

Motives and Processes of Migration

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Motives and Processes of Migration

Why do migrants choose New Zealand as their new home? Where did migrants find the information they needed, and how helpful was it? Was New Zealand their first choice?

3.1 Introduction

Knowing what motivates migrants to choose New Zealand as their desired destination and examining the challenges they undergo while settling into their new home are important factors that contribute to our understanding of the migration experience. Moreover, identifying the initial information needs of particular groups of migrants will provide insight into the individual experiences of segments of New Zealand's population. This knowledge is critical to delivering effective New Zealand immigration services and the country's ability to provide appropriate settlement information customised to meet the individual needs of migrants.

This chapter examines migrant motivations and the pathways migrants take to gain residence in New Zealand. Variables include:

- information pertaining to migrants' previous temporary permits
- migrants' main reasons for applying for New Zealand residence
- migrants' information sources about New Zealand
- whether migrants had friends and family in New Zealand
- migrants' reasons for living at their first and current addresses
- migrants' initial settlement intentions.

Key findings

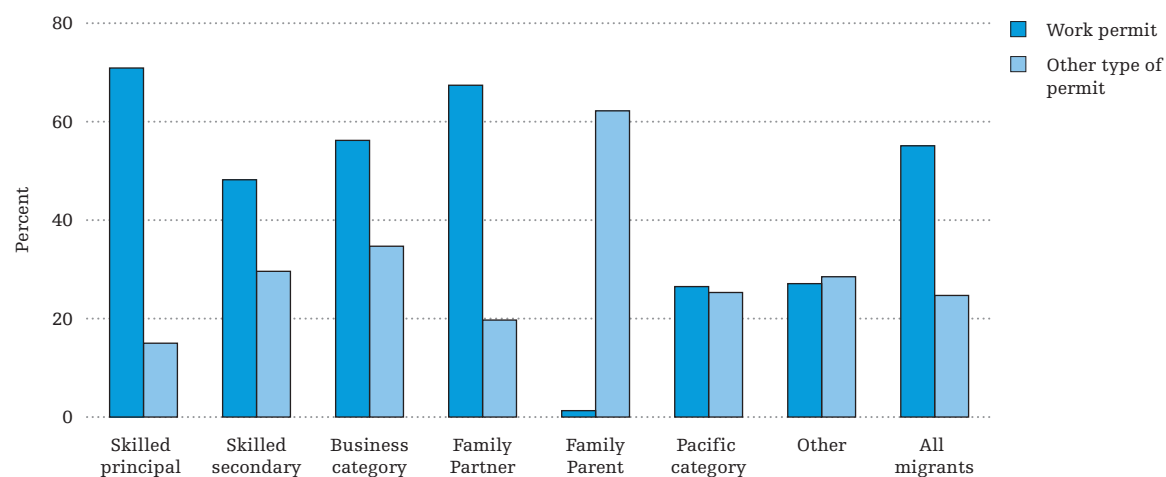
- Most migrants (80 percent) held some form of temporary permit in the three years before gaining residence, with over half having held a temporary work permit.
- The three most common reasons migrants chose New Zealand were the relaxed pace of life or lifestyle (44 percent), the climate or clean, green environment (40 percent), and to provide a better future for their children (39 percent).
- Fifty-six percent of all migrants sourced pre-arrival information from family and friends living in New Zealand. The internet, including the Immigration New Zealand website, was an important source of information, especially for skilled migrants.
- About two-thirds of all migrants and almost all Pacific category migrants (94 percent) had existing contacts in New Zealand.
- Almost all migrants (99 percent) reported that they had applied for residence in New Zealand only during the past three years.
- Most migrants (88 percent) intended to stay in New Zealand for at least five years.

3.2 *Temporary permits held before permanent residence*

As discussed in the previous chapter, most migrants had spent time in New Zealand before being approved for permanent residence. Eighty percent of all migrants held some form of temporary permit for New Zealand in the three years before being approved for permanent residence. Over half (55 percent) had held a temporary work permit during that time.

Almost all Business (91 percent) and most Skilled principal (86 percent) migrants had held some form of temporary permit in the three years before being approved for New Zealand residence. Temporary work permits were most likely to be held by Skilled principal (71 percent) and Family Partner (67 percent) migrants. Family Parent (62 percent) migrants were more likely than other migrants to have held other types of temporary permits in the three years before gaining residence.²⁵ Pacific and Other category migrants were the most likely to report never having been to New Zealand before or not having visited New Zealand during the three years before residence approval. (See Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1.)

Figure 3.1: Temporary permits migrants held in the previous three years by immigration approval category



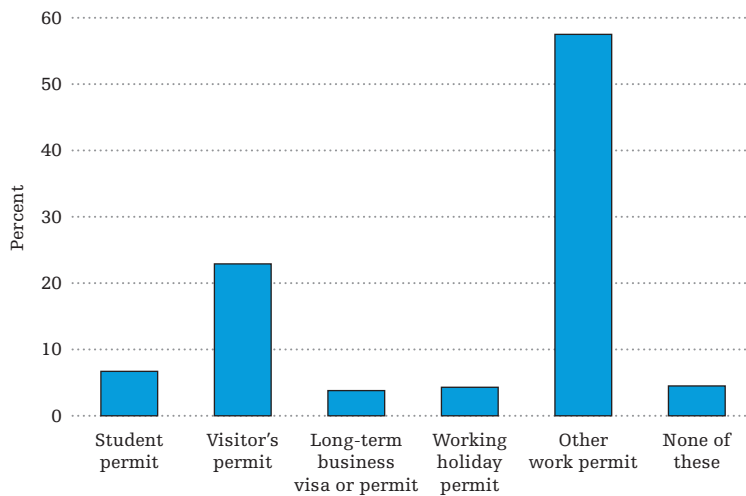
²⁵ Other temporary permits include mainly student and visitor permits, along with a small number of other classes of temporary permits.

