

Department of Labour
TE TARI MAHI



PEOPLE ON THE MOVE: A STUDY OF MIGRANT MOVEMENT PATTERNS TO AND FROM NEW ZEALAND

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

One long-term measure of a migrant's successful settlement and contribution to the country is the extent to which they remain in the country after taking up residence. It is important to realise, however, that people may leave the country for a number of reasons, only some of which are related to "unsuccessful" settlement. Reasons for absence may include overseas business commitments and family ties. Previous research has highlighted that certain sub-groups of migrants tend to spend lengthy periods out of the country after taking up residence. However, previous research is limited, in that absence has been assessed at one point in time, rather than over the course of a migrant's residence in New Zealand.

Purpose

This research extends previous studies to understand more fully the dynamics of migrants' absenteeism and movement patterns. The purpose is to identify migrants with particular movement patterns into and out of New Zealand, and to explore the characteristics of those who spend lengthy periods out of the country.

Methodology

The research involved a quantitative analysis of the Department of Labour's Immigration database. Migrants included in the analysis were those with residence applications approved between January 1998 and December 2004. The analysis involved producing a client history of each migrant's movements into and out of New Zealand from the date of final residence approval. The analysis was done using SAS algorithms to produce a number of derivative datasets and statistical tables. The statistical tables were exported into Excel and Access for analysis.

Variables that were calculated for each migrant included:

- whether they arrived to take up residence
- the number of spells of absence
- the length of each spell of absence
- the time spent absent on a year-by-year basis
- the total time spent absent
- location on a monthly basis (i.e. onshore, offshore temporarily, or offshore and not returned during the analysis period).

The second stage of the analysis involved exploring the characteristics of migrants with particular movement and absence patterns. Some comparison is provided between non-return rates for the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts and out-migration estimates for the usually resident New Zealand population (derived from 1996 and 2001 Census data).

There are some data limitations that are fully described in the main text. In some cases, it was necessary to assign "dummy movements" in order to create a complete movement set over the analysis period.¹ Due to technical issues (such as migrants using more than one passport), there was a small proportion of data inconsistencies (less than 2 percent). For example, migrants may have had two subsequent arrivals or departures recorded. In such cases, an assumption was made as to whether a migrant was onshore or offshore in the intervening period.

¹ For example, each person was assigned a dummy movement at the end of the study period (31 December 2004), if they did not arrive in or depart from New Zealand on that day.

Summary of main movement and absence types

The analysis provides a number of views of migrants' movement and absence patterns after taking up residence in New Zealand. The analysis highlights six main groups of migrants, based on their movement patterns (including length of absences and number of spells of absence). These broad categories include:

- **Low mobility and lower absence** – The majority of migrants were not highly mobile and did not spend lengthy periods absent.
- **Highly mobile and lower absence** – Certain groups of migrants travel to and from New Zealand regularly but, overall, were not highly represented in those spending lengthy periods absent.
- **Highly mobile and higher absence** – Certain sub-groups were highlighted as being very mobile, as well as spending lengthy periods out of New Zealand.
- **Low mobility and higher absence** – These migrants were not highly mobile, but often spent lengthy periods out of the country.
- **Spend all time in New Zealand.**
- **Non-arrivers** – A small proportion of those approved each year did not arrive to take up residence.

Examples of the types of migrants who fit into each profile group are provided below and in the main text. However, it is important to keep in mind the variability within various nationality groups and residence approval categories.

Characteristics of approvals 1998–2004

A total of 257,230 migrants had residence applications approved and took up residence between 1998 and 2004. The main source countries were Great Britain (15 percent), China (13 percent), India (12 percent), South Africa (9 percent) and Fiji (6 percent). It is of note that, in the year ended June 2005, the proportion of migrants from Great Britain was much higher (31 percent). As discussed below, source country is one factor that impacts absence rates. Changes in the source countries of migrants over time mean that the identified patterns of absenteeism will also change over time.

The main category of approvals between 1998 and 2004 was the General Skills Category (50 percent). This was followed by Partnership (17 percent), Family Parent (9 percent) and the Investor Category (4 percent).

Non-arrival

Between 1998 and 2003, 6,016 approved people did not arrive to take up residence.² There has been a decline over time in the proportion not taking up residence (from 3 percent of all approvals in 1998 to 2 percent in 2003). Sixty-one percent of those who did not arrive were approved through the General Skills Category (GSC). In the same period, the GSC made up 53 percent of all approvals. Indian migrants were overrepresented in the non-arrivals, comprising 21 percent of those who did not arrive and 12 percent of all approvals. Those younger than 16 years were more likely than older migrants not to arrive. Under 16 year olds made up 35 percent of non-arrivals and 24 percent of all approvals.

Length of time to arrive

Seventy-eight percent of those approved offshore arrived within six months to take up residence. When those approved offshore and onshore were combined, 88

² Migrants have 12 months to arrive to take up residence. Those approved in 2004 were not included in this analysis, since 12 months had not passed for these individuals.

percent of migrants were in New Zealand within six months of their residence application being completed.

Overall time spent absent

The total time migrants spent out of the country was explored as a proportion of time since taking up residence. The majority of migrants did not spend large amounts of time out of New Zealand after taking up residence. The proportion of migrants to remain in New Zealand continuously ranged from 18 percent of the 1998 cohort to 71 percent of the 2004 cohort. This is to be expected, given the 2004 cohort had been in the country for a much shorter period of time. For those who did spend time out of New Zealand, this was often for less than 25 percent of their residence period (43 percent spent this amount of time absent). Between 9 and 12 percent of the 1998 to 2003 cohorts spent at least three-quarters of their residence period absent. The proportion of high absence migrants (those spending three-quarters or more absent) was highest for the 2002 cohort (12 percent).

Residence category

Thirty percent of GSC migrants spent no time absent, and a further 46 percent were absent for less than 25 percent of their residence period. Nearly one-quarter of GSC migrants spent 25 percent or more of their residence period absent (including 12 percent who were absent for 75 percent or more).

Compared to other migrants, Investor Category migrants had extremely high rates of absence, with 42 percent spending at least three-quarters of their residence period absent. Most of this high absence was by Chinese and Taiwanese Investors. The other main categories with high proportions of high absence migrants were the Family Parent sub-category (9 percent) and the Samoan Quota (8 percent). Under each of the Family sub-categories of Sibling, Adult Child, Child Dependent and Partnership, 6 percent were high absence migrants. Migrants through most categories in the International/Humanitarian Stream had low rates of absence. For example, 80 percent of those through the Refugee Quota spent no time out of New Zealand after taking up residence.

Applicant type

Secondary applicants were less likely than principal applicants to have spent time out of New Zealand after taking up residence. If secondary applicants did leave the country, they tended to spend more time absent than principal applicants. Of the migrants who spent time absent, 12 percent of principal and 19 percent of secondary applicants were absent for 75 percent or more of their residence period.

Nationality

Migrants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia had high rates of spending 75 percent or more of their time absent. Secondary applicants accounted for more of this high absence than principal applicants, although they had fewer spells of absence than principal applicants. Migrants from these same countries were highly represented in those to have a spell of absence that they did not return from during the analysis period.

Of the main source countries, 6 percent from Great Britain, 16 percent from China and 10 percent from India spent at least 75 percent of their time absent. With the exception of Malaysia and China, secondary applicants from the top ten source countries were substantially more likely than principal applicants to have remained in New Zealand subsequent to taking up residence.

Gender

For some age groups, there were gender differences in absence rates. Males aged 35 years and older were more likely than females of the same age to spend 50 percent or more of their time absent. The difference was particularly noticeable for 45 to 54 year olds, with 24 percent of males spending 50 percent or more absent compared to 17 percent of females.

Family type

A comparatively high proportion of migrants from the family types “couples without children” and “two-parent families” spent 50 percent or more of their residence period absent (18 and 17 percent respectively). This compared to 10 percent of migrants from “one-parent families” and 11 percent of solo migrants. Solo migrants had a higher number of spells of absence than migrants from other family types, but overall did not spend lengthy periods absent.

For migrants from two-parent families, a higher proportion of principal (19 percent) than secondary applicants (16 percent) spent 50 percent or more of their time absent. Principal applicants from two-parent families also had more spells of absence than secondary applicants. These findings may point to some incidence of “astronaut migration”, where a migrant returns to their country of origin to work or do business, leaving their partner and children in New Zealand.

Number of spells of absence

Overall, most migrants were not highly mobile. Forty-four percent had between one and two spells of absence over their residence period.³ Investor Category migrants were highly mobile, with 19 percent having five or more spells of absence. The other main categories with a high proportion of five or more spells of absence were Partnership (10 percent), GSC (10 percent), Ministerial Direction (9 percent), Family Child Adult (8 percent) and Family Parent (8 percent). Through most other categories, 5 percent or less had five or more spells of absence.

Migrants from the USA and Japan were very mobile, with 23 percent from each of these countries having five or more spells of absence. However, migrants from these countries were not amongst the main ones to spend a high proportion of their residence period absent.

Principal applicants (11 percent) were more likely than secondary applicants (6 percent) to have five or more spells of absence. Solo migrants and those from the family type “couples without children” tended to have more spells of absence than migrants from families with children. Although, as discussed above, migrants without children were less likely than those from other family types to spend more than half of their residence period absent.

Lengths of spells of absence

Overall, 85 percent of spells of absence were for less than six months. Categories where a comparatively high proportion had spells of absence for one year or longer included the Refugee Quota (18 percent), Samoan Quota (16 percent), Family Parent (12 percent), Investor Category (12 percent), Family Child Dependent (11 percent), Refugee Status (10 percent) and the GSC (9 percent).

³ A spell of absence is defined as a departure from New Zealand and a subsequent arrival.

The spells of absence data highlights that those with lengthy spells of absence are not always the ones who are highly mobile. The majority of migrants through the Refugee Quota had no spells of absence, yet 18 percent of spells by this group were for one year or longer. Most of the long spells of absence by Quota refugees were by those approved in 1998 and 1999. Quota refugees approved in these years had high non-return rates compared to other cohorts, although the current analysis did not explore their destination. A similar pattern of low mobility, yet lengthy spells of absence, was evident for migrants through the Samoan Quota.

Long-term absence as at December 2004

Long-term absence (for six continuous months or more) was explored as at December 2004. The proportion long-term absent as at December 2004 ranged from 22 percent of the 1998 cohort to 8 percent of the 2003 cohort. Investors had the highest rate of long-term absence (34 percent). Migrants through the Family Parent, General Skills, Samoan Quota, Family Child Dependent and Partnership categories also had high rates (ranging from 12 percent of both Partnership and Family Child Dependent to 18 percent of Family Parent).

Taiwan had the highest overall long-term absence rate (44 percent). Migrants from Taiwan also had the highest rates in the Skilled/Business Stream (47 percent) and the Family Sponsored Stream (37 percent). Other countries with high overall rates were Singapore (30 percent), Hong Kong (29 percent), Malaysia (27 percent), Canada (26 percent), Indonesia (25 percent), USA (23 percent) and China (20 percent).

Year-by-year absence rates

The proportion of time spent absent was examined separately each year after a migrant took up residence. At least 50 percent of migrants were always in New Zealand each year after taking up residence. The proportion of migrants always overseas in a given year increased with length of residence, from 7 percent of those in their second year of residence to 23 percent in their seventh year.

Skilled/Business migrants were more likely than others to always be overseas in a given year. International/Humanitarian migrants spent less time offshore than others, with at least 70 percent always onshore each year after taking up residence. Migrants from the family type “couples without children” had a higher rate of always being overseas in a given year than migrants from other family types. In line with this, migrants from the family type “couples without children” were most likely not to return from a spell of absence during the analysis period.

High absence migrants

The characteristics of migrants who spent 75 percent or more of their residence period absent were explored in detail. There was some variation but, overall, the proportion of high absence migrants each year after residence uptake was fairly similar across the cohorts (1998 to 2004). Migrants in the 2002 cohort had a higher rate of high absence in their first and second years than other cohorts.

Some nationalities were overrepresented in the proportion of high absence migrants compared to total approvals:

- China made up 13 percent of approvals, yet made up 22 percent of the high absence migrants.
- Malaysia made up 2 percent of approvals and 7 percent of high absence migrants.
- Taiwan made up 2 percent of approvals and 8 percent of high absence migrants.

Great Britain was the main source of migrants over the period (15 percent). In comparison, Great Britain was underrepresented in the proportion of high absence migrants (10 percent).

A large proportion of Investors were high absence migrants (42 percent overall). Half of Investors were Chinese, and a similar proportion of high absence migrants through the Investor Category were Chinese. Taiwanese migrants made up 19 percent of Investor approvals, yet they made up 31 percent of high absence migrants. The changes introduced in July 2005 as part of the new Investor Category, including the requirement that Investors make New Zealand their home at the end of the five-year investment period, are likely to impact positively on the longer-term rates of future Investors living in New Zealand.

Through the GSC, British migrants were underrepresented in the proportion of high absence migrants. Chinese, Malaysian, Indonesian, Singaporean and Taiwanese migrants were overrepresented (compared to total approvals from these countries).

Onshore rates

A time series enabled analysis of migrants' location as at the first of each month over the analysis period. There were seasonal variations, with a dip in the proportion of migrants onshore from December to February each year.

For each cohort, there was a decline over time in the proportion onshore, which reflected migrants leaving and not returning from a spell of absence. The decline for Skilled/Business migrants was steeper than for the Family Sponsored or International/Humanitarian Streams. Of those approved in 1998, 70 percent of Skilled/Business migrants were onshore as at December 2003, as were 75 percent through the Family Sponsored Stream and 84 percent through the International/Humanitarian Stream.

Generally, onshore rates were lower for those approved in earlier years than later years. However, the 2002 cohort stood out with low onshore rates. For example, for the Investor Category, the 2002 cohort had the lowest onshore rate – 39 percent were onshore as at December 2003. The onshore rate for Skilled/Business migrants approved in 2002 was slightly lower than for the 2001 cohort. For the GSC, there was a steep decline in the onshore rate for the 2002 cohort between December 2002 and December 2003 (from 88 to 80 percent).

Non-return rates

The rate of migrants leaving the country and not returning by the end of the analysis period (December 2004) was explored. For all cohorts, the rate of non-return increased steeply over time. As at December 2003, 19 percent of the 1998 cohort had left and not returned. Nine percent of the 2002 cohort had left and not returned.

There was a similar increase in non-return for each cohort over time, although the increase for the 2002 cohort was steeper than for other cohorts. Also, the 2002 and 2003 cohorts had a relatively high non-return rate in the first few months after residence uptake (compared to other cohorts), which then levelled off over the first year. The differing patterns for the 2002 and 2003 cohorts may be a reflection of a number of significant policy changes introduced in 2002. These changes included several increases to the GSC passmark, strengthening of the English language requirements for Skilled/Business migrants, tightening of the job search visa policy for GSC applicants within five points of the General Skills passmark and changes

around the source funds for Investors. The overall similarity in non-return rates over time may indicate that the data represents typical loss of migrants.

Overall, non-return rates were similar for principal and secondary applicants. For the 2001 to 2003 cohorts, a higher proportion of secondary than principal applicants had left and not returned. Skilled/Business migrants had higher rates of non-return than migrants through other streams. For example, of those approved in 1998, 22 percent of Skilled/Business migrants had left and not returned as at December 2003. The comparative figures were 17 percent for the Family Sponsored Stream and 11 percent for the International/Humanitarian Stream.

Non-return rates for those approved through the GSC ranged from 3 percent of the 2003 cohort to 22 percent of the 1998 cohort. For the Investor Category, which is a comparatively small approval source, the rate of non-return was higher for those approved more recently than in earlier years. Of the 100 Investors approved in 1998, 16 percent had left and not returned. Rates of non-return were higher for all other cohorts of Investors, particularly the 2002 cohort. For those approved in 2002 (n=3,465), 30 percent had left and not returned. In 2002, a comparatively high proportion of Investors were from China, and this appears to account for some of the high non-return rates. Also, a very high proportion of Taiwanese Investors from this cohort spent at least 75 percent of their residence period absent (74 percent).

There was a small amount of variation in non-return rates between the three main source countries. Of those approved in 1998, non-return rates as at December 2003 were 20 percent for British migrants and 23 percent for both Chinese and Indian migrants. The rate of non-return for other cohorts from these source countries followed a similar gradient, although, as at December 2003, Chinese migrants approved in 2002 had a rate of non-return that was nearly as high as those approved in 2001.

Overall, the countries with the highest non-return rates (across all cohorts) were Taiwan (38 percent), Singapore and Hong Kong (24 percent each), Canada (22 percent), Indonesia (21 percent), Malaysia (18 percent) and the USA (17 percent). Migrants from these countries were also the most likely to be long-term absent (for six months or more) as at December 2004.

The residence approval categories with the highest rates of non-return were the Investor Category (26 percent), Family Parent (14 percent), the GSC (12 percent), Family Child Dependent (10 percent) and Samoan Quota (10 percent). These categories were the same ones with the highest rates of long-term absence as at December 2004. The categories with low rates of non-return (5 percent or less) were mostly in the International/Humanitarian Stream.

Migrants aged between 16 and 24 years had the lowest rate of non-return (7 percent). Non-return was highest for those aged 55 years and older (14 percent). For other age groups, non-return rates were about 11 percent.

Comparison with the usually resident New Zealand population

Migrants approved in 1998 and 1999 had out-migration rates that were more than twice as high as the estimated rates for the New Zealand usually resident population.⁴ This comparison is indicative only, and the different characteristics of the migrant and the usually resident populations need to be considered when

⁴ Out-migration rates for the usually resident New Zealand population were estimated from the 1996 and 2001 Censuses.

interpreting the differences in out-migration rates. A significant portion of migrants are highly skilled, with occupations that are in demand. Such migrants are likely to be more mobile in the global labour market than the usually resident population as a whole. Indeed, compared to the entire 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts, GSC principal applicants had higher out-migration rates. Also, internal migration within New Zealand by the usually resident population will, in some cases, reflect international migration behaviour by migrants. Internal migration is not considered in the current analysis.

Out-migration was higher for migrants than the usually resident population for all age groups, except those between 16 and 24 years. For migrants aged between 16 and 54 years, out-migration rates peaked between 25 and 34 years. Across all age groups, out-migration peaked for migrants aged between 65 and 74 years and peaked for the New Zealand population aged between 16 and 24 years (although a smaller proportion of migrants than the New Zealand population were older than 55 years). Migrants aged between 0 and 15 years had a high out-migration rate compared to the New Zealand population.

Comparison with the New Zealand population highlights three main components in migrants' out-migration. These include:

- an out-migration rate that is overall higher than the usually resident population
- a large retirement age out-migration flow
- a large number of children leaving (probably with their parents).

The high out-migration rate for older migrants may indicate that they return to their home country or move elsewhere to retire. It may also reflect settlement being more difficult for older than younger migrants.

Conclusion

The findings in this report challenge the notion that people granted permanent residence remain here permanently. The data shows that migration is more dynamic. While the majority of migrants do not spend large amounts of time out of New Zealand after taking up residence, some migrants spend much of their time absent. There is also a consistent (and growing) loss of migrants over time. It is important that consideration is given to this loss when planning the yearly New Zealand Immigration Programme, including setting the number of approvals each year. The findings also have impacts in terms of understanding the longer-term impact migrants have on areas such as health, education and infrastructure.

There are many reasons that migrants may leave New Zealand after taking up residence. Some of the non-return would reflect unsuccessful settlement, such as migrants not being able to find work. Other reasons could include migrants missing their home countries, overseas family or business commitments. Similar reasons could also account for migrants spending time out of the country temporarily. Some migrants would not have intended staying permanently. An important point to note is that many of the migrants who remain in New Zealand for a shorter amount of time make a valuable contribution while they are here. Also, non-return needs to be considered in the context of continual gain of new skilled residents and other skilled people through temporary flows.

It is possible that the Citizenship Amendment Act 2005 will increase the length of time that some migrants remain in New Zealand. The Act came into effect from April 2005 and increased the standard period of residence in New Zealand to qualify for citizenship from three to five years. The Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) was

introduced in December 2003. The SMC's focus on matching skilled migrants with New Zealand's needs and opportunities is likely to improve migrants' settlement outcomes, which may also impact positively on the length of time migrants remain in New Zealand.

The patterns of absence and non-return will change over time, reflecting changing source countries and immigration policies. Some of the analysis presented in this report will be incorporated into the *Migration Trends* series for ongoing analysis of absence and non-return. The pivot tables and SAS algorithms produced for this research will be used for ongoing analysis of migrants' absence and movement patterns.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

One long-term measure of a migrant's successful settlement and contribution to the country is the extent to which they remain in a country in the years following arrival or approval. It is important, however, to realise that people may leave the country on a temporary or permanent basis for a number of reasons, only some of which may be related to "unsuccessful" settlement. A reason that migrants may spend time out of New Zealand includes globalisation of labour flows, meaning that skilled migrants are mobile. Overseas family ties also mean that recent migrants are likely to spend time out of New Zealand.

Previous research has explored migrants' absence from New Zealand. Some of these studies have shown that certain sub-groups of migrants tend to spend long periods out of New Zealand after taking up residence. More recently, absence from New Zealand was found to be a significant reason for migrants not taking up their pre-purchased English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) tuition entitlement (see 1.2.2 below).⁵ These previous studies are limited in that migrants' absence is assessed at one point in time, rather than over the course of their residence in New Zealand.

The current research extends previous studies to understand more fully the dynamics of absenteeism and possible impacts on immigration policy. The research explores migrants' movements into and out of New Zealand for those approved between 1998 and 2004, including long-term absence from the country. Migrants' movement patterns and absenteeism are explored from a number of perspectives. The research does not directly explore the reasons that migrants spend time out of the country after residence approval.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 *Returning resident's visa policy*

Residence permit holders who wish to leave New Zealand temporarily require a returning resident's visa (RRV) to re-enter New Zealand. All residents are issued with an RRV that is current for two years from the date the first residence permit is granted. After migrants have been resident in New Zealand for two years and can demonstrate a commitment to New Zealand, they are entitled to an indefinite RRV. One way that commitment to New Zealand can be demonstrated is by spending a significant amount of time in the country during the two-year period.⁶ If migrants are unable to meet the requirements to demonstrate commitment to New Zealand, they may be eligible for a 12-month or 14-day RRV. Business Investor Category migrants are entitled to an indefinite RRV if they meet requirements imposed under section 18A of the Immigration Act.⁷ These requirements include maintaining an acceptable investment in New Zealand for a minimum of two years (but not necessarily remaining in the country during that time).⁸

⁵ *Migrants and their take-up of English for speakers of other languages tuition*. Department of Labour, March 2005.

⁶ That is, they have held residence permits for a total of 184 days or more in each of the two 12-month portions of the 24 months immediately preceding their application for an RRV (i.e. in each of the two 12-month portions, a period or periods that amount to 184 days or more).

⁷ Section 18A enables requirements to be imposed. The actual requirements are provided in policy.

⁸ From 4 July 2005, a new Investor Category came into effect. The new category introduced a number of changes, including a minimum investment amount of NZ\$2 million, and these funds being held by the New Zealand government for five years.

1.2.2 Related research

The regular *Migration Trends* series tracks absence rates for migrants approved for residence during the 1998 to 2002 calendar years. The analysis shows that, as at 30 June 2005, 23 percent of those approved for residence in 1998 were “long-term absent” from the country (absent for six months or more). There were wide variations in long-term absenteeism by immigration approval category. With the exception of the 1998 cohort, migrants approved through the Business categories were much more likely to be long-term absent than migrants approved through other categories. Variation in long-term absence by country of origin was also evident.⁹ A comparison of absence rates for those approved in the 1998–2002 calendar years shows that rates of absence in any given cohort increase over time. This may indicate that long-term absence is permanent, not temporary.

Other research has highlighted certain sub-groups of migrants tending to spend long periods out of the country. Research looking at the take-up of pre-purchased ESOL tuition showed that, of those who had pre-purchased tuition in recent years, 52 percent of Business¹⁰ and 27 percent of Skilled migrants were absent from New Zealand as at 24 November 2004. Business migrants, in particular, tended to spend long periods out of the country, with 29 percent absent for six months or more as at this date. Absence from New Zealand was found to be a reason for a low take-up rate of ESOL tuition in recent years.¹¹ An evaluation of the 1999 Business Immigration Policy highlighted high rates of absence by Business Investor migrants.¹²

Another project explored the incidence and character of astronaut and cosmonaut migration to New Zealand for Skilled and Business migrants approved between July and December 1997. “Astronaut migration” is a migration pattern first identified in the 1980s and refers to migrants who, after taking up residence, spend lengthy periods out of New Zealand. Typically, astronauts are believed to return to their country of origin to work or do business, leaving their spouses and children in New Zealand. “Cosmonaut migration” refers to childless migrants who engage in astronaut-like practices. The main finding was that, while many migrants spent some time out of New Zealand, few with families were out of New Zealand for extended periods. The number of people included in applications appeared to be inversely proportional to the incidence of astronaut migration.¹³ The findings may be specific to the cohort of migrants analysed (those approved for residence between July and December 1997).

1.3 Purpose

The main aim of this project was to extend existing studies into the absence of residents from New Zealand. The purpose was to identify groups of migrants with particular movement patterns into and out of New Zealand, and to explore the characteristics of migrants who are long-term absent so as to better understand migrants’ patterns of movement.

1.4 Research objectives

The objectives of the research were:

- 1 to produce a client history dataset identifying movements into and out of New Zealand for each client, including total time spent absent from the country, for

⁹ *Migration Trends 2004/2005*. Department of Labour, October 2005.

¹⁰ The Business Categories include the Entrepreneur, Investor and Employees of Relocating Businesses Categories.

¹¹ *Migrants and their take-up of English for speakers of other languages tuition*. Department of Labour, March 2005.

¹² *Business Immigration: The Evaluation of the 1999 Business Immigration Policy*. Department of Labour, August 2002.

¹³ *Astronaut Families and Cosmonaut Couples*. Department of Labour, May 2000.

those migrants whose residence applications were approved between January 1998 and December 2004

- 2 to identify the characteristics of migrants with particular movement patterns into and out of New Zealand, including long periods of absence
- 3 to explore an appropriate definition of “long-term absent”
- 4 to build SAS codes that enable ongoing analysis of migrants’ absenteeism.

1.5 Structure of the report

After this introduction, Chapter 2 describes the methodology used for the research. Chapter 3 describes the characteristics of migrants included in the research, the characteristics of those who did not arrive to take up residence and the average length of time migrants took to arrive in New Zealand. Chapter 4 includes data on the proportion of time migrants spent absent from New Zealand and the number and length of individual spells of absence. Chapter 5 provides data on long-term absence (for six months or more) as at December 2004. Chapter 6 looks at absence rates on a year-by-year basis, and Chapter 7 explores the characteristics of “high absence migrants” (those who spent 75 percent or more of their residence period out of the country). Chapter 8 provides data from a monthly time series – including the proportion of migrants not to return from a spell of absence during the analysis period.¹⁴ Chapter 9 compares out-migration estimates for the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts with the New Zealand usually resident population. Chapter 10 brings the findings together and draws some overall conclusions.

¹⁴ The monthly time series included assessing migrants’ status (i.e. onshore, offshore, or offshore and not returned during the analysis period) as at the 1st of each month.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

The research involved a quantitative analysis of the Department of Labour's Immigration database. The analysis was complex and involved a number of computer programs, including SAS, Access and Excel.

2.2 Research methodology

The research was completed in three stages, as outlined below.

2.2.1 Stage 1 – Producing the datasets

Two main datasets were produced from the Immigration database:

Client dataset

The client dataset included all migrants with residence applications completed between 1 January 1998 and 31 December 2004. This dataset was filtered to exclude 594 duplicate records. In the 594 cases where migrants had more than one completed residence application recorded, their most recent application was included in the dataset. Migrants who did not arrive to take up residence during the analysis period were also excluded. A total of 10,138 migrants did not arrive to take up residence, including 6,016 who did not arrive within the required one year and 4,122 approved in 2004 who were yet to arrive. The characteristics of those who did not arrive to take up residence are described in Chapter 3.

The final client dataset included 257,230 records (representing 257,230 migrants). A range of demographic and immigration variables relating to these migrants were included in the dataset.

One aspect of the analysis included exploring absence rates within and between different family types. This involved assigning a family type (including solo migrant, couple without children, two-parent family, or one-parent family) to each residence application. An algorithm involving two steps was used to define family type. Firstly, the attributes of individuals within each family type (including applicant type, age and marital status, where available) were defined and summed to derive the indicators used for each family type. Secondly, these attributes were used to define family type. (Figures A.1 and A.2 in the Appendix include a pictorial representation of the method used.)

Movement dataset

The movement dataset included movement information for migrants in the client dataset, including the dates of all movements into and out of New Zealand. A total of 1,431,456 movements were recorded for 253,152 migrants. Some migrants (4,078) had no movements recorded over the analysis period.

Some manipulation of the movement dataset was necessary before analysis could be carried out. In order to establish a complete residence history in terms of spells of absence, those approved onshore were assigned a dummy movement on the date they took up residence if they did not arrive or depart on this day. If a migrant's first recorded movement (after their application was completed) was an arrival, then the dummy movement assigned to the day residence was taken up was a departure. If

the first movement after the application was completed was a departure, then the start dummy movement was an arrival. This means that some migrants with long spells of absence may not have returned during the analysis period (or subsequent to the analysis) but will be recorded as having returned. This is highlighted in the relevant parts of the report.

Each person was also assigned a dummy movement for the end of the study period (31 December 2004), if they did not already have an arrival or departure on that day. This movement was set to be the opposite of the last recorded movement, in order to create a complete set. Where no movements were recorded over the analysis period, migrants were assigned an arrival on the date their residence application was completed and a departure at the end of the study period (31 December 2004).

In some cases, the movement dataset contained some inconsistencies. There were 4,392 cases where a migrant had two subsequent arrivals or two subsequent departures recorded (representing less than 2 percent of the population). This could occur, for example, if a migrant used two separate passports (see section 2.5 for a description of some technical difficulties that can lead to data inconsistencies).¹⁵ If a migrant had two subsequent arrivals, the location for the intervening spell of absence was assumed to be offshore. If two consecutive moves were departures, the intervening residence spell was assumed to be onshore.

The final movement dataset contained 1,322,192 moves (including arrivals and departures) for 257,230 migrants between January 1998 and December 2004. This includes the start and end dummy movements.

2.2.2 Stage 2 – Analysis

The analysis involved producing a history of each client's movements into and out of New Zealand during the analysis period. The interim steps described above (including assigning family type, assigning dummy moves and correcting data inconsistencies) were carried out before the stage 2 analysis.

The analysis was done using SAS algorithms to produce a number of derivative datasets and statistical tables. The statistical tables were exported into Excel pivot tables for analysis. This enabled identification for each migrant of:

- whether they arrived to take up residence (within 12 months of their residence application completion date)
- the number of spells of absence since arrival
- the length of each spell of absence
- the total time spent absent on a year-by-year basis (i.e. one year after arrival, two years after arrival, etc)
- the total time spent offshore
- a monthly time series assessing migrants' movement status (i.e. onshore, offshore, or offshore and not returned by the end of the analysis period) as at the 1st of each month
- the incidence of not returning from a spell of absence during the analysis period.

The second stage of the analysis involved exploring movement patterns for certain groups of migrants. This analysis was carried out by a range of immigration and demographic variables. A number of areas were explored including:

- the characteristics of those who did not arrive to take up residence within 12 months of their residence application completion date

¹⁵ The data inconsistencies were highest for the earliest cohorts.

- the characteristics of those who spent long periods out of New Zealand
- the characteristics of those who regularly come and go from New Zealand
- the characteristics of those who spent little or no time absent from New Zealand
- a comparison of absence rates by length of residence
- a comparison of absence rates across cohorts (calendar years)
- a comparison of absence rates within family units, for example, differences in absence rates within a family (i.e. principal versus secondary applicants)
- comparison of absence rates by family type (i.e. two-parent families, one parent families, couples without children and solo migrants)
- exploring an appropriate definition of “long-term absent”, for example, what proportion of people who were out of New Zealand for a continuous six-month period actually returned to New Zealand?
- exploring absence rates for those with similar characteristics to those who pre-purchase ESOL tuition (Skilled/Business secondary applicants who do not meet the minimum English language standards).

2.2.3 Stage 3 – Summarising the data and report writing

The final stage involved drawing together the analysis to produce a report that detailed the main findings.

2.3 Comparative New Zealand data

An additional part of analysis involved comparing migrants’ non-return rates with out-migration estimates for the New Zealand usually resident population. The estimates for the New Zealand usually resident population were based on existing 1996 and 2001 intercensal out-migration estimates.¹⁶ Birth and death statistics were applied to the data in order to estimate out-migration. The data reflects out-migration over the five-year Census period, i.e. those who were present at the 1996 Census, but not at the 2001 Census.¹⁷ The net migration estimates produced as part of this work have been compared to permanent and long-term arrival and departure (PLT) data and been found to be very comparable. This indicates that the data provides a good estimate of out-migration by the usually resident population.

In order to provide comparable data for migrants and the usually resident New Zealand population, out-migration rates for the cohorts of migrants approved in 1998 and 1999 were estimated over a five-year period. For the 1998 migrant cohort, the out-migration rate included those who were absent as at 1 March 2003 (approximately five years after approval) and who had not returned by the end of the analysis period. For the 1999 migrant cohort, the out-migration rates included those who were absent as at 1 March 2004 and who had not returned by the end of the analysis period. March was used to be consistent with the month that the Census is conducted, in order to minimise differences between the populations due to seasonal variation.

The above method provides out-migration estimates that are roughly comparable over a five-year period. It is estimated that there was a net undercount of 1.6 percent (60,000 people) at the 1996 Census and 2.2 percent (85,000 people) at the 2001 Census.¹⁸ This means that the out-migration estimates for the usually resident New Zealand population are likely to be slightly overestimated. The estimates are indicative rather than exact.

¹⁶ Newell, J and Bedford, R. 2005. *New Zealand Regional Intercensal Migration Estimates – 1981 to 2001*. Presentation at the Population Association of New Zealand 2005 Conference.

¹⁷ Those present at the 2001 Census, but not at the 1996 Census were not included in this analysis.

