

# Subnational Population Estimates: At 30 June 2013 (provisional)

Embargoed until 10:45am – 22 October 2013

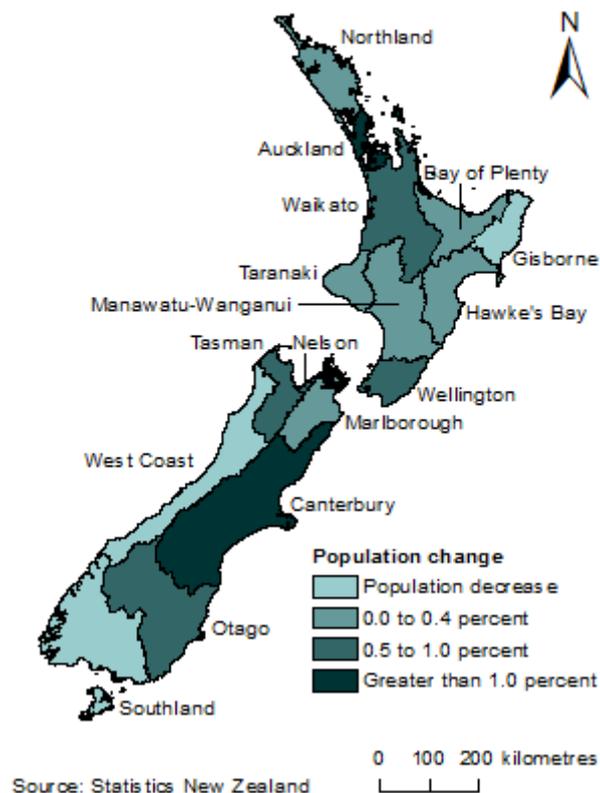
## Key facts

Subnational population estimates give the best available measure of the size and age-sex composition of New Zealand's 16 regional council areas (regions) and 67 territorial authority areas, on an annual basis.

In the June 2013 year the estimates indicate:

- 13 of New Zealand's 16 regions experienced population growth.
- Auckland region had the largest percentage growth (1.4 percent) followed by Canterbury (1.3 percent).
- Auckland region accounted for 57 percent of New Zealand's total population growth; Canterbury's growth accounted for 19 percent.
- 39 of the 67 territorial authority areas had population growth.
- The five fastest-growing territorial authority areas were in the South Island.
- Christchurch city's population increased during 2013, following two years of decline.

**Regional population change**  
Year ended 30 June 2013



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## Commentary

- New Zealand's population growth remains below 1 percent
- Regional growth driven by Auckland and Canterbury
- Auckland dominates population growth in North Island
- Christchurch city's population increases after two years of decline
- South Island population grows faster than North Island
- Median age of Thames-Coromandel approaches 50

This information release contains provisional estimates of the resident population of New Zealand's 16 regional council areas and 67 territorial authority areas at 30 June 2013. Population estimates give the best available measure of the size and age-sex composition of the population usually living in each area, on an annual basis.

These estimates are based on the 2006 Census, and take account of births, deaths, and migration since the 2006 Census.

New national and subnational estimates using the 2013 Census results as a base will be published from August 2014, after estimates of net census undercount from the 2013 Post-enumeration Survey are available in March 2014.

New Zealand's estimated resident population is generally higher than the census usually resident population count. The estimated resident population includes New Zealand residents temporarily overseas at the time of the census, an allowance for residents missed or counted more than once by the census (net census undercount), and for population change between census night and the reference date of the estimate.

Uncertainty is inherent in the estimation process used to produce the population estimates, because no one data source accurately measures all population change from year to year. Uncertainty generally increases the further the population estimates are from their census base starting point, and as they are broken down further by age, sex, and geographic area.

### **New Zealand's population growth remains below 1 percent**

New Zealand's population grew by 37,700 (0.9 percent) during the June 2013 year, compared with 27,900 (0.6 percent) in the previous June year. Population growth in the year to June 2013 was due to a natural increase (more births than deaths) of 29,800 and a net international migration gain (more arrivals than departures) of 7,900.

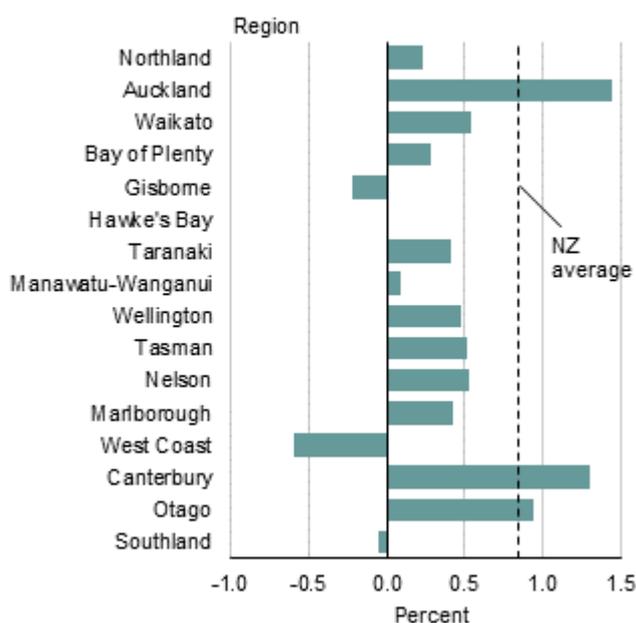
Compared with the previous June year, natural increase has fallen by 1,300, while net international migration has increased by 11,100. The natural increase for the year to June 2013 was the lowest since 2005, mainly due to fewer births.

