#### Labour & Immigration Research Centre

Te Pokapū a Mahi me Te Manene Rangahau

A SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

# Community Attitudes Towards Immigrants and Immigration in New Zealand

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## **Outline**

- Questions of interest
- The New Zealand context
- Immigration to New Zealand
- What are New Zealanders' attitudes to migrants and migration?
- Attitudes, the media and Government policy
- Challenges for the future





# **Questions of interest**

- What are New Zealanders' attitudes to migrants and migration?
- How do they differ according to sector of the community or migrant background?
- Have attitudes hardened in recent years?
- How have attitudes affected Government policy?



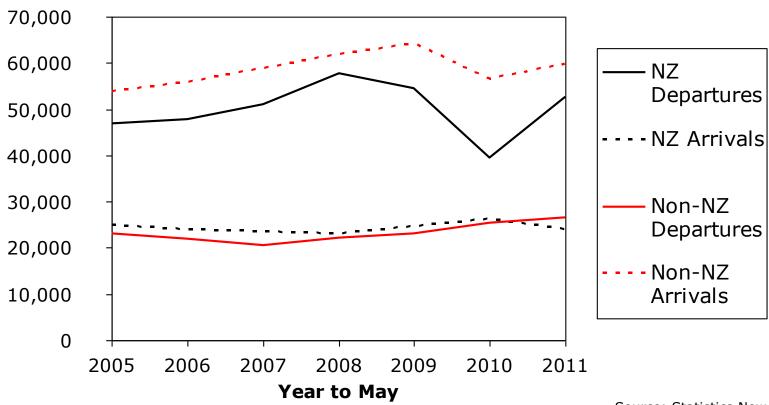
### The New Zealand context

- Resident population 4.3 million
   ...but a large and highly skilled diaspora
- 24% of labour force is overseas-born large economic impact
- Predominantly European ethnicity (68% of popn), but Asian ethnic group fastest growing, doubling in size in the ten years to 2006 (to 9% of popn)
- Significant indigenous M\u00e4ori and Pacific populations (15% and 7% of popn)



# **Overall migration flows**

#### **Permanent and Longterm Migration by Citizenship**



Source: Statistics New Zealand





# **Immigration to New Zealand**

- High level of control over migration in-flows, except for New Zealanders and Australians
- Temporary migration:
  - International students approx 75,000 in 2010/11
  - Temporary workers 137,000 people in 2010/11
- Permanent migration:
  - New Zealand Residence Programme approx 45,000-50,000 places per year – over half as "skilled migrants"
  - Most skilled migrants enter as students or temporary workers first.





# Immigration in the NZ media

- Anti-migrant sentiment at the beginning of the recession
  - Election at the end of 2008
  - Displacement of local workers and competition for jobs

#### Parties split on immigration levels

"Winston Peters' speech strikes at the heart of the issue as the country goes through a recession..."

Source: New Zealand Herald (01/11/08)

#### Winston Peters: Protect and save New Zealand jobs

Source: Speech: New Zealand First Party 16/10/08

#### Factory accused of favouring migrants

Source: New Zealand Herald 24/03/09





# Immigration in the NZ media

- Pro-migrant sentiment
  - mid 2009 high point of media discourse on immigration
  - Perception that New Zealand was being too tough
  - Labour market testing vis a vis economic recovery

#### Temporary work visas

"Work-permit applications are being declined at double the rate of a year ago, leaving immigrants worried about their future..."

Source: The Press 08/06/09

#### Immigrants deceived, says support group

"A migrant support group has accused the Government of 'taking migrants' money, using their skills and then telling them to bugger off"..."

Source: The New Zealand Herald 08/06/09

#### Work visa refused despite boss' plea

"A Fijian caregiver has been refused a work permit and must leave New Zealand in one week - despite a plea from her employer to allow her to stay because she is impossible to replace..."

Source: The Dominion Post 14/09/09





# What are New Zealanders' attitudes to migrants and migration?

- Three main areas investigated:
  - Multicultural ideology
  - The number of migrants
  - Economic contribution, skills shortages, and threat to jobs
- How have attitudes changed over the last decade?
- How do attitudes differ:
  - By migrant characteristic?
  - By sector of the community?





# **Community Attitudes – NZ Data Sources**

#### 2003 and 2006

 New Settlers Programme Survey (Gendall, Spoonley and Trlin, Massey University)
 2004/5

 AIIM Survey (Ward and Masgoret, Victoria University of Wellington)

#### 2009 and 2010

 Immigration Survey Monitoring Programme Community Survey (Migration Research)







# Multicultural ideology

- Question asked in AIIM and ISMP surveys.
   "It is a good thing for any society to be made up of people from different races, religions and cultures"
- More specific question in New Settlers
   Programme survey.
   "The diversity immigration adds to New Zealand culture is a good thing"



# Multicultural ideology

New Settlers Programme Survey

Question	Year	% Agree
The diversity immigration adds to	2003	59%
New Zealand is a good thing	2006	59%

