

**The Settlement Experiences of Immigrants (Excluding Refugees) In New Zealand:
An overview paper completed for the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy**

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Executive Summary

Introduction

- Immigration policy in New Zealand has, until recently, assumed that suitable new arrivals would fit into the wider society without outside assistance.
- Changes in immigration policy during the closing decades of the 20th century have brought about major changes in New Zealand's ethnic composition and challenged this assumption.
- Recent immigration policies have been more selective and offered more settlement services for immigrants who do not settle quickly.

Settlement and integration

- While the terms “settlement” and “integration” are often used interchangeably, they tend to have different foci, with settlement focusing on shorter-term goals and the individual immigrant, and integration on a longer-term and more reciprocal adaptation process involving both immigrants and structures within the host society.
- There appear to be no definitive benchmarks against which successful settlement can be judged, but there are common features associated with immigrant “satisfaction”: suitable employment, access to services, being able to participate in the wider society, and being accepted as belonging. These features are reflected in the settlement indicators commonly identified by governments, researchers and commentators.

Labour market participation

- Labour market participation is a critical indicator of successful settlement for immigrants of working age, and the early engagement of immigrants in employment is a central goal of most immigration policies.
- Research findings indicate that policies related to the selection and settlement of immigrants in New Zealand have only to a limited degree achieved the goal of successful socio-economic integration.
- While immigration policy continues to target skilled and business immigrants, such immigrants continue to experience difficulties finding employment and immigrant underemployment and unemployment levels remain disproportionately high.
- Most business investment by immigrants in New Zealand is relatively small scale, with a pattern of cautious and limited investment in businesses.
- Employment continues to be a major problem for skilled immigrants, especially those from non-traditional sources.
- Factors hindering the economic integration of skilled immigrants include not only differences in human capital (lack of English language proficiency, non-transferable overseas qualifications and work experience) but also structural factors related to broader economic conditions and discrimination.
- Analyses of the employment rates of immigrants in New Zealand have found limited skilled transferability and a penalty for being from a non-English speaking background which goes beyond actual English language proficiency to include visibility and accent.
- Studies on the recruitment of skilled immigrants confirm the negative effect of ethnic and linguistic stereotypes on immigrant job-seeking.
- Immigrant responses to discrimination in the labour market include: the acceptance of underemployment, self-employment, “astronauting”, onward or return migration, and further education or retraining to gain New Zealand qualifications.
- Underemployment often goes unnoticed among immigrants and may be promoted or exacerbated by settlement programmes where the goal is entry to the labour market, rather than suitable employment.
- Self-employment, not always eagerly sought, is an alternative to unemployment or underemployment and immigrants - particularly those from non-English speaking backgrounds - are more likely to be self-employed than non-immigrants.

- “Astronauting” (the return of one or more family member to the country of origin to work) is another response to lack of socio-economic integration and a phenomenon that has attracted negative attention from both the media and the wider population.
- Failure to gain any or suitable employment is an important factor in decision-making regarding return and onward migration among immigrants.
- There are signs that the children of “astronauting” and transnational families may have adopted the transnational values and lifestyles of their parents rather than establishing fixed roots in New Zealand.

Language

- There are indications from immigrants themselves and from ESOL providers that those who undertake English language study target courses which provide appropriate, often academic or employment-oriented, courses.
- ESOL and employment bridging courses have had mixed results regarding immigrant entry to appropriate employment, with a substantial workplace experience component associated with more positive outcomes, and general courses and discrimination with less positive outcomes.
- ESOL courses have been found to vary in quality and accessibility and immigrant experiences of language learning provisions show mixed results. While educational background is positively associated with language learning, many immigrants favour the informal learning of English – preferably through the workplace, a source of access which is often unattainable.
- Among voluntary migrants, the very young plus unskilled female dependants and the elderly are identified as more likely to lack English on arrival, with each group having different needs to be addressed.

Health

- As for those in the wider society, commonly used health professionals include general practitioners, dentists and dental nurses.
- Language is the most frequently identified barrier for immigrants seeking access to health care and services.
- Post-migration discrimination, underemployment and unemployment are related to anxiety, depression and other health problems.
- Elderly immigrants and their families are often in particular need of support.
- There remains a need for culturally appropriate social services, social support and health services.

Housing

- Housing is an issue for many immigrants. Options are restricted by their economic circumstances and, for some, by reluctance among landlords to let houses to certain groups of immigrants.
- Many new arrivals initially share accommodation with friends or relatives.
- The migrant presence has contributed to changes in housing styles and neighbourhood networks and facilities in areas with higher immigrant populations.
- Residential concentrations may diminish or abrogate the need for English language proficiency, particularly among older immigrants.

Social participation

- Social participation, not experiencing difficulties making friends with Kiwi New Zealanders, and feelings of belonging are all closely associated with employment.
- Employment provides the income, status and “leisure” time for social activities.
- Further study may provide contact with members of the host society, but this is less likely where there are large classes.

- Immigrants' aspirations to be accepted as New Zealanders are often frustrated by the policy of biculturalism (which excludes visibly different immigrants from identity as Pakeha), by attitudes of the New Zealand-born towards difference, and by dichotomous "them" and "us" distinctions.

Conclusion

- Criteria for "successful settlement" vary, but include government, wider host society and immigrant expectations and satisfaction.
- Ultimately, successful settlement involves social, economic and political participation in the wider society on merit, without preference or discrimination; the target is "a level playing field".
- Focusing only on short-term settlement outcomes may be myopic in the longer term.
- Some settlement services have been provided by government departments over recent decades, but these have been largely ad hoc to date.
- There is a growing body of research and literature on immigration settlement issues in New Zealand which indicates a pressing need to address issues associated with settlement and integration and for a move to more holistic settlement support for immigrants if the aims of immigration policy are to be achieved and immigrants are to be successfully settled and integrated into the wider society.

Introduction

New Zealand is often identified as a country of immigration. However, for a century immigration remained predominantly white and English speaking apart from inflows of Pacific peoples with historical and political links to New Zealand, and a laissez-faire attitude prevailed towards the settlement of new arrivals. The assumption was that immigrants other than refugees arrived to take up jobs included in the Occupational Priority List and/or as a result of family sponsorship and would, therefore, “fit in” without outside assistance (Farmer, 1985; Kaplan, 1980; McGill, 1982).

Immigration and settlement issues gained increased significance in the closing decade of the twentieth century as a result of the removal of the traditional source country bias in 1986 and the introduction of a points-based system in 1991. These changes, designed to boost economic growth by tapping into an international pool of human and financial capital, radically changed the nature of immigration to New Zealand.

The effects of the new policies were unanticipated and unplanned for. During the last decade of the 20th century New Zealand recorded the highest decennial net migration gain for the century (a 118,000 net gain), and there was the highest influx of migrants from Northeast Asia on record (Bedford, 2001). The policy changes had major repercussions on the ethnic composition of the society and would test the country’s ability to absorb and capitalise on the capital brought by large numbers of often highly educated and/or wealthy, but culturally and phenotypically different, immigrants. The ethnic Chinese population in New Zealand increased over threefold between 1986 and 1996 (from 26,616 to over 81,309), with those born in China rising from just under five thousand to near 20,000 during the decade (Thomson, 1999). By 2001: nearly quarter of a million usually resident New Zealanders (one in 15) were of Asian descent including just over 100,6000 ethnic Chinese; close to a third (30%) of all those usually resident in New Zealand but born overseas (19%) were recent migrants (that is, they had arrived during the previous five years); and nearly a half of these recent arrivals had come from other than characteristically European sources (those collectively identified by NZIS as “ESANA”: Europe, South Africa and North America) or Australia (NZIS, 2003). The social cohesion of the society was strained by immigrants who challenged the bicultural identity of the country, and the security of New Zealanders already stressed by rapid and significant restructuring (Kelsey, 1997), and by an immigration policy which focussed only on entry requirements without the sorts of post-arrival settlement provisions and multicultural ethnic policies found in Canada and Australia. Immigration, with its “brain drain” and “Asian invasion”, became a significant public and political issue.

The type of immigration that is promoted and the institutional support that is provided at both national and community levels, through immigration-related and wider social policies, impact on the

settlement process and on the success (or otherwise) of the outcome for both immigrant populations and the wider society. Where immigrants are selected on the basis of their human and economic capital, the desired outcomes are not necessarily assured, even where settlement programmes are in place (Castles et al., 1998; Freeman, 1999).

