

Introduction to the Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand

1.1 <i>Primary objective of the survey</i>	20
1.2 <i>Content of this report</i>	20
1.3 <i>Background to the survey</i>	20
1.4 <i>Survey methodology</i>	22
1.5 <i>New Zealand's immigration context</i>	25
1.6 <i>International competition for skilled migrants</i>	27

1

Introduction to the Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand

1.1 *Primary objective of the survey*

The primary objective of the Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand (LisNZ) is to provide comprehensive data about the settlement experiences of migrants in their first three years in New Zealand. Understanding the key factors contributing to positive social and economic outcomes for migrants will be used to inform the development of effective immigration policy and settlement services.

1.2 *Content of this report*

This report describes the Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand (LisNZ) and summarises the findings of the first wave of data (six months post residence), providing a comprehensive overview of early migrant experiences.

This report is the first in a series of Department of Labour reports from the LisNZ research programme. The LisNZ project will result in a series of information releases over the next few years.

1.3 *Background to the survey*

The LisNZ project grew from concerns in the early to mid-1990s about the lack of information available to assist in facilitating positive settlement for migrants, and the need for a detailed assessment of the impact of immigration on New Zealand.³

International immigration research has demonstrated that one of the most effective ways to obtain policy-relevant and timely information on immigration and settlement is through longitudinal studies. Longitudinal studies are used to collect information from a sample of migrants on several occasions, thus capturing an understanding of the complete dynamics of the migration and settlement processes. Governments in Australia and Canada initiated such studies on immigration and settlement in the 1990s, and these surveys have been instrumental in the development of the LisNZ.

In 1997/98, the Department of Labour proposed that a comprehensive evidence base involving a longitudinal immigration survey was required if it was to robustly track migrant outcomes and develop informed immigration policy.

³ For more information about New Zealand's expectations around migrant settlement, see Department of Labour. *Our Future Together: New Zealand Settlement Strategy*, Wellington: Department of Labour, 2007, available from <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/community/stream/support/nzsettlementstrategy>



Nearly one in four New Zealanders are born overseas.

Early work on the New Zealand survey focused on identifying the options for longitudinal research and examining the feasibility of those options. In June 1999, the Government approved the LisNZ, and Statistics New Zealand subsequently became the Department of Labour's partner in developing and undertaking the survey. A pilot survey was conducted in 2001 and 2002, with its findings published in 2004.⁴

The main purpose of the pilot survey was to test the survey methodology and questionnaire in the field in preparation for the main survey. This pilot study also allowed for a test of the electronic questionnaire and survey methodology, including ways to establish and maintain contact with those migrants taking part in the survey.

1.4 Survey methodology

1.4.1 Interviews

The whole LisNZ project will involve interviews with the same group of migrants at three 'waves' – six months (wave 1), 18 months (wave 2), and 36 months (wave 3) after they have taken up permanent residence in New Zealand. This report summarises the findings for wave 1. The number of interviewed respondents totalled 7,137. This corresponds to a 66 percent response rate.⁵

The survey sample was selected from migrants aged 16 years and over who were approved for permanent residence in New Zealand from 1 November 2004 to 31 October 2005. The wave 1 interviews were conducted between 1 May 2005 and 30 April 2007. The wave 2 interviews were conducted from June 2006 to March 2008, and the wave 3 interviews will be completed in November 2009. The full survey aims to achieve about 5,000 completed interviews at wave 3, allowing for non-response and attrition.

The survey included migrants arriving from offshore for residence and migrants who changed from a temporary permit to permanent residence onshore. The migrants were interviewed face to face using an electronic questionnaire, which the interviewer administered on a laptop computer. Bilingual interviewers conducted the interviews in seven designated survey languages (English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Samoan, Korean, Hindi, and Punjabi).

1.4.2 Target population

The target population for LisNZ included all migrants (excluding refugees) aged 16 years and over who were approved for permanent residence in New Zealand. The population included those who were approved for residence offshore as well as those approved onshore. Migrants were sampled at the time they were granted residence. Migrants who are approved offshore have 12 months from the date of their residence approval to arrive in New Zealand and take up residence.

