



Meadowbank

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NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER - WHIRINGA-Ā-RANGI 2024

Greetings from the 'Acting President'

Our October monthly meeting was very well attended with 147 members and visitors present. We had two very interesting mini speakers from our Interest groups – Roger Peak outlining the history of the 'Music group', and giving fascinating examples from recent group presentations, and David Arrowsmith discussing the role of the 'Memoir Writing group', followed by one of the group, Janet Say, reading a recent story she had shared with the group. Looking for new members for the 2025 committee, Melda Brunette spoke of her role as Secretary, and Judith Stewart outlined the role of the Membership Co-Ordinator. We look forward to new committee members joining us.

The main speaker was Dr Alan Barber, from the Neurological Foundation of NZ– Professor of Clinical Neurology at Auckland Medical School

His talk focused on 'Stroke' including some fascinating statistics such as in NZ we have around 9000 people who have a stroke each year; 1 out of 5 die, in the first month;

our demographics are changing, 1 out of 4 are now of working age, and Māori and Pacifica peoples have higher rates of strokes than Europeans caused by genetics, lifestyle, access to health care, medications.

For every 100 people treated, 40 have a less disabled outcome, 23 are more functionally independent, and 26 require hospital level care.

Alan discussed the types of stroke, focusing on blood clots depriving the brain cells of blood supply and the work of his department in focusing on 'clot retrieval' before the brain cells are damaged too much.

Alan stressed the need to remember the acronym *FAST*

We need to look for signs of a stroke such as *FACE* [drooping], *ARM* [weak], *SPEECH* [difficult] then Taking action - Call 111

While we cannot change our age, sex, ethnicity, or genetics, we can modify how much we exercise, reduce high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking and alcohol consumption, as well as controlling diabetes.

Our November meeting is our AGM, followed by a speaker, then a light lunch.

We are still looking for a Treasurer and Vice President for 2025 and will be seeking nominations from the floor at the AGM. Could you fill this role?

Please remember to bring items for donating to the Auckland City Mission – they will come to collect them at St Chads after our lunch. A list of suitable items can be found listed below in this newsletter.

Looking forward to seeing you all on November 18th

Gay Williams

Who's Who for **Monday 18 November 2024** meeting: 9.45 a.m. for 10 a.m. start at St Chad's Church, 38 St Johns Road, St Johns 1072.

Greeters: Saints & Sinners

Mini speakers: Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Guest speaker: Gay Williams, Past President/Acting President and member of Meadowbank U3A since 2003. Gay will endeavour to outline the ever-changing scope of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

This will include: (1) Common terms used when discussing AI; (2) Major AI chatbots and who produces them; (3) Key people who contributed/are contributing to AI developments; (4) How AI is already used in our everyday activities, and in business and science; (5) What generative AI currently produces; (6) The risks of AI; (7) The future of AI; (8) Learning more and references. Every day it seems there is a new development in this exciting field including events hosting Yuval Harari, presentations by Stephen fry, Oprah Winfrey interviewing Sam Altman and Bill Gates, the release of GPT01 and many more.

Who's Who for **Monday 20 JANUARY 2025** meeting: 9.45 a.m. for 10 a.m. start at St Chad's Church, 38 St Johns Road, St Johns 1072.

Greeters: Short Walks

Mini Speaker: Dollars and Sense – Gay Williams (we will break for morning tea at 1020)

Guest speaker: James Duncan Tramway Project Manager, MOTAT (10.50 -12.00)

Infant Sparks

"The story behind the arrival of electric trams in Auckland – the trials, tribulations, tragedies, battles and successes of bringing what was then "space-age" technology to NZ's largest city. The story is brought to life with a large number of digital images, many rare and not seen previously, of this revolutionary form of street transport – this large vehicle that could propel itself along as if by magic, without horses or a steam engine in front!"

James grew up in Auckland during the 1960s and 1970s when Auckland was served by a large and extensive electric trolley bus system.

At age 15, he joined the Tramway Division at MOTAT and has now been an active volunteer member of the tramway for 48 years.

