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi / Te Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840.

After 1840 the British government shifted their focus from the far north and established the capital in Auckland. Gradually the settlement of Auckland took over much of the trade that had flourished in the Bay of Islands. From the 1840s onwards Auckland dominated the upper part of the North Island, and the far north became part of the Auckland province. In the latter part of the nineteenth century logging and the kauri gum trade drew more settlers to the region, including groups of Croats (Dalmatians). Companies built large timber mills in Dargaville, but while the north expanded Auckland City benefited most from the trade. The intensive, unsustainable logging destroyed most of the kauri forest, resulting in the region's stagnation. Cattle farming and horticulture eventually replaced logging but the boom years of Northland were over.

For much of the twentieth century Northland remained fairly separate from the rest of New Zealand. Poor roads and isolation hindered economic development, particularly in the north of the region. Today the region is the most rural in New Zealand, with almost half of the population living in rural areas. A third of the population is Māori, which has made the maintenance of cultural traditions easier. By the 1970s the northern areas were one of the few parts of New Zealand which remained largely Māori speaking.

Lack of employment and educational opportunities means it is difficult for the region to keep its young people and it has experienced significant migration loss of people aged 15 to 40 years. Unemployment rates are high and the region has one of the highest percentages of people receiving income from the unemployment benefit. Rural occupations predominate and a large proportion of the population works in agriculture, forestry or fishing. Despite the proximity and undoubtedly important influence of Auckland, the region remains a land apart to some extent. Its physical beauty, geographical isolation, rural qualities and rich history give it a unique atmosphere. However, the southern part of the region has the potential to be affected by the burgeoning growth of Auckland and it is possible that the future Auckland population will encroach upon the region.

History

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 900s | According to tradition, Kupe, the Polynesian discoverer of Aotearoa, circumnavigated both islands, and brought his canoe into Hokianga. |
| 1100s | Early Polynesian settlements scattered around the coasts of Northland |
| 1100-1700s | Warm conditions favoured kumara and horticulture in the region. By the eighteenth century the region had the largest population of Māori in Aotearoa. |

- 1807 Māori first acquired firearms, which later led to the dominance of Ngāpuhi, especially under the leadership of Hongi Hika.
- 1809 Local Māori burnt the Boyd in Whangaroa Harbour because of the apparent mistreatment of the chief Tara during the ship's voyage from Port Jackson (Sydney).
- 1814 The Church Missionary Society set up an Anglican mission at Rangihoua. Reverend Samuel Marsden conducted the first Anglican service in New Zealand on Christmas Day.
- 1820 Captain Kent in the schooner Prince Regent took the first European vessel into Hokianga Harbour.
The first plough was put through New Zealand soil at Kerikeri.
- 1827 Thomas Raine and David Ramsey established a flax trade based at Horeke in the Hokianga.
- 1830s Literacy spreads rapidly among Māori and becomes a pre-requisite for a young Rangatira.
- 1838 A Roman Catholic Marist Mission, under Bishop Pompallier, was established in Hokianga.
- 1839 Scotsman, William Carruth, became the first permanent European settler at Whangarei.
- 1840 After days of debate Captain Hobson and 45 Māori chiefs signed the Treaty of Waitangi / Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The Treaty was eventually signed by more than 500 Māori chiefs throughout the country
- 1844-46 Disputes occurred between Māori and the government - during this time Hone Heke and Kawiti felled the flag staff on Maiki Hill, Russell.
- 1845 Whangarei District virtually abandoned for a decade following the actions of Hone Heke in the north.
- 1850s The quest for kauri gum brought new prosperity to the region.
- 1860s The first Dalmatians arrived to work in the gumfields. Many settled permanently in the region.
- 1892 Hui planned the formation of a Māori parliament/ Kotahitanga.
- 1896 Whangarei became a borough.

1924	The railway link to Auckland was completed.
1934	An all weather road to Auckland was completed.
1952	Waipoua State forest, the only large surviving tract of Kauri forest, was declared a forest sanctuary.
1955-56	Opo the friendly dolphin visited the shores of Opononi (southern shoreline of Hokianga harbour).
1964	Marsden Point Oil Refinery began production.
1965	Whangarei became a city
1967	The Marsden A thermal power station completed.

The land and environment

Topography

The Northland Region covers a total land area of 13,941 square kilometres. Northland, the northern-most region of New Zealand, is bounded to the west by the Tasman Sea, to the east by the Pacific Ocean and to the south by Auckland. The Kaipara Harbour marks the southern boundary, while North Cape is the most northern point, marginally north of Cape Reinga.

Northland is peninsula-shaped, approximately 250 kilometres in length but only 80 kilometres across at its widest point. It has a very high ratio of coastline to land area. The region is principally hill country with some flat land which is mainly restricted to river valleys and the coastal areas. The main upland areas comprise the Maungataniwha Range in the north and the Tutamoe Range in the west. The highest point is around the Hokianga Harbour, with hills around 700 metres above sea level.

The principal river of the region is the Wairoa River whose catchment covers approximately 29 percent of Northland's land area. It is sourced from both the Tutamoe Ranges and the hills on the eastern side of the peninsula, with its tributaries flowing south and then west to Dargaville. The river continues southwards to enter the Kaipara Harbour. On the eastern coast of Northland there are numerous harbours and bays. The most well known is the Bay of Islands, which is dotted with around 150 islands formed through the result of a drowned river system. The western coastline has long sandy beaches broken only by the Hokianga and Kaipara Harbours. Ninety Mile Beach is also a well-known landmark, although its length is actually around 90 kilometres.

Soil and climate

Over 100 different soil types have been identified in the region¹ which can be attributed to the variation in underlying rock, the low relief and the influence that the warm, moist climate and original vegetation have on soil-forming conditions. Northland has significant areas of strongly leached, heavy clays with thin topsoil and low subsoil fertility.

In the early days of European settlement, vast areas of Northland were covered with kauri forests, but these were soon felled to clear land for agriculture and the timber was used for housing construction, spars for sailing ships and for export. After the clearance of most of the accessible forested land, large areas of infertile, unproductive, leached gumland soils remained. However, through effective land management processes and extensive use of fertilisers and trace elements, the soils have become productive and are being used for agricultural and forestry purposes.

Northland has a sub-tropical climate and experiences warm humid summers and mild winters. The region has an average annual temperature of 15°C, the warmest in the country. Whangarei, the principal settlement, has a maximum mid-summer average temperature of 25°C and a minimum mid-winter average temperature of 7°C. Whangarei also has around 1,900 sunshine hours per year, and receives an annual rainfall of approximately 1,300 millimetres, about average for New Zealand.

Environment

Air and water pollution, land erosion, marine oil and fuel spills, and plant and animal pests are the main environmental problems in Northland. Common pollutants are soil and sediment from earthworks, roads and farmland, and also fertiliser, cow shed waste and contaminated runoff from farmland. Other significant potential sources of pollution include industrial discharges, sewage treatment systems and landfills.

