

Internal Migration

Reasons for moving within and between regions

Commentary

Economic reasons were the main motivators for moving from one residence to another residence within the region. However, when moving from one region to another it was mostly for employment reasons followed by social reasons. The relative importance of the types of reasons for moving from residences to residences within the region or in another region was dependent on how long people had been living at their previous residence. The motivation for choosing a residence in another region was mainly for social followed by environmental reasons. As a comparison, a residence within the same region was chosen mainly for environment, social and economic reasons, and these reasons were of similar importance.

Movers within regions and between regions

In this paper, movers within New Zealand refer to movers defined by the survey of Dynamics and Motivations for Migration in New Zealand (DMM) as having specified a previous and a current address. Due to the low number of movers within and between some of the regional council areas, statistics of movers within New Zealand have been aggregated to groupings of regional council areas.

Between March quarters 2005 and 2007, an estimated 779,400 people moved within New Zealand, and the majority of those movers (85 percent or 665,300 people) changed residence within the region they were living in.

Reasons for moving from previous residence

The reasons residents moved from their previous residence to a residence in the same region are compared with the reasons of those who moved to other regions. The relative importance of the types of reasons for moving from a residence also vary with length of stay at previous residence and with different stages of people's life cycles.

Economic reasons

Mainly economic reasons made people move within their region between 2005 and 2007. These reasons included moving from a rental property into own purchased dwelling, expiry of a rental lease rental or notice being given by a landlord. These types of economic motivations were particularly important when people had lived at their previous residence for less than 10 years – peaking when they had lived at their previous residence between one and three years. When length of stay at the previous residence was 10 years or more, people tended to state having sold the dwelling as the main motivator to move from their home.

Figure 1

Reasons for Moving from Previous Residence

By length of stay at previous residence

March 2007 quarter



Social reasons

Social reasons for moving from previous residence were important both for people who moved within their region and for people who moved to other regions. However, the types of social reasons were quite different. When people had lived at the previous residence for less than 10 years, it was commonly the desire to set up home independently and to move to live with a partner that made people want to move to another residence within their region. On the other hand, when people had lived at their home for three years or more, breakdown of relationship or marriage was often the main cause for moving. In fact, when they had lived at their previous residence for 10 years or more, it was the most common social reason for moving. Wanting to live closer to family dominated the social reasons why people moved from a residence in another region.

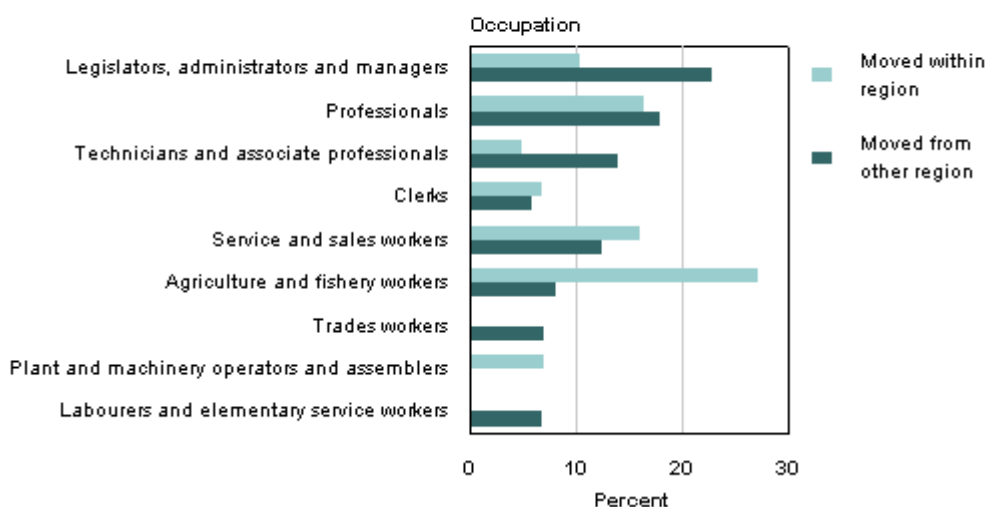
Housing reasons

People who moved within the region were also driven by housing factors. These became increasingly important when people had lived longer at their previous residence. When the stay was less than 10 years, the housing reasons were nearly always characterised by the previous dwelling being too small. If people had lived at their previous residence for 10 years or more, then the previous dwelling being too large became an equally important reason for moving, indicating that as people get older or have lived longer in their homes, their housing needs changed. Housing factors were not a reason people moved to another region.

Employment reasons

Among people who had moved to another region, it was mainly employment or work related reasons, followed by social reasons, that made people move away from the region of their previous residence. In particular, people who moved to another region were prompted by the start of a new job and, relatively speaking, this became the most frequent reason as people got older and had lived longer at their previous residence. These reasons were prevalent among workers who belonged to one of the three top occupation groups, namely legislators, administrators and managers, professionals, or technicians and associated professionals.

Figure 2
Percentage of Those Who Moved for Employment
By occupation and regional movement
 March 2007 quarter



Age

Noticeably, education reasons were significant among people who moved to another region. People of younger ages, who tended to have stayed less than three years at their previous residence, moved from the region for their own education.

