



NEW ZEALAND  
IMMIGRATION

# Immigration Factsheets

## Skill shortage lists

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May 2019

- The Essential Skills in Demand (ESID) Lists were established in 2002 and help to ensure that New Zealand's skill needs are met by facilitating the entry of appropriately skilled migrants to fill skill shortages. This objective also balances the need to ensure there are no suitably qualified New Zealand citizens or resident workers available to undertake the work, and that the shortage is genuine.
- If an occupation is on a shortage list, positions in that occupation are not subject to an individual labour market test. A labour market test means that an employer must demonstrate that no suitable New Zealanders are available to fill or be trained for each individual position. Employers wanting to bring in migrant workers for occupations on a shortage list can still do so provided they can prove suitable New Zealanders are not available.
- The **Long Term Skill Shortage List (LTSSL)** is a list of all long-term, high-level skills shortages in the New Zealand labour market. This list is used in relation to both temporary work visas and resident visas. If people come to work in New Zealand based on meeting the LTSSL requirements, they are likely to be eligible for residence through a Work to Residence category, or the Skilled Migrant Category.
- The **Regional Skill Shortage List (RSSL)** was introduced in May 2019 and replaces the Immediate Skills Shortage List. The RSSL is divided into 15 regions and shows New Zealanders and temporary migrants where their opportunities are for work in provincial New Zealand. This list is only used in relation to temporary work instructions, and means the employer does not need to prove they cannot find a New Zealander for the job.
- A third list, the **Construction and Infrastructure Skill Shortage List (CISSL)**, contains immediate short-term skill shortages in the New Zealand construction labour market that are designed to meet the industry's labour requirements across the country. It is split into the same 15 regions as the RSSL. The CISSL was established in December 2018 to support the Government's construction and infrastructure commitments. Its establishment meant the Canterbury Skill Shortage List was no longer needed and it was disestablished. The Canterbury Skill Shortage List was a temporary list set up to address specific occupations identified as being in short supply that were critical to the region's rebuild and recovery after the 2011 earthquake.



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- The lists are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to respond to the changing face of the country's labour market. The review process is carried out by Immigration New Zealand and seeks to strike the right balance between making it easy for employers to source foreign workers where there are shortages, and encouraging employers to make use of local workers.
- The removal and addition of occupations and transfer of occupations between lists is the result of extensive consultation with industry groups, other stakeholders and relevant government agencies, alongside analysis of economic, labour market and immigration data.
- Recommendations on proposed changes to the shortage lists are made to the Minister of Immigration, who makes the final decisions.