Water quality and supply issues have become more important with population growth and an upsurge in demand for water for farm irrigation. These demands conflict with the need for adequate flows to maintain stream life and water quality for all uses. Flow levels of significant rivers and streams are electronically monitored day and night to ensure that major water users reduce their take when the flow drops to levels which could have a major impact on water quality. Silt from land erosion or earthworks is a significant contaminant of Northland's rivers, streams and harbours. Many landholders are actively working to minimise land erosion with tree planting programmes, river stabilisation works and improved earthwork techniques.

On Northland's coastline small oil and fuel spills, usually from bilge pumping or boat refuelling, are reported regularly. There is also the risk of a large oil spill from a coastal ship or ocean-going oil tankers which visit Marsden Point to unload crude oil at the oil refinery.

Possums, feral deer and goats are major environmental pests in Northland. These animals severely damage native forests. These pests, along with hares and rabbits, also damage horticultural crops, farmland and commercial forest plantations. The Regional Council, landholders and the Department of Conservation work together to control the pest populations. Weasels, stoats, ferrets and wild cats also have a major impact on the native bird population.

¹ Source: *New Zealand's Forest Growing and Wood Processing Sector report*, Ministry of Forestry.

The most well established of Northland's environmental and agriculture weeds were introduced by European settlers last century, but new species are also escaping into the environment from home gardens. The most significant include mistflower, wild ginger, lantana and the climber moth plant, while major agricultural weeds are gorse, carrot weed and ragwort. Northland Regional Council and other authorities have introduced biological control agents for as many of these weeds as possible.

Regional features

Northland is a region rich in history with many buildings and sites reflecting New Zealand's past. The Treaty House at Waitangi is a place of national heritage being the spot at which, on 6 February 1840, the British Crown and representatives of various tribes signed the Treaty of Waitangi / Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the founding constitutional document of New Zealand. The township of Kerikeri has two of the oldest buildings in New Zealand - Kemp House (1821) and the Old Stone House (built mid-1830s).

Two of Northland's main attractions are its sub-tropical climate and sandy beaches and bays. The Bay of Islands, with its numerous islands, is a popular spot for fishing, scuba diving or sailing. Tutukaka provides a base for dive trips to the famous Poor Knights Islands, which are volcanic in origin and consist of a labyrinth of caves and tunnels. Ninety Mile Beach is a popular drive north up the coast, ending at Cape Reinga, the northern tip of New Zealand where the Tasman Sea meets the Pacific Ocean. A.H. Reed Memorial Park is a bush reserve with several stands of ancient kauri trees and well-marked walkways. The Waipoua Forest has New Zealand's largest tree, the kauri *Tane Mahutu* (Lord of the Forest).

The people

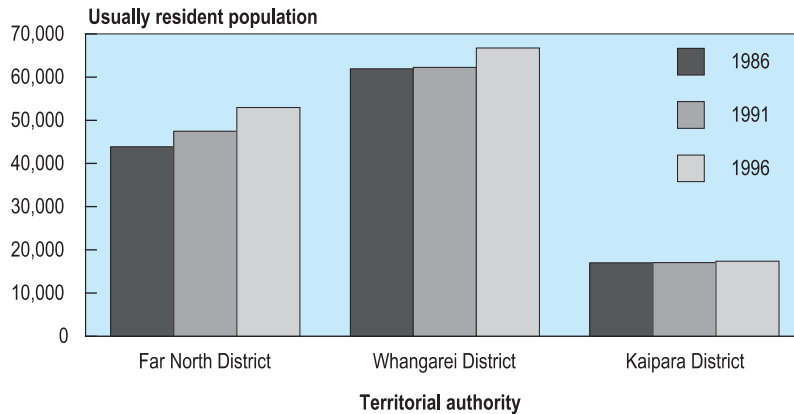
Population structure

On census night (5 March 1996), Northland had a usually resident population of 137,052 people which represents 3.8 percent of the national population. Northland's population is similar in size to that of Hawke's Bay, with 142,788 people.

Between the 1986 and 1996 Censuses, Northland's population increased by 14,220 people. Most of the increase has been in the last five years with the population rising by 8.1 percent. This is higher than the national increase of 7.2 percent over the same interval. Most of the increase (between 1991 and 1996) has been concentrated in the Far North District where the population rose by 5,469 or 11.5 percent. This can be explained by a 10.1 percent increase in people identifying with the European ethnic group considerably higher than the national average growth in this group of 3.4 percent.

Figure 1.1

Population Growth, 1986-1996



Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Censuses of Population and Dwellings*, 1986, 1991 and 1996

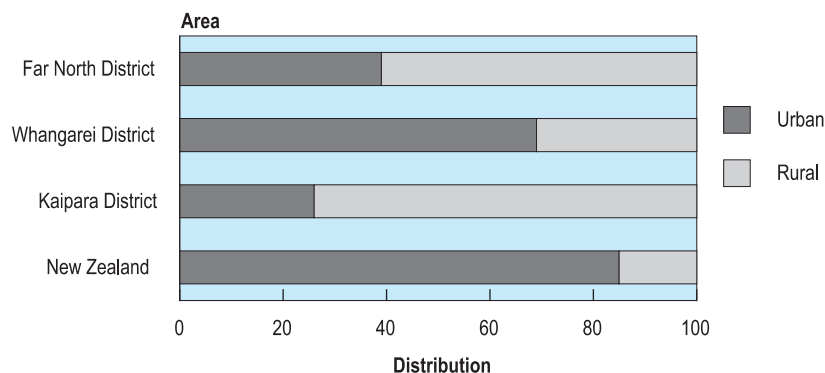
Subnational resident population projections (using the 1996 Census as a base) indicate that the Far North District is projected to increase in population by 31.1 percent between 30 June 1996 and 30 June 2021. This compares with a projected national increase of 17.2 percent over the same interval. The Whangarei and Kaipara Districts are projected to change by 18.7 percent and -2.8 percent respectively. Consistent with the national projections, Northland's Māori population is expected to increase (48 percent) between 1996 and 2021 (compared with 41 percent nationally).

Northland's estimated population density, at 9.8 people per square kilometre, is significantly below the New Zealand average of 13.1 recorded on census night 1996. The main population centre in Northland is the Whangarei urban area (45,891 people), which constitutes around 33 percent of the regional population. As a consequence, the Whangarei District has the highest population density of 20.1 people per square kilometre. The most sparsely populated district is Kaipara with only 5.6 people per square kilometre.

Northland is the least urbanised region in New Zealand. Only 51.9 percent of the population lived in urban areas on 5 March 1996. This compares with 85.4 percent of the national usually resident population. In the last ten years, Northland's usually resident population has become much more rural, especially between the 1991 and 1996 Censuses. There were 45.2 percent of people living in rural areas in March 1986, compared with 48.1 percent ten years later, the fastest growth being in the Far North District which has a large rural population base. The growth has mainly been due to natural increase which can be explained by the high proportion of Māori in the area (Māori generally have higher birth rates).