### **Regional growth driven by Auckland and Canterbury**

Of New Zealand's 16 regional council areas (regions) 13 had population growth in the June 2013 year. While Auckland dominated regional growth (1.4 percent) both Canterbury (1.3 percent) and Otago (0.9 percent) also grew more than the national average (0.9 percent). For Canterbury, this reverses the decline seen in both 2011 (-0.9 percent) and 2012 (-0.3 percent). The population of Canterbury increased by 7,300 in the June 2013 year, which represents 19 percent of the total population growth in New Zealand.

## Regional population change

Year ended 30 June 2013



Source: Statistics New Zealand

All regions had a natural increase during the June 2013 year. While the majority of regions experienced net losses from migration, six regions, including Auckland (7,000), Canterbury (4,900), and Otago (1,300), also had a population increase from net migration (more people moving into an area from overseas and other areas within New Zealand than out of an area).

In the June 2013 year, Canterbury and Otago were the only two regions to experience larger population growth than their annual average over the previous six years.

## Auckland dominates population growth in North Island

Over the last decade, Auckland has been the fastest-growing region. In the June 2013 year:

- Auckland's population grew by 21,700 (1.4 percent), to reach 1.53 million.
- Almost three-fifths (57 percent) of New Zealand's population growth was in Auckland.
- More than two-thirds (68 percent) of Auckland's population growth came from natural increase, and the remaining growth (32 percent) came from net migration.

## Christchurch city's population increases after two years of decline

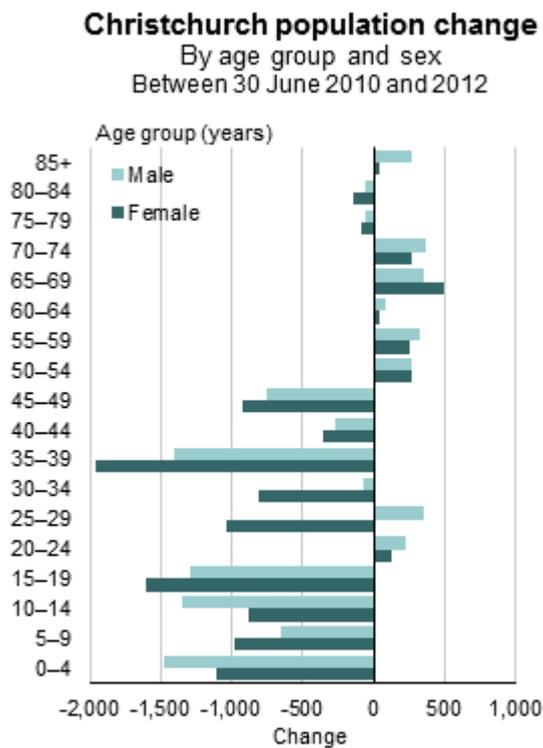
Before the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes, Christchurch city's population was growing. In the four-year period ended 30 June 2010, the city's population grew at an average annual rate of 1.0 percent, with population gains from both natural increase (2,200 per year on average) and net migration (1,600 per year on average).

Christchurch city's population is again growing after two years of decline following the earthquakes. In the June 2013 year, the population of Christchurch city grew by 2,900 (0.8 percent), to 366,000. This is around 10,000 fewer than the population in 2010, which was 376,700.

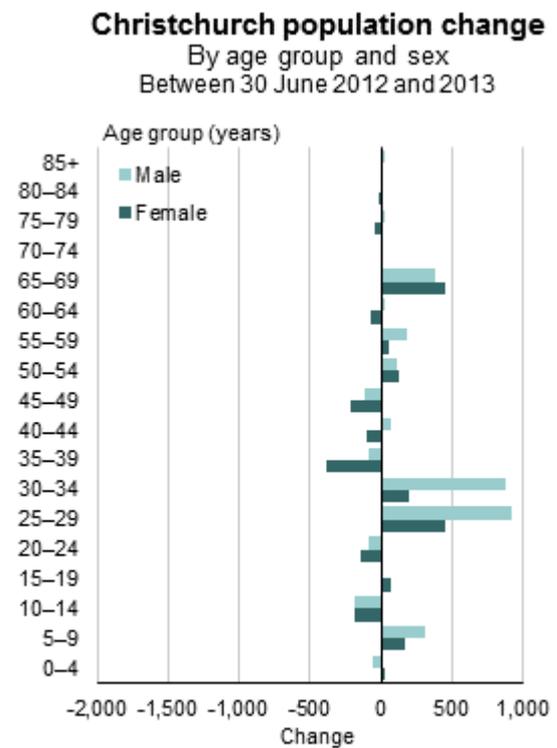
In the period between June 2010 and June 2012 the population of Christchurch city decreased by a total of 13,500 as a result of a net migration loss of 16,600, partly offset by a natural increase of 3,100.

The population increase in the June 2013 year was due to a net migration gain of 1,300 and a natural increase of 1,500.

