

Household Composition

What this is about...

Household composition reflects living arrangements within New Zealand households, as measured in the Census. A 'household' for Census purposes comprises the person or persons who reside in a private dwelling, and a 'family' is defined as a husband or wife (in a legal or de-facto marriage) with or without children of any age living in the same dwelling – or a sole parent, of any marital status, living with children of any age.¹¹

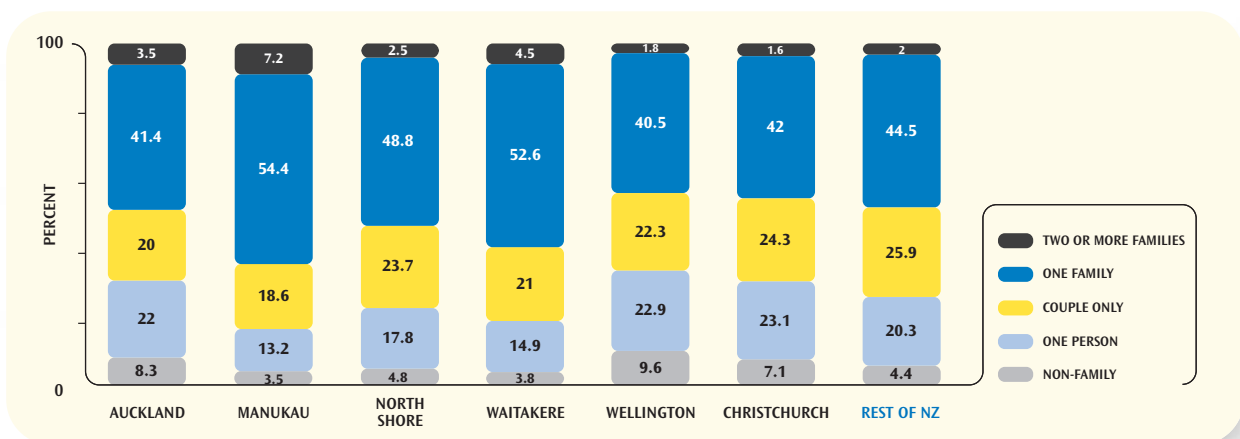
Household composition can reflect the impact of changing social trends (e.g. later marriages, lower fertility rates and independent living) as well as economic pressures (such as housing costs, tertiary education fees and incomes) and cultural preferences (eg. extended family and intergenerational living).

What did we find ?

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

- While most people still live in a family, the 1996 Census detected more people choosing to live alone or in relationships that do not include children.
- The highest proportions of non-family and one person households are in Wellington and Auckland Cities. This probably reflects the larger numbers of single, professional people and students living in the inner-city areas.
- The six largest cities have a lower proportion of couple only households when compared to the rest of New Zealand.
- Compared to the rest of New Zealand, Auckland, Waitakere and Manukau Cities have a much higher rate of two or more families living in the same house. This may be due to increasing housing costs leading to 'doubling' up of families in one house and may also reflect patterns of intergenerational living common in Maori, Asian and Pacific Islands cultures.
- In 1996, Manukau City's rate of households with two or more families (7.2%) was three times greater than the rest of New Zealand.

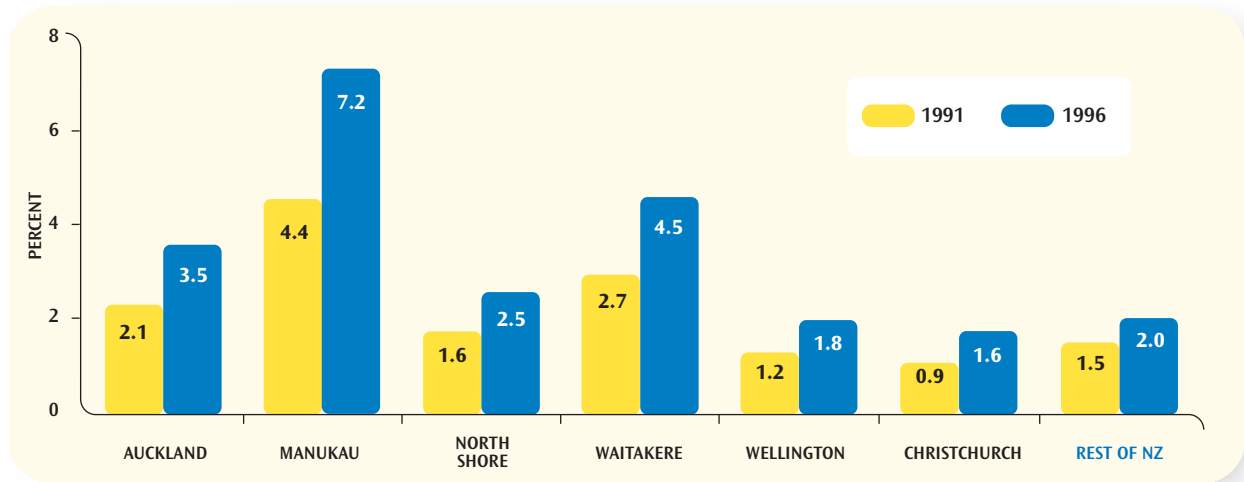
HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION, BY CITY (1996)



Data Source: Statistics New Zealand

11 It is acknowledged that Census based family data reflects predominantly European definitions of nuclear based family structures. Some have argued that this approach does not "capture satisfactorily the structures found in present day New Zealand" (Shirley, Koopman-Boyd, Pool and St. John. 1997. Family Change and family policies: New Zealand.) For example, a grandmother, mother and three children living together in the same house would "officially" be counted as two families. However, they may view themselves as being one family rather than two.

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH TWO OR MORE FAMILIES RESIDENT, BY CITY (1991 AND 1996)



Data Source: Statistics New Zealand

Between 1991 and 1996, the proportion of households with two or more families increased at a rate of at least 50% in the six largest cities, compared to a 30% increase for the rest of New Zealand.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

In 1996, the average number of household members nationally was 2.7 people. Four of the six largest cities were at or above this figure, especially Manukau City with an average of 3.4 persons per household.

Several wards in the Auckland Region were found to have particularly high average numbers of household members, namely Massey (3.3), Manurewa (3.4), Mangere (4.1) and Otara (4.6).

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE, BY CITY (1996)

	Average number of household members
Auckland	2.7
Manukau	3.4
North Shore	2.8
Waitakere	3.0
Wellington	2.6
Christchurch	2.6

Data Source: Statistics New Zealand