Figure 1.2

Urban / Rural Population Distribution, 1996



Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Census of Population and Dwellings, 1996*

Migration²

The majority of people migrating to Northland from within New Zealand came from the closest region, Auckland, with 10,113 people³ moving northwards between the 1991 and 1996 censuses. Conversely, more than half of the 9,252 people moving to Auckland came from Northland. Looking at the age structure of the people migrating south to Auckland, 50.8 percent were less than 25 years old. Employment opportunities and more educational institutions in Auckland would account for many younger people moving south.

Although Northland has increased in population by 8.1 percent between the 1991 and 1996 Censuses, most of this growth has occurred through natural increase. Net internal and overseas migration flows were small. Marginally more people left Northland for other regions with there being a net internal migration loss of 114 people. Northland had a net overseas migration gain of 298 people over the five-year period.

Age and sex structure

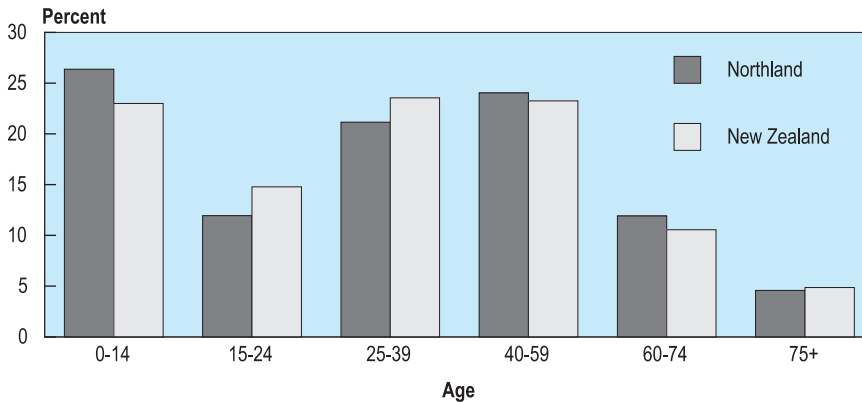
Northland has a much younger age distribution compared with other regions. This difference reflects the area's high proportion of Māori, who have higher birth rates and a younger age structure than most other ethnic groups. On 5 March 1996, 26.4 percent of the population were aged under 15 years compared with 23.0 percent nationally. Conversely, Northland has proportionately fewer people in the working-age group, especially those aged between 15 and 40. The region's older aged population resembles that of the national average, with around 16 percent aged over 60 years.

² For definitions of internal and overseas migration, refer to glossary.

³ When census data is being referred to, unidentifiable, not applicable, or missing responses have been excluded from all calculations.

Figure 1.3

Selected Age Group Distributions, 1996



Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Census of Population and Dwellings, 1996*

Census data for 1996 showed Northland had a higher ratio of females to males, 983 males for every 1,000 females. The region has a higher proportion of males than the national ratio of 966 males per 1,000 females. Again, this probably reflects the largely rural nature of the area where males are traditionally more associated with farming. Consistent with the national trend, the female population has increased at a faster rate, possibly because of the ageing population. The 1991 Census showed an almost identical ratio of males to females in Northland, with 998 males for every 1,000 females.

Ethnicity

Northland has always been an area with a high proportion of Māori residents. The warm conditions and rich marine life favoured early Māori settlers. The main iwi living in Northland in 1870 were Te Aupōuri, Te Rarawa, and Ngāpuhi, with Ngāpuhi being the largest numerically.

Of those people living in Northland who reported having Māori ancestry at the 1996 Census, the Ngāpuhi iwi had 20,742 people, and the Te Rarawa and Te Aupōuri iwi had 2,892 and 2,052 people respectively.

At the 1996 Census, 32.3 percent of all people identified themselves as being of Māori ethnicity,⁴ compared with 15.1 percent nationally. By contrast, 78.8 percent of all people identified with one or more European ethnicities, below the New Zealand figure of 83.1 percent. The Far North District had the highest percentage of people identifying with Māori ethnicity, 21,927 people or 45.5 percent of the population of this area.

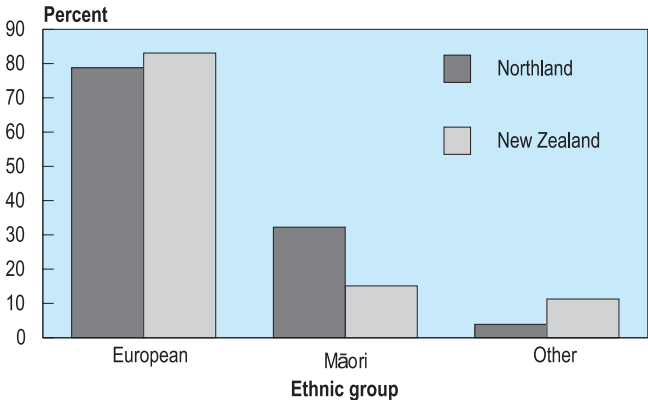
People reporting other ethnicities, such as those associated with the Pacific Islands, are under-represented in the population. Since Northland has many rural settlements, overseas immigrants who traditionally settle in urbanised areas have not made an impact on Northland's population.

⁴ Because people can identify with more than one ethnic group, percentages across ethnic groups will add up to more than 100 percent.

However, in the early days of New Zealand settlement, a significant number of Dalmatians chose to move to Northland for kauri gum digging. Even today, the influence of the early Dalmatian settlers is reflected in family names and the settlement of Dargaville.

Figure 1.4

Distribution of Selected Ethnicities, 1996



Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Census of Population and Dwellings, 1996*

Both main ethnic groups increased between the 1991 and 1996 Censuses. Over this period, people identifying as Māori increased by 16.5 percent (a growth of 5,892), a significantly greater percentage increase than European identifications which increased by 6.3 percent. The growth rate for the Māori ethnic group was the highest in the Whangarei District, increasing by 22.7 percent during this period.

Figure 1.5

Population Distribution and Change in Population for Selected Ethnic Groups⁽¹⁾, 1991-1996

Ethnic Group	1996			Change (1991-1996)	
	Number	Percent of population		Northland	
		Northland	New Zealand	Number	Percentage change
European	101,331	78.8	83.1	6,009	6.3
Māori	41,499	32.3	15.1	5,892	16.5
Pacific Islands	2,925	2.3	5.8	1,338	84.3
Asian	1,734	1.3	5.0	714	70.0
Other	309	0.2	0.5	184	146.0

(1) Note: People not specifying any ethnicity are omitted from the above table

Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Censuses of Population and Dwellings, 1991, and 1996*

Religion

In New Zealand, Anglicanism is the dominant religion and Northland follows this pattern. At the time of the 1996 Census, 20.9 percent of the usually resident population were Anglican, compared with 18.4 percent nationally. Although the Latter Day Saints and the Ratana religions have a small representation nationally, these religions are well represented in Northland. A total of 2.6 percent of Northlanders were Latter Day Saints (compared with 1.2 percent nationally), and 3.5 percent were Ratana (compared with 1.1 percent nationally). This is probably due to the high proportion of Māori. Nationally, 57.0 percent of Latter Day Saints and 97.4 percent of Ratana people identify as Māori. The Ratana religion was founded by Tahupotiki Wiremu Ratana in November 1918 and, at the time, united Māori in the harsh post-war climate. In modern times, the religion still has a significant following in traditional Māori areas.