Most of his working life was spent in retail, but in 2011 he was asked to take on managing the operation of the new tramway down in Wynyard Quarter.

Today, together with this role, and a full-time position at MOTAT looking after the infrastructure for the MOTAT Tramway, he says he is now like a pig in mud.



The History group at Yvonne Kennedy's place, embarking on the history of Poland



The shared reading Group 2 at their October meeting.



Gill Naden with our October speaker: Prof Alan Barber

U3A Meadowbank Inc.

Further Notice of AGM 2024

The 24th Annual General Meeting of the Society is to be held on Monday 18 November at St Chad's, starting at 10.00 am. The agenda will include the usual presentation of President's and Treasurer's reports and the election of officers for 2025. Members must be fully paid-up, as of this date, in order to vote at the AGM.

The agenda and all relevant notices and reports will be sent to members by email or mail on or before 1 November 2022. Our Constitution requires 40 per cent of members to be in attendance to make up a quorum, so please do plan to attend.

The AGM/guest speaker will be followed by the year-end function.

Melda Brunette Secretary

SAD NEWS!

It is with regret that I need to inform you of the recent death of one of our founding members – Lou Holder. Lou and his wife Paddy were major contributors to our U3A for more than 20 years, with Lou President in 2011 and they were convenors of several interest groups.

After the tragic death of Paddy, Lou moved to Christchurch in September 2023 to be near family. He was active until the last and death was sudden and unexpected just after he had unloaded the car in preparation for a family dinner. He had also just found out he had two grandchildren on the way which he was delighted about.

A letter has been sent to the family on behalf of Meadowbank U3A.

The Programme "National Treasures" on TV One Oct 2nd included a presentation by one of our members – Jill Smith.

Jill presented as a national treasure the graduation hood worn by her grandmother, Kate Edger, the first woman in NZ to get a degree and the first in the British Empire to graduate from University with a Bachelor's degree (With Distinction!).



The Kate Edger Educational Charitable Trust formed in her memory, and based in Auckland, promotes and advances the cause of women's education, and provides a range of scholarships. A great presentation Jill.

The hood continued to be worn by family members who graduated (including her granddaughter Jill and great granddaughter Caitlin). How proud they all must be of this amazing woman who continued throughout her career to contribute to the education of women in New Zealand and many other educational causes. To read more about this fabulous pioneering woman try to get hold of Diana Morrow's book "Kate Edger- the life of a pioneering Feminist" published in 2021. Gay Williams

FOOD DONATIONS FOR THE AUCKLAND CITY MISSION

We will be collecting donations for the City Mission at our November 18th meeting

The need for our donations is greater than ever so please contribute what you can as follows

Non Perishable Food:

Canned Fish, Vegetables and fruit Spreads – vegemite, peanut butter and jams Rice and Pasta

Toiletries: Shampoo, Toothpaste/brushes, soap, and feminine products

Please ensure any donation is not past its used by date

Thank you all for your contributions Gay Williams

Whakataukī / Words of Wisdom

Time to enrich our days with some more words of wisdom from around the world!

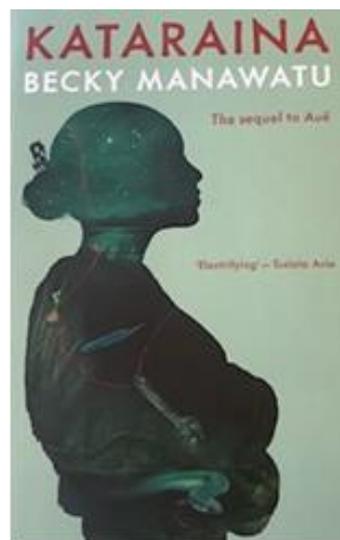
“A wise man never knows all, only fools know everything.” African proverb.

“I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.”

