

## 5. LONGITUDINAL IMMIGRATION SURVEY (LisNZ) AND REFUGEE VOICES

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about two longitudinal research projects being carried out by the New Zealand Immigration Service.

### INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the information provided to the Refugee and New Migrant Forum by the New Zealand Immigration Service. The purpose of the research is to discover more about the settlement of migrants and refugees in New Zealand. This will enable the development of strategies to improve the wellbeing of migrants and refugees.

The key issues for policy and service delivery are:

- Pre-settlement/ Resettlement – eg pre-arrival information,
- Initial Settlement/ Resettlement – eg ESOL, interpreter services, health services,
- Post Settlement/ Resettlement - eg responsiveness of 'mainstream' government services, ESOL, interpreter services.

### LONGITUDINAL IMMIGRATION SURVEY (LisNZ)

Migrants come from a variety of backgrounds and experience. Most current new migrants come from the United Kingdom, People's Republic of China, India and South Africa. The 1996 Census data tells us that of recent migrants (158 178 people), 53% were living in Wellington, 10% in Wellington and 8% in Christchurch. Of this migrant population, 32% were born in Europe, North America or South Africa, 28% were born in North Asia, 10% were born in Australia, 10% were born in South East Asia, 10% were born in the Pacific and 6% were born in South Asia.

The pilot study is currently being completed and the final survey of around 5000 migrants will begin in 2003. The participants will be interviewed six months after taking up residence, and then again at eighteen months and three years. As well as demographic information the data collected will include reasons for migration, housing, labour market and business activities, income and assets, English language proficiency, education, need for and use of social services, social networks, health and information on partners and dependents.

The anticipated benefits of the LisNZ is that it will:

- Identify the factors which help new migrants to settle in New Zealand,
- Identify the barriers to successful settlement in New Zealand,
- Enable both government and social service organisations to provide the types of services most needed by new migrants and
- Enable the government to develop targeted and well informed immigration policy.

### REFUGEE VOICES

In 1999-2000 716 refugees arrived in New Zealand as part of the Refugee Resettlement Programme. Most of these people were (from the largest to smallest groups) Somali, Ethiopian, Sudanese, Vietnamese, Iraqi, Laotian, Yugoslav, Afghan, Congolese, Eritrean and Burundian.

A refugee-focused research programme called Refugee Voices will be undertaken to complement the migrant research. Refugees will be interviewed over their first two to five years in New Zealand. Information gathered will include:

- Circumstances that led people to become refugees,
- Selection process,
- Experience of agencies providing services to refugees,
- Access and quality of housing,
- Family reunification,
- Social networks,
- Physical and mental health needs,
- Learning English,

- Employment,
- Education and
- Cultural integration.

Refugee Voices will collate views, experiences and expectations to inform government, communities, NGOs and refugees of:

- the factors that lead to successful resettlement and
- the barriers that hinder resettlement.

#### **CONCLUSION**

LisNZ and Refugee Voices indicate a major commitment by the New Zealand Immigration Service to finding out more about the experiences of refugees and migrants. These research projects will take some years to complete. Findings will be reported to the Council through the Community Services Committee as they become available.

#### **Chairman's**

**Recommendation:** That the information is received.