Education

At the time of the 1996 Census, 45.9 percent of Northland's working age population had no educational qualifications. This is above the national figure of 38.2 percent. Access to appropriate educational institutions could be a barrier for many people in the region due to the rural nature of the population. Also the opportunity to engage in skilled occupations is more likely in urbanised areas. In terms of the highest qualifications gained, 28.5 percent have a secondary school qualification (compared with 31.4 percent nationally), and 25.6 percent have a post-school qualification (compared with 30.5 percent nationally).

Labour market

Northland's workforce is distributed among most industries, although agriculture, forestry and fishing, and the retail trade industries have a larger share when compared with the national distribution. The large amount of forested land being milled locally has resulted in a high proportion of people being employed in the wood and paper product manufacturing industry.

Figure 1.6

Full Time Equivalents Employed in the Manufacturing Industry, 1997

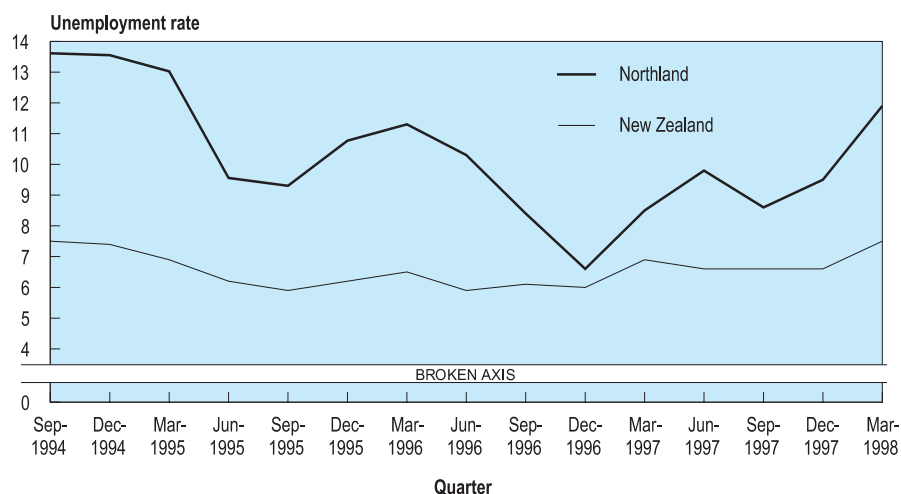
Industry	Percent of manufacturing	
	Northland	New Zealand
Food, beverage and tobacco	25.9	24.5
Textile, clothing, footwear and leather manufacturing	6.0	9.5
Wood and paper product manufacturing	14.0	10.3
Printing, publishing and recorded media	4.9	8.8
Petroleum, coal, chemical and associated product manufacturing	9.9	8.3
Non-metallic mineral product manufacturing	5.0	2.7
Metal product manufacturing	12.0	11.2
Machinery and equipment manufacturing	17.2	18.7
Other manufacturing	5.1	5.9

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Annual Business Frame Update, 1997

Unemployment has traditionally been high in the region, and unemployment rates have been among the country's highest in recent years. During mid-1993 the unemployment rate peaked at around 15 percent.⁵ However, since this time, the unemployment rate has been decreasing and has stabilised to around 8 to 9 percent of the labour force. Unemployment is still the highest in the country; for the December 1997 quarter the unemployment rate was 9.5 percent compared with 6.6 percent nationally.

Figure 1.7

Unemployment Rates⁶



Source: Statistics New Zealand, Household Labour Force Survey

The region also has the lowest labour force participation rate in the country, with 61.4 percent of the working-age population being in the labour force. A number of factors could contribute to this situation - the younger age structure (with young adults still at school or attending tertiary institutions), and reduced access to employment due to rural isolation.

Voluntary work

There is a strong rural voluntary network in the region. The people are among the highest contributors to unpaid work outside the home. At the time of the 1996 Census, 47.2 percent of the working-age population made some contribution to unpaid work over the four weeks prior to census night 1996. This compares with 44.1 percent nationally. More specifically, 3.0 percent of the working-age population contributed more than 60 hours of unpaid work, the highest percentage in the country. People identifying as Māori were the highest contributors to unpaid work in Northland with 52.2 percent making some contribution, compared with 45.6 percent for non-Māori ethnic groups. It seems likely that this is partly due to voluntary work on local marae.

⁵ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Household Labour Force Survey.

⁶ Census night unemployment figure of the Household Labour Force Survey, which estimates unemployment figures from a representative sample rather than a general census of the population.

Access to services

The ratio of professionals to the population is generally not as good as other regions. Northland's large rural population is probably a prohibiting factor. Engineers and nurses, for example, are under-represented, more so than any other region. At the national level, there is one engineer for every 209 people, but there is only one for every 394 Northlanders. There were also fewer general practitioners, dentists and dental surgeons, pharmacists and other medical professionals. Of the main professions, only teachers were more prevalent than the national average - one teacher for every 68 people, compared with one for every 71 people nationally. This is probably due to the large proportion of children in the region.

Dwellings

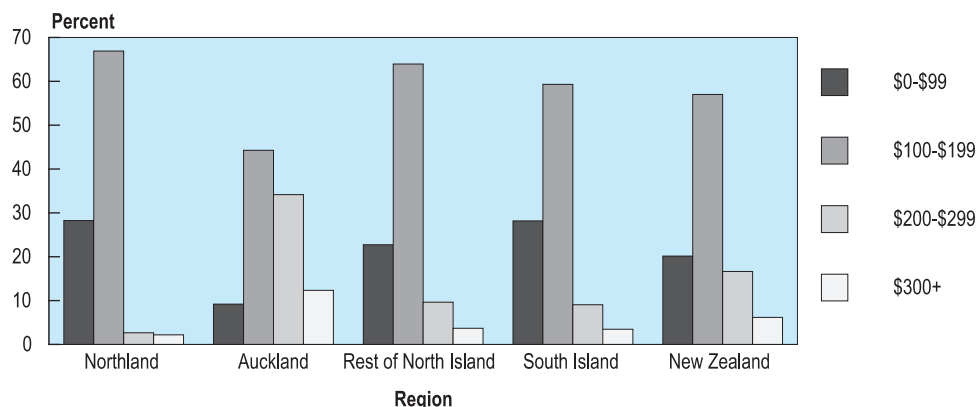
Of the 48,162 private dwellings in Northland at 5 March 1996, 15,036 or 33.1 percent were owned with a mortgage, lower than the New Zealand average of 36.7 percent. Additionally, 16,467 or 36.3 percent were owned without a mortgage compared with the national figure of 32.3 percent.

