

Appendix F: Immigration Policy changes between 2001–2008

Date	Category	Policy	Summary of changes
Oct-01	All permanent residence categories	New Zealand Immigration Programme (NZIP)	The NZIP includes three separate residence streams based on skill and family connections. Each stream is allocated a proportion of places in the overall programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skilled/Business Stream – 60% of the NZIP. • Family Sponsored Stream – 30% of the NZIP. • International/Humanitarian Stream – 10% of the NZIP. Under the NZIP, a numeric target of permanent residence approvals is set annually.
Oct-01	Family	Family Category	A range of policy changes come into effect for family sponsorship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newly arrived residents are unable to sponsor parents or siblings to New Zealand for their first three years of residence. • Definition of dependant children is broadened to include children under 25. • Parents are deemed to include grandparents and legal guardians where parents are deceased. • Married siblings/adult children and their children can be sponsored when the principal applicant has a job offer.
Feb-02	Skilled	1995 General Skills Category	Differential points are allocated for relevant and non-relevant job offers. Applicants score 5 points if the job offer is relevant to their qualification and experience, 2 points if the offer is not relevant.
Apr-02	Temporary	Work to Residence	Three new Work to Residence policies come into effect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Occupation List work permits are issued to people who will fill a position deemed to be in absolute shortage. • The Talent Visa (Accredited Employer) requires an applicant to have an offer of employment with an accredited employer and a minimum base salary of \$45,000. • Talent Visa (Arts, Culture, and Sports) is issued to applicants with an exceptional talent in a declared field of art, culture, or sport and are sponsored by a New Zealand organisation of national repute in the declared field. Work permit holders can apply for residence through an associated residence policy after two years.
Jul-02	International/ Humanitarian	Pacific Access Category (PAC)	The PAC allows an annual quota of 375 residence places for citizens of Tonga (250 places), Tuvalu (75) and Kiribati (50). The PAC operates on a ballot system.
Nov-02	Skilled	1995 General Skills Category	English language requirements increase from IELTS 5 to IELTS 6.5.
Nov-02	Business	Investor Category	Tighter operational policy requirements are introduced regarding the source of investment funds. The minimum English language requirements are increased from IELTS 4 to IELTS 5.
Nov-02	Business	Entrepreneur Category	The minimum English language requirements are increased from IELTS 4 to IELTS 5.
Apr-03	International/ Humanitarian	Pacific Access Category	Fiji is included in the PAC quota (250 places). Places for Kiribati increase from 50 to 75.
Jul-03	Skilled	1995 General Skills Category (GSC)	GSC applications are prioritised on the basis of contribution and settlement potential. Some applications are lapsed to help manage the level of applications on hand and to ensure that the outcomes of the Skilled Migrant Category can take effect more quickly. The GSC is closed.
Dec-03	Skilled	Skilled Migrant Category	The Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) shifts immigration policy from the passive acceptance of residence applications to the active selection of skilled migrants. Points are awarded for a skilled job or offer, work experience, qualifications and age. Bonus points are granted in certain circumstances and recognise partners' employment and experience, New Zealand qualifications and employment outside of Auckland. Applicants must obtain at least 100 points to submit an expression of interest (EOI) into a pool. Applicants meeting a selection point are selected from the pool and may be invited to apply for residence through the SMC.

