

Population with access to safe drinking-water supplies

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Drinking-water is vital for human health**
- **Around 79% of New Zealanders received drinking-water that met all the requirements of the drinking-water Standards for New Zealand**
- **People in the North Island were more likely to be supplied with microbiologically compliant drinking-water**

Monitoring compliance of drinking-water Standards

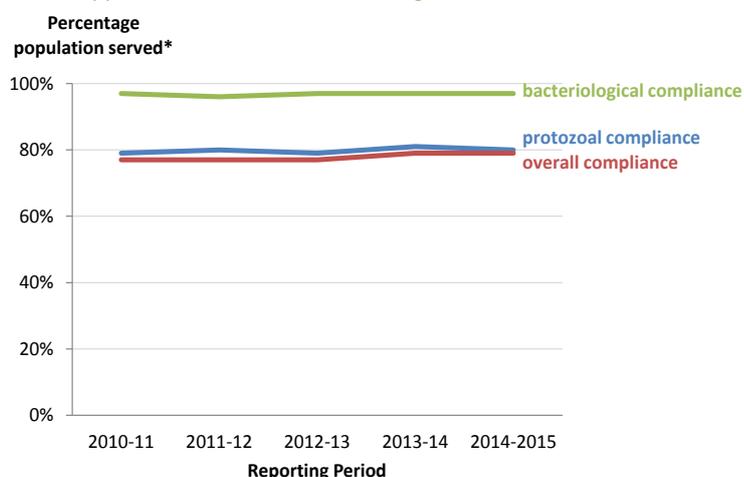
Safe drinking-water is vital for human health, but water that is contaminated with pathogens (disease-causing organisms) may cause diseases, particularly gastro-intestinal diseases (e.g diarrhoea, vomiting). Drinking-water supplies can be treated to remove these pathogens and make the water safe to drink.

Drinking-water supplies in New Zealand are tested for microbiological and chemical compliance with the *Drinking-water Standards for New Zealand* (the Standards). These Standards set maximum acceptable levels to protect human health.

Microbiological compliance of drinking-water supplies is based on two main microbiological reference organisms (Ministry of Health, 2016):

- monitoring of *E.coli* is used to determine the bacteriological compliance
- monitoring of *Cryptosporidium* is used to determine the protozoal (protozoa=single-celled organisms) compliance

Figure 1: Percentage of population* on registered community drinking-water supplies with access to safe drinking water



Source: Ministry of Health, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)

* based on the population served by registered drinking-water supplies serving more than 100 people

Table 1: Population* on registered community drinking-water supplies that had access to safe drinking-water

Access to safe-drinking water	Estimated population	Percentage population
Bacteriological compliance		
Served by drinking-water supply known to comply with E.coli requirements	3,666,000	97%
Served by drinking-water supply known not to comply with E.coli requirements	121,000	3%
Protozoal compliance		
Served by drinking-water supply known to comply with protozoal requirements	3,030,000	80%
Served by drinking-water supply known not to comply with protozoal requirements	757,000	20%

Source: Ministry of Health, 2016

* based on the population served by registered drinking-water supplies serving more than 100 people

Four in five New Zealanders received drinking-water that met all the requirements of the Standards

Drinking-water statistics are presented for all registered community drinking-water supplies that served more than 100 people. This describes the access to safe drinking-water for 3.8 million New Zealanders (Ministry of Health, 2016).

Over 79% of New Zealanders (3 million) on registered supplies received drinking-water that met all the requirements (microbiological, protozoal and chemical) in the reporting period 2014-2015. This is an improvement over the previous reporting periods (Figure 1).

Around 97% of the population (3.6 million) on registered supplies was served by bacteriologically compliant drinking-water, and 80% (3 million) by protozoally compliant drinking-water (Table 1).

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People in the North Island were more likely to be supplied with bacteriologically and protozoally compliant drinking-water than those in the South Island

In the reporting period 2014-2015, 97% (2.8 million) of the North Island population on registered community drinking-water supplies was served by bacteriologically compliant drinking-water and 96% (0.9 million) of the South Island population (Figure 2).

In the North Island, 87% (2.5 million) of the population on registered supplies was served by drinking-water known to comply with the protozoal requirements, whereas in the South Island 57% (0.5 million) received protozoally compliant drinking-water (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Percentage of population* with access to bacteriologically compliant drinking-water by territorial authority

