



KEY FINDINGS FROM THE MIGRANTS SURVEY

2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot)

IMMIGRATION SURVEY MONITORING PROGRAMME

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Purpose

This report highlights the key findings from the 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot) of the Department of Labour's Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme. It describes the short-term settlement outcomes of migrants granted permanent residence in New Zealand¹ as well as the outcomes for temporary workers and international students. This report includes migrants' responses to questions about their life in New Zealand, employment and income, living arrangements, and plans for the future.

Introduction

The Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme monitors new migrants to New Zealand, employers, and the New Zealand public. The purpose of the programme is to build up an evidence base about migrants' settlement and labour market outcomes, employers' experiences with migrants, and community attitudes towards immigration.

This report presents the findings from the 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).² Findings from the survey of employers and the New Zealand public are presented in separate reports in this series.

Understanding the economic and social outcomes of migrants contributes to the development of effective immigration policy and settlement services. The Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme enables the monitoring of both the effects of immigration policy on migrants' settlement outcomes and changes in the environment that may affect immigration policy and community attitudes towards immigration.

The 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot) was conducted online and using telephone interviews in August–October 2009 and achieved a sample of 3,092 migrants.³ Of the total responses, 2,092 were achieved online and 1,000 were achieved via telephone interview.⁴ The survey will be repeated each year to measure changes and respond to new information needs.

¹ 'Short term' means 6–12 months after approval for most migrants, although up to 2 years for Pacific Access Category migrants.

² Additional data tables are provided in Appendix B.

³ Twenty responses were subsequently removed from the analysis.

⁴ The response rate was 36 percent but varied by immigration category (see Appendix A).

Key findings

- Most respondents were satisfied with life in New Zealand (89 percent), and most felt safe from crime (78 percent). More than half (52 percent) felt more welcome in New Zealand than they had expected to feel.
- Thirty-seven percent of respondents found the cost of living in New Zealand was higher than they had expected it to be, and 37 percent felt their household income was not enough to support themselves and their family.
- Employment outcomes were positive across several indicators, particularly for skilled principal migrants⁵ and Essential Skills temporary workers.⁶
 - Sixty-eight percent of principal migrants, 92 percent of skilled principal migrants, and 96 percent of essential skills workers were in paid employment.
 - Eighty-two percent of skilled principal migrants said their current job matched their skills and qualifications. Generally, the higher the skill level of the job, the greater the match to respondents' skills and qualifications.
 - Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of respondents working in a skilled job earned \$40,000 or more. Forty-three percent of skilled principal migrants earned \$60,000 or more. The median income from wages and salaries for all New Zealanders is around \$39,300 per year.
- More than half of the respondents lived in Auckland (53 percent). Most rented their accommodation (61 percent), but 7 percent owned their home without a mortgage.
- Most (87 percent) respondents planned to stay long term in New Zealand, and many wanted to gain New Zealand citizenship (73 percent of permanent residents).
- Just over one-third (35 percent) of respondents planned to sponsor family, in particular their parents.

⁵ A 'principal migrant' is the principal applicant in a visa or permit application.

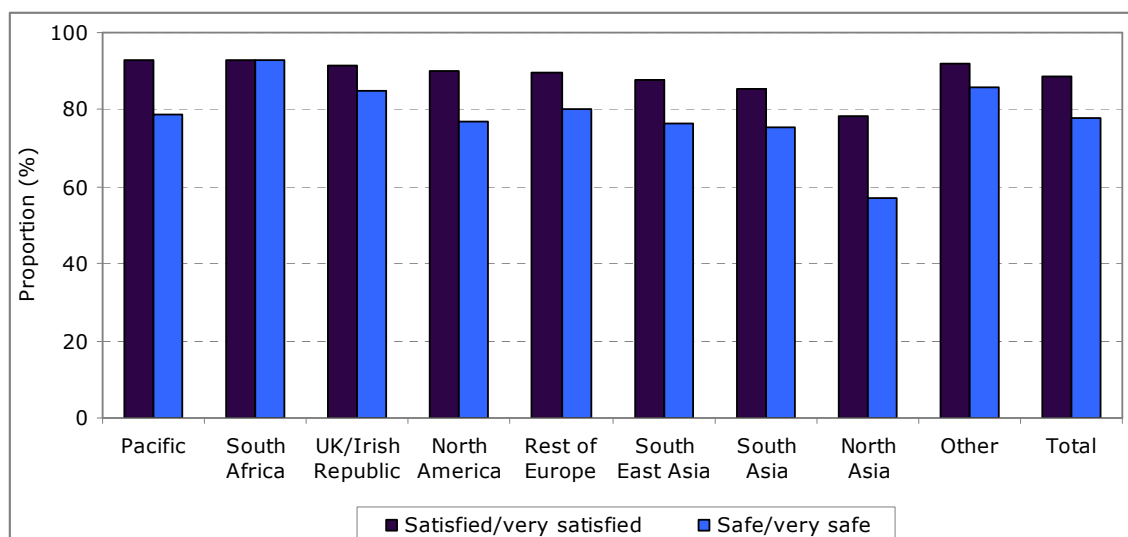
⁶ The Essential Skills Policy is one of the main temporary work categories. Applicants must have an offer of full-time work in New Zealand that meets specific criteria.

High level of satisfaction with life in New Zealand

Migrants to New Zealand typically report high levels of satisfaction with life here. Eighty-nine percent of respondents in this survey were satisfied or very satisfied with life in New Zealand, a rate consistent with previous migrant surveys.⁷ In addition, most respondents felt safe from crime in New Zealand (78 percent).

Figure 1 shows that North Asian respondents were less likely to report feeling safe from crime (57 percent) and South African respondents were more likely to feel safe from crime (93 percent) compared with respondents from other regions. These findings may reflect the comparative perceptions of safety between New Zealand and the respondents' countries of origin.

