

1 Summary

Queenstown-Lakes and Selwyn District top the 2006 rankings.

For the fourth year in a row, Queenstown-Lakes District has topped the BERL regional performance indicators. However, it has had to slide across this year and share top dog status with Selwyn District.

The top five...

Selwyn District has moved up to first equal position, followed closely by its rural neighbours - **Hurunui District in 3rd place** and Waimakariri District in 4th place. The top five is rounded out by Tauranga City, the first city and North Island Local Authority (LA) in the rankings. Selwyn and Hurunui Districts were new entrants into the top five. Falling out of the top five were Hamilton and Manukau City (now 7th equal).

Queenstown-Lakes secured its top ranking due to posting the highest growth rates for both resident population and business units. It also had the 6th fastest employment growth rate and the 10th fastest GDP growth rate. Selwyn District secured its share of first place by having the 2nd fastest rate of growth for resident population, the 3rd fastest rate of employment growth, the 6th fastest rate of business units growth and the 7th fastest rate of GDP growth. Selwyn District was ranked 21st in 2005 and 23rd in 2004.

Hurunui District was the big improver, moving up to 3rd spot following rankings of 38th in 2005 and 39th in 2004. Hurunui's stellar 2006 performance is based on having the fastest rate of employment growth, the 3rd fastest rate of GDP growth and solid performances in resident population (16th) and business units (17th) growth.

Waimakariri District improved one place from 2005, moving into 4th spot. Its performance was based on having the 4th fastest rate of population and employment growth, the 13th fastest rate of GDP growth and the 18th fastest rate of business growth.

The top five was rounded out by Tauranga City, which dropped three spots from 2nd place in 2005. Tauranga City's performance was based on solid business units (4th fastest) and resident population (5th fastest) growth rates. Tauranga City had the 12th fastest rate of GDP growth and the 22nd fastest rate of employment growth.

...was dominated by rural districts...

In a turnaround from the previous year's results where cities took three of the top five spots, rural districts took four of the top five spots and fourteen of the top twenty positions in 2006.

Looking at the top ten LAs, Central Otago ranked 6th, Marlborough ranked 9th, and Kaikoura ranked 10th. Other districts in the top 20 were Rodney, Kapiti Coast, Ashburton, Far North, Whangarei, Waikato and Kaipara.

...mainly in the mainland.

And in a further about face from the previous year, four of the top five spots went to South Island Districts (compared to two the previous year). Interestingly, three of those – Selwyn, Hurunui and Waimakariri – are neighbouring districts in the Canterbury Region. Rounding out the Canterbury region, Kaikoura District ranked 10th, Ashburton District ranked 14th equal, Christchurch City ranked 21st, Mackenzie District ranked 32nd, Timaru ranked 50th and Waimate ranked 66th.

There were only three cities in the top 10 rankings.

Out of the cities, Tauranga City was the best placed in 5th position. It was followed by Manukau (7th) and Hamilton Cities (8th) in the top ten and then Porirua (13th), North Shore (15th), and Wellington City (16th). Christchurch, Palmerston North and Auckland Cities ranked 21st, 22nd, and 23rd respectively. Waitakere City had the largest fall in rankings from the previous year, dropping to 41st in 2006 from 12th in 2005. Napier City also fell 21 places to 44th in the 2006 rankings. Invercargill was the lowest ranked city coming in 67th out of the 72 LAs.

Rural districts led population growth but also population decline.

Out of the 72 LAs, 42 had positive population growth. The Queenstown-Lakes District had the largest rate of population growth followed by Selwyn, Rodney and Waimakariri Districts. Tauranga and Manukau were next – and the fastest growing cities. At the other end of the scale, Ruapehu District had the largest decrease in population followed by Kawerau, South Waikato and Wairoa Districts. There were 21 LAs with population growth rates faster than the New Zealand average.

Four of the five fastest increases in employment were in South Island districts.

Only ten LAs had negative employment growth in 2006. **Hurunui District had the fastest rate of employment growth in 2006**, followed by Porirua City, Selwyn District, Waimakariri District and Kaikoura District. The largest decreases in employment growth were in Papakura District followed by South Waikato, Central Hawke's Bay and Kawerau Districts. There were 35 LAs with employment growth rates faster than the New Zealand average.