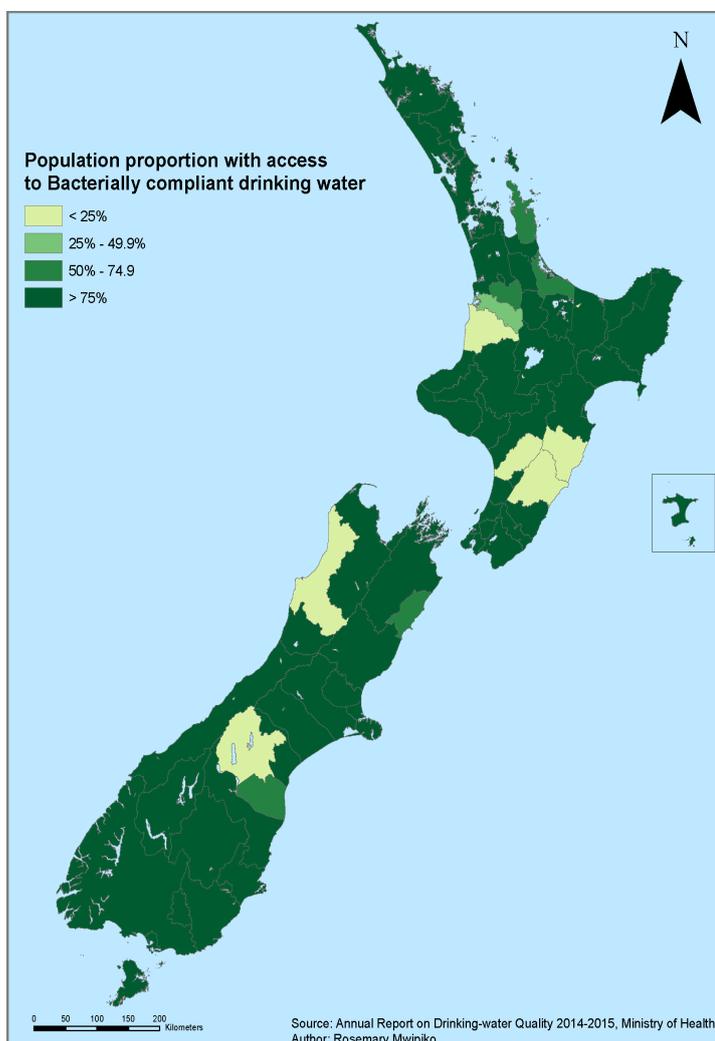
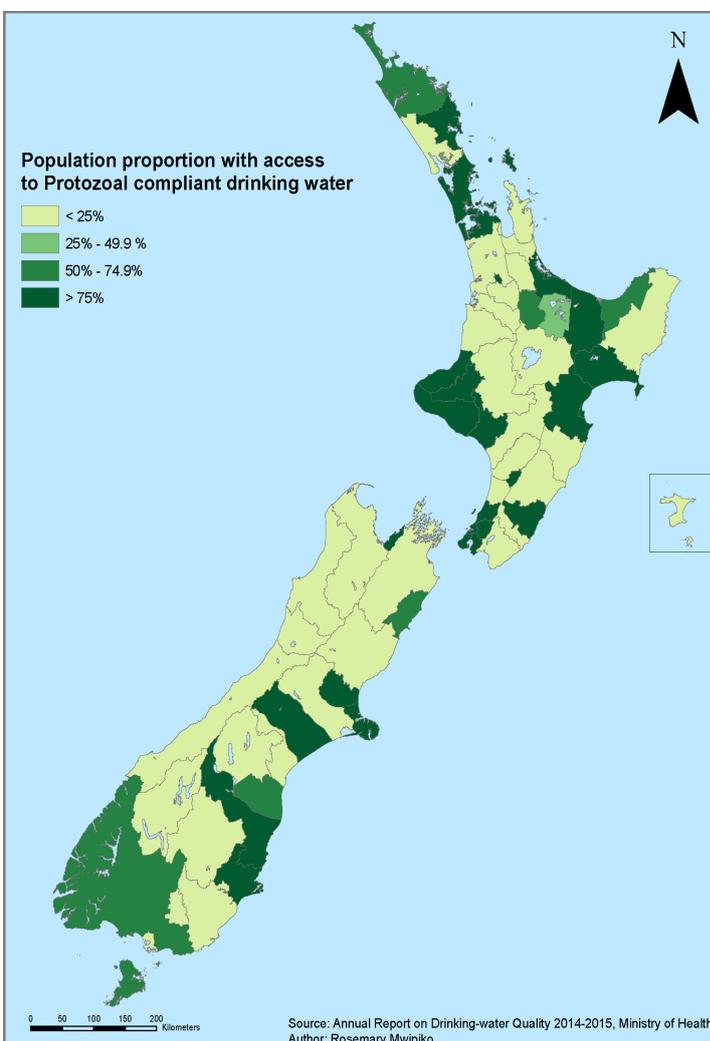


Figure 3: Percentage of population* with access to protozoally compliant drinking-water by territorial authority



Source (Figure 2 and 3): Ministry of Health, 2016

*based on the population served by registered drinking-water supplies serving more than 100 people

REFERENCES:

- Ministry of Health. (2012). *Annual report on drinking-water quality 2010-2011*. Wellington: Ministry of Health
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