Unfortunately, in New Zealand more than in other major countries of immigration and despite the changing nature and the needs of immigrants and research regarding immigrant settlement, including studies conducted by and for government agencies which signaled negative outcomes (for example, Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996), neo-liberal values prevailed. Through the 1990s, selection criteria and targets were modified to control the nature and volume of voluntary migrants, but, once selected, immigrants were expected to take responsibility for their own settlement outcomes, plus support any family members whom they might sponsor. Strategies subsequently adopted by individuals to overcome the barriers to settlement and participation in the wider society, and a negative reception – return migration, step migration, parents returning to work in the home country (“astounding”) to support families left in New Zealand, transnationalism, passive investments in banking institutions or property, mixing with others from their own ethnic group, and speaking out – have drawn criticism and been used by some for political advantage (Trlin et al., 1998).

Recent years have seen parallel moves within government to: (a) institute more selective immigration policies, designed to select immigrants who will settle quickly and not become a burden on the state; and (b) provide post-arrival settlement assistance for those who have not achieved this goal. The new Skilled Migrant Category seeks to ensure immigrants’ skills are matched to labour force requirements while sponsors in the Family categories are now required to be more financially and socially responsible for those they sponsor. Meanwhile, the government has identified settlement provisions for voluntary migrants along with those for refugees as an area of focus and funding. It is in this environment that this background paper has been commissioned by the Ministry of Social Development to scope recent research findings related to settlement issues experienced by immigrants other than refugees in New Zealand.

The paper will first briefly address issues related to the concepts and processes of “settlement” and “integration” and what it might mean to be successfully settled. Recent research and commentaries pertaining to immigrant settlement issues in the New Zealand context will then be discussed under a number of headings reflecting key settlement factors to highlight current needs and desired outcomes. This paper will build on reviews of literature and research from the 1990s (Bedford et al., 1998; and Fletcher, 1999), addressing themes and adding research undertaken since 1999. Since other papers have and are being undertaken to review the literature on refugee settlement, attention will be focused particularly on settlement issues affecting voluntary, long-term immigrants (hereafter “immigrants”).

While the particular needs of refugee groups and immigrant groups entering New Zealand on temporary permits will not be addressed, many of the settlement issues affecting voluntary, long-term arrivals are equally relevant for the settlement of refugees and temporary immigrants on work-to-residence and similar permits or international student visas, particularly with the trend towards increased category shifting from short-term to longer-term, more permanent categories). Given the short timeframe for the completion of the review, it does not purport to offer a comprehensive literature review of immigration research related to the settlement issues facing immigrants. But it does hope to convey an overview of significant findings related to the topics addressed in the report and a point of entry to other research, should this be desired.

“Settlement” and “integration”

The terms “settlement” and “integration”, each with its aspects of process and outcomes, are often used interchangeably in the literature on immigration, but they tend to have different foci.

“Settlement” focuses attention on the adaptation of the individual immigrant rather than on host society adaptation. So, Fletcher (1999: 8) perceives settlement as a “multi-dimensional process involving all aspects of the migrant’s (and migrant’s family’s) life”, a process that focuses on the experiences, adaptation and acculturation of the immigrant within the social context. Similarly, Burnett (1998: 17), in a discussion of settlement issues in Australia, observes that “[s]ettlement is constructed by the immigrant’s interaction with the various elements of the political, economic and social structures of the host society”. “Integration”, in contrast, is more likely to be identified as a reciprocal process involving the adaptation not only of immigrants but also of structures within the host society (Bauböck, 1996a, 1996b; Heisler, 2000; Neuwirth, 1999; Vertovec, 1999). It implies some form of multicultural policy where immigrants are able to retain aspects of their own culture, rather than an assimilation model, which expects only one party (the immigrant) to adapt.

A second, but less clear-cut, distinction between settlement and integration is the time factor associated with each of the processes/outcomes. Despite Fletcher’s assertion that “the implicit end-point in the settlement process [is] when the fact of being an immigrant does not in itself make a difference” (1999: 29) – a goal often only achieved in the longer term – and Burnett’s (1998) feeling that settlement may be a lifelong process, “settlement” tends to focus on shorter-term goals: “the early parts of the longer integration process” (Fletcher, 1999: 8). Discussions of integration are more likely to take a longer and more complex view of the process of immigrant incorporation. This is clearly illustrated in the following quote (OECD [SOPEMI] 1998: 62):

Integration sets into play complex social relationships that cannot be reduced to estimates of a few select indicators (e.g. employment, sector of activity, income level, place of residence, family situation, etc.). In addition, differences between nationals and immigrants with respect to a number of indicators do not necessarily imply inequality between the two groups, nor does a convergence of behavioural patterns necessarily reflect a successful integration process.

Policies which promote immigrant settlement generally aim to render immigrants economically and socially self-sufficient as quickly as possible.

“Successful” settlement

A goal of immigration policies in New Zealand and other traditional countries of immigration is the “successful” settlement of immigrants. However, there appear to be no definitive empirical

benchmarks against which successful settlement can be measured. This situation renders any judgement rather subjective. As Burnaby (1992: 123) notes:

[w]e do not have absolute criteria for success... Therefore, we cannot create criteria for success for immigrants ... Success can be measured by the satisfaction of the immigrants we serve, but we will never be able to produce statistics on our success that ministers can take to cabinet meetings.

Nevertheless, there are some common features associated with settler “satisfaction”, reiterated by immigrants from a wide range of backgrounds in studies of immigrant settlement in New Zealand and elsewhere. These involve a desire:

- to be employed (if employment is aspired to) in a position somewhat commensurate with one’s expectations on migration, if not utilizing one’s actual education and skills;
- to have access to the services of the host community, including health and education for oneself and one’s children;
- to be able to participate in the wider society; and
- to be accepted as belonging.

(see, for example, Beiser, 1999; Boyer, 1995; Burnett, 1998; Hawthorne, 1999; Ho, 1995a; Ho et al., 2000; Ip, 1990, 1996, 2003; Jansen, 1990; Lidgard, 1998; and Skeldon, 1994.)

These “satisfaction” features are reflected in the interrelated settlement indicators that are commonly identified by governments, researchers and commentators:

- labour market participation;
- financial independence (closely related in most cases to labour market participation);
- proficiency in the language of the host society;
- chain migration and sponsorship;
- citizenship uptake (a moot indicator when (a) only some source countries allow dual citizenship, and the “costs” of citizenship uptake are, therefore, higher for some than others, and (b) this measure is not applied to the commitment of, for example, British immigrants in New Zealand);
- accommodation and home ownership; and
- psychosocial factors (including identity, social absorption and role acculturation).

(Burnett, 1998; Citizenship and Immigration Canada [CIC] 1998; Fletcher, 1999; Ho et al., 2000; NZIS, 1995, 2004; Winkelmann and Winkelmann, 1998).

Research findings in New Zealand related to these immigrant settlement indicators will be discussed in the following section.

Settlement factors

In this section research findings related to the factors associated with successful immigrant settlement in the previous section are examined.

Labour market participation

Modern life revolves around employment and work is still the fundamental organising concept in society. Not only do we centre much of our lives on work but our place in the labour market determines whether we live in poverty or wealth, or somewhere in between. (McLaren et al., 2004: 8)

With employment playing such a pivotal role in most person's lives, it is not surprising that a primary indicator of immigrant settlement and concern of most immigrants of working age is entry to the workforce, despite Fletcher's (1999: 45) cautioning against placing too much weight on this factor (Baubock, 1996b; Fletcher, 1999; Neuwirth, 1999; Henderson, 2002; Ho et al., 2000). This is particularly true for skilled immigrants, who have been targeted for their qualifications and previous work experience and for an immigration policy where success is contingent upon the employment of immigrants in positions which utilize their human capital (Freeman, 1999; Trlin, 1997). But it applies also for all other working-aged arrivals, be they semi-skilled or unskilled arrivals, family category, business migrants or refugees. Participation in suitable work is closely associated with health and psychological well-being. It provides a source of social and economic independence, self-fulfillment and a vital means of integration into the wider society (Pavalko, 1988). Moreover, at the institutional level, the early engagement of immigrants in employment is a central goal of an immigration policy that focuses on economic growth and prosperity while maintaining social cohesion (NZIS, 1995; Trlin, 1997).