Table 1

Main Reasons for Moving from Previous Residence by Age Group March 2007 quarter						
Age group (years)	Most common main reasons ranked					
	Moved within region			Moved to other region		
	First	Second	Third	First	Second	Third
Under 20	Social	Economic	Housing	Education	Social	Employment
20–29	Economic	Social	Housing	Social	Employment	Education
30–39	Economic	Housing	Social	Employment	Social	Economic
40–49	Economic	Housing	Social	Employment	Social	Economic
50–59	Economic	Housing	Social	Employment	Social	Environment
60–69	Economic	Housing	Environment	Social	Environment	-
70+	Housing	Environment	Economic	-	-	-

Region

Economic reasons were the most commonly stated factors driving people from the previous residence for moves within the respective 12 grouped regions. In the Manawatu-Wanganui region, however, moving to set up home independently was the most common social reason followed by economic (that is, moved from rental to own purchased dwelling) and housing reasons (that is, previous dwelling too small) for moving from previous residence.

Employment related factors were stated as the second and third most common reasons for moving from previous to other residences within the Northland and Southland regions, respectively. In particular, people moved for better employment or career opportunities in other areas within these two regions.

Table 2

Main Reasons for Moving from Previous Residence by Region March 2007 quarter						
Region of previous residence	Most common main reasons ranked					
	Moved within region			Moved to other region		
	First	Second	Third	First	Second	Third
Northland	Economic	Employment	Social	-		
Auckland	Economic	Housing	Social	Employment	Social	Environment
Waikato	Economic	Housing	Social	Employment	Social	Environment
Bay of Plenty	Economic	Social	Housing	Employment	Social	-
Gisborne/ Hawke's Bay	Economic	Social	Housing	-		
Taranaki	Economic	Social	Housing	-		
Manawatu- Wanganui	Social	Economic	Housing	Employment	Social	Education
Wellington	Economic	Social	Housing	Social	Employment	Environment
Tasman/Nelson/ Marlborough/ West Coast	Economic	Housing	Social	Social	-	
Canterbury	Economic	Social	Housing	Social	Employment	-
Otago	Economic	Social	Housing	Employment	Social	-
Southland	Economic	Social	Employment	-		

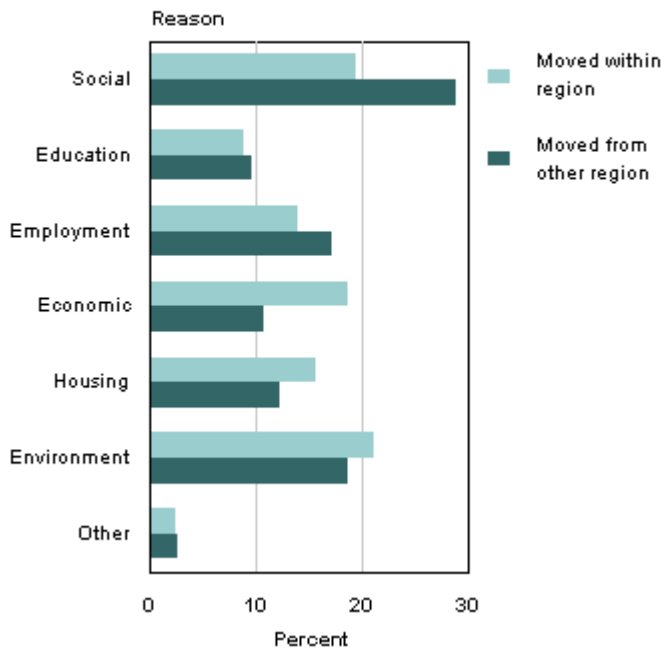
People who previously lived in Auckland region mostly moved to another region for employment reasons, which typically were described as starting a new job. People who moved from Waikato Region also most commonly stated employment related causes for moving from their residence, but these were mostly described as wanting better employment opportunities. Environment factors were also important as a motivator to move to another region. For example, the third most common reason for people moving from their previous residence in Auckland region to another region was being dissatisfied with their previous suburb, town, city or region.

Reasons for moving to current residence

People who had moved to their current residence within the region between 2005 and 2007 rated environment, social, economic, housing and employment reasons to be of similar levels of importance. Often people chose to move to a more suitable suburb, town, or city, but also wanted to live closer to family and friends, more affordable housing, or a larger dwelling.

By contrast, when people had moved from another region it was frequently social reasons that attracted people to move to the current residence; they moved to live with, or be closer to, family. The same environment factors, like wanting a more suitable suburb, town, city or region, and a place with better services and facilities, were also important attractions for those who moved to another region. Employment reasons, like wanting to live closer to the workplace or starting a new job, were relatively more common determinants for choosing a residence in another region.

Figure 3
Main Reason for Moving to Current Residence
March 2007 quarter



Region

Environment reasons were one of the preferred factors that made people move to residences within Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions, or within Wellington, Tasman/Nelson/Marlborough/West Coast, Canterbury and Otago regions. People who moved within regions in the very north (Northland), in the middle of the North Island (ie Gisborne/Hawke's Bay, Taranaki or Manawatu-Wanganui), or in the very south (Southland) had chosen their current residence for other types of reasons that were categorised mainly as social, economic, housing or employment factors.