Oscar Wilde

Book of the month

Aué and Kataraina



Becky Manawatu has recently released a second book as a follow up to her celebrated novel **Aué** (the best book of 2019 according to Steve Braunias)

The books follow a troubled family, the Te Au whānau, their tīpuna and their whānau with chapters telling each member's story. Readers of Auē were left wondering what happens and now with Kataraina we learn more of this story of survivors of loss, abuse and tragedy

Kataraina (2024) has a family tree at the beginning which is a big help in reminding the reader of just how the family members are related. It also included more te reo Māori throughout the text which is translated and added at the back of the book.

Both books are not in chronological order which meant I needed to read them carefully to ensure I understood the perspectives of each family member. The writing however is beautiful and very touching

I recommend you read Auē first then the sequel to get the most out of Becky's writing

Gay Williams

Next Monthly Meeting: Monday 20 November 2024 at 10 am at St Chad's.

Don't forget to send us your U3A news to include in the next newsletter – we rely on your contributions

Deadline for **JANUARY 2025** newsletter items is **SATURDAY 28 DECEMBER 2024**. Expect receipt confirmation

If you change your personal details, OR LEARN OF THE BEREAVEMENT OF A U3A MEMBER, please email the change to u3ameadmemb@gmail.com. Please include YOUR full name, physical address, phone number and email address.

TO CONTACT COMMITTEE MEMBERS please use the correct gmail addresses below:

Secretary: u3ameadowbank@gmail.com

Membership Coordinator: u3ameadmemb@gmail.com

Treasurer: u3ameadtrea@gmail.com

Newsletter Coordinator: u3ameadnews@gmail.com

Feedback: u3ameadfeedback@gmail.com

Groups Coordinator: u3ameadconv@gmail.com

Something Amusing



“A true gentleman is one who knows how to play the bagpipes – but doesn't.”

Anonymous

Everyone talks about leaving a better planet for our children.

Why doesn't anyone try to leave better children for our planet?



Something Interesting

We really do get wiser with age, according to a new study of more than 2,000 pensioners. Brain boffins at Stanford found that the risk-taking element of our brain starts to fade as we get older, and we become less susceptible to our hormones, allowing us to make more balanced and emotionally intelligent decisions.

NZ's yawning demographic divide

Major demographic changes have not only coincided with major events in New Zealand's history – from the Land Wars to Māori urbanisation – they have caused them. But decision-makers, including the current government, are ignoring another major shift underway now – the imminent decline of the Pākehā population and rapid growth of the Māori population.

by [Aaron Smale](#) Radio NZ (2023)

Extracts from three feature articles in 2023.



Ngawai is among a generation 18-years-old and under that make up 40 percent of the Māori population. Around 40 percent of the Pākehā population is over the age of 50. Photo: Aaron Smale.

“One thing is very clear – the Pakeha population will decline, both in terms of demographic composition and then also numerically. The Māori population and Pacific populations will continue to grow” Dr Tahu Kukutai

On the campaign trail (last year) Christopher Luxon suggested, that the country should start procreating more vigorously and patriotically. But then he recanted, or at least his deputy Nicola Willis did on his behalf. Despite climbing-down from that advocacy, the Prime Minister had inadvertently highlighted the major social and economic issue facing the country, even if he was framing it the wrong way round and now doesn't want to talk about it.

“We need people,” he said at the time, speaking to an infrastructure conference, of all things. “Here is the deal – New Zealand stopped replacing itself in 2016. I encourage all of you to go out there and have more babies if you wish, that would be helpful.”

Speaking to reporters later, Nicola Willis was asked if she believed people needed to have more babies in New Zealand.

“No, that is the decision for individuals depending on their desires and their family circumstances. I think what you're referring to is a joke that Christopher Luxon made.”

Willis said National would never be a party that told people what the right size for their family was.

“The National Party does not have a policy that we want to encourage women to change their decisions about their family size or change guidance to men for that matter either and to suggest otherwise is ridiculous.”

“He made a joke.”

Despite their disavowals and “jokes”, National’s “no-policy” is a policy. It appears the main governing party doesn’t have a policy on the shifting demographics that are going to see the Pākehā population declining in the next 20 years, while the Māori and Pasifika populations grow. The Asian population will also increase but the main driver there will be immigration.

