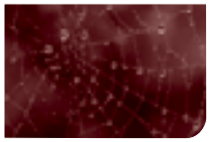
Te Puni Kōkiri
REALISING MĀORI POTENTIAL

Kei Tua i te 2020: Te Taupori Māori
Beyond 2020: Population Projections for Māori



KEY FACTS

- The Māori population is expected to grow by 193,000 (or 31 percent) to 818,000 over the next two decades from 2006 to 2026.
- Greater growth in the Māori population (1.4 percent per annum) will mean Māori comprise a greater proportion of the New Zealand population in 2026 (up from 14.9 percent in 2006 to 16.6 percent).
- The Māori population is projected to grow in all regions from 2006 to 2021, with the greatest increases in the main centres, and the fastest growth in the South Island.
- The Māori population is projected to age, but at a slower rate than that of the total population (14.6 year difference in median ages in 2026, up from 12.9 years in 2006).

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa

When and where is the Māori population expected to grow? This fact sheet presents population projections for Māori, identifying the regions and age groups that are most likely to experience change in the coming decades.

POPULATION GROWTH

Based on moderate levels of fertility, mortality, migration and inter-ethnic mobility, the Māori population is projected to grow from 624,000 to 818,000[1] over the two decades from 2006 to 2026.

The projected growth in the Māori population from 2006 to 2026 equates to 1.4 percent growth per annum. Over the same period, the total population[2] is expected to grow by just 0.8 percent per annum. This difference in growth rates will result in Māori constituting a higher percentage of the New Zealand population in 2026, increasing from 14.9 percent in 2006 to 16.6 percent.

Under different demographic scenarios, the Māori population may reach between 704,000 and 944,000, as is illustrated in Graph 1.

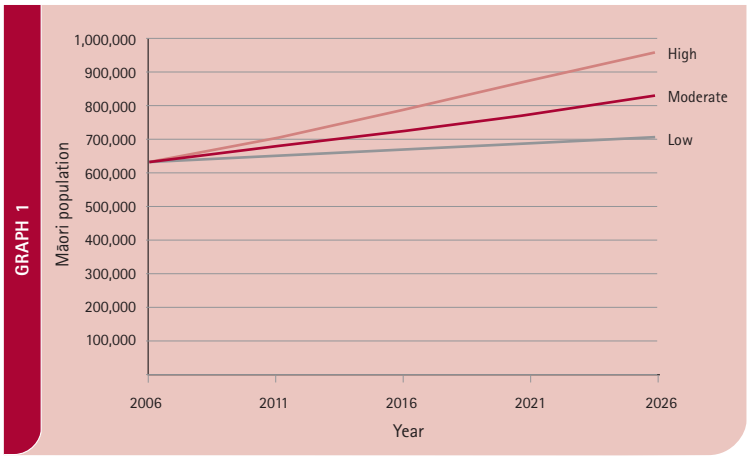
REGIONS

The Māori population is projected to grow in all regions[3] from 2006 to 2021, with large increases expected for the northern parts of the North Island. The greatest numerical increases are projected to occur in the main centres; in Auckland (up 45,100 to 201,700), Waikato (up 19,300 to 103,300), and Canterbury (up 15,200 to 55,300). While the fastest rates of growth are projected to occur in the South Island; in Nelson (up 2.4 percent per annum to 5,600), Canterbury (up 2.2 percent per annum to 55,300) and Otago (up 1.8 percent per annum to 17,700). The Māori population is projected to increase in both the North Island (up 123,100 to 667,300) and South Island (up 25,700 to 105,400). The South Island is projected to experience a higher rate of population growth (1.9 percent per annum versus 1.4 percent for the North Island).

Between 2006 and 2021, Māori population growth is projected to exceed the growth of the total population in all regions, meaning Māori will comprise a greater proportion of the total population in all regions.

By 2021, Māori will comprise the majority of the Gisborne population (50.6 percent, up from 46.8 percent), more than a third of the Northland population (34.1 percent, up from 31.5 percent), and more than a quarter of the Bay of Plenty (28.7 percent, up from 27.7 percent) and Hawke's Bay (27.1 percent, up from 23.9 percent) populations. Further, significant increases in the Māori share of the population are forecast for Taranaki (from 16.1 percent to 20.1 percent), Manawatu-Wanganui (from 20.0 percent to 23.4 percent), Southland (from 12.0 percent to 14.9 percent), and Nelson (from 8.9 percent to 11.7 percent).