Table 3.1: Temporary permits held by migrants before residence by immigration approval category

Temporary permits held in the three years before residence	Immigration approval category (%)							Total (%)
	Skilled principal	Skilled secondary	Business category	Family Partner	Family Parent	Pacific category	Other	
Yes, including work	70.9	48.2	56.2	67.4	1.3	26.5	27.1	55.1
Yes, not including work	15.0	29.6	34.7	19.7	62.2	25.3	28.5	24.7
None (never been to NZ before)	7.7	15.2	4.1	6.0	23.0	32.1	32.7	12.4
Did not visit NZ for three years before residence approval	2.2	2.7	5	3.8	6.5	9.9	5.1	3.4
Not specified	4.3	4.5	4.6	3.1	7.4	6.2	6.5	4.5
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total weighted	12,490	8,470	2,190	7,020	2,300	1,620	2,140	36,220

In terms of the particular temporary permits that were held most recently by migrants, the most common types were work permits (61 percent, including long-term business work permits but excluding working holiday permits), followed by visitor’s permits (23 percent), and student permits (7 percent). (See Figure 3.2.)

Figure 3.2: Most recent temporary permit migrants held by immigration approval category



Note: Excludes people approved offshore who had not held a temporary permit in the three years before residence.

The types of temporary permits migrants held varied by immigration approval category. As expected, the Family Parent migrants were more likely than other migrants to have most recently held a visitor’s permit. Business migrants were more likely to have held a long-term business visa or a student permit.²⁶ Skilled principal migrants were most likely to have held a work permit, followed by Family Partner and Skilled secondary migrants.

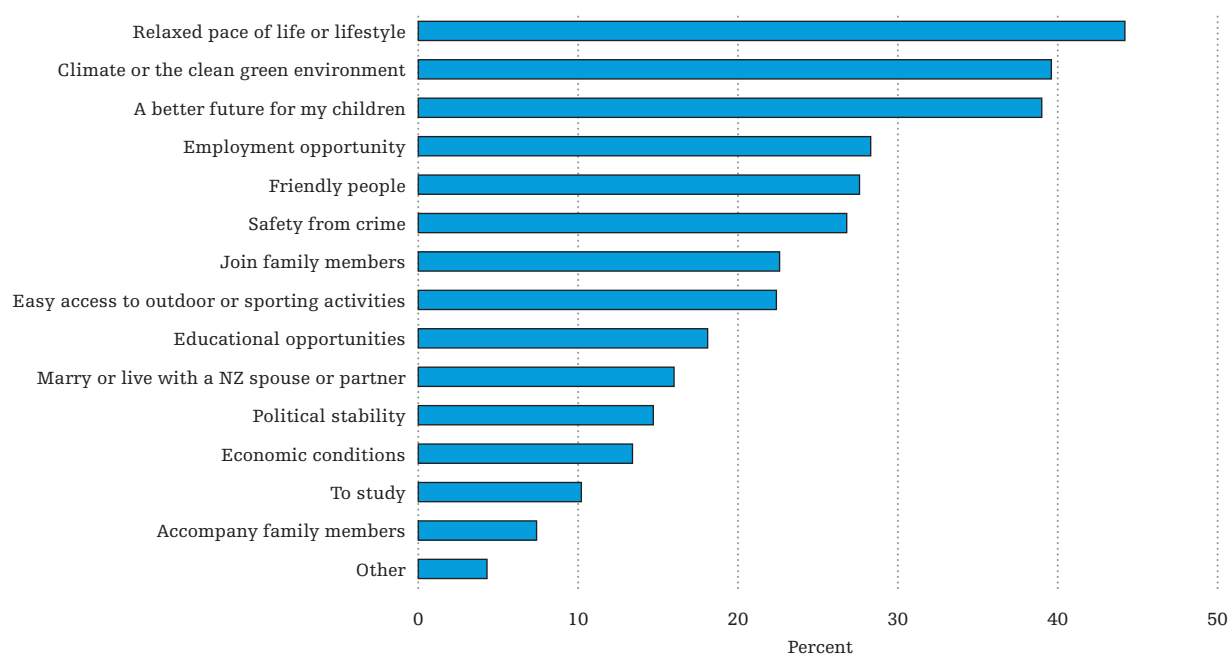
26 Student permit holders in the Business category are primarily the children (16 years and over) of Business applicants.

3.3 *Motives for migrating to New Zealand*

A migrant's reasons for choosing to move to a new country often involve both push and pull factors. This decision may combine a move away from potentially undesirable circumstances in the country of origin with a move towards the hope of a better future for the migrant and their family.