Recent research on immigration has painted a rather gloomy picture of immigrant labour force participation, with particular problems faced by those from Asian and other non-traditional source countries and non-English speaking (NESB) backgrounds. However, the situation is not a new one; pre-1999 publications signaled the difficulties immigrants, and more especially those from non-traditional source countries, were experiencing finding work even when they were highly skilled and qualified.

Pre-1999 findings included:

- the government's 1996 *High Hopes* study of skilled immigrants, which found that large numbers of skilled immigrants, including engineers, teachers and health professionals, most admitted

- under the 1991 General Category, were unable to find employment in their professions, in some instances despite being fluent speakers of English (Barnard, 1996; Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996);
- Selvarajah's (1998) and Rasalingham's (1998) research on the experiences of doctors from non-traditional sources unable to gain the statutory registration required to practice in New Zealand;
 - Ho's studies on the sociocultural adjustment issues and Hong Kong-focused aspirations of adolescent immigrants from Hong Kong (Ho, 1995a, 1995b, 1996);
 - Ho, Lidgard, Bedford and others' investigations of (predominantly) business immigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, which found that the inability to establish businesses or secure suitable investments in New Zealand contributed to "astronauting" parents/spouses, single-parent families and "satellite kids" (Ho et al., 1997; Ho et al., 1998; Ho and Lidgard, 1997; Lidgard, 1996);
 - Boyer's (1995, 1996) study of Taiwanese immigrants, often unable to establish themselves in New Zealand and resorting to "astronauting;"
 - Ho et al.'s (1998) study of skilled immigrants from China, many of whom reluctantly turned to self-employment as a way out of on-going unemployment or under-employment, having been "unable to find employment that can fully utilize their skills and abilities" (Ho et al., 1998:282);
 - Friesen and Ip's (1997) initial findings on the unemployment, under-employment and "astronauting" transnational patterns of Chinese immigrants in Auckland ; and
 - Winkelmann and Winkelmann's analyses of the labour force status of 25-54 year olds from different countries of origin in the 1996 census, with differences in participation rates and returns on employment related to country of origin (ESB vs. NESB), ability to speak English and recentness of immigration – with recent immigrants experiencing more difficulties than earlier cohorts), (Winkelmann and Winkelmann, 1998).

The increased entry disadvantage and decline in labour market outcomes for Asian and Pacific immigrants vis a vis other groups of immigrants and earlier cohorts observed in the last mentioned study could not be explained there (Winkelmann and Winkelmann, 1998), nor in Rainer Winkelmann's (2000) later analysis of census data, by any of the analyzed characteristics. One explanation proposed was that, with structural changes in the labour market, being from a non-English speaking country was carrying an extra penalty for (some) recent arrivals. Another in Winkelmann (2000) was discrimination, an explanation which gains credence when set alongside the results of the December 1998 National Business Review-Compaq opinion poll on immigration. This poll found that 47% of participants felt there were too many immigrants from the Pacific and 40% that there were too many Asians. Conversely, many felt there should be more South African, Australian and British immigrants (22%, 24% and 26%, respectively) (Hunt, 1999).

The research findings in these studies indicated that the policies related to the selection of immigrants and their settlement in New Zealand had only to a limited degree achieved a goal of successful socioeconomic integration. In particular, the experiences of recent skilled immigrants from Asia illustrated a marked skills transferability gap, what Freeman (1999: 113) has described as a “disjuncture between the pre-migration experiences and qualifications of migrants and the assessment of those experiences and qualifications by employers”. For example, Ho et al.’s (1998) comparison of the occupational experiences of recent Chinese (from Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China) and Korean immigrants, found that all had experienced problems settling. Furthermore, employment rates alone were not a clear indicator of positive socioeconomic outcomes, as they disguised underemployment and the inability to access employment in one’s own profession or field. Despite the fact that those from China had the highest labour force participation, they had fared least well in terms of occupational levels; large numbers were employed in sales and services or factory positions rather than in administration/management or professional/technical positions, although they were the most qualified group. Others had, often reluctantly, become self-employed. Beal and Sos (1999), Boyer (1995, 1996), Lidgard (1996), Friesen and Ip (1997) and North all noted similar employment difficulties in surveys involving recently-arrived economic migrants from Asia, as did Winkelmann and Winkelmann (1998) in their macro study of immigrant labour market outcomes.

While immigration policy continues to target skilled and business immigrants, with “[m]igrants through the Skilled/Business Stream ... selected for their ability to contribute to New Zealand’s capacity building, global connectedness and thriving and inclusive communities” (NZIS, 2004: 2), and trends in residence approvals indicate that skilled and business immigration from China and India, if not other Asian countries, remain high (NZIS, 2002, 2003), the problems experienced by such immigrants in finding employment, particularly in suitable work persist (see, for example, Butcher et al., 2004; Ho, 2003; Ip, 2001, 2003; Ip and Friesen, 2001; Henderson, 2002, 2003; NZIS, 2004).

The NZIS LisNZ Pilot Survey found that, at Wave 2, some 18 months after taking up residence, Skilled/Business (SB) principals were more likely to be employed as professionals than in other occupational groups and more likely to be in professional occupations than other immigrants, “around one in ten SB principals had not worked in New Zealand” (NZIS, 2004: 6). The 2001 Census paints a similarly bleak picture of immigrant employment, with a little over half of the overseas-born population aged 15 years and over employed compared with nearly two-thirds of those born in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). Even accounting for the most recent arrivals, a younger overall immigrant population and high international student numbers, immigrant unemployment remains high. Those from Northeast Asia, one of New Zealand’s four main sources of immigrants, were second only in unemployment to immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East; conversely, those from the UK and Ireland, and from Northwest Europe were the least likely to be

unemployed. Unemployment rates declined with length of residence, but for non-white immigrant groups they tended to remain higher than for the New Zealand-born.

While an Enterprise Auckland (1996) publication commented favourably on the large amount of financial capital immigrants had injected into the Auckland economy, Ip (2001) notes that most investment is relatively small scale, with the acquisition of businesses after some 4-5 years but little further capital from the home country after such time. The delay in investment in businesses (noted also by Ho et al. (1998) is seen as positive and the government's attempt to force people to make business decisions before they are ready as counter-productive; premature business ventures are identified as leading to failures. Ip concludes that business immigrants "have been the victims of ... [an] unsuccessful experiment, losing money, interrupting careers, and wasting valuable time and energy" (2001: 55), and that if they "had not been so brow-beaten by racism and xenophobia", they might have told the government that their lack of success and responses to this were more a reflection on the government's lack of support than their lack of entrepreneurial skills. Beal (2001: 41) reflects similarly on the experiences of Taiwanese business immigrants and the need for economic integration for settlement, observing that "social and political participation must, for most people be built on a foundation of successful career". With negative experiences, business immigrants with transnational linkages and lives are unlikely to settle long term. Nor will they promote New Zealand as an immigration destination for investment or employment opportunities (Beal, 2001; Friesen and Ip, 1997; Henderson, 2002; Ip, 2001).

Employment, or lack of it, continues to be a major problem faced by skilled immigrants from non-traditional sources. Encouraged and approved for their skills and (usually) professional work experience, very well educated compared with the New Zealand population (Henderson, 2003; Ho, 2003; Ip, 2003; Statistics New Zealand, 2002), and meeting the increasingly stringent English language requirements (Henderson et al., 1998), they find that they (still) do not have enough English, and their overseas qualifications and overseas experience. Despite the general equation of education with fewer settlement problems, skilled migrants from non-traditional sources have been found to be more likely than less qualified immigrants to experience problems accessing the labour market, even when they are fluent in English and from "white" (ESANA) sources rather than from Northeast Asia.