Because, to paraphrase Luxon, here’s the real deal. When he said “we need people” because we’re not replacing ourselves, he missed some people; because Māori are replacing themselves quite well. In fact, they’ve been growing in numbers and as a percentage of the population for some time and will continue to do so.

Luxon’s “joke” about a demographic slide in the New Zealand population only exposed a lack of awareness of the changing face of the country. What the numbers show is an almost mirror image between Pākehā and Māori age structures to the point that there is a clear demographic divide between Pākehā Baby Boomers and young Māori. Around 40 percent of the Pākehā population is over the age of 50 (compared with around 20 percent of the Māori population in the same age bracket), which means in the next 20 years approximately 1.3 million Pākehā will be in retirement – or dying. But only around 750,000 Pākehā kids will enter adulthood over the same period.

By contrast, around 40 percent of the Māori population is 18 years old or younger (compared with 23 percent of the Pākehā population), which means around 300,000 Māori children will be entering adulthood over the next 20 years. Around 42 percent of the Pasifika population are 18 or under and have a median age of 23.4, which means approximately 160,000 will enter adulthood in the next 20 years.

The numbers of Asian children entering adulthood in New Zealand will also increase, although the dynamics are more complicated. For a start, Asia is a catch-all term for one of the largest, most populous and diverse regions in the world. Secondly, the increase in the Asian population will be driven more by immigration as the resident Asian population generally has a lower birth rate than Māori and Polynesian.

Actually, these numbers are based on the 2018 census, so we’re already five years into these changes. And for Māori at least the numbers are likely to be an undercount – the response rates for the census in 2018 were 74 percent for both Māori and Pacific.



Ngawai with her Aunty Kororia. Photo: Aaron Smale.

Even with all these caveats, these numbers pose questions that are inescapable. These numbers will impact on almost every decision this and future governments are faced with in the short to long-term future of the country – housing and cost of living, health and retirement, education and employment, taxation and the economy. All of these will be shaped irrevocably by population trends that can’t be reversed or changed.

This demographic divide has been so-far ignored by the parties making up the current government, but also Labour over its two terms.

During their election campaigns the main parties focused their attention on the section of the population that is in decline, which just so happens to be the country’s largest voting bloc – white Baby Boomers. Throughout the election campaign the media repeatedly showed images of leaders of the three parties that are now forming a government speaking to audiences that were a sea of grey heads and white faces.

While pandering to this cohort might get you into government, they’re not the future of the country. They’re heading for retirement, rest-homes or cemeteries while still believing they should be not only in power but deciding the political future of the country. However, economically they’re already starting to be a drag on the

economy as they move into their final years and start making more demands of the health sector, and will be drawing superannuation for longer than any previous generation.

Conversely, in many of the soundbites and election sloganeering there was constant rhetoric that portrayed Māori as some kind of threat, either implicitly or explicitly. The media barely provided any pushback on this, maybe because its ranks are predominantly Pākehā. It's leadership certainly is.

As happens overseas, issues of race are often euphemised in language that appeals to a white population without actually mentioning race at all.

Winston Peters, who has built a decades-long political career appealing to old white people's gripes, had billboards saying: "Take back our country." (It's worth noting that Trump used this phrase on January 6 and has used it often since). Take it back from who, exactly? Who is "our" referring to and why do they have greater claim to ownership of the country than this other anonymous group that has supposedly taken over? Peters' slogan only makes sense when read in the context of his decades-long tactic of pitching to old white people. His modus operandi appears to have been to accentuate concerns for these old white people enough, make them angry enough, and you'll get in.

Peters has been so successful at this because there are lots of old white people to scare. Because the Pākehā Baby Boomer group is so large, he only has to tickle the attention of a small percentage and he's over the line and back in Parliament. So successful has he been that other political leaders have occasionally pinched his methodology, much to Peters irritation. But Peters also grew up in an era when it was widely perceived that the way for Māori to be successful was to act and aspire to be more like Pākehā. Being Māori was no way to get ahead.