Migrants were asked to choose the main reasons they applied for permanent residence in New Zealand.²⁷ The three most important reasons reported over all others were the relaxed pace of life or lifestyle (44 percent), the climate or clean green environment (40 percent), and to provide a better future for their children (39 percent). (See Figure 3.3.)

Figure 3.3: Reasons migrants chose New Zealand



Note: Migrants could give multiple responses, so percentages may not add to 100.

The main reasons reported by migrants for choosing New Zealand varied by immigration approval category. Skilled principal migrants were more likely than other migrants to choose New Zealand for its relaxed pace of life or lifestyle. Skilled migrants (both principal and secondary) were also more likely than other migrants to choose New Zealand for its friendly people, safety from crime, and easy access to outdoor or sporting activities.

Pacific category migrants were more likely to choose New Zealand to provide a better future for their children, have access to better employment opportunities, and accompany other family members. As would be expected, Family Parents were more likely than other migrants to come to New Zealand to join family members, and Family Partner migrants came to New Zealand to live with a New Zealand spouse or partner.

²⁷ Migrants were given a list of 14 reasons and an 'other' option from which to choose.

Migrants from the UK/Irish Republic were more likely than all other migrant groups to report New Zealand's relaxed pace of life or lifestyle, its climate and clean green environment, and easy access to outdoor or sporting activities as their main reasons for choosing New Zealand as their place of residence. Migrants from the UK/Irish Republic, North America, and the Rest of Europe were more likely to choose New Zealand for its friendly people.

South African migrants were more likely than all other migrant groups to choose New Zealand to ensure a better future for their children and for its safety from crime, while Pacific migrants were more likely than other groups to choose New Zealand to join or accompany family members. Employment opportunities were also considered an important reason for choosing New Zealand for those from South Africa and the Pacific, while educational opportunities were most important to North Asian and Pacific migrants.

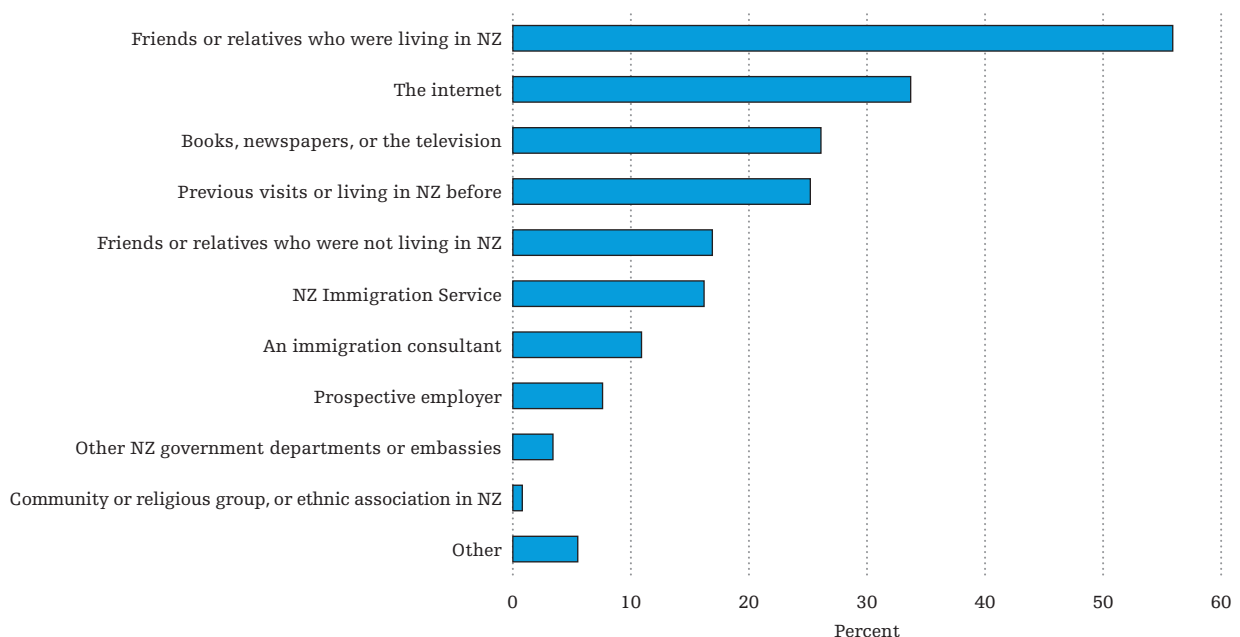
3.4 The migration process

3.4.1 Sources of information about New Zealand

The main source of information about New Zealand before migrants' arrival was from friends or relatives living in New Zealand (56 percent). The next most common source was the internet (34 percent), followed by other media sources such as newspapers or television (26 percent), and previous visits or living in New Zealand before taking up permanent residence (25 percent). (See Figure 3.4.)

The information sources used by migrants varied by immigration approval category. Skilled migrants (principal and secondary) were more likely than other groups of migrants to acquire information on New Zealand from the internet, other media sources, or from Immigration New Zealand. As expected, Family Parent and Pacific category migrants were much more likely to acquire information from friends or relatives already living in New Zealand. Family Parent and Pacific category migrants also tended to report their previous visits or prior experience living in New Zealand as key information sources before their residence approval.