¹⁸ <http://www.stats.govt.nz/analytical-reports/post-enumeration-survey-2001/chapter-three-post-enumeration-results.htm>

2.4 Units of analysis and definitions

Unit	Categories included
Residence Stream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skilled/Business – Skilled Migrant (from 17 December 2003), General Skills (closed 1 July 2003), Interim General Skills (closed 12 November 2003), Entrepreneur, Investor, Employees of Relocating Businesses, Work to Residence. • Family Sponsored – Partnership (includes Partnership, Marriages and De Facto approvals), Parent, Sibling, Dependent Child, Adult Child, Family Quota, October 2000 Transitional Policy (now closed), Humanitarian (closed 1 October 2001). • International/Humanitarian – Refugee Quota, 1995 Refugee Status, Refugee Family Sponsored Quota, Samoan Quota, Pacific Access Category (PAC), Ministerial Direction, Section 35A, Victims of Domestic Violence.
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 16 years • 16–24 years • 25–34 years • 35–44 years • 45–54 years • 55–64 years • 65 years and over
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male • Female
Nationality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As recorded
Applicant type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal – the person assessed against the policy criteria. • Secondary – other people included in the residence application, including partners and dependent children.
Year application completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1998 to 2004 calendar years. • A residence application is completed when a visa or permit label is issued in the applicant's passport. • Completed applications are referred to as “approved” applications throughout this report.
Residence uptake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those approved onshore, residence is taken up on the date their application is completed. • For those approved offshore, residence is taken up on the date they arrive in New Zealand.
Family type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solo migrant • Two-parent family • One-parent family • Couple without children

2.5 Limitations with the data

A sizeable lead time is needed when undertaking analysis of absence. People approved for residence have one year from the date their residence application is completed to arrive. For example, a person approved for residence at the end of 1998 could potentially have arrived as late as the end of 1999.

Analysis of absence has recently been revised from that originally used in the *Migration Trends* report. The number of residence approvals in a given cohort is now based on the number of applications completed within a calendar year. (Previously the data was based on applications decided.) An application is completed when the visa or permit label is issued in the applicant's passport. Using this method provides more accurate data for calculating long-term absence. Completed applications are referred to as “approved” applications throughout the report.

There are some known technical issues involved in matching a person's movements in the Customs and Immigration computer systems. These problems include the following:

- The administrative process of "client linking" can mean that a client's original identity is not matched up with their later movement records. This can be a problem where a person uses two different passports.
- Duplicate client records can prevent correct application matching to movements.
- In some instances, movement information is not successfully passed between Customs and Immigration, or is not successfully outputted by the Immigration system.

Comparison of out-migration rates for the usually resident population and the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts is indicative only. As discussed above, there was an estimated undercount at the 1996 Census of 1.6 percent and at the 2001 Census of 2.2 percent. Because the undercount was estimated to be higher in 2001 than in 1996, this means that the out-migration rates are likely to be slightly overestimated. Only the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts were included in the comparative analysis so that out-migration rates could be explored over a five-year period (in line with the inter-Census period).

3 CHARACTERISTICS OF APPROVALS 1998–2004

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the characteristics of migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2004. The characteristics of those approved for residence, but who did not arrive to take up residence, are explored (although these migrants are excluded from the main analysis from Chapter 4 onwards). Data on the time taken to arrive for migrants approved offshore is included.

Variation in factors such as immigration policy and migrant source countries impacts on patterns of absenteeism and migrant flows. Some of the findings presented in this report will be specific to those approved between 1998 and 2004. It is important to understand the characteristics of migrants approved over this period.

3.2 Characteristics of those approved between 1998 and 2004

Migrants approved offshore have one year from the date their residence application is completed to arrive in New Zealand to take up residence. A total of 257,230 migrants were approved for residence between 1998 and 2004 and took up residence within this time (see Table 3.1). More migrants approved in 2004 will arrive subsequent to this analysis. The characteristics of those who did not arrive to take up residence are described below (section 3.3).

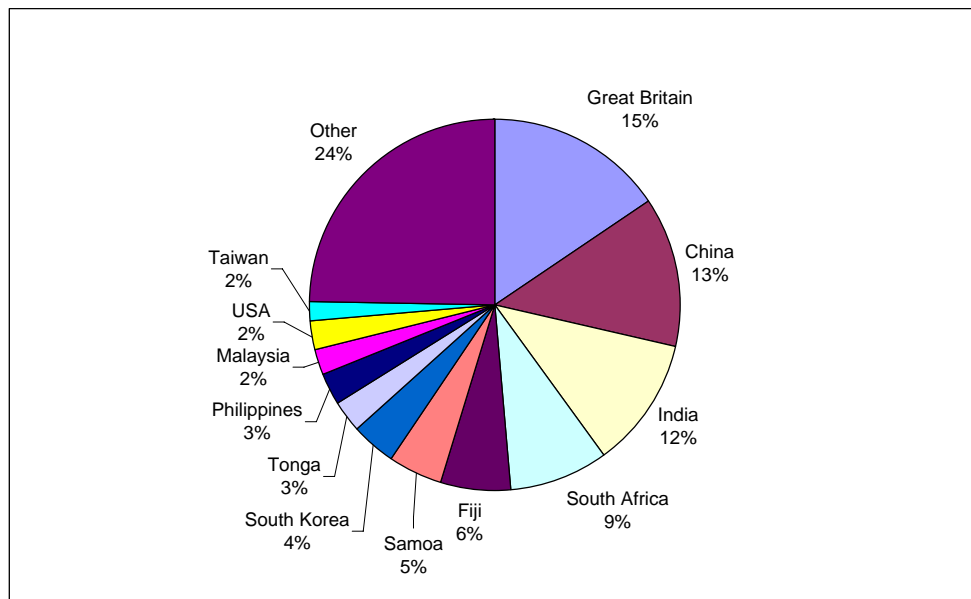
Table 3.1 Migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2004 who took up residence

Year application approved	Total number
1998	24,086
1999	28,711
2000	34,531
2001	48,545
2002	47,487
2003	43,083
2004	30,787
Total	257,230

The three largest source countries over the analysis period were Great Britain (15 percent), China (13 percent) and India (12 percent). Other significant sources of migrants were South Africa, Fiji, Samoa and South Korea (see Figure 3.1).

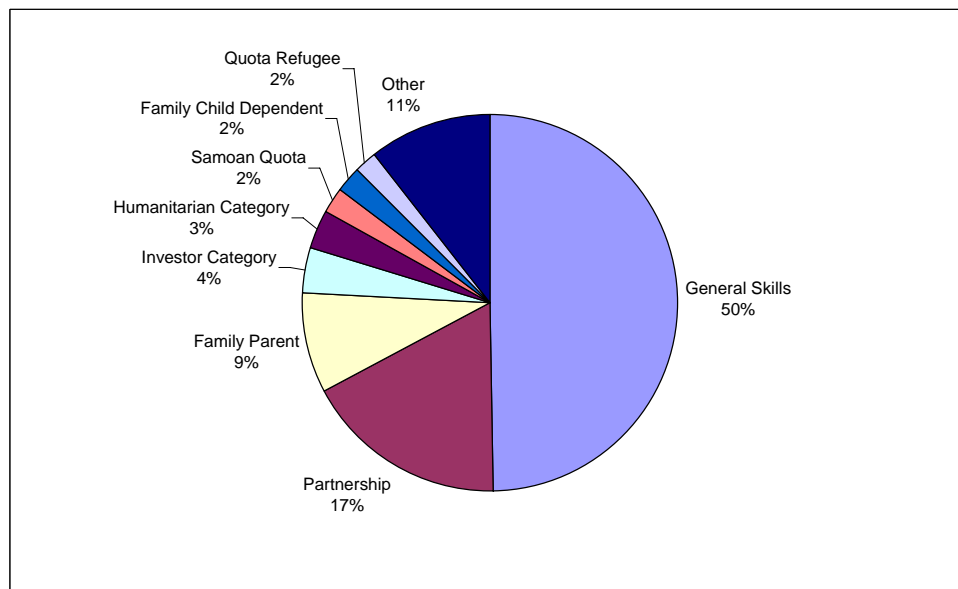
For comparison, in 2004/05 the proportion of migrants from Great Britain was much higher. The top source countries in 2004/05 were Great Britain (31 percent), China (10 percent) and South Africa and India (7 percent each). Changes in the source countries of migrants over time means that the patterns of absenteeism identified in this report will not necessarily persist over time.

Figure 3.1 Nationalities of migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2004 who took up residence $n=257,230$



Half of the migrants included in the analysis came through the General Skills Category (see Figure 3.2). Migrants through the Partnership Category¹⁹ made up 17 percent, followed by Family Parent (9 percent) and Investor Category (4 percent). The General Skills Category (GSC) closed in July 2003 and was replaced by an interim GSC (which required migrants to have a New Zealand job or job offer) before being replaced by the Skilled Migrant Category, which came into effect in December 2003.²⁰

Figure 3.2 Application criteria of migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 who took up residence $n=257,230$



¹⁹ The Partnership Category includes the Marriage, De facto and Partnership sub-categories.

²⁰ There were 4,837 people approved through the Skilled Migrant Category over the analysis period. This represented 1.9 percent of all approvals.

3.3 Characteristics of those who did not arrive to take up residence

A total of 10,138 migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2004 did not arrive to take up residence (see Table 3.2). This represented between 2 and 3 percent of those approved between 1998 and 2003. There was a downward trend in the proportion of people not arriving to take up residence between 1998 and 2003. At the time of analysis, one year had not passed for those approved in 2004. More people from this cohort will arrive to take up residence subsequent to the analysis.

It is possible that some of those who did not arrive to take up residence will apply and be approved again in subsequent years. A possible reason for people not taking up residence is if they simultaneously apply for residence in more than one country. However, respondents to the Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand (LisNZ) pilot survey were asked whether they had applied for residence in any other countries in the last three years. Almost all migrants (97 percent) had applied only for residence in New Zealand.²¹

Table 3.2 Those who did not arrive to take up residence between 1998 and 2004

Year residence application approved	Total applications approved	Did not arrive to take up residence	Proportion not to arrive
1998	24,943	857	3.4%
1999	29,711	1,000	3.4%
2000	35,412	881	2.5%
2001	49,737	1,192	2.4%
2002	48,699	1,212	2.5%
2003	43,957	874	2.0%
2004*	34,909	4,122	11.8%
Total	267,368	10,138	3.8%

- *Note: As 12 months had not passed for those approved in 2004, more people from this cohort will arrive subsequent to the analysis.

Table 3.3 shows those approved for residence between 1998 and 2003 who did not arrive to take up residence. The 2004 cohort is not included, since the one-year arrival period had not passed for these individuals. A total of 6,016 people approved between 1998 and 2003 did not arrive to take up residence, and most of these were approved through the GSC (61 percent). During the same period, the GSC made up 53 percent of all approvals (including those who arrived and did not arrive). Seven percent of those who did not arrive were approved through the Humanitarian Category, yet the Humanitarian Category made up only 4 percent of all approvals over the period.

²¹ Dunstan, S., Boyd, S., and Crichton, S. (March, 2004). *Migrants' Experiences of New Zealand. Pilot Survey Report, Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand (LisNZ)*. Department of Labour: Wellington.

Table 3.3 Those who did not arrive to take up residence between 1998 and 2003 by application criteria

Application criteria	Year application approved						Total 1998–2003	
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003		
General Skills	412	470	533	828	867	584	3,694	61.4%
Partnership	147	108	58	94	60	82	549	9.1%
Family Parent	109	112	89	69	43	46	468	7.8%
Humanitarian Category	40	85	107	79	113	19	443	7.4%
Refugee Quota	66	160	32	21	26	32	337	5.6%
Samoa Quota	31	30	30	24	16	14	145	2.4%
Investor Category	2	8	5	42	54	25	136	2.3%
Other	50	27	27	35	33	72	244	4.1%
Total	857	1,000	881	1,192	1,212	874	6,016	100.0%

Twenty-one percent of those who did not arrive to take up residence were from India (see Table 3.4). During the same period, migrants from India made up 12 percent of all approvals. The other main countries of non-arrivals were Great Britain (11 percent), South Africa (10 percent) and China (8 percent). The proportion of total approvals from these countries was 15 percent, 9 percent and 13 percent respectively.

Table 3.4 Those who did not arrive to take up residence between 1998 and 2003 by nationality

Nationality	n	%
India	1,259	20.9%
Great Britain	629	10.5%
South Africa	607	10.1%
China	488	8.1%
Iraq	329	5.5%
Samoa	228	3.8%
Somalia	176	2.9%
Fiji	169	2.8%
Malaysia	167	2.8%
South Korea	140	2.3%
USA	100	1.7%
Other	1,724	28.7%
Total	6,016	100.0%

Thirty-six percent of those who did not take up residence were principal applicants and 64 percent were secondary applicants (see Table 3.5). During the same period, 52 percent of all approvals were for principal applicants and 49 percent were for secondary applicants (including those who arrived and did not arrive). Therefore, secondary applicants were proportionately more likely not to arrive.

Table 3.5 Those who did not arrive to take up residence between 1998 and 2003 by applicant type

Applicant type	Did not arrive		Total approvals	
	n	%	n	%
Principal	2,182	36.3%	119,795	51.5%
Secondary	3,834	63.7%	112,664	48.5%
Total	6,016	100.0%	232,459	100.0%

Those aged younger than 16 years were overrepresented in the proportion not to arrive compared to all approvals. Thirty-five percent of those not to arrive and 24 percent of all approvals were under 16 years of age (see Table 3.6).

Table 3.6 Those who did not arrive to take up residence between 1998 and 2003 by age

Age	Did not arrive		Total approvals	
	n	%	n	%
< 16 years	2,112	35.1%	56,010	24.1%
16–24 years	595	9.9%	24,821	10.7%
25–34 years	1,227	20.4%	62,734	27.0%
35–44 years	1,177	19.6%	49,511	21.3%
45–54 years	429	7.1%	19,572	8.4%
55–64 years	229	3.8%	11,188	4.8%
65 years +	247	4.1%	8,623	3.7%
Total	6,016	100.0%	232,459	100.0%

3.4 Length of time to arrive

Table 3.7 shows the length of time it took migrants whose residence applications were approved offshore to arrive in New Zealand. Overall, 78 percent of those approved offshore arrived to take up residence within six months of their application being completed. This was fairly consistent over the period 1998 to 2003 (the period for which full data was available).²²

Migrants approved offshore made up 54 percent of approvals over the analysis period. When those approved onshore and offshore were combined, 88 percent of migrants were in New Zealand within six months of their residence application being completed.

Table 3.7 Time to arrive in New Zealand for those approved offshore

Time to arrive	Year residence application approved							Total	
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total %	Cumulative %
0–30 days	26.8%	30.1%	26.6%	20.8%	22.1%	25.9%	39.8%	25.6%	25.6%
31–60 days	20.3%	19.0%	18.6%	19.0%	18.3%	18.0%	24.4%	19.1%	44.8%
61–90 days	10.9%	11.0%	11.3%	13.0%	12.3%	11.4%	13.2%	11.9%	56.7%
91–120 days	8.6%	8.7%	8.6%	9.5%	8.0%	7.9%	6.3%	8.4%	65.1%
121–150 days	7.4%	7.0%	7.1%	7.3%	6.9%	6.4%	5.2%	6.9%	72.0%
151–180 days	5.9%	6.1%	5.6%	5.7%	5.5%	5.0%	3.6%	5.5%	77.5%
181–270 days	12.4%	11.3%	11.6%	12.1%	11.7%	12.3%	5.4%	11.5%	89.0%
271–366 days	7.6%	6.8%	10.5%	12.6%	15.1%	13.2%	2.1%	11.0%	100.0%
Total	14,788	16,266	20,418	28,984	29,124	20,239	9,101	138,920	138,920

3.5 Summary

A total of 257,230 migrants were approved for residence (and took up residence) between 1998 and 2004.

The main source countries over this period were Great Britain, China and India. It is of note that the proportion of British migrants approved in 2004/05 was twice the proportion approved over the analysis period (31 percent compared to 15 percent). Half of approvals between 1998 and 2004 were through the GSC.²³ The other main categories were Partnership (17 percent) and Family Parent (9 percent).

²² Migrants have 12 months from the date their residence application is completed to arrive to take up residence. At the time of analysis, the 12 months had not passed for those approved in 2004.

²³ The GSC closed in July 2003 and was replaced by an Interim GSC before being replaced by the Skilled Migrant Category, which came into effect in December 2003.

A small proportion of migrants approved each year did not arrive to take up residence (between 2 and 3 percent of those approved between 1998 and 2003). Compared to all approvals, GSC migrants, secondary applicants and those younger than 16 years were overrepresented in the proportion not to arrive.

4 OVERALL TIME SPENT ABSENT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter includes data on the overall length of time migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2004 (and who took up residence) spent out of the country. Data is provided on the total length of time spent absent as a proportion of the time since taking up residence. The number of individual spells of absence and lengths of spells of absence are explored.

One of the aims of this research was to further explore absence rates for those with similar characteristics to those who are required to pre-purchase English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) tuition. The purpose of this is to extend previous research that showed that migrants' absenteeism from New Zealand was a key reason for them not taking up the ESOL tuition that they had pre-purchased.²⁴ In relevant places, data is provided separately for migrants with a similar profile to those who are required to pre-purchase ESOL tuition. This mainly includes Skilled/Business secondary applicants who do not meet the minimum English language requirements.

Understanding the overall amount of time that migrants spend absent, as well as the number and length of spells of absence, helps to build a picture of the dynamics of migrants' movements and absenteeism. The analysis provides insights into the characteristics of those who spend much of their residence period out of the country compared with those who stay. Certain patterns are explored in more detail in subsequent chapters.

4.2 Overall time spent absent from New Zealand

Table 4.1 shows that, as would be expected, the propensity to spend time out of New Zealand increased with length of residence. Of those whose residence applications were approved in 1998, only 18 percent had spent no time out of the country. This compared to 71 percent of the 2004 cohort to have remained in New Zealand subsequent to residence uptake. For those who did spend time out the country, most commonly this was for less than 25 percent of their residence period, with 43 percent overall spending up to 25 percent absent.

Of those with residence applications approved between 1998 and 2003, between 9 and 12 percent had spent three-quarters or more of their residence period absent. The rate of spending 75 percent or more absent was particularly high for the 2002 cohort (12 percent). The characteristics of high absence migrants are explored further in Chapter 7.

²⁴ *Migrants and their take-up of English for speakers of other languages tuition*. Department of Labour, March 2005.

Table 4.1 Total time spent absent since taking up residence

Year residence application approved	Proportion of time spent absent					Total
	None	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	
1998	17.6%	54.9%	9.3%	6.9%	11.2%	24,086
1999	19.3%	55.7%	8.5%	6.0%	10.5%	28,711
2000	23.1%	53.4%	7.7%	5.7%	10.1%	34,531
2001	27.1%	49.0%	7.1%	5.9%	10.8%	48,545
2002	35.4%	41.3%	6.3%	5.0%	11.9%	47,487
2003	47.9%	34.1%	5.3%	3.4%	9.3%	43,083
2004	71.1%	18.7%	4.3%	2.3%	3.6%	30,787
Total	35.1%	43.3%	6.8%	5.0%	9.8%	257,230

4.2.1 Absence by residence category

Table 4.2 shows total time spent absent by residence category. Some residence categories have been introduced recently, which at least partly explains low absence rates for these categories. For example, 82 percent of those through the Skilled Migrant Category, introduced in December 2003, had spent no time absent.

The GSC was the main category of approvals over the analysis period. Thirty percent of migrants through this category had spent no time out of the country, and a further 46 percent had spent less than 25 percent of their time absent. Nearly one-quarter of GSC migrants spent 25 percent or more of their residence period absent (including 12 percent who spent 75 percent or more absent).

Compared to other migrants, Investor Category migrants stood out with high rates of absence. Forty-two percent of Investors spent 75 percent or more of their time out of the country. Only 9 percent of Investors spent no time out of the country subsequent to taking up residence. Investors do not need to remain in New Zealand in order to obtain an indefinite RRV. The Family Parent, Samoan Quota and Employees of Businesses categories also had comparatively high proportions of migrants spending 75 percent or more of their time absent (9, 8 and 12 percent respectively). Samoan citizens who have permanent residence in New Zealand are able to apply for New Zealand citizenship.²⁵ Migrants through the Samoan Quota who gain New Zealand citizenship would not need to obtain an RRV in order to come and go from New Zealand.

Migrants through some International/Humanitarian Stream categories had low rates of absence. Eighty percent of those through the Refugee Quota had remained in the country subsequent to taking up residence. Other categories with comparatively low rates of absence included the Transitional Policy²⁶, the Pacific Access Category and the Refugee Family Sponsored Category.

²⁵ To apply for New Zealand citizenship, Samoan citizens must have been in New Zealand on 14 September 1982 or have legally entered New Zealand after 14 September 1982 and have been granted permanent residence. See http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Services-Citizenship-Grants-of-New-Zealand-Citizenship-in-Other-Situations?OpenDocument#eight

²⁶ The October 2000 Transitional Policy offered well-settled overstayers the opportunity to apply for a two-year work permit and then to transition to residence. To qualify under this policy, applicants needed to have been resident in New Zealand for five years or more and to have no convictions. People lawfully in New Zealand who otherwise met these conditions could also apply for a work permit and then qualify for residence under this policy.

Table 4.2 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by residence category

Residence category	Proportion of time spent absent					Total
	None	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	
General Skills	29.9%	46.2%	7.1%	5.3%	11.6%	128,176
Partnership	31.7%	52.1%	6.2%	4.5%	5.5%	44,787
Family Parent	30.0%	41.3%	11.3%	8.4%	8.9%	22,237
Investor Category	9.0%	31.4%	9.3%	8.5%	41.7%	9,928
Humanitarian Category	54.2%	38.5%	3.2%	1.7%	2.4%	8,814
Samoaan Quota	56.4%	27.8%	3.7%	4.3%	7.9%	5,531
Family Child Dependent	43.4%	41.6%	5.2%	4.0%	5.8%	5,409
Refugee Quota	79.8%	15.4%	2.9%	0.5%	1.4%	5,105
Skilled Migrant	81.7%	11.6%	3.8%	1.7%	1.2%	4,837
Family Sibling	52.3%	32.7%	5.3%	3.6%	6.0%	4,245
Transitional Policy (Int/Hum)*	62.7%	34.4%	2.1%	0.5%	0.4%	4,121
1995 Refugee Status	49.6%	39.1%	6.1%	3.3%	1.8%	3,973
Entrepreneur Category	55.2%	34.8%	5.1%	2.1%	2.8%	2,533
Ministerial Direction	44.2%	45.2%	4.4%	3.1%	3.2%	2,455
Family Child Adult	36.9%	45.6%	7.5%	4.0%	6.0%	2,326
Transitional Policy (Family)*	76.0%	21.2%	1.8%	0.7%	0.3%	910
PAC	77.1%	13.9%	4.4%	1.6%	2.9%	547
Family Quota	70.7%	16.5%	3.8%	2.7%	6.2%	369
Transition 33(2) Voluntary	39.9%	53.4%	3.0%	1.2%	2.4%	328
Section 35A	32.1%	53.3%	8.2%	4.3%	2.2%	184
Refugee Family Sponsored	94.6%	1.8%	0.6%	2.4%	0.6%	166
Employees of Businesses	21.8%	54.8%	6.5%	4.8%	12.1%	124
Other	61.6%	32.0%	4.0%	0.8%	1.6%	125
Total	35.1%	43.3%	6.8%	5.0%	9.8%	257,230

- *Note: For the October 2000 Transitional Policy, applicants who had a New Zealand citizen or resident partner or a New Zealand born child were counted through the Family Sponsored Stream, while others were counted through the International/Humanitarian Stream.
- Note: Some of the differences between categories can be accounted for by the length of time that various categories have been in place. For example, the Skilled Migrant Category was introduced in December 2003, which is likely to account for the low rate of absence by migrants through this category.

Table 4.3 shows absence rates by residence category and applicant type. Overall, a higher proportion of secondary than principal applicants spent 75 percent or more of their time absent (11 percent compared to 9 percent). For the Investor Category, a much higher proportion of principal applicants (52 percent) than secondary applicants (38 percent) spent 75 percent or more of their time absent.

Table 4.3 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by residence category and applicant type

Residence Category	None		<25%		25–<50%		50–<75%		75–<100%	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
General Skills	22.9%	34.6%	52.1%	42.2%	8.2%	6.3%	6.0%	4.9%	10.9%	12.0%
Partnership	29.5%	46.5%	54.1%	39.1%	6.4%	4.6%	4.6%	3.7%	5.5%	6.1%
Family Parent	29.9%	30.2%	40.4%	42.7%	12.0%	10.4%	8.8%	7.8%	8.9%	8.9%
Investor Category	6.5%	10.1%	21.1%	35.8%	9.6%	9.2%	11.3%	7.3%	51.5%	37.6%
Humanitarian Category	46.4%	59.8%	43.7%	34.7%	4.5%	2.3%	2.6%	1.0%	2.7%	2.2%
Samoan Quota	45.5%	64.3%	37.9%	20.5%	3.6%	3.7%	4.8%	4.0%	8.2%	7.6%
Family Child Dependent	43.2%	56.3%	41.7%	34.5%	5.2%	2.3%	4.0%	2.3%	5.8%	4.6%
Refugee Quota	74.0%	82.9%	19.9%	13.0%	3.7%	2.5%	0.6%	0.4%	1.7%	1.2%
Skilled Migrant	75.9%	85.8%	15.1%	9.2%	5.4%	2.7%	2.3%	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%
Family Sibling	40.4%	68.2%	41.3%	21.3%	7.2%	2.9%	4.9%	2.0%	6.3%	5.6%
Transit. Policy (Int/Hum)*	62.0%	64.3%	34.8%	33.5%	2.2%	1.8%	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%	0.1%
1995 Refugee Status	51.3%	48.0%	35.6%	42.6%	6.0%	6.1%	4.5%	2.2%	2.5%	1.1%
Entrepreneur Category	49.2%	57.9%	38.4%	33.2%	8.4%	3.6%	2.0%	2.2%	1.9%	3.2%
Ministerial Direction	42.8%	45.9%	45.2%	45.2%	5.0%	3.5%	3.4%	2.6%	3.6%	2.8%
Family Child Adult	29.7%	64.2%	51.0%	25.2%	8.5%	3.5%	4.7%	1.4%	6.1%	5.7%
Transit. Policy (Family)*	76.3%	75.5%	21.0%	21.7%	1.3%	2.8%	1.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
PAC	70.3%	80.5%	20.9%	10.4%	5.5%	3.8%	0.5%	2.2%	2.7%	3.0%
Family Quota	59.6%	77.3%	21.3%	13.7%	8.1%	1.3%	5.1%	1.3%	5.9%	6.4%
Transition 33(2) Vol.	39.3%	47.8%	53.4%	52.2%	3.3%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%
Section 35A	30.3%	47.4%	54.5%	42.1%	9.1%	0.0%	3.6%	10.5%	2.4%	0.0%
Refugee Family Spons.	93.8%	94.9%	2.1%	1.7%	0.0%	0.8%	2.1%	2.5%	2.1%	0.0%
Employees of Bus.	15.9%	25.0%	54.5%	55.0%	9.1%	5.0%	9.1%	2.5%	11.4%	12.5%
Others	49.4%	82.6%	41.8%	15.2%	5.1%	2.2%	1.3%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%
Total	30.9%	39.7%	47.8%	38.5%	7.4%	6.1%	5.4%	4.5%	8.6%	11.2%

- Note: P = principal applicant. S = secondary applicant.
- *Note: For the October 2000 Transitional Policy, applicants who had a New Zealand citizen or resident partner or a New Zealand born child were counted through the Family Sponsored Stream, while others were counted through the International/Humanitarian Stream.
- Note: Some of the differences between categories can be accounted for by the length of time that various categories have been in place. For example, the Skilled Migrant Category was introduced in December 2003, which is likely to account for the low rate of absence by migrants through this category.

4.2.2 Absence by applicant type

A higher proportion of secondary than principal applicants had spent no time out of the country. Forty percent of secondary applicants had spent no time absent compared to 31 percent of principal applicants (see Table 4.4).

For those migrants who did spend time out of New Zealand, secondary applicants tended to be absent for longer than principal applicants. For principal applicants who had spent time absent, 69 percent had been absent for less than 25 percent of their time and 12 percent had been absent for 75 percent or more. The corresponding figures for secondary applicants were 64 percent absent for less than 25 percent of their time and 19 percent absent for 75 percent or more.

Table 4.4 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by applicant type

Applicant type	Proportion of time spent absent					Total
	None	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	
Principal	30.9%	47.8%	7.4%	5.4%	8.6%	134,378
Secondary	39.7%	38.5%	6.1%	4.5%	11.1%	122,852
Total	35.1%	43.3%	6.8%	5.0%	9.8%	257,230

Table 4.5 shows that, for all cohorts, secondary applicants were more likely than principal applicants to spend no time absent from New Zealand. The difference was most notable for those approved in 2002 and 2003. For the 2002 cohort, 30 percent of principal and 41 percent of secondary applicants spent no time absent. For the 2003 cohort, 43 percent of principal and 54 percent of secondary applicants spent no time absent.

On the other hand, for most cohorts (1999 to 2004), a higher proportion of secondary than principal applicants spent 75 percent or more of their time absent. This difference was the greatest for those approved in 2002 (4 percent difference) and 2003 (5 percent difference). For all cohorts, principal applicants were more highly represented than secondary applicants in the proportion spending less than 25 percent of their residence period absent.

Table 4.5 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by applicant type and year approved

Year residence application approved	Proportion of time spent absent									
	None		>0–<25%		25–<50%		50–<75%		75–<100%	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
1998	14.4%	21.6%	56.8%	52.5%	9.5%	9.2%	8.1%	5.5%	11.3%	11.2%
1999	16.2%	23.1%	57.8%	53.0%	8.8%	8.3%	7.0%	4.8%	10.2%	10.8%
2000	19.4%	27.4%	56.3%	50.2%	8.3%	7.1%	6.5%	4.7%	9.5%	10.7%
2001	23.1%	31.2%	53.3%	44.7%	7.8%	6.4%	6.4%	5.4%	9.4%	12.2%
2002	29.8%	40.6%	48.2%	34.8%	7.2%	5.5%	4.9%	5.2%	9.8%	13.9%
2003	42.7%	53.8%	41.1%	26.2%	6.1%	4.4%	3.2%	3.7%	6.9%	12.0%
2004	67.3%	75.6%	22.0%	14.8%	5.1%	3.3%	2.5%	2.0%	3.1%	4.3%

• Note: P = principal applicant. S = secondary applicant.

4.2.3 Absence by nationality

Migrants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia had high rates of spending 75 percent or more of their time out of the country (46, 31, 30, 30 and 23 percent respectively). As discussed in Chapter 8, migrants from these countries were highly represented in those not returning from a spell of absence. Migrants from Canada had a comparatively low rate of spending 75 percent or more of their residence period absent (12 percent), yet they had the fourth highest rate of not returning from a spell of absence (see Table 8.3). A similar pattern was evident for migrants from the USA. Thirteen percent of American migrants spent 75 percent or more absent, and they had the seventh highest rate of non-return. The proportion of migrants from Great Britain, China and India (the top three source countries) to spend 75 percent or more of their time absent was 6, 16 and 10 percent respectively. Seven percent of Samoan migrants spent 75 percent or more of their time absent (see Table 4.6).

Countries from which 50 percent or more of migrants had spent no time out of New Zealand included Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Zimbabwe, Samoa, Romania, Cambodia, Iran and Vietnam. If migrants from these countries did spend time out of New Zealand, most often this was for 25 percent or less of their time.

Table 4.6 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by nationality (1,000+ approvals)

Nationality	Proportion of time spent absent					Total
	None	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	
Great Britain	34.8%	48.3%	6.0%	4.4%	6.4%	40,056
China	27.5%	38.9%	10.3%	7.1%	16.2%	33,476
India	36.3%	41.5%	6.7%	5.1%	10.4%	29,609
South Africa	36.6%	49.8%	4.7%	2.7%	6.2%	22,137
Fiji	23.2%	61.9%	6.4%	3.6%	4.9%	15,535
Samoa	54.9%	30.4%	3.5%	4.1%	7.1%	12,232
South Korea	33.3%	49.4%	6.7%	3.9%	6.7%	9,570
Tonga	46.0%	44.7%	4.6%	2.5%	2.2%	7,700
Philippines	49.5%	39.9%	3.7%	2.7%	4.1%	6,705
Malaysia	12.2%	37.1%	9.6%	11.3%	29.8%	6,206
USA	19.8%	47.7%	10.8%	9.1%	12.6%	5,890
Taiwan	5.2%	28.9%	9.9%	9.9%	46.0%	4,438
Sri Lanka	29.2%	44.7%	9.4%	6.7%	10.0%	3,901
Zimbabwe	66.8%	27.9%	1.6%	1.1%	2.4%	3,324
Iraq	70.8%	21.1%	3.9%	1.6%	2.6%	3,091
Indonesia	17.6%	43.3%	8.4%	7.8%	23.0%	2,955
Japan	12.6%	62.4%	9.4%	7.6%	8.0%	2,932
Thailand	27.3%	56.5%	5.9%	4.4%	5.8%	2,673
Cambodia	54.2%	39.9%	2.6%	1.0%	2.2%	2,575
Germany	23.1%	51.8%	9.4%	5.8%	9.8%	2,550
Russia	40.5%	42.3%	5.9%	5.4%	5.8%	2,471
Canada	19.0%	50.5%	9.8%	8.3%	12.3%	2,097
Hong Kong	14.3%	37.2%	9.5%	8.5%	30.6%	1,986
Singapore	10.3%	37.2%	13.1%	10.0%	29.5%	1,937
Netherlands	33.9%	47.1%	5.2%	5.4%	8.3%	1,895
Afghanistan	77.2%	20.3%	1.8%	0.6%	0.1%	1,822
Somalia	81.0%	11.6%	4.9%	1.6%	0.9%	1,701
Iran	51.2%	34.5%	5.5%	5.3%	3.5%	1,596
Vietnam	51.2%	38.9%	3.9%	2.8%	3.2%	1,584
Pakistan	37.4%	42.0%	9.1%	4.3%	7.3%	1,499
Ireland	23.3%	53.8%	7.0%	6.9%	8.9%	1,320
Romania	54.9%	35.4%	4.0%	1.5%	4.2%	1,214
Yugoslavia	35.1%	38.4%	6.9%	5.3%	14.2%	1,048
Other	44.5%	37.6%	6.5%	4.6%	6.8%	17,504
Total	35.1%	43.3%	6.8%	5.0%	9.8%	257,229

• Note: Nationality was not recorded for one person.