Date	Category	Policy	Summary of changes
Sep-04	International/ Humanitarian	Samoan Quota and Pacific Access Category	Changes are made to increase the take-up of places and maintain positive settlement outcomes for Pacific migrants, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum income requirement is lowered for applicants with dependant children, and a partner's job offer can contribute to meeting the minimum income • either the principal applicant or their partner can satisfy the requirement of a genuine, permanent job offer • successful registrants given six months to apply for residence • successful registrants lawfully in New Zealand can apply for residence • Residual Places Policy is introduced.
Dec-04	Skilled	Skilled Migrant Category	A range of policy changes come into effect for skilled migrants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More points allocated to qualifications, work experience, and employment, in areas of absolute skills shortage. • Recognition of a broader range of trade qualifications. • Additional points for having close family in New Zealand.
Jul-05	Business	Investor Category	Replaces the 1999 Investor Category. Applicants must submit an expression of interest, after which they may be invited to apply for residence. The minimum amount of investment is NZ\$2 million, and these funds are held by the New Zealand Government for five years. Applicants may withdraw up to NZ\$1 million after two years to invest in a business that will benefit New Zealand. Applicants must be no older than 54 years and have at least five years' business experience. Conditions apply for five years after residence.
Dec-05	Skilled	Skilled Migrant Category	Principal applicants who score 140 points or more in their EOI are now selected from the pool automatically. Applicants who score between 100 and 140 points and have a skilled job or offer are ranked and selected in sufficient numbers to meet the required places for the Skilled/Business Stream at the time of that selection. Additional EOIs may be selected from the pool on the basis of criteria set by the Minister of Immigration.
Aug-06	Family	Sibling, Adult Child	An age limit of 55 years comes into effect.
Dec-06	All categories	Immigration Change Programme	New Immigration Policy Framework and policy objectives introduced.
Jul-07	Skilled	Skilled Migrant Category (SMC)	Several changes are made to the SMC, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an amendment to the allocation of points for employment, qualifications and experience in an identified future growth area • an amendment to the allocation of bonus points for study in New Zealand and for partners' skilled employment and qualifications • the introduction of a more transparent definition of skilled employment based on the new Australia New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).³
Jul-07	Business	Investor Category	The 2005 Investor Category is closed to new expressions of interest. A new Active Investor Migrant Category is announced to be implemented in November 2007.
Jul-07	Family	All Family categories	The cap on the number of places available in the NZRP for partners and dependant children of New Zealand residents or citizens is removed. These categories are approved through a new, separate stream to the Family Sponsored Stream. Limits will still be imposed on the number of parents, siblings, and adult children of New Zealand sponsors, with a separate cap for each of these categories.
Nov-07	Business	Active Investor Migrant Category	The new Investor policy is segmented into three sub-categories on the basis of the migrant's potential contribution and the assessed level of risk, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Investors – highest priority category for high value investors investing \$20 million (including at least \$5 million in active investment). • Professional Investors – a second priority category for migrants investing \$10 million (including at least \$2 million actively). • General (Active) Investors – a category for those investing a minimum of \$2.5 million. Applicants are selected through a points system.
Nov-07	Family	Family Category	A number of changes are introduced, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new visitor's visa for parents and grandparents visiting family in New Zealand – the holder can make multiple visits of up to 6 months each, for a maximum stay of 18 months over 3 years • strengthened character requirements for sponsoring a partner • a minimum income requirement for those sponsoring parents (excludes refugee sponsors and those over 65 years old).

³ The ANZSCO definition was implemented in February 2008.

Date	Category	Policy	Summary of changes
Mar-08	International/ Humanitarian	Samoan Quota and Pacific Access Category	The minimum income requirement in the Samoan Quota and Pacific Access Category is increased to \$29,897.92, which is based on the unemployment benefit (married and civil union rate) plus the maximum accommodation supplement (as set by the Government).
Mar-08	International/ Humanitarian	Special Zimbabwe Residence Policy	The Special Zimbabwe Residence Policy ceases to be effective from 31 March 2008.
May-08	Skilled	Residence Policy	The annual salary requirement under the Residence Policy for holders of work permits granted under the Talent (Accredited Employers) Work Policy increases to \$55,000 if the work to residence permit application is made on or after 28 July 2008.
Jul-08	All permanent residence categories	New Zealand Immigration Programme (NZIP)	Policy is amended to reflect Cabinet's agreement to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain the NZRP in 2008/09 at the current level of 45,000–50,000 places • increase the annual allocation for Parent, Adult Child and Adult Sibling Policies from 10 percent to about 11 percent • decrease the annual allocation for Partner and Dependant Child Policies from 21 percent to about 20 percent.

Sources

- 1 New Zealand Immigration Service. *The Evaluation of the 1999 Business Immigration Policy*. Wellington: Department of Labour, 2002
- 2 New Zealand Immigration Service. *Trends in Residence Approvals 2000/2001*, Vol 1. Wellington: Department of Labour, 2001
- 3 New Zealand Immigration Service. *Trends in Residence Approvals 2001/2002*, Vol 2. Wellington: Department of Labour, 2002.
- 4 New Zealand Immigration Service. *Trends in Residence Approvals, 2002/2003*, Vol 3. Wellington: Department of Labour, 2003.
- 5 New Zealand Immigration Service. *Migration Trends 2003/2004*. Wellington: Department of Labour, 2004.
- 6 Department of Labour. *Migration Trends 2004/2005*. Wellington: Department of Labour, 2005
- 7 Department of Labour. *Migration Trends 2005/06*. Wellington: Department of Labour, 2006
- 8 Immigration New Zealand. *Operations Manual*. Wellington: Department of Labour, available at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/generalinformation/operationsmanual>.