Northland also has proportionately more dwellings provided rent free - 6.2 percent of all private dwellings compared with 3.8 percent nationally. Northland is a largely rural area (compared with other regions) with a high number of farms, many of which provide free board for employees. This explains the above-average percentage of dwellings provided rent free.

Housing rentals in Northland are considerably lower than other regions. Ninety-five percent of all rented dwellings were rented for less than \$200 per week (compared with 77.2 percent nationally). In contrast, only 2.2 percent of all rented dwellings in Northland had weekly rent exceeding \$300, compared with 6.2 percent nationally. Lower weekly rent could be explained by lower house prices in the region. Prices average \$141,961 compared with \$183,986 nationally (for the year ended December 1997).⁷

Figure 1.8

Distribution of Weekly Rent, 1996



Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Census of Population and Dwellings, 1996*

⁷ Source: Quotable Value New Zealand.

Households and families

At the time of the 1996 Census, 67.6 percent of all occupied dwellings in Northland consisted of one family only. This is higher than the national figure of 64.9 percent.

One-parent families accounted for 19.9 percent of all families, compared with 17.7 percent nationally. There were proportionately fewer two-parent families in the region - 42.0 percent of all families (compared with 44.9 percent nationally) - and the number of two-parent families with one or two children was the lowest in the country. However, a high proportion of both one and two-parent families had three or more children, 27.5 percent of all families compared with 23.6 percent nationally. A higher number of children in families would be influenced by the high Māori population who generally have larger families.

Number of children

At the 1996 Census, women were asked how many live children they had given birth to. The data which resulted is historical but it gives an indicator of family size over time in different regions, in a way which is impossible to obtain from any other source. These statistics indicated that Northland mothers had an average of 3.04 children born alive, considerably higher than the national average, and second only to Gisborne (3.12 children born alive per mother). Northland mothers were also younger, with 10.3 percent of mothers being less than 20 years old (compared with 8.7 percent nationally).⁸ This is probably related to two factors - ethnicity (Māori mothers have more children than European mothers) and the generally larger family sizes in rural areas.

Income and expenditure

Personal income for the working-age population was among the lowest in New Zealand at the time of the 1996 Census. The median income (in which half earned over and half under the stated amount) for the year ended 31 March 1996 was \$13,225 per year, much lower than the New Zealand median of \$15,603. A low employment rate, and proportionately more people working in the lower-paying occupations are the key factors. More specifically, 20.7 percent of the employed population worked as agriculture and fishery workers, around twice the national figure of 9.9 percent. The median national annual income for agriculture and fishery workers is \$18,648 compared with \$24,600 for all employed people. Affecting income levels also are the number of hours worked per week. On census night 1996, Northlanders worked a median of 43.5 hours per week, lower than the national median of 44.4 hours.

The 1996 Census figures show that Northland had a median household income of \$27,843 (for the 12-month period ending 31 March 1996), the second lowest in the country behind the West Coast Region. During the 1991-1996 intercensal period, the median personal income increased by 11.3 percent which is marginally higher than the national increase of 10.3 percent.

⁸ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Vital Statistics.

For the year ended March 1997, households in Northland spent an average of \$29,857.⁹ This is low compared with the national expenditure of \$33,145 over the same time period. Low personal and household incomes, and lower than average house prices are the main contributing factors.

Northlanders spent more proportionately on housing and household operation than nationally. This is probably a reflection of increasing house prices in the region (an average of around 8 percent annual increase in house prices over the last five years) caused by an increasing population. Proportionately, food expenditure is lower which could be a result of the vast natural food resources in the region.

Figure 1.9

Household Expenditure for Main Groups, Year Ended March 1997

Item	Northland		New Zealand	
	Annual expenditure (\$)	Percent of expenditure	Annual expenditure (\$)	Percent of expenditure
Food	4,702	15.8	5,431	16.4
Housing group	6,578	22.0	6,719	20.3
Household operation ⁽¹⁾	4,185	14.0	4,546	13.7
Apparel	1,069	3.6	1,246	3.8
Transportation	5,485	18.4	6,033	18.2
Other goods group	3,400	11.4	3,814	11.5
Other services	4,437	14.9	5,355	16.2
Total	29,857	100.0	33,145	100.0

(1) The household operations category covers the cost of running a household, and includes items such as heating, the purchase of household items (eg furniture) and any non-food household services

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Regional Household Expenditure Database

Health

The Northland Region has access to health care through five hospitals. The largest is in Whangarei which has 372 beds (as at September 1997). The hospital bed ratio across the region approximates the national ratio. There was one bed for every 263 Northlanders, marginally less than the national ratio of one bed for every 242 people. There were 106 active general practitioners, a ratio of one practitioner for every 1,293 people¹⁰, slightly below the national ratio of one practitioner for every 1,233 people.

The 1996 Census provides some information about the health of the people of the region. Northland has the second-highest proportion of regular smokers (28.0 percent of all people aged 15 years and over) behind Gisborne, and also the lowest proportion of people who have never smoked before (47.7 percent). Both Northland and Gisborne have a large percentage of Māori people who generally have higher smoking rates. In particular, 44.8 percent of Northland Māori were regular smokers (compared with 22.0 percent of non-Māori).

⁹ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Regional Household Expenditure Database.

¹⁰ Source: Ministry of Health.

Infant mortality rates provide another measure of health. This is a measure of the number of infant deaths as a ratio for every 1,000 infants (infants being defined as children less than one year of age). Northland has a higher infant mortality rate, 9.3 deaths per 1,000 children compared with 7.0 deaths per 1,000 children nationally (five-year period, ending December 1996).¹¹ Infant mortality rates are considerably higher among Māori, the rate being approximately three times that of Europeans.

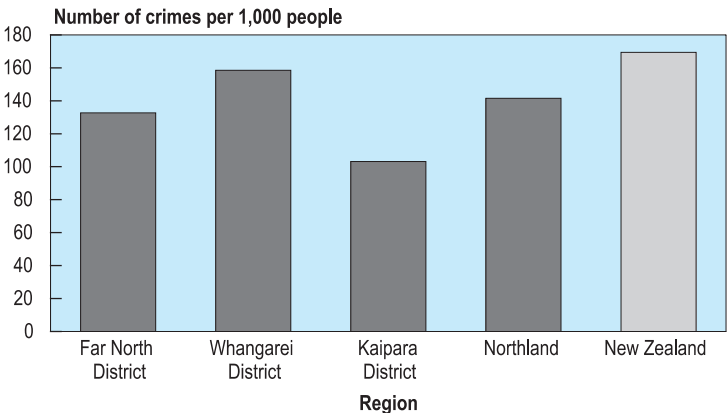
Life expectancy at birth is lower than the national average. According to the 1995-97 regional life tables, a new-born baby can expect to live for an average of 75.5 years¹² (compared with 77.1 years nationally). A possible contributing factor could be the high proportion of the region's population who are Māori who have lower life expectancy than non-Māori. According to the 1995-97 New Zealand life tables the difference was approximately 8.5 years.