For some nationalities, there were large differences between principal and secondary applicants in the amount of time spent absent. With the exception of Malaysia and China, secondary applicants from the top ten source countries were substantially more likely than principal applicants to have not left the country. For China, the difference between secondary and principal applicants was small – 28 percent of secondary and 27 percent of principal applicants had spent no time absent (see Table 4.7).

For some nationalities, a high proportion of secondary compared to principal applicants spent three-quarters or more of their residence period absent. Migrants from China, Malaysia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Singapore had comparatively high rates of absence and secondary applicants accounted for more of this absence than principal applicants.

Table 4.7 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by nationality and applicant type (top 25 source countries)

Nationality	Proportion of time spent absent									
	None		<25%		25–<50%		50–<75%		75–<100%	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
Great Britain	28.4%	42.9%	53.9%	41.2%	6.7%	5.2%	4.9%	3.8%	6.1%	6.9%
China	26.9%	28.2%	42.6%	34.4%	11.2%	9.3%	7.3%	6.9%	12.0%	21.3%
India	32.1%	40.2%	46.0%	37.2%	7.4%	6.1%	5.1%	5.0%	9.4%	11.4%
South Africa	31.5%	39.7%	53.6%	47.4%	5.3%	4.3%	3.2%	2.5%	6.4%	6.1%
Fiji	18.3%	27.9%	66.3%	57.5%	6.8%	6.0%	3.9%	3.4%	4.6%	5.2%
Samoa	50.4%	62.0%	35.8%	22.1%	3.6%	3.3%	3.8%	4.4%	6.4%	8.1%
South Korea	26.0%	38.2%	50.2%	48.9%	9.5%	4.9%	5.4%	2.8%	8.9%	5.2%
Tonga	43.2%	50.4%	47.7%	39.9%	4.4%	5.0%	2.6%	2.3%	2.0%	2.4%
Philippines	41.4%	58.6%	46.9%	32.2%	4.4%	3.0%	3.3%	2.0%	4.0%	4.2%
Malaysia	12.8%	11.8%	44.3%	31.9%	9.1%	9.9%	9.1%	12.9%	24.7%	33.5%
USA	18.9%	21.2%	49.9%	44.1%	11.0%	10.5%	9.0%	9.2%	11.2%	14.9%
Taiwan	7.1%	3.7%	30.6%	27.6%	10.9%	9.0%	12.2%	8.1%	39.2%	51.6%
Sri Lanka	30.0%	28.5%	43.8%	45.5%	9.6%	9.2%	7.2%	6.2%	9.4%	10.6%
Zimbabwe	59.3%	70.9%	35.3%	23.9%	1.8%	1.6%	1.3%	1.1%	2.2%	2.5%
Iraq	67.9%	73.7%	23.2%	19.0%	3.9%	3.8%	1.7%	1.6%	3.2%	1.9%
Indonesia	18.0%	17.2%	48.6%	38.0%	8.0%	8.8%	8.6%	6.9%	16.8%	29.2%
Japan	11.5%	16.5%	64.6%	54.5%	9.4%	9.3%	7.9%	6.7%	6.6%	13.0%
Thailand	26.9%	29.0%	59.3%	46.2%	5.8%	6.5%	3.8%	6.9%	4.2%	11.4%
Cambodia	46.1%	65.0%	46.5%	31.0%	3.6%	1.4%	1.5%	0.5%	2.3%	2.1%
Germany	19.9%	28.6%	55.9%	44.9%	9.8%	8.8%	5.8%	5.7%	8.5%	11.8%
Russia	38.1%	43.7%	43.8%	40.4%	6.1%	5.8%	6.6%	3.9%	5.4%	6.3%
Canada	16.6%	24.6%	55.9%	38.2%	9.4%	10.9%	7.9%	9.3%	10.3%	16.9%
Hong Kong	13.7%	15.0%	40.7%	32.0%	8.9%	10.4%	9.0%	7.8%	27.6%	34.8%
Singapore	10.3%	10.3%	39.1%	35.8%	13.7%	12.6%	10.2%	9.9%	26.7%	31.4%
Netherlands	27.2%	41.6%	53.1%	40.3%	6.6%	3.6%	5.5%	5.4%	7.6%	9.1%
Other	40.0%	57.9%	41.4%	29.1%	6.9%	4.9%	5.1%	2.8%	6.6%	5.2%
Total	30.9%	39.7%	47.8%	38.5%	7.4%	6.1%	5.4%	4.5%	8.6%	11.2%

• Note: P = principal applicant. S = secondary applicant.

4.2.4 Absence by those with similar characteristics to migrants who pre-purchase ESOL tuition

One of the aims of this research was to further explore absence rates for those with similar characteristics to those who are required to pre-purchase ESOL tuition.²⁷ Previous research has shown that a key reason for a high rate of non-take-up of tuition in recent years is absenteeism from the country.²⁸ The main groups of migrants who are required to pre-purchase tuition are Skilled/Business secondary applicants who do not meet the required English language standards. In this section, absence rates for certain groups are compared with some findings from the ESOL research.

The ESOL research showed that 50 percent of those who pre-purchased ESOL tuition between November 1998 and November 2004 were from China. Table 4.8 shows that, of the Chinese Skilled/Business migrants, secondary applicants were much more likely than principal applicants to spend 75 percent or more of their residence period absent. Twenty-seven percent of secondary applicants were

²⁷ Since November 1998, secondary applicants under the Skilled and Business categories (and principal applicants prior to November 2002) who do not meet the minimum English language standards have been required to pre-purchase ESOL tuition.

²⁸ *Migrants and their take-up of English for speakers of other languages tuition*. Department of Labour, March 2005.

absent for 75 percent or more compared to 19 percent of principal applicants. The ESOL research showed that about one-third of Chinese migrants who pre-purchased between three and three and a half years ago (and whose tuition was due to expire) had used none of their entitlement.

South Korea was another main pre-purchase country between 1998 and 2004 (17 percent of those who pre-purchased ESOL tuition were South Korean), yet absence rates for South Koreans were comparatively low (10 percent of principal and 5 percent of secondary applicants were absent for 75 percent or more of their time). In line with this, the ESOL research showed that South Koreans had higher rates of taking up their tuition than those from the other main source countries to pre-purchase.

Ten percent of those who pre-purchased ESOL tuition between 1998 and 2004 were from Taiwan. Both principal and secondary applicants from Taiwan had very high rates of absence (54 and 53 percent respectively spent 75 percent or more absent). Consequently, the ESOL research showed that Taiwanese migrants had the highest rate of not using their tuition.

Indonesia and Japan also stood out, with secondary applicants more likely than principal applicants to spend 75 percent or more of their time absent. The ESOL research showed that Indonesia and Japan made up one percent each of those to pre-purchase ESOL tuition between 1998 and 2004.

Table 4.8 Total time spent absent since taking up residence for Skilled/Business migrants by nationality and applicant type (1,000+ approvals)

Nationality	Proportion of time spent absent									
	None		<25%		25–<50%		50–<75%		75–<100%	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
Great Britain	24.8%	42.6%	54.8%	41.4%	7.5%	5.1%	5.6%	3.8%	7.3%	7.2%
India	29.6%	39.4%	47.0%	37.4%	6.8%	5.8%	5.1%	5.0%	11.5%	12.3%
China	23.0%	24.1%	38.8%	32.4%	12.0%	9.4%	7.5%	7.0%	18.8%	27.1%
South Africa	29.6%	39.7%	55.5%	47.6%	5.0%	4.3%	3.1%	2.3%	6.7%	6.2%
South Korea	26.8%	38.3%	49.6%	49.2%	8.6%	4.7%	4.8%	2.7%	10.2%	5.0%
Fiji	13.2%	23.8%	67.6%	60.2%	7.6%	6.3%	4.2%	3.4%	7.5%	6.3%
Malaysia	7.5%	10.8%	37.5%	30.5%	10.3%	10.1%	11.0%	13.3%	33.7%	35.2%
Philippines	39.8%	59.1%	46.5%	31.9%	5.0%	2.9%	3.7%	1.8%	5.1%	4.4%
Taiwan	4.6%	3.3%	22.7%	26.9%	8.0%	8.9%	10.3%	7.7%	54.4%	53.2%
USA	10.1%	16.3%	50.4%	45.0%	13.6%	11.7%	10.8%	10.0%	15.1%	17.0%
Zimbabwe	57.1%	71.0%	37.4%	23.9%	2.2%	1.5%	0.9%	0.9%	2.4%	2.7%
Indonesia	13.8%	15.3%	46.7%	38.2%	8.3%	8.7%	10.0%	6.7%	21.2%	31.2%
Sri Lanka	18.5%	24.2%	50.1%	45.7%	10.3%	9.7%	8.0%	7.2%	13.1%	13.1%
Germany	16.6%	27.6%	55.6%	45.2%	11.1%	9.2%	7.4%	6.1%	9.3%	11.7%
Singapore	6.5%	9.5%	36.9%	35.8%	14.6%	12.4%	11.5%	10.1%	30.6%	32.2%
Japan	10.0%	15.9%	64.4%	55.2%	10.9%	9.3%	8.9%	6.4%	5.9%	13.2%
Netherlands	24.4%	41.1%	55.5%	40.9%	6.2%	3.5%	6.4%	5.5%	7.5%	8.9%
Russia	34.2%	41.1%	46.8%	42.1%	7.6%	6.1%	5.9%	3.6%	5.5%	7.1%
Canada	9.3%	22.6%	54.0%	36.8%	11.4%	12.1%	10.4%	9.3%	14.9%	19.3%
Hong Kong	7.1%	7.6%	31.8%	31.5%	9.0%	11.2%	9.8%	9.0%	42.2%	40.8%
Romania	48.3%	64.0%	43.2%	28.1%	3.3%	3.7%	1.3%	0.8%	3.9%	3.4%
Other	25.3%	39.3%	50.4%	39.5%	7.9%	6.9%	6.5%	5.0%	9.9%	9.3%
Total	18.2%	35.1%	59.9%	46.6%	9.3%	9.6%	5.9%	4.5%	6.7%	4.1%

- Note: P = principal applicant. S = secondary applicant.
- Note: Nationality was not recorded for one person.

4.2.5 Gender

A slightly higher proportion of males (11 percent) than females (9 percent) spent 75 percent or more of their time absent. A higher proportion of males (36 percent) than females (34 percent) spent no time absent (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.9 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by gender

Gender	Proportion of time spent absent					Total
	None	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	
Male	36.0%	41.6%	6.7%	5.0%	10.7%	125,950
Female	34.3%	45.0%	6.8%	4.9%	9.0%	131,276
Total	35.1%	43.3%	6.8%	5.0%	9.8%	257,226

• Note: Gender was not recorded for four people.

For every cohort (1998 to 2004), a slightly higher proportion of males than females (between 1 and 2 percent difference) had spent no time absent from New Zealand. However, each year a slightly higher proportion of males than females spent 75 percent or more of their time absent (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.10 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by gender and year residence application approved

Year residence application approved	Proportion of time spent absent									
	None		<25%		25–<50%		50–<75%		75–<100%	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1998	18.3%	16.9%	53.3%	56.4%	9.8%	9.0%	7.1%	6.8%	11.6%	10.9%
1999	20.2%	18.4%	54.3%	56.9%	8.6%	8.5%	6.0%	6.1%	10.8%	10.1%
2000	24.1%	22.2%	51.6%	55.1%	7.8%	7.6%	5.7%	5.6%	10.6%	9.5%
2001	28.1%	26.2%	46.8%	51.2%	7.1%	7.2%	6.0%	5.8%	12.0%	9.6%
2002	36.3%	34.5%	39.0%	43.5%	6.2%	6.5%	5.1%	4.9%	13.3%	10.5%
2003	48.8%	47.1%	32.4%	35.6%	5.0%	5.6%	3.5%	3.3%	10.3%	8.3%
2004	71.5%	70.7%	18.1%	19.3%	4.1%	4.4%	2.3%	2.2%	3.9%	3.3%
Total	36.0%	34.3%	41.6%	45.0%	6.7%	6.8%	5.0%	4.9%	10.7%	9.0%

• Note: M = male. F = female.

• Note: Gender was not recorded for four people.

For some age groups, there were gender differences in absence rates (see Table 4.11). Males aged 35 years and older were more likely than females to spend 50 percent or more of their time absent. The difference was particularly noticeable for 45 to 54 year olds, with 24 percent of males spending 50 percent or more of their time absent compared to 17 percent of females. For 35 to 44 year olds, 19 percent of males spent 50 percent or more of their time absent compared to 15 percent of females.

For those aged 16 to 24 years, males were more likely than females to have remained in the country subsequent to taking up residence. Forty-three percent of males had remained in New Zealand compared to 36 percent of females.

Table 4.11 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by gender and age

Age group	Proportion of time spent absent									
	None		<25%		25–<50%		50–<75%		75–<100%	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
< 16 years	46.0%	44.7%	34.5%	36.0%	5.1%	5.2%	4.3%	4.0%	10.1%	10.1%
16–24 years	43.2%	35.7%	42.9%	48.8%	5.4%	6.3%	2.9%	3.5%	5.6%	5.8%
25–34 years	30.2%	29.3%	50.3%	51.0%	6.8%	6.8%	4.7%	5.0%	7.9%	7.8%
35–44 years	32.5%	32.4%	41.4%	45.9%	6.7%	6.4%	5.4%	4.6%	14.0%	10.6%
45–54 years	29.6%	28.4%	38.6%	45.5%	8.1%	8.6%	6.4%	6.3%	17.4%	11.1%
55–64 years	26.9%	25.9%	40.8%	44.7%	12.8%	11.8%	8.3%	8.8%	11.2%	8.8%
65 years +	35.6%	39.4%	35.3%	34.4%	10.8%	10.0%	8.5%	7.8%	9.8%	8.2%
Total	36.0%	34.3%	41.6%	45.0%	6.7%	6.8%	5.0%	4.9%	10.7%	9.0%

- M = male. F = female.
- Note: Gender was not recorded for four people.

4.2.6 Age

A higher proportion of those aged 45 to 54 years (15 percent), 35 to 44 years (12 percent) and less than 16 years (10 percent) had spent 75 percent or more of their time absent compared to other age groups (see Table 4.12). Migrants aged between 16 and 24 years were less likely than others to spend 75 percent or more of their time absent (6 percent).

A comparatively high proportion of migrants aged 35 years and older were absent for 50 percent or more of their time. Eighteen percent of those aged 35 and older were absent for at least half of their time, compared to 13 percent of those younger than 35 years. Table 4.11 above shows that males accounted for more of this difference than females.

Table 4.12 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by age

Age group	Proportion of time spent absent					Total
	None	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	
< 16 years	45.4%	35.3%	5.1%	4.2%	10.1%	60,553
16–24 years	39.1%	46.0%	5.9%	3.2%	5.7%	28,158
25–34 years	29.7%	50.7%	6.8%	4.9%	7.8%	70,161
35–44 years	32.5%	43.6%	6.5%	5.0%	12.3%	54,771
45–54 years	29.0%	41.8%	8.3%	6.4%	14.5%	21,923
55–64 years	26.4%	42.9%	12.3%	8.6%	9.9%	12,234
65 years +	37.6%	34.8%	10.4%	8.1%	9.0%	9,430
Total	35.1%	43.3%	6.8%	5.0%	9.8%	257,230

4.2.7 Investor Category and nationality

Table 4.13 shows the proportion of time Investor Category migrants spent absent by nationality. The main source countries were China and Taiwan, and migrants from both countries had high rates of spending 75 percent or more of their residence period absent (42 and 67 percent respectively). The rates of high absence for Chinese and Taiwanese Investors were particularly high for the 2002 and 2003 cohorts (44 and 50 percent for China and 74 and 78 percent for Taiwan).

South Korea and Great Britain were the other main source countries of Investors. Investors from these countries were likely to spend the majority of their residence period in New Zealand. Twenty-one percent of South Koreans had remained continuously in the country after taking up residence, and a further 54 percent spent up to 25 percent absent. For British Investors, 36 percent remained in New Zealand continuously and 42 percent spent up to 25 percent absent.

A new Investor Category came into effect from July 2005. A requirement of the new category is that Investors make New Zealand their home at the end of the five-year investment period (see Chapter 8 for more detail).

Table 4.13 Total time spent absent since taking up residence for Investor Category migrants by nationality

Nationality	Proportion of time spent absent					Total
	None	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	
China	5.4%	31.4%	11.5%	9.6%	42.2%	4,892
Taiwan	2.4%	17.9%	5.2%	7.2%	67.2%	1,935
South Korea	20.8%	54.0%	7.0%	5.0%	13.3%	828
Great Britain	36.2%	41.9%	4.9%	7.2%	9.8%	652
Malaysia	1.8%	20.7%	7.1%	10.0%	60.4%	280
Hong Kong	8.0%	25.3%	12.3%	6.9%	47.5%	261
USA	9.6%	26.8%	13.2%	16.4%	34.0%	250
Netherlands	38.0%	43.4%	1.6%	6.2%	10.9%	129
Singapore	9.3%	40.2%	14.0%	8.4%	28.0%	107
Germany	9.7%	32.3%	25.8%	1.6%	30.6%	62
Japan	7.0%	40.4%	8.8%	17.5%	26.3%	57
Indonesia	0.0%	21.8%	7.3%	14.5%	56.4%	55
Other	14.0%	41.9%	11.4%	5.2%	27.4%	420
Total	9.0%	31.4%	9.3%	8.5%	41.7%	9,928

4.2.8 Family type

There was variation in the proportion of time spent absent by different family types (see Table 4.14). A comparatively high proportion of migrants from the family types “couples without children” and “two-parent families” spent 50 percent or more of their time absent from New Zealand (18 and 17 percent respectively). This compared to 10 percent of migrants from “one-parent families” and 11 percent of solo migrants.

For migrants from two-parent families, a higher proportion of principal (19 percent) than secondary applicants (16 percent) spent 50 percent or more of their time absent. This finding may point to some incidence of “astronaut migration” (where a migrant returns to their country of origin to work or do business, leaving their partner and children in New Zealand). For migrants from the family type “couples without children”, there was not much difference by applicant type in the proportion of time spent absent.

Previous research examined absence patterns for Skilled and Business migrants approved between July and December 1997.²⁹ The research found that the overall level of astronaut migration was low. About a third of children from two-parent families had, at some point, been in New Zealand with only one parent for a brief period. About a quarter of children from one-parent families had been in New Zealand without a parent. While the current research did not directly examine astronaut migration, the data in Table 4.14 suggests a higher level of astronaut migration for migrants from two-parent families than other family types.

A higher proportion of solo migrants than migrants from other family types spent up to 25 percent of their residence period absent (52 percent of solo migrants were absent for this amount of time). Solo migrants appear to be quite mobile, while spending the majority of their time in New Zealand.

²⁹ *Astronaut Families and Cosmonaut Couples*. Department of Labour, May 2000.

Table 4.14 Total time spent absent since taking up residence by family type

Family type	Applicant type	Proportion of time spent absent					Total
		None	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	
One-parent family	Principal	40.0%	43.6%	5.3%	3.8%	7.3%	5,969
	Secondary	51.4%	34.7%	4.2%	3.4%	6.3%	10,433
	Total	47.3%	37.9%	4.6%	3.5%	6.7%	16,402
Two-parent family	Principal	34.1%	40.3%	6.5%	5.2%	13.8%	29,765
	Secondary	41.4%	37.1%	5.5%	4.3%	11.8%	85,682
	Total	39.5%	37.9%	5.8%	4.5%	12.3%	115,447
Couple without children	Principal	27.4%	45.5%	9.7%	7.2%	10.2%	20,609
	Secondary	28.8%	44.6%	8.8%	6.2%	11.6%	24,418
	Total	28.1%	45.0%	9.2%	6.6%	10.9%	45,027
Solo	Total	29.7%	51.7%	7.3%	5.1%	6.2%	76,108
Other family type	Principal	36.6%	44.3%	8.7%	4.0%	6.5%	1,965
	Secondary	41.6%	43.2%	6.8%	3.1%	5.3%	2,281
	Total	39.3%	43.7%	7.6%	3.5%	5.8%	4,246
Total	Principal	30.9%	47.8%	7.4%	5.4%	8.6%	134,378
	Secondary	39.7%	38.5%	6.1%	4.5%	11.1%	122,852
	Total	35.1%	43.3%	6.8%	5.0%	9.8%	257,230

4.3 Number of spells of absence

This section looks at the number of separate spells of absence migrants had over the analysis period. A spell of absence is a departure from New Zealand and a subsequent arrival. In the case that a spell extended before the beginning of the analysis period (1 January 1998) or after the end of the period (31 December 2004), a “dummy move” variable was imputed to create a complete spell (see the methodology in Chapter 2 for more detail).

Table 4.15 shows the number of spells of absence for all migrants over the analysis period. Migrants most commonly had between one and two spells of absence (44 percent overall), but there were differences across the cohorts. For the 1998 to 2002 cohorts, migrants were most likely to have had one to two spells of absence (ranging from 42 percent of the 1998 cohort to 48 percent of the 2002 cohort). Migrants from the 2003 and 2004 cohorts were most likely to have had no spells of absence (48 percent in 2003 and 71 percent in 2004). The high proportion of migrants with between one and two spells of absence indicates that many migrants are not very mobile.

Table 4.15 Number of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by year application approved

Year residence application approved	Number of spells of absence					Total
	0	1–2	3–4	5–10	11+	
1998	17.6%	41.9%	20.3%	15.1%	5.2%	24,086
1999	19.3%	44.0%	19.7%	13.0%	4.1%	28,711
2000	23.1%	46.3%	17.6%	10.4%	2.7%	34,531
2001	27.1%	47.8%	15.3%	8.0%	1.7%	48,545
2002	35.4%	48.3%	11.1%	4.6%	0.6%	47,487
2003	48.0%	45.2%	5.2%	1.5%	0.2%	43,083
2004	71.3%	27.5%	1.0%	0.2%	0.0%	30,787
Total	35.1%	43.9%	12.4%	6.9%	1.8%	257,230
Cumulative row %	35.1%	79.0%	91.4%	98.3%	100.0%	

Investor Category migrants were highly mobile compared to those through other categories (see Table 4.16). Nineteen percent of Investors had five or more spells of absence (including 4 percent with 11 or more spells). Sixteen percent of the 124

migrants approved through the Employees of Businesses category had five or more spells of absence.

Ten percent of migrants approved through the General Skills and the Partnership Categories had five or more spells of absence. Nine percent of those approved through Ministerial Direction and 8 percent through the Family Child Adult and Family Parent Categories had five or more spells of absence. Through most other categories, 5 percent or less had five or more spells of absence.

Table 4.16 Number of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by residence category

Residence category	Number of spells of absence					Total
	0	1–2	3–4	5–10	11+	
General Skills	29.9%	47.1%	13.3%	7.6%	2.2%	128,176
Partnership	31.7%	43.5%	14.6%	8.2%	2.0%	44,787
Family Parent	30.0%	47.7%	14.7%	6.6%	0.9%	22,237
Investor Category	9.1%	52.3%	19.2%	15.4%	4.0%	9,928
Humanitarian Category	54.2%	34.5%	7.7%	3.2%	0.5%	8,814
Samoa Quota	56.3%	34.5%	5.3%	2.8%	1.1%	5,531
Family Child Dependent	43.5%	42.5%	9.2%	4.3%	0.5%	5,409
Refugee Quota	79.8%	18.6%	1.3%	0.3%	0.0%	5,105
Skilled Migrant	82.1%	17.4%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%	4,837
Family Sibling	52.3%	35.8%	8.4%	3.1%	0.5%	4,245
Transitional Policy (Int/Hum)*	62.7%	34.1%	2.9%	0.3%	0.0%	4,121
1995 Refugee Status	49.6%	42.4%	6.5%	1.4%	0.1%	3,973
Entrepreneur Category	55.2%	38.2%	4.0%	2.1%	0.6%	2,533
Ministerial Direction	44.2%	36.0%	10.4%	6.9%	2.5%	2,455
Family Child Adult	37.1%	41.9%	13.3%	6.6%	1.0%	2,326
Transitional Policy (Family)*	76.0%	22.9%	0.9%	0.2%	0.0%	910
PAC	77.5%	20.3%	1.8%	0.4%	0.0%	547
Family Quota	70.7%	27.4%	1.4%	0.5%	0.0%	369
Transition 33(2) Voluntary	39.9%	42.4%	12.5%	4.6%	0.6%	328
Section 35A	32.1%	39.1%	14.1%	12.0%	2.7%	184
Refugee Family Sponsored	94.6%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	166
Employees of Businesses	21.8%	54.8%	7.3%	12.9%	3.2%	124
Other	61.6%	24.8%	5.6%	6.4%	1.6%	125
Total	35.1%	43.9%	12.4%	6.9%	1.8%	257,230

- *Note: For the October 2000 Transitional Policy, applicants who had a New Zealand citizen or resident partner or a New Zealand born child were counted through the Family Sponsored Stream, while others were counted through the International/Humanitarian Stream.

A high proportion of migrants from the USA and Japan had five or more spells of absence (23 percent each), yet migrants from these countries were not amongst the top countries to spend 75 percent or more absent (see Table 4.6 above). This indicates that migrants from these countries had a tendency to be highly mobile without spending lengthy periods absent. Nineteen percent of migrants from Taiwan and 18 percent from Singapore had five or more spells of absence (see Table 4.17).

The four main approval sources over the analysis period were Great Britain, China, India and South Africa. The proportions from these countries to have five or more spells of absence were 12, 8, 3 and 7 percent respectively.

Table 4.17 Number of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by nationality

Nationality	Number of spells of absence					Total
	0	1-2	3-4	5-10	11+	
Great Britain	34.8%	39.6%	13.9%	8.8%	2.9%	40,056
China	27.5%	51.1%	13.8%	6.6%	1.0%	33,476
India	36.3%	53.2%	7.6%	2.4%	0.5%	29,609
South Africa	36.6%	45.3%	11.6%	5.3%	1.3%	22,137
Fiji	23.2%	45.0%	18.8%	10.8%	2.3%	15,535
Samoa	54.9%	34.5%	6.4%	3.3%	0.9%	12,232
South Korea	33.3%	42.7%	13.4%	8.6%	2.0%	9,570
Tonga	46.0%	37.6%	9.9%	4.9%	1.6%	7,700
Philippines	49.6%	39.7%	7.8%	2.4%	0.6%	6,705
Malaysia	12.2%	50.9%	21.4%	13.1%	2.5%	6,206
USA	19.8%	40.2%	17.3%	15.9%	6.9%	5,890
Taiwan	5.3%	56.7%	19.5%	14.8%	3.7%	4,438
Sri Lanka	29.2%	51.0%	13.8%	5.1%	0.9%	3,901
Zimbabwe	66.8%	28.4%	3.4%	1.2%	0.2%	3,324
Iraq	70.8%	24.2%	3.3%	1.5%	0.3%	3,091
Indonesia	17.6%	48.1%	19.9%	11.4%	3.0%	2,955
Japan	12.6%	41.9%	22.8%	17.9%	4.8%	2,932
Thailand	27.3%	45.4%	15.4%	10.4%	1.5%	2,673
Cambodia	54.2%	37.9%	6.0%	1.7%	0.2%	2,575
Germany	23.1%	41.8%	19.2%	12.3%	3.6%	2,550
Russia	40.6%	42.6%	10.2%	5.0%	1.7%	2,471
Canada	19.0%	39.7%	19.3%	16.9%	5.2%	2,097
Hong Kong	14.2%	52.0%	19.3%	11.4%	3.0%	1,986
Singapore	10.3%	49.9%	22.3%	13.6%	4.0%	1,937
Other	47.3%	37.6%	9.1%	4.8%	1.2%	31,183
Total	35.1%	43.9%	12.4%	6.9%	1.8%	257,229

• Note: Nationality was not recorded for one person.

Nearly twice the proportion of principal (11 percent) than secondary applicants (6 percent) had five or more spells of absence (see Table 4.18).

Table 4.18 Number of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by applicant type

Applicant type	Number of spells of absence					Total
	0	1-2	3-4	5-10	11+	
Principal	30.9%	43.3%	14.4%	8.8%	2.6%	134,378
Secondary	39.7%	44.5%	10.1%	4.8%	0.8%	122,852
Total	35.1%	43.8%	12.4%	6.9%	1.8%	257,230

For most nationalities, a higher proportion of principal than secondary applicants had five or more spells of absence. For example, 16 percent of British principal applicants had five or more spells compared to 6 percent of British secondary applicants.

Comparison of Table 4.19 with Table 4.7 above shows that, although secondary applicants accounted for more high absence than principal applicants, secondary applicants had less spells of absence. For example, secondary applicants from China, Malaysia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Singapore had comparatively high rates of absence, yet less spells of absence than principal applicants.

Table 4.19 Number of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by nationality and applicant type (1,000+ approvals)

Nationality	Number of spells of absence							
	0		1-2		3-4		5+	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
Great Britain	28.4%	43.0%	38.6%	40.8%	16.9%	10.0%	16.0%	6.2%
China	26.9%	28.2%	50.1%	52.2%	14.4%	12.9%	8.5%	6.6%
India	32.1%	40.2%	55.1%	51.5%	9.1%	6.1%	3.7%	2.1%
South Africa	31.5%	39.7%	43.1%	46.6%	14.8%	9.7%	10.6%	4.1%
Fiji	18.4%	28.0%	43.0%	46.9%	21.8%	15.8%	16.8%	9.3%
Samoa	50.3%	61.9%	37.4%	30.1%	7.5%	4.6%	4.8%	3.4%
South Korea	26.0%	38.2%	41.2%	43.7%	16.5%	11.3%	16.4%	6.8%
Tonga	43.2%	50.5%	38.3%	36.4%	11.4%	7.5%	7.1%	5.6%
Philippines	41.4%	58.6%	42.7%	36.3%	11.4%	3.8%	4.5%	1.2%
Malaysia	12.8%	11.8%	41.7%	57.5%	22.0%	21.0%	23.5%	9.8%
USA	18.9%	21.2%	37.4%	44.7%	17.9%	16.2%	25.8%	17.9%
Taiwan	7.2%	3.8%	46.4%	65.0%	21.8%	17.6%	24.5%	13.6%
Sri Lanka	30.0%	28.5%	46.1%	55.4%	15.3%	12.4%	8.5%	3.6%
Zimbabwe	59.3%	70.9%	31.7%	26.6%	6.2%	1.8%	2.7%	0.7%
Iraq	67.9%	73.7%	26.8%	21.5%	3.5%	3.1%	1.8%	1.7%
Indonesia	18.0%	17.2%	44.8%	51.4%	20.8%	19.0%	16.4%	12.4%
Japan	11.5%	16.5%	41.3%	44.1%	23.8%	19.4%	23.4%	20.0%
Thailand	26.9%	29.0%	45.5%	45.0%	16.1%	12.9%	11.5%	13.1%
Cambodia	46.1%	65.0%	43.9%	29.9%	7.8%	3.6%	2.2%	1.5%
Germany	19.9%	28.6%	41.0%	43.2%	19.2%	19.1%	20.0%	9.0%
Russia	38.1%	43.7%	42.6%	42.7%	11.6%	8.3%	7.7%	5.3%
Canada	16.5%	24.6%	39.0%	41.2%	19.7%	18.3%	24.7%	15.8%
Hong Kong	13.7%	15.0%	49.3%	56.0%	19.7%	18.8%	17.3%	10.2%
Singapore	10.3%	10.3%	40.5%	56.3%	24.4%	20.8%	24.8%	12.7%
Other	39.2%	56.9%	40.2%	34.4%	11.9%	5.8%	8.6%	2.9%
Total	30.9%	39.7%	43.3%	44.5%	14.4%	10.1%	11.4%	5.6%

• P = principal applicant. S = secondary applicant.

The length of time spent absent for those with similar characteristics to migrants who pre-purchase ESOL tuition was explored above (see Table 4.8).³⁰ China was the main source to pre-purchase over the analysis period, and secondary applicants tended to spend more of their residence period absent than principal applicants. However, Chinese secondary applicants had fewer spells of absence than principal applicants (see Table 4.20). Taiwan was another main country to pre-purchase, and more than half of both principal and secondary applicants spent 75 percent or more of their residence period absent. However, Taiwanese secondary applicants had fewer spells of absence than principal applicants.

³⁰ The main groups required to pre-purchase ESOL tuition are Skilled/Business secondary applicants who do not meet the required English language standards.