Population change in Christchurch city has been unevenly distributed across age groups. The graphs below compare population change by age and sex in Christchurch for the two years ending June 2012, and the year ending June 2013.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

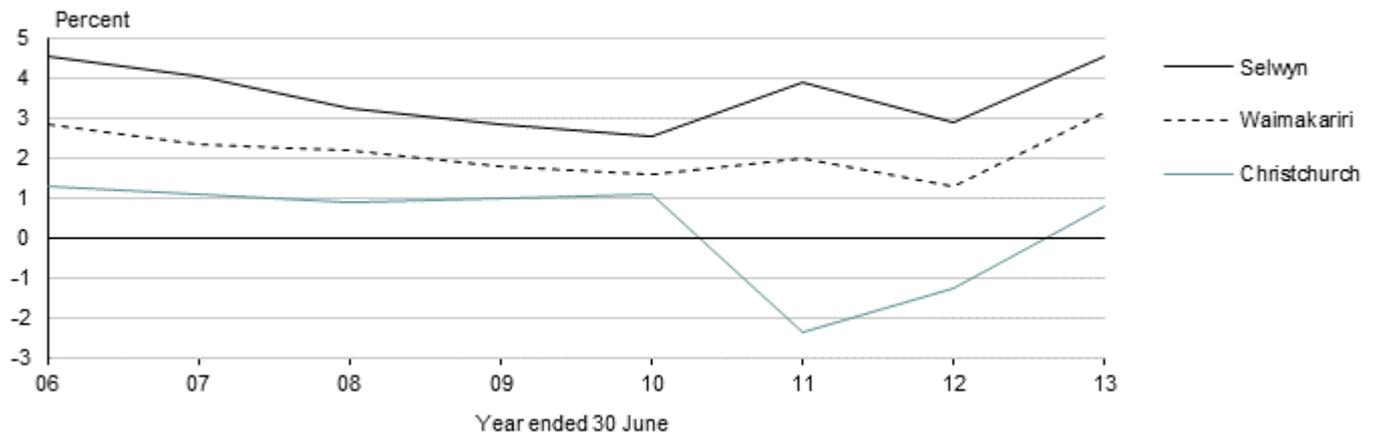
In the two years ending June 2012, population change by age indicated a net outflow of children and their parents, as well as fewer young adults moving to Christchurch to study. However, within the younger adult population, there were some interesting contrasts. The male population aged 20–34 years increased by 500 over the two-year period, while the corresponding female population decreased by 1,700. This partly reflects a net inflow of young male workers.

In the year ending June 2013, the age and sex distribution of population change in Christchurch city indicates that while the male population aged 25–34 has continued to grow, the number of females aged 25–34 has also begun to grow. This partly reflects international migration flows for females returning towards pre-earthquake levels, after a period of lower arrivals and higher departures. The continued growth for males in this age group is partly due to an increase in international arrivals, specifically for construction and engineering occupations.

The territorial authority areas surrounding Christchurch also experienced population growth in the June 2013 year, as illustrated in the graph below. Population growth in Waimakariri (3.1 percent) in the June 2013 year was the fastest annual growth seen in the seven years since the

2006 Census. Growth in Selwyn (4.5 percent) equalled growth in the June 2006 year, having fluctuated during the intervening years.

**Population change for Christchurch, Waimakariri, and Selwyn**  
Year ended 30 June 2006–13



Source: Statistics New Zealand

## South Island population grows faster than North Island

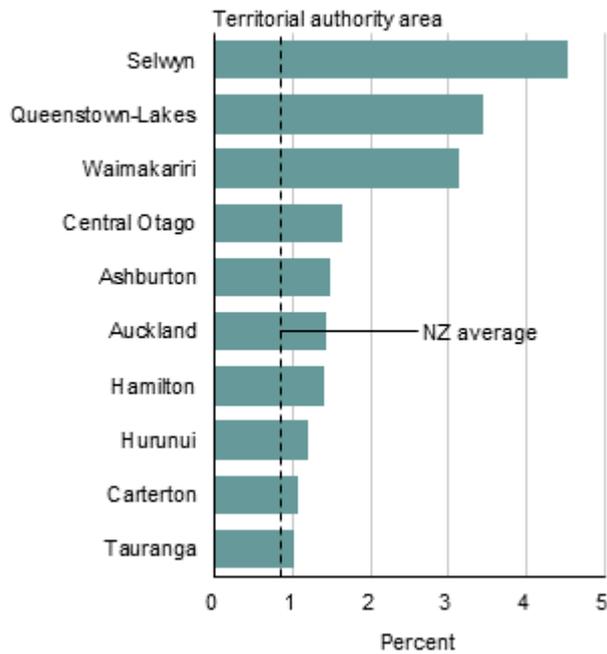
In the June 2013 year the estimated resident population of the South Island grew by 0.9 percent, compared with 0.8 percent growth in the North Island. This is the first year since the estimated resident population series began in 1996 that South Island growth has been faster than North Island growth.

An estimated 1.05 million people lived in the South Island at 30 June 2013. The increase of 9,700 in the June 2013 year was due to a natural increase of 3,900, and a net migration gain of 5,800.

While the South Island population grew by just 200 between June 2010 and June 2012, the latest year's growth is higher than the average of 6,600 per year in the six years to 30 June 2012. It is similar to the annual average of 9,900 in the four years to 30 June 2010, before the Canterbury earthquakes.

Selwyn district maintained the country's highest growth rate (4.5 percent) for the fifth year running in the June 2013 year, with growth across most age groups. The top five fastest-growing territorial authority areas were all in the South Island (Selwyn 4.5 percent, Queenstown-Lakes 3.4 percent, Waimakariri 3.1 percent, Central Otago 1.6 percent, and Ashburton 1.5 percent). Each experienced a faster growth rate than the national average of 0.9 percent.