Crime

For the year ended June 1997, there were a total of 16,723 reported offences in the Northland Region.¹³ There were proportionately more violent, drug-related and anti-social offences committed than the national average. Conversely, there were proportionately fewer property damage and dishonesty crimes.

A way of measuring crime is to determine its impact on the population as a whole. Northland has fewer crimes with one offence for every 8.2 people, compared to the national ratio of one offence for every 6.9 people. This can be explained by reported crime rates generally being lower in rural areas.

Figure 1.10
**Number of Crimes per 1,000 Usually Resident Population,
Year Ended June 1997**



Source: New Zealand Police

¹¹ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Vital Statistics.

¹² Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Regional Life Tables, 1995-97*.

¹³ Source: New Zealand Police.

The economy

Business

Much of the settlement in Northland in the late colonial period was aided by the kauri trades. A demand for building timber coupled with an increase in gum prices in the 1860s resulted in a rapid increase in the milling of kauri timber and the extraction of kauri gum. Kauri gum exports, most of which were sent to the United States and used for varnish, peaked around 1900 but declined after World War I due to competition from other resins and synthetic products. Too much dependence on extractive industries resulted in the region's eventual stagnation. Northland's economy was largely influenced by Auckland, and when the dairy industry developed in Auckland in the 1920s and 1930s, flow on effects resulted in development further north. Diversification has seen Northland expand into many land and sea-based activities such as fishing, forestry, agriculture and horticulture. The warm climate and closeness of Auckland's large population has also resulted in a significant tourist industry.

Statistics show that Northland has over twice the national percentage of businesses in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries - 11.0 percent compared with 4.4 percent nationally as at June 1997.¹⁴ This can be explained by a number of factors - the rural nature of the area, the high amount of exotic timber planted and the extensive coastline. Conversely, only 13.1 percent of businesses are classified into the property and business services industry, compared with 19.1 percent nationally. Again this is a consequence of the substantial rural population base.

There were five businesses in Northland which were ranked in the top 200 in a recent survey¹⁵ (annual turnover being the determining factor). As at February 1997, they employed a total of 1,291 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The majority of these FTEs were employed in the manufacturing industry, and the remainder were employed in the electricity, gas, and water supply industry, the transport and storage industry and the retail trade industry.

Oil is refined at the Marsden Point Oil Refinery, which is located at the entrance to the Whangarei Harbour. The refinery produces most of New Zealand's petroleum requirements. Around 40 to 45 percent of the refinery's intake comes from Taranaki-produced hydrocarbons, and the rest is imported crude oil from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Minerals

Northland is a region rich in minerals. There is potential for base metal extraction of copper, lead and zinc but currently there is little prospecting because of environmental issues and uncertainty over land ownership. Other mineral deposits present in the region include coal and bauxite. Four small coal fields are located in the mid-eastern area of the region between Kawakawa and Kamo. Approximately 20 million tonnes of rock-bearing bauxite deposits have also been identified near Matauri Bay on the north east coast of the region.

¹⁴ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Annual Business Frame Update.

¹⁵ Source: "1997 Top 200 New Zealand Companies", Deloitte & Touche Consulting Group, *Management*, December 1997, pp.68-91.

Energy

Northland's first geothermal power plant was commissioned in 1998, and is located near Ngawha Springs near Kaikohe. The plant generates eight megawatts and has a maximum capacity of 10 megawatts. It is estimated that the plant will supply approximately one-third of the region's power requirements.

Northland rivers are unsuitable for hydroelectric power generation purposes, and coal deposits in the region are uneconomic for thermal power generation. The Marsden Thermal Power Station, situated near the oil refinery, is the main source of electricity generation in Northland. Heavy oil is piped six kilometres from the refinery and stored in four 19-million-litre-capacity tanks at the Marsden A station. The station has a capacity of 240 megawatts and was commissioned in 1968. Marsden B, although completed in 1980, was never commissioned and was subsequently demolished in October 1997.

Agriculture

For the year ended June 1996, approximately 61 percent of the total land in Northland was being used for farming purposes.¹⁶ This is marginally above the national figure of 60 percent. For the same time period, there were 5,523 farm holdings in Northland. Although the region has numerous farms, the mean farm size is only 155 hectares, well below the national average of 251 hectares. High quality farmland with favourable climatic conditions has resulted in a more intensive use of the land for horticulture and cattle farming.

Cattle farming is the predominant farm type in Northland. Beef cattle predominate, with stock numbers estimated at 544,411 at June 1996. Northland has the third-highest number of beef cattle in New Zealand. Only Manawatu-Wanganui and Waikato, with 789,984 and 771,586 beef cattle respectively, exceed Northland.

The mild Northland climate enables a variety of citrus and sub-tropical fruit to be cultivated. Among the principal fruit grown are: lemons, mandarins, oranges and tamarillos.

Forestry

Northland has extensive areas of forest, both indigenous and exotic. Due to the warm climate, the region produces some of New Zealand's highest-density and fastest-growing radiata pine. These exotic forests have been planted mainly on the sandy coastal areas while remnant kauri forest can be found on the uplands. Northland contains a State Forest Park that consists of a number of small forested areas including the Waipoua, Omahuta and Puketi Forests.

The estimated total area of planted production forest in Northland (as at 1 April 1997) was 155,967 hectares.¹⁷ The forestry industry is supported by a well-developed infrastructure, linking the southern half of the region with the ports of Whangarei and Auckland.

¹⁶ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Agriculture Statistics.

¹⁷ Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Buildings

The level of building activity has increased strongly with numbers of both new and altered building consents rising sharply since 1995.¹⁸ When comparing the number of new and altered consents for the years 1991 and 1997, Northland has increased by 41.1 percent, higher than the national increase of 36.7 percent. Most of the increase has been in more recent years with new and altered consents increasing from around 600 each quarter to around 750 for the latter quarters in 1997. Population increase has probably been an important factor, combined with neighbouring Auckland's large increases.

Retail trade

Retail trade in the region is also steadily increasing. Due to the strong seasonality in retail trade activities, the same quarters (or annual totals) are used for comparative purposes. For the quarter ending December 1995, total retail trade for the region was \$316 million, increasing to \$351 million (an increase of 10.8 percent) for the December 1997 quarter.¹⁹ Over the same two periods, national retail trade increased by just 3.2 percent. As at the December 1997 quarter, Northland's total retail trade amounted to 3.3 percent of the national total.

