

Labour, Employment and Work Conference (LEW16)

Abstracts (as of 4 November, 2014)

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Does distance still matter for internal migration and, if so, how?

Niyi Alimi

Ernst & Young

David Maré

Motu Economic and Public Policy Research

Jacques Poot

University of Waikato

In this paper we re-examine the determinants of internal migration in New Zealand. We use data on gross migration flows between the 39 main and secondary urban areas for intercensal periods between 1986 and 2006. Perhaps surprisingly, we find that the deterrence effect of distance on migration has been increasing, at least until 2001. The way in which distance is measured (road distance or travel time) does not appear to matter. Improvements in connectivity through reduced travel time have not increased migration flows either. We confirm the important role of certain economic and demographic characteristics in determining migration. Income is a significant determinant of migration. Internal migration may worsen demographic imbalances in local areas rather than compensate for it. There is evidence of the deterrence effect of Cook Strait and of agglomeration network effects between the six main urban centres of New Zealand. Finally, we find that sunshine and rainfall are significant locational characteristics that determine migration flows.

Are New Zealand farmers experiencing psychological strain?

A review of the transactional theory of stress

Ang, H. B. and Lamm, F.,

AUT University

& Tipples, R.

Lincoln University

Abstract

Research examining the relationship between stressors and strain has flourished over the past decades. The research on stress processes has also advanced significantly. One of the major advances in this literature has been the emergence of the transactional theory of stress as a central organizing theory for understanding the coping process from the impact of stressors.

The proposed model examines the effects of farmers' six factors of farm stressors (e.g., government bureaucracy, financial debts, time pressures, personal farm hazards, geographical isolation, unpredictable factors such as weather and machinery breakdown at busy time), on the cognitive appraisal process. The model describes how their emotions and self-regulation affect individual coping behaviors, adaptation, and learning from stressful experiences.

Literature has shown that greater understanding of the effects of stress is achieved when farmers not only recognize the separate effects of positive versus negative stress, but also consider the holistic perspective by taking into account the combined effects of farm stress and personal life stress on their well-being. Stress-related illnesses, in particular suicide attempts/successes, are now of major concern in agriculture and attract increased interest from scholars worldwide. Many farmers and farm employees have first-hand experience of fatalities, injuries and ill health where stress and fatigue are major contributors.

Farm stress research could benefit from an integrative approach that seeks to incorporate the more traditional negative aspects of the stress experience. The study was developed through a questionnaire survey and interviews. Our result suggests that farmers focus on available coping mechanism as an option for altering the perceive stressors so that more positive environment is created. To deal with the demands of the farm stressors, the perceptions of manageability should be enhanced with sufficient resources available (such as social support) to assist themselves. This outcome will encourage practitioners who provide services to confront the impact of stressors directly to reduce psychological strain, which likely enhances satisfaction and performance.

Social Security Incentives, Retirement Choices and Well-Being

Professor Garry Barrett

University of Sydney

This presentation will provide an overview of recent research analysing the effects of changes to the Australian Age Pension on the labour market participation of individuals, and their partners, and the take-up of alternative public assistance. Using a variety of data sources, it is found that the recent increase in women's eligibility age for the Age Pension (i) increased labour force participation of elderly women by 8-12 percentage points, (ii) increased the labour supply of men married to women targeted by the reform, and (iii) led to significant 'program substitution' with a spike in the receipt of Disability Support pensions. Using the pension reform as an exogenous source of variation in retirement status, it is also found that retirement has a significant positive impact of subjective and objective measures of mental health and well-being. The implications of these research findings for public policy will be discussed.

A Re-assessment of Employer-funded Training in New Zealand: Who Benefits and Who Does Not?

Stephen Blumenfeld

Victoria University of Wellington

Ashish Malik

University of Newcastle

While training is critical to building a productive workforce and achieving sustainable, quality growth, access to training by employees varies considerably across the labour market. In this regard, employers' investment in employee training is known to vary by educational level, personal characteristics of the employee and characteristics of the job, as well as by characteristics of workplace in which the employee works. To this effect, the empirical literature points to the conclusion that an employer's investment in training of its employees is positively associated with the expected returns to the employer from the employee's participating in training.

This study aims to identify characteristics of employees who are most likely (or least likely) to participate in employer-funded education or training in New Zealand. It explores variations in the receipt of employer-funded education and training across the country's workforce, identifying which individuals and groups are most likely (or least likely) to receive further education or training provided either by their employer or with their employer's financial support. Findings from this study highlight differences in opportunities for employer-supported training across various demographic groups of New Zealand workers.

These findings are based on data from the Survey of Working Life (SoWL), which was conducted as supplement to Statistic New Zealand's Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) in the March 2008 quarter and again in the December 2012 quarter. The SoWL gathers a wide range of detailed information about New Zealanders' employment conditions, working arrangements, quality of working life, and job satisfaction, including education and training undertaken by working adults, much of which is funded or sponsored by employers. Findings of this study are helpful in identifying groups of workers amongst which there are low rates of participation in work-based learning as well as unmet needs that programmes to promote skills development could take into account.