Figure 1: Respondents' satisfaction and safety in New Zealand by region of origin



Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

Despite migrants' perceptions of satisfaction and safety in New Zealand, the level of respect and acceptance towards new migrants varies within the host community. Migrants' experience of discrimination has been borne out in other surveys of migrants and the New Zealand public. Research has shown that New Zealanders feel some migrant groups, particularly Asian peoples, experience more discrimination than others.⁸ Immigration surveys have also shown that Asian migrants report more discrimination than other ethnic groups report.⁹

⁷ See Department of Labour (2009) *Life in New Zealand: Settlement experiences of skilled migrants*. Wellington: Department of Labour. See also the findings from the Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand, available at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/lisnz>.

⁸ Human Rights Commission (2009) *Race Relations in 2009*. Wellington: Human Rights Commission. Available at <http://www.hrc.co.nz> (accessed 11 March 2010).

⁹ Department of Labour (2009) *New Faces, New Futures: New Zealand. Findings from the Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand – Wave One*. Wellington: Department of Labour. Available at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz>

This survey found that 43 percent of respondents had felt discriminated against, with significant differences across regions of origin. North Asian respondents were more likely to have felt discriminated against (67 percent), in particular North Asian students (73 percent compared with 48 percent of all other students).

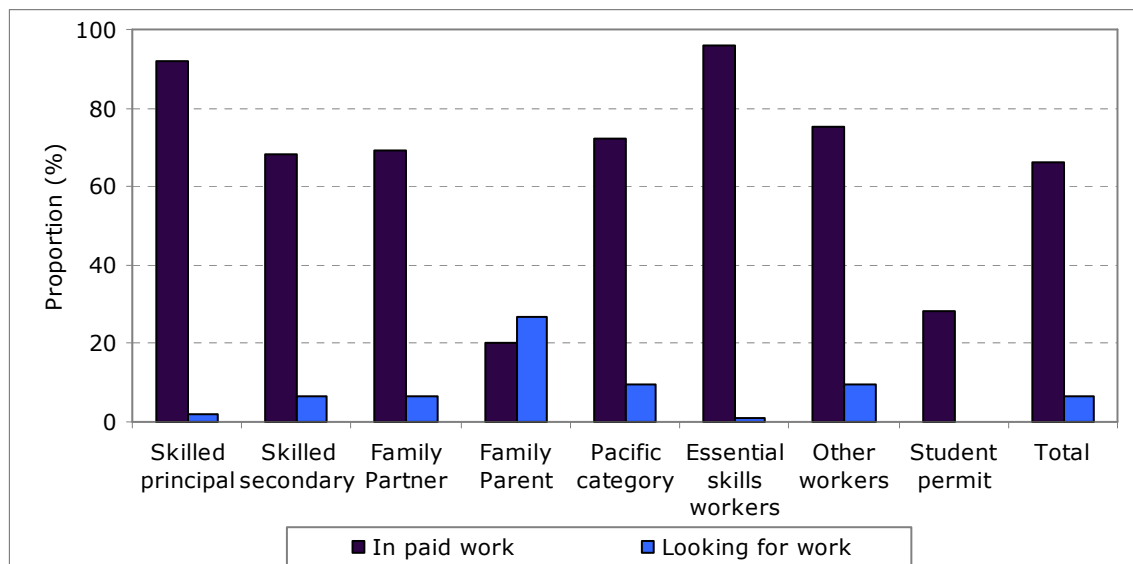
Positive employment outcomes for new migrants

New migrants generally achieve good employment outcomes in New Zealand, both in their rate of employment and in the matching of their skills and experience to the labour market. In this survey, 68 percent of principal migrants were employed (including those approved through the Family Sponsored Stream and Pacific Category) with 81 percent satisfied or very satisfied with their job.¹⁰

Ninety-two percent of skilled principal migrants were employed and 82 percent of work permit holders. A further breakdown of work permit holders showed that 96 percent of those approved through the Essential Skills Policy were employed compared with 70 percent of those approved through the family-related work policies.

Overall, 7 percent of respondents in the labour force were looking for work (Figure 2). Older respondents in particular were more likely to be looking for work than were younger respondents, which was most evident through the Family Parent Category (27 percent looking for work).

Figure 2: Respondents’ employment status by category



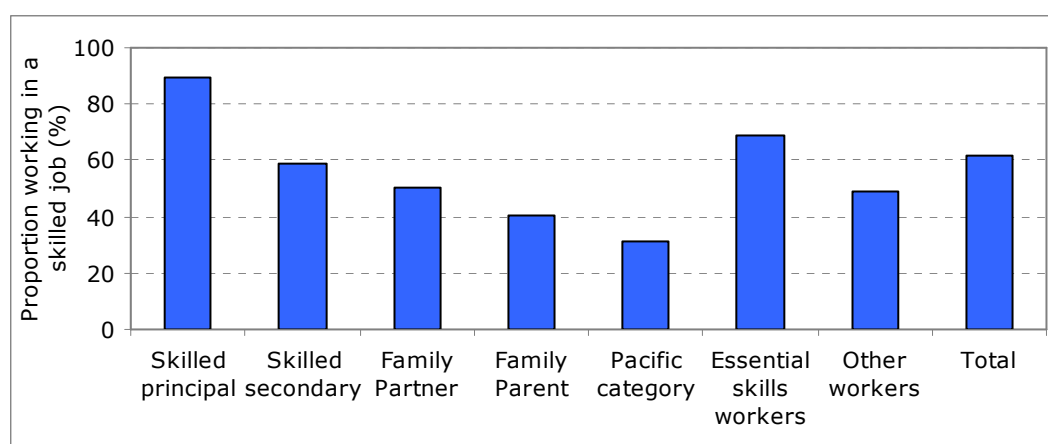
Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

Most employed respondents were in full-time paid work (83 percent). One in four employed skilled secondary and Family Partner Category migrants were in part-time paid work, compared with 4 percent of skilled principal migrants and Essential Skills workers.