David Seymour was at least more explicit in his election slogan. "End racial division" one billboard thundered. Seymour even had the audacity to claim Nelson Mandela would vote for ACT if he was alive because he opposed apartheid (Mandela's grandson rubbished this claim). Seymour has not read enough New Zealand history – Governor George Grey served terms in both New Zealand and South Africa at crucial points in both countries' histories. Despite apartheid being legally abolished over 30 years ago, South Africa is still very much divided along racial lines by socio-economic status. Abolishing the explicitly racist laws of apartheid doesn't erase the impacts of colonisation and racism that can and do drag on for generations.

What Seymour must know is that this rhetoric appeals to the same generation Peters has targeted. But what he ignores is that New Zealand was and still is already divided along racial lines if you look at every social and economic measure. None of Seymour, Luxon or Peters have made any great noise about this, let alone said much about how they intend to address it. Nor did ex-Prime Minister Chris Hipkins, for that matter. Māori kids don't vote, but Māori kids make up nearly half the Māori population and will be a larger proportion of the country's adults over the next 20 years.

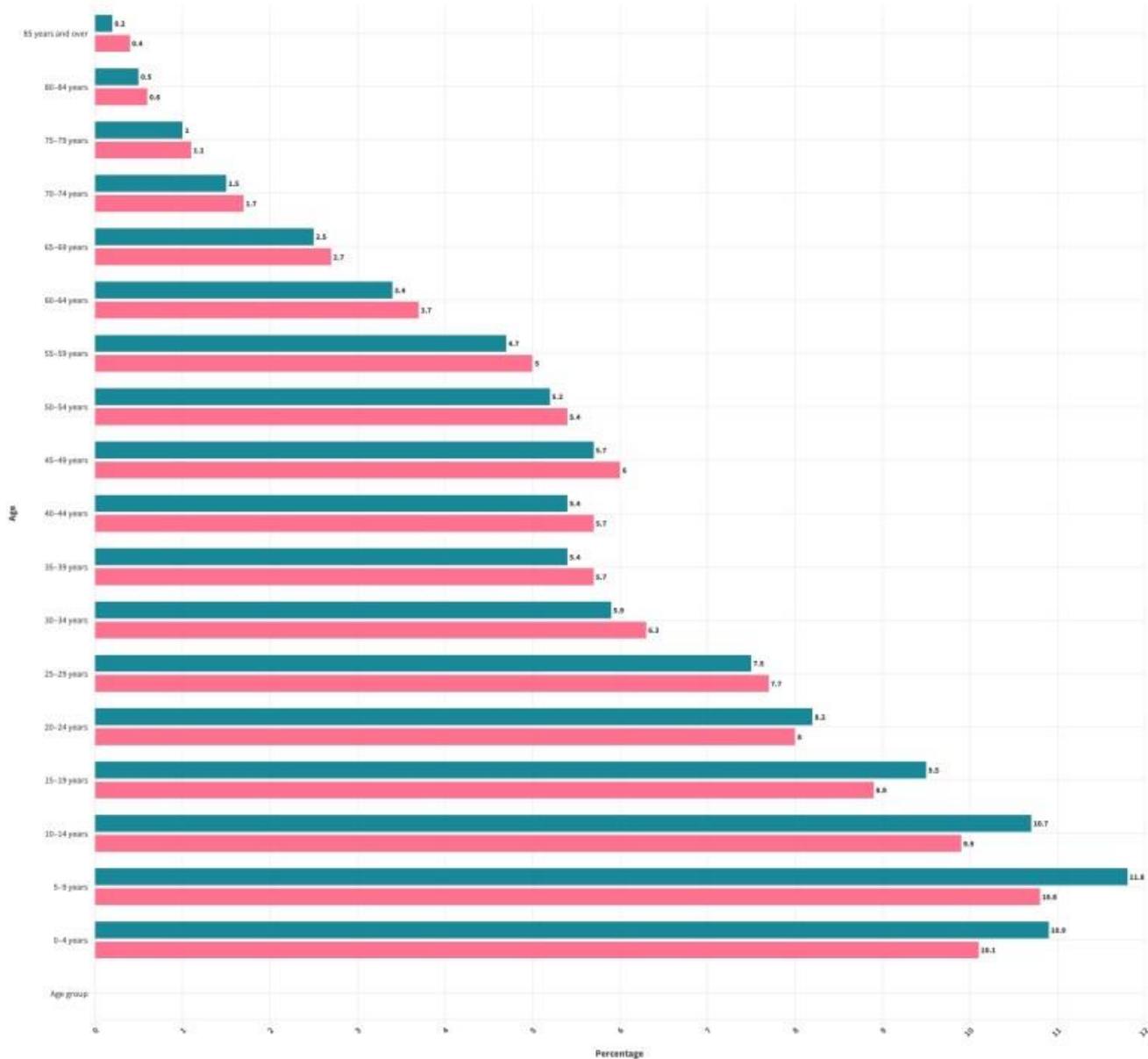
If politicians want to promise a gold-plated retirement and health system for their old, white voters, who are going to increasingly be a drag on the country's finances, it's going to increasingly be a growing brown population that will be paying for it. No amount of election sloganeering will change this brute fact. If politicians fail to face up to these changes, they are essentially ignoring the biggest economic, social and political issue of the coming decades. With all the variables that face a government, this is one that is locked in for the next generation at least. Treasury [reports](#) state clearly that New Zealand's overall ageing population is going to increase superannuation and health costs while reducing tax revenue and GDP.