**Fastest-growing territorial authority areas**  
Year ended 30 June 2013



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Of the 23 territorial authority areas within the South Island, seven had population decreases, with the fastest being in the West Coast districts of Grey (down 1.2 percent) and Buller (down 0.8 percent).

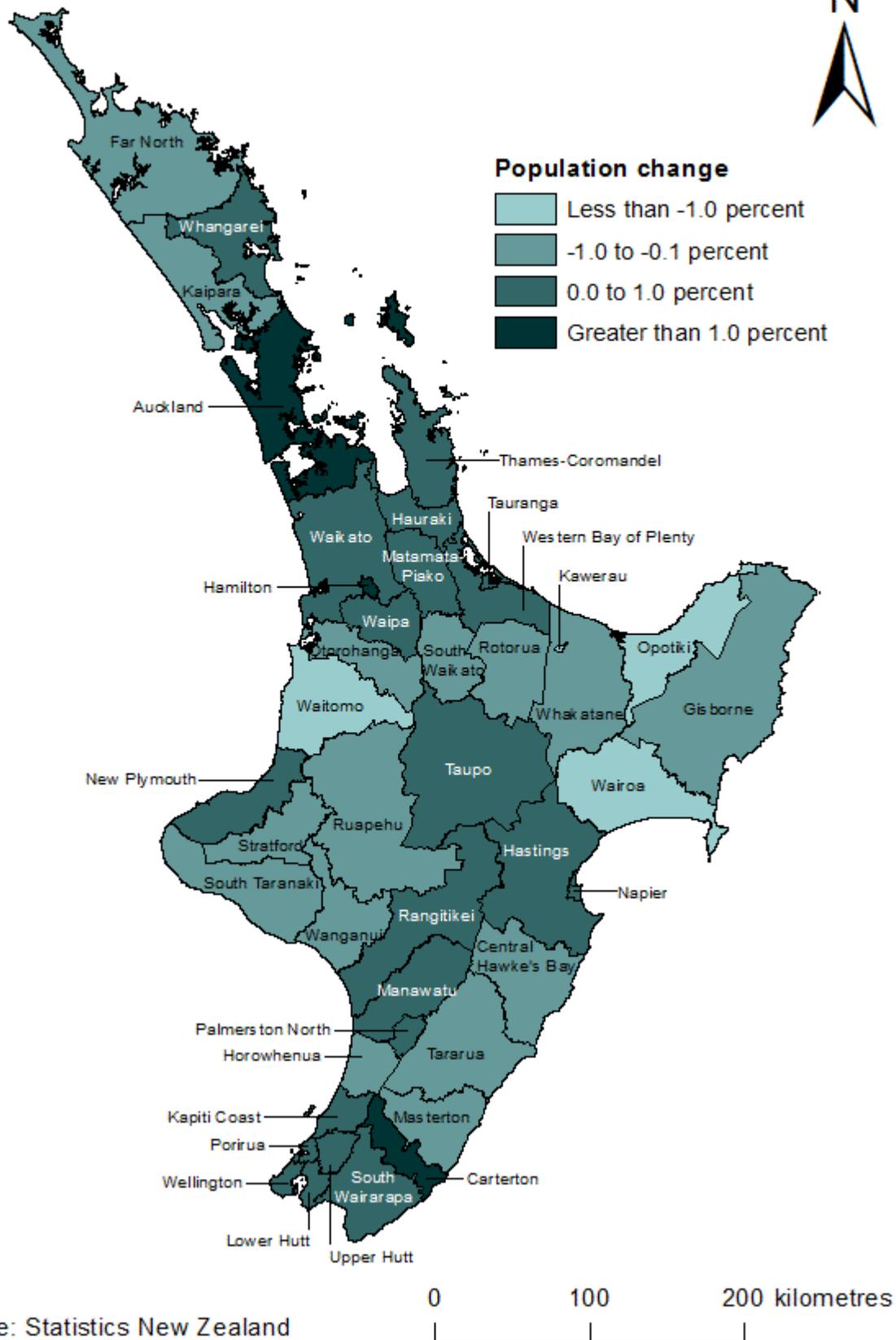
The population of the North Island grew by 28,000 (0.8 percent) in the June 2013 year. The growth was due to natural increase of 25,900 and net migration gain of 2,100. Auckland contributed almost four-fifths (21,700) of this growth. The second-largest growth in the North Island was in Hamilton, which grew by 2,100.

Of the 43 North Island territorial authority areas, 20 recorded a population decrease in the June 2013 year. The fastest rates of population decrease were in Kawerau (down 2.6 percent) and Opotiki (down 1.4 percent).