Figure 3.4: Sources of information for migrants about New Zealand

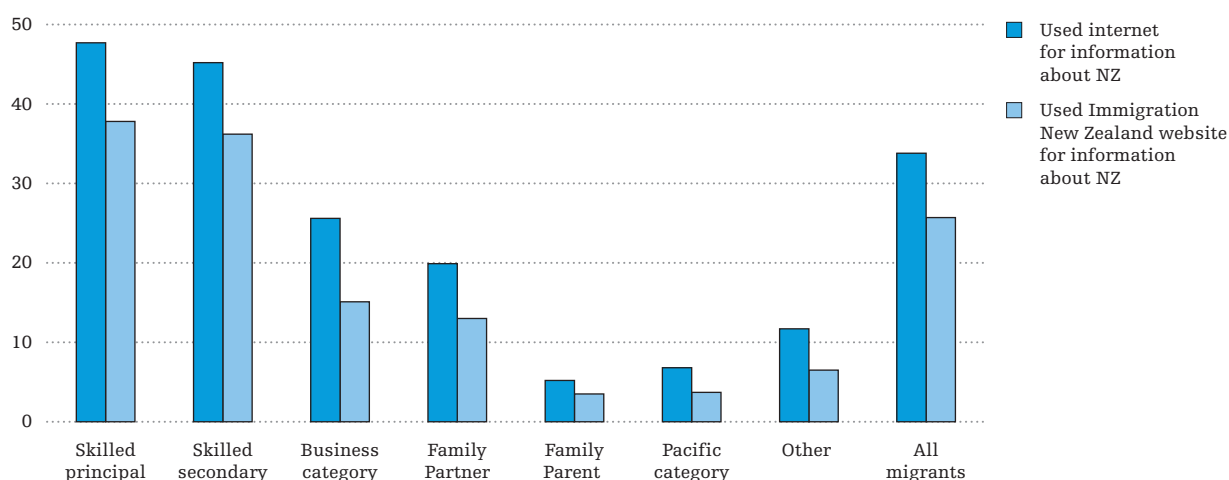


Note: Migrants could give multiple responses, so percentages may not add to 100.

3.4.2 Internet use

About a third of all migrants said they used the internet to access information about New Zealand before arriving in the country and around a quarter of all migrants used Immigration New Zealand’s website. Skilled migrants were much more likely to use the internet (47 percent) and the Immigration New Zealand website (37 percent) to find out about New Zealand than were all other groups of migrants. (See Figure 3.5.)

Figure 3.5: Use of the internet by migrants to access information by immigration approval category



3.4.3 Use of immigration advisers

One-third of all migrants used an immigration adviser to assist them with the residence process. Business migrants (69 percent) were the most likely to have used an immigration adviser, whereas those from the Family categories were the least likely (18 percent of Family Parent and 21 percent of Family Partner migrants). Immigration advisers were predominantly used to assist in the application process (27 percent of all migrants), most notably by Business migrants (64 percent). (See Table 3.2.)

Table 3.2: Type of help migrants received from an immigration adviser by immigration approval category

Received help/Type of help	Immigration approval category (%)							Total (%)
	Skilled principal	Skilled secondary	Business category	Family Partner	Family Parent	Pacific category	Other	
Received help from an immigration adviser								
Yes	32.7	36.0	69.4	20.7	17.8	32.1	38.8	32.8
No	67.3	64.0	30.6	79.3	82.2	67.9	61.2	67.2
Type of help received from an immigration adviser ¹								
Application for residence	25.9	28.7	64.4	16.7	17.4	30.9	36.9	27.4
Travel arrangements	3.1	1.4	1.4	1.4	S	6.8	1.4	2.3
Business contacts	1.7	4.0	6.4	S	S	S	0.9	2.1
Finding a place to live	2.4	2.6	5.0	1.1	S	S	S	2.0
Other	6.6	6.3	2.7	3.1	S	S	2.3	4.7
Total weighted	12,490	8,470	2,190	7,020	2,300	1,620	2,140	36,220

Note: ¹ Migrants could give multiple responses, so percentages may not add to the percentage who reported receiving help from an immigration adviser.

Symbol: S = suppressed for confidentiality reasons.

Feature box 3.1 *The pull of family and friends*

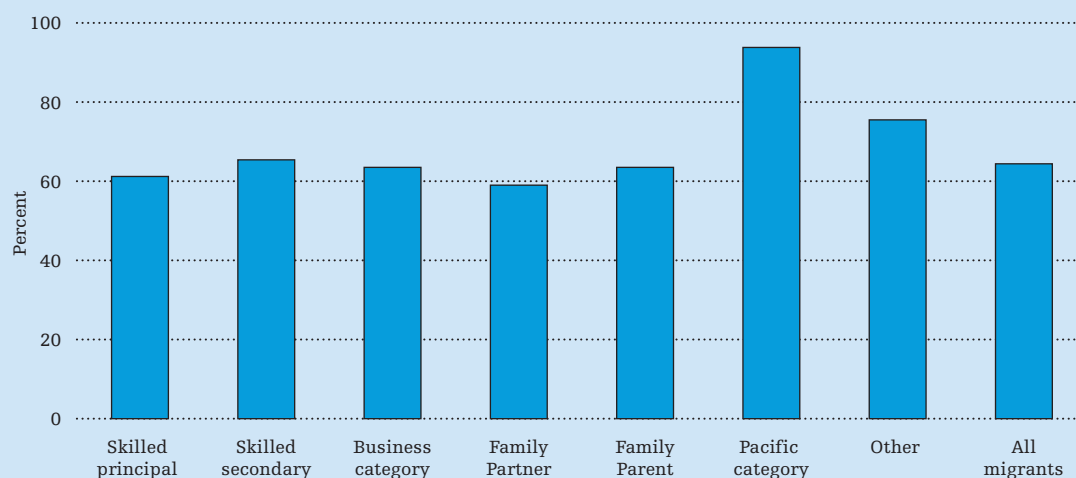
Family and friends play an integral role in the social integration and settlement of migrants. Contact with family and friends already living in New Zealand seems particularly significant to our recent migrants. (See Figure 3.6 and Figure 3.7.)