Studies of skilled immigrants from China and Russia and of a profession with a perceived labour shortage (the IT industry), highlight the difficulties faced by many (Benson-Rea et al., 2000).¹ English language ability helped only some of the 59 highly qualified and skilled immigrants from the former Soviet Union in one study secure work; many ended up in unskilled work or returning to studies to

retrain, a very common strategy among unemployed skilled Chinese immigrants (see also Henderson, 2002). Similar problems faced the Asian IT graduates, with main success factors identified as “relevant work experience, practical skills and good English” (Benson-Rea et al., 2000: 31), and, for three interviewees, also “luck”. While there were seen to be inadequate numbers of graduates from New Zealand institutions in the IT sector, over half of the 55 IT companies surveyed reported that they had not considered recruiting recently-arrived skilled immigrants. The report noted that, even though the success of Silicon Valley in the United States depends on the recruitment of international talent and Kiwi employers recognised that immigrants could provide some form of competitive advantage, New Zealand work experience remained a prerequisite in the hiring of staff, at least in the case of Asian staff (Benson-Rea et al., 2000: 37).²

The very different labour market trajectories of skilled immigrants from “traditional” and non-traditional source countries were observed in the contrasting experiences of three panels of skilled immigrants from China, India and South Africa studied in the New Settlers Programme longitudinal survey (Henderson, 2004; Pernice et al., 2000; Trlin et al., 1999, 2000). The Chinese panel members and, to a lesser extent, the Indian panel members, faced problems accessing suitable work. In all, just over one-third of the Indian panel was employed at the time of the first interview, this rising to nearly three-quarters one year later. Of the Chinese panel, less than one fifth were employed in New Zealand at the time of the first interview and only a half a year later, many in part-time positions while they undertook further studies. More tellingly, only half of the original Chinese panel of 36 skilled principal applicants were employed in New Zealand by the fifth annual round of interviews in 2002. In contrast, only 8.6 per cent of the South African panel of 35 were unemployed at the time of the first interview and none a year later. They proved to be very successful in gaining employment, despite their often lower qualifications (Henderson, 2004; Trlin et al., 2000).

Factors hindering economic integration

Differences in human capital, particularly lack of English language proficiency and non-transferable qualifications and work experience, were identified in Fletcher’s (1999) literature as the main factors hindering the successful settlement and acculturation of new arrivals. To these, need to be added structural factors related to broader economic conditions, with a decline in the employment and earnings of skilled immigrants has been noted in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United

¹ Interestingly the three postgraduate projects which made up this report were completed by immigrants who had returned to study.

² In the listing of recruitment criteria prioritized by participating companies (Benson-Rea et al., 2000: 43), the report does not stipulate that the recruitment criteria involved **New Zealand** rather than generic work experience and qualifications, but from the earlier responses of immigrants (see, for example, pp.39-40, it is assumed that this is the case.

States, particularly since the mid-1980s³, and discrimination, a factor which has been identified in most studies as a barrier to employment but was passed over lightly in Fletcher's review, which focused on deficiencies in the individual immigrants rather than more systemic problems in the wider society.

Analyses of the employment rates of immigrants in New Zealand have found limited skills transferability and a penalty for being from a non-English speaking background. Winkelmann and Winkelmann (1998) observed that only part of the large, and increasing, entry disadvantage among Pacific Islanders and Asians could be attributed to structural changes in the marketplace. Part remained unexplained by country of origin or observed characteristics, including language and education. A further study involving the employment patterns of European and Asian immigrants (Winkelmann, 2000) found similar disadvantage for visible (that is, Chinese) immigrants. Despite this, most official reports in New Zealand have remained circumspect, not attributing such disadvantage to ethnic or racial discrimination. Notable exceptions have been the Office of the Race Relations Conciliator (see Butcher et al. 2004), the Citizen's Advice Bureaux (2000) and the Equal Employment Office Trust (Basnayake, 1999; EEO Trust, 2000).

A certain degree of proficiency in the language of the host society is clearly a necessity for socioeconomic integration in the wider society, and English is almost universally identified in studies of NESB immigrants as one of the main barriers to employment. But this begs the question: how much is enough? As Castles et al. note (1998: 53; emphasis added), "the better an individual [immigrant] speaks English, **other things being equal**, the better is their employment and earning situation". It is increasingly evident in the research on immigrant integration that language proficiency is affected by, and cannot be seen in isolation from, these "other things", including macro-level economic factors, the transferability of skills, and discrimination (Basanayake, 1999; EEO Trust, 2000; Henderson, 2002, 2003; Henderson et al., 2003).

That discrimination on the basis of accent (and what it represents in the mind of the hearer) is a widespread phenomenon is supported by a considerable body of research. This includes matched guise-type experiments and other research involving judgements on accents conducted in New Zealand (Bayard, 1990; Huygens and Vaughan, 1983; Vaughan and Huygens, 1990; Watts, 1981) and

³ This research includes: in Australia, Birrell and Hawthorne (1997), Han (1999), Hawthorne (1997), Miller and Neo (1997); in New Zealand, the New Zealand Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (2000), Winkelmann (2000), and Winkelmann and Winkelmann (1998); in Canada, Boyd (1999); and in the United States, Chiswick (1991), and Chiswick et al. (1997).

overseas (Edwards, 1982; Giles and Powesland, 1975; Roberts et al., 1992).⁴ Being better educated appears to offer little protection against such linguistic prejudice; Huygens and Vaughan's (1983) second year university students were as ready as Watts' (1981) high school subjects to apply social and personal ratings on the basis of recorded voices.

International research has shown that language, rather than being a neutral tool for interpersonal communication, can be a "loaded weapon" (Bolinger, 1980) in interethnic communication and a major source of discrimination in employment (Burnaby and Cumming, 1992; Hall and Eggington, 2000; Lippi-Green, 1997; Roberts et al., 1992; Vasta and Castles, 1996). Exclusion from the workforce (ranging from professional gatekeeping via unrealistic accreditation requirements to more blatant racial prejudice) as a result of discrimination against a marked accent which signals immutable characteristics (that is, country or area of origin, ethnicity and visibility) has been identified in New Zealand research. In a study of English language provision for adult NESB immigrants and refugees, a head of department in an ESOL institution noted that even a "slight foreign accent and the foreign flavour of their qualifications" could outweigh proficiency in English (at IELTS 7 level) for skilled job seekers (Watts et al., 2001: 34). Respondents in the *High Hopes* survey (Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996) also reported discrimination on the basis of accent. Fluency in English was positively associated with employment in the survey, but there were those (Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996: 37):

...whose written English comments appeared lively, correct and articulate, and who considered themselves thoroughly fluent, [who] believed they had met discrimination because New Zealand employers did not accept their foreign accents.

Sixteen per cent of those in the survey who identified themselves as fluent or fully fluent in English remained unemployed and looking for work at the time of the study.

More recent studies on the recruitment of talent confirm the negative effect of ethnic and linguistic stereotypes on immigrant job-seeking. In a study of Sri Lankan immigrants in 1999, nearly 50 per cent of respondents reported having faced discrimination in finding work despite their high level tertiary qualifications (Basnayake, 1999). A later survey of 243 recruitment consultants confirmed that "unfair and wasteful discrimination is occurring in employment in New Zealand" (EEO Trust, 2000: 28). Apart from people who were older or had disabilities, those most likely to experience discrimination in recruitment were job seekers with a non-New Zealand accent followed by those from a different culture (the two generally being synonymous). A recruitment consultant with ten years' experience reported that (EEO Trust, 2000: 12):

⁴Interestingly, New Zealanders, despite wanting others to sound "like us", appear to have ambivalent attitudes towards the New Zealand accent (Bayard, 1990, 2000; Gordon and Abell, 1990; Vaughan and Huygens, 1990). A culture cringe persists.

many employers, or their HR recruitment staff, will consider applicants with a foreign accent or a foreign name only as a last resort, regardless of their qualifications, experiences and references.

Asians were perceived to be considerably more likely to experience discrimination than either Pacific Islanders or Maori.²⁵ One of the most common reasons offered to justify discrimination was that the applicant would not “fit in”. Overseas qualifications, foreign names, and the assumption that Asians would struggle with English were also mentioned. Most respondents felt that immigration policies did not promote employment-related opportunities and believed that “if applicants were given a chance to show their talent they would have a better chance of being hired” (EEO Trust, 2000: 23). This belief was borne out in the success of the Work and Income/Manukau City/ professional engineers (IPENZ) programmes designed to provide immigrant professional engineers with work experience in Auckland firms (Fisk, 2003), compared with the comparative lack of success of professional bridging programmes focusing mainly on ESOL training (Market Research and Evaluation Team, 1998).

The relative lack of success of programmes focusing only or mainly on English language proficiency as the key to employment is not surprising when the expectations of employers are considered. North and Higgins’ (1999) study of employers’ expectations and perspectives found that most were not particularly concerned about their immigrant employees’ language proficiency. A study of recruitment agencies and professional employers in the engineering and computing fields, however, found not only that overseas qualifications and overseas experience were rated below New Zealand qualifications and experience (at least in one’s own profession!), but a significant number of respondents considered native speaker fluency with a New Zealand accent a prerequisite for employment, particularly for middle level and senior positions (Henderson et al., 2003). This level of “proficiency” is clearly beyond virtually all adult immigrants, whether from non-traditional or traditional source countries.

