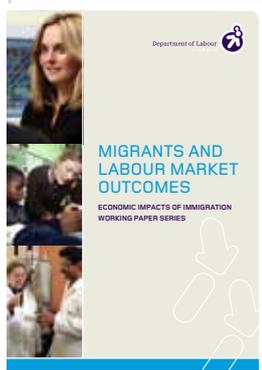


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## MIGRANTS AND LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES

### ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF IMMIGRATION WORKING PAPER SERIES

AUTHORS: Ganesh Nana and Kel Sanderson, BERL

**T**his paper investigates the labour market outcomes of immigrants to New Zealand. Labour market outcomes such as income, source of income, labour force status and occupation are included. The study uses data from the 1981, 1996, 2001 and 2006 censuses.

#### FINDINGS

- In 2006, 25 percent of the working age population (those aged 15 years and over) were born overseas, compared with 22 percent in 2001 and 18 percent in 1981.
- Between 2001 and 2006 the working age population grew by around 271,000 people. Of this, just over 162,000 (60 percent) were born overseas.
- Between 2001 and 2006, the high participation working age group (30 to 49 years of age), had a net inflow of 64,200 immigrants and a net outflow of 1,200 New Zealand born.
- The retention of immigrants between the censuses has improved. The out-migration rate is defined as the relativity between the existing immigrants who leave between a censuses compared with those who arrive. For every 100 immigrants who entered New Zealand between 2001 and 2006, 24 migrants who were in New Zealand as at 2001 left the country. This figure of 24 is compared to an overall out-migration rate of 42 between 1996 and 2001.
- The prolonged period of economic growth in New Zealand as well as changes in immigration policy focussing on matching migrants and employment are likely factors contributing to the improved retention of migrants. However, it is not possible to determine the extent of these contributing factors.
- The highest rates of out-migration are for those from countries with mainly European populations. This group is likely to be fluent in English and has fewer constraints to global mobility.
- The labour market outcomes for migrants are shown to improve as their length of residence in New Zealand increases.
- In most cases, the large majority of the differences in labour market outcomes across the various sub-groups of the population could be described by non-migrant related characteristics, namely differences in age composition and highest qualifications possessed.

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