Table 4.20 Number of spells of absence for Skilled/Business migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by nationality and applicant type (1,000+ approvals)

Nationality	Number of spells of absence							
	0		1-2		3-4		5+	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
Great Britain	24.8%	42.7%	37.8%	41.3%	17.9%	9.9%	19.5%	6.0%
India	29.6%	39.4%	56.7%	52.3%	9.1%	6.0%	4.6%	2.3%
China	23.0%	24.1%	49.0%	52.9%	15.7%	14.4%	12.2%	8.7%
South Africa	29.6%	39.7%	43.9%	46.8%	15.1%	9.6%	11.3%	3.9%
South Korea	26.8%	38.3%	38.8%	44.0%	16.3%	11.0%	18.1%	6.8%
Fiji	13.3%	23.8%	43.1%	50.1%	23.5%	16.5%	20.1%	9.5%
Malaysia	7.5%	10.8%	40.7%	58.0%	23.2%	21.2%	28.5%	9.9%
Philippines	39.8%	59.1%	42.1%	36.2%	12.3%	3.5%	5.8%	1.2%
Taiwan	4.7%	3.5%	52.2%	66.5%	18.8%	16.9%	24.4%	13.2%
USA	10.1%	16.3%	30.7%	44.3%	21.8%	17.9%	37.4%	21.5%
Zimbabwe	57.1%	71.0%	34.2%	26.5%	5.9%	1.8%	2.8%	0.7%
Indonesia	13.8%	15.3%	44.5%	52.2%	22.4%	20.2%	19.3%	12.3%
Sri Lanka	18.5%	24.2%	49.9%	58.3%	18.3%	13.8%	13.3%	3.6%
Germany	16.6%	27.6%	38.2%	43.2%	20.7%	20.0%	24.5%	9.3%
Singapore	6.5%	9.5%	40.7%	56.7%	26.5%	21.1%	26.3%	12.6%
Japan	10.0%	15.9%	37.4%	45.4%	24.0%	19.5%	28.7%	19.3%
Netherlands	24.4%	41.3%	43.1%	43.0%	13.7%	8.3%	18.8%	7.4%
Russia	34.2%	41.1%	37.6%	44.0%	14.9%	8.5%	13.3%	6.3%
Canada	9.3%	22.6%	32.3%	41.1%	22.4%	19.1%	36.0%	17.3%
Hong Kong	7.1%	7.6%	53.1%	61.2%	16.9%	20.2%	22.9%	11.1%
Romania	48.3%	64.0%	40.2%	31.7%	7.4%	3.4%	4.1%	1.0%
Other	25.2%	39.3%	42.2%	43.3%	15.6%	10.4%	17.0%	7.1%
Total	24.3%	34.8%	44.3%	47.5%	16.0%	11.2%	15.4%	6.5%

• P = principal applicant. S = secondary applicant.

Table 4.21 shows the number of spells of absence by family type. Solo migrants and migrants from the family type “couples without children” tended to have more spells of absence than those from other family types. Eleven percent of migrants from both of these family types had five or more spells of absence. This compared to 5 percent of migrants from one-parent families and 7 percent from two-parent families to have five or more spells of absence. However, as discussed above, migrants from two-parent families (particularly principal applicants) and migrants from the family type “couples without children” spent a greater proportion of their total residence period absent than those from other family types.

Overall, principal applicants had more spells of absence than secondary applicants. This was particularly noticeable for migrants from one- and two-parent families. Eight percent of principal applicants from one-parent families had five or more absence spells compared to 4 percent of secondary applicants. Twelve percent of principal applicants from two-parent families had five or more absence spells compared to 5 percent of secondary applicants. In terms of two-parent families (the most common family type), these findings point to some incidence of astronaut migration. For example, much of the time, principal applicants are travelling without their families.

Table 4.21 Number of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by family type and applicant type

Family type		Number of spells of absence					Total
		0	1–2	3–4	5–10	11+	
One-parent family	Principal	40.0%	39.6%	12.1%	6.4%	1.9%	5,969
	Secondary	51.4%	37.4%	7.3%	3.4%	0.4%	10,433
	Total	47.3%	38.2%	9.1%	4.5%	0.9%	16,402
Two-parent family	Principal	34.1%	41.2%	12.4%	8.7%	3.6%	29,765
	Secondary	41.4%	44.5%	9.2%	4.2%	0.7%	85,682
	Total	39.5%	43.7%	10.0%	5.4%	1.4%	115,447
Couple without children	Principal	27.4%	45.5%	15.0%	9.2%	2.9%	20,609
	Secondary	28.8%	47.6%	14.4%	7.5%	1.6%	24,418
	Total	28.2%	46.6%	14.7%	8.3%	2.2%	45,027
Solo	Total	29.7%	43.8%	15.3%	8.9%	2.3%	76,108
Other family type	Principal	36.6%	42.2%	11.7%	7.3%	2.1%	1,965
	Secondary	41.7%	40.8%	11.2%	5.4%	0.8%	2,281
	Total	39.3%	41.5%	11.4%	6.3%	1.4%	4,246
Total	Principal	30.9%	43.3%	14.4%	8.8%	2.6%	134,378
	Secondary	39.7%	44.5%	10.1%	4.8%	0.8%	122,852
	Total	35.1%	43.8%	12.4%	6.9%	1.8%	257,230

4.4 Lengths of spells of absence

This section includes data on the lengths of completed spells of absence. A completed spell of absence is a departure and a subsequent arrival. There was a total of 438,198 spells of absence recorded. As mentioned above, in the case that a spell extended before the beginning of the analysis period (1 January 1998) or after the end of the period (31 December 2004), a “dummy move” variable was imputed to create a complete spell (see the methodology for more detail). This means that some of those with long spells of absence may not have returned during the analysis period (or subsequent to the analysis), but will be recorded as having returned. Some data on non-return rates is included in this chapter and is explored in more detail in Chapter 8.

Overall, 85 percent of spells of absence were for less than six months (see Table 4.22). The most common length of absence across all years was between 1 to 30 days (53 percent of spells). Thirty-one percent of spells of absence were between 31 and 180 days, and 7 percent were between six months and one year. Five percent of spells were between one and two years, and 4 percent were two years or longer.

Table 4.22 Lengths of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by year approved

Year residence application approved	Number of days absent during each spell of absence						Total
	1–30	31–60	61–180	181–365	366–730	731+	
1998	56.8%	14.7%	12.8%	5.6%	3.9%	6.2%	74,921
1999	56.2%	15.5%	13.2%	5.7%	4.1%	5.3%	79,088
2000	54.4%	15.8%	14.5%	5.9%	4.6%	4.7%	79,060
2001	50.3%	16.9%	16.6%	7.3%	5.1%	3.8%	92,613
2002	47.2%	17.3%	18.4%	7.7%	7.3%	2.1%	64,960
2003	53.1%	15.9%	17.2%	9.7%	4.0%		36,497
2004	64.4%	16.9%	14.6%	4.1%			11,059
Total	53.3%	16.1%	15.2%	6.7%	4.8%	4.0%	438,198
Cumulative row %	53.3%	69.4%	84.6%	91.3%	96.1%	100.0%	

Sixteen percent of absence spells by those through the Samoan Quota were for one year or longer. Other categories where a high proportion of spells of absence were for one year or longer included Family Parent (12 percent), Investor Category (12 percent), Family Child Dependent (11 percent), Refugee Status (10 percent) and the GSC (9 percent).

It is interesting to compare the length of spell data with the number of spells data. Eighty percent of Quota refugees had no spells of absence (see Table 4.16 above). Of the 1,455 spells of absence (by 1,031 individuals) that were recorded for Quota refugees, 18 percent were for one year or longer (including 10 percent that were two years or longer). Most of these long spells of absence by Quota refugees occurred by refugees approved in 1998 and 1999. Quota refugees approved in 1998 and 1999 had comparatively high rates of non-return compared to later cohorts. Nine percent (74 individuals) approved in 1998 and 11 percent (112 individuals) approved in 1999 had a spell of absence that they did not return from during the analysis period. This suggests that a number of Quota refugees with long spells of absence did not return. The current analysis did not explore where migrants who left New Zealand went to.

Fifty-six percent of migrants through the Samoan Quota had no spells of absence and a further 35 percent had between one and two spells, yet, if these individuals did have a spell of absence, it was often for a long period (16 percent of spells were for one year or longer). A number of those with lengthy spells of absence would not have returned. A total of 469 people (10 percent) approved through the Samoan Quota between 1998 and 2003 had left and not returned during the analysis period (see Table 8.4).

Seventy-seven percent of GSC migrants had between 0 and 2 spells of absence (see Table 4.16 above). Table 4.23 shows that 85 percent of spells of absence by GSC migrants were for six months or less. Therefore, most GSC migrants had a small number of spells of absence and did not spend lengthy periods out of the country.

Table 4.23 Lengths of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by residence category

Residence category	Number of days absent during each spell of absence						Total
	1–30	31–60	61–180	181–365	366–730	731+	
General Skills	56.4%	15.4%	13.1%	6.2%	4.9%	3.9%	243,089
Partnership	59.1%	16.5%	13.3%	4.8%	3.1%	3.2%	84,861
Family Parent	35.5%	14.5%	25.9%	11.8%	6.6%	5.8%	37,207
Investor Category	35.0%	20.8%	22.5%	9.9%	7.1%	4.7%	28,733
Humanitarian Category	51.5%	18.7%	18.1%	5.7%	3.3%	2.6%	8,494
Family Child Dependent	46.4%	21.6%	16.4%	5.0%	4.5%	6.1%	6,396
Samoan Quota	48.3%	12.5%	13.5%	10.0%	7.8%	8.0%	5,374
Ministerial Direction	66.8%	14.9%	10.6%	3.9%	1.7%	2.1%	4,283
Family Sibling	49.3%	14.8%	19.9%	8.8%	4.4%	2.8%	4,261
Family Child Adult	51.5%	14.0%	18.6%	7.5%	5.3%	3.1%	3,661
1995 Refugee Status	31.8%	22.9%	27.6%	8.0%	4.6%	5.1%	3,339
Transitional Policy (Int/Hum)*	76.1%	12.9%	8.6%	1.5%	0.9%	0.0%	2,170
Entrepreneur Category	61.1%	20.7%	14.0%	2.9%	0.6%	0.7%	2,030
Refugee Quota	23.0%	19.4%	31.6%	8.5%	7.8%	9.8%	1,455
Other	73.3%	12.1%	9.8%	3.2%	0.7%	0.9%	2,845
Total	53.3%	16.1%	15.2%	6.7%	4.8%	4.0%	438,198

*Note: For the October 2000 Transitional Policy, applicants who had a New Zealand citizen or resident partner or a New Zealand born child were counted through the Family Sponsored Stream, while others were counted through the International/Humanitarian Stream.

Seventeen percent of spells of absence by Taiwanese migrants and 16 percent of spells by migrants from Hong Kong were for one year or more (see Table 4.24). A comparatively high proportion of spells of absence by migrants from Sri Lanka, India, Samoa, Singapore, Indonesia, China and Malaysia were for one year or more (15, 14, 14, 13, 12, 12 and 11 percent respectively).

In some cases, those with long spells of absence in the analysis period will have left New Zealand permanently. The non-return data (see Table 8.3 in Chapter 8) shows that Taiwanese migrants approved between 1998 and 2003 had the highest rate of not returning from a spell of absence (38 percent). Singapore had the second highest non-return rate in this period (24 percent).

Table 4.24 Lengths of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by nationality

Nationality	Number of days absent during each spell of absence						Total
	1–30	31–60	61–180	181–365	366–730	731+	
Great Britain	71.3%	11.4%	7.2%	4.1%	3.0%	3.1%	81,326
China	29.8%	19.6%	28.0%	11.1%	7.1%	4.4%	56,748
Fiji	71.4%	10.3%	10.5%	4.5%	2.3%	1.0%	35,336
India	33.9%	22.8%	20.5%	8.9%	8.2%	5.6%	33,948
South Africa	65.0%	16.1%	7.2%	3.8%	3.7%	4.2%	33,805
USA	65.0%	12.4%	10.1%	5.8%	3.0%	3.6%	19,547
South Korea	52.2%	19.8%	18.5%	5.2%	2.8%	1.5%	17,717
Malaysia	38.4%	16.8%	21.3%	12.3%	7.1%	4.0%	16,044
Taiwan	30.6%	18.8%	23.8%	9.6%	8.3%	8.9%	12,565
Samoa	53.8%	11.3%	13.0%	8.4%	7.0%	6.5%	12,229
Tonga	62.5%	13.8%	14.9%	5.1%	2.3%	1.3%	11,386
Japan	63.5%	14.6%	11.6%	5.2%	2.8%	2.4%	9,414
Indonesia	37.5%	20.1%	21.4%	9.1%	4.9%	6.9%	7,257
Germany	58.8%	16.9%	12.4%	5.3%	3.4%	3.1%	6,714
Philippines	53.9%	21.0%	11.5%	6.1%	4.6%	2.8%	6,700
Canada	67.5%	12.7%	6.9%	4.2%	3.7%	5.0%	6,478
Sri Lanka	40.2%	20.1%	17.7%	7.4%	9.1%	5.4%	6,150
Singapore	45.2%	15.3%	17.9%	8.3%	7.3%	6.0%	5,535
Thailand	50.5%	22.5%	17.6%	4.7%	2.9%	1.8%	5,247
Hong Kong	35.4%	15.9%	21.8%	11.2%	8.0%	7.6%	4,913
Other	49.6%	18.4%	16.6%	5.9%	4.4%	5.0%	49,139
Total	53.3%	16.1%	15.2%	6.7%	4.8%	4.0%	438,198

The proportion of migrants who had spells of absence of six months or more varied between family types. Twelve percent of solo migrants had spells of absence of six months or more, as did 16 percent of migrants from one-parent families, 17 percent from couples without children and 18 percent from two-parent families (see Table 4.25). Overall, a higher proportion of spells of absence by secondary applicants than principal applicants were longer than six months (20 percent compared to 13 percent).

Table 4.25 Lengths of spells of absence for migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 by family type

Family type	Applicant type	Number of days absent during each spell of absence						Total number of spells
		1–30 days	31–60 days	61–180 days	181–365 days	366–730 days	731+ days	
One Parent Family	Principal	55.1%	16.6%	15.1%	6.0%	4.1%	3.1%	9,909
	Secondary	44.7%	21.7%	15.0%	7.0%	6.0%	5.6%	10,273
	Total	49.8%	19.2%	15.1%	6.5%	5.0%	4.4%	20,182
Two parent family	Principal	55.3%	14.4%	16.5%	6.6%	4.2%	3.0%	63,416
	Secondary	46.8%	18.5%	14.3%	7.9%	7.0%	5.6%	105,612
	Total	50.0%	16.9%	15.1%	7.4%	6.0%	4.6%	169,028
Couples without children	Principal	54.7%	13.3%	16.5%	7.4%	4.5%	3.6%	45,069
	Secondary	48.4%	15.1%	18.3%	8.5%	5.4%	4.3%	44,575
	Total	51.5%	14.2%	17.4%	7.9%	4.9%	4.0%	89,644
Solo	Total	58.6%	15.7%	13.9%	5.1%	3.3%	3.3%	152,886
Other family type	Principal	54.3%	16.5%	17.3%	6.3%	3.5%	2.1%	3,374
	Secondary	48.4%	19.9%	20.1%	5.6%	3.5%	2.5%	3,084
	Total	51.5%	18.1%	18.7%	5.9%	3.5%	2.3%	6,458
Total	Principal	57.0%	15.0%	15.0%	5.9%	3.7%	3.3%	274,576
	Secondary	47.1%	17.8%	15.5%	8.0%	6.4%	5.2%	163,622
	Total	53.3%	16.1%	15.2%	6.7%	4.8%	4.0%	438,198

4.5 Summary

The majority of migrants do not spend large amounts of time out of New Zealand after taking up residence. Of those approved between 1998 and 2004, 35 percent spent no time absent and a further 43 percent spent up to 25 percent absent. Secondary applicants were less likely than principal applicants to have spent time absent post-residence, although, if they did leave the country, they tended to spend more time absent than principal applicants. Migrants from the family types “couples without children” and “two-parent families” were more likely than solo migrants or those from “one-parent families” to spend 50 percent or more of their residence period absent. Compared to other categories, the Investor Category stood out with very high absence rates – 42 percent of Investors spent three-quarters or more of their residence period absent. In part, this is likely to reflect Investors not needing to remain in the country in order to obtain an RRV. Twelve percent of GSC migrants were absent for three-quarters or more.

Migrants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia had high rates of spending 75 percent or more of their residence period out of the country. Secondary applicants accounted for more of this high absence than principal applicants, although they had fewer spells of absence than principal applicants.

Most migrants did not have a high number of spells of absence – 79 percent had between 0 and 2 spells of absence over the analysis period. Investor Category migrants were highly mobile, with 19 percent having five or more spells of absence. Ten percent of migrants through the GSC had five or more spells of absence. Migrants from the USA and Japan were very mobile, with 23 percent from each of these countries having five or more spells of absence. However, migrants from these countries were not amongst the main ones to spend a high proportion of their residence period absent.

5 LONG-TERM ABSENCE AS AT DECEMBER 2004

5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes long-term absence as at December 2004 (the end of the analysis period). Long-term absence is defined as a spell of absence for six months or longer. The data included in this chapter relates to those whose residence applications were approved between January 1998 and December 2003. Since migrants approved offshore have 12 months to arrive to take up residence, those whose applications were approved in 2004 are not included.³¹

Absence for six months or more is one way of viewing long-term absence rates. The analysis included in this chapter is similar to that in the *Migration Trends* series. Other views of long-term absence, such as the proportion of migrants spending 75 percent or more of their time absent and the proportion not to return from a spell of absence within the analysis period, are included in other chapters.

5.2 Overall long-term absence rates as at December 2004

Table 5.1 shows the rates of long-term absenteeism for those approved for residence in the 1998 to 2003 calendar years. The proportion who had been absent for six months or more as at December 2004 ranged from 8 percent approved in 2003 to 22 percent approved in 1998.

It should be noted that, depending on when migrants arrived to take up residence, those approved in the last six months of 2003 had not had sufficient time to be long-term absent. For this reason, the figure for 2003 is not directly comparable with the figures for other years. Seventy-five percent of those whose residence applications were approved offshore during 2003 arrived to take up residence within six months (see Table 3.7 in Chapter 3). Individuals who arrived within six months would not have had time to be long-term absent.

Table 5.1 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2003

Year application approved	Proportion LTA04³²	Total number long-term absent	Total in cohort
1998	22.4%	5,383	24,086
1999	18.5%	5,322	28,711
2000	16.2%	5,581	34,531
2001	14.0%	6,770	48,545
2002	11.8%	5,607	47,487
2003	8.2%	3,545	43,083
Total	14.2%	32,208	226,443

Investor Category migrants had the highest rate of long-term absence as at December 2004 (34 percent). Migrants through the Family Parent, General Skills, Samoan Quota, Family Child Dependent and Partnership categories also had high rates of long-term absence (ranging from 12 percent of Partnership to 18 percent of Family Parent) (see Table 5.2).

³¹ Most of those in the 2004 cohort would not have had adequate time to be long-term absent.

³² "LTA04" is used in tables through this chapter and is an abbreviation for long-term absence as at December 2004.

Table 5.2 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2003 by application criteria

Application criteria	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04
Investor Category	8,939	33.6%
Family Parent	20,233	17.5%
General Skills	119,314	15.2%
Samoaan Quota	4,975	13.7%
Family Child Dependent	4,595	12.3%
Partnership	38,255	11.6%
Family Child Adult	2,065	10.3%
Employees of Businesses	119	10.1%
1995 Refugee Status	3,653	9.1%
Ministerial Direction	1,939	8.8%
Family Sibling	3,388	8.5%
Refugee Quota	4,374	5.9%
Transition 33(2) Voluntary	328	5.8%
Humanitarian Category	8,523	5.2%
Family Quota	253	4.7%
Entrepreneur Category	1,005	4.5%
Transitional Policy (Int/Hum)*	3,589	2.5%
Transitional Policy (Fam)*	468	1.7%
PAC	169	0.6%
Other	259	7.3%
Total	226,443	14.2%

- *Note: For the October 2000 Transitional Policy, applicants who had a New Zealand citizen or resident partner or a New Zealand born child were counted through the Family Sponsored Stream, while others were counted through the International/Humanitarian Stream.

A slightly higher proportion of secondary (15 percent) than principal applicants (14 percent) were long-term absent as at December 2004 (see Table 5.3). As discussed in Chapter 4, principal applicants tended to have more spells of absence than secondary applicants. However, if secondary applicants did have a spell of absence, it tended to be for longer than spells of absence by principal applicants.

Table 5.3 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2003 by applicant type

Applicant type	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04
Principal applicant	117,613	13.9%
Secondary applicant	108,830	14.6%
Total	226,443	14.2%

There was no difference between the proportion of males and females absent for six months or more as at December 2004 (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2003 by gender

Gender	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04
Male	111,072	14.4%
Female	115,367	14.0%
Total	226,439	14.2%

- Note: Gender was not recorded for four people.

For some cohorts, a slightly higher proportion of males than females were long-term absent as at December 2004 (see Table 5.5). For those approved in 1998, 2002 and 2003, there was a 1 percent difference in the proportion of males and females absent.

Table 5.5 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2003 by gender and year approved

Year approved	Proportion LTA04	
	Male	Female
1998	22.7%	22.0%
1999	18.4%	18.6%
2000	16.1%	16.2%
2001	14.3%	13.6%
2002	12.3%	11.3%
2003	8.6%	7.8%
Total	111,072	115,367

• Note: Gender was not recorded for four people.

In some age groups, there were slight differences in the proportion of males and females who were long-term absent as at December 2004 (see Table 5.6). For those in the age groups 35 to 44 years and 45 to 54 years, 16 percent of males were long-term absent compared to 14 percent of females. In line with this, males from these age groups were more likely than females to spend 75 percent or more of their residence period absent (see Table 4.11 in Chapter 4).

Table 5.6 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2003 by gender and age

Age group	Proportion LTA04		Total who arrived or were approved onshore
	Male	Female	
< 16 years	14.1%	14.0%	53,897
16–24 years	9.1%	10.1%	24,226
25–34 years	13.7%	14.5%	61,507
35–44 years	15.8%	13.8%	48,331
45–54 years	15.9%	13.9%	19,143
55–64 years	18.6%	18.2%	10,959
65 years +	19.2%	18.1%	8,376
Total	111,072	115,367	226,439

• Note: Gender was not recorded for four people.

There were more than 4,000 Taiwanese migrants approved between 1998 and 2003, and 44 percent of these individuals had been absent for six months or more as at December 2004 (see Table 5.7). This long-term absence rate is a lot higher than for other countries. Other countries with high rates of long-term absence included Singapore (30 percent), Hong Kong (29 percent), Malaysia (27 percent), Canada (26 percent), Indonesia (25 percent) and USA (23 percent). Nineteen percent of the 30,230 migrants from China had been absent for six months or more as at December 2004. Chinese migrants tended to have a low number of spells of absence – Table 4.17 above shows that 79 percent had between 0 and 2 spells of absence.

As discussed in Chapter 8, there were similarities in the nationalities of migrants with high long-term absence rates and those with high non-return rates as at December 2003. Table 8.3 in Chapter 8 shows non-return rates by nationality.

Table 5.7 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved for residence between 1998 and 2003 by nationality (1,000 approvals or more)

Nationality	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04	Nationality	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04
Taiwan	4,199	43.9%	South Africa	19,983	10.4%
Singapore	1,779	30.3%	Russia	2,273	10.4%
Hong Kong	1,816	29.0%	Iran	1,424	9.8%
Malaysia	5,750	26.9%	Thailand	2,337	9.7%
Canada	1,840	25.9%	South Korea	8,132	8.9%
Indonesia	2,761	25.3%	Somalia	1,496	8.4%
USA	5,028	23.3%	Vietnam	1,388	7.3%
China	30,230	19.6%	Philippines	6,006	7.0%
Ireland	1,065	18.4%	Romania	1,066	6.9%
Japan	2,570	18.3%	Iraq	2,953	6.1%
Germany	2,187	17.2%	Fiji	13,580	5.5%
Netherlands	1,630	16.3%	Zimbabwe	2,368	4.4%
Sri Lanka	3,725	15.9%	Cambodia	2,323	4.2%
India	27,149	13.6%	Tonga	6,646	4.1%
Great Britain	32,987	13.5%	Afghanistan	1,249	2.0%
Samoa	10,784	12.3%	Other	16,366	14.7%
Pakistan	1,353	11.0%	TOTAL	226,443	14.2%

Migrants through the Skilled/Business Stream had a slightly higher rate of long-term absence as at December 2004 than all migrants (16 percent compared to 14 percent). Forty-seven percent of Taiwanese migrants through the Skilled/Business Stream were long-term absent as at December 2004. Other nationalities from which 20 percent or more of migrants were long-term absent included Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, USA, China and Japan (see Table 5.8).

Table 5.8 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved for residence through the Skilled/Business stream between 1998 and 2003 by nationality

Nationality	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04	Nationality	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04
Taiwan	3,199	46.5%	Great Britain	21,632	15.1%
Singapore	1,517	31.4%	India	20,992	14.0%
Malaysia	4,767	29.9%	South Africa	16,855	10.5%
Indonesia	2,130	28.6%	Russia	1,225	9.2%
USA	2,727	27.2%	South Korea	6,431	7.9%
China	16,825	22.1%	Philippines	4,000	7.4%
Japan	1,292	20.2%	Fiji	6,343	6.8%
Germany	1,450	19.0%	Zimbabwe	1,973	4.7%
Netherlands	1,126	17.6%	Other	12,727	17.3%
Sri Lanka	2,166	16.2%	TOTAL	129,377	16.4%

The overall rate of long-term absence for Family Sponsored Stream migrants was 12 percent (see Table 5.9). It is of note that 37 percent of the 946 Taiwanese migrants through this stream were long-term absent as at December 2004. Twenty percent of

the 946 Sri Lankan migrants were long-term absent. Those from the USA and Japan also had comparatively high rates of absence (18 and 17 percent respectively). China and Great Britain were the main source countries of Family Sponsored approvals, and the long-term absence rates for these migrants were 17 and 10 percent respectively.

Table 5.9 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved through the Family Sponsored Stream between 1998 and 2003 by nationality

Nationality	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04	Nationality	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04
Taiwan	962	36.6%	South Africa	3,014	9.9%
Sri Lanka	946	20.3%	Thailand	1,617	7.2%
USA	2,105	18.4%	Philippines	1,844	6.7%
Japan	1,231	17.1%	Vietnam	1,291	6.0%
China	12,964	16.9%	Iraq	1,739	5.3%
South Korea	1,635	13.2%	Tonga	3,825	5.0%
Samoa	4,399	12.8%	Fiji	6,760	4.6%
India	5,875	12.6%	Cambodia	2,225	4.1%
Russia	1,028	11.9%	Other	13,325	15.6%
Great Britain	10,995	10.3%	TOTAL	77,780	12.2%

Overall, 8 percent of International/Humanitarian Stream migrants had been absent for six months or more as at December 2004 (see Table 5.10). Samoa was the main approval source, and 12 percent of these migrants were long-term absent as at December 2004. Ten percent of the 1,004 migrants from Somalia were long-term absent.

Table 5.10 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved for residence through the International/Humanitarian Stream between 1998 and 2003 by nationality

Nationality	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04	Nationality	Total who arrived or were approved onshore	Proportion LTA04
Yugoslavia	344	26.2%	India	282	4.6%
Great Britain	360	12.2%	China	441	3.2%
Samoa	6,231	11.6%	Fiji	477	2.5%
Somalia	1,004	10.0%	Afghanistan	796	2.5%
Sri Lanka	613	8.3%	Tonga	1,866	2.3%
Stateless	842	8.1%	Thailand	228	1.8%
Ethiopia	484	7.2%	Myanmar	369	1.4%
Iran	1,008	6.5%	Other	3,060	7.7%
Iraq	880	5.1%	TOTAL	19,285	8.1%

Table 5.11 shows long-term absence rates as at December 2004 for each residence stream. For all streams, long-term absence rates were highest for those approved in 1998 and were lower for those approved in more recent years. This is a function of time, rather than a particular characteristic of the 1998 cohort.

Table 5.11 Long-term absence as at December 2004 for migrants approved between 1998 and 2003 by year approved and immigration stream

Year application approved	Skilled/Business		Family Sponsored		International/Humanitarian	
	Total	LTA04	Total	LTA04	Total	LTA04
1998	10,784	25.6%	11,017	20.8%	2,285	14.8%
1999	13,561	21.2%	12,257	16.7%	2,893	13.9%
2000	17,634	18.7%	13,404	14.5%	3,493	9.7%
2001	30,376	16.2%	15,277	10.7%	2,892	7.5%
2002	32,873	14.1%	12,601	6.8%	2,013	5.3%
2003	24,149	11.1%	13,224	5.4%	5,710	2.9%
Total	129,377	16.4%	77,780	12.2%	19,286	8.1%

5.3 Summary

Long-term absence (for six months or more) is one way of viewing high absence rates. The proportion of long-term absent migrants as at December 2004 increased with length of residence, ranging from 22 percent of the 1998 cohort to 8 percent of the 2003 cohort. Investors had the highest rate of long-term absence (34 percent). Migrants through the Family Parent, General Skills, Samoan Quota, Family Child Dependent and Partnership categories also had high rates (ranging from 12 percent of Partnership to 18 percent of Family Parent).

Taiwanese migrants had the highest overall rate of long-term absence (44 percent) and also had the highest rate in the Skilled/Business and Family Sponsored Streams. Other countries with high overall rates were Singapore (30 percent), Hong Kong (29 percent), Malaysia (27 percent), Canada (26 percent), Indonesia (25 percent), USA (23 percent) and China (20 percent).

6 YEAR-BY-YEAR ABSENCE RATES

6.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at absence rates on a year-by-year basis, that is, each year after a migrant took up residence. The proportion of time spent absent is examined separately for each year, which enables comparison of all migrants over relative periods.

6.2 All residence categories

At least 50 percent of migrants remained in New Zealand throughout each year after residence uptake (see Table 6.1). For those migrants who were in their fifth and sixth year of residence, 53 percent were never overseas during those years. This ranged through to 58 percent of migrants who had held residence for one year and 59 percent who had held residence for seven years.

The proportion of migrants who were always overseas in a given year (i.e. overseas for the entire year) increased with length of residence. Seven percent of those who had held residence for two years were always overseas in the second year post-residence. Twenty-three percent of those who had held residence for seven years were always absent in their seventh year.

Table 6.1 Time spent absent each year after residence uptake for those approved between 1998 and 2004

Year after uptake	Proportion of time spent absent each year since application completion						Total
	Never overseas	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	Always overseas	
1	57.7%	22.8%	6.0%	3.1%	10.2%	0.2% ³³	257,230
2	56.2%	24.2%	5.0%	2.5%	4.9%	7.3%	220,659
3	55.1%	24.6%	3.9%	2.3%	4.6%	9.5%	173,924
4	54.4%	23.3%	3.7%	2.1%	3.3%	13.3%	125,244
5	53.2%	22.4%	3.1%	1.9%	3.4%	16.0%	81,074
6	53.1%	20.2%	3.3%	1.7%	3.2%	18.5%	46,519
7	58.7%	12.3%	2.5%	1.2%	2.0%	23.3%	22,292

• Note: The percentages are of each row.

6.3 Skilled/Business Stream

Compared to the overall figures presented in Table 6.1 (above) a slightly smaller proportion of Skilled/Business migrants were never overseas each year and a larger proportion were always overseas each year (see Table 6.2). Ten percent of Skilled/Business migrants were always overseas in their second year and 27 percent were always overseas in their seventh year.

³³ The proportion recorded as always being overseas in their first year after taking up residence is likely to be due to the small proportion of inconsistencies in the data. See the methodology section for more detail.

Table 6.2 Time spent absent each year after residence uptake for Skilled/Business migrants

Year after uptake	Proportion of time spent absent each year since residence uptake						Total
	Never overseas	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	Always overseas	
1	52.1%	23.8%	6.0%	3.5%	14.5%	0.1%	145,646
2	50.9%	25.9%	4.8%	2.7%	6.2%	9.5%	124,990
3	50.5%	27.0%	3.5%	2.2%	5.1%	11.7%	97,472
4	49.3%	25.9%	3.4%	2.0%	3.6%	15.7%	63,633
5	46.7%	26.0%	2.9%	1.9%	3.8%	18.7%	37,485
6	46.9%	23.4%	2.9%	1.7%	3.6%	21.4%	20,672
7	52.3%	14.7%	2.4%	1.3%	2.2%	27.1%	9,376

• Note: The percentages are of each row.

6.4 Family Sponsored Stream

The proportion of Family Sponsored Stream migrants who were always in the country each year ranged from 61 percent of those in their first year of residence to 55 percent of those in their sixth year. Sixty-two percent of those in their seventh year were always in the country. The proportion who were always overseas ranged from 5 percent in their second year to 21 percent of those in their seventh year (see Table 6.3).

Table 6.3 Time spent absent each year after residence uptake for Family Sponsored migrants

Year after uptake	Proportion of time spent absent each year since residence uptake						Total
	Never overseas	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	Always overseas	
1	61.3%	23.4%	6.9%	3.1%	5.1%	0.2%	89,097
2	58.6%	24.5%	6.0%	2.5%	3.6%	4.8%	76,500
3	57.4%	23.6%	4.9%	2.6%	4.3%	7.1%	63,175
4	56.0%	22.6%	4.2%	2.3%	3.1%	11.7%	50,330
5	55.6%	21.0%	3.6%	2.0%	3.2%	14.7%	35,078
6	55.2%	19.2%	3.7%	1.7%	3.0%	17.1%	20,971
7	61.6%	11.2%	2.7%	1.2%	1.8%	21.4%	10,617

• Note: The percentages are of each row.

6.5 International/Humanitarian Stream

Migrants approved through the International/Humanitarian Stream spent less time overseas than other migrants (see Table 6.4). Eighty-one percent of those who had been resident for two years were never overseas during their second year. Between 71 and 72 percent of International/Humanitarian Stream migrants in their fifth, sixth and seventh years were never overseas in these years. The proportion always overseas ranged from 3 percent of those in their second year to 17 percent in their seventh year.

Table 6.4 Time spent absent each year after residence approval for International/Humanitarian migrants

Year after uptake	Proportion of time spent absent each year since application completion						Total
	Never overseas	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	Always overseas	
1	79.4%	14.3%	2.7%	1.0%	2.4%	0.1%	22,487
2	80.5%	11.7%	2.1%	1.0%	1.8%	2.9%	19,169
3	78.7%	11.0%	1.9%	1.3%	2.0%	5.1%	13,277
4	75.4%	11.5%	2.6%	1.4%	1.9%	7.2%	11,281
5	71.6%	12.1%	2.5%	1.5%	2.5%	9.8%	8,511
6	70.6%	10.6%	3.0%	1.3%	2.4%	12.0%	4,876
7	71.6%	7.3%	2.0%	0.9%	1.6%	16.6%	2,299

• Note: The percentages are of each row.

6.6 Family type

This section includes tables on yearly absence rates for different family types. The four family types examined included one-parent families, two-parent families, couples without children, and solo migrants.

Around two-thirds of migrants from one-parent families were always in the country each year after residence uptake, although there was a slight decrease over time. Seventy percent were never overseas in their first year and 63 percent were never overseas in their fifth and sixth years (see Table 6.5).