Responses to unemployment and under-employment:

Immigrant responses to discrimination in the labour market

For immigrants unable to gain employment and without the funds or willingness to ride out lengthy periods of unemployment, alternative strategies are required. Those found in the literature include:

- the acceptance of underemployment
- self-employment,
- “astronauting”,
- onward or return migration, and
- further education or retraining.

²⁵ The figures were 50 per cent versus 37 per cent and 32 per cent, respectively (EEO Trust, 2000: 11).

Under-employment

Underemployment often goes unnoticed among immigrants. There is a danger that settlement programmes may contribute to underemployment by providing only survival-level, general courses where the success rate is measured in terms of employment, be it suitable or not, leading to economic and social self-sufficiency in dead-end jobs. This is an issue of concern to Neuwirth (1999), who is critical of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's Settlement Principles which aim to have immigrants economically and socially "self-sufficient as soon as possible" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1999). Tollefson (1991: 104) voices similar concerns regarding some immigrant language education, claiming it is often:

... part of a broad policy to channel migrants into marginal jobs in the peripheral economy that offer little security and no opportunity to gain additional language or job skills.

Research findings bear out Neuwirth's (1999: 55) concern that settlement policies which stress the need for immigrants to become economically and socially self-sufficient "as soon as possible" are likely to result not only in underemployment, dead-end jobs and frustration for immigrants, but also in an under-utilisation of immigrant skills and ethnic-related social problems for the host society. In New Zealand, the *High Hopes* report (Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996) highlighted the underemployment of professional immigrants, as did reports on the experiences of doctors, unable to gain statutory registration (Bain, 1999; North et al, 1999; Selvarajah, 1998).

Self-employment

An alternative response to labour market disadvantage and discrimination against qualifications, experience and non-native language proficiency has been a withdrawal from the wider employment market. Immigrants in both Australia and New Zealand, especially those from non-English speaking backgrounds, are identified as being more likely to be self-employed than non-immigrants (Castles et al., 1998; Ho et al, 1998). New Zealand research has shown that self-employment is not confined to those gaining entry under business categories; it is often the route to workforce participation taken by skilled immigrants (Ho and Lidgard, 1997; Ho et al., 1998; Ip, 1999).

Self-employment is not always eagerly sought, however. David Ip (1993), for example, noted the reluctant shift of Chinese immigrants into small family businesses in Brisbane and Sydney and a later study, conducted by the same researcher, found that most of a sample of professional Chinese immigrants who were self-employed had also resorted to business to escape their predicament (Ip, 1999). Almost all had suffered severe downward mobility "to the bottom of the occupational ladder"

or “humiliating” underemployment in their occupational fields before turning to self-employment (“jumping into the sea”) as a solution. Ip (1999: 157) noted that “like their predecessors [of the nineteenth and earlier twentieth century] they also faced tremendous obstacles to mobility arising principally from their language difficulties.” However, while most of his sample had close-knit social networks of fellow mainland Chinese immigrants who often supported them into their ventures, the majority were engaged in professional and business fields and catering to non-Chinese clients. Since this activity presumably necessitated the use of English, language ability was no longer preventing (if it had previously prevented) these predominantly highly educated and skilled professionals from functioning in the wider community.

A similar initial reluctance to opt for the self-employment route out of unemployment was observed among mainland Chinese in a study of self-employment among Chinese immigrants in New Zealand (Ho et al., 1998). Recent arrivals from China, most often admitted as skilled immigrants, were found to be less likely to be self-employed and more likely to be wage or salary earners or unemployed and looking for work, than Chinese from Hong Kong or Taiwan. With increased length of residence, the mainland Chinese group's level of self-employment rose (eliminating the differential between the three groups, and eventually seeing the mainland Chinese have a lower rate of unemployment than the Taiwanese and Hong Kong groups). Ho et al. (1998: 282) concluded that self-employment “has become a significant alternative for many contemporary China-born [skilled] migrants who are unable to find employment that can fully utilise their skills and abilities”.

“Astronauting”

Another immigrant strategy in response to an inability to enter the workplace has been the advent of “astronauting”, the return of one (or more) member of a family to the country of origin to work while the rest of the family remains in the country of settlement, with the “astronaut” making frequent long-distance flights to visit the remaining family (Ho et al., 1997b: 20; Skeldon, 1994). “Astronauting” transnational migration patterns, undertaken to maintain socioeconomic levels within the family and/or as an alternative to dead-end jobs and discrimination, have been found in research into the settlement of entrepreneurial Asian business immigrants in the United States (Portes, 1997), Canada (Lam, 1994), Australia (Inglis et al., 1992; Kee and Skeldon, 1994), and New Zealand (Beal and Sos, 1999; Boyer, 1995, 1996, Friesen and Ip, 1997; Ho, 1995; Ho et al., 1997b; Lidgard, 1996). Ip and Friesen (2001: 214) note that, while most Chinese immigrants try to settle in New Zealand, find jobs and integrate into the society, “the reality is that many are part of an expanding transnational community” who choose to return to work in the source country to avoid unemployment or underemployment.

As Ho et al. (1997b: 21) noted, there are methodological problems associated with the identification of “astronaut” households, since the Census provides only a snapshot of those present in the country at a particular time and the phenomenon is “a highly personal and sensitive topic”, which has attracted negative attention from the media and the wider population. The sensitive nature of the situation and the inability to capture some “astronauting” parents in surveys (Boyer, 1995; Ho, 1996) notwithstanding, the phenomenon has been identified as relatively common in New Zealand, particularly among immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Using a *Supercross* package to analyse census data, Ho et al. (1997b) estimated that around 12 per cent of all immigrant families with children who migrated from Hong Kong between 1986 and 1991 included an “astronaut”. In smaller surveys, and the proportions were higher. Nearly one third of Boyer’s (1996) 49 Taiwanese families, a quarter of Lidgard’s (1996) 42 Taiwanese, Hong Kong and South Korean families and just over half of Ho et al.’s (1997) 124 Taiwanese, Hong Kong and South Korean families included “astronauts”.

Return and onward migration

Return and onward migration patterns have also been observed by researchers in New Zealand and elsewhere (in New Zealand: Bedford et al., 2000; Ho et al., 1997; Lidgard and Bedford, 1999, and elsewhere: Castles and Miller, 1993; Schak, 1999; Skeldon, 1994, 1998). The extent of return and onward migration from New Zealand cannot be accurately gauged in the absence of a birthplace question on arrival and departure cards between 1987 and 2001. However, the proportion of overseas born in the Australian intake from New Zealand in 1998 was reported to be 24 per cent (compared with 10 per cent in 1991), higher than the percentage of overseas born in the total population (17.5 per cent) (Bedford et al., 2000: 11), a situation which gave rise to claims of “back door entry” to Australia (Birrell and Rapson, 2001). That Asian immigrants to New Zealand were targeting Australia was not borne out in the 1998-2002 New Settlers Programme longitudinal study, where, of those known to have left the country, only one Chinese and possibly two Indians had migrated to Australia. Return migration was the more favoured option. However, South Africans were more likely to have crossed the Tasman, and none were known to have returned to South Africa (Henderson, 2004). While failure to gain any or suitable employment is not the only reason for return or onward migration, it plays an important part in decision-making for many immigrants.

Of particular interest to some researchers has been the acculturation and remigration of the younger 1.5 generation of Asian immigrants, that is, those who have attended high schools and universities in New Zealand. Some would like to stay but return to their home country, either because they cannot find employment or the employment prospects are better in their country of origin; others are like many young New Zealanders who seek overseas experiences (Ho, 1995b; Lidgard et al., 1998; Ip,

2001, 2003). While Schak (1999: 145) asserts that the retention of such people is “crucial to the establishment of a firm and stable migrant community”, New Zealand research suggests that these children of “astronauting” and transnational families, with multiple links in New Zealand and elsewhere, may have adopted the transnational values and lifestyles of their parents rather than establishing fixed roots in New Zealand (Ho, 1995b; Bartley, 2003).

