

Internal Migration

Urban and rural dwellers' reasons for moving

Moving from previous residence

People move for a variety of reasons and the decision-making process is complex. The reasons for moving may differ markedly from reasons for choosing to live at the current residence. Taken together, these two sets of reasons describe the factors that drive people away from residences and those that attract people to new residences.

People moving within rural areas (centres with populations less than 1,000) moved from their homes mainly for employment reasons, primarily for better employment opportunities or to start a new job, as can be seen in the graph below. This was followed by economic reasons, such as having purchased or built a dwelling, or sold a dwelling. Moves within urban areas (centres with populations of 1,000 or more) were mainly for the same economic reasons, but setting up home independently or moving with other people who were also moving were important social reasons for moving from a previous urban residence.

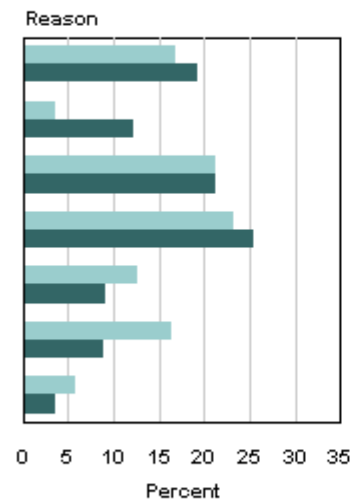
A move from a rural to an urban area was mostly driven by economic and employment reasons, but education-related reasons such as moving for your own or other's education were also important factors. In contrast, when people chose to move from an urban residence to a rural residence, it was also frequently environmental factors prompting the move, such as not being satisfied with previous lifestyle.

Figure 1

Main Reason for Moving from Previous Residence

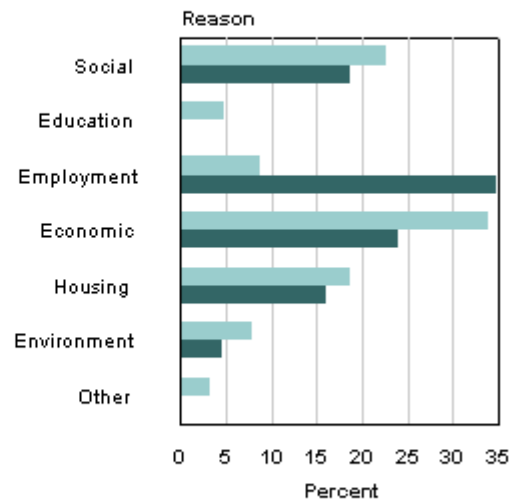
March 2007 quarter

Moved between urban and rural



From urban to rural
From rural to urban

Moved within urban or rural

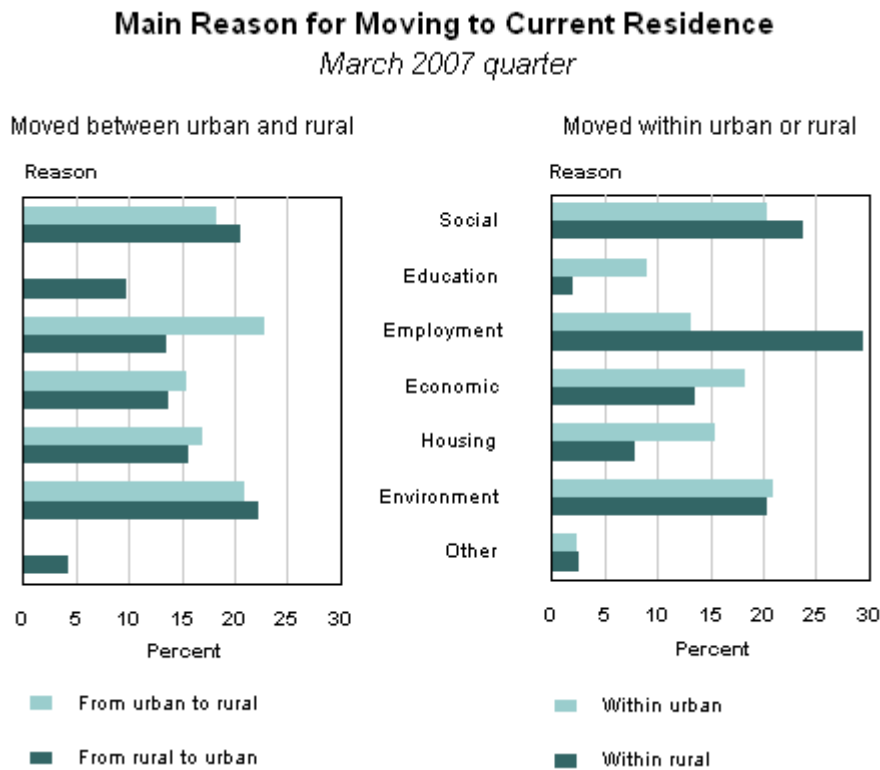


Within urban
Within rural

Moving to new residence

It would be reasonable to assume that the factors that drive people away from a residence would influence their decision in choosing another residence. However, the reasons for moving to a residence revealed a distribution of preferred reasons which was different from the reasons for moving from a residence. Generally, people chose to move to their current residences for environment, employment and social reasons.

Figure 2



People who moved from an urban residence chose a rural residence mostly for employment reasons (23 percent of reasons stated for this category). Environment reasons (21 percent), especially lifestyle reasons, were also important. Conversely, when moving from a rural residence, an urban residence was mainly chosen for environment reasons (22 percent) because moving to a place with better services and facilities was important.