# Population change

## North Island territorial authority areas

Year ended 30 June 2013

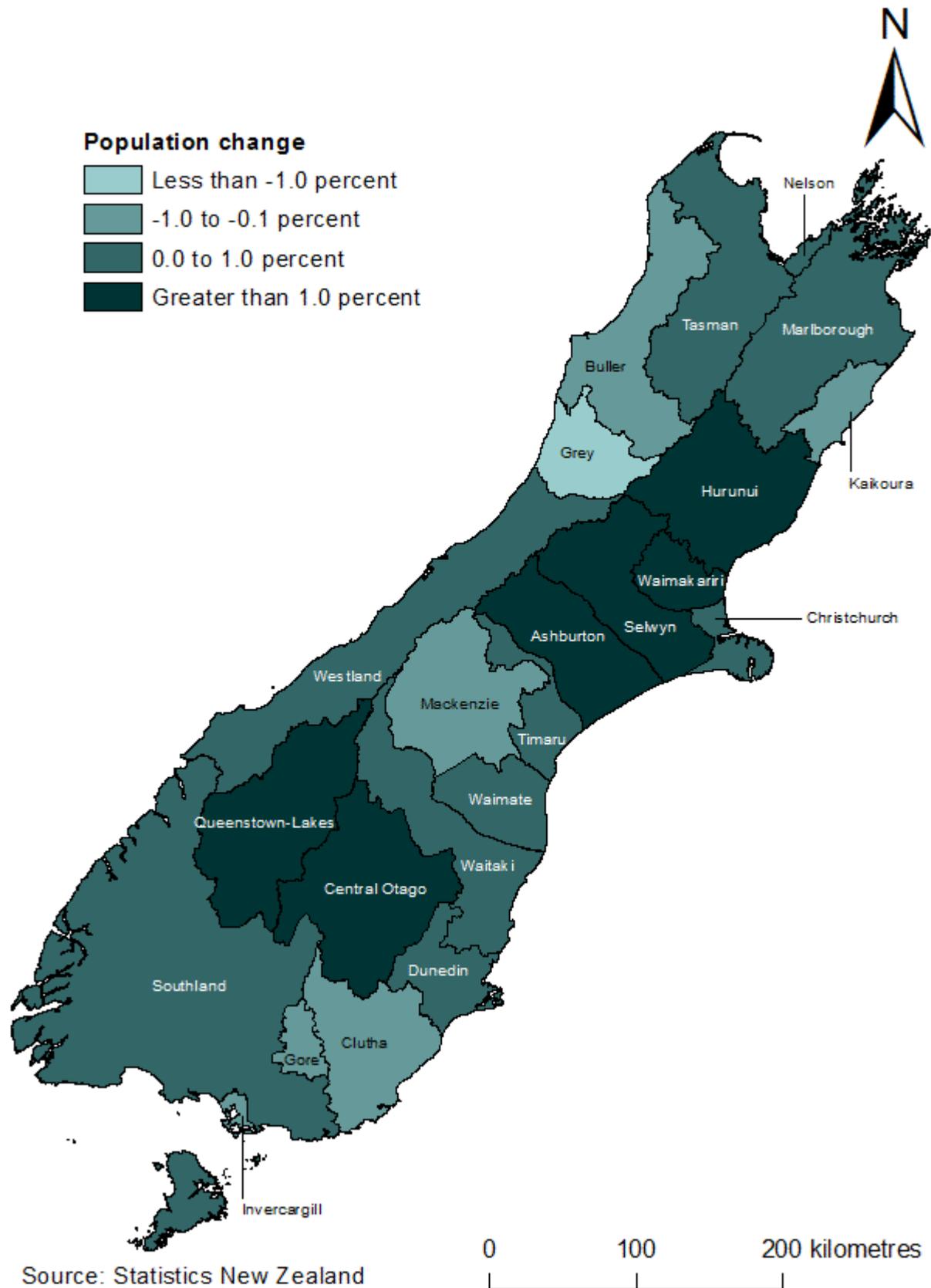


Source: Statistics New Zealand

# Population change

## South Island territorial authority areas

Year ended 30 June 2013

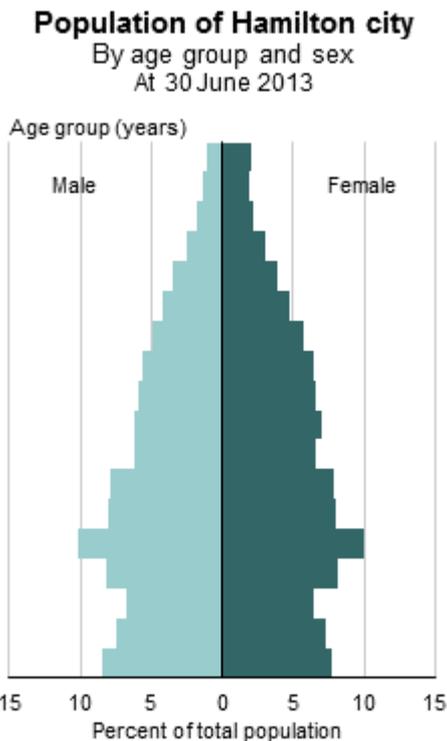


## Median age of Thames-Coromandel approaches 50

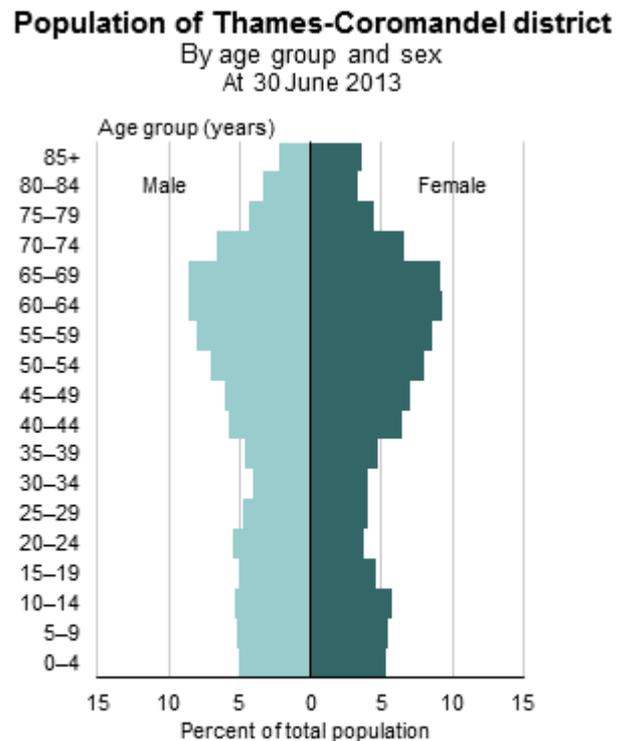
Half of New Zealand's population was aged over 37.1 years at 30 June 2013. Of New Zealand's 67 territorial authority areas, 15 had a median age lower than the national average, with Hamilton city having the lowest median age of 32.0 years. Other territorial authority areas with a relatively young population included the cities of Palmerston North (32.5 years), Wellington (33.8 years), Porirua (33.9 years), Auckland (34.4 years), and Dunedin (34.6 years).

A low median age can indicate a high proportion of children, as with Porirua where almost one-quarter of the population (24.4 percent) is aged under 15, compared with the national average of 19.9 percent.

In other areas, such as Dunedin, Wellington, and Hamilton, low median age can result from a high proportion of people aged 15–29 years. In Dunedin, 29.4 percent are aged between 15 and 29, while in Wellington city it is 26.3 percent and in Hamilton 25.5 percent, compared to a national average of 21.1 percent. This partly reflects the large student populations in these cities.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

In contrast, some areas have an older age profile. For example, the median age of Thames-Coromandel district is approaching 50 years. This area also has one of the highest proportions (25.6 percent) of residents aged 65 years and over, and recorded a natural decrease (more deaths than births) in the June 2013 year. Three other districts experienced a natural decrease in the June 2013 year: Kapiti Coast, Waitaki, and Horowhenua. These areas also share the highest percentages of people aged 65 and over and have correspondingly high median ages.

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

## Definitions

### About subnational population estimates

Population estimates give the best available measure of the size and age-sex structure of the population usually living in an area, on an annual basis. Current estimates are based on the 2006 Census data and on births, deaths, and migration since the 2006 Census.

Subnational population estimates are published annually and national population estimates are published quarterly.

Estimates will be revised from August 2014 to incorporate the results of the 2013 Census, and the Post-enumeration Survey used to measure the number of people missed or counted more than once by the census.

New Zealand's estimated resident population is generally higher than the census usually resident population count. The estimated resident population includes New Zealand residents temporarily overseas at the time of the census, an allowance for residents missed or counted more than once by the census (net census undercount), and for population change between census night and the reference date of the estimate.

