

New Zealand's Changing Demographic Landscape and Implications for Health System Demand

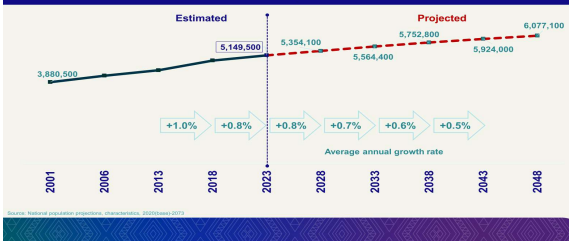
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The New Zealand/Aotearoa Picture

New Zealand population has grown steadily over the years, but overall growth conceals subnational decline.

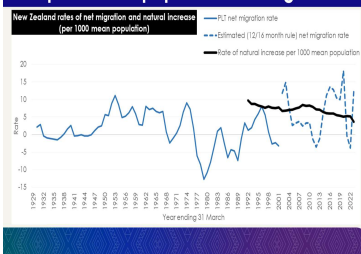
This growth is characterised by unpredictable migration, regional divergence, large indigenous and oversea born populations, and intergenerational and ethnic inequities

Growth: Past, Present, Future

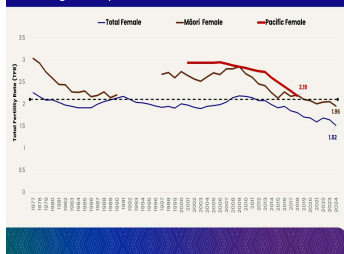


Components of Population Change

Components of population change



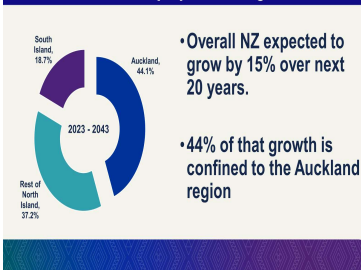
Declining fertility rates



While fertility is declining, New Zealand's population growth is driven by migration and ageing. With the proportion of those aged 65 and over projected to contribute about 61% of the population growth in the next decade.

More than 70% of the population are in the North Island, with a big concentration in the Auckland region.

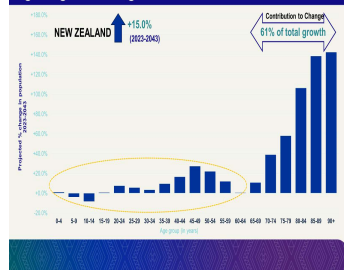
Share of national population growth



• Overall NZ expected to grow by 15% over next 20 years.

• 44% of that growth is confined to the Auckland region

Ageing driven growth

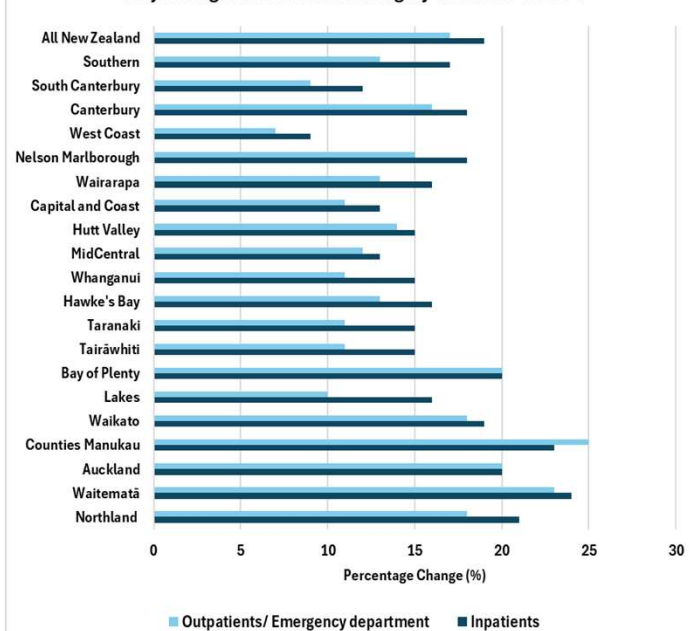


Implications for Health System Demand

If rates of care by age group were maintained, adult acute care is projected to increase by nearly a quarter and hospitalisations for older people to go up by nearly 50%.

By health districts, projected increase in demand for health services, for all ages, in the next decade will increase by between 7% and 25%. Largest growth in health services demand are projected in the Upper North Island and Auckland Metro area (Waitematā, Auckland City, and Counties Manukau).

Projected growth in medical/surgery demands in 2034



Conclusion

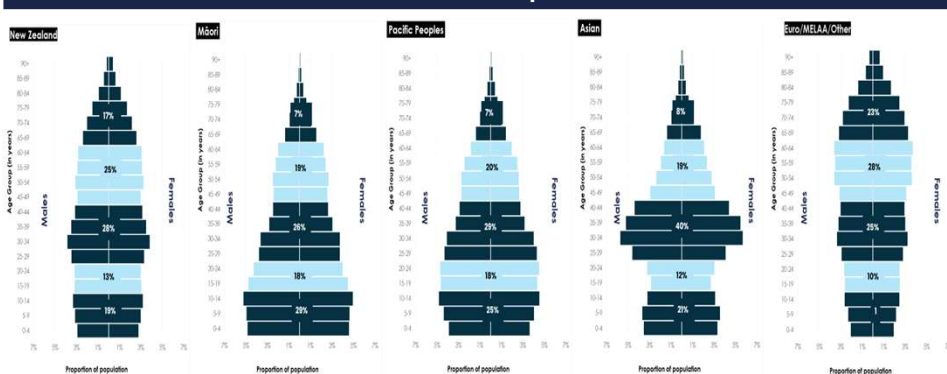
From the 2023 Census results, New Zealand is more ethnically diverse and ageing slightly, but growth of the population slowed considerably, with about 6.3%, between censuses.

While the population identifying with European ethnicities remains the largest at nearly 68% of the total population, people identifying with Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian, and Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (MELAA) ethnicities increased their share of the total population.

Another ongoing change is the disproportional distribution of the New Zealand population, with recent growth as well as that projected to occur disproportionately in the upper part of the North Island.

These changes of both population growth and demographic transformation need to be well considered in policy making, particularly health care delivery.

2023 Ethnic Composition



New Zealand's population is becoming older with baby boomers boosting the population of those aged 65 and over. The European/MELAA and other ethnicities pyramid, comprising a larger proportion of the European group, is already inverted.

However, the population profile of Māori and Pacific Peoples still has a pyramid shape with larger proportions of newborns and young people.

While the Asian population growth, with the bulging middle, is largely driven by migration.

References: Statistics New Zealand