Moves within urban areas involved choice of a residence that provided proximity to services and facilities, but also a residence in a more suitable suburb or town, and a better natural environment (environment reasons comprised 21 percent of reasons stated for this category). In contrast, moves within rural areas resulted in choosing a residence that enabled better employment opportunities, or to start a new job (employment reasons comprised 30 percent of reasons stated for this category). Social reasons (24 percent) were also important (for example, to live closer to others).

Table 1

Main Reason for Moving by Type of Move March 2007 quarter				
Type of move	Main reason for moving from previous residence		Main reason for moving to current residence	
	Most common	Second most common	Most common	Second most common
Within urban area	Economic	Social	Environment	Social
From urban to rural area	Economic	Employment	Employment	Environment
Within rural area	Employment	Economic	Employment	Social
From rural to urban area	Economic	Employment	Environment	Social

Note: Rural area denotes rural centre or other rural area.

The ranking of motivations for having chosen the current residence depends on a range of characteristics of the movers such as age, occupation, and income. As an example, among movers within urban areas, from urban to rural areas, from rural to urban areas, and for those aged 40 years and over, environment reasons were the preferred motives for choosing the current residence.

The largest proportion of those moving within rural areas, or from rural to urban areas, were agricultural (or fishery) workers who, when seeking better employment opportunities, would often be forced to move. This was particularly important for those aged between 30–49 years, who moved from residences in rural areas. Social reasons for choosing the current residence were typical among the younger ages (under 20 years), who mostly moved to live with family or moved with parent(s).

Table 2

Most Frequent Main Reason for Moving to Current Residence by Age Group March 2007 quarter					
Type of move	Age group (years)				
	Under 20	20–29	30–39	40–49	50+
Within urban area	Social	Social	Economic	Environment	Environment
From urban to rural area	Social	Employment	Housing	Environment	Environment
Within rural area	-	Employment	Employment	Employment	-
From rural to urban area	-	Social	Employment	Environment	-

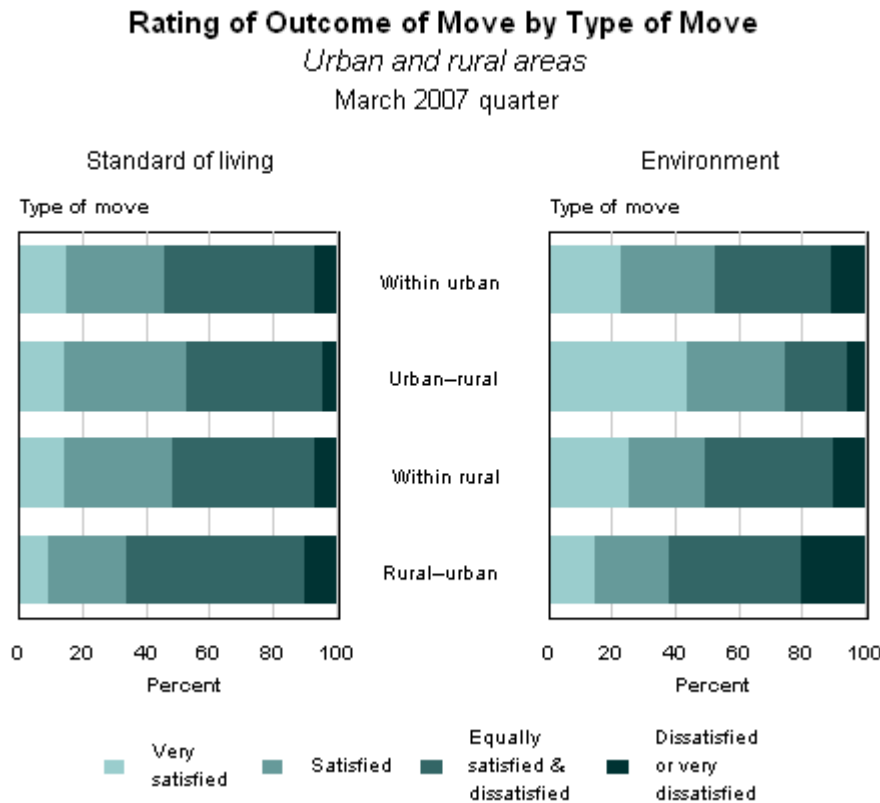
Note: Rural area denotes rural centre or other rural area.

Symbol: - Result not available due to low response for the category.

Satisfaction with move

Respondents were asked to rate their move based on their perceived change in the standard of living between their current residence and their previous residence. Satisfaction levels were on a scale of five categories ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied. About one-third of movers from rural to urban areas were satisfied or very satisfied with their current standard of living compared with the previous residence. However, close to half of movers within rural areas, from urban to rural areas, or within urban areas, provided the same rating. The outcome of the move was also measured with respect to ratings of social life, employment opportunities, housing and environment, and an overall rating, at the current residence in comparison with the previous residence.

Figure 3



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 Survey of Dynamics and Motivations for Migration in New Zealand can be found in the links below.

[More information](#).

[Technical notes](#).

The document attached provides a three-level definition of the classification of reasons for moving from and to location, not moving location, moving to New Zealand and planning to move location.

The downloadable files are in Adobe Acrobat format. If you do not have the Adobe Acrobat Reader, you may download the [reader](#) to view or print the contents of this file.

[Classification of reasons for moving and not moving \(PDF, 39KB\)](#)

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](#) webpage.