Further study and retraining

Immigrants with limited language skills and/or unrecognised qualifications may decide to undertake further study in order to gain entry to or improve their competitiveness in the marketplace. Skilled Asian immigrants with higher qualifications on arrival could be expected to choose further academic study rather than general courses, and so to prefer ESOL courses with an academic orientation. Such was found to be the case in a longitudinal study of skilled Chinese immigrants (Henderson, 2002) and in a survey of English language provisions for adult immigrants in New Zealand (Watts et al., 2001). Many of the panel members studied to gain an IELTS Academic score for entry to university studies, and while most courses offered by the surveyed institutions were general in nature, nearly half were reported to be more focused academic English courses, reflecting a move away from the English-for-ever courses criticised by Gubbay and Coghill (1988). However, an overwhelming majority (81.3 per cent) of the providers surveyed still felt that changes were needed with respect to ESOL provision to better meet the settlement needs of immigrants. Among the main areas identified for changes were those required to facilitate easier access and the provision of more up-to-date and appropriate courses (Watts et al., 2001: 22).

Little research has been done on the prevalence or effectiveness of the further-study response to unemployment and the non-recognition of skills. In the Ethnic Affairs Service (1996) study of skilled immigrants, 14.5 per cent of those who had gained entry under the General Category introduced in 1991 (particularly from North Asia and Eastern Europe) reported that they were studying at a tertiary institution and/or preparing to sit qualifying examinations.⁵ No information was provided in this research on post-study employment. However, at the end of the 1990s Masters and Doctors programme graduates who were Asian were reported by the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors’ Committee (1999: 73) to be experiencing difficulties finding work, and further study as a means to gain access to suitable employment in New Zealand was only partially successful for skilled Chinese immigrants in the New Settlers Programme (Henderson, 2002, 2003). Without New Zealand experience, New Zealand referees and/or native speaker fluency with a New Zealand accent, but overqualified, some were still unable to access IT or business-management fields in New Zealand.

One was recruited for a suitable job in Australia, others returned to China where they could use their new qualifications.

ESOL-skills bridging programmes are widely regarded as an investment which is very profitable in terms of the rate of economic return for immigrants who are not fluent in the dominant language (Chiswick and Miller, 1995). In Israel, the Ulpan system provides six months of intensive Hebrew language tuition for new immigrants to facilitate a modest level of fluency and literacy in the language, which can then be used and further developed by professionals in the workplace or through work-related training programmes (Beenstock and benMenahem, 1997). In Finland, instruction in the language of the host society also remains a function of the central government and immigrants are quickly absorbed into the workforce (Valtonen, 1999).

The inclusion of a substantial work component is a feature of most bridging programmes for skilled immigrants in Australia and New Zealand. Plimer et al. (1997) reported that Australian bridging programmes which concentrated on a combination of English language and employment-related skills led to between 60 and 85 per cent of participants moving into either employment or further education., and the Auckland WINZ initiative for professional engineers was reported to have resulted in the employment of over three-quarters of participants (Fisk, 2003). These figures reflect rather more successful outcomes than the results shown in other bridging programmes in either Australia or New Zealand (Hawthorne, 1997; Market Research and Evaluation Team, 1998). The research conducted by Hawthorne (1997) into the training outcomes of a group of immigrant engineers found only a limited degree of success for such programmes, with racial and ethnic discrimination keeping those from Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe out of employment in their fields – after the successful completion of programmes, and despite their fluency in English.

A generic professional immigrants' New Zealand bridging programme also returned disappointing results despite its aims: to “develop personal motivation and self-esteem”; to provide “a sufficient level of English” to participate successfully in society; to develop confidence in the use of English and an awareness of culture and gender issues in New Zealand; to provide skills and make participants “work ready”; and to “address misconceptions held by job seekers” (Market Research and Evaluation Team, 1998: 6-7). Even though the participating institutions selected the most promising applicants for their courses, only 24 per cent went on to either further training (15 per cent) or into employment (9 per cent). The report claimed that the programme “successfully assists in moving the tertiary qualified unemployed people from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) towards employment and training” but “found that the course length and the work experience component

⁵ In comparison it may be noted that only 11.7 per cent were in employment and 13.6 per cent identified themselves as being unemployed (Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996: 45)

should be extended” (Market Research and Evaluation Team, 1998: 11, 18). “Lack of spoken English” was identified as a continuing barrier to employment along with lack of New Zealand work experience and the non-recognition of qualifications (Market Research and Evaluation Team, 1998: 18), though participants had been selected for the courses primarily on the basis of their English language ability. More telling was the fact that the greatest concern expressed by participating employers in taking on tertiary qualified immigrant job seekers in the programme was their lack of “ability to speak **New Zealand English**” (Market Research and Evaluation Team, 1998: 11; emphasis added). Clearly targeted bridging courses can produce very positive outcomes, so the differences between successful and unsuccessful bridging courses need to be studied to ensure the greatest returns for both providers and immigrants alike.

Language involves the cooperative negotiation of meaning, but as this example clearly illustrates, language also remains a powerful tool for discrimination. Without any change in the attitudes of job providers, adult immigrant job seekers from non-English speaking backgrounds will immediately be placed in a disadvantageous position. The identification of deficiencies – expressed in terms of immigrants' inability “to speak New Zealand English” – reflects a negative attitude to difference. Where discrimination is ostensibly applied only to those with certain marked varieties of English, questions arise regarding the underlying judgements and the need for changes in attitude within the wider marketplace if society is to achieve the potential economic and social rewards of an ethnically diverse and highly skilled immigrant labour force.

Despite the apparent advantages enjoyed by Canada and Australia (that is, their longer involvement in the recruitment and settlement of economic migrants, their multicultural policies and their larger, more diverse economies), the New Zealand findings are echoed in research in both countries (Freeman, 1999; Halli and Driedger, 1999a). They, also, have been challenged by the ethnic and cultural diversity of skilled and business immigrants, especially “visible” immigrants, who have highlighted a raft of settlement issues. These include: the appropriacy and transferability of overseas-gained qualifications and experience; post-arrival retraining and up-skilling provisions; language and cultural capital; and, perhaps most importantly, the amount of acceptance and discrimination immigrants from less-developed and generally non-English speaking backgrounds (NESBs) face in host communities, especially when they are highly educated and skilled professionals. Freeman (1999: 116) concludes that:

Taken together, the technical, administrative, and political difficulties of mounting a successful skilled immigration programme suggest that governments so inclined will need to make major commitments of finances, personnel and time. Even then, the odds appear to be against anything more than an erratic, episodic and modest success.

Language

Despite the lack of clarity and numerous comments which cast doubts on the level of English language proficiency required for successful settlement, the need for English language proficiency recurs in the New Zealand research (Ethnic Affairs Service, 1996; Daley, 1998; Ho et al., 2000; White et al., 2001; Winkelmann and Winkelmann, 1998).

Immigrant experiences of language learning provisions show mixed results. The Forsythe Research report (1998) on the English language bond made a sharp distinction between IELTS preparatory classes and everyday English language courses. Participants in the study noted that the former did not help them develop their everyday communication skills; the latter did not help them recoup the \$20,000 bond. Skilled immigrants from China tended to favour concentrated academic English courses which facilitated access to further non-ESOL study and New Zealand qualifications for employment. Courses were identified as varying in quality and value (Henderson, 2003). As with adult learners in White et al.'s (2001) study, many of whom felt they had made only "a little" progress through ESOL classes in the first year post-migration, informal language learning opportunities were favoured, along with the hard to achieve option of learning English at work. The two main problems identified by those in White et al.'s (2001) study were cost and lack of opportunities to use English with native speakers of the language.

While Watts et al. (2001) found that an increasing number of training establishments were focusing on specialised ESOL programmes (including IELTS and EAP courses), the lack of any coordinated and readily available ESOL provision such as is provided in Canada (with the language benchmarks) and in Australia (through AMES and other providers) has been criticized as ad hoc (Altinkaya, 1998), and as showing a lack of commitment to a national language policy or strategy, without which ESOL provision will remain uncoordinated and under-funded (Altinkaya, 1998; Hoffmann and Chrisp, 1998; Little, 1999; Shackelford, 1997).

Educational background is positively associated with second language learning in a formal setting but is seen as playing a less independent role in second language acquisition post-migration, particularly with regard to the development of oral fluency. Similarly, length of residence is usually associated with exposure to and use of the language, but does not necessarily lead to language acquisition and fluency since life may be lived in isolation from the mainstream society. Ethnic enclaves, confinement to the home (often the case for immigrant women, particularly those with small children, and the elderly), and social participation predominantly within one's own speech community, reinforce the first language and may provide few opportunities and little motivation to learn the second language. As Spolsky (1989: 164) notes:

It is the social situation ... that indirectly affects second language learning by determining the learner's attitudes and motivation. The social context also determines the existence and kinds of situations and opportunities that are available for formal and informal second language learning.