Table 6.5 Time spent absent each year after residence approval for migrants from one-parent families

Year after uptake	Proportion of time spent absent each year since application completion						Total
	Never overseas	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	Always overseas	
1	69.9%	17.5%	3.8%	2.1%	6.4%	0.3%	16,402
2	68.1%	18.5%	3.2%	1.4%	3.6%	5.2%	14,042
3	66.7%	19.1%	2.6%	1.6%	3.0%	6.9%	11,301
4	65.4%	18.2%	2.5%	1.5%	2.6%	9.8%	8,888
5	63.3%	17.2%	2.6%	1.5%	2.7%	12.6%	6,156
6	62.9%	15.3%	2.6%	1.5%	2.7%	15.0%	3,694
7	66.4%	8.6%	2.4%	1.1%	2.2%	19.3%	1,857

• Note: The percentages are of each row.

Migrants from two-parent families spent more time absent from New Zealand each year than those from one-parent families (see Table 6.6). Sixty-one percent spent no time overseas in their first year, as did 57 percent of those in their fifth and sixth years.

Table 6.6 Time spent absent each year after residence approval for migrants from two-parent families

Year after uptake	Proportion of time spent absent each year since application completion						Total
	Never overseas	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	Always overseas	
1	61.0%	17.0%	4.6%	3.1%	14.1%	0.1%	115,447
2	60.1%	19.7%	3.4%	2.4%	5.6%	8.8%	99,487
3	59.0%	21.8%	2.6%	1.7%	4.3%	10.5%	77,572
4	58.2%	21.6%	2.7%	1.6%	2.8%	13.1%	51,977
5	56.5%	21.8%	2.4%	1.5%	2.8%	15.0%	31,700
6	56.8%	19.5%	2.7%	1.4%	2.8%	16.9%	17,345
7	60.3%	12.4%	2.3%	1.1%	1.7%	22.1%	7,760

• Note: The percentages are of each row.

As would be expected, migrants from the family type “couples without children” spent more time absent than family units with children (see Table 6.7). They also spent more time absent than solo migrants (see Table 6.8 below). In all years apart from their first and seventh, the proportion of migrants from the family type “couples without children” to remain always in the country was less than 50 percent.

Table 6.7 Time spent absent each year after residence approval for migrants from couples without children families

Year after uptake	Proportion of time spent absent each year since application completion						Total
	Never overseas	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	Always overseas	
1	50.9%	24.3%	9.0%	4.2%	11.3%	0.2%	45,027
2	49.1%	26.3%	7.5%	3.3%	5.8%	7.9%	38,495
3	47.3%	26.8%	5.8%	3.5%	6.2%	10.4%	30,524
4	46.5%	24.9%	5.3%	3.0%	3.9%	16.4%	22,229
5	45.3%	23.9%	4.3%	2.7%	4.1%	19.8%	14,360
6	44.5%	21.0%	4.7%	2.4%	3.4%	23.8%	8,405
7	52.1%	11.8%	3.8%	1.0%	2.0%	29.4%	4,016

• Note: The percentages are of each row.

The proportion of solo migrants who spent no time out of the country was fairly consistent from year to year (see Table 6.8). Between 51 and 59 percent of solo migrants were never overseas each year.

Table 6.8 Time spent absent each year after residence approval for solo migrants

Year after uptake	Proportion of time spent absent each year since application completion						Total
	Never overseas	<25%	25–<50%	50–<75%	75–<100%	Always overseas	
1	53.9%	31.6%	6.8%	2.8%	4.6%	0.2%	76,108
2	51.6%	31.0%	6.2%	2.4%	3.6%	5.1%	65,316
3	51.4%	28.5%	4.9%	2.6%	4.3%	8.3%	52,136
4	51.1%	25.8%	4.2%	2.4%	3.7%	12.8%	40,407
5	51.0%	23.5%	3.5%	1.9%	3.8%	16.2%	27,729
6	51.4%	21.6%	3.3%	1.6%	3.7%	18.4%	16,447
7	58.5%	13.4%	2.1%	1.4%	2.0%	22.6%	8,352

• Note: The percentages are of each row.

6.7 Summary

This chapter explored absence rates separately each year after a migrant took up residence. At least 50 percent of migrants remained in New Zealand each year after residence uptake. The proportion to be always overseas in a given year increased with length of residence, up to 23 percent of those in their seventh year.

Skilled/Business migrants were more likely than others to always be overseas in a given year. International/Humanitarian migrants had the lowest rate of always being overseas and the highest rate of always being onshore. Seventy-two percent of International/Humanitarian migrants in their seventh year of residence remained onshore in that year. Migrants from the family type “couples without children” had higher rates of always being overseas than migrants from other family types.

7 HIGH ABSENCE MIGRANTS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter looks in more detail at “high absence migrants” – those who spent 75 percent or more of their residence period absent from New Zealand. This includes those who were always absent in a given year. Data is presented for each residence stream and for the four categories with the highest rates of absence (the Investor, General Skills, Family Parent and Samoan Quota Categories).

Previous chapters have highlighted certain sub-groups of migrants tending to spend lengthy periods absent. For example, migrants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia were more likely than others to be high absence migrants (see Chapter 4). It is useful to explore high absence on a year-by-year basis and to compare the proportion of high absence migrants from a certain country with all approvals from that country.

7.2 Overall

Table 7.1 shows the proportion of all migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 to spend 75 percent or more of their time absent (high absence migrants). For each cohort (except 2002), the tendency to spend this proportion of time absent increased with length of residence. There was some variation, but overall the proportion of high absence migrants each year after residence uptake was fairly similar across cohorts. For example, for those in their third year, the proportion of high absence migrants ranged between 13 and 15 percent.

Table 7.1 Proportion of migrants who spent 75 percent or more time absent each year after residence uptake 1998 to 2004

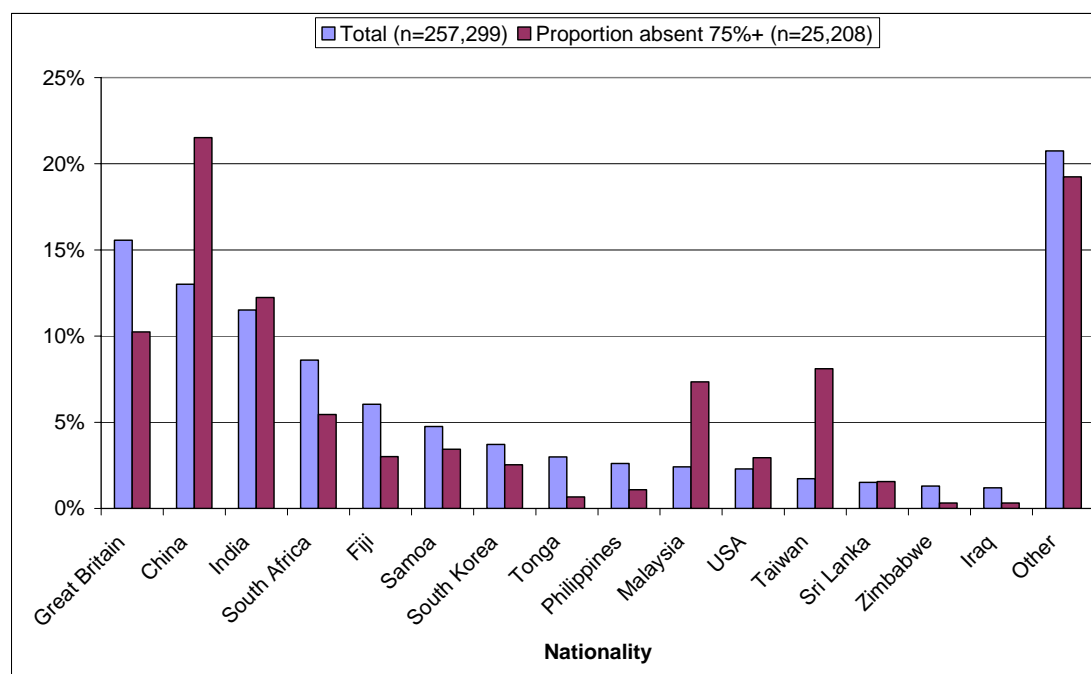
Year after uptake		Year residence application approved							All
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
1	Absent 75%+	10.0%	10.0%	10.9%	12.7%	13.1%	9.5%	3.6%	10.3%
	Total in cohort	24,086	28,711	34,531	48,545	47,487	43,083	30,787	257,230
2	Absent 75%+	12.1%	12.1%	12.5%	12.9%	13.9%	8.9%		12.2%
	Total in cohort	24,086	28,711	34,531	48,545	47,487	37,299		220,659
3	Absent 75%+	14.4%	14.1%	13.9%	14.8%	13.4%			14.1%
	Total in cohort	24,086	28,711	34,531	48,545	38,051			173,924
4	Absent 75%+	17.5%	16.6%	16.3%	16.2%				16.6%
	Total in cohort	24,086	28,711	34,531	37,916				125,244
5	Absent 75%+	20.6%	19.4%	18.5%					19.4%
	Total in cohort	24,086	28,711	28,277					81,074
6	Absent 75%+	22.9%	20.5%						21.7%
	Total in cohort	23,844	22,675						46,519
7	Absent 75%+	24.5%							24.5%
	Total in cohort	20,371							20,371

Figure 7.1 shows the nationality of approvals between 1998 and 2004 and the proportion of high absence migrants. Some nationalities were overrepresented in the proportion of high absence migrants compared to total approvals:

- Chinese migrants made up 13 percent of approvals over the period, yet made up 22 percent of the high absence migrants.
- Malaysia made up 2 percent of approvals and 7 percent of high absence migrants.
- Taiwan made up 2 percent of approvals and 8 percent of high absence migrants.

Great Britain was the main source of migrants of the period (15 percent). In comparison, Great Britain was underrepresented in the proportion of migrants with high rates of absence (10 percent).

Figure 7.1 Nationality of approvals and proportion absent for 75 percent or more 1998 to 2004



• Note: Nationality was not recorded for one person.

7.3 Residence stream

Table 7.2 shows the proportion of Skilled/Business migrants with high rates of absence. Each year after residence uptake (i.e. years one to seven), the proportion of high absence migrants was fairly similar across cohorts.

Table 7.2 Proportion of Skilled/Business migrants who spent 75 percent or more time absent each year after residence uptake 1998 to 2004

Year after uptake		Year residence application approved							All
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
1	Absent 75%+	14.8%	14.9%	15.5%	17.1%	17.1%	14.2%	4.7%	14.7%
	Total in cohort	10,784	13,561	17,634	30,376	32,873	24,149	16,269	145,646
2	Absent 75%+	15.4%	15.4%	16.2%	16.4%	17.1%	11.9%		15.6%
	Total in cohort	10,784	13,561	17,634	30,376	32,873	19,762		124,990
3	Absent 75%+	17.0%	16.4%	16.9%	17.7%	15.8%			16.8%
	Total in cohort	10,784	13,561	17,634	30,376	25,117			97,472
4	Absent 75%+	20.2%	19.4%	19.3%	19.0%				19.3%
	Total in cohort	10,784	13,561	17,634	21,654				63,633
5	Absent 75%+	23.6%	22.6%	21.5%					22.5%
	Total in cohort	10,784	13,561	13,140					37,485
6	Absent 75%+	26.3%	23.7%						25.1%
	Total in cohort	10,653	10,019						20,672
7	Absent 75%+	28.3%							28.3%
	Total in cohort	8,551							8,551

For Family Sponsored migrants, there appears to be a tendency for a higher proportion of high absence migrants in earlier years than in more recent years (see Table 7.3). For example, 7 percent of the 1998 cohort were high absence migrants in their first year as were 14 percent in their third year. The corresponding figures for the 2002 cohort were 5 percent in their first year and 9 percent in their third year.

Table 7.3 Proportion of Family Sponsored migrants to spend 75 percent or more absent each year after residence uptake 1998 to 2004

Year after uptake		Year residence application approved							All
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
1	Absent 75%+	6.9%	6.0%	6.5%	5.6%	4.6%	4.5%	2.7%	5.3%
	Total in cohort	11,017	12,257	13,404	15,277	12,601	13,224	11,317	89,097
2	Absent 75%+	10.6%	9.4%	9.2%	7.6%	7.0%	7.0%		8.4%
	Total in cohort	11,017	12,257	13,404	15,277	12,601	11,944		76,500
3	Absent 75%+	13.7%	12.8%	11.5%	10.6%	8.9%			11.4%
	Total in cohort	11,017	12,257	13,404	15,277	11,220			63,175
4	Absent 75%+	17.0%	15.1%	14.2%	13.3%				14.8%
	Total in cohort	11,017	12,257	13,404	13,652				50,330
5	Absent 75%+	19.6%	17.4%	17.0%					17.9%
	Total in cohort	11,017	12,257	11,804					35,078
6	Absent 75%+	21.4%	18.8%						20.2%
	Total in cohort	10,907	10,064						20,971
7	Absent 75%+	22.8%							22.8%
	Total in cohort	9,665							9,665

The proportion of International/Humanitarian Stream high absence migrants increased with length of residence, but was overall lower compared to other residence streams (see Table 7.4). The rate of absence each year was fairly similar across cohorts (1998 to 2004).

Table 7.4 Proportion of International/Humanitarian migrants to spend 75 percent or more absent each year after residence uptake 1998 to 2004

Year after uptake		Year residence application approved							All
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
1	Absent 75%+	2.0%	3.8%	4.4%	3.8%	2.1%	1.1%	1.6%	2.6%
	Total in cohort	2,285	2893	3,493	2,892	2,013	5,710	3,201	22,487
2	Absent 75%+	3.4%	7.8%	6.0%	5.3%	4.3%	2.7%		4.7%
	Total in cohort	2,285	2893	3,493	2,892	2,013	5,593		19,169
3	Absent 75%+	5.7%	8.7%	7.5%	6.4%	6.5%			7.1%
	Total in cohort	2,285	2893	3,493	2,892	1,714			13,277
4	Absent 75%+	7.6%	10.2%	9.2%	9.0%				9.1%
	Total in cohort	2,285	2893	3,493	2,610				11,281
5	Absent 75%+	11.6%	13.0%	12.2%					12.3%
	Total in cohort	2,285	2893	3,333					8,511
6	Absent 75%+	14.1%	14.6%						14.4%
	Total in cohort	2,284	2592						4,876
7	Absent 75%+	17.4%							17.4%
	Total in cohort	2,155							2,155

7.4 Investor Category

Table 7.5 shows the proportion of Investor Category migrants with a high rate of absence on a year-by-year basis. The tendency for Investor Category migrants to spend large proportions of the year absent in any year was high. For those approved for residence in 1998 and 1999, the tendency to be absent for 75 percent or more increased over time. For those approved between 2000 and 2003, the proportion of high absence migrants was fairly similar each year after residence uptake. Investors approved in 2002 had particularly high rates of being absent for 75 percent or more of their time. The English Language requirements and the policies around the source of funds for Investors changed from 20 November 2002.³⁴

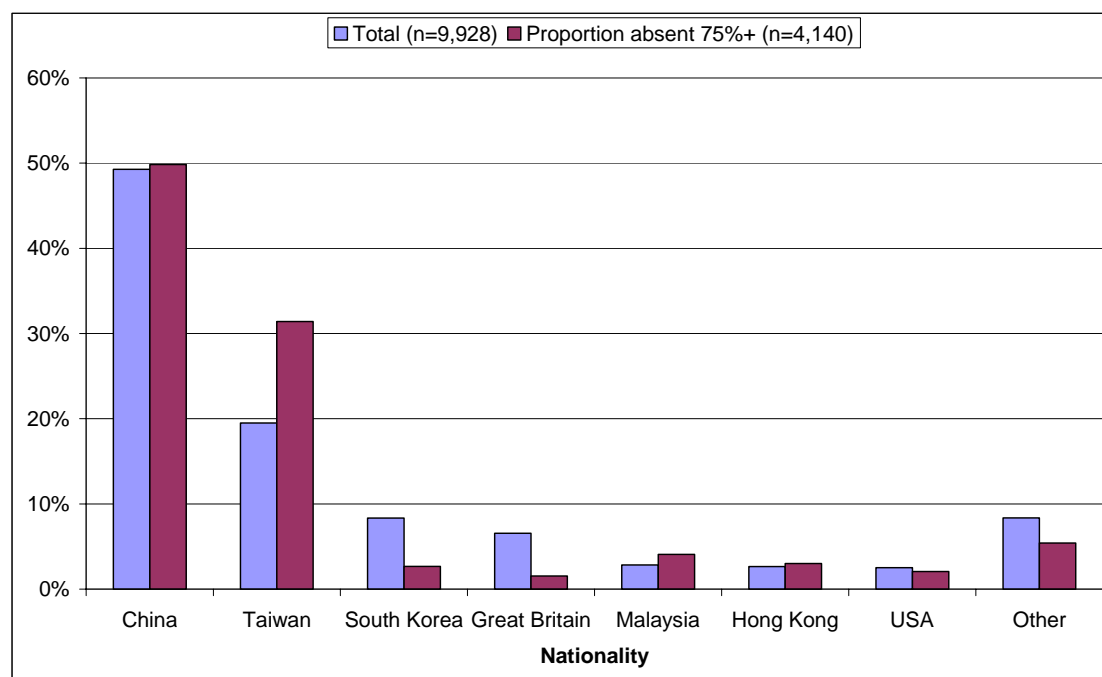
Table 7.5 Proportion of Investor Category migrants to spend 75 percent or more of their time absent by year between 1998 and 2004

Year after uptake		Year residence application approved							All
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
1	Absent 75%+	22.0%	23.2%	39.2%	42.8%	49.3%	47.1%	37.2%	44.5%
	Total in cohort	100	241	457	2,774	3,465	1,902	989	9,928
2	Absent 75%+	21.0%	25.7%	39.2%	39.9%	48.5%	44.3%		43.5%
	Total in cohort	100	241	457	2,774	3,465	1,502		8,539
3	Absent 75%+	30.0%	25.3%	38.1%	39.6%	44.2%			40.8%
	Total in cohort	100	241	457	2,774	2,741			6,313
4	Absent 75%+	33.0%	29.5%	39.2%	38.7%				36.1%
	Total in cohort	100	241	457	2,097				2,895
5	Absent 75%+	35.0%	32.8%	38.8%					36.1%
	Total in cohort	100	241	327					668
6	Absent 75%+	28.6%	33.3%						31.7%
	Total in cohort	98	192						290
7	Absent 75%+	39.5%							39.5%
	Total in cohort	86							86

Overall, 42 percent of Investor migrants spent 75 percent or more of their residence period absent (see Table 4.2 in Chapter 4). Figure 7.2 shows the nationality breakdown of all Investor Category approvals and the proportion who were high absence migrants. Chinese migrants made up 49 percent of approvals over this period and made up a similar proportion of migrants who were absent for 75 percent or more of their time. Taiwanese migrants made up 19 percent of approvals, yet they made up 31 percent of high absence migrants.

³⁴ The English language requirements increased for Skilled/Business migrants from November 2002. For the Business Categories, the minimum IELTS score increased from 4 in each area to an average of 5. Also in November 2002, tighter operational policy requirements regarding the source of funds through the Investor Category were introduced.

Figure 7.2 Nationality of Investor Category approvals and proportion absent for 75 percent or more of their time 1998 to 2004



7.5 General Skills Category

Overall, 13 percent of GSC migrants were absent for 75 percent or more of their time in their first year of residence (see Table 7.6). The proportion absent for this amount of time increased each year, up to 29 percent of those who were in their seventh year of residence.

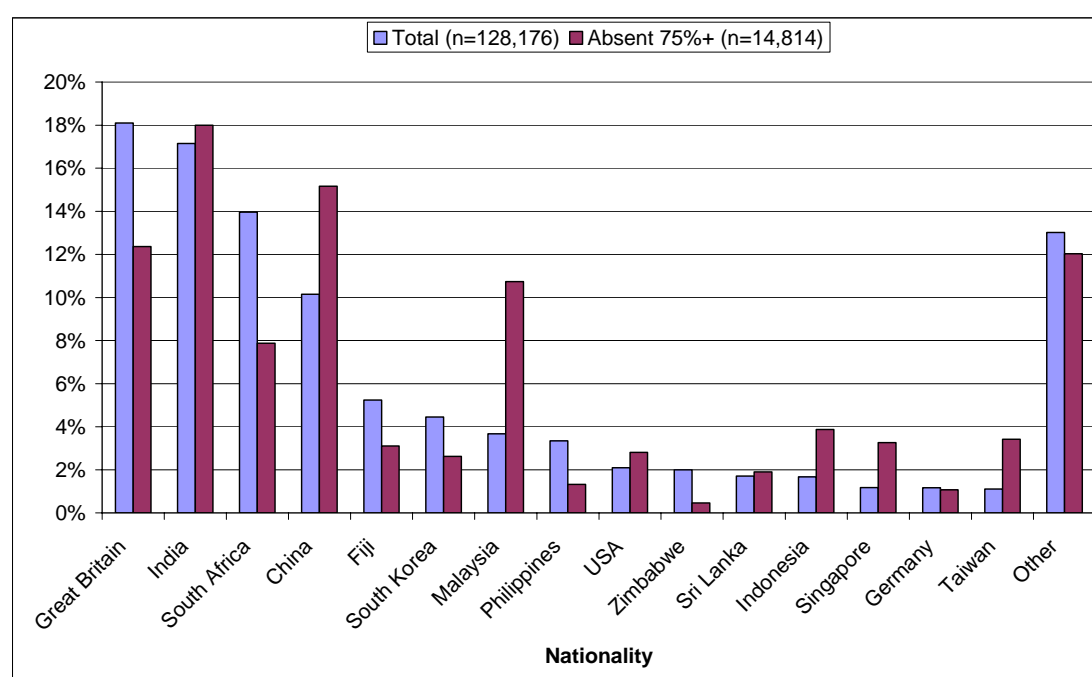
There was some variation in the rate of absenteeism between cohorts. Generally each year after residence uptake, the rate of being absent for 75 percent or more was lower for those approved in more recent years than in earlier years. For example, for those who were in their third year of residence, 17 percent of those approved in 1998 were absent for 75 percent or more compared to 12 percent of those approved in 2002.

Table 7.6 Proportion of General Skills Category migrants to spend 75 percent or more absent by year between 1998 and 2004

Year after uptake		Year residence application approved							Total
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
1	Absent 75%+	14.7%	14.8%	14.9%	14.5%	13.3%	11.7%	3.6%	13.1%
	Total in cohort	10,684	13,301	17,148	27,497	29,239	21,445	8,862	128,176
2	Absent 75%+	15.3%	15.1%	15.6%	14.0%	13.5%	9.4%		13.7%
	Total in cohort	10,684	13,301	17,148	27,497	29,239	17,474		115,343
3	Absent 75%+	16.8%	16.2%	16.4%	15.5%	12.4%			15.2%
	Total in cohort	10,684	13,301	17,148	27,497	22,212			90,842
4	Absent 75%+	20.0%	19.2%	18.8%	16.8%				18.5%
	Total in cohort	10,684	13,301	17,148	19,457				60,590
5	Absent 75%+	23.5%	22.4%	21.1%					22.3%
	Total in cohort	10,684	13,301	12,784					36,769
6	Absent 75%+	26.3%	23.5%						24.9%
	Total in cohort	10,555	9,814						20,369
7	Absent 75%+	28.2%							28.2%
	Total in cohort	8,465							8,465

Overall, 12 percent of GSC migrants spent 75 percent or more of their time absent (see Table 4.2 in Chapter 4). Migrants from Great Britain made up 18 percent of approvals through the GSC over the period 1998 to 2004. In the same period, migrants from Great Britain made up 12 percent of high absence migrants (see Figure 7.3). Chinese migrants made up 10 percent of approvals, yet they made up 15 percent of high absence migrants. Migrants from Malaysia made up 4 percent of approvals and 11 percent of high absence migrants. Other nationalities from which there was a high proportion of high absence migrants (compared to the proportion of total approvals) were Indonesia, Singapore and Taiwan.

Figure 7.3 Nationality of General Skills Category approvals and proportion absent for 75 percent or more 1998 to 2004



7.6 Family Parent Category

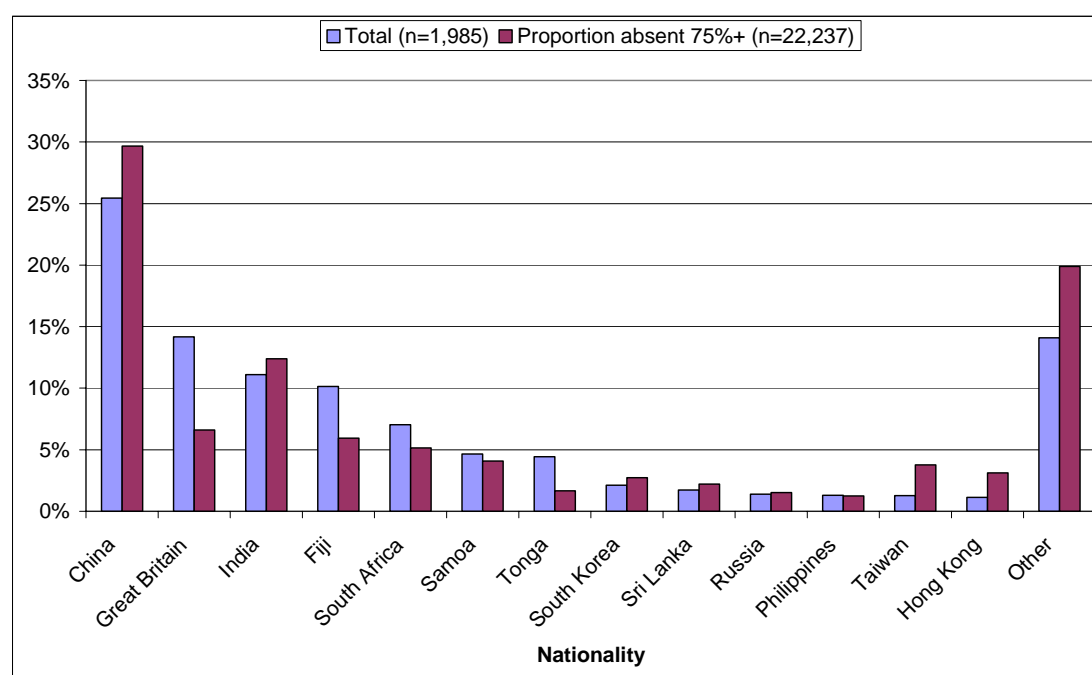
The proportion of Family Parent Category high absence migrants ranged from 9 percent of those in their first year of residence to 27 percent in their seventh year (see Table 7.7). The proportion absent on a year-by-year basis was fairly consistent between cohorts (those approved between 1998 and 2004).

Table 7.7 Proportion of Family Parent Category migrants to spend 75 percent or more of their time absent by year between 1998 and 2004

Year after uptake		Year residence application approved							All
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
1	Absent 75%+	9.4%	10.0%	10.6%	9.5%	8.6%	6.1%	4.3%	8.9%
	Total in cohort	340	348	408	438	219	132	87	1,972
2	Absent 75%+	13.3%	12.2%	12.9%	11.1%	11.8%	12.6%		12.3%
	Total in cohort	479	425	495	512	301	226		2,438
3	Absent 75%+	17.3%	15.6%	16.0%	15.7%	13.8%			15.8%
	Total in cohort	623	542	617	722	285			2,789
4	Absent 75%+	20.9%	17.6%	19.6%	19.3%				19.4%
	Total in cohort	753	611	755	728				2,847
5	Absent 75%+	23.5%	19.9%	21.1%					21.5%
	Total in cohort	849	691	649					2,189
6	Absent 75%+	25.3%	21.4%						23.6%
	Total in cohort	900	568						1,468
7	Absent 75%+	26.6%							26.6%
	Total in cohort	771							771

Overall, 9 percent through the Family Parent Category were absent for 75 percent or more of their residence period (see Table 4.2 in Chapter 4). Countries through the Family Parent Category with a disproportionate proportion of high absence migrants (compared to total approvals) included China, Taiwan and Hong Kong (see Figure 7.4). British migrants were less likely to be high absence migrants (14 percent of approvals and 7 percent of high absence migrants were British).

Figure 7.4 Nationality of Family Parent Category approvals and proportion absent for 75 percent or more 1998 to 2004



7.7 Samoan Quota

Table 7.8 shows migrants approved through the Samoan Quota who were absent for 75 percent or more on a year-by-year basis. Overall, the proportion of high absence migrants increased from 7 percent of those in their first year of residence to 21 percent of those in their seventh year. There was a comparatively small number approved through this category in 2003 (337), yet this cohort had high rates of absence compared to other cohorts. Eleven percent of those approved in 2003 were absent in their first year of residence and 16 percent were absent in their second year.

Table 7.8 Proportion of Samoan Quota migrants to spend 75 percent or more of their time absent by year 1998 and 2004

Year after uptake		Year residence application approved							Total
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
1	Absent 75%+	3.8%	7.2%	8.2%	9.3%	7.8%	11.0%	5.6%	7.4%
	Total in cohort	909	908	1,419	1015	387	337	556	5,531
2	Absent 75%+	6.5%	10.0%	11.2%	10.5%	8.8%	16.4%		10.1%
	Total in cohort	909	908	1,419	1015	387	317		4,955
3	Absent 75%+	10.1%	10.1%	12.7%	12.6%	12.9%			11.7%
	Total in cohort	909	908	1,419	1015	294			4,545
4	Absent 75%+	12.8%	11.1%	14.6%	15.7%				13.7%
	Total in cohort	909	908	1,419	851				4,087
5	Absent 75%+	14.4%	12.0%	17.2%					14.9%
	Total in cohort	909	908	1,331					3,148
6	Absent 75%+	16.9%	13.6%						15.3%
	Total in cohort	908	809						1,717
7	Absent 75%+	20.9%							20.9%
	Total in cohort	879							879

7.8 Summary

For each cohort, the tendency to spend 75 percent or more of the residence period absent increased with length of residence. One exception was the 2002 cohort, with a comparatively high rate of absence in the first two years after residence uptake. Some nationalities had a high proportion of high absence migrants when compared to total approvals from those countries. Migrants from China, Malaysia and Taiwan had a high proportion of high absence migrants, whereas Great Britain had a lower rate. Each year after residence uptake, migrants through the Skilled/Business Stream were more likely to be high absence migrants than those through other residence streams.

Compared to other migrants, Investor Category migrants had a high tendency to spend large amounts of their residence period absent. Investors approved in 2002 had particularly high rates of absence.

8 ONSHORE AND NON-RETURN RATES

8.1 Introduction

This chapter includes data from a time series analysis. Migrants were assessed as at the first of each month to determine if they were either in New Zealand (onshore), offshore temporarily (but subsequently returned) or offshore permanently (with no subsequent return during the analysis period). The movement statuses of all migrants approved between 1998 and 2004 were calculated.

The chapter includes data that tracks onshore rates over time for all migrants approved between 1998 and 2003. This data is provided for various immigration approval categories. Migrants' non-return rates are also described. This includes the rate of migrants approved between 1998 and 2003 leaving the country and not returning by the end of the analysis period (December 2004). Finally, the chapter provides data on migrants' overall rates of non-return.

8.2 Overall movement patterns

Table 8.1 shows the rate of migrants being onshore, temporarily offshore and offshore without return during the analysis period as at December 2003.

One of the aims of the research was to explore the proportion of migrants who had a spell of absence of six months or more and subsequently returned. Overall, 4 percent had a spell of absence of six months or more and subsequently returned. There was variation by cohort – for the 1998 to 2000 cohorts, the rate was fairly constant (4 percent), for the 2001 cohort, the rate was 5 percent, and for 2002, 6 percent. For the 2003 cohort, the rate was lower although this reflects migrants in this cohort having had less time to have had long spells of absence.

Overall, 80 percent were onshore and 11 percent had left and not returned during the analysis period as at December 2003. The remainder of this chapter focuses on migrants' onshore and non-return rates.

Table 8.1 Migrants' onshore, offshore and non-return rates as at December 2003

Year residence application approved	Temporary spell of absence							Total
	Onshore	1–30 days	31–60 days	61–180 days	181–365 days	366+ days	Not returned	
1998	73.6%	0.8%	0.9%	1.8%	1.3%	2.7%	19.0%	24,086
1999	76.6%	0.8%	1.1%	2.0%	1.5%	2.8%	15.2%	28,711
2000	79.1%	0.8%	1.2%	2.4%	1.4%	2.1%	13.0%	34,531
2001	79.5%	0.8%	1.5%	3.3%	1.9%	3.0%	10.1%	48,545
2002	79.2%	0.7%	1.2%	3.9%	3.0%	3.4%	8.6%	47,441
2003	89.3%	0.8%	1.1%	3.4%	1.9%	0.6%	2.9%	34,004
Total	79.9%	0.8%	1.2%	3.0%	1.9%	2.5%	10.8%	217,318

• Note: The percentages are of each row.