Specifically, the survey includes all people granted residence through the:

- Skilled categories (referred to in the tables and figures under the categories Skilled principal and Skilled secondary)
- Business categories (referred to in the tables and figures under the Business category)
- Family categories (referred to in the tables and figures under the categories Family Partner and Family Parent)

⁴ Interviews for wave 1 of the pilot survey were conducted six months after residence uptake, in July and August 2001 and the wave 2 interviews were undertaken in July and August 2002. For wave 1 of the pilot survey, 691 migrants were interviewed, of whom 546 were re-interviewed for wave 2. See Department of Labour. *Migrants' Experiences of New Zealand: Pilot Survey Report*, Wellington: Department of Labour, 2004, available from <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/generalinformation/research>

⁵ Most of the 'non-response' is due to non-contact rather than respondent refusal to participate. Non-contact was higher for migrants approved offshore, where the response rate was 57 percent compared with 70 percent for those approved onshore.

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- Pacific Access Category and Samoan Quota (referred to in the tables and figures under the Pacific category)
 - various miscellaneous policies within the Family Sponsored and International/Humanitarian Streams (referred to in the tables and figures under the category Other).

Appendix A describes how the immigration approval categories have been grouped to form the analysis groups used throughout this report. (Other key terms are explained in Appendix B.)

The population included principal applicants and secondary applicants from the approved application.⁶ The population excluded temporary visitors and people from Australia, Niue, the Cook Islands, and Tokelau.⁷ The sample frame was constructed from Immigration New Zealand's Application Management System.

The design for the main survey is a stratified random sample using strata based on the three variables:

- immigration category
- region of origin
- type of application (offshore/onshore).

1.4.3 LisNZ results

The values in the figures and tables in this report are based on proportions calculated from weighted population estimates. These weighted estimates, which are based on the data collected from the 7,137 migrants who completed the wave 1 interview, enable us to make inferences on the whole migrant population from the results of the survey. The weights used to obtain these estimates take into account the sample selected in LisNZ, the non-response information, and the benchmarking information on the actual number and composition of migrants who were approved for residence during the selection period (November 2004 to October 2005). The weighting methodology is discussed further in Appendix C and sampling errors are discussed in Appendix D. Supplementary data tables are in Appendix E.

All group comparisons discussed in this report have been tested for statistical significance at the 95 percent confidence level. Any group differences reported are statistically significant unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Values in cells with weighted estimates of fewer than 20 people have been suppressed to protect the confidentiality of respondents. These cells, as well as the proportions based on them, appear as 'S' (suppressed) in the tables.

1.4.4 Objectives of the survey

The information provided by the LisNZ is intended to serve several agencies and individuals, helping to inform policy and improve the integration and settlement of new migrants. More than 85 groups participated in the development of this extensive survey, including central government agencies, ethnic and community groups, non-governmental organisations, local government, and academics.

⁶ Secondary applicants are supplementary people included in the application such as partners and children.

⁷ Special circumstances exist for these countries – people from Niue, the Cook Islands, and Tokelau are New Zealand citizens, and Australians do not require approval to reside in New Zealand.

It is intended that the research will be used to:

- inform immigration policy
- provide insights into other social and economic policy development
- provide information to local government, the voluntary sector, and community groups
- enable further academic research that focuses on migration issues.

The LisNZ will provide essential information to not only local and central government agencies offering services to recent migrants, but also the wide variety of community and ethnic groups supporting and assisting new migrants. It also provides an opportunity to assess how government policy and programmes affect early migrants, and how well migrants are settling in New Zealand.

Feature box 1.1 *What will the LisNZ tell us?*

The questions asked in the LisNZ reflect the information needs of the many government agencies and groups that contributed to the survey's development. The survey objectives address questions from 10 key areas including:

Who are our migrants?

The survey data describes the key characteristics of migrants and those of their family members (partner/spouse and children).

Why do migrants choose New Zealand as their new home, and was it their first choice? Where did migrants find information about New Zealand?