Employment in the mainstream of the new society has the potential to provide communicative competence (Hymes, 1971), oral fluency in the second language (Ellis, 1994, 1999), and the social context and the otherwise often difficult to establish contact with native speakers of the target language that is associated with acculturation (Berry, 1992; Kim, 1988; Schumann, 1986). Immigrants' access to mainstream employment (and thus access to the language, both workplace-related and social, that this affords) is, however, often thwarted.

Among voluntary migrants, the very young, along with unskilled female dependants and elderly migrants (generally the result of chain family reunion) are identified as being more likely to lack target language proficiency at migration (Boyd, 1992; Stevens, 1999). Most children who migrate as dependants quickly become bilingual in the language of the home and that of the wider society once exposed to compulsory education.⁶ As has been noted in studies of language maintenance and shift among immigrant children in New Zealand (Henderson, 2002; Holmes and Harlow, 1991; Roberts, 1997; Walker, 1996; Watts et al., 2002), the problem becomes more one of maintaining the first language than one of introducing the second language.

With a large amount of exposure to and interaction with native-speaking students, immigrant children are likely to acquire not only the language but also the prevailing local accent and cultural values. Their development of fluency in spoken English most often reflects a parallel underlying cognitive competency in the language. It may, however, for some disguise a disjuncture between informal spoken language and cognitive academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1981, 1984). This is an important issue for schools, especially those with older immigrant students who are required to function academically in their second language, English.

Health

There has been little research on the overall physical health of voluntary migrants in New Zealand, a not surprising situation given the general medical requirements which have to be and the relatively

⁶ A spin-off of the more rapid acquisition of English by children is their role of interpreters for parents, especially mothers at home while "astronaut" husbands commute back to the country of origin for work (Schak, 1999). This reliance on children turns the traditional hierarchical order of the household on its head, and places young children in adult roles with associated strains and tensions in terms of intergenerational relationships.

young age categories under which most immigrants gain residence. However, a Waitemata District Health Board and Ministry of Health-commissioned study (Ngai et al., 2001) provides information on Asian immigrant needs and health provider views. This study found that, as with the wider society, GPs and dentists and dental nurses were the most widely used health services. Social support systems relied heavily on family and friends from an immigrant's culture and there was a need for more accessible information on health options, and greater availability of interpreters in hospitals to overcome language barriers. Holt et al. (2001) similarly noted that language was the greatest barrier for many immigrants in gaining access to health care and other services and that immigrants often lacked knowledge of the medical benefits available to them.

The larger body of research related to the mental health of immigrants is summarised in Ho et al. (2002). Of interest is the mid-1990s research of Pernice and Brook. Studying demographic and post-migration settlement factors and their relationship to the mental health of three groups of migrants (Southeast Asian refugees, Pacific Island immigrants and British immigrants) to New Zealand, they (Pernice and Brook, 1996a, 1996b) found that emotional stress was not related to demographic factors. Rather, it was related to post-migration discrimination and unemployment. Discrimination experienced in their daily lives by Samoan and Southeast Asian participants – from employers, fellow workers, and health and mental health providers – was identified as “the crucial post-immigration factor associated with high symptom levels (both anxiety and depression” (Pernice and Brook, 1996a: 516). Examples of discrimination reported included:

- non-recognition of qualifications resulting in non-employment or underemployment,
- not being remunerated for skills and qualification;
- negative stereotyping as “uncouth, unskilled workers”;
- resentment that migrants might work harder and longer hours; and
- misdiagnosis and over-diagnosis of non-psychotic disorders through lack of cultural considerations.

While unemployment was found to affect stress levels, across all three groups in their study, the negative effects of unemployment were more marked for British immigrants, for whom the stigma of unemployment was seemingly greater. Having close friends was seen to lower potential depression and anxiety. However, while it was acknowledged that ethnic groups are supportive of immigrants, leisure time spent with members of one's own ethnic group was not seen to lower potential depression and anxiety. The research did not support the view that depression is restricted to refugees. Nor did it support Sluzki's (1986) model of a euphoric phase followed by a deterioration in mental health; the first six months were seen to be as important in the settlement process as the next six years (Pernice and Brooks, 1996b). Unemployment, under-employment and lack of satisfaction with work have been

found to be associated with some deterioration in mental well-being among skilled immigrants even within the first year of settlement (Pernice et al., 2000; Trlin et al., 2001).

Unemployment and the straitened financial situation it brings have been related to health problems. This situation applies to immigrants from all cultural backgrounds, with unemployment not only leading to a deterioration in mental health (Abbott et al., 1999; Ho et al., 2003) but also poor diet. The inability to afford healthy food contributes to diabetes among immigrant groups with limited savings (Dr Potts, the People's Centre, Auckland, on India2New Zealand website). Elderly immigrants and their families were often in particular need of support, with elderly people often faced with a choice of staying in the country of origin without care and family support, or migrating and being cared for, but away from familiar environments and isolated from the wider society by lack of language and mobility (Elliott and Gray, 2000).

While language skills levels and conflicts related to cultural values were noted as factors contributing to increased rates of mental disorder among immigrants and refugees, Abbott (1997) too identified post-arrival prejudice and discrimination, unemployment and underemployment, and a drop in socioeconomic status as main factors. In a survey of Chinese immigrants in Auckland, Abbott et al. (2000: 54) found that, even though many of their participants were well-educated, most were "characterised by one or more factors known to compromise adaptation and health" – unemployment or under-employment, language difficulties, lack of pre-migration information about New Zealand, non-acceptance by members of the host society; and living in a single parent/spouse household.

The need for further settlement provisions for both refugees and immigrants was also identified by social worker practitioners. In a study of Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers members, Nash and Trlin (2004) found that while some respondents felt they could do little for their clients, given cultural, economic and other structural obstacles to (re)settlement, most felt they had achieved improvements in the circumstances of most of their clients. This said, they wanted further training in cross-cultural social work, better support services including accessing interpreters and skilled cultural advisors, and more education within the wider society about cultural diversity. The need for employment and culturally-appropriate social services, plus social support and health services besides those currently provided by non-governmental organisations and ethnic groups, were also identified in Wang's study of Chinese male immigrant issues (Wang, 2000, reported in Nash and Trlin, 2004: 10).

Housing

Housing is identified by Butcher et al. (2004: 35) as “a bone of contention” for many migrants, immigrants and refugees alike. Accommodation options restricted by their lack of discretionary income and landlords who are reluctant to let to them. Accent was identified by immigrants in Butcher et al.’s (2004) research as a marker for potential landlords that an enquirer was an immigrant. That South Africans in their research reported no difficulties in accessing accommodation indicates that only certain accents were “undesirable”.

With a few exceptions, quota refugees are initially housed at the Mangere Refugee Reception Centre. Thereafter, they receive the most help, finding and meeting the costs of accommodation (not that this accommodation was always considered satisfactory) with support from sponsors and the state (Dibley and Dunstan, 2002; Butcher et al., 2004). Other arrivals, without state-provided on-arrival accommodation or access to benefits within the first two years of arrival, are dependent on their own resources and friends or relatives already in the country to find somewhere to live. Just over two-thirds of immigrants approved off-shore initially stayed with someone they knew when they first arrived in New Zealand, with Family category immigrants more likely to stay longer in this shared accommodation (NZIS, 2004: 44). For Family category arrivals initial on-arrival accommodation, if not longer-term accommodation, is normally with sponsors. Zodgekar (1997) found that Asian-born immigrants and Pacific people were more likely to have a combination of family members and recently-arrived single members living in one household. In the LisNZ pilot study, 37% of all migrants had other relatives living in New Zealand (NZIS, 2004: 43).

Neighbourhood choice

In a preliminary report on the North Shore, Spoonley *et al.* (1997) commented on the significant numbers of immigrants who had settled on the Shore during the 1990s: Britons, South Africans (an estimated 12,000-15,000), and East Asians (especially Koreans, and two-thirds of the predominantly home-owning respondents residing in Browns Bay and the Palms, an area with a “significant new migrant population”). It was noted that “on-migration or return migration should be anticipated for a proportion, and perhaps a significant proportion of East Asian groups . . . , as it has been for traditional source migrants such as British” (Spoonley et al., 1997:12) and that meanwhile levels of employment for many remained low despite the skills which had gained immigration points for settlement.⁷ Meanwhile, however, the migrant presence had contributed to changes in housing styles, the

⁷ This lack of participation in the workforce among Koreans is reflected in the reporting of very low or “nil” incomes by Korean residents in the 1996 Census (Thomson, 1999: 139).

establishment of new networks of organisations and modification of existing ones (such as church communities) to meet ethnic groups' needs.

