

Census 2013: Data reveals most religious region

Auckland had the largest percentage of religious people in New Zealand at the 2013 Census, according to a regional breakdown of results released by Statistics New Zealand today.

Across New Zealand, the number of people who affiliated with a religion in 2013 fell 5.5 per cent since the 2006 Census. This trend was reflected in every region except Auckland, which had a 1.2 per cent increase in the number of religious residents.

"Auckland was the only region with more religious people in 2013 than in 2006," Government Statistician Liz MacPherson said.

"It also had the highest proportion of people with a religion, at 59.6 per cent, though this fell from 63.5 per cent in 2006. Nationally, 55 per cent of the population had a religious affiliation in 2013."

Ms MacPherson said regional census information is some of the most important because it will help communities plan for the future. "For instance, we know that nationally the number of adults who regularly smoke dropped 22.5 per cent since the last census.

Today's results show that this was reflected across all regions, which each had a notable decrease in the number of regular smokers. The largest drop was in Otago, with 25.6 per cent fewer smokers than in 2006, while the smallest decrease was in Taranaki, with 15.7 per cent fewer smokers."

Tasman region had the lowest proportion of smokers in 2013, at just 12.9 per cent of its adult population, compared with 15.1 per cent of the adult population nationally.

Other highlights from today's release show that, at the 2013 Census: Wellington had the highest proportion of adults who did unpaid activities in the month leading up to Census day.

Tasman had the highest proportion of married people.

West Coast had the highest increase in median household income since 2006. Taranaki had the highest proportion of managers.

"2013 Census information will be used by government, councils, community groups, and iwi to help decide where to put vital services and resources such as housing, hospitals, schools, community centres, and places of worship," Ms MacPherson said.