The survey examines why people migrated to New Zealand, how they found the information they needed, and their future intentions to stay in the country.

What skills, qualifications, and experience do migrants bring to New Zealand?

The survey examines migrants' English language ability, qualifications, work experience, and participation in schooling and further education and training in New Zealand.

Are migrants able to find suitable employment in New Zealand?

The survey describes migrants' labour market experiences and identifies issues associated with labour market integration.

What is migrants' average income, and what assets do they bring to New Zealand?

The survey includes items assessing the personal and business assets of migrants, as well as their incomes and expenditures.

Are migrants receiving the help and information they need from government and/or community service providers?

The survey identifies the need for and use of government and/or community social services and health services, and other settlement indicators.

What are migrants' living arrangements in New Zealand?

The survey identifies where migrants are living, the types of housing used, and examines problems migrants had in finding suitable living arrangements, as well as their overall satisfaction with their living conditions.

Are migrants developing meaningful community networks in New Zealand?

The survey examines the social networks migrants have developed, and the factors affecting the establishment of those networks.

What is the overall well-being of New Zealand's migrants?

The survey asks migrants about several areas of well-being, including their feelings of settlement, life satisfaction, perceived discrimination, safety, general health status, and use of health services.

What do we know about New Zealand's Business migrants?

The survey identifies the key characteristics of new migrants involved in business and explores the nature of their business activities.

1.5 *New Zealand's immigration context*

In 2006, 23 percent of all New Zealanders were born overseas.⁸ People who wish to migrate permanently to New Zealand must apply through one of the residence streams of the New Zealand Residence Programme: the Skilled/Business Stream, the Family Sponsored Stream (includes the Parent Sibling Adult Child Stream and an Uncapped Immediate Family Category), and International/Humanitarian Stream.⁹ Each stream contains various categories or policies.¹⁰

The Skilled/Business Stream accounts for 60 percent of all people granted permanent residence in New Zealand, with most gaining residence through the Skilled Migrant Category. The Skilled Migrant Category is a points-based policy that allows people to gain permanent residence if they have the requisite skills, qualifications, and experience to contribute to New Zealand economically and socially. The Skilled Migrant Category came into effect in 2003 and since then over half of all migrants granted permanent residence each year come through this category. The main source countries of Skilled Migrant Category migrants are the United Kingdom/Irish Republic, South Africa, China, India, and the Philippines. These five countries are the source of almost 75 percent of Skilled Migrant Category migrants.

The Family Sponsored and International/Humanitarian Streams are intended to enhance the well-being of existing New Zealand residents by allowing people with whom they have family links to come to New Zealand, contribute to international humanitarian activities, and fulfil other humanitarian objectives or international obligations. The International/Humanitarian Stream includes the Refugee Quota,¹¹ the Samoan Quota, and other policies that allow New Zealand to meet its humanitarian or international obligations.

⁸ Statistics New Zealand. *2006 Census of Population and Dwellings*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, 2007.

