

Interactive census timeline

We have developed an interactive tool for exploring important dates in census history. Interactive census timeline allows you to select different dates in history to learn about events since the 1840s.

Statistics NZ, n.d.[b]

Census dates since 1851

The following table gives the dates of national and provincial population censuses since 1851.

National census dates from 1851

Year	European census	Māori census
1851	Saturday, 1 November	No census held
1858	Friday, 24 December	September 1857–September 1858 ¹
1861	Monday, 16 December	No census held
1864	Thursday, 1 December	No census held
1867	Thursday, 19 December	No census held ²
1871	Monday, 27 February	No census held ²
1874	Sunday, 1 March	March
1878	Sunday, 3 March	March
1881	Sunday, 3 April	April
1886	Sunday, 28 March	March
1891	Sunday, 5 April	February
1896	Sunday, 12 April	Late February and March
1901	Sunday, 31 March	Late February
1906	Sunday, 29 April	Late April
1911	Sunday, 2 April	March
1916	Sunday, 15 October	October ³
1921	Sunday, 17 April	1–7 April
1926	Tuesday, 20 April	Tuesday, 20 April
1931	Cancelled	
1936	Tuesday, 24 March	Tuesday, 24 March
1941	Cancelled	
1945	Tuesday, 25 September	Tuesday, 25 September
1946	Cancelled	
From 1951, the European and Māori censuses were integrated into a general New Zealand census		
1951	Tuesday, 17 April	
1956	Tuesday, 17 April	
1961	Tuesday, 18 April	
1966	Tuesday, 22 March	
1971	Tuesday, 23 March	
1976	Tuesday, 23 March	
1981	Tuesday, 24 March	
1986	Tuesday, 4 March	
1991	Tuesday, 5 March	
1996	Tuesday, 5 March	
2001	Tuesday, 6 March	
2006	Tuesday, 7 March	
2011	Cancelled	
2013	Tuesday, 5 March	
<p>1. With the exception of Nelson, where numbers from an 1855 provincial census were used.</p> <p>2. While no census of Māori was held, the European census report contains estimates of the Māori population, supplied by the Native Department.</p> <p>3. Only included Māori in the North Island. From 1916 until 1951, the Māori census only included Māori in the North Island. Māori in the South Island were counted in the European census.</p>		

Provincial census dates 1853 to 1876

When the provinces were set up with their own governments in 1853, they became responsible for conducting the census within their jurisdictions. They each passed their own legislation to do this. By 1858, the inconsistent timing of the provincial censuses made it too hard to compile national statistics from them, so national censuses were reintroduced. A few provincial governments continued to take their own censuses for some years, but eventually stopped.

Provincial government censuses	1854	1855	1856	1857	1858	1859	1860	1862	1863
Auckland									
Taranaki									
Hawke's Bay									
Wellington									
Nelson									

1858

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European census
Both European and Māori
censuses

