



Environmental Health Indicators for New Zealand

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EHI #1

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POPULATION CHANGE IN NEW ZEALAND

Population change is driven by the birth rate, the mortality rate and immigration. An increase in population can have positive environmental health outcomes through economic development and growth and possible increased funding for programmes, such as those dealing with environmental issues and sustainable development (Kerr 1997).

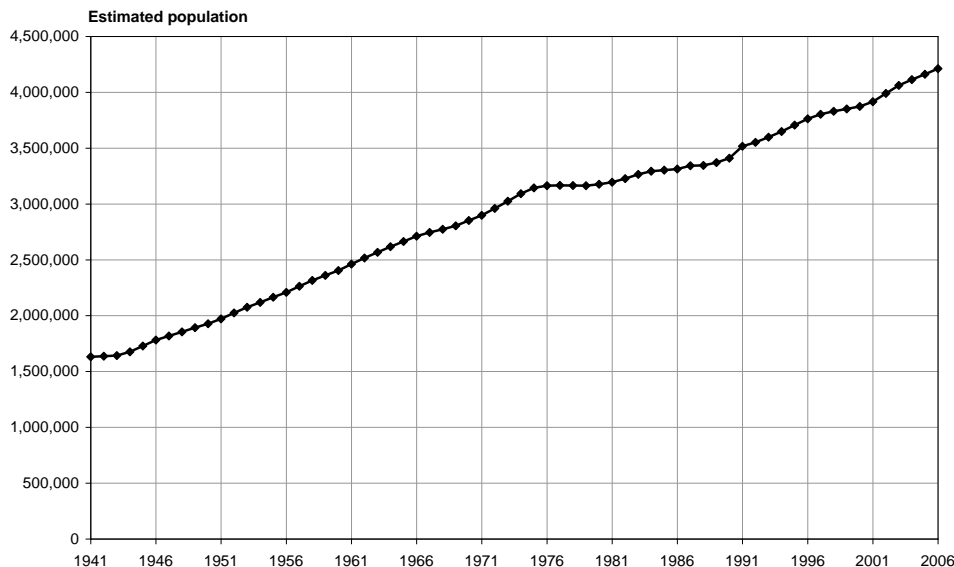
However, negative effects may also arise from population growth. Rapid population growth without the provision of local infrastructure and services, such as sanitation and water supply, can place heavy demands on the environment. Such demands in turn may have negative effects on aspects of environmental health and ecosystems, including air pollution, poor drinking-water quality, an increase in vector-borne disease, and waste management and sanitation issues (Briggs 1999).

This potential for negative outcomes highlights the need for appropriate services and urban planning as towns and cities grow, to ensure sustainable growth and adequate provision and management of services.

The following factsheet from the EHI project presents data on the estimated total population in New Zealand between 1941 to 2006.

Figure 1 shows that the total estimated population in New Zealand has grown considerably over the past 50 years. In 1951 the estimated population size was approximately 2 million people, but it had more than doubled by 2006, to over 4 million people. The rate of increase over that time has been fairly consistent.

Figure 1:
ESTIMATED TOTAL POPULATION IN NEW ZEALAND, 1941 - 2006



Note: Year to 31 December.
Source: Statistics New Zealand (2010)

References

- Briggs D. 1999. Environmental Health Indicators: Framework and methodologies. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- Kerr R. 1997. Population and immigration. Speech presented to the New Zealand Association for Migration and Investment Annual Conference, Auckland, 25 July.
- Statistics New Zealand 2010. Infoshare online database. URL: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/infoshare>. Accessed 21 May 2010.