Pākehā Age Structure 2018



The Pākehā population structure (above) is older with a median age of 41.4 and has a fertility rate that is lower than its mortality rate. In short, the Pākehā population is not only stagnant but will start to decline over the next 20 years. That decline will accelerate as the cohort he and other leaders are so focused on – Pākehā Baby Boomers – will start dying off.

Māori Age Structure 2018



However, the population structure of Māori (above) is far younger – the median age is 25.4. Māori fertility is also higher. Which means the brown population is going to steadily grow not only in numbers but as a percentage of the total population over the next 20 years.

Len Cook is firmly in the middle of the Pākehā Baby Boomer generation. He’s also the former head of Statistics New Zealand and also headed Statistics in the UK. So, he knows his numbers. And the numbers are clear.

“I’m not sure when it will be, but in somewhere between 10, and 20 years time deaths will exceed births in the Pākehā population. And you’re going to have this extraordinary increase of Māori and Pacific.”

“We don’t do enough work looking 20 years ahead at these demographic structures.”



University of Waikato demographer Dr Tahu Kukutai. Photo: University of Waikato.

Demographer Tahu Kukutai is based at Waikato University's National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis and was mentored by Ian Pool, whose ground-breaking work on Māori population studies is still considered foundational. She says population structures and mortality and birth rates don't shift a great deal over time, which makes it relatively straightforward when making projections about future trends.

"One thing is very clear – the Pākehā population will decline, both in terms of demographic composition and then also numerically. The Māori population and Pacific populations will continue to grow – they have a very different age structure that's nearly all entirely driven by natural increase. And then the Asian population will grow as well through migration. So, the non-European share of Aotearoa will grow considerably and the relative balance will shift demographically."

These changes are due to differences in the rates of natural increase, or the difference between birth rates and death rates. When death rates are higher than birth rates, there's a net loss. Rates of fertility have dropped globally as women have more control over their fertility and, in Western countries in particular, choose to have children at an older age than previous generations. Running alongside this, people are living longer. This means each generation is taking longer to replace itself. But Māori and Pākehā replacement rates differ significantly, due to higher Māori fertility. Māori also die around seven years younger on average.