Insights

- Sixty-four percent of all migrants knew people in New Zealand before taking up permanent residence.
- Over half of all migrants reported that their main source of information about New Zealand came from family or friends already living here.
- Pacific category migrants had significantly more contacts in New Zealand than all other migrant groups (94 percent).

The number of New Zealand contacts migrants had varied by immigration approval category. About a third of migrants knew one to four people in New Zealand before arriving in the country to live and 18 percent knew 10 or more people. Skilled (principal and secondary) and Business migrants knew fewer people in New Zealand than migrants in other categories, whereas Pacific category migrants tended to know the most people.

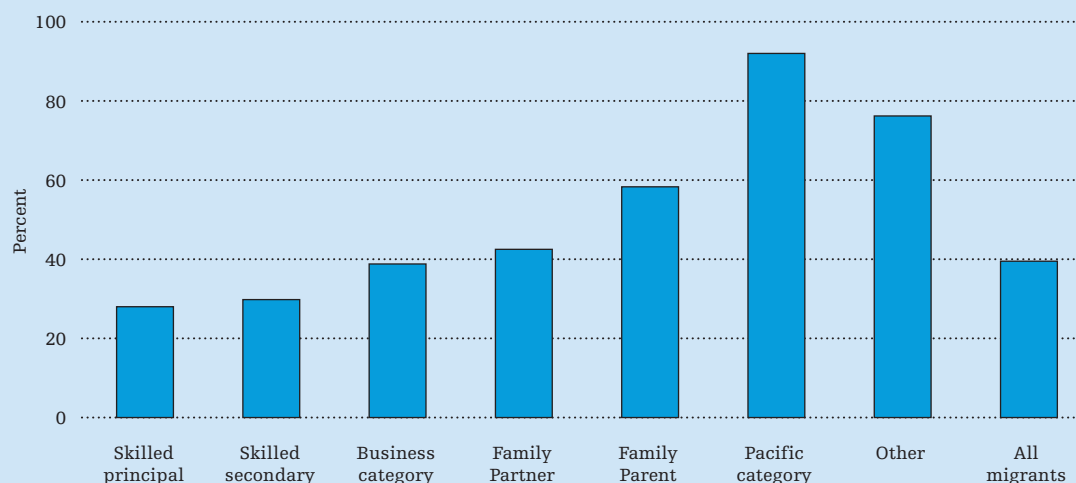
Figure 3.6: Whether migrants knew people in New Zealand before migrating by immigration approval category



Note: Excludes responses identified as not specified.

Forty percent of all migrants reported having relatives already living in New Zealand. Family and Pacific category migrants were more likely to have other family members living in New Zealand than were Skilled migrants. This is consistent with family being the key motivating factor for Family Parent migrants and an influential factor for Pacific category migrants in deciding to apply for New Zealand residence (see section 3.3). Although a significant number of Skilled and Business migrants knew people before settling in New Zealand, most of these people were not family members.

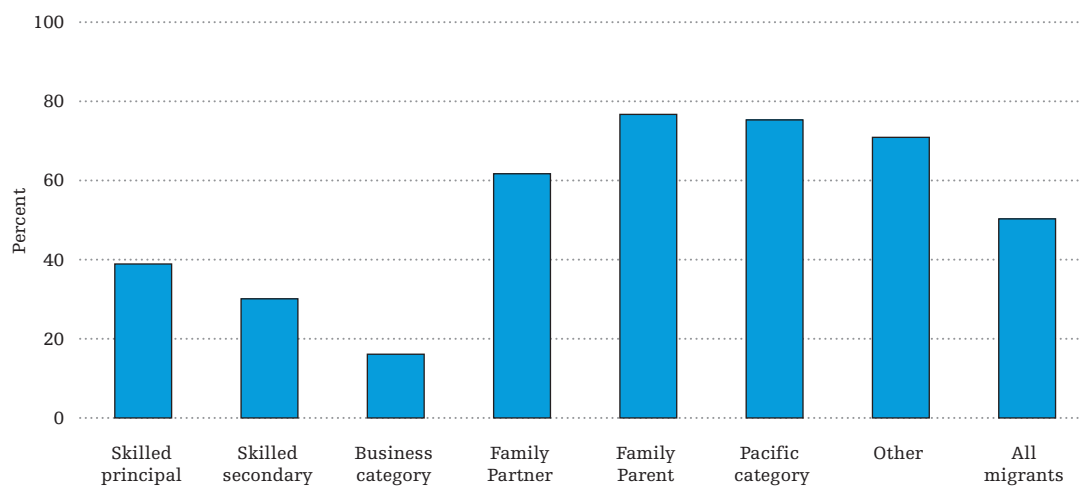
Figure 3.7: Migrants with family already in New Zealand by immigration approval category



3.4.4 Staying with family, friends or a sponsor on arrival

Migrants approved for residence offshore were asked whether they stayed with family, friends, or a sponsor when they first arrived in New Zealand. Of these, half stayed with family or friends. Staying with family or friends on arrival was particularly common for Family Parent (77 percent), Family Partner (62 percent), and Pacific category (75 percent) migrants. (See Figure 3.8.)