### More definitions

**Census usually resident population count:** a count of all people who usually live in a given area and are present in New Zealand on census night. This count excludes visitors from overseas, visitors from elsewhere in New Zealand, and residents temporarily overseas on census night. The population counts published from the census are not directly comparable with the estimated resident population.

**Estimated resident population:** an estimate of all people who usually live in an area at a given date. It includes:

- all residents present in New Zealand and counted by the census (census usually resident population count)
- residents who are temporarily overseas (who are not included in the census)
- an adjustment for residents missed or counted more than once by the census (net census undercount).

It excludes visitors from elsewhere in New Zealand and visitors from overseas.

The 2013 subnational population estimates are based on the 2006 Census, and include updates for births, deaths, and net migration (arrivals less departures) of residents during the period between census night and June 2013.

**Internal migration:** migration between areas of New Zealand.

**International migration:** migration into or out of New Zealand. International migration statistics are based on 'permanent and long-term' migration statistics, which are primarily determined by passengers' responses on arrival or departure cards to the questions on where they live and their intended length of stay or absence.

**International migrant arrivals:** people from overseas arriving to live in New Zealand for 12 months or more (including permanently), and New Zealanders returning after an absence of 12 months or more. (Referred to as permanent and long-term arrivals in international migration statistics.)

**International migrant departures:** New Zealanders departing for an absence of 12 months or more (including permanently), and people from overseas departing after a stay of 12 months or more in New Zealand. (Referred to as permanent and long-term departures in international migration statistics.)

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

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

**Net migration:** the difference between the number of people who have moved to, and departed from, a given area. Subnational net migration includes both international migration and internal migration.

**North Island and South Island:** the population of the North Island is the sum of the population of North Island regions. The population of the South Island is the sum of the population of South Island regions.

**Regional council area (or region):** an area governed by a regional council. New Zealand has 16 regional council areas, based on boundaries at 1 January 2013.

**Territorial authority area:** an area governed by a territorial authority. New Zealand has 67 territorial authority areas, based on boundaries at 1 January 2013.

## Related links

### Upcoming releases

Final estimates for regional council and territorial authority areas by five-year age group and sex, at 30 June 2013, will be released on [NZ.Stat](#) on 19 December 2013.

We will also release final estimates for area units by five-year age group and sex, at 30 June 2013 on [NZ.Stat](#) at this time.

Final estimates of the total population of urban areas, at 30 June 2013, will be released on [Infoshare](#) by 24 January 2014.

Final estimates of the total population of wards, community boards, subdivisions, constituencies, and district health boards, at 30 June 2013, will be released on the [Subnational population estimates tables](#) web page by 24 January 2014.