"The European age structure is older and rapidly aging, primarily driven by sub-replacement fertility and declining fertility. That's happened for quite some time now. The Baby Boom was a blip in a long-term trajectory of fertility decline. And so that's shaped the age structure in particular ways. Now you've got sub-replacement fertility for Pakeha women, and peak childbearing is 30 to 34, and that will probably shift up to 35 to 39 in the not-too-distant future. (Pākehā) women are delaying having their first child and when they do have their first child, they have fewer children as well."

"So, 2.1 (births per woman) is what you need to replace. You need one for yourself, and one for the male, because only half of the population can have babies. In some countries it's down to 1.5, it's not 1.9, it's not hovering there near replacement. It's like way off replacement."

According to Stats NZ, New Zealand's total fertility rate in 2020 was down to 1.61 births per woman, its lowest recorded level, and well below the population replacement rate of 2.1.

The Retirement Commission has noted the proportion of people aged 65 years or older is steadily increasing, from 495,606 in 2006 (12.3 percent) to 715,167 (15.2 percent) in 2018 ([Stats.NZ](#)). Long-term projections indicate a 90 percent probability of increasing to 21–26 percent in 2048 and 24–34 percent in 2073.

There is an estimated 90 percent probability that there will be 1.36–1.51 million people aged 65-plus in 2048, and 1.61–2.22 million in 2073. The largest growth occurs up to 2038 as the baby boomers move into the 65+ age group.

This means New Zealand's population is steadily ageing, as the birth rate is also declining. At 1.61 in 2020 it is below the replacement rate of 2.1 births per woman ([Stats NZ](#)).

Although racial categories are fluid – and many Māori also identify with other ethnic groups including Pākehā – the Pākehā population will decline.



Ngawai with her Uncle Kelson. Photo: Aaron Smale.

Statistics NZ projections show that in 2040 – 200 years after the Treaty of Waitangi was signed – the Pākehā population will start to drop due to deaths outnumbering births. The drop will be around 300 in 2040 and then steadily increase to a drop of 800 in 2041, 1400 in 2042 and 1900 in 2043. There will be still be slight increases in

the Pākehā population during these years, but this will be mainly from modest numbers of white immigrants and Māori and other ethnicities also identifying as European/Pākehā.

“So, if you want to grow your population, to put it crudely, if we’re talking about the European-Pākehā population, where’s that going to come from? Where’s that going to come from when all the other white populations are in sub-replacement fertility?” says Kukutai.

In the next 20 years the rate of natural increase for Māori population will be around 13,000 annually, a rate that is already happening and is projected to continue at this rate for the foreseeable future. This is due to birth rates being higher than death rates.

There is also a marked contrast in regional replacement rates. The Gisborne and Northland regions – areas with the highest proportion of Māori in the country – are showing replacement rates of over 2.2. Hawke’s Bay, Bay of Plenty and Taranaki – areas with a significant percentage of Māori – have replacement rates around 2.1. Every other region is below the replacement rate of 2.1.

Kukutai says these shifts are effectively being ignored even though the general trajectories are relatively certain and will shape the future of the country in profound ways politically and economically.

“Politicians are notorious at not looking at things to do with the population. You’d think it’d be really obvious that you need to have that.”

“We’re not talking about a maybe, this is 100 percent certainty. People are in denial. Sometimes people are in denial because they don’t like the thought of it. But Māori are much more part of the future than current generations and previous generations had to meaningfully grapple with.”

“The overall population is dominated by the European Pākehā population, which is older and advancing in structural aging. I don’t really think that people fully comprehend just that fundamental shift between older people and tamariki, that that transition has already happened, and that is not going to reverse.”

She says part of the ignorance is wilful because those in power don’t want to acknowledge they might have to not only change the way they exercise power but actually relinquish it.

“I think essentially, it’s about power and maintaining that power and the different ways that that can be threatened, whether that’s economically, demographically, socially or politically, there’s these different mechanisms for maintaining power. And then when those mechanisms look like they’re shifting, those in dominant positions don’t like it.”

One of those mechanisms – demographics – is shifting, and rapidly so. Most Pākehā are only vaguely aware of it. And many don’t like it.

But we’ve been here before. And we didn’t do a great job in the past either.