Tourism

Northland experiences strong seasonal variation in the accommodation industry, with more visitors staying during the summer months. The increase in the number of guest nights between the December 1997 and March 1998 quarters, at 58.6 percent, is among the highest in New Zealand.²⁰ This large seasonal increase is partly due to the proximity of Auckland, not only providing a large population base, but also an international gateway into New Zealand.

However, the occupancy rate of the accommodation providers is comparatively low, 22.6 percent for the December 1997 quarter compared with 31.5 percent nationally for the same period.

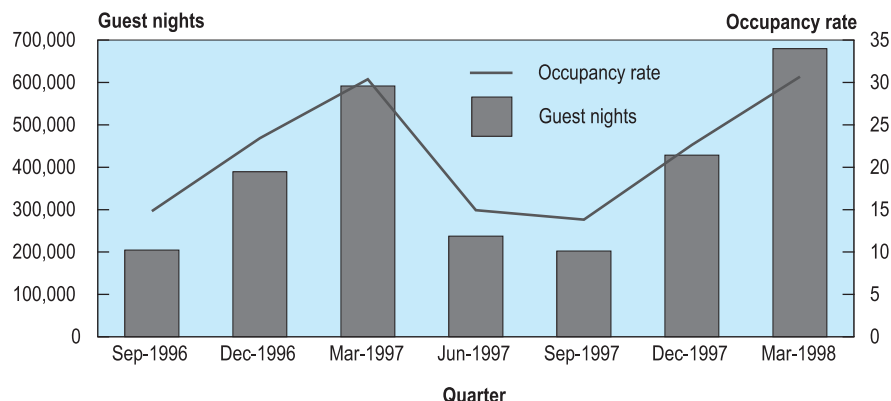
¹⁸ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Building Consents.

¹⁹ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Retail Trade Survey.

²⁰ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Accommodation Survey.

Figure 1.11

Number of Guest Nights and Occupancy Rates for Selected Quarters



Source: Statistics New Zealand, Accommodation Survey

Transport

State Highway One extends north along the eastern part of the region connecting Auckland to Whangarei. The highway continues north around the peninsula, providing access to the popular Bay of Islands. Northland has a total road length of 6,471 kilometres, of which 5,292 kilometres are classified as rural roads, or 81.8 percent of the total roading system.²¹ Furthermore, only 38.5 percent of the total road length is sealed roading compared to 61.3 percent nationally. This is the lowest proportion in New Zealand. Both of these characteristics reflect the rural nature of the area.

Traffic volume in the region is relatively low at 1,225 million vehicle-kilometres (see glossary) per year. In comparison, the neighbouring region Auckland has a traffic volume of around 8,200 million vehicle kilometres per year. Data from the 1996 Census suggests that Northlanders have fewer cars per household. Most households have one car only, while only 38.0 percent have more than one car compared to 47.1 percent nationally.

There were 3,520 new and ex-overseas cars registered in the Whangarei Postal District for the year ended December 1997.²² Car registrations have remained steady throughout the last two years although the annual registrations nationally are starting to decline.

²¹ Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Roading Statistics*, Transfund New Zealand, 30 June 1997.

Definitions

Adult

Person aged 15 years and over.

Birth (fertility) rate

A measure expressing the number of births in relation to the size of the population from which these births arose.

Census

A type of survey in which all members of a given population provide information at a given time. These units may be people, companies, buildings, local authorities, etc. Statistics New Zealand carries out a range of censuses at regular intervals, such as the **Census of Population and Dwellings**, (at five-yearly intervals).

Child

Person under 15 years of age.

Country road

Defined by the Land Transport Safety Authority as a road with a posted speed limit of 70 km/h or more.

Couple

Two persons who usually reside together, and are married or living in a consensual union.

Death (mortality) rate

A measure expressing the number of deaths in relation to the size of the population in which these deaths occurred.

De facto population

The population enumerated in terms of its actual place of residence at a given time. Visitors from overseas, who are in New Zealand on census night, are included in the de facto population. Thus the de facto population is different from the usually resident population, which refers to people who usually live in New Zealand.

Density (of population)

Average number of persons per square kilometre in a particular locality.

Dependency ratio

An indication of the burden of non-workers on workers. The **conventional measure of dependency** is the sum of people aged 0-14 years and 65 years or more as a ratio of the number of people aged 15-64 years. The **child dependency ratio** is the number of people aged 0-14 years as a ratio of the number of people aged 15-64 years. The **elderly dependency ratio** is the number of people aged 65 years or over as a ratio of the number of people aged 15-64 years. The **labour force dependency**

ratio is the sum of people aged 0-14 years and the number of people not in the labour force as a ratio of the number of people in the labour force. The advantage of the latter is that it takes into account variations in the labour force participation of women, and changes in the age at entry and age at retirement from the labour force. The **employment dependency ratio** is the sum of people aged 0-14 years and people who are not employed (including those not in the labour force and those who are unemployed) as a ratio of the number of people who are employed. This has the additional advantage of taking into account changing levels of unemployment.

Dependent child

Person aged under 18 years who is not employed full-time.

Elderly

Person aged 65 years and over.

Employment status

A person's status within the labour force. Including those in full- and part-time employment: paid employee; self-employed and without employees; employer; and unpaid family worker.

Ethnicity / ethnic responses

The ethnic group or groups that people identify with or feel they belong to. Thus, ethnicity is self-perceived and people can belong to more than one ethnic group meaning that the total number of ethnic responses for the target population will often exceed the actual number of people. Furthermore, this affects percentages, in that they will often sum to more than 100 percent. An **ethnic group** is defined as a social group whose members have the following characteristics:

- share a sense of common origins
- claim a common and distinctive history and destiny
- possess one or more dimensions of collective cultural individuality
- feel a sense of unique collective solidarity.

Life expectancy

The average number of years that a person could expect to live from a given age if a given set of age-specific mortality rates are applied without change for each successive year. Conceptually, it equals the number of years of life remaining to all persons reaching a specified age in a life table, divided by the number of persons reaching that age. The expectation of life is derived from a life table.

Family

A family consists of two or more people, who are members of the same household, and who comprise either a couple, or at least one parent role/child relationship, or both.

Full-time

Persons working 30 hours or more a week.

Full-time equivalent

Full-time equivalents are all full-time employees plus one-half of all part-time employees.

Guest nights

A guest night is equivalent to one guest spending one night at an establishment. For example, a motel with 15 guests spending two nights each would report provision of 30 guest nights of accommodation.

Household

One person who usually resides alone, or two or more people who usually reside together and share facilities (such as eating facilities, cooking facilities, bathroom and toilet facilities, a living area).

Household operation

The household operation category (for household expenditure) covers the cost of running a household, and includes items such as heating, the purchase of household items (eg furniture) and any non-food household services.

Infant mortality rate

The number of deaths of infants under 1 year of age registered during a year per 1000 live births during the same year. It should be noted that some of the infant deaths in the numerator of the infant mortality rate occur to infants born in the year prior to that for which the infant death rate is computed. Hence, the measure is only an approximation of the true risk of mortality during the year of birth.