*Revised Subnational Population Estimates: At 30 June for 2006–13* is scheduled for release from August 2014. These revised estimates of the resident population will incorporate the results of the 2013 Census and adjustments for net census undercount (from the Post-enumeration Survey) and residents temporarily overseas on census night.

*Subnational Population Estimates: At 30 June 2014* is scheduled for release in October 2014. These estimates will be based on the 2013 Census and on births, deaths, and migration since the 2013 Census.

[Subscribe to information releases](#), including this one, by completing the online subscription form.

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

### Past releases

[Subnational Population Estimates](#) has links to past releases. Note, however, that these information releases contain provisional estimates.

[Subnational population estimates tables](#) has final estimates for past years.

### Related information

[Subnational population estimates tables](#) has links to provisional estimates for regional council and territorial authority areas, by five-year age groups and sex, at 30 June 2013.

Once finalised on 19 December 2013, the estimates will be available on [NZ.Stat](#).

[Subnational population estimates tables](#) also contains Excel files with population estimates for selected local government areas. These will include estimates at 30 June 2013 by 24 January 2014.

[Estimating local populations after the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes](#) describes the data sources used to derive subnational population estimates at 30 June 2011.

Evaluation of alternative data sources for population estimates assesses a diverse range of existing administrative and commercial data sources that might be useful for producing subnational population estimates.

Evaluation of administrative data sources for subnational population estimates describes the potential for four administrative data sources to improve subnational population estimates, building on the paper above.

National Population Estimates has links to past releases of national population estimates.

## Data quality

### Period-specific information

This section contains information about data that has changed since the last release.

- [Data sources used to estimate subnational migration](#)
- [Effect of the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes](#)
- [Geographic boundaries](#)
- [Provisional and final estimates](#)
- [Comparability with 2013 Census data](#)

### General information

This section contains information that does not change between releases.

- [Base population](#)
- [Deriving subnational population estimates](#)
- [2006-base population estimates extended](#)
- [2013-base population estimates](#)
- [Nature of estimates](#)
- [Data accuracy](#)
- [Rounding](#)
- [More information](#)

## Period-specific information

### Data sources used to estimate subnational migration

For the year to 30 June 2013, we used both traditional and new data sources to estimate subnational migration.

For subnational areas, net migration includes international migration (flows into and out of New Zealand) and internal migration (flows between areas in New Zealand). Multiple data sources are traditionally used to derive estimates of subnational migration because:

- there is no direct measure of internal migration in New Zealand other than the periodic Census of Population and Dwellings
- while New Zealand does have a direct measure of international migration (via the arrival and departure cards completed by passengers), vague, incomplete, and temporary addresses affect the quality of geographic information.

Since 2006, Statistics NZ has implemented a number of changes to its estimation methods aimed at improving the accuracy of subnational population estimates. This has included using new data sources and refining methods for using existing data sources. These initiatives have been given greater impetus due to:

- the estimation challenges raised by the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes
- the cancellation of the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings, resulting in population estimates that had to be extended further out than usual from the 2006 base (starting point).

While producing subnational population estimates at 30 June 2013, we primarily used three data sources to estimate subnational migration by age and sex:

- international (permanent and long-term) migration statistics
- primary health organisation enrolment data
- Inland Revenue tax data.

We selected these three datasets because they have high rates of population coverage, include the key demographic variables of age and sex, and capture information on geographic location.

In using these three data sources, we aimed to identify and use their respective strengths. With regards to estimating subnational migration by age, we used:

- international migration data to estimate international migration for all ages
- primary health organisation enrolment data to estimate internal migration for the population aged 0–14 years and 45 years and over
- Inland Revenue tax data to estimate internal migration for the population aged 25–44 years.

There are particular challenges associated with estimating subnational migration for the 15–24-year age group. Not only is this group highly mobile, it has low coverage in many datasets (including primary health organisation enrolment data and Inland Revenue tax data). As a result, subnational migration for this age group was estimated using the information sources mentioned above, as well as historical estimates and age-sex net migration patterns derived from population projections.

Once we created preliminary estimates of subnational migration, several additional data sources were used to validate the estimates. The information sources used to validate the estimates included:

- electoral enrolment data
- residential building consents
- information provided by territorial authorities during the annual consultation
- data on specific population subgroups; namely defence force personnel, prison populations, and tertiary students.

See [Evaluation of alternative data sources for population estimates](#) and [Evaluation of administrative data sources for subnational population estimates](#) for additional information on the data sources mentioned in this section.

## **Effect of the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes**

The 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes triggered large migration flows as people were displaced from earthquake-affected areas.

[Estimating local populations after the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes](#) describes the additional data sources and methods used to estimate the population for the June 2011 year.

For the June 2013 year, estimates of migration for territorial areas within the Canterbury region were estimated using the same methods and data sources used for the rest of New Zealand (see [Data sources used to estimate subnational migration](#)). While areas within the Canterbury

region continue to experience changing migration patterns following the earthquakes, the data sources available for estimating migration across New Zealand reflect these changes.

## **Geographic boundaries**

The population estimates in this release are based on boundaries at 1 January 2013. These boundaries align with those used in the latest subnational population projections (released 8 October 2012), and the boundaries that were in place for the 2013 Census of Population and Dwellings.

## **Provisional and final estimates**

The population estimates contained in this release are provisional. They incorporate provisional estimates of births, deaths, and migration that occurred in the June 2013 year.

Final estimates will be released on 19 December 2013, along with area unit population estimates.