8.3 Onshore rates

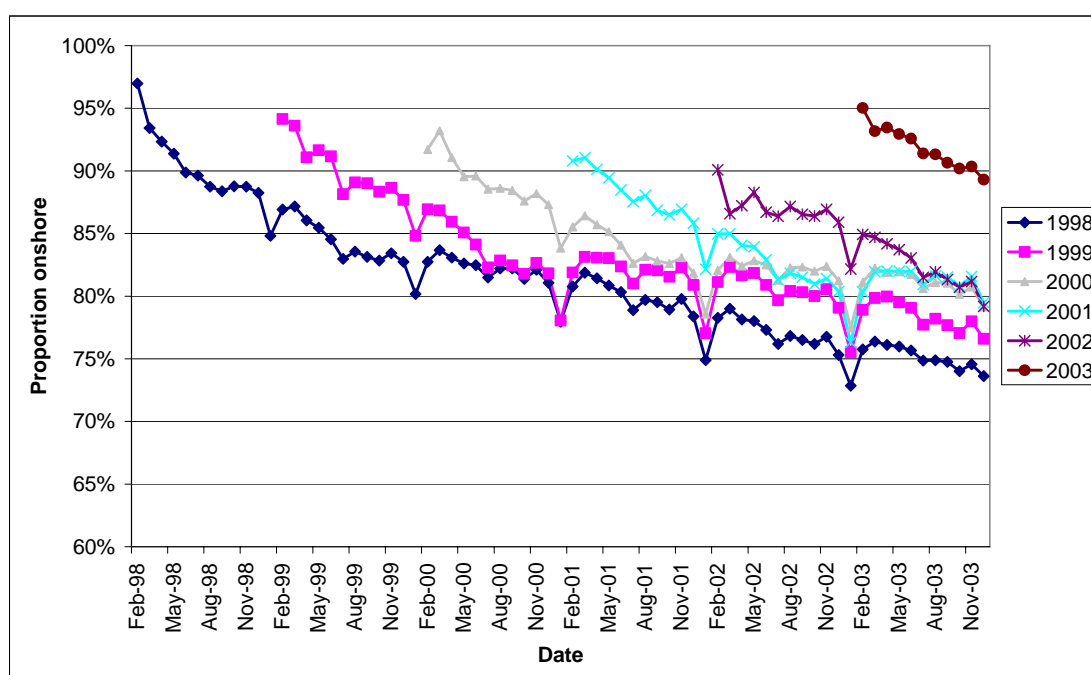
The graphs in section 8.3 should be read as the proportion of those who arrived to take up residence who were onshore at a given date. Each line reflects a separate cohort. For example, the bottom line in Figure 8.1 tracks onshore rates for the 1998 cohort over the period February 1998 to November 2003. Migrants have 12 months

from the date their application is completed to take up residence. Therefore, each line reflects migrants arriving over their first 12 months, as well as those leaving.

Figure 8.1 shows the proportion of migrants who were onshore on a monthly basis. For each cohort, there was a decline over time in the proportion onshore. This is a reflection of migrants leaving the country and not returning from a spell of absence (see section 8.4 below).

Figure 8.1 highlights seasonal patterns in migrants' absence from New Zealand. For each cohort, there is a noticeable dip in onshore rates between December and February, reflecting migrants travelling overseas over the Christmas holiday period. For each cohort, there is also a smaller dip in July of each year which coincides with the Northern hemisphere summer. This seasonal variation has impacts on analysis of absence, depending on which part of the year the analysis is carried out.

Figure 8.1 Proportion of migrants onshore at monthly intervals 1998–2003

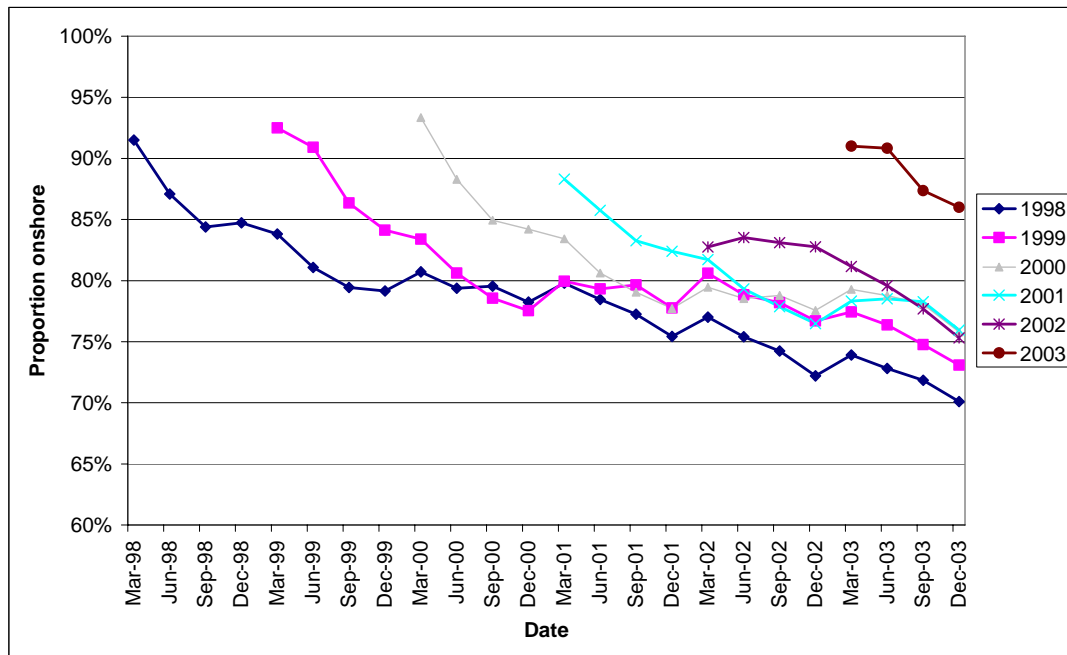


- Note: The y axis starts at 60 percent.
- Note: The onshore rates are a proportion of those who had arrived to take up residence. Each line starts below 100 percent due to some migrants being offshore subsequent to arrival.

Figure 8.2 shows the proportion of Skilled/Business Stream migrants who were onshore on a three-monthly basis. The decline in the proportion of Skilled/Business migrants onshore is steeper than for Family Sponsored or International/Humanitarian Streams (see Figures 8.3 and 8.4 below). There is a noticeable increase in absences around December each year.

The onshore rate for the cohort of Skilled/Business Stream migrants approved in 2002 was slightly lower than for the 2001 cohort. Seventy-five percent of the 2002 cohort were onshore as at December 2003, compared to 76 percent of the 2001 cohort. Between September and December 2000, the onshore rate for the 1999 cohort dipped below the onshore rate for the 1998 cohort.

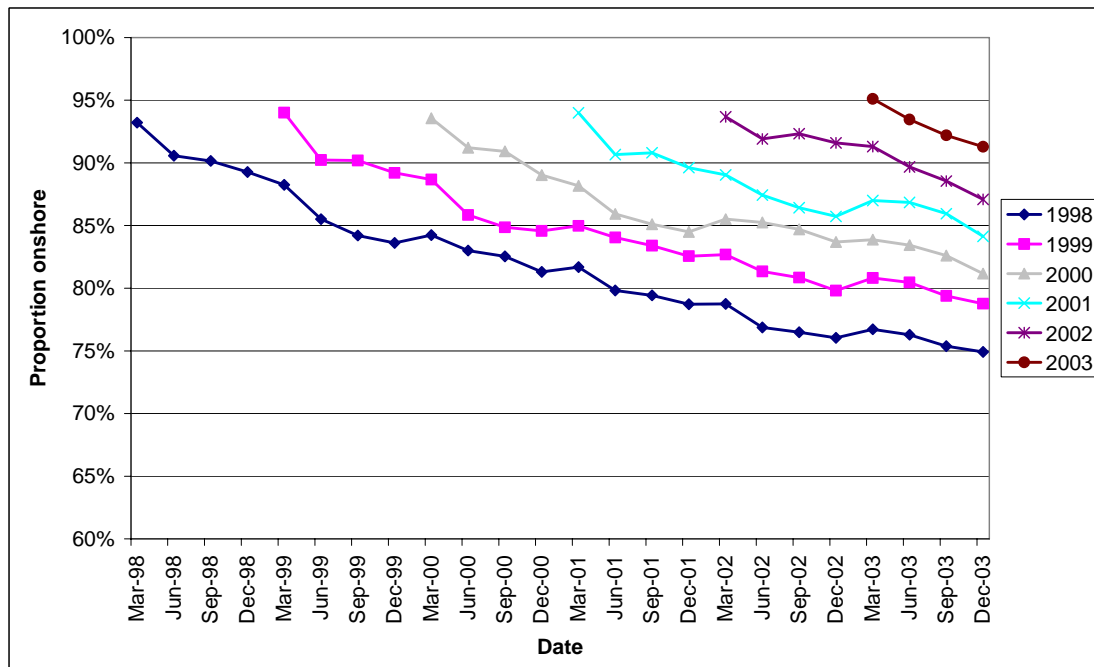
Figure 8.2 Proportion of Skilled/Business Stream migrants onshore 1998–2003



- Note: The y axis starts at 60 percent.
- Note: The onshore rates are a proportion of those who had arrived to take up residence. Each line starts below 100% due to some migrants being offshore subsequent to arrival.

The decline in the proportion of Family Sponsored Stream migrants onshore over time is consistent for each cohort. Seventy-five percent of the 1998 cohort were onshore as at December 2003 (see Figure 8.3).

Figure 8.3 Proportion of Family Sponsored Stream migrants onshore 1998–2003

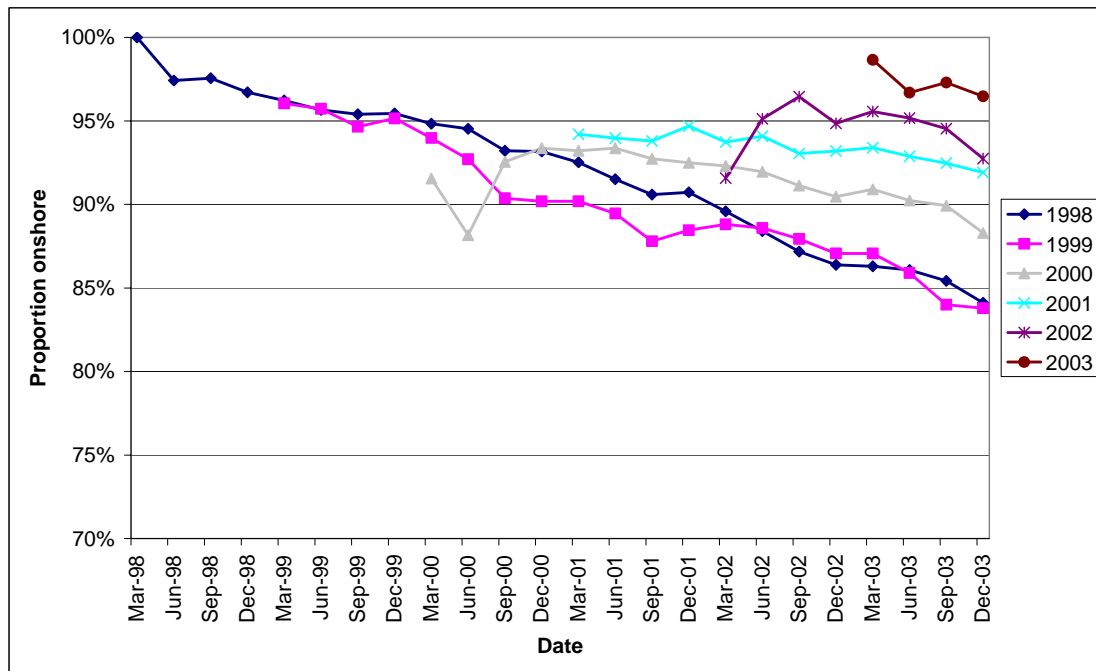


- Note: The y axis starts at 60 percent.
- Note: The onshore rates are a proportion of those who had arrived to take up residence. Each line starts below 100 percent due to some migrants being offshore subsequent to arrival.

International/Humanitarian Stream migrants had higher onshore rates than migrants through other streams (see Figure 8.4). For those approved in 1998 and 1999, 84

percent were onshore as at December 2003. Between September 1999 and March 2002, the 1999 cohort had a lower onshore rate than the 1998 cohort.

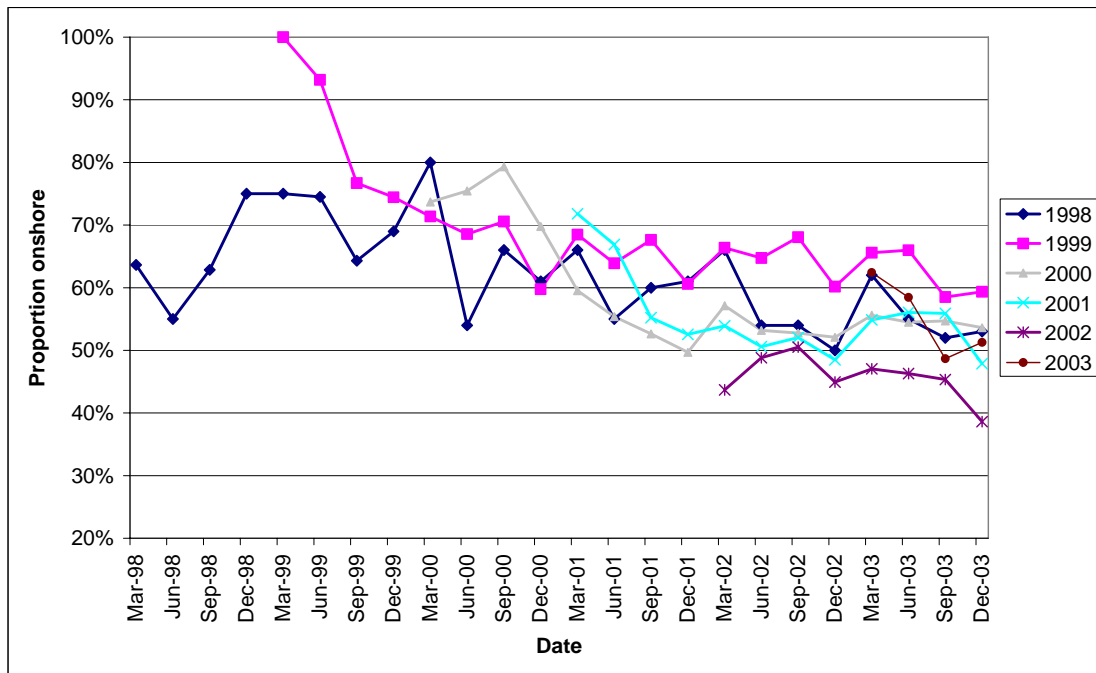
Figure 8.4 Proportion of International/Humanitarian Stream migrants onshore 1998–2003



- Note: The y axis starts at 70 percent.
- Note: The onshore rates are a proportion of those who had arrived to take up residence. Each line starts below 100 percent due to some migrants being offshore subsequent to arrival.

Overall, Investor Category migrants had lower rates of being onshore than other migrants (see Figure 8.5). The patterns of being onshore were variable, and there were not consistent patterns between cohorts although, for some cohorts, there was a higher rate of absence at December each year. The 2002 cohort stood out with the lowest onshore rate – 39 percent were onshore as at December 2003.

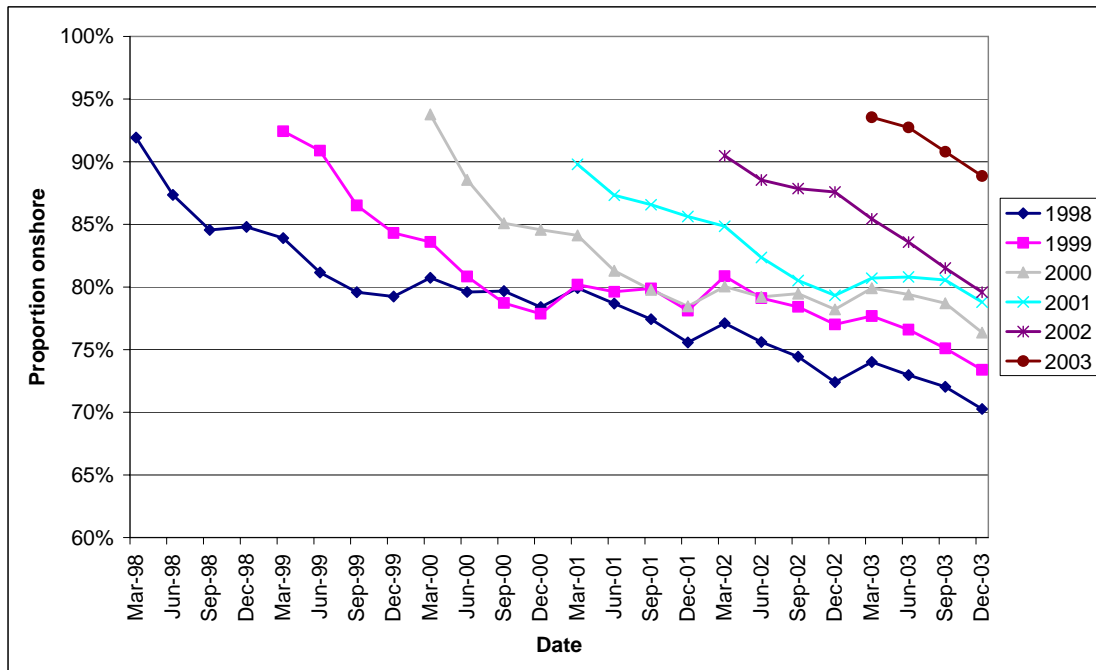
Figure 8.5 Proportion of Investor Category migrants onshore 1998–2003



- The y axis starts at 20 percent.
- The onshore rates are a proportion of those who had arrived to take up residence. Each line starts below 100 percent due to some migrants being offshore subsequent to arrival.

The proportion of GSC migrants who were onshore as at December 2003 ranged from 70 percent of the 1998 cohort to 89 percent of the 2003 cohort (see Figure 8.6). For the 2002 cohort, there was a steep decline in the onshore rate between December 2002 (88 percent) and December 2003 (80 percent).

Figure 8.6 Proportion of General Skills Category migrants onshore 1998–2003



- The y axis starts at 60 percent.
- The onshore rates are a proportion of those who had arrived to take up residence. Each line starts below 100 percent due to some migrants being offshore subsequent to arrival.

8.4 Non-return rates

This section examines the rate of migrants leaving the country and not returning by the end of the analysis period (December 2004). The analysis is as at December 2003, and the rate of not returning after this date is not examined. The reason for absence after December 2003 being excluded is that it falsely inflates the non-return rate. For example, someone may have had a two-week period of absence that extended past the end of 2004. If the 2004 data was included, this person would incorrectly be recorded as not having returned.

Figure 8.7 shows the proportion of migrants between 1998 and 2003 who had a spell of absence that they did not return from before the end of the analysis period (31 December 2004). The data reflects differing lengths of absence, but all migrants included in Figure 8.7 had been absent for at least one year (and up to five years and nine months).

For all cohorts, the rate of non-return increased quite steeply over time. As at December 2003, 19 percent of the 1998 cohort had left and not returned before December 2004. Nine percent approved in 2002 had a spell of absence from which they did not return. The increase in the rate of non-return was steeper for the 2002 cohorts than others.

The rates of non-return are similar for each cohort (i.e. each line in Figure 8.7, with the exception of the 2002 cohort, has a similar gradient). This similarity indicates that the level of non-return in Figure 8.7 is typically what we can expect over time.

Slightly different trends were apparent for the 2002 and 2003 cohorts. For each of these cohorts, the rate of non-return is initially higher than for other cohorts and then is slow over the first year (the slope of the line is less steep). A number of significant policy changes were introduced in 2002, including several increases to the GSC passmark³⁵ and differential points for relevant and non-relevant job offers.³⁶ In November 2002, the English language requirements for Skilled and Business migrants were increased.³⁷ In addition, the policy allowing job search work visas to be issued to GSC principal applicants within five points of the General Skills passmark was tightened so that visas were only available to those who met the new GSC English language standard and who had qualifications relevant to occupations on the Immediate Skill Shortages List (previously the Occupational Shortages List).

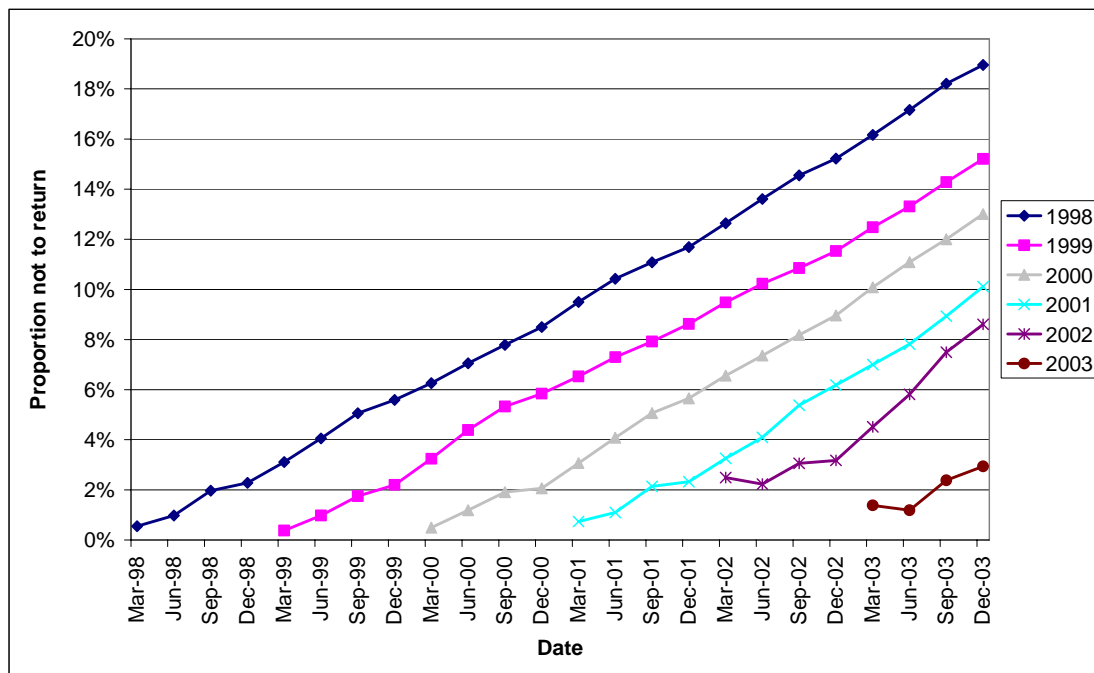
It could be postulated that the different patterns in non-return for the 2002 and 2003 cohorts is a reflection of the 2002 policy changes, although changes that came in towards the end of 2002 (such as the increased English language requirements) would impact on the 2003 and future cohorts, rather than 2002 cohort. It will be important to continue to track non-return rates for these and other cohorts over time. Given the importance of English language ability to good employment and settlement outcomes, it would be expected that the English language policy changes would impact positively on any non-return that may be due to poor settlement.

³⁵ The GSC passmark increased from 24 to 25 in January 2002, from 25 to 28 in June 2002, from 28 to 29 in September 2002 and from 29 to 30 in October 2002.

³⁶ From February 2002, GSC applicants scored 5 points if their New Zealand job offer was relevant to their qualifications and experience and 2 points if the offer was not relevant.

³⁷ For the GSC, the minimum IELTS score increased from an average of 5 to an average of 6.5 across all four bands. For the Business categories, the score required increased from 4 in each area to an average of 5.

Figure 8.7 Proportion of migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003



8.4.1 Applicant type

Figures 8.8 and 8.9 below show the non-return rates for principal and secondary applicants. Overall, the patterns were similar for both types of applicants. For the 1999 cohort, a slightly higher proportion of principal than secondary applicants had left and not returned (16 percent for principal applicants and 15 percent for secondary applicants). For the 2003, 2002 and 2001 cohorts, a higher proportion of secondary than principal applicants had left and not returned (4, 10 and 11 percent for secondary applicants and 2, 7, and 9 percent for principal applicants respectively). The higher rate of non-return for secondary applicants could reflect secondary applicants leaving without the principal applicant or it could reflect larger application units leaving (i.e. families that contain many secondary applicants).

Figure 8.8 Proportion of principal applicants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003

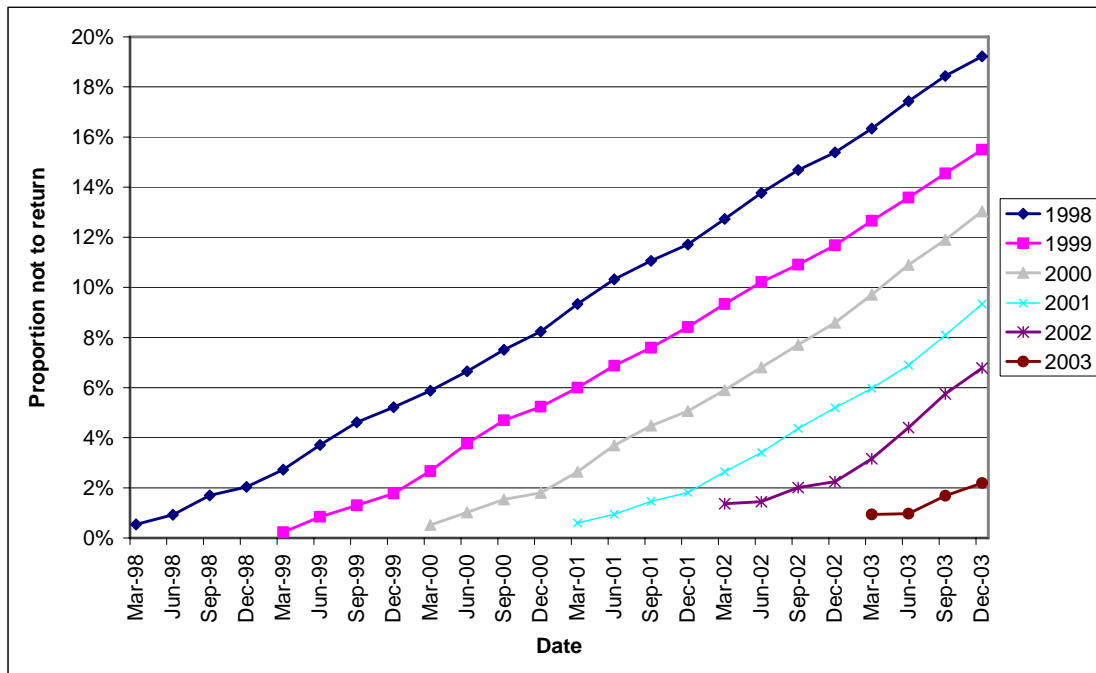
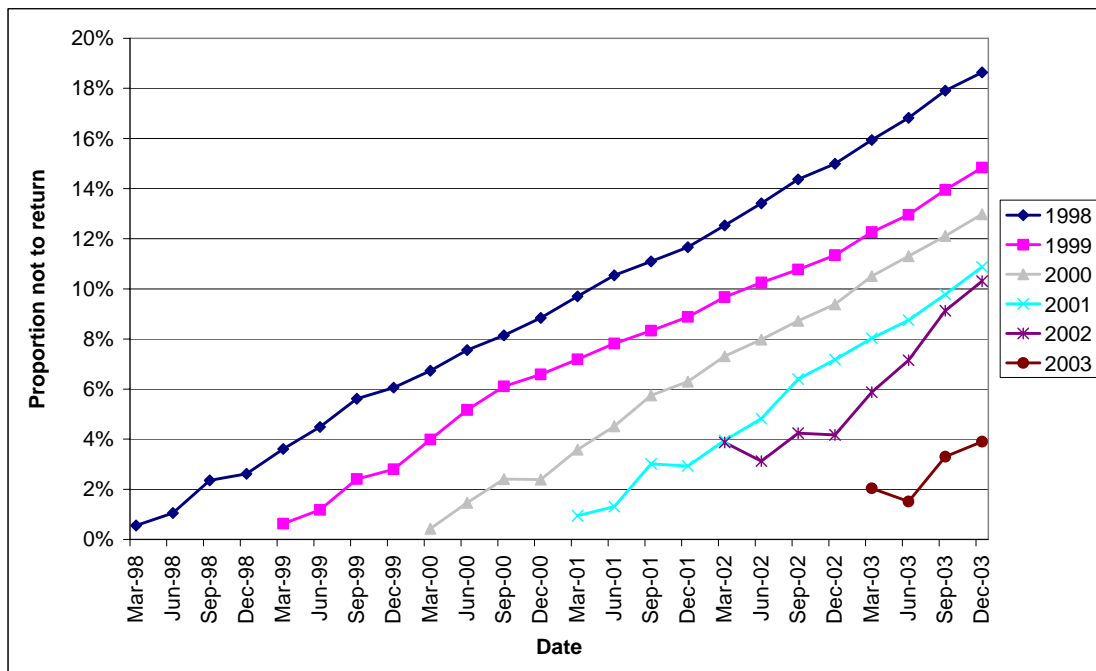


Figure 8.9 Proportion of secondary applicants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003

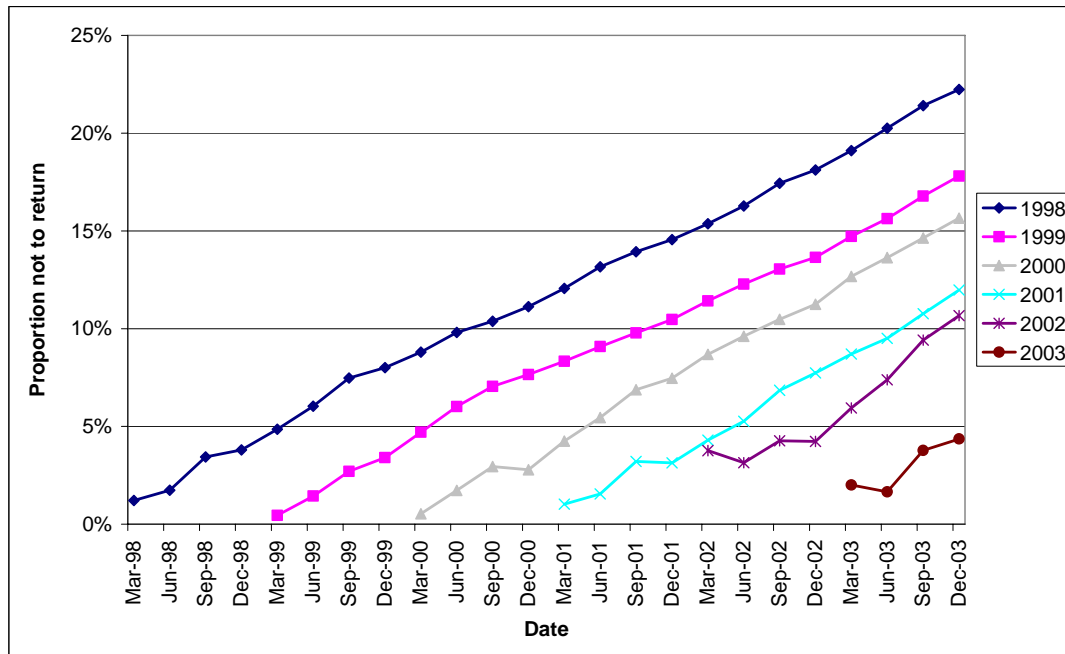


8.4.2 Residence stream

Skilled/Business migrants had higher rates of non-return compared to all migrants (see Figure 8.10 and 8.7 for comparison). Twenty-two percent of Skilled/Business migrants approved in 1998 had left the country and not returned between 1998 and 2004. The non-return rates for other cohorts ranged from 18 percent of the 1999 cohort to 4 percent of the 2003 cohort. A comparatively high proportion of Skilled/Business migrants approved in 2002 had left the country as at March 2002 (4

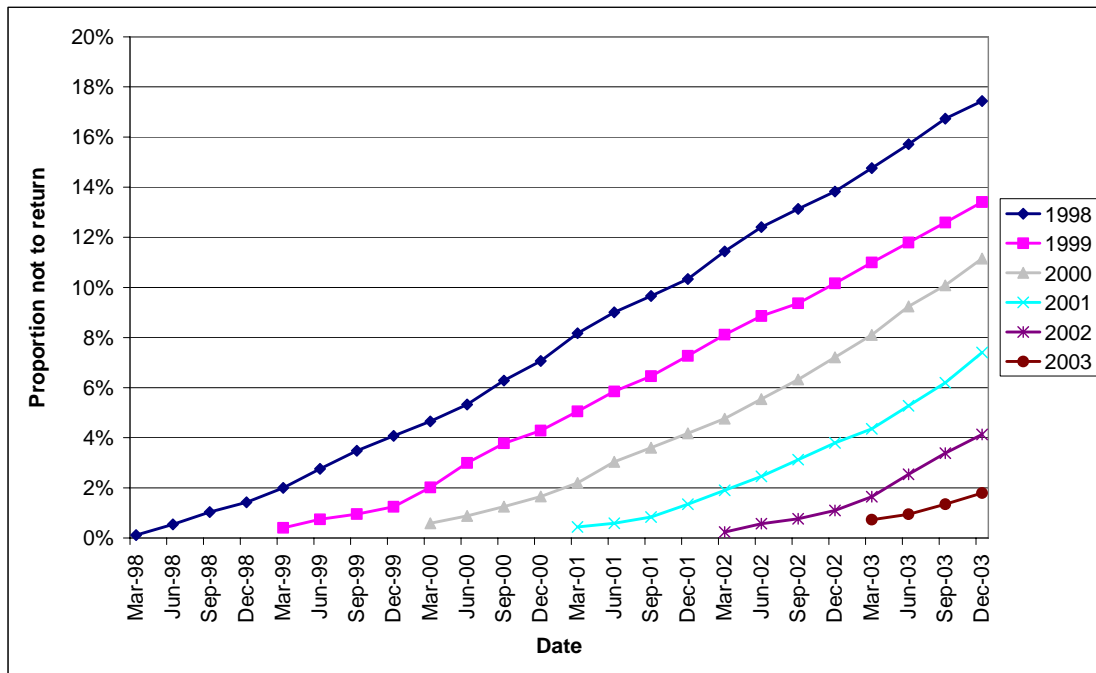
percent). The proportion of other cohorts to have left and not returned by March of the year they were approved was less than 2 percent each. After an initial spike in non-return by the 2002 and 2003 cohorts soon after taking up residence, the rate of non-return levelled out over the first year. This pattern is discussed above (see Figure 8.7) and is more evident in the Skilled/Business stream than other residence streams.