Such residential concentrations may diminish or abrogate the effect of length of residence on second language proficiency particularly among parents who are not in the workforce. Older immigrants, too, are less likely to acquire host language proficiency. Living generally in a first-language environment, with family members who have sponsored their immigration and/or in close proximity to others from the same ethnic and linguistic group, they may have little incentive to learn the language. Following this pattern, Thomson (1999: 167) found that among those of Chinese ethnicity living in New Zealand at the time of the 1996 census, the highest proportion (52 per cent) unable to speak English was for those aged 60 plus, whereas the 15-24 year age group had the lowest proportion (13 per cent). Refugees also provide an exception to the coincidence of age, education and target language proficiency. As involuntary migrants, they are more likely to have experienced disrupted formal education and are less likely to have invested in language learning prior to migration. These groups (apart from the very young, who will be incorporated into the compulsory education system) are likely to suffer more isolation and require more target language assistance than other arrivals.

Social participation

Social participation for adult immigrants is usually dependent on employment. With a job, people have leisure time that can then be given over to participating in clubs and other social organisations. Without a job there's no "free" time in contrast to work.

For example, many of the skilled Chinese immigrants interviewed in the New Settlers Programme longitudinal survey initially planned to join clubs and other social organisations but, unemployed and without jobs, they did not have the money to join clubs (Henderson, 2002). Nor did most have the time (many were too busy studying) or energy and inclination to socialise with other than recent immigrants from their own ethnic group, that is, people who "understood", shared their situation and backgrounds. Further study was a source of new friends and social participation in the wider community for some. However, most studied in courses with large class numbers, where they made contact and socialized with those they could identify as having similar backgrounds (Chinese or other visibly different immigrants) and/or a shared language. However, returning to study could – though it did not always – offer more status, contact with Kiwis and others, and a greater feeling of being accepted and belonging. This was sometimes dashed (again) when they graduated and tried again to enter the workforce only to find that while they had completed further studies in New Zealand, they did not have New Zealand experience and they were not a native speaker of English with a New Zealand accent – they were not one of “us”. When they eventually did get jobs, may found

themselves in positions that: were demeaning positions for professionals; took up all their time and energy; required very long hours; and/or meant working on their own or with compatriots. Nevertheless, having a job (interestingly, any job) seemed to be positively associated with not reporting difficulties making friends with Kiwis and with feelings of being more settled and belonging.

An aspiration to be accepted as a Kiwi is apparent in most new arrivals but over time this hope often wanes. Immigrants may become increasingly aware of their differences from "Kiwis", and of being identified as "other", as "them", not "us". Awareness of the bi- in the cultural policy, and not being able anywhere in the census's and other ethnic questions to identify as a New Zealander if they weren't European (that is "white"), contributes to and reinforces this feeling of remaining an "outsider" (Ip, 2000). Entering the education system, with its daily contact and activities with New Zealand children, young children generally fit in easily, particularly if young enough to acquire English with a New Zealand accent. However, if the current bicultural situation persists, there will still be those who will face issues of ethnic identity as they grow up.

CONCLUSION

These issues return us to the criteria for “successful” settlement. It can be measured against the degree of satisfaction of the government, of the wider host society and of the immigrants themselves. From the receiving society’s perspective, a measure of the successful outcomes of immigration policy at the institutional level will be the degree to which the goals of government policies are achieved. While some criteria such as employment levels may be objectively measurable,⁸ others such as social cohesion inevitably remain very much more subjective and difficult to assess, particularly in the shorter term. Ultimately, successful settlement involves the right to participate socially, economically and politically in the wider, mainstream society on merit, without prejudice or discrimination. As Bauböck (1996c: 232) put it in his taxonomy of the cultural rights of minorities, “[t]he target is a ‘level playing field’ where race, gender or ethnic origin no longer counts as a disadvantage”.

Focusing only on short-term settlement outcomes may be myopic in the longer term. For example, as Neuwirth (1999) warns in her discussion of the key elements of integration outlined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, an emphasis on economic self-sufficiency meets the expectations of the host society but may result in immigrants being stuck in dead-end jobs rather than in positions where they and the society can benefit more fully from their skills. Similarly, language and orientation courses, of particular importance for those who arrive with little or no knowledge of the host language and culture, generally focus on low level, functional competence and are normally available only within the first year(s) of settlement, despite the acquisition of the higher-level communication skills in a second language being a longer-term process (Cummins, 1979; Clyne, 1994).

Business Liaison and Settlement Units have been established (or re-established in the latter case) within the New Zealand Immigration Service and settlement kits, post-arrival newsletters, booklets for the over-50s and business investment-related information are disseminated to immigrants. A telephone translation service, introduced on a local basis in the late 1990s (Banda and Beaglehole, 1998), has been (re)introduced on a wider scale. Regionally piloted migrant resource centres have been bolstered and, in some instances, established on a more permanent footing and comprehensive, integrated basis (see Johns and Ainsworth, 2001). A number of pilot programmes have been provided, with varying degrees of success, by government agencies to assist skilled immigrants’ entry to the workforce. These include: Work and Income’s English for Professionals courses in Auckland (New

⁸ Even here there may be problems as Weinfeld (1998) notes in a discussion of the methodological bias inherent in benchmarking immigrant settlement against indicators derived from the native-born population. There may also be problems associated with measuring levels of under-employment where immigrants hold qualifications gained overseas.

Zealand Employment Service, 1998), from which the rate of entry to the workforce was low; a bridging programme to retrain unemployed overseas-trained doctors admitted under the 1991-1995 General Category, instigated in June 2000 with an \$11.8m. budget to retrain doctors in five courses over three years, since extended to include three further intakes (King, 2000; Kirkwood, , 2003); and a very successful work-experience/mentoring service for professional engineers, through which the majority of participants gained re-entry to their profession (Fisk, 2003).

Paralleling these largely ad hoc and often one-off settlement provisions, there has been a growing body of research and literature on immigrant settlement issues in New Zealand since Fletcher's literature review in 1997, much of it noted or foreshadowed in Bedford et al's bibliography (Bedford et al., 1998). There have been a large number of one-off studies by academics or students, plus locally-initiated reports such as that on immigrant settlement services in Auckland (Johns and Ainsworth, 2001) and the health care needs of Asian peoples in Auckland (Ngai et al., 2001), and a plethora of research results from government-funded projects, including the New Directions and, latterly, "Strangers in Town" projects at Waikato University and the New Settlers Programme at Massey University, and smaller projects.⁹ The New Zealand Immigration Service has also carried out and commissioned reports on immigration trends, literature reviews and studies on issues related to immigrant, including refugee, settlement in New Zealand – very useful reports which are freely available via the Immigration Service's website but unfortunately not widely disseminated in hard copy. These reports include the 2004 Pilot Survey Report (NZIS, 2004) for the national Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand (LisNZ), the sampling for which is scheduled to start in 2004, leading into three rounds of interviewing spanning 36 months.

With countries of immigration continuing to recruit skilled labour to fill shortfalls or replace "brain drains", predictions that the competition for skilled migrants will intensify rather than decline in the future, and the likelihood that economic migration will lead to chain migration of family members and other contacts, the increase in the availability of highly educated (and more visible) migrants from less-developed countries underlines the pressing need to address issues related to settlement and integration. These issues become even more contentious and difficult where host communities are themselves facing economic recession, undergoing major restructuring and grappling with issues of national identity. They need to be addressed, however, if the aims of immigration policy are to be achieved and effective use is to be made of inflows of human capital, since "the [settlement]

⁹ Where the Population Conference of 1997 was a one-off, big budget "talk-fest" (cf Bedford and Ho, 1998), an annual end-users' meeting has provided, since its instigation in 1998 by the leaders of the two major FRST-funded immigration programmes of the time, a forum for the regular presentation to stakeholders (government and others) of research findings from an increasingly diverse number of projects related to immigration issues.

trajectories of immigrants are largely determined by how they negotiate the obstacles throw up by the native born” (DeWind and Kasinitz, 1997: 1102).