¹⁰ The Pacific Category includes the Samoan Quota and Pacific Access Category.

Results were also positive for the types of jobs respondents held, with 61 percent working in a skilled job (Figure 3).¹¹ When assessed by category, most skilled principal migrants worked in a skilled job (90 percent), as did 59 percent of skilled secondary migrants and 56 percent of work permit holders. An assessment of work permit holders showed 69 percent of employed Essential Skills workers had skilled jobs compared with 43 percent of those approved through family-related work policy.

Figure 3: Respondents working in a skilled job by category



Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

The findings also demonstrate that migrants' partners can achieve good labour market outcomes. Seventy-two percent of respondents lived with a partner and a large proportion of those partners worked (72 percent).¹² Furthermore, two-thirds (66 percent) of the employed partners worked in a skilled job.

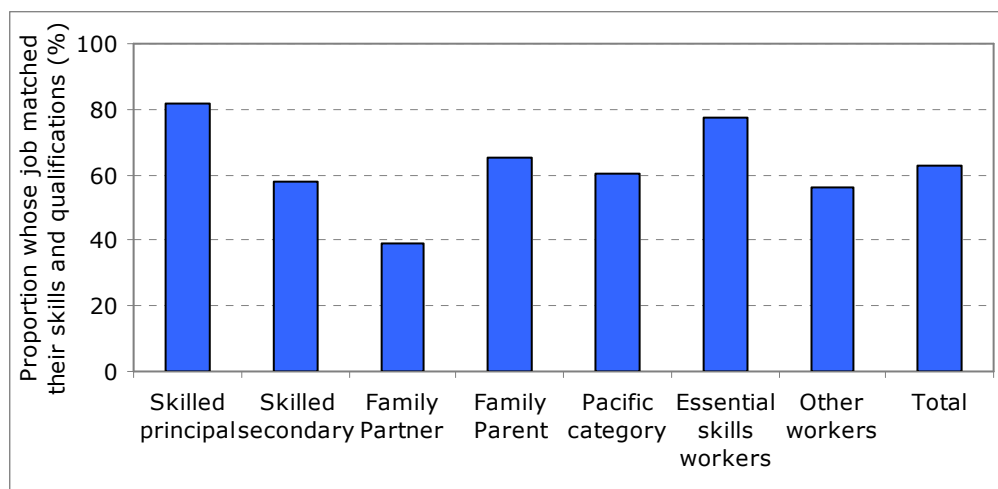
Strong link between migrants' skills and the labour market

The relationship between respondents' current jobs and their skills and qualifications was very positive for skilled migrants. Eighty-two percent of employed skilled principal migrants stated their current job matched their skills and qualifications, as did 77 percent of Essential Skills workers (Figure 4).

¹¹ The Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupation (ANZSCO) defines five skill levels based on formal education and training, previous experience, and on-the-job training. A skilled job in the context of this report aligns with ANZSCO skill levels 1, 2, and 3.

¹² Seventy-seven percent of partners were themselves migrants.

Figure 4: Employed respondents whose job matched their skills and qualifications by category



Note: Respondents rated how well their job matched their skills and qualifications.

Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

Of all employed respondents, 37 percent said their job did not match or only partly matched their skills and qualifications. The most common reasons for the mismatch were that they were over-qualified for their current job (33 percent) or they had decided to pursue a different career or job in New Zealand (29 percent).

Not surprisingly, respondents working in skilled jobs were less likely to report a mismatch between their job and their skills and qualifications than those working in lower skilled jobs. Twenty-five percent of respondents working in a skilled job reported a mismatch compared with 56 percent of those working in a lower skilled job.

Income from employment

Forty-eight percent of employed respondents earned \$40,000 or more in their main job.¹³ In 2009, the median income for wage and salary earners in New Zealand was \$756 per week,¹⁴ which is about \$39,300 per year. Although the 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot) sample is not strictly comparable to the New Zealand population, similar trends are observed in both groups with regard to differences in earnings. As with the New Zealand population, migrants' age, gender, qualifications, and employment status all affect their earnings.

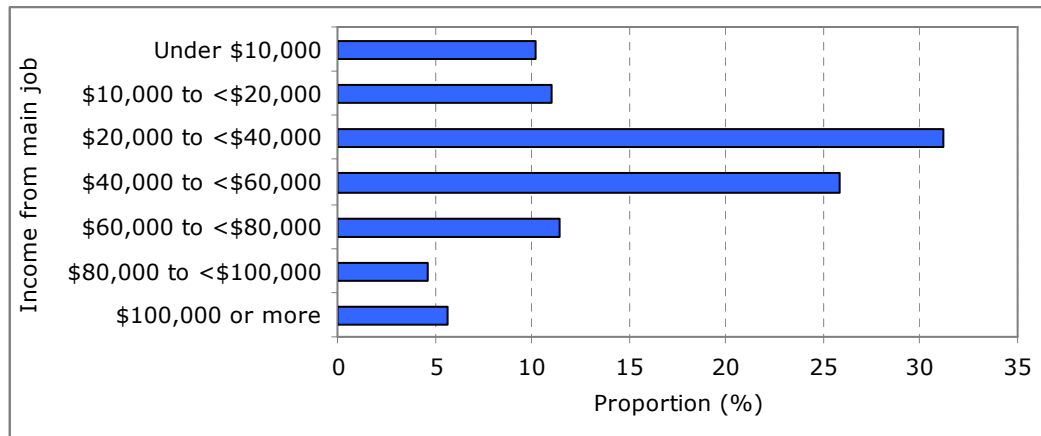
This survey showed job skill level and English language proficiency also affected earning ability. Sixty-five percent of respondents working in a skilled job earned \$40,000 or more compared with 17 percent of those in lower skilled jobs. Skilled

¹³ Excludes international students.

