Age Structure and Population Ageing

With just 11.5 per cent aged 65+ years in 2013, Auckland has one of the youngest regional age structures (compared with 14.3 per cent nationally). However age structures differ markedly within the region, both at local board area level and by ethnic group and country of birth — and in all cases are ageing due to declining birth rates and increasing longevity. Figures 7 and 8 compare the age structures for total Auckland and for Māori. They also show how each population has aged structurally since 2006 (unshaded bars). In 2013 the median age for the region’s Māori population was 23.6 years, compared with 39 years for all of Auckland.

Figure 8: Age Structure: Auckland Māori 2006, 2013

Figure 7: Age Structure: Auckland 2006, 2013

The population of Auckland has grown steadily over the past twenty-seven years, from 881,000 in 1986 to around 1.5 million in 2013, an increase of 70 per cent (Figure 1). Continued steady growth is anticipated with the Statistics New Zealand medium case projections indicating a population of just under 2 million by 2031.

Components of Change

Contrary to popular opinion, the majority of Auckland’s growth over the past few decades has been from natural increase — the difference between births and deaths. However migration plays a major role and did so particularly between 2001 and 2006 when it accounted for the larger component of growth (57 per cent, compared with 41 per cent 1996-2001 and 31 per cent 2006-2013). Between 2001 and 2006 all Auckland age groups gained more people from international PLT migration than they lost, with the net gains greatest at 15-19 and 30-34 years. The picture differed somewhat for internal migration, with net gains at 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29 years only, peaking at 20-24 years. Around 70 per cent of those enumerated as living in Auckland at the 2013 Census had been living there in 2008. The single-largest group of arrivals (9.3 per cent) had been living overseas in 2008, while the second-largest group (7.2 per cent) had not been born. Auckland gained notable proportions of its internal migrants from the Waikato, Wellington and Canterbury, and lost internal migrants to the Waikato, Northland, Bay of Plenty, Wellington and Canterbury. Auckland’s overseas-born population (36.5 per cent) is very unevenly distributed across Auckland’s local board areas. Auckland has one of the youngest regional age structures; however age structures differ markedly within the region, both at local board area level and by ethnic group and country of birth — and in all cases are ageing structurally due to declining birth rates and increasing longevity.

References:
Components of Change by Component Flow

Using a ‘demographic accounting model’ (Jackson & Pawar 2013), the broad components of Auckland’s population change can be broken down into their underlying flows. Figure 3 shows that between 2001 and 2006, Auckland’s estimated net change in population of 154,500 was comprised of natural increase of 65,641 persons and estimated net migration of 88,459—over this period migration accounting for the larger component of growth (57 per cent, compared with 41 per cent between 1996 and 2001, and 31 per cent (approximately) between 2006 and 2013. The natural increase component was in turn comprised of 101,241 births offset by 35,604 deaths, while estimated net migration was comprised of ‘known’ migration (net internal and net permanent and long-term [PLT] international) of around 50,686 persons, along with a further 37,773 migrants whose origin cannot be further disaggregated. Drilling down, the net known migration was comprised of a net internal loss of 16,656 offset by a net PLT international gain of 67,342. Underlying these flows were internal arrivals (59,325) and internal departures (75,981), and international PLT arrivals (176,553) and international PLT departures (109,211).

Figure 3: Components Flows—Auckland 2001-2006

Components of Change by Age

Although not clear from Figure 4, between 2001 and 2006 all age groups gained more people from international PLT migration than they lost, with the net gains greatest at 15-19 and 30-34 years. The picture differed somewhat for internal migration, with net gains at 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29 years only, peaking at 20-24 years.

Auckland’s Movers and Stayers

Data from the 2013 Census indicate that around 70 per cent of those who were enumerated at living in Auckland at the 2013 Census had been living there in 2008. The single-largest group of arrivals (9.3 per cent) had been living overseas in 2008, while the second-largest group (7.2 per cent) had not been born. Living elsewhere in New Zealand but not further defined (5.7 per cent) also comprised a relatively large group of arrivals, as did those who were not elsewhere included (3.5 per cent). Three regions (Waikato, Wellington and Canterbury) each contributed between 0.5 and 0.99 per cent of Auckland’s arrivals, followed by four regions (Northland, Bay of Plenty, Manawatu-Wanganui and Otago) each contributed between 0.2 and 0.49 per cent, and two regions (Hawke’s Bay and Taranaki) each contributed between 0.1 and 0.19 per cent.

The single-largest group of those who had been living in Auckland in 2008 but were living elsewhere at the 2013 Census (leavers) were found to be living in the Waikato. Other regions disproportionately gaining from Auckland’s loss were Northland, Bay of Plenty, Wellington and Canterbury, with smaller gains enjoyed by Manawatu-Wanganui, Hawke’s Bay, Otago and Taranaki. It should be noted that people overseas at the time of the census are not enumerated and thus ‘missing’ from these data. In keeping with recent trends, Auckland experienced a net internal migration loss for the period of approximately 4,600, lower than that for the 2001-2006 period (16,656) but higher than between 1996 and 2001 (-2,244).

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