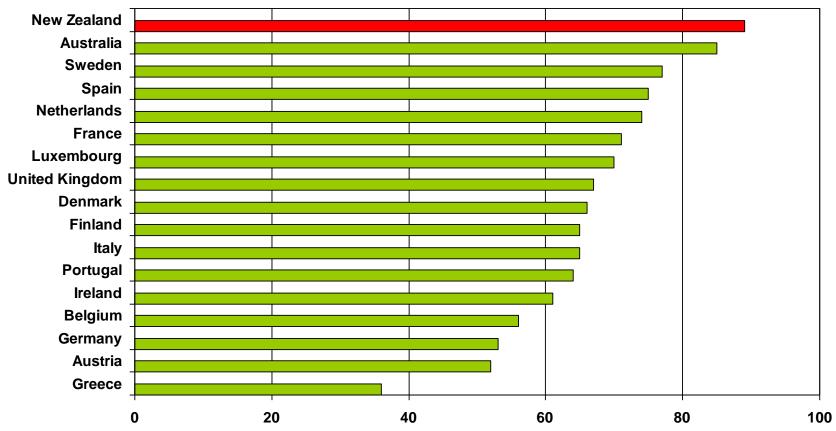
AIIM and ISMP Surveys

		% Agree
It is a good thing for any society to be made up of people from different races, religions and cultures	2004/5 AIIM	89%
races, religions and cultures	2010 SMP	88%





# Multicultural ideology across countries



Source: Ward and Masgoret 2008 - European data from Eurobarometer (2000), Australian data from Dunn (2003)







# **Policy settings – Number of migrants**

## New Settlers Programme Survey

Question	Year	Increased	Stay the
			same
Should the total number of	2003	12%	22%
migrants be increased, decreased or stay the same?	2006	15%	26%

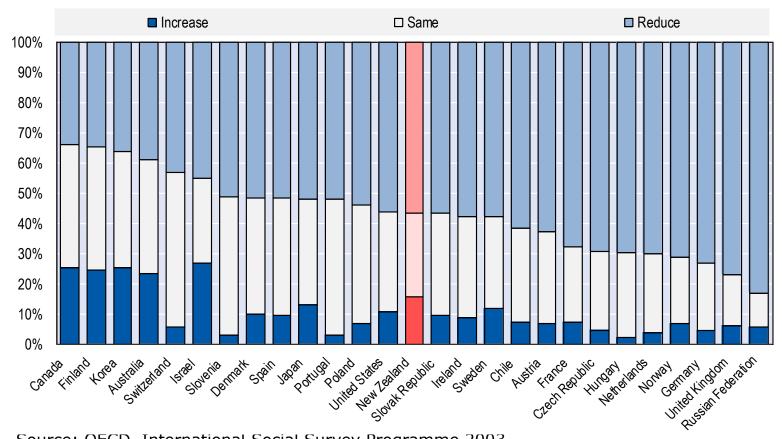
# ISMP Community Survey

Question	Year	More	About right
Perception of the current	2009	11%	52%
number of migrants admitted on a permanent basis	2010	10%	56%





# Policy settings – International comparisons



Source: OECD, International Social Survey Programme 2003.

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# **Contribution to the economy**

### New Settlers Programme Survey

Question	Year	% Agree
Attracting new migrants is vital if New Zealand is to	2003	51%
prosper economically	2006	48%

# ISMP Community Survey

Question	Year	% Agree
Migrants make an important	2009	70%
contribution to New	2010	76%
Zealand's economy		





# Skills shortages and jobs

Meeting skills needs – New Settlers Programme Survey

Question	Year	% Agree
Immigrants provide skills that are in short supply in	2003	39%
New Zealand	2006	46%

Threat to jobs – AIIM and ISMP Surveys

Question	Year	% Agree
	2004/5 AIIM	25%
Zealanders	2010 SMP	35%







# **Attitudes towards specific groups**

 Big differences in attitudes towards migrants from different backgrounds. Little change over time.

Positive attitude	2004/5 AIIM Survey	2010 Community Survey
UK	75%	80%
Australia	74%	79%
South Africa	67%	69%
India	60%	60%
China	60%	57%
Samoa	59%	54%
Somalia	51%	_
Refugees	-	42%





# **Attitudes towards specific groups**

- 2003 and 2006 New Settlers Programme survey
- ... take jobs from New Zealanders ...
  - Not many differences (all less than around 30%).
- ... are good for the economy?
  - Increases between 2003 and 2006 for all groups, but
  - Low % for Pacific Islanders
    - 12% 2003
    - 18% 2006
  - Little change for Chinese and 'Other Asians'





# **Attitudes by sector of community**

- More positive attitudes from:
  - Overseas-born
  - Higher educated
- Few differences by gender or age.
- More negative attitudes from Mäori
- Migrant density and unemployment (Ward and Masgoret 2010)
  - Generally immigrants more highly valued in areas with more migrants
  - Some evidence of less positive attitudes at the top end (in Auckland)
  - Local unemployment rates not linked to community attitudes.



# Attitudes, the media and Govt policy

- Changes have been driven largely by drive for economic outcomes
  - Introduction of new skilled migration policy with a focus on demand for skills
  - Expansion of 'export education' market and pathway for international students.
- Immigration not an overriding political issue
  - Main political parties consistent on importance of migration
  - An election year, but currently not a lot of public debate.



# Challenges for the future

- Community attitudes largely positive, <u>but</u>
  - Growth in migration from Asia, and negative attitudes a potential concern
  - Negative attitudes to refugees
- Potential for continuation in economic crisis to flow through in public attitudes
- Some concern about temporary migrants (in particular) taking jobs from New Zealand unemployed
- Immigration seen in a more negative light by indigenous Mäori



# Community Attitudes Towards Immigrants and Immigration in New Zealand

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http://www.dol.govt.nz/research/migration/index.asp