¹⁴ Statistics New Zealand (2009). *New Zealand Income Survey: June 2009 quarter*. Available at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/work_income_and_spending/Income/NZIncomeSurvey_HOTPJun09qtr.aspx (Table 6) (accessed 2 February 2010).

principal migrants were the highest earning, with 43 percent earning \$60,000 or more. Figure 5 shows the income from respondents' main jobs.

Figure 5: Respondents' income from main job



Note: This figure excludes international students.

Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

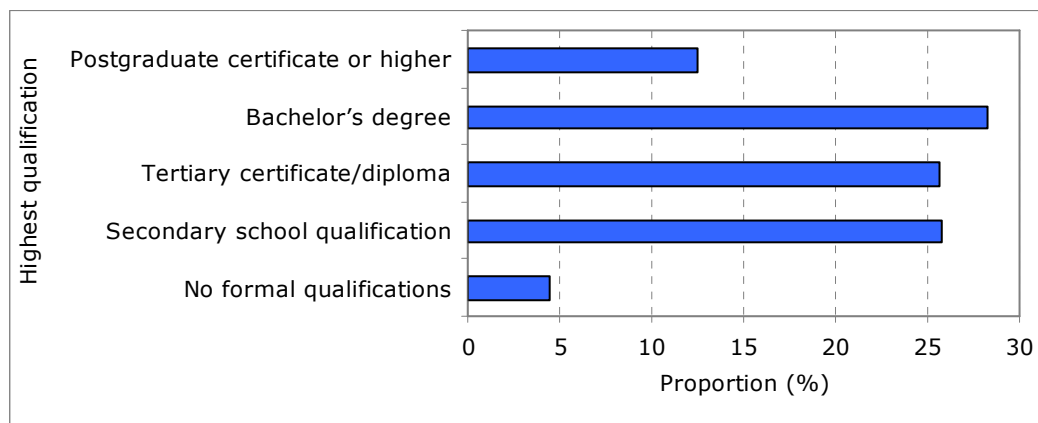
Migrants' highest qualifications

Sixty-six percent of respondents held a post-school qualification, with 28 percent holding a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) and 13 percent holding a postgraduate certificate or degree (Figure 6). In comparison, in 2006, the proportion of people in New Zealand (aged 15 and over) with a post-school qualification was 40 percent and 11 percent held a bachelor's degree.¹⁵

Across immigration categories, skilled principal migrants and Essential Skills workers were the most qualified (89 percent and 75 percent respectively held a post-secondary qualification). Only 4 percent of migrants held no formal qualification.

¹⁵ See the Statistics New Zealand QuickStats website:
<http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2006CensusHomePage/QuickStats> (accessed 1 March 2010).

Figure 6: Respondents' highest qualifications



Note: Excludes international students who have not yet completed their qualification.

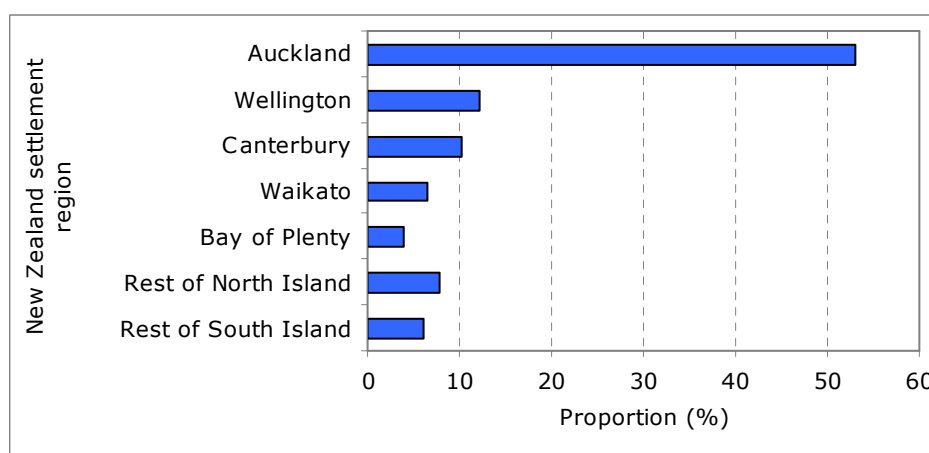
Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

Auckland attracts a large proportion of migrants

Auckland is the main entry point for new migrants to New Zealand and is a key settlement region. Around 52 percent of overseas-born people in New Zealand live in the Auckland region.¹⁶ This survey showed that most respondents lived in New Zealand's main centres (Figure 7): Auckland (53 percent), Wellington (12 percent), Canterbury (10 percent), and the Waikato (7 percent).

Respondents from the Pacific were more likely than respondents from other regions to settle in the Auckland region (73 percent). International students were concentrated in two centres: Auckland (43 percent) and Canterbury (32 percent).