New national and subnational estimates using the 2013 Census results as a base will be published from August 2014, after estimates of net census undercount from the 2013 Post-enumeration Survey are available in March 2014.

## **Comparability with 2013 Census counts**

From October 2013, results from the 2013 Census are being published, according to the [Census release schedule](#).

Population estimates for 2013 are not directly comparable with 2013 Census counts.

See [Frequently Asked Questions - Population Statistics](#) for the key differences between estimates and census counts.

## **General information**

### **Base population**

The estimated resident population at 30 June 2006 forms the base population for deriving current post-censal population estimates.

The estimated resident population of each area at 30 June 2006 is based on the census usually resident population count from the 2006 Census (held 7 March 2006), with adjustments for:

- people missed or counted more than once by the census (net census undercount)
- residents temporarily overseas on census night
- births, deaths, and net migration between census night and 30 June 2006
- reconciliation with demographic estimates at ages 0–4 years.

## **Deriving subnational population estimates**

We derived subnational population estimates for dates after 30 June 2006 by updating the estimated resident population of each area at 30 June 2006 for births, deaths, and net migration (international and internal migration combined).

Birth and death registrations are used to estimate the number of births and deaths that occurred during each June year. There is often a delay between when a birth or death occurs and when it is registered, and this delay is taken into account when estimating birth and death occurrences.

We use multiple data sources to derive estimates of subnational migration (see [Data sources used to estimate subnational migration](#)).

Subnational population estimates are consistent with national population estimates for a given reference date.

## **2006-base population estimates extended**

Statistics NZ planned to produce 2006-base post-censal estimates until mid-2012. Following the cancellation of the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings, 2006-base post-censal estimates will now be produced until mid-2014.

## **2013-base population estimates**

The 2013 Census of Population and Dwellings was held on Tuesday 5 March 2013. The 2013 Census website ([www.census.govt.nz](http://www.census.govt.nz)) provides information about the census.

Population estimates based on the 2013 Census are scheduled for release from August 2014.

## **Nature of estimates**

Population estimates give the best available measure of the size and age-sex composition of the population usually living in an area. However, uncertainty is inherent in the estimation process.

Statistics NZ produces subnational population estimates using a component methodology, which uses the components of population change (births, deaths, and net migration) to update a base population. There is some uncertainty associated with component data, particularly the estimation of net migration (international and internal migration combined) for subnational areas. Generally speaking, the uncertainty associated with population estimates increases as the estimates move further away from the base (starting point). Uncertainty also increases as population estimates are broken down by age, sex, and geographic area.

In reality, no data source perfectly measures the resident population of New Zealand or of subnational areas. Furthermore, no data source perfectly measures changes in the resident population, or even movements of the resident population within New Zealand.

The periodic Census of Population and Dwellings remains the cornerstone of population statistics in New Zealand. Following the 2013 Census we will be able to derive updated estimates of the population, to assess the accuracy of estimates since 2006, and to revise estimates where necessary.

## Data accuracy

An evaluation of subnational population estimates produced during the 2002–06 period identified that, five years out from the 2001 base population, absolute relative errors were less than 5 percent for 60 of the 73 territorial authority areas (based on boundaries at 30 June 2006). For the 10 territorial authority areas with a population greater than 100,000, relative errors ranged from an underestimate of 2.2 percent (Manukau city) to an overestimate of 0.5 percent (Auckland city).

We cannot ascertain the accuracy of current population estimates as no independent authoritative measure of the resident population exists. Since 2006, Statistics NZ has implemented a number of changes to its estimation methods, aimed at improving the accuracy of population estimates. This has included using new data sources and refining methods for using existing data sources (see [Data sources used to estimate subnational migration](#)).

## Rounding

All figures in this release are rounded independently. All derived figures in this release are calculated using data of greater precision than published.

The rounding of estimates of the total population, and broad age groups, is determined by the total population size of the geographic area. Estimates for areas with a population less than 10,000 are rounded to the nearest 10. For areas with a population between 10,000 and 20,000, estimates are rounded to the nearest 50. Estimates for areas with a population of 20,000 or more are rounded to the nearest 100. The rounding of estimates of natural increase, net migration, and population change is also determined by the total population size of the geographic area.

## More information

[Information about the population estimates](#) contains detailed information about the methods used to derive population estimates.

## Liability

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## Tables

The following tables are available in Excel format from the 'Downloads' box. If you have problems viewing the files, see [opening files and PDFs](#).

1. Estimated resident population, regional council areas, at 30 June 2006, 2012, and 2013
2. Estimated resident population, territorial authority areas, at 30 June 2006, 2012, and 2013
3. Estimated resident population by broad age group, regional council areas, at 30 June 2006, 2012, and 2013
4. Estimated resident population by broad age group, territorial authority areas, at 30 June 2006, 2012, and 2013
5. Components of population change, regional council areas
6. Components of population change, territorial authority areas

## Access more data on NZ.Stat

[Subnational population estimates tables](#) has links to provisional estimates for regional council and territorial authority areas, by five-year age groups and sex, at 30 June 2013.

Once finalised on 19 December 2013, the estimates will be available on [NZ.Stat](#).

## Access more data on Infoshare

Use [Infoshare](#) to access time-series data specific to your needs. For this release, select the following categories from the homepage:

Subject category: **Population**  
Group: **Population Estimates**

The time series can be downloaded in Excel or comma delimited format. More information [about Infoshare](#) can be found on our website.