Labour force

Persons aged 15 years and over who:

- regularly work for one or more hours a week for financial gain
- are unpaid working in a family business
- are unemployed and actively seeking either part-time or full-time work.

Labour force participation rate

The percentage of the total population aged 15 years or over who are in the labour force. Institutionalised people and those in the armed forces are sometimes excluded.

Median

The value which divides a distribution or array so that an equal number of items is on either side of it. For example, the median age is the specified age where one half of the population is older and one half is younger.

Migrant

A person moving from one place to another. A return migrant is a person who moves back to their place of origin.

Migration

Net overseas migration

The number of overseas arrivals into a country, less the number of overseas departures from a country. When there are more arrivals than departures it is known as net immigration, and when there are more departures than arrivals it is net emigration.

Net internal migration

Internal migration is determined by matching details supplied in the “usual address five years ago” question on the census form against the current usual address. If the two are the same, then the person is classified as a non-mover. If there are differences, then it is assumed that the person has changed where they usually live. Internal migration recorded in this way tends to under-estimate the true magnitude of movements that have taken place. This is because the census only looks at two points in time, and there is no record of any other movements which may have occurred in between. For example, multiple moves by a single person will be missed, as will return migration, moves by people who have subsequently died, been born, or moved overseas since the 1991 Census. A number of groups within the population are excluded from census-based internal migration analysis because they have no previous address available. This could be due to a variety of reasons, including being overseas at the time, being born after the 1991 Census, or providing a previous address which could not be coded to an area. Overall, around 4 in every 5 New Zealanders were able to be included in an analysis of internal migration flows between 1991 and 1996.

Natural increase

The excess of births over deaths. When deaths exceed births, there is what may be called a negative natural increase or natural decrease.

New Zealand

Geographic New Zealand, that is, the North Island, South Island, and adjacent islands. Persons on board ship in New Zealand ports or territorial waters are included in regional council area, North and South Island, and New Zealand populations, but not in those of smaller administrative or statistical units.

Non-private dwelling

A building or structure in which a number of generally unrelated people (either individuals or families) live. Includes institutions and group-living quarters: hotels, motels, hospitals, prisons, hostels, motor camps, boarding houses, ships and trains. They usually have common cooking and dining facilities. Lounge rooms and dormitories can also be shared by the occupants.

Occupancy rate (for accommodation providers)

These are calculated by dividing stay unit nights occupied by stay unit nights available (a stay unit is the unit of accommodation charged out to guests). If a motel had six of its ten units occupied every night in July, it had $6 \times 31 = 186$ stay unit nights occupied. Its stay unit nights available (capacity) would have been $10 \times 31 = 310$. So its occupancy rate would be 60 percent ($186 / 310 \times 100$).

Occupation

A set of jobs which involve the performance of a common set of tasks. It refers to the job, trade, profession or type of work in which a person is employed for financial reward or as an unpaid worker in a family business.

Part-time

Persons working less than 30 hours a week.

People not in the labour force

People who were not in the categories employed or unemployed. This category includes people who were solely engaged in home duties, retired people, pensioners, people in institutions (hospitals, gaols, sanatoriums, etc), trainee teachers, students and children under 15 years.

Permanent dwelling

A building or structure that is both fixed in location and of durable construction. This includes houses, flats, baches, hotels and hospitals, but excludes tents, houseboats and caravans.

Population projections

Estimates of the future size and other demographic characteristics of a population, based on an assessment of past trends and assumptions about the future course of demographic behaviour (fertility, mortality and net migration).

Private dwelling

A building or structure in which one person usually resides alone, or two or more people usually reside together and share facilities (such as eating facilities, cooking facilities, bathroom and toilet facilities, a living area).

Ratio

A quotient which indicates the relative size of one number to another.

Regional council area (region)

The Local Government Amendment Act (No 3) 1988 provides for the constitution of these regions. The geographical boundaries conform as far as practical to the boundaries of one or more water catchments. Consideration was also given to regional communities of interest, civil defence, natural resource management, land use planning, port facilities and environmental matters. At 31 March 1992, there were fourteen regions covering every territorial authority area in New Zealand except for Chatham Islands District.

At 1 July 1992, the number of regions increased to sixteen following boundary reorganisation in the northern South Island. Twelve of these regions are administered by regional councils while the Gisborne, Tasman, Nelson and Marlborough Regions are administered by their respective district/city councils. The boundaries of territorial authority areas are generally the same as regional council area boundaries, although there are eight instances where territorial boundaries straddle regional boundaries.

Regional council boundaries extend out to the Coastal Marine Area which is the seabed from the line of mean high water spring tides extending to the territorial (12 mile) limit.

Rural area

An area not specifically designated as “urban”. This includes towns of fewer than 1,000 population plus district territory where this is not included in an urban area. Rural areas also include offshore islands.

Territorial authority areas

The smallest local government entities, created by the local government reorganisation that took effect on 1 November 1989. There is a total of 74 territorial authority areas, comprising 15 cities and 59 districts.

A city must have a minimum population of 50,000 persons and be predominantly urban in character, while a *district* serves a combination of rural and urban communities. The boundaries of territorial authority areas are defined according to “community of interest” considerations to each other and the ability of the unit to efficiently service its community.

Unemployment rate

For any group, the number of unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labour force (employed plus unemployed) in the same group.

Unpaid work. Hours of unpaid work performed outside the household in the 4 weeks prior to the 1996 Census.

Urban area

A non-administrative area with urban characteristics and high to moderate concentration of population. The classification of urban areas was revised for the 1991 Census of Population and Dwellings, and comprises a three-part classification consisting of main, secondary and minor urban areas, differentiated by population size:

- (i) Main urban areas - centres with populations of 30,000 or more. There are currently fifteen main urban areas, eleven in the North Island and four in the South. Auckland, Wellington, Hamilton and Napier-Hastings are further subdivided into zones.
- (ii) Secondary urban areas - centres with populations between 10,000 and 29,999. There are currently fifteen secondary urban areas including Timaru, formerly a main urban area.
- (iii) Minor urban areas - centres with populations of 1,000 or more not already classified as urban (ie not falling within a main or secondary urban area). There are currently ninety-nine minor urban areas and together with the above two categories they constitute the urban population of New Zealand.

Usually resident (de jure) population

The legal population of a locality. The de jure population at census is obtained by assigning all persons to their usual place of residence. Overseas residents who are temporarily in New Zealand on census night are excluded from the population, while those persons normally resident in an area in New Zealand but who were enumerated elsewhere in New Zealand on census night are relocated to their usual address.

Vehicle-kilometre

A vehicle-kilometre occurs when one vehicle travels a distance of one kilometre.

Vitals

Events such as births, deaths and marriages which influence the numbers of a population.

Working-age population. People aged 15-64 years.

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