Figure 7: Region in which respondents lived in New Zealand



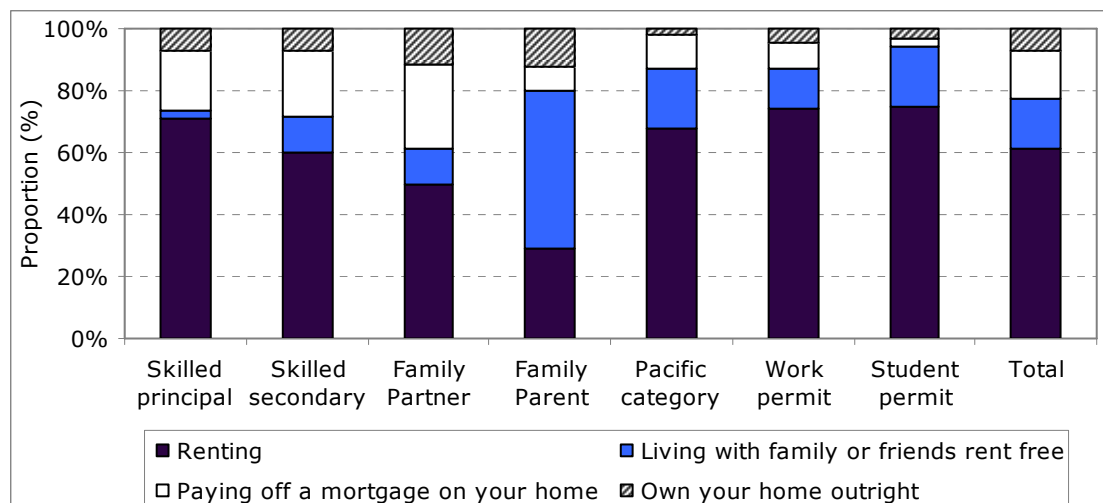
Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

¹⁶ See the Statistics New Zealand QuickStats website: <http://stats.govt.nz/Census/2006CensusHomePage/QuickStats> (accessed 12 March 2010).

Migrants living arrangements

Sixty-one percent of respondents rented their home while 16 percent lived rent-free with family and friends (Figure 8). Seven percent of respondents owned their home outright (ie, without a mortgage).

Figure 8: Respondents' living arrangements in New Zealand



Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

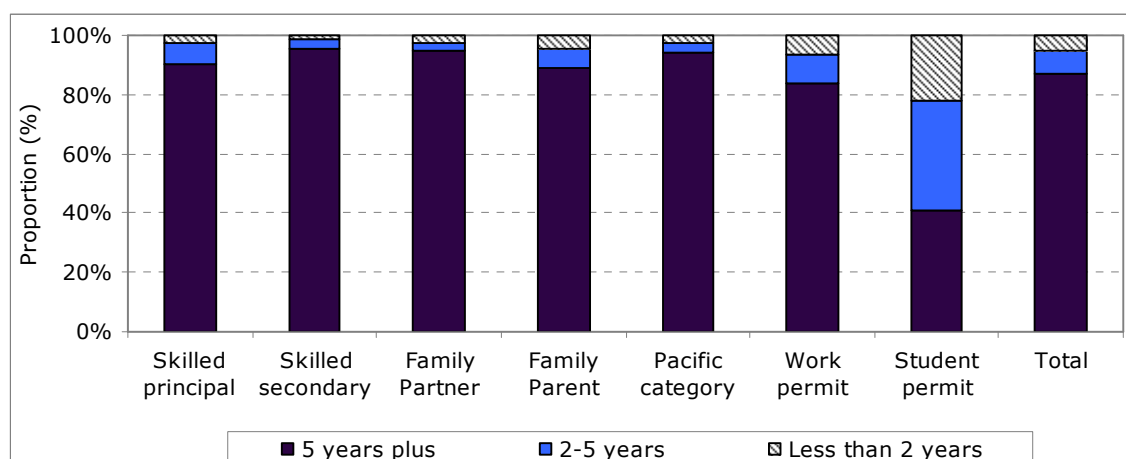
Sponsored migrants (Family Parent and Family Partner Category) were least likely to be renting and Family Parent Category migrants tended to live with family or friends (51 percent), reflecting the obligations of their sponsors to provide accommodation and financial support (if necessary). Family Partner Category migrants, like skilled principal and secondary migrants, were more likely to be paying a mortgage on their own home.

Migrants' commitment to New Zealand

Settling into a new community takes time. One measure of new migrants' ability to make the most of the opportunities New Zealand offers is their commitment to New Zealand. Most respondents in this survey planned to stay long term in New Zealand and a large proportion wanted to gain citizenship.

Eighty-seven percent of respondents planned to stay 5 years or more and 8 percent planned to stay 2–5 years (Figure 9). Only 5 percent intended to leave in the short term (less than 2 years) and, predictably, these were mostly temporary migrants (36 percent were students and 26 percent were workers). Eighty-four percent of temporary workers planned to stay in New Zealand for 5 years or more.

Figure 9: Length of time respondents plan to stay in New Zealand



Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

Respondents' intentions demonstrate clearly the link between temporary and permanent migration and show that many students and temporary workers have a long-term commitment to New Zealand. For many permanent migrants their first step in New Zealand is as a student or temporary worker.