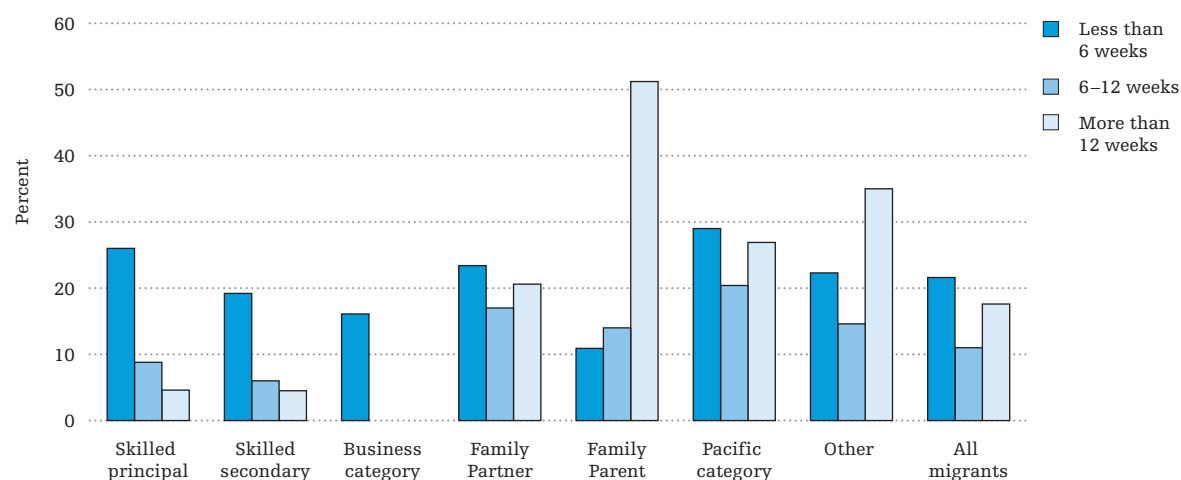
Figure 3.8: Staying with family, friends, or a sponsor on arrival by immigration approval category



Note: Includes migrants approved offshore and excludes responses identified as not specified.

As expected, Family Parent migrants were more likely to spend a longer period staying with family or friends compared with all other migrants, with just over half staying with family or friends for more than 12 weeks after arrival. A large proportion of Pacific category (47 percent) and Family Partner (38 percent) migrants also reported staying with family or friends for six weeks or more after their arrival in New Zealand. Skilled and Business migrants were most likely to have spent little or no time living with family or friends on arrival. (See Figure 3.9.)

Figure 3.9: Time migrants stayed with family, friends, or a sponsor on arrival by immigration approval category



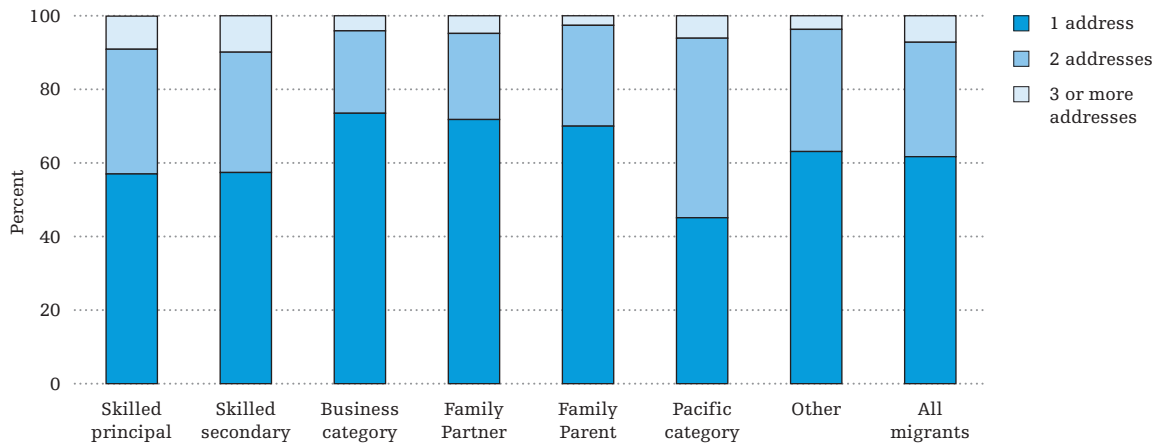
Note: Includes migrants approved offshore and excludes responses identified as not specified.

3.4.5 Number of dwellings

Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of all migrants had lived at the same address in New Zealand since their residence uptake, 31 percent had moved once, and 7 percent had lived at three or more addresses. (See Figure 3.10.)

