

Internal Migration

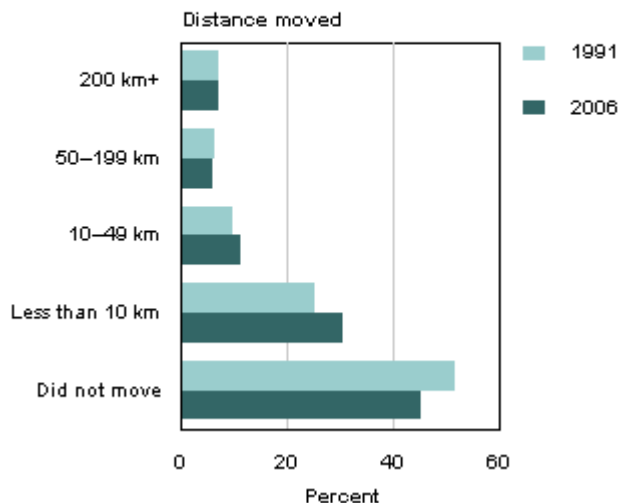
# Are New Zealanders moving longer distances?

## Commentary

New Zealanders change their address more often than they used to, but the new address is typically less than 10 kilometres away from the old one.

The graph below shows the proportion of New Zealanders who changed usual residences within New Zealand during the five years before the 1991 and 2006 censuses. In 1991, 7 percent of people had moved at least 200 kilometres from their address five years earlier. In 2006, this figure was unchanged at 7 percent. However, while the likelihood of making long-distance moves has remained steady, short-distance moves have become more common. The proportion of New Zealanders making moves of less than 10 kilometres increased from 25 percent in 1991 to 30 percent in 2006.

**Figure 1**  
**Percent of People who Moved Within New Zealand**  
*1991 and 2006 Censuses*



All these calculations are based only on migration within New Zealand, so they exclude, for instance, 18,300-kilometre moves between London and Auckland.

## Information sources

1991, 2006 Censuses of Population and Dwellings and 2006 Census digital boundaries

## Technical notes

All data for this page were derived from the questions on usual residence and usual residence five years earlier from the 1991 and 2006 censuses. The calculations were restricted to people living in New Zealand at the time of the census and five years earlier. The question on previous residence was not administered to children aged 0–4 years, and children were treated as non-movers.

When people moved between area units, the distance moved was approximated by the distance between the centres of the two area units. When people moved within an area unit, the distance moved was approximated by half the width of the area unit. These approximations should be accurate enough for the level of detail presented here, since most area units are small. For instance, 50 percent of moves in 2001–2006 were to area units that were 2.3 square kilometres or smaller (that is, less than about 1.5 km across), and 90 percent were to area units that were 151 square kilometres or smaller (less than 12 km across).

A second limitation of the data is that 3 percent of internal migrants in 1991 and 8 percent in 2006 did not provide sufficient detail on their previous address to permit the area unit to be identified. Again, this is unlikely to materially affect the results.

The following table presents data from figure 1.

**Table 1**

<b>Percent of People Who Moved Within New Zealand 1991 and 2006 Censuses</b>		
Distance moved	1991	2006
200 km+	7.0	7.1
50–199 km	6.3	6.1
10–49 km	9.6	11.1
Less than 10 km	25.2	30.4
Did not move	51.9	45.3
Total	100.0	100.0

## Glossary

Please refer to [Glossary](#).

## References

For similar data from the United Kingdom, see Moves within UK, on the UK Office of National Statistics website, [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk).

## Further information

This page is part of a web-based analytical report by Statistics New Zealand.

The report includes more than 10 topics. To see the other topics, go to the [Internal Migration report](#) introduction page.