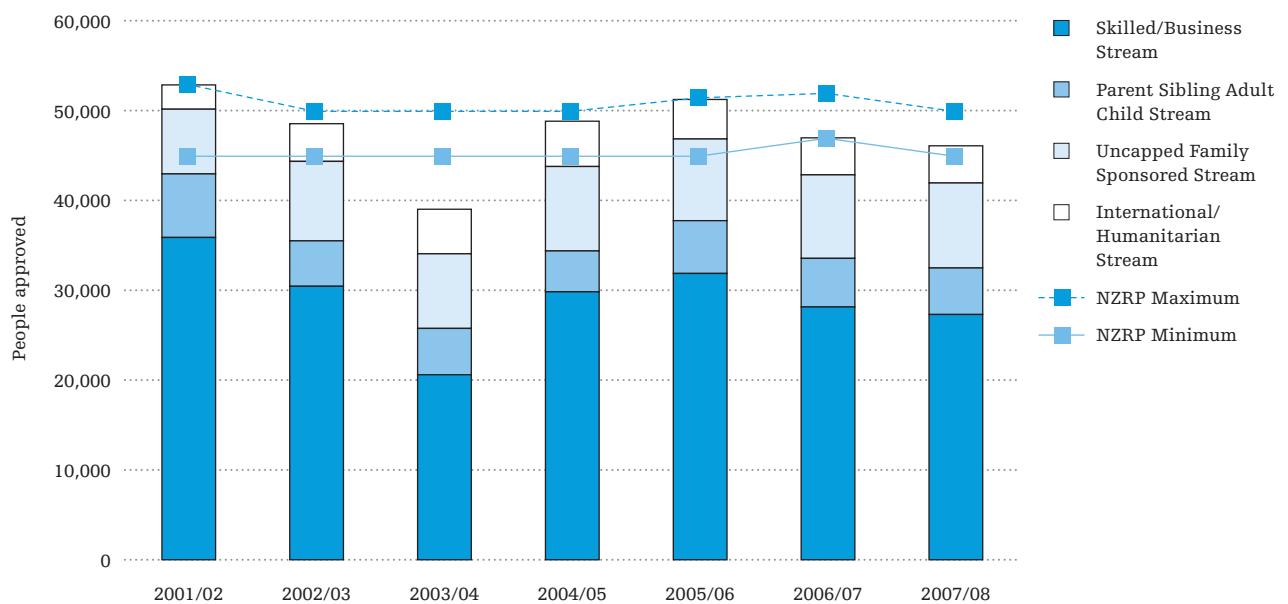
⁹ See Appendix B for more information on these streams, and other key terms used in this report.

¹⁰ For more information on residence streams and residence approval categories, see the Migration Trends series, available from the Immigration New Zealand website <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/generalinformation/research>.

¹¹ Refugees are not included in the survey population. The Refugee Voices project and Quota Refugees 10 Years On research programme explore the resettlement experiences of refugees to New Zealand. Visit the Immigration New Zealand website for more details on these projects: <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/generalinformation/research>.

Figure 1.1 shows the number of people approved through each immigration stream compared with the approval limit set by the government since 2001/02.

Figure 1.1: Number of people approved for residence compared with the New Zealand Residence Programme planning level, 2001/02 to 2007/08



Notes: Policies before 2007/08 were grouped together to match the streamed approach to the New Zealand Residence Programme (NZRP). As the NZRP planning level is a range, both the minimum and maximum are shown.

The LisNZ project began in June 1999 and the pilot study was conducted in 2001 and 2002. Since then, New Zealand has significantly changed how it selects migrants for permanent residence, with close links expected between migrants' skills and the needs of the New Zealand labour market. This link has been strengthened through the development of policies that give migrants an opportunity to work or study in New Zealand before gaining permanent residence. See Appendix F for a comprehensive list of the key immigration policy changes that took place from the time the LisNZ sample was selected for the pilot study (2001) until 2008.

1.6 *International competition for skilled migrants*

Since the late 1990s, many OECD countries, including New Zealand, Australia, and Canada, have increased their emphasis on developing policies to attract skilled migrants. In those three countries, skilled migrants make up around 60 percent of all migrants. These and other 'competing' countries have similar attributes at the core of their skilled policies, including their language, education, and skills requirements.

In New Zealand (as in other countries), the outcomes for migrants who gain entry via skilled migrant policies are important to the governments who set the policies. Australia and Canada have conducted longitudinal immigration surveys, which have demonstrated that migrants admitted through economic selection policies have better than average employment outcomes and English language skills have a positive role in facilitating good labour market outcomes.¹²

The LisNZ study will provide a comprehensive evidence base of migrants' settlement experiences over their first three years as permanent residents in New Zealand. This evidence base will provide an opportunity to compare the outcomes of migrants who were selected through different immigration policies, and examine the role of such factors as language, education, and skills on their settlement outcomes.

¹² B Birrell, L Hawthorne., and S Richardson *Evaluation of the General Skilled Migration Categories*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2006, available from http://www.pieronline.org/_Upload/Files/2006512103325_GSMReport.pdf.