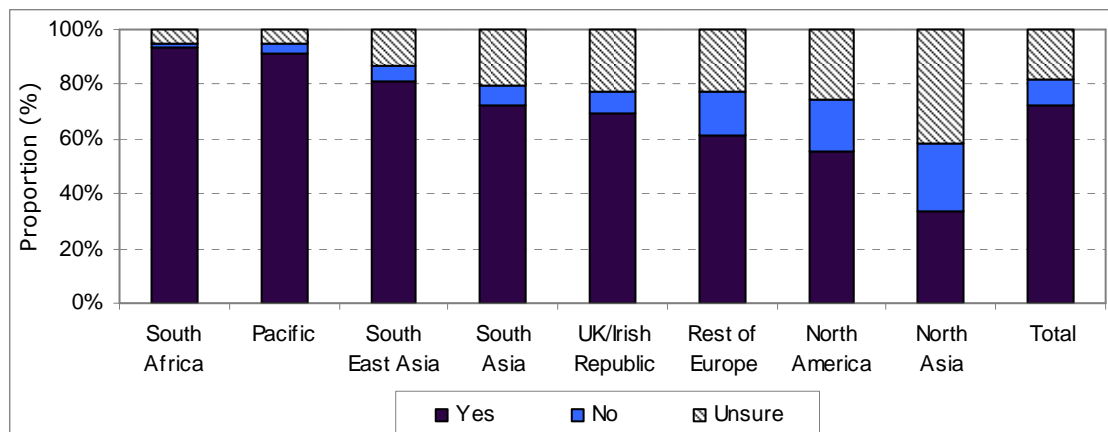
This survey showed many international students intended to stay long term in New Zealand. Sixty-four percent wanted to obtain a work permit after their studies and 59 percent wanted to gain residence. Thirty-two percent of students wanted to gain New Zealand citizenship but many were unsure (36 percent).

Most temporary workers wanted to gain permanent residence (87 percent), with very little difference between Essential Skills workers (85 percent) and family-related workers (92 percent). Sixty-three percent of temporary workers also wanted to apply for citizenship – 60 percent of Essential Skills workers and 71 percent of family-related workers.

Seventy-three percent of permanent residents intended to apply for New Zealand citizenship, 9 percent did not plan to, and 18 percent were unsure. Intentions varied significantly by region of origin (Figure 10). Respondents from South Africa and the Pacific region were more likely than respondents from other regions to want New Zealand citizenship (94 percent and 91 percent respectively). Respondents from North Asia were the least likely (33 percent) and many were unsure (41 percent).¹⁷ This may reflect China not allowing its citizens to hold dual nationality.

¹⁷ Predominantly Chinese and South Korean respondents.

Figure 10: Permanent resident respondents' intention to apply for citizenship by region of origin



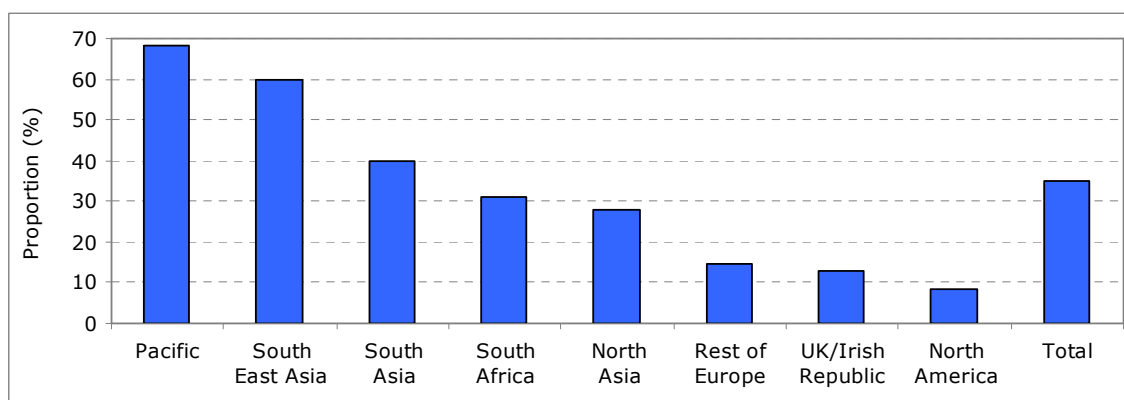
Note: Figure excludes temporary workers and students.

Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

Migrants want to connect with family

Just over one-third of respondents intended to sponsor family members to New Zealand (35 percent) while 31 percent were unsure. Overall, respondents were most likely to want to sponsor parents (63 percent of those who wanted to sponsor family) and siblings (40 percent).

Figure 11: Respondents' intention to sponsor family members by region of origin



Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

Across regions of origin, respondents from the Pacific (68 percent) and South East Asia¹⁸ (60 percent) had the largest proportions that intended to sponsor family (Figure 11). Across immigration categories, 80 percent of Pacific category migrants wanted to sponsor family compared with around one-third of skilled principal, skilled secondary, and Family Partner Category migrants. One third of temporary workers and 27 percent of students planned to sponsor family.

¹⁸ Predominantly Philippine, Malaysian, and Thai respondents.

Life in New Zealand

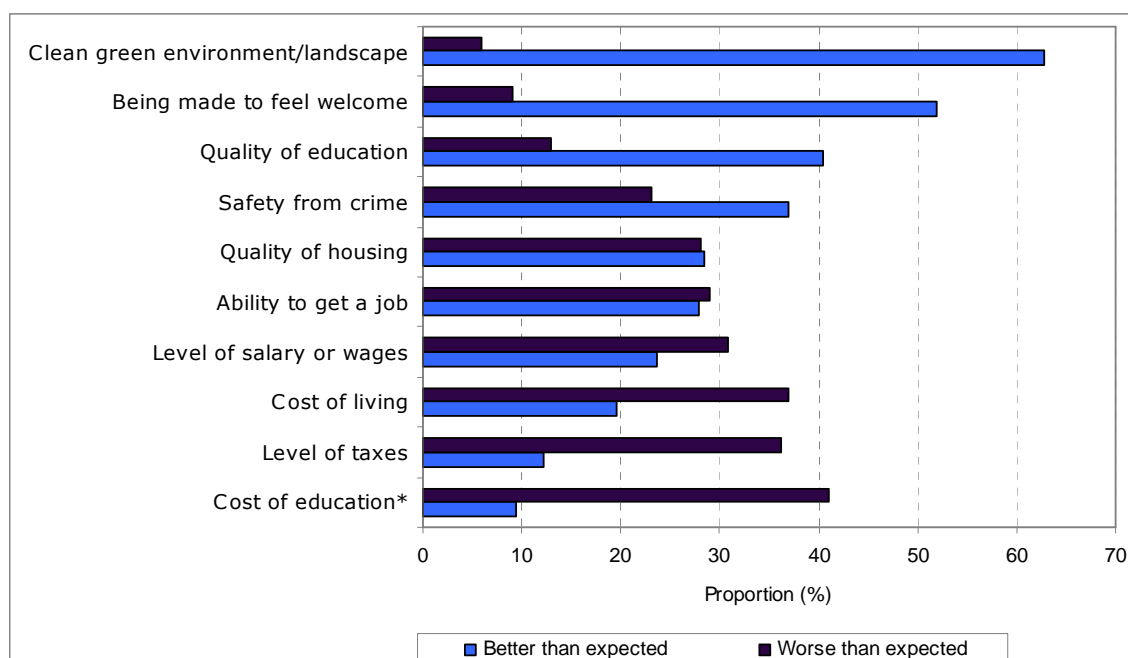
Figure 12 shows that 63 percent of respondents found New Zealand’s environment or landscape better than they had expected it would be, and just over half had been made to feel more welcome than they had expected to feel. Safety from crime and the quality of education were other aspects that generally met or exceeded expectations.

