

Island Profile: Mangaia

Economic Development Strategy

Background

Mangaia is the Cook Islands’ southern-most island and the second largest island after Rarotonga. The island consists of one volcanic formation and is surrounded by a high ring of fossilised coral cliffs. The highest point of the island is 169 meters above sea level near the centre of the island.

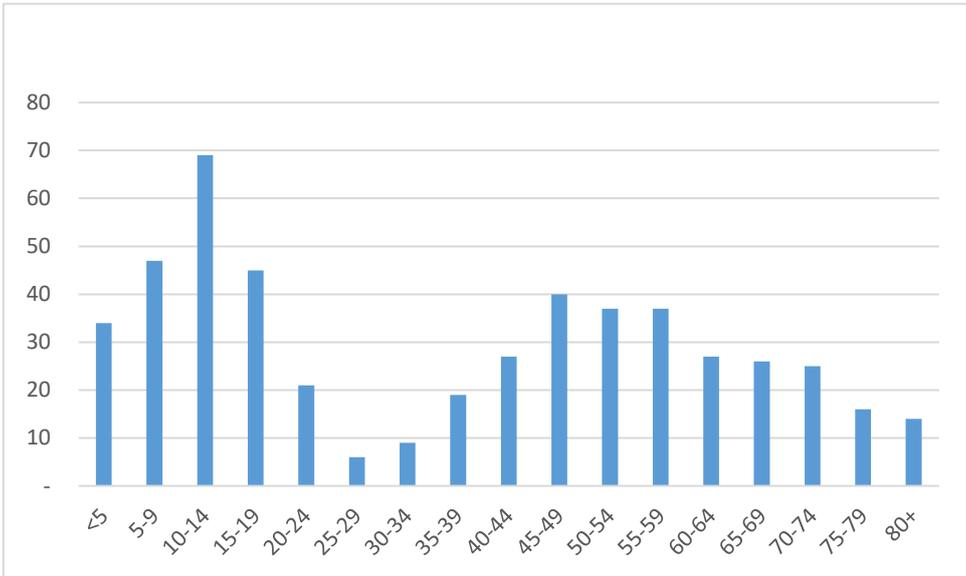
Mangaia residents live across the island’s three villages Ivirua, Tamarua and Oneroa being the central business district. The island had a population of 499 as at the 2016 census, a decline from 1,108 in 1996. There were a total of 157 dwellings on Mangaia at the time of the census.

Mangaia is currently working towards the Mangaia Island and Puna Development Plan 2020 which outlines strategies for economic development, infrastructure services, public utilities, government, environment and climate change, and social development.

Demographics

As can be seen in Figure 1 the age profile is uneven, with a high number of children and youth, moderate levels of people in their middle age, 45-59 and very low number of people in the 20-40 age bracket. As an example of this distribution skewness, there were only 15 people in the age bracket 25-34, comprising 3 per cent of the population.

Figure 1: Age profile - Mangaia



Education

There is one school operating in Mangaia catering to nearly 200 students. The school is staffed by 14 employees.

In 2019 one student from Mangaia was enrolled in the USP Cook Islands Campus.

Labour statistics

According to the census 42 per cent of the population were in some form of paid work. A further 20 per cent were producing goods for own or family use or were undertaking home duties. 12 per cent of the population reported as retired.

Of the 173 workers in Mangaia, 31 stated that they were engaged in agricultural, forestry or fisheries work. This was followed closely by professionals (27) and craft and trades related work (23). Of the total labour force 50 per cent stated that they were employed by the public sector, 25 per cent were self-employed and 18 per cent were in private employment.

Data suggests that the average income of those aged 15 years and over was just under \$10,000 per year in 2016. It appears that this low average is largely due to the significant number of women earning less than \$5,000 per year (67 people).

Industry

Historically the economy of Mangaia was characterised by a strong focus on the production of agricultural products. The industry was extensively subsidised with the objective of producing high quality produce for the export to New Zealand and Rarotonga. The scheme was profitable when New Zealand allowed preferential protection of the Cook Islands products. When this was removed, Mangaia's agricultural sector substantially declined.

Information Technology

At the time of the census, out of the total population aged 10 and over, 52 per cent had cellular phones and 65 per cent had landlines. The mobile internet was accessed by 44 per cent of the population while only 33 per cent had internet access at home. Moreover, 7 per cent of the population had no access to any of the outlined forms of information technology.

Budget

In 2019/20 Mangaia was appropriated a total of \$1,857,290 for the island administration, of which \$943,706 was administered to cover personnel expenditure and \$578,760 to cover operating expenditure.

MFEM's Outer Island Small Capital Fund for Mangaia totalled \$12,000 in 2019/20. This fund was designated to enable the islands to purchase small capital such as ICT equipment and machinery parts.

Welfare payments to Mangaia amounted to \$942,500.

In 2019/20 Mangaia will not be undergoing any island specific projects although the island is a part of some of the National and Pa Enea Initiatives such as the Government IT Network.

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