Figure 8.10 Proportion of Skilled/Business Stream migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003



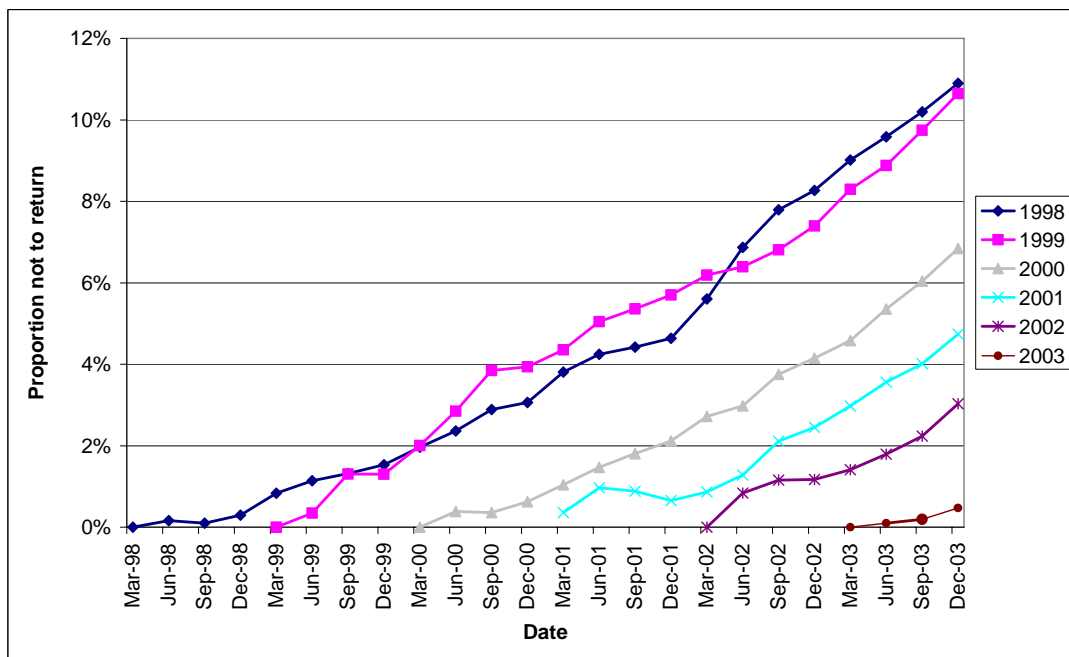
Compared to all migrants, Family Sponsored Stream migrants had slightly lower rates of non-return (see Figure 8.11). The proportion not to return from a spell of absence ranged from 17 percent of those approved in 1998 to 2 percent of those approved in 2003.

Figure 8.11 Proportion of Family Sponsored Stream migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003



Compared to other residence streams, International/Humanitarian Stream migrants had lower rates of non-return (see Figure 8.12). As at December 2003, 11 percent of those approved in 1998 had left and not returned before December 2004. The rate of non-return for the 1999 cohort was similar, with 11 percent also having left and not returned. For other cohorts, the proportion to have left ranged from 1 percent of those approved in 2003 to 7 percent approved in 2000.

Figure 8.12 Proportion of International/Humanitarian Stream migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003



8.4.3 Residence category

The proportion of GSC migrants not to return from a spell of absence ranged from 3 percent of the 2003 cohort to 22 percent of the 1998 cohort (see Figure 8.13). This is quite similar to the rates of all Skilled/Business migrants (see Figure 8.10 for comparison).

Figure 8.13 Proportion of General Skills Category migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003

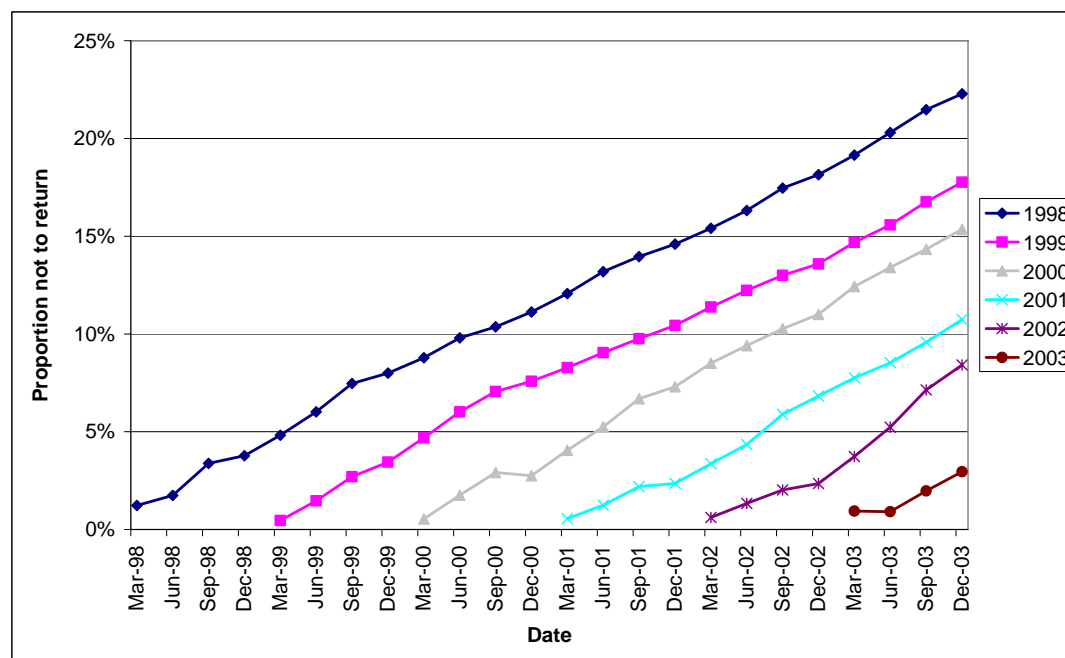


Table 8.2 shows GSC principal applicants had a slightly higher rate of non-return than secondary applicants between 1998 and 2000. In 2002 and 2003, the non-return rate was slightly higher for secondary applicants.

Table 8.2 Proportion of General Skills Category migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003 by applicant type

Applicant type	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Principal	23.9%	18.8%	16.1%	10.7%	7.3%	2.6%
Secondary	21.3%	17.1%	14.9%	10.7%	9.2%	3.2%
Total	22.3%	17.8%	15.4%	10.7%	8.4%	3.0%

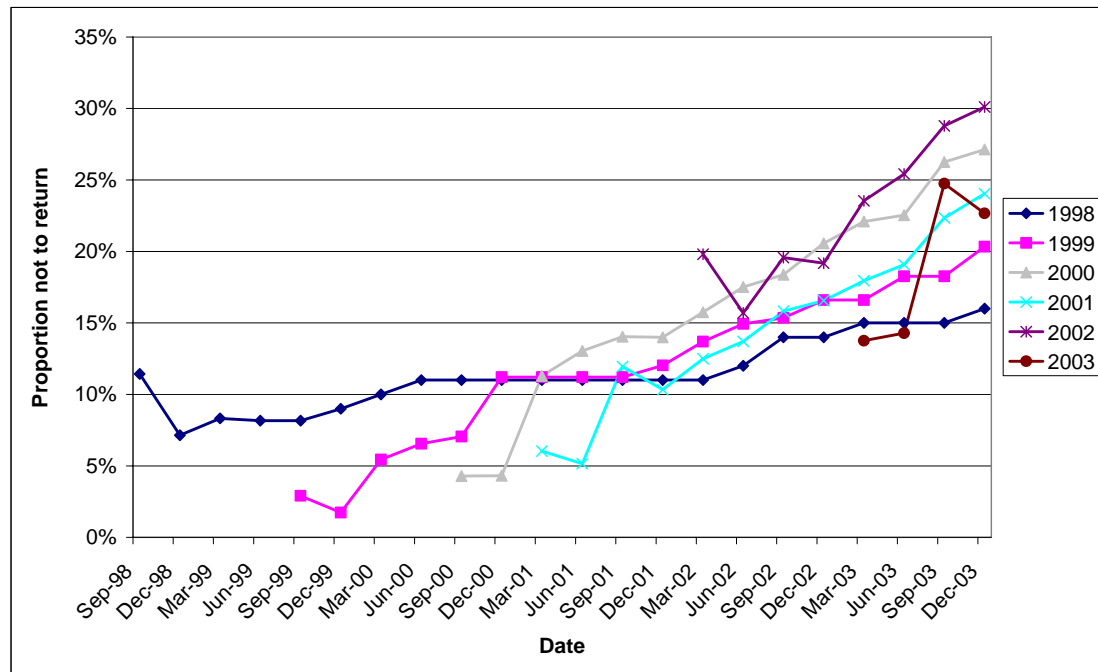
The rate of non-return for Investor Category migrants was higher for those approved more recently than in earlier years (see Figure 8.14). Of the 100 Investors approved in 1998, 16 percent had left and not returned as at December 2003. Rates of non-return were higher for all other cohorts, particularly the 2002 cohort. For those approved in 2002 (n=3,465), 30 percent had left and not returned before December 2004. Twenty-three percent of Investors approved in 2003 (n=1,377) had a spell of absence from which they had not returned.

The source countries of Investors have changed over the years, and this appears to impact non-return rates. In 2002, a comparatively high proportion of Investors were Chinese (63 percent). The proportion of Chinese Investors in other years ranged from 3 percent of those approved in 1998 to 52 percent of those in 2001. Of the main source countries, overall absence rates by Chinese Investors were second only

to Taiwanese Investors (see Table 4.13 in Chapter 4). The large number of Chinese Investors in 2002 accounts for the high overall non-return rate for that cohort.

From July 2005, a new Investor Category came into effect and brought about a significant shift in the way Investors are granted residence. The new policy aims to provide targeted use of Investor funds and attract skilled business people to New Zealand. Applicants granted residence under the new policy will have a number of conditions on their permit, and these conditions will apply for the first five years. They must retain NZ\$2 million in an acceptable investment for five years, they must make New Zealand their home by the end of the investment period, and they must participate in monitoring and evaluation as required by the Department of Labour.

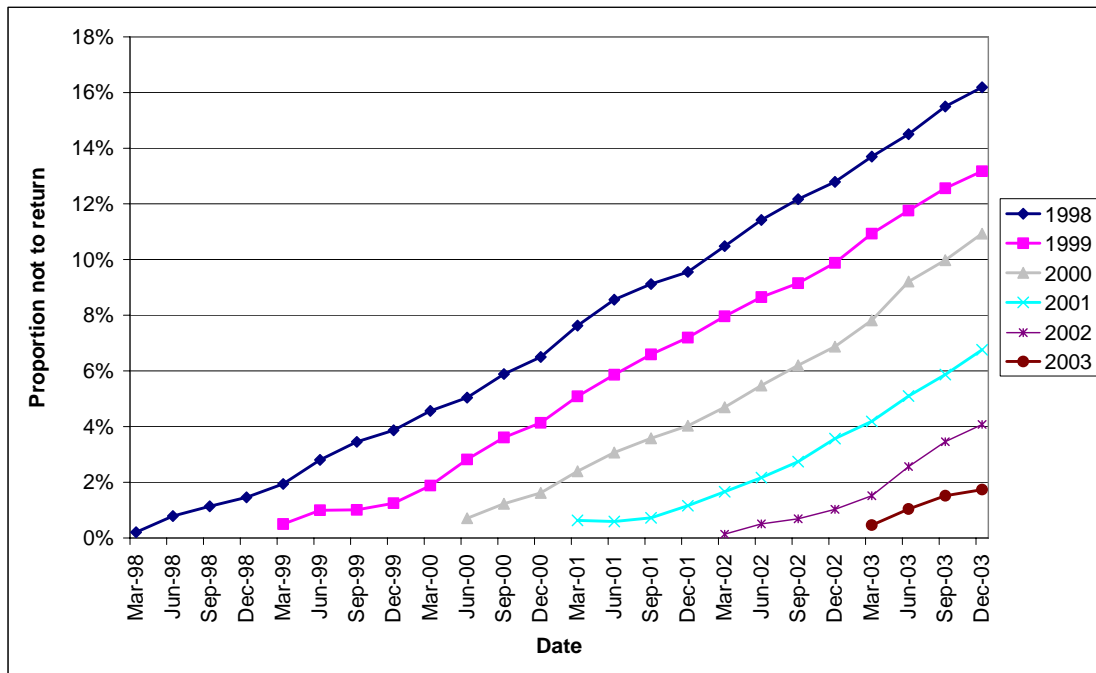
Figure 8.14 Proportion of Investor Category migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003



• Note: n=100 (1998), 241 (1999), 457 (2000), 2,774 (2001), 3,465 (2002) and 1,377 (2003).

As at December 2003, the non-return rate for migrants through the Partnership Category ranged from 16 percent of the 1998 cohort to 1 percent of the 2003 cohort (see Figure 8.15).

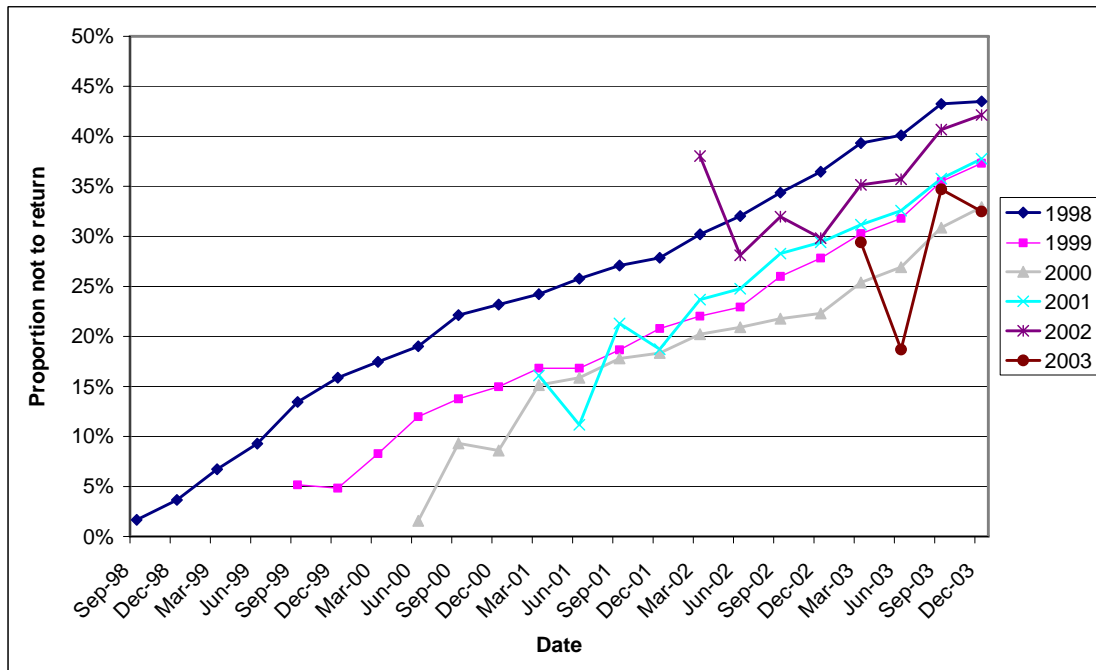
Figure 8.15 Proportion of Partnership Category migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003



8.4.4 Nationality

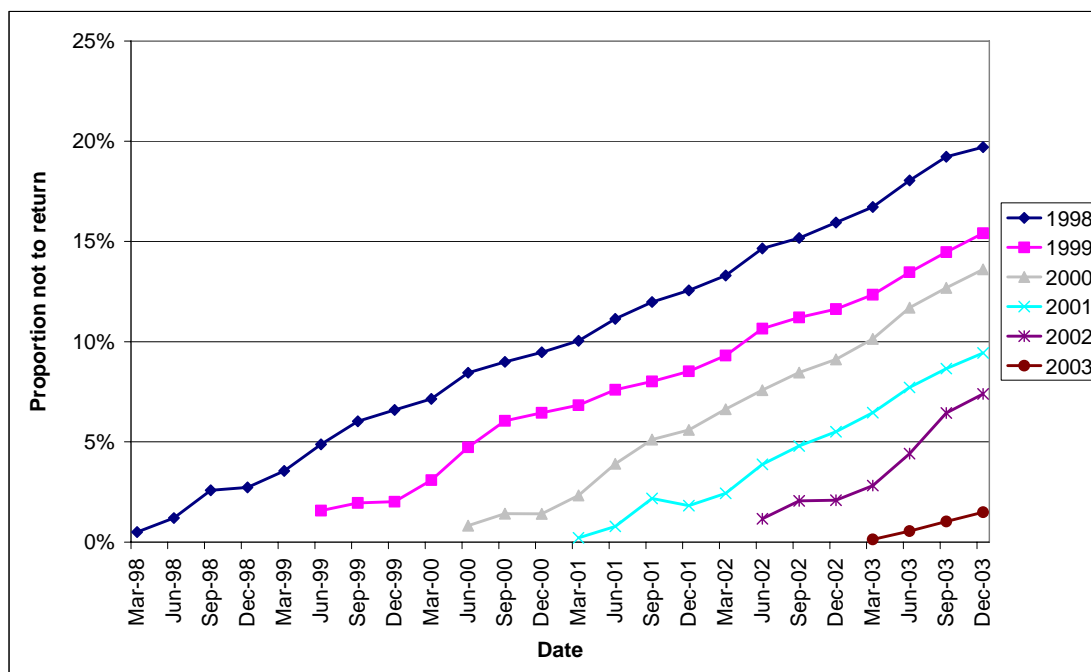
Forty-four percent of Taiwanese migrants approved in 1998 had not returned from a spell of absence as at December 2003. Taiwanese migrants approved in 2002 had the second highest non-return rate of 42 percent. Those approved in 1999 and 2001 had similar non-return rates of 37 and 39 percent respectively (see Figure 8.16).

Figure 8.16 Proportion of Taiwanese migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003



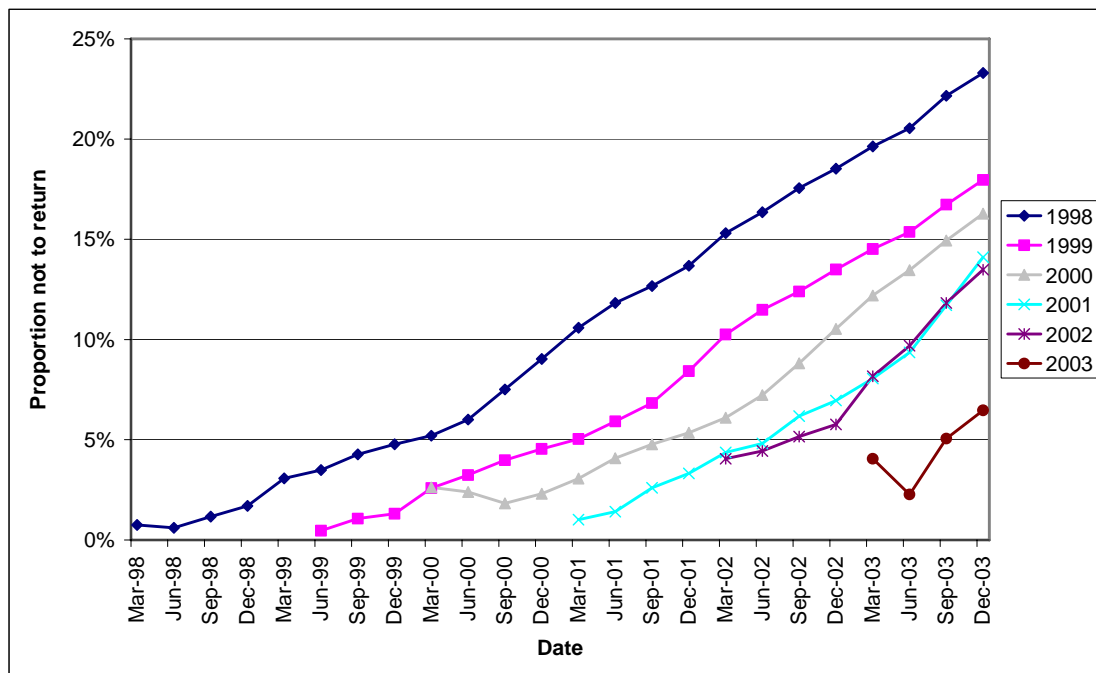
The proportion of British migrants not to return from a spell of absence ranged from 20 percent of those approved in 1998 to 2 percent of those approved in 2003 (see Figure 8.17).

Figure 8.17 Proportion of British migrants to remain offshore at 31 December 2004 for 12 months or more – approved 1998–2003



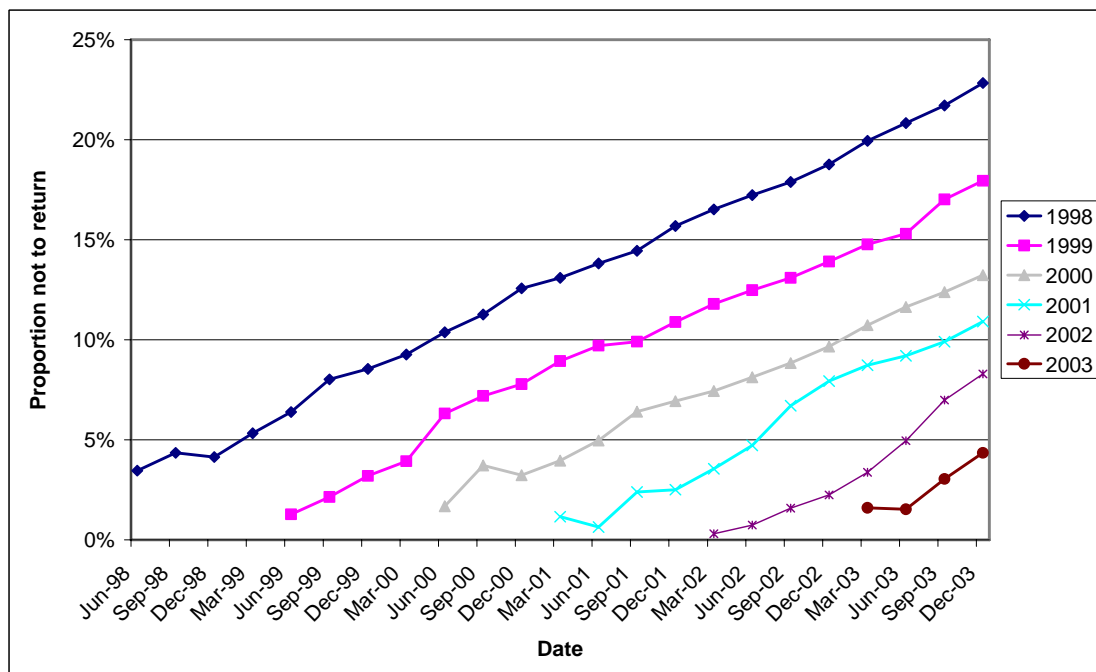
The proportion of Chinese migrants not to return from a period of absence ranged from 6 percent of those approved in 2003 to 23 percent of those approved in 1998. The rates of non-return for the 2001 and 2002 cohort were similar – 14 percent for 2001 and 13 percent for 2002 (see Figure 8.18). In 2002, a higher proportion of approvals were from China than in other years. Seventeen percent of all approvals were Chinese in 2002, compared to between 10 and 15 percent in other years of the analysis period. Migrants from China appear to account for much of the high rate of non-return by those approved in 2002 compared to other years.

Figure 8.18 Proportion of Chinese migrants to remain offshore at 31 December 2004 for 12 months or more – approved 1998–2003



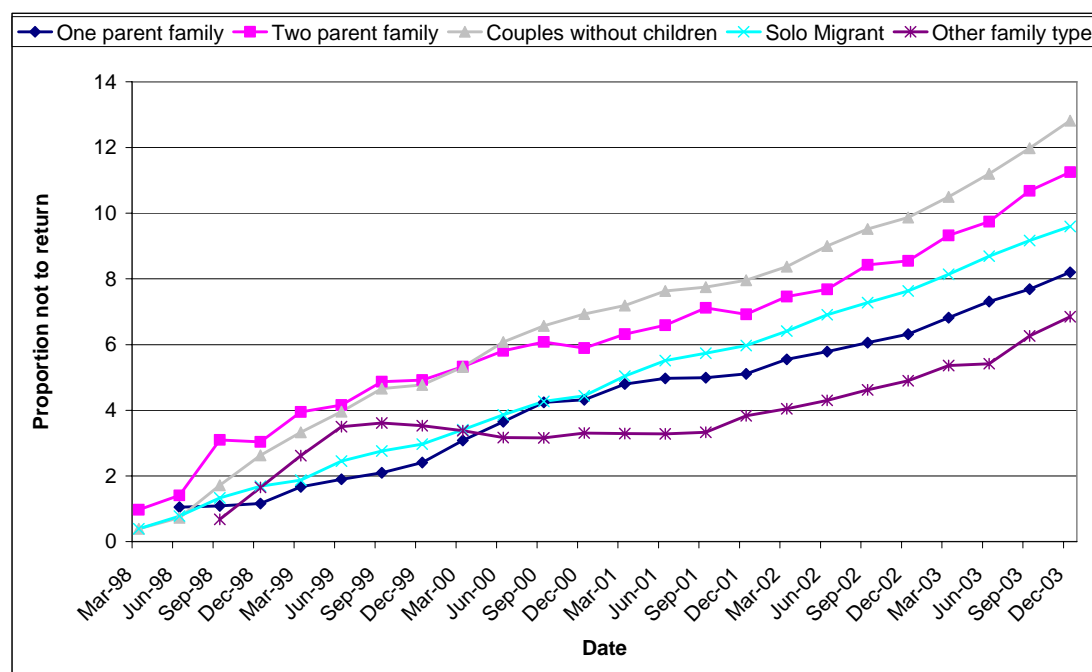
The proportion of Indian migrants not to return from a spell of absence ranged from 4 percent of those approved in 2003 to 23 percent approved in 1998 (see Figure 8.19).

Figure 8.19 Proportion of Indian migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003



There were differences in non-return rates by family types (see Figure 8.20). Migrants from the family type “couples without children” had the highest non-return rate, with 13 percent having left and not returned as at December 2003. This was followed by migrants from two-parent families (11 percent), solo migrants (10 percent), one-parent families (8 percent) and other family types (7 percent).

Figure 8.20 Proportion of migrants to remain offshore for 12 months or more at 31 December 2004 – approved 1998–2003 by family type



8.5 Overall rates of non-return

Table 8.3 shows the proportion of migrants from countries with 1,000 or more approvals between 1998 and 2003 not to return from a spell of absence. The three nationalities with the highest non-return rates were Taiwan (38 percent), Singapore (24 percent) and Hong Kong (24 percent).

It is useful to compare Table 8.3 to Table 5.7, which shows long-term absence (for six months or more) as at December 2004. The top three countries to be long-term absent were the same as the top three in Table 8.3 – Taiwan (44 percent), Singapore (30 percent) and Hong Kong (29 percent).

Table 5.7 shows absence rates as at December 2004, while Table 8.2 records non-return rates as at December 2003. Therefore the tables are not directly comparable, although they have many similarities. The long-term absence figures are higher than the non-return rates in Table 8.3, which can partly be accounted for by the differing dates of analysis.

Migrants from Canada and the USA had comparatively high rates of non-return (22 and 17 percent respectively), yet migrants from these source countries were not among the main ones to be absent for three-quarters or more of their residence period (see Table 4.6 in Chapter 4). For migrants from both of these countries, rates of non-return were high for all cohorts. For example, 32 percent of the 682 Americans approved in 1998 had left and not returned. Thirty-four percent of the 365 Canadians approved in 1999 and 30 percent of 282 approved in 1998 had left and not returned.

Table 8.3 Proportion of migrants approved between 1998 and 2003 to remain offshore at 31 December 2004 (1,000 or more approvals) by nationality

Nationality	Total in cohort	Proportion not to return by Dec 04	Nationality	Total in cohort	Proportion not to return by Dec 04
Taiwan	3,978	38.2%	Pakistan	1,275	8.7%
Singapore	1,679	23.9%	Samoa	10,484	8.3%
Hong Kong	1,734	23.5%	Russia	2,213	8.1%
Canada	1,803	21.5%	Iran	1,373	6.7%
Indonesia	2,661	21.0%	Somalia	1,475	6.6%
Malaysia	5,341	18.3%	Thailand	2,303	6.4%
USA	4,892	17.2%	Romania	1,034	6.1%
China	28,236	14.4%	Vietnam	1,358	5.8%
Ireland	1,036	13.8%	South Korea	7,860	5.5%
Netherlands	1,555	13.4%	Philippines	5,856	4.8%
Japan	2,516	13.0%	Iraq	2,930	4.4%
Sri Lanka	3,620	12.6%	Fiji	12,994	3.4%
Germany	2,136	12.5%	Zimbabwe	2,268	3.2%
India	25,888	10.9%	Cambodia	2,297	3.0%
Great Britain	31,389	10.3%	Tonga	6,376	2.5%
South Africa	19,589	8.8%	Afghanistan	1,232	1.3%

- Note: The total numbers in this table are as at 1 December 2003 rather than 31 December 2003. Therefore they differ slightly from those in other sections of the report.
- Note: This table does not include short spells of absence in 2004.

Table 8.4 shows non-return rates as at December 2003 for migrants approved between 1998 and 2003, by application category. The categories with the highest rates of non-return were the Investor Category (26 percent), Family Parent (14 percent), GSC (12 percent), Family Child Dependent (10 percent) and Samoan Quota (10 percent). These categories are the same ones with the highest rates of long-term absence as at December 2004, although the order for the Family Child Dependent and the Samoan Quota are reversed (see Table 5.2 in Chapter 5).

The categories with low non-return rates (5 percent or less) were mostly International/Humanitarian Stream categories. Most Transitional Policy and all Pacific Access Category migrants were onshore as at December 2003. The 914 migrants approved through the Entrepreneur Category had a low rate of non-return (2 percent).

Table 8.4 Proportion of migrants approved between 1998 and 2003 to remain offshore at 31 December 2004 (100 or more approvals) by application criteria

Application category	Total in cohort	Proportion not to return by Dec 04
Investor Category	8,414	26.3%
Family Parent	19,643	13.5%
General Skills	113,657	11.7%
Family Child Dependent	4,409	10.3%
Samoan Quota	4,925	9.5%
Partnership	37,363	8.5%
Family Child Adult	1,989	7.3%
Employees of Businesses	117	6.8%
Refugee Status	3,571	6.2%
Family Sibling	2,953	5.9%
Ministerial Direction	1,879	5.5%
Refugee Quota	4,356	4.6%
Transition 33(2)	328	4.0%
Humanitarian	8,472	3.4%
Section 35A	151	3.3%
Entrepreneur Category	914	1.9%
Family Quota	193	1.0%
Transitional Policy (Int/Hum)*	3,432	0.1%
Transitional Policy (Family)*	346	0.0%
PAC	120	0.0%

- *Note: For the October 2000 Transitional Policy, applicants who had a New Zealand citizen or resident partner or a New Zealand born child were counted through the Family Sponsored Stream, while others were counted through the International/Humanitarian Stream.
- Note: The total numbers in this table are as at 1 December 2003 rather than 31 December 2003. Therefore they differ slightly from those in other sections of the report.
- Note: This table does not include short spells of absence in 2004.

Migrants aged between 16 and 24 years had the lowest rate of non-return (7 percent). Non-return was highest for those aged 55 years and older (14 percent). For other age groups, non-return rates were about 11 percent (see Table 8.5).

Table 8.5 Proportion of migrants approved between 1998 and 2003 to remain offshore at 31 December 2004 by age

Age group	Total in cohort	Proportion not to return by Dec 04
<16 years	51,346	11.3%
16–24 years	23,342	7.2%
25–34 years	59,578	10.5%
35–44 years	46,077	11.1%
45–55 years	18,272	10.5%
55–64 years	10,607	13.9%
65 years +	8,096	14.3%

8.6 Summary

For each cohort, there was a decline over time in the proportion of migrants onshore. Also, there were seasonal variations, with a dip in onshore rates between December and February each year. The decline in the proportion of Skilled/Business migrants onshore was steeper than for migrants through other residence streams.

There was a consistent and growing loss of migrants from each cohort over time. The loss over time was very similar across the cohorts, although the 2002 and 2003 cohorts initially had high rates of non-return that levelled off over the first few years. The differing trends by the 2002 and 2003 cohorts may reflect a number of policy

changes introduced in 2002. Overall, the rate of non-return was highest for the Skilled/Business Stream and lowest for the International/Humanitarian Stream.

The main source countries (with the exception of China) tended to have a lower level of loss than the smaller source countries. However, there was significant loss from all of the main source countries over time. Of those approved between 1998 and 2003, 14 percent from China, 11 percent from India and 10 percent from Great Britain had left and not returned during the analysis period. The categories with the highest non-return rates were the Investor, Family Parent and General Skills Categories. Migrants aged between 16 and 24 years had the lowest rate of non-return and those aged 55 years and older had the highest rate.

9 COMPARISON WITH NEW ZEALAND POPULATION

9.1 Introduction

This chapter looks in more detail at the non-return rates for migrants and compares these with out-migration estimates for all New Zealand residents. The analysis compares the five-yearly net international out-migration rates for the New Zealand usually resident population (from the 1996 and 2001 Censuses) and migrants approved in 1998 and 1999. The data is examined by age and gender.

9.2 Overall out-migration rates

Table 9.1 compares overall out-migration rates. The estimate for the usually resident New Zealand population reflects out-migration over a five-year period (between the 1996 and 2001 Censuses).³⁸ The rate for the 1998 cohort of migrants reflects those who were absent at 1 March 2003 and who had not returned by the end of the analysis period (December 2004). The rate for the 1999 cohort reflects migrants who were absent at 1 March 2004 and who had not returned by the end of the analysis period.³⁹ The data provides out-migration estimates that are comparable over a five-year period.

The rate of non-return over a five-year period was very similar for the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts (16 and 17 percent respectively). Overall, migrants had a rate of out-migration that was more than twice as high as the New Zealand population.

It should be noted that comparison of out-migration estimates for the usually resident New Zealand population and the 1998 and 1999 migrant populations are indicative only. While birth and death statistics have been applied to the usually resident out-migration estimates, there are some limitations with this data. For example, the undercount at the 2001 Census is estimated to be higher than at the 1996 Census (see the methodology in Chapter 2 for more detail).

A significant proportion of migrants are highly skilled and are trained in occupations that are in demand. It is likely that these particular sub-groups are more mobile in the international labour market than the population as a whole. Also, the analysis does not consider internal migration within New Zealand. In some cases, internal migration behaviours will reflect international migration behaviours. For example, someone raised in Dunedin and who migrates to Auckland may have a high likelihood of return to Dunedin at some stage. This may be comparable to a Chinese migrant to New Zealand returning to China.

Table 9.1 Overall out-migration rates for the New Zealand usually resident population and the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts

	NZ usually resident population	1998 migrant cohort	1999 migrant cohort
Out-migration rate	7.3%	16.2%	16.7%
Total population	3,618,303	24,086	28,711

³⁸ The net migration estimates between 1996 and 2001 have been compared with net permanent and long-term arrival and departure data and been found to match closely (Newell, J and Bedford, R. 2005. *New Zealand Regional Intercensal Migration Estimates – 1981 to 2001*. Presentation at the Population Association of New Zealand 2005 Conference).