The quality of housing in New Zealand and the ability to get a job drew mixed responses, with similar proportions of respondents stating these things were better or worse than expected. This could reflect good or bad experiences with housing and jobs after arrival in New Zealand, unrealistic expectations, or differences in the quality of information migrants got before they came to New Zealand.

One in three respondents thought the cost of living and the level of taxes were worse than they had expected, which again may reflect the quality of information migrants sought about living and working in New Zealand.

Forty-one percent of students thought the cost of education was higher than they had expected. This may indicate a lack of information about living costs over and above the cost of education. In contrast, 33 percent of students thought the quality of education was better than they had expected but 13 percent thought it worse.¹⁹

Figure 12: Things about New Zealand respondents found better or worse than they had expected



*Only asked of international students.

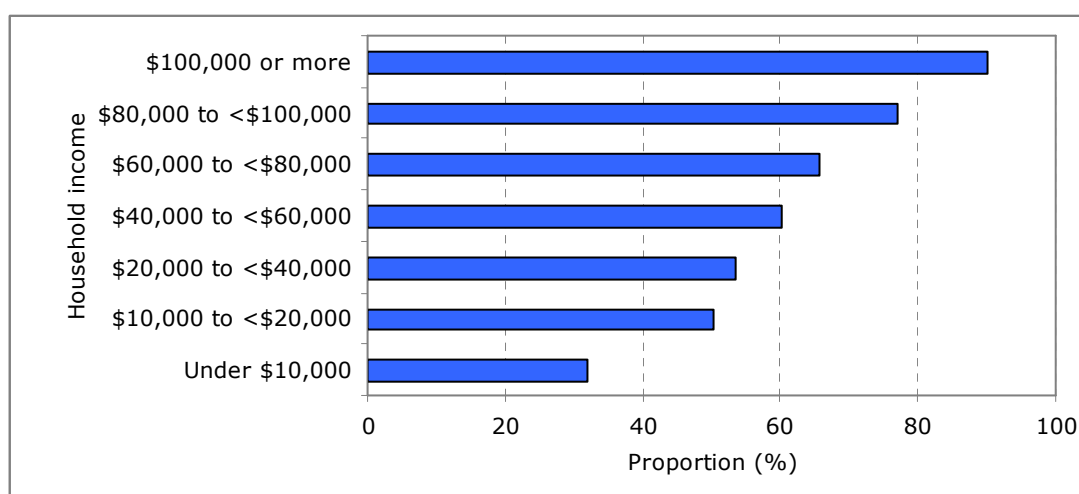
Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

¹⁹ Forty-nine percent thought the quality matched their expectations and 4 percent had no expectations.

Thirty-seven percent of respondents said they did not have enough money to support themselves and their family. However, research suggests the adequacy of migrants' incomes improves over time.²⁰ Around half of those reporting an inadequate income also found the cost of living higher than they had expected, which may indicate a gap in the knowledge migrants have about New Zealand before migrating.

Figure 13 shows that the proportion of respondents stating they have enough money increases with household income. While this analysis does not take family size into account, the figure shows that from incomes of \$40,000 per year, 60 percent or more respondents say they have enough money to support themselves and their families.

Figure 13: Respondents with enough money to support themselves and their family by income level



Source: Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot).

A comparison across immigration categories showed that Family Parent Category migrants were more likely than most migrants to report not having enough income – 50 percent said they did not have enough money compared with 37 percent overall. This most likely reflects the low income of this category of migrants. Twenty-seven percent had no income (compared with 7 percent of all respondents) and a further 42 percent earned less than \$40,000.

²⁰ Department of Labour (2009) *New Faces, New Futures: New Zealand. Findings from the Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand–Wave One*. Wellington: Department of Labour. Available at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/generalinformation/research/lisnz/newfacesnewfuturesnz.htm>

Conclusion

The key findings from the 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot) paint a generally positive picture of migrant settlement in New Zealand. The results reinforce several trends that have emerged from earlier studies as well as illuminating several important aspects of migrants' settlement experiences.

The results show migrants bring skills and experience that allow them to connect in the labour market. There was a high rate of employment among respondents, and a good match between respondents' jobs and their skills and qualifications across most categories. However, the skill match was less positive for Family Partner Category migrants. Overall, migrants had a high degree of satisfaction with jobs and life in New Zealand, and most saw New Zealand as a safe and welcoming country.

