

# Island Profile: Palmerston

## Economic Development Strategy

### Background

Palmerston is a coral atoll located about 500 kilometres northwest of Rarotonga. It consists of a number of smaller islets enclosing a lagoon. The largest of the islets include Palmerston, North Island, Lee To Us, Leicester, Primrose, Toms, and Cooks.

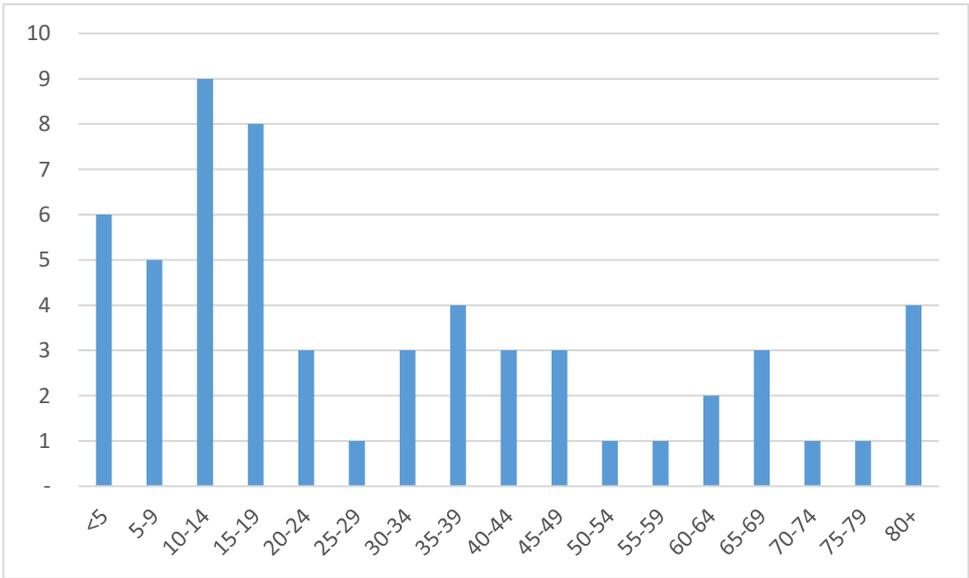
In 2016 the island population was 58 people split across 13 dwelling units.

Palmerston has developed the Community Sustainable Development Plan (CSDP) 2017-2020 to provide guidance in the implementation of its development strategies.

### Demographics

Due to the small population it is difficult to make any significant demographic analysis. Some of the age groups on the island were comprised of one person. There were 9 people in the 10 to 14 age bracket which is the highest number followed by 8 people in the 15 to 19 age bracket.

**Figure 1: Age profile – Palmerston**



### Education

In 2016 the educational facilities in Palmerston included 1 accommodation unit with two classrooms. The school was run by two expatriate teachers with the assistance of one local special aid teacher.

The school delivers ACE and other relevant education programs as well as it implements MOE national assessments. It also promotes additional community education opportunities through the USP and free online courses.

In 2019 eight students from Palmerston were enrolled in the USP Cook Islands Campus.

### **Labour statistics**

According to the census 18 people were in some form of paid work, 16 being employed in the public sector. One person reported working in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry. Seven people in Palmerston were retired and 5 people were reported as full time students.

Data suggests that the average income of the individuals above the age of 15 was around \$10,000 per year in 2016.

### **Industries**

Palmerston's soil is unsuitable for intensive agriculture. Only a small amount of green vegetables is produced for the local consumption. Residents rely on the lagoon to provide most of the food to sustain their livelihood.

Additional income for the island is generated through the visiting cruise ships and yachts.

### **Information Technology**

As per 2016 census, out of the total population aged 10 and over, 62 per cent had cellular phones and 41 per cent had landlines. Fifty-seven per cent of the population had access to the internet. Five people did not have access to any of the forms of information technology outlined above.

### **Budget**

In 2019/20 Palmerston Island Administration was appropriated \$411,873 of which \$282,500 was allocated to personnel and \$65,474 to operating expenditure.

Palmerston Small Capital Fund appropriated a total of \$10,000 to Palmerston which is to be used for small capital purchases such as ICT equipment and machinery parts.

Presently Palmerston is not undergoing any Island Specific Projects although support is provided through a number of Agencies for the implementation of the National and Pa Enea initiatives such as the Government IT Network.

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