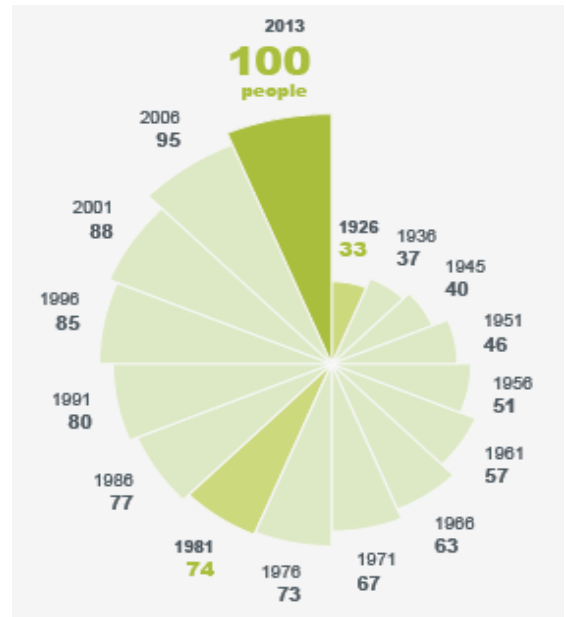


Population Change

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Population growth can have a major effect on the health of the environment**
- **New Zealand’s population increased to 4.5 million in 2013**
- **New Zealand’s population has tripled since 1926 and is expected to reach 5 million in 2026.**

Figure 1: New Zealand as a village of 100 people, 1926-2013



Source: Statistics New Zealand. (2013)

Population growth can have a major effect on the health of the environment

Population growth can have a major effect on the health of the environment. Positive outcomes from population growth and higher density living include (Kerr 1997):

- economic development and growth
- increased funding for programmes related to environmental issues
- public transport
- reticulated water supplies

Conversely, rapid population growth can place heavy demands on the environment, if not managed carefully. Population growth can lead to (Briggs 1999):

- air pollution
- poorer drinking water quality
- waste and sanitation issues
- increased vector-borne disease.

A decreasing population size can put pressure on essential services. Fewer ratepayers can make it difficult to maintain basic infrastructure.

New Zealand’s population increased to 4.5 million in 2013

The estimated total population in New Zealand by 31 December 2013 hit 4.5 million. Compared to 2012, population increased by 0.1 million (1.2%). (Table 1)

Table 1: Estimated total population 2011-2013

Year	Estimated population	Increase	
		Number	Percent
2011	4,422,500	--	--
2012	4,452,900	30,400	0.7
2013	4,504,600	51,700	1.2

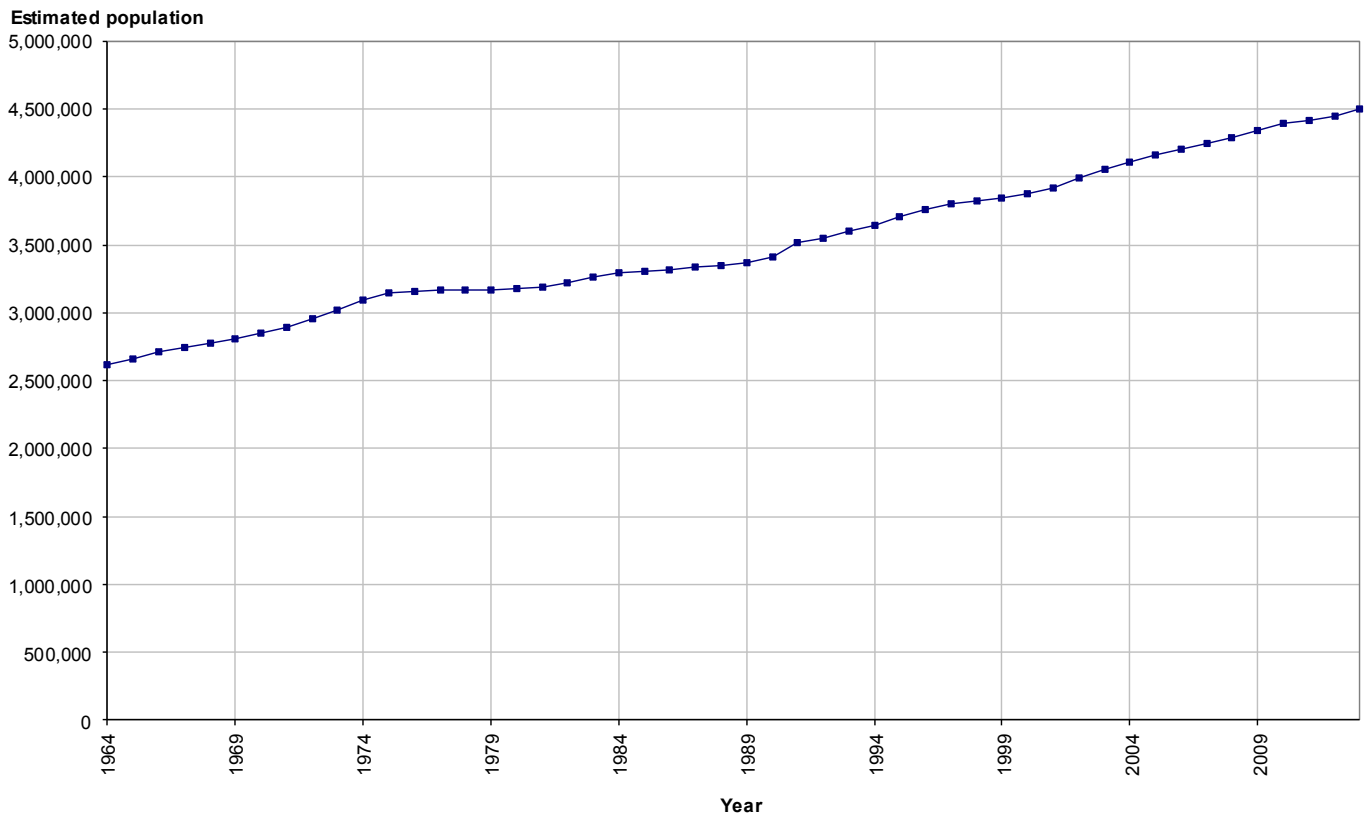
Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2014

Note: Year to 31 December

New Zealand’s population has tripled since 1926 and is expected to reach 5 million in 2026.

Up until 2013, the New Zealand’s population had tripled since 1926 (Figure 1). In the past 50 years, New Zealand population has increased by 72%: from 2.6 million in 1964 to 4.5 million in 2013 (Figure 2). Except in 1977-1979 when the population remained relatively stable, the New Zealand population has increased each year. The total population is expected to reach 5 million in 2026 (Statistics New Zealand, 2009).

Figure 2: Estimated total population in New Zealand, 1964-2013



Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2014

Note: Year to 31 December

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