This report also demonstrates the links between study, work, and permanent residence in New Zealand, with many temporary workers and students planning to live in New Zealand long term. The findings signal respondents' high level of commitment to New Zealand, with a large proportion of respondents planning to make New Zealand their permanent home and many wanting to gain citizenship.

This report shows migrants find New Zealand's environment, safety from crime, and quality of education better than they had expected, and over half found New Zealand was more welcoming than they thought it would be. Some migrants find the cost of living high in New Zealand, although previous research has shown migrant incomes to improve over time. Other migrants find some aspects of life in New Zealand worse than they had expected. This may reflect the quality of information migrants obtain about New Zealand before arriving or highlight the difficulties of adjusting to life in a new country.

Future work

The Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme will monitor the settlement indicators described in this report. This time series will make an important contribution to the evidence base of migrants' settlement outcomes in New Zealand. Future work will include reports on specific groups of migrants.

Further information

For other reports in the Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme series, visit the Immigration Research website (<http://www.immigration.govt.nz/research>) or email research@dol.govt.nz.

Appendix A: Survey method

The 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot) selected migrants who were aged 16 years and above and had contact details. From the 23,956 migrants in the target population, further exclusion criteria (such as removing migrants with incomplete street addresses) were employed, thus removing 64 percent of the target population. The remaining 8,594 migrants were asked to participate in the survey, of whom 3,092 migrants (36 percent) responded to the survey (either online or via a telephone interview).

Response rates for different immigration categories are given in Table 1 below. Some of the non-response is due to non-contact because migrants were not living at the address listed with Immigration New Zealand or no longer living in New Zealand at the time of the survey.

Potential respondents were sent a pre-notification letter. Those with internet access could complete the survey online, otherwise interviews were done over the telephone. The average telephone interview took 18 minutes. The fieldwork was completed on 31 October 2009, with 2,092 respondents completing the survey online and 1,000 respondents surveyed by telephone. Table 1 gives the number of migrants who were asked to participate in the survey and the number who responded.

Table 1: Response rates

	Immigration category							Total
	Skilled principal	Skilled secondary	Family Partner	Family Parent	Pacific category	Work permit	Student permit	
Migrants in the survey	1,271	1,279	1,264	1,218	969	1,471	1,122	8,594
Total respondents	551	585	539	358	199	572	288	3,092
Response rate	43%	46%	43%	29%	21%	39%	26%	36%

Given the high non-response and under-coverage rates, users should be cautious about generalising the results of respondents to the survey population or the target population.

More details are available in the *Methodology report for the 2009 Migrants Survey (Pilot)* from IMSED Research, Department of Labour.

Appendix B: Summary data tables

Table 2: Respondent demographics by category

Respondent demographics	Immigration category							Total (%)
	Skilled principal (%)	Skilled secondary (%)	Family Partner (%)	Family Parent (%)	Pacific category ⁽¹⁾ (%)	Work permit (%)	Student permit (%)	
16-24 years	4	22	10	3	22	16	66	17
25-34 years	40	24	54	1	41	49	29	36
35-44 years	37	37	22	1	30	20	3	23
45-54 years	17	15	9	8	7	13	2	11
55-64 years	2	2	4	41	1	2	0	7
65+ years	...	1	1	46	0	0	0	6
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Male	63	37	29	36	45	48	50	44
Female	37	63	71	64	55	52	50	56
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
UK/Irish Republic	29	31	19	15	...	14	1	19
North Asia	15	6	19	22	...	13	43	16
Pacific	2	4	13	14	100	16	6	15
South East Asia	16	18	12	8	...	15	19	14
South Africa	15	21	2	9	...	11	2	10
South Asia	8	6	10	19	...	12	9	10
Rest of Europe	6	5	10	6	...	8	10	7
North America	5	2	9	1	...	6	4	4
Other	5	7	5	6	...	6	5	6
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total respondents	547	576	539	358	199	572	281	3,072

Notes: (1) Includes the Samoan Quota and the Pacific Access Category.

Symbol: ... = not applicable

Table 3: Key indicators by category

Key indicators	Immigration category							Total
	Skilled principal	Skilled secondary	Family Partner	Family Parent	Pacific category ⁽³⁾	Work permit	Student permit	
Satisfied/very satisfied with life in New Zealand (%)	88	90	85	90	96	92	79	89
Feel safe/very safe from crime in New Zealand (%)	77	84	71	76	80	82	71	78
Has felt discriminated against (%)	50	44	47	26	23	42	58	43
In paid employment (%)	92	68	69	20	72	82	28	66
Works in a skilled job (%) ⁽¹⁾	90	59	50	41	31	56	...	61
Job matches skills and qualifications (%) ⁽¹⁾	82	58	39	65	60	64	...	63
Earns \$40,000 or more from main job (%) ⁽¹⁾	81	46	32	23	23	35	...	48
Looking for work (%) ⁽²⁾	2	6	7	27	9	7	...	7
In full time work (%) ⁽¹⁾	96	74	75	64	80	89	...	83
Holds a post-secondary school qualification (%)	89	63	69	46	44	72	56	66
Living in Auckland (%)	52	45	49	71	74	52	43	53
Spent more than 2 years in New Zealand before current permit (%)	20	7	25	8	19	16	18	16
Plans to stay 5 years + (%)	90	95	95	89	94	84	41	87
Plans to apply for New Zealand citizenship (%)	71	80	69	59	92	63	32	67
Plans to sponsor family (%)	39	35	34	16	80	33	27	35
Not enough money to support self or family (%)	34	33	41	50	35	32	46	37
Total respondents	547	576	539	358	199	572	281	3,072

Notes:

(1) Includes only employed migrants.

(2) Proportion of respondents in the labour force who were looking for work.

(3) Includes the Samoan Quota and the Pacific Access Category.

Symbol: ... = not applicable.

