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### PUBLICATION:

### ECONOMIC



## SETTLEMENT PATTERNS AND THE GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY OF RECENT MIGRANTS TO NEW ZEALAND

### ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF IMMIGRATION WORKING PAPER SERIES

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**T**his paper uses census data from 1996 and 2001 to examine the characteristics of local areas where recent migrants settle, and gauges the extent to which migrants choose to settle where there are the best labour market opportunities as opposed to where there are already established migrant networks from their region of origin. The extent of how these factors change as migrants spend more time in New Zealand is also explored.

#### SUMMARY

Results indicate that recent migrants are more likely to have settled in areas where a larger proportion of previous immigrant populations from their region of origin have settled ('migrant networks'). Earlier migrants (in New Zealand for between five and ten years) are also likely to be resident in these areas, but to a lesser extent.

No evidence is found that recent migrants chose to settle in areas with better than average labour market conditions.<sup>1</sup> However, there is some evidence that earlier migrants are more likely to have relocated to areas with better labour market conditions for the general population. This suggests that labour market conditions became a more important determinant of settlement location in the longer term. However, migrant networks remained the dominant factor.

Interestingly, controlling for migrant networks from the same region of origin shows migrants were less likely to settle in areas with high proportion of migrants from other regions of origin. This was true for both recent and earlier migrants. Somewhat surprisingly, migrant networks had a greater impact on the settlement decisions for those with English speaking backgrounds than those from non-English speaking regions.

PACIFIC

YOUTH

LISNZ

SETTLEMENT

FAMILY

ECONOMIC

GLOBAL MOBILITY

REFUGEE

1. Better than average employment levels for the general population, previous migrants from the same region or individuals of the same skill level.

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