³⁹ Absence as at March 2003 was used for the 1998 cohort and absence as at March 2004 was used for the 1999 cohort in order to provide a rate approximately five years after residence approval. March was used to be consistent with the month that the Census is conducted in order to minimise differences between the populations due to seasonal variation.

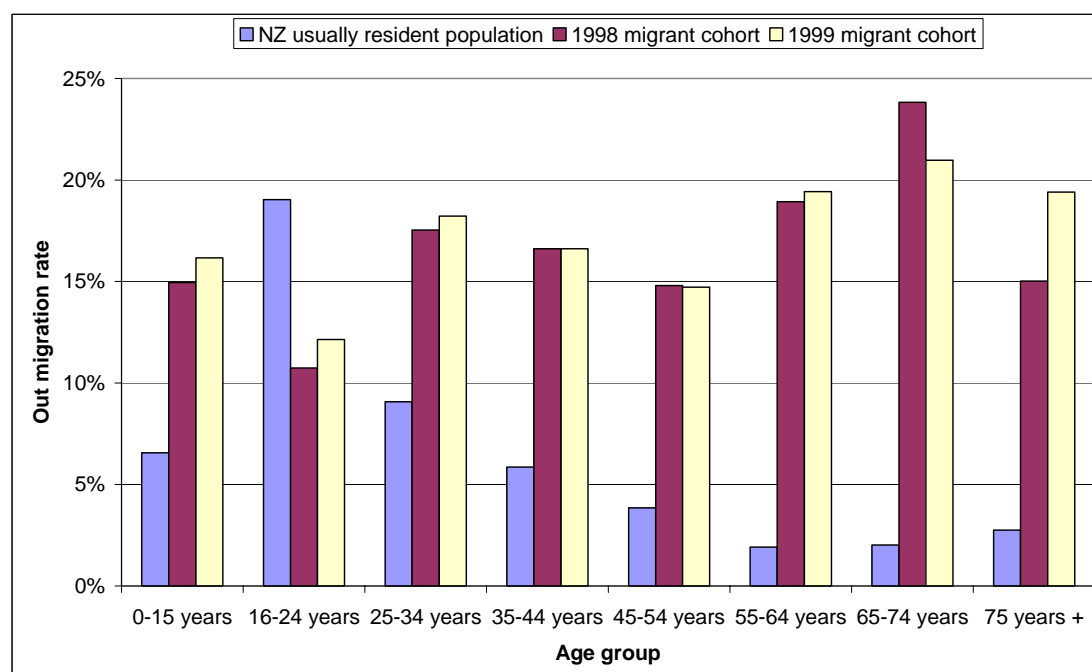
9.3 Out-migration by age

Figure 9.1 compares out-migration rates by age.⁴⁰ Out-migration rates for the New Zealand usually resident population followed a bell shape with a peak by those aged between 16 and 24 years.

The rates and distribution of out-migration for the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts were very similar to each other. Migrants' out-migration was higher than for the usually resident population for all age groups except those between 16 and 24 years. The rates were particularly high for those aged older than 55 years, with a peak for those aged between 65 and 74 years. However, it is important to note that a comparatively small number of migrants were aged older than 55 years. Those older than 55 years made up a smaller proportion of the migrant population (13 percent of the 1998 cohort and 11 percent of the 1999 cohort) than the New Zealand population (20 percent). The higher rate of out-migration by older migrants may reflect these migrants returning to their home country or elsewhere for retirement. It may also reflect settlement being more difficult for older than younger migrants.

Between the ages of 16 and 54 years, out-migration rates for migrants followed a bell shape, with a peak for those aged between 25 and 34 years. Migrants had a comparatively high rate of out-migration by children aged between 0 and 15 years.

Figure 9.1 Out-migration rates for the New Zealand usually resident population and the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts by age



9.4 Out-migration by gender

For the usually resident population, the out-migration rate was slightly higher for males (8.1 percent) than females (6.7 percent). There was very little difference between the out-migration rates for male and female migrants (see Table 9.2).

⁴⁰ Age is calculated as at residence approval for the migrant cohorts and as at the 1996 Census for the New Zealand usually resident population.

Table 9.2 Overall out-migration rates for the New Zealand usually resident population and the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts

	NZ usually resident population	1998 migrant cohort	1999 migrant cohort
Female	6.7%	16.1%	16.9%
Male	8.1%	16.3%	16.4%
Total	7.3%	16.2%	16.7%

Males and females had similar rates of out-migration across all age groups (see Figures 9.2 and 9.3). For the usually resident population, males aged between 16 and 24 years had a higher out-migration rate than females (21 percent compared to 17 percent respectively). For migrants in this age group, the opposite was true with male migrants having a lower rate than females.

Figure 9.2 Out-migration rates for the female New Zealand usually resident population and the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts by age

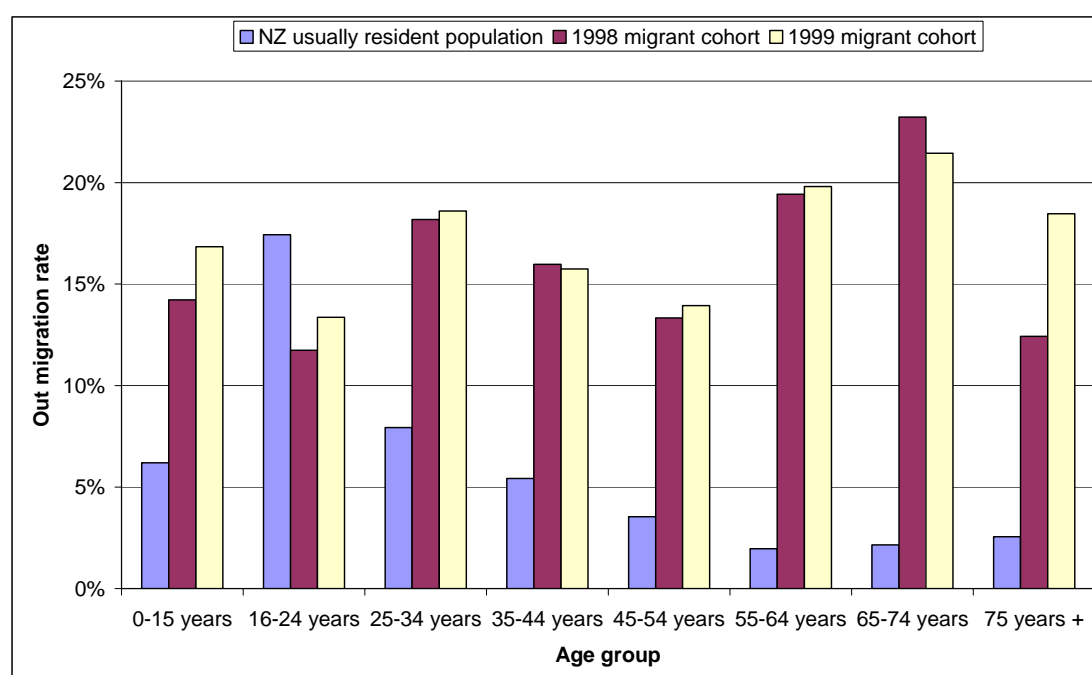
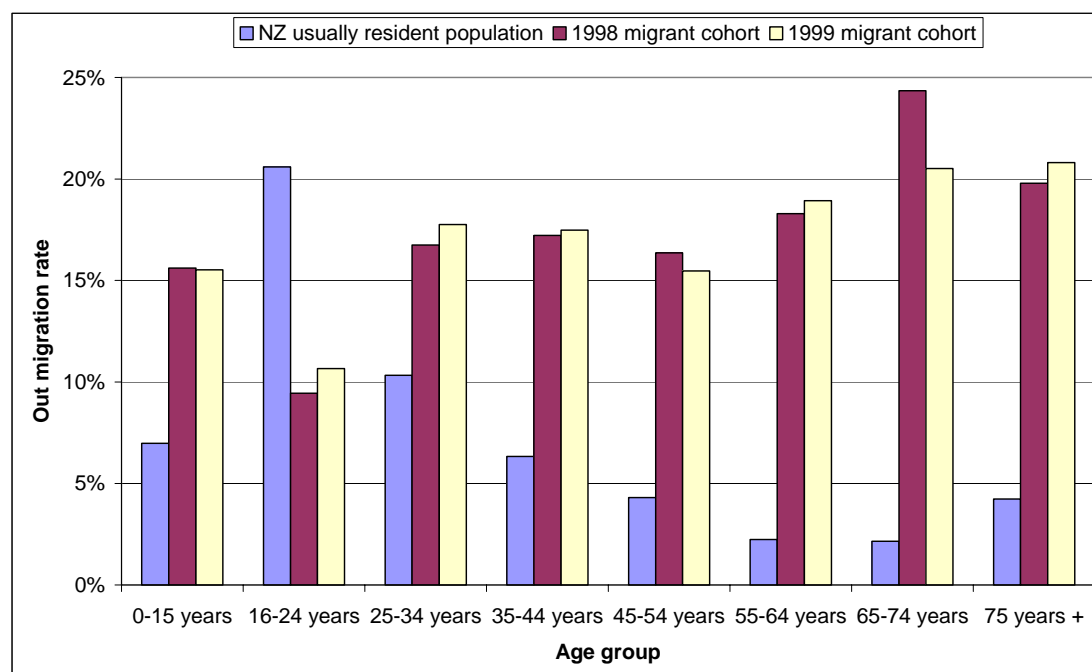


Figure 9.3 Out-migration rates for the male New Zealand usually resident population and the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts by age



9.5 Out-migration for GSC principal applicants

This section explores out-migration rates for GSC principal applicants compared to the usually resident New Zealand population of the same age.⁴¹ GSC principal applicants are of particular interest since they are selected for their skills, including their ability to settle and contribute. It should be noted that, while the GSC was the main category of approvals over the analysis period, it closed in July 2003 and was replaced by an Interim GSC before being replaced by the Skilled Migrant Category in December 2003.

GSC principal applicants and the New Zealand usually resident population aged between 16 and 54 years had higher out-migration rates compared to these entire populations. GSC principal applicants had a rate of out-migration that was twice as high as the New Zealand usually resident population of a similar age (see Table 9.3).

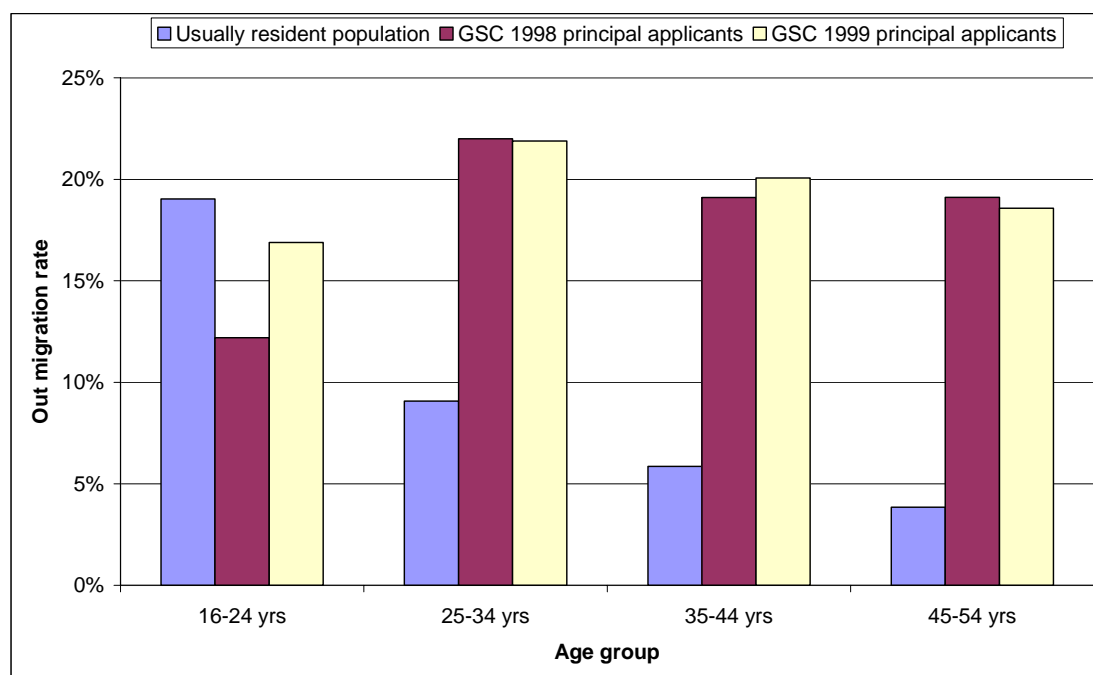
Table 9.3 Out-migration rates for GSC principal applicants (1998 and 1999) and the New Zealand usually resident population aged between 16 and 54 years

	NZ usually resident population	1998 GSC principals	1999 GSC principals
Out-migration rate	9.5%	20.4%	20.7%
Total population	2,016,303	4,095	5,127

Figure 9.4 compares the out-migration rates for GSC principal applicants and the New Zealand usually resident population aged between 16 and 54 years. For the usually resident population, out-migration was highest for those aged between 16 and 24 years. For migrants, the rate was highest for those aged between 25 and 34 years. Out-migration rates were substantially higher for GSC principal applicants aged 25 years and older than the New Zealand population of a comparable age.

⁴¹ The GSC points system did not allow principal applicants to be older than 55 years at the time the application was made.

Figure 9.4 Out-migration rates for GSC principal applicants (1998 and 1999) and the New Zealand usually resident population aged between 16 and 54 years



9.6 Summary

A comparison of estimated out-migration by the 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts and the usually resident New Zealand population indicated that migrants had a much higher rate of out-migration. Migrants have different characteristics to the New Zealand population as a whole, which is likely to account for much of this difference. For example, highly skilled migrants are more mobile in the global labour market.

It is of note that out-migration was highest for migrants over the age of 55 years and was highest for the usually resident New Zealand population between 16 and 24 years. Out-migration was lowest for migrants aged between 16 and 24 years. GSC principal applicants had a higher rate of out-migration than other migrants in the 1998 and 1999 cohorts.

10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

10.1 Introduction

This section brings together some key findings and draws some conclusions. Firstly, the key findings are summarised, including a comparison with New Zealand data and the links with immigration policy. A broad profile of migrants with particular movement patterns is provided. Some overall conclusions are made, including the impact of the research findings on immigration selection policies, such as planning approval numbers under the New Zealand Immigration Programme.

10.2 Key findings

An important finding highlighted in the non-return data is the consistent loss of migrants over time. As at December 2003, 18 percent of the 1998 cohort had left and not returned. With the exception of the 2002 cohort, which had a steeper rate, the non-return rates over time for each cohort between 1998 and 2003 followed a very similar gradient. This indicates a typical loss of migrants over time. Australian research has also noted a fairly steady rate of permanent departures by migrants. In both 2001/02 and 2002/03, around half of permanent departures from Australia were by people born overseas.⁴² The rate of loss of migrants over time is useful to know in terms of understanding the longer-term implications of the number of residence approvals set each year through the New Zealand Immigration Programme. It is important to note that many of the migrants who remain in New Zealand for a short amount of time will make a valuable contribution while they are here. There are a number of reasons, other than settlement failure, that migrants may leave New Zealand (see section 10.3 below).

There was variation in non-return across the three immigration streams, with Skilled/Business migrants having the highest rate, followed by the Family Sponsored and International/Humanitarian Streams. In line with this, an analysis of attrition data from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA) found that migrants most likely to leave Australia permanently had gained entry to Australia through the "Skill-Business" categories and the "independent points assessment". Those who gained entry through the humanitarian programme and the "prospective marriage" visa category were less likely to have left Australia.⁴³

The GSC was the main category of approvals, and these migrants had a comparatively high rate of non-return, ranging from a loss of 3 percent of the 2003 cohort to 22 percent of the 1998 cohort. For some cohorts, the loss of principal applicants was slightly higher than the loss of secondary applicants. Given that GSC principal applicants were selected for their skills, including their ability to settle and contribute, the loss over time is of note. However, the non-return rate needs to be considered in the context of continual gain of new skilled residents and other skilled people through temporary flows.

The Investor Category is a smaller approval source and allows people to gain residence if they invest in New Zealand. Investors, particularly those approved more recently, had very high non-return rates. Thirty percent of the 2002 cohort had left and not returned by December 2004. Investors are entitled to an indefinite RRV if they meet requirements under section 18A of the Immigration Act, including

⁴² Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. 2003. *Fact Sheet 5, Emigration from Australia*.

⁴³ Hugo, G., Rudd, D., and Harris, K. *Emigration from Australia. Economic Implications*. June 2001. CEDA Information Paper No.77.

maintaining an acceptable investment in New Zealand. As they are not required to spend a specified amount of time in New Zealand to obtain an RRV, there may be less incentive for these migrants to stay. The changes introduced in July 2005 as part of the new Investor Category, including the requirement that Investors make New Zealand their home at the end of the five-year investment period, are likely to impact positively on the longer-term rates of future Investors living in New Zealand.

While there has been a small number of approvals through the Entrepreneur Category (2,533 over the analysis period), it is encouraging to see the low non-return rate through this category.⁴⁴ Principal applicants through the Entrepreneur category need to demonstrate that they have successfully set up and operated a business in New Zealand that is beneficial to the country.

With the exception of China, the nationalities with the higher rates of non-return are mostly the smaller source countries. There was, however, significant loss from all of the main source countries over time. Of those approved between 1998 and 2003, 14 percent from China, 11 percent from India and 10 percent from Great Britain had been out of the country for at least 12 months. The countries with the highest rates of non-return were Taiwan (38 percent), Singapore (24 percent), Hong Kong (24 percent), Canada (22 percent), Indonesia (21 percent), Malaysia (18 percent) and the USA (17 percent). The Australian analysis of attrition data from the LSIA found that migrants from North America, followed by the UK and Ireland and North East Asia were the most likely to have left permanently. Migrants from South East Asia, South Asia, China and the Middle East were the most likely to have remained in Australia.⁴⁵

The 2002 and 2003 cohorts stood out with a spike in non-return in the months after taking up residence and then a lower rate (compared to other cohorts) over the first year. Overall, there was a higher rate of non-return for the 2002 cohort, specifically in the Skilled/Business Stream. The high rate was evident in the GSC and the Investor Category. The large number of Chinese migrants approved in 2002 appears to account for much of the high rate of non-return. A number of significant policy changes were introduced in 2002 (including several increases to the GSC passmark, changes to the English language requirements for Skilled/Business migrants and changes to job search visa policy). It is possible that the different patterns of non-return for the 2002 and 2003 cohorts are a reflection of these policy changes. It will be important to monitor any ongoing impact of these changes over time.

Migrants from a number of countries have a strong tendency to spend large proportions of their residence period absent. In most cases, these migrants have the same characteristics to those with high rates of non-return. Migrants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and China had high rates of spending 75 percent or more of their residence period absent. Secondary applicants accounted for more of this high absence than principal applicants.

Migrants through the Investor Category had very high rates of high absence as did those through the GSC, Family Parent sub-category and the Samoan Quota, but to a lesser extent. With the exception of Investors and migrants through the Samoan Quota who gain New Zealand residence, migrants who spend the majority of their time absent would not be entitled to an indefinite RRV. Migrants through the Samoan Quota who gain New Zealand citizenship would not need to obtain an RRV in order to come and go from New Zealand.

⁴⁴ The Entrepreneur Category came into effect from 1999.

⁴⁵ Hugo, G., Rudd, D., and Harris, K. *Emigration from Australia. Economic Implications*. June 2001. CEDA Information Paper No.77.

10.2.1 Comparison with usually resident population

Migrants approved in 1998 and 1999 had out-migration rates that were more than twice as high as the estimated rates for the New Zealand usually resident population. This comparison is indicative only. Out-migration was higher for migrants than the usually resident population for all age groups, except those between 16 and 24 years. For migrants aged between 16 and 54 years, out-migration rates peaked between 25 and 34 years. However, across all age groups, out-migration peaked for migrants aged between 65 and 74 years and peaked for the New Zealand population aged between 16 and 24 years. Migrants aged between 0 and 15 years had a high out-migration rate compared to the New Zealand population.

The different characteristics of the migrant and the usually resident populations need to be considered when interpreting the differences in estimated out-migration rates. A significant proportion of migrants are highly skilled, with occupations that are in demand. Such migrants are likely to be more mobile in the global labour market than the usually resident population as a whole. Indeed, compared to the entire 1998 and 1999 migrant cohorts, GSC principal applicants had higher out-migration rates. Also, internal migration within New Zealand by the usually resident will, in some cases, reflect international migration behaviour by migrants. Internal migration is not considered in the current analysis.

Comparison with the New Zealand population highlights three main components in migrants' out-migration. The three components include:

- an out-migration rate that is overall higher than the usually resident population
- a large retirement age out-migration flow
- a large number of children leaving (probably with their parents).

The high out-migration rate for older migrants may indicate that they return to their home country or move elsewhere to retire. It may also reflect settlement being more difficult for older than younger migrants.

10.3 Reasons migrants may spend time absent from or leave New Zealand

There are a number of reasons that migrants may leave the country subsequent to gaining residence. Some reasons include missing their home country, overseas family commitments, business commitments, marriage breakdowns or better employment or business opportunities in another country. The New Migrant Follow-up Survey⁴⁶ data shows that one of the main dislikes new migrants have about New Zealand is the distance from home and family.⁴⁷ Particular movement and absence patterns are also a reflection of factors such as New Zealand's proximity to other countries, migrants' financial situation, the health of the New Zealand economy and world events.

Some migrants would not have intended staying permanently. The Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand (LisNZ)⁴⁸ pilot report found that most migrants were intending to live in New Zealand for five years or more when they were approved for residence. However, 10 percent were intending to stay for less than five years and another 10 percent did not know. Around one in ten were intending on maintaining dual citizenship – living in New Zealand for part of the time and another country for part of the time.

⁴⁶ The New Migrant Follow-up Survey captures information about skilled and business migrants' employment, occupation, location and satisfaction with New Zealand and the immigration process.

⁴⁷ *Migration Trends 2004/2005*. Department of Labour, October 2005.

⁴⁸ Dunstan, S., Boyd, S., and Crichton, S. (March, 2004). *Migrants' Experiences of New Zealand. Pilot Survey Report, Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand (LisNZ)*. Department of Labour: Wellington.

Some of the non-return would reflect unsuccessful settlement, such as migrants being unable to find work or not settling well into general society. The LisNZ found that lifestyle was the main reason migrants gave for choosing to migrate to New Zealand. It is possible that some migrants find their expectations about New Zealand are not met on arrival.

It is likely that a number of the migrants who leave New Zealand permanently return to their country of origin. For example, Statistics New Zealand data shows that there were 16,600 visits by New Zealand residents to Taiwan in 2000. For the period that country of birth data was available,⁴⁹ 85 percent of New Zealand residents who visited Taiwan and stated their country were born in Taiwan.⁵⁰ Research by the Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs found that, of the 50,463 people to depart Australia permanently in 2002/03, nearly half were born overseas. The majority of these groups returned to their country of birth, for example, Hong Kong (80 percent) and Taiwan (62 percent).⁵¹

While some migrants would depart New Zealand for Australia, there has been a decrease in the number of New Zealanders (including those not born in New Zealand) migrating to Australia in recent years. There was a decline in the proportion of non-New Zealand born New Zealand citizens migrating permanently to Australia in 2002/03. In 2002/03, 25 percent of all New Zealand immigrants to Australia were born overseas, down from a 20-year high of 41 percent in 2000/01.⁵² This decrease is due to changes to the bilateral social security agreement between Australia and New Zealand that came into place in February 2001. There was a large increase in New Zealand citizens departing for Australia between October 2000 and February 2001 after the new policy was announced. The changes require New Zealand citizens who arrive in Australia to apply for and be granted permanent residence if they wish to access certain social security payments.⁵³

The LisNZ will provide some information on why migrants spend time out of New Zealand.⁵⁴ Those migrants with family members who were part of the residence approval unit and who have spent time in New Zealand but are living overseas at the time of the interview, or who have not spent any time in New Zealand since their residence approval, will be asked the reasons for their family member's absence.

The Citizenship Amendment Act 2005 came into effect on 21 April 2005 and tightened the criteria for New Zealand citizenship. The Act increased the standard period of residence in New Zealand to qualify for citizenship from three to five years. In addition, time spent in the country on temporary permits no longer counts as a qualifying period of residence for citizenship purposes.⁵⁵ It is likely that this change will increase the length of time that some future migrants remain in New Zealand. The Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) was introduced in December 2003. The SMC's focus on matching skilled migrants with New Zealand's needs and opportunities is likely to improve migrants' settlement outcomes, which may also impact positively on the length of time migrants remain in New Zealand.

⁴⁹ Country of birth data was only available for a small amount of this period (September to December 2000).

⁵⁰ <http://www.stats.govt.nz/analytical-reports/tourism-migration-2000/tourism-and-migration-overseas-trips.htm>

⁵¹ Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. 2003. *Fact Sheet 5, Emigration from Australia*.

⁵² Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2004. *Migration Australia*.

⁵³ Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. 2003. *Fact Sheet 17, New Zealanders in Australia*.

⁵⁴ The LisNZ will interview migrants at around six months, 18 months and 36 months after their residence uptake. The aim is to achieve a sample of around 5,000 migrants at the third interview, allowing for attrition. This data will be progressively available from 2007.

⁵⁵ <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=22722>

10.4 Profile

The analysis highlights six main movement and absence profiles. These are outlined below, and examples of the migrants who fit into each of these categories are provided. It is important that migrants from certain countries or approved through certain categories are not viewed as homogeneous groups. There was variability within each sub-group (for example, while the majority of one nationality may have high absence rates, there is a smaller proportion who spend no time out of the country). Also, the groupings below summarise overall patterns, and it is important to keep in mind the consistent loss of migrants over time (as described above).

10.4.1 *Low mobility and lower absence*

The majority of migrants were not highly mobile and did not spend lengthy periods absent. For example:

- Overall, 35 percent spent no time out of the country and a further 43 percent spent less than 25 percent of their residence period absent.
- 79 percent had between 0 and 2 spells of absence.
- 85 percent of spells of absence were for less than six months.
- Great Britain was the main approval source over the analysis period. Thirty-five percent of these migrants spent no time absent and 48 percent spent up to 25 percent absent. Seventy-four percent of British migrants had between 0 and 2 spells of absence.

10.4.2 *Highly mobile and lower absence*

Certain groups of migrants travel to and from New Zealand regularly but, overall, are not highly represented in those spending lengthy periods absent. For example:

- Migrants from Japan and the USA were more likely than others to have a high number of spells of absence, yet, of the main source countries, the USA and Japan were not the main countries to have a comparatively high proportion of migrants spend 50 percent or more of their residence period absent. However, migrants from the USA had comparatively high non-return rates.
- Principal applicants were more mobile than secondary applicants – 11 percent of principal and 6 percent of secondary applicants had five or more spells of absence. However, principal applicants spent less total time absent than secondary applicants. This indicates that principal applicants are likely to be out of the country more frequently, but for shorter amounts of time than secondary applicants.
- Solo migrants were less likely than other family types to spend 75 percent or more of their residence period absent, yet they were the most likely to have five or more spells of absence.

10.4.3 *Highly mobile and higher absence*

Certain sub-groups were highlighted as being very mobile and spending lengthy periods out of New Zealand:

- The top five long-term absence countries were Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Canada. Migrants from these same countries were also among the main source countries to have five or more spells of absence. These same countries are the top five to not return from a spell of absence over the analysis period.
- Migrants from the family type “couples without children” were more likely than those from other family types to spend 50 percent or more of their residence period absent. They also tended to have a high number of spells of absence.

10.4.4 Low mobility and spend lengthy periods absent

These migrants were not highly mobile, but often spent lengthy periods out of the country:

- Secondary applicants, particularly from some countries, were more likely than principal applicants to spend lengthy periods absent, yet they did not always have a high number of spells of absence. For example, a higher proportion of Chinese secondary applicants (21 percent) than Chinese principal applicants (12 percent) spent 75 percent or more of their residence period absent, yet Chinese migrants were not among the highest mobility countries
- Migrants from two-parent families, particularly principal applicants, were highly represented in the proportion spending 50 percent or more of their residence period absent (overall, 17 percent spent this amount of time absent), yet migrants from two-parent families were less likely than migrants from other family types (with the exception of one-parent families) to have five or more spells of absence. Two-parent families were the most common family type.

10.4.5 Spend all time in New Zealand

Some groups of migrants were highly represented in the proportion spending no time out of the country. For example:

- 80 percent through the Refugee Quota spent no time out of New Zealand.
- Other categories where a high proportion spent no time out of New Zealand included Transitional Policy and PAC.

10.4.6 Non-arrivers

A small proportion of those approved each year do not arrive to take up residence. Some sub-groups of migrants are overrepresented in the “non-arrivers” compared to total approvals:

- 61 percent of non-arrivers and 53 percent of total approvals were approved through the GSC.
- 21 percent of non-arrivers and 12 percent of total approvals were Indian.
- Secondary applicants were proportionately more likely than principal applicants not to arrive.

10.5 Conclusion

The findings in this report challenge the notion that people granted permanent residence remain here permanently. The data shows that migration is more dynamic. While the majority of migrants do not spend large amounts of time out of New Zealand after taking up residence, some migrants spend much of their time absent. There is also a consistent (and growing) loss of migrants over time. It is important that consideration is given to this loss when planning the yearly New Zealand Immigration Programme, including setting the number of approvals each year. The findings also have impacts in terms of understanding the longer-term impact migrants have on areas such as health, education and infrastructure.

The data in this report will be an important feed into an upcoming review of the Returning Residents Visa (RRV) policy. One of the aims of the current RRV policy is to encourage those granted residence to show a commitment to New Zealand.

The patterns of absence and non-return will change over time, reflecting changing source countries and immigration policies. Some of the analysis presented in this report will be incorporated in the *Migration Trends* series for ongoing analysis of absence and non-return. The pivot tables and SAS algorithms produced for this

research will be used for ongoing analysis of migrants' absence and movement patterns.

APPENDIX – DIAGRAMS OF PROCESS FOR DEFINING FAMILY TYPE

Figure A.1 Stage 1 in the process of defining family type

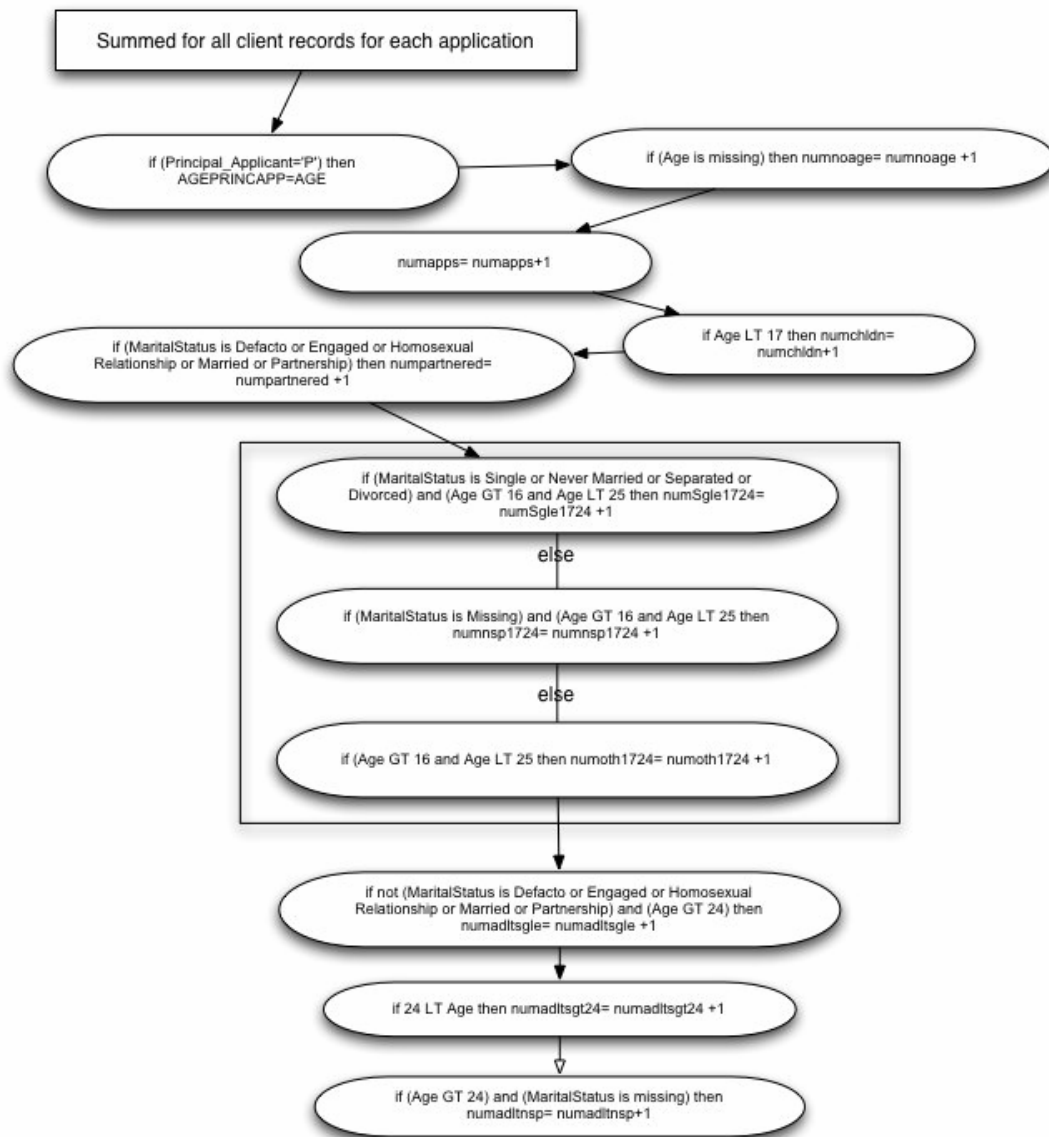


Figure A.2 Stage 2 in the process of defining family type