Family Parent, Family Partner, and Business migrants were less likely to relocate than were Skilled and Pacific category migrants. Almost three-quarters of Family and Business migrants were still living at the same address six months after gaining residence in New Zealand. In contrast, about half the Pacific category migrants had lived at two addresses and about 10 percent of Skilled migrants had lived at three or more addresses since taking up residence.

Figure 3.10: Number of addresses since approval by immigration approval category




3.4.6 Reasons for living at different addresses

Migrants who had changed their address in New Zealand at least once in the six months since residence approval were asked about their reasons for living at their first address.²⁸ The four most common reasons for choosing the first location were liking the house, area or location; to live with family or their partner; employment-related reasons; and affordability. (See Figure 3.11.)

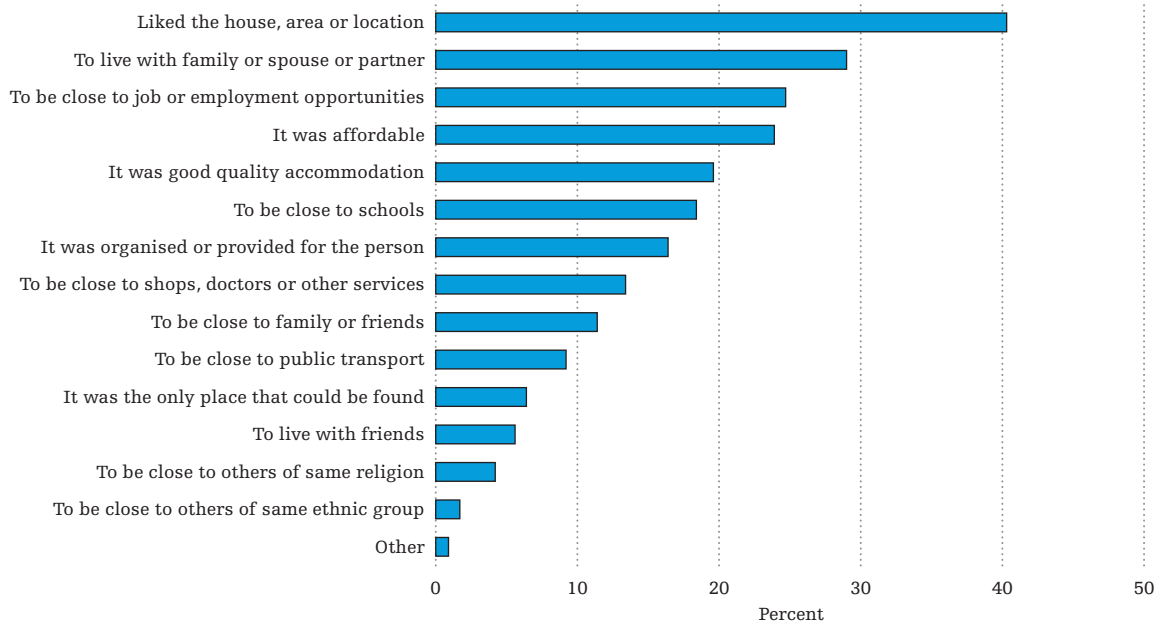
Skilled (both principal and secondary) and Business migrants reported liking the house, area, or location as a common reason for choosing their first address, while Family and Pacific category migrants tended to live at their first address to join other family members, a spouse, or a partner. Skilled principal migrants also chose their residence location to be close to jobs or employment opportunities, while Business migrants reported being close to schools as a common determinant in choosing their first address in New Zealand. Family Parent and Pacific category migrants also reported that their initial living arrangements were already organised or provided before they took up permanent residence.

²⁸ The first address was the first location lived at for at least one month.



Many migrants choose
New Zealand to provide a
better future for their children.

Figure 3.11: Reasons migrants lived at first address



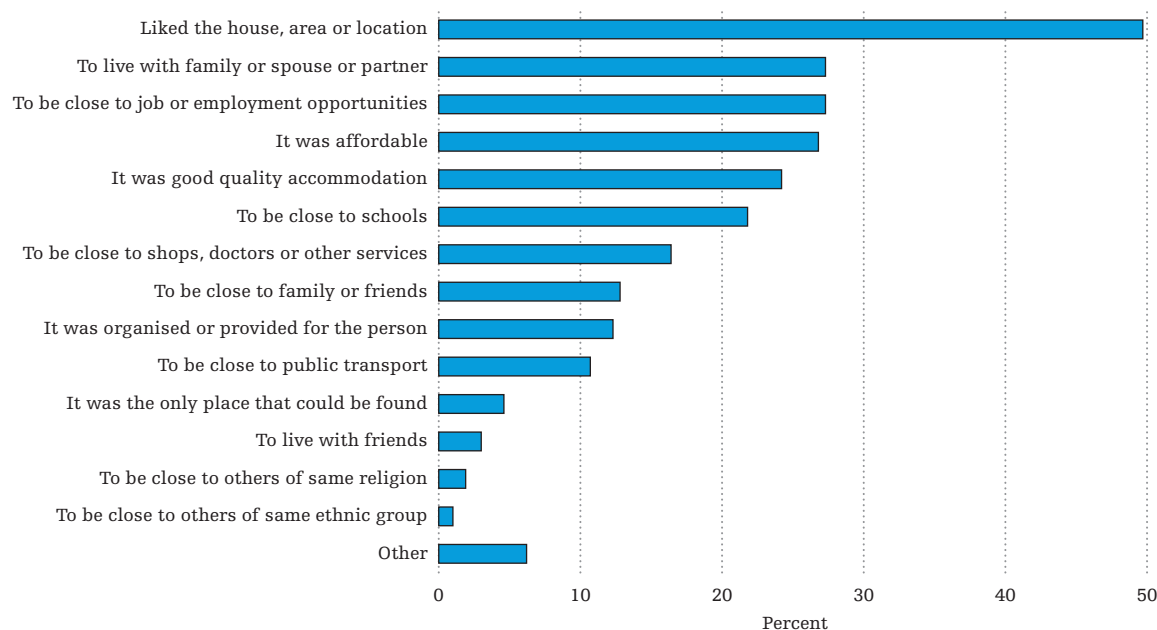
Note: Migrants could give multiple responses, so percentages may not add to 100.