By comparison, people who had moved from another region to residences in Taranaki or Tasman/Nelson/Marlborough/West Coast regions most frequently stated environment factors as the reason for choosing their current residence. People were motivated to move to Canterbury region for economic and employment reasons. There were not enough moves to Southland from other regions to give information about the motivations for these moves. However, people who moved to any of the other eight regions tended to state social reasons.

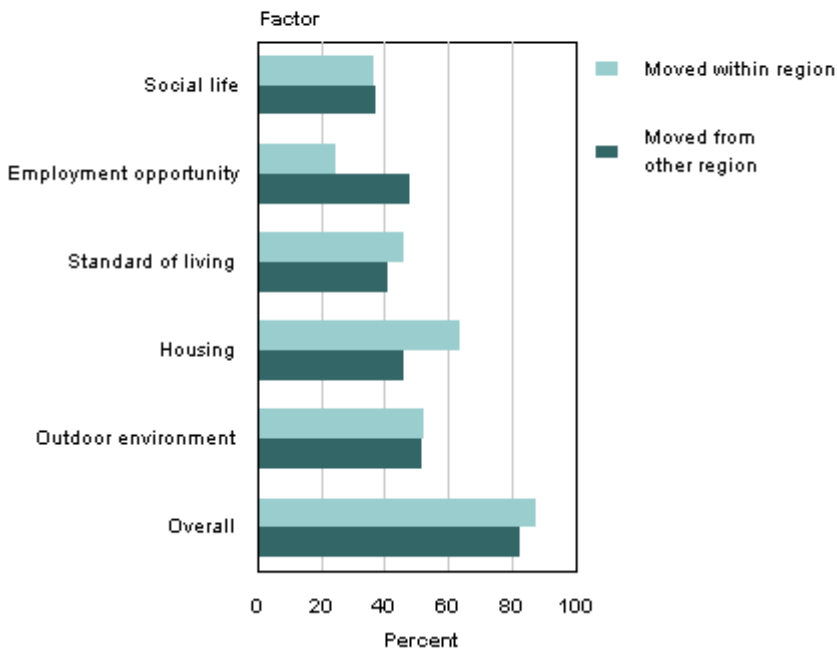
Table 3

Main Reasons for Moving to Current Residence by Region March 2007 quarter						
Region of current residence	Moved within region			Moved from other region		
	First	Second	Third	First	Second	Third
Northland	Economic	Social	Employment	Social	Environment	-
Auckland	Environment	Social	Economic	Social	Environment	Employment
Waikato	Economic	Environment	Housing	Social	Employment	Environment
Bay of Plenty	Environment	Social	Economic	Social	Employment	Environment
Gisborne/ Hawke's Bay	Social	Housing	Economic	Social	-	
Taranaki	Social	Economic	Employment	Environment	-	
Manawatu- Wanganui	Social	Economic	Housing	Social	Environment	
Wellington	Environment	Economic	Social	Social	Economic	Employment
Tasman/Nelson/ Marlborough/ West Coast	Environment	Social	Housing	Environment	Employment	Social
Canterbury	Environment	Social	Economic	Economic	Employment	Environment
Otago	Environment	Education	Social	Social	-	
Southland	Economic	Employment	Housing	-		

How well was the outcome of the move rated?

The benefits of the move were measured by asking respondents to provide ratings of their social life, employment opportunity, standard of living, housing and outdoor environment following the move, compared with how they experienced these at their previous residence. An overall rating summarised how the individual respondent generally felt the outcome of the move had been. The ratings were categorised as much better, better, about the same, worse, and much worse. In this section, results are only provided of proportions that stated the outcome of the move as being much better or better.

Figure 4
Percentage of Movers Who Rated Current Residence
as Much Better or Better than Previous Residence
By lifestyle factor
March 2007 quarter



In summary, for all regions combined, the outcome of the move was more frequently rated much better or better with respect to housing and standard of living when people had moved within one of the 12 grouped regions, compared with those who moved from another region. The overall rating was also more frequently rated much better or better for those who had moved within the region (88 percent) compared with those who moved from another region (83 percent). By contrast, employment opportunity more often had ratings of much better or better when people had moved from another region, indicating that employment reasons were often the main motivator for moving to another region.

Comparatively, social life received a similar proportion of much better or better ratings (37 percent) among movers within and from other regions. This was a low rating considering that social reasons often were the main reason for moving within regions or to another region.

Information sources

The data used comes from the [Survey of Dynamics and Motivations for Migration in New Zealand: March 2007 quarter](#).

Technical notes

More details about the classification system used can be found in the links below.

More information about the [Survey of Dynamics and Motivations for Migration in New Zealand: March 2007 quarter](#) on www.stats.govt.nz.

Technical notes from the [Survey of Dynamics and Motivations for Migration in New Zealand: March 2007 quarter](http://www.stats.govt.nz) on <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>.

Glossary

Please refer to [Glossary](#).

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.