GRAPH 1: PROJECTED GROWTH OF THE MĀORI POPULATION



Source: Statistics New Zealand, National Ethnic Population Projections, 2006 – 2026 (2006-base).

Note: High, moderate and low refer to different population projections reflecting different demographic assumptions. The moderate projection is the most plausible, while the high and low projections represent alternative growth scenarios.

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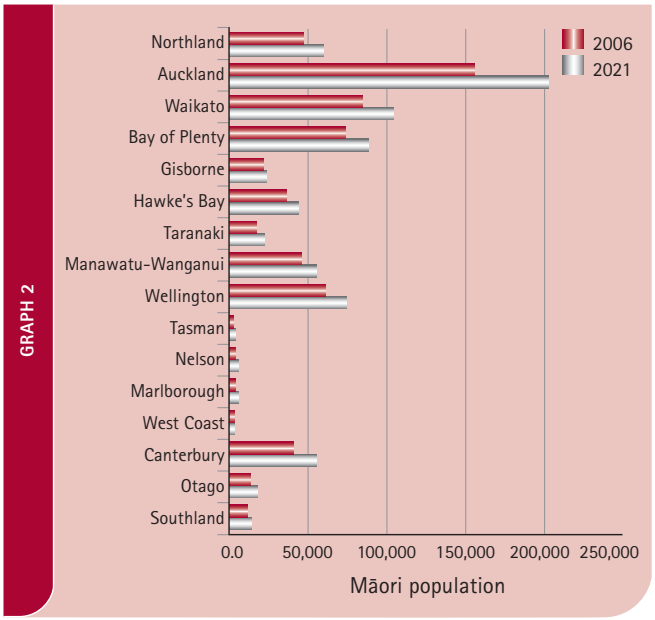
GRAPH 2: PROJECTED REGIONAL NUMERICAL GROWTH OF THE MĀORI POPULATION



Source: Statistics New Zealand, Sub-national Ethnic Population Projections, 2006 – 2021 (2006-base)

AGE

The Māori population is projected to age between 2006 and 2026, with an increase in the median age from 22.9 years to 25.3 years. This increase in median age reflects changes in the age distribution, with proportionally fewer individuals projected to be under the age of 15 in 2026; 32 percent of the Māori population, down from 34 percent in 2006; and an increased proportion projected to be above the age of 65; 9 percent of the Māori population, up from 4 percent in 2006.

The Māori population is a young population compared to the total New Zealand population and while it is projected to age, is expected to age at a slower rate than the total population. The median age of the total population is projected to increase by 4.1 years from 35.8 years in 2006 to 39.9 years in 2026. Over the same period, the median age of the Māori population is projected to increase by just 2.4 years. This will result in a 14.6 year difference in median ages at 2026, up from 12.9 years difference in 2006. Despite ageing, the Māori population will be comparatively more youthful than the total population in 2026.

GRAPH 3: POPULATION PYRAMIDS FOR MĀORI AND THE TOTAL POPULATION IN 2006 AND 2026

Source: Statistics New Zealand, National Ethnic Population Projections, 2006 – 2026 (2006-base)

1 Māori population projections are based on the estimated resident population of Māori ethnicity at 30 June 2006. Eleven alternative projection series are available. In this factsheet, Series 6 projections (assuming moderate levels of fertility, mortality, migration and inter-ethnic mobility) were used unless otherwise specified, as recommended by Statistics New Zealand.

2 Total population refers to all people in New Zealand, including Māori. Total population projections are based on the estimated resident population of New Zealand at 30 June 2006. Nine alternative projection series are available. In this factsheet, Series 5 projections (assuming moderate levels of fertility, mortality and migration) were used, as recommended by Statistics New Zealand.

3 The regions employed in this section are Regional Council areas.

4 Median age is the midpoint of the age distribution, meaning half of the population are younger, and half are older, than this age.

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