All respondents were asked why they had chosen their current address. Migrants reported similar reasons for living at their current address to the reasons for living at their first address, although there were notable exceptions. Desirability was an important factor with a larger proportion of migrants reporting liking the house, area, or location (compared with their first address). This was particularly so for Family Partner and Skilled migrants. (See Figure 3.12.)

There was also an overall increase (from 20 percent to 24 percent) in the proportion of migrants reporting good quality accommodation as a reason for choosing to live at their current address. This increase was significant for both Skilled principal and Family Parent migrants.

Fewer Pacific category migrants reported that their accommodation had been arranged or provided for them as a main reason for living at their current address than had done at their first location. About half of Pacific category migrants had lived at two addresses since their residence approval. These findings suggest that many Pacific category migrants shift from pre-arranged temporary accommodation to living with family members within the first six months of residence.

Figure 3.12: Reasons migrants lived at current address



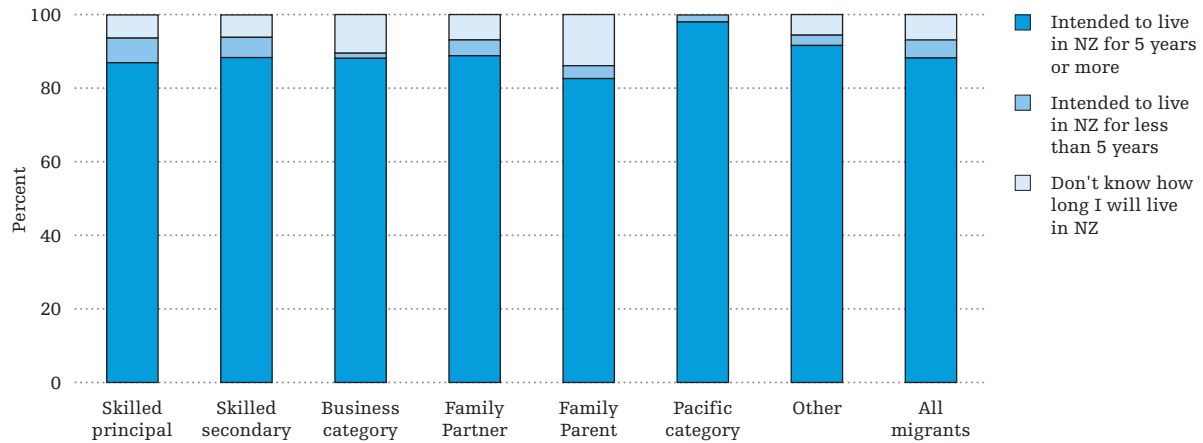
Note: Migrants could give multiple responses, so percentages may not add to 100.

3.4.7 Settlement intentions

Migrants were asked about their settlement intentions at the time they were approved for permanent residence. Most migrants (88 percent) said they intended to live in New Zealand for five years or more. Only 5 percent reported that they intended to live in New Zealand for less than five years, while another 7 percent did not know how long they would stay.

Almost all Pacific category migrants (97 percent) intended to settle in New Zealand for five years or more. Family Parent (14 percent) and Business (10 percent) migrants were the least likely to know how many years they intended to live in New Zealand. Seven percent of Skilled principal migrants intended to live in New Zealand for less than five years. (See Figure 3.13.)

Figure 3.13: Settlement intentions of migrants at time of approval by immigration approval category



Note: Excludes responses identified as not specified.

Migrants were also asked whether they intended to live in New Zealand for part of the time or all of time when they were granted residence. Most migrants (90 percent) intended to live solely in New Zealand. Seven percent of migrants intended to live both in New Zealand and in another country and around 5 percent of migrants intended to do this for five years or more. Eleven percent of Business migrants intended to live in New Zealand and another country for five years or more.

3.4.8 Applications for residence in other countries

Migrants were asked whether they had applied for residence in any countries other than New Zealand in the last three years. Almost all migrants (99 percent) had applied for residence in New Zealand only, suggesting that those who chose to make New Zealand their new home had not attempted to gain residence in other countries. Migrants who also applied for residence elsewhere may have chosen to reside in alternative countries. However, this finding demonstrates that New Zealand was the chosen destination for virtually all its new residents.