Stochastic multiregional projections of migration rates

John Bryant

Statistics NZ

Kirsten Nissen

Statistics NZ

Statistics NZ prepares regular population projections for all standard geographic areas. Traditional deterministic methods have integrated assumptions about future fertility, mortality and net migration patterns in a cohort component model based on a selection of variants of the components. We briefly describe the motivation for developing a statistical and multi-regional modelled approach to subnational projections. Hierarchical Bayesian models are used to produce age-sex-region specific rates for fertility, mortality, in- and out-migration (internal and international migration, separately) using historic data from 1991. Estimated rates of in- and out-migration are compared with observed historic rates, and attention is given to the ability of the model to estimate migration rates for small population domains. Demographic rates are forecasted using a Bayesian approach and these are supplied to a demographic accounting framework. Projections of migration rates for selected cities and districts are examined including comparisons with results from the validation process. We conclude with a discussion of the challenges and limitations of the data and models, and directions for future developments.

The Impact of Alternative Labour Force Participation Rate Assumptions on Labour Force Projections

Michael P. Cameron

University of Waikato

William Cochrane

University of Waikato

This paper evaluates the impact of alternative assumptions about labour force participation rates on labour force projections at the regional level in New Zealand to 2043. Following a similar approach to earlier work by Bryant et al (2004), who considered labour force projections at the national level, we consider four alternative scenarios at the regional level: (1) the 2013 age-sex-region-specific labour force participation rates apply throughout the projection period; (2) the gender gap in labour force participation of prime age workers halves every decade over the projection period; (3) current changes in labour force participation among older cohorts of workers continue into the future; and (4) a combination of scenarios (2) and (3). The cohort approach adopted in scenarios (3) and (4) represents a significant advance over previous methods of considering labour force participation changes over time. In our analysis we pay particular attention to differences between the scenarios and what those differences imply for the future labour force at the national and regional levels in New Zealand.

Projecting future inter-regional migration using age-gender-specific gravity models – Application to New Zealand

Michael P. Cameron

University of Waikato

Jacques Poot

University of Waikato

Most sub-national population projections are undertaken using one of two methods: (1) top-down, where a national population projection model is run initially, then sub-national models are undertaken and subsequently moderated to ensure that the sum of the sub-national projections is equal to the national projection; or (2) bottom-up, where sub-national projections are run without recourse to a national projection, commonly with these sub-national projections each being independent (though often with a common set of underlying assumptions). The former method is that preferred by Statistics New Zealand, whereas many consulting firms, and NIDEA, have typically adopted the latter. In this paper, we present an alternative to the bottom-up sub-national population projections model, wherein gross migration between pairs of regions in New Zealand is modelled using a set of age-sex-specific gravity models. Our prototype model allows all inter-regional migration flows to be estimated and projected in a common framework with a single set of assumptions. This method offers a number of advantages over traditional methods, in particular that factors known to affect migration flows (such as economic factors, climate, etc.) can be explicitly (based on regression modelling) incorporated into the population projections in a transparent and justifiable manner. Having developed the initial prototype model, we extend this model in two ways: (1) we incorporate climate variables to account for climate-specific influences on migration and mortality patterns, which allows us to account for the impacts of climate change on the future population distribution; and (2) we explicitly incorporate parameter uncertainty into the model, which allows us to undertake stochastic (probabilistic) projections. Finally, we explore future developments that are being incorporated into the model, including further reducing the spatial scale from the current 16-region model to an even more spatially disaggregated 70-district model, and the data and other constraints that have arisen as a result.

Labour Force Participation and Well-being among Older New Zealanders

Michael P. Cameron

University of Waikato

Matthew Roskrug

University of Waikato

New Zealand is experiencing a rapid rise in the population of older people. Previous research suggests that older people are increasingly likely to participate in formal employment beyond retirement. However, very little research has been conducted into the impact that working beyond retirement has on the wellbeing of older people who remain employed. In this paper we investigate the relationship between labour force participation and life satisfaction among older New Zealanders. To achieve this, data from several waves of the New Zealand General Social Survey is analysed using econometric techniques which reduces bias due to selection effects and endogeneity, while controlling for the effects of mental and physical health. We find that full-time labour force participants having lower life satisfaction when compared to those employed part-time and those who are not active in the labour force. This finding suggests that, should improving wellbeing for older people become a government priority, then investing in reducing the push factors for older people to remain in the workforce full-time is an option. In addition, policy could be designed to assist employers in offering more part-time or bridging employment for older workers.

Non-cognitive Abilities and Labor Market Outcomes: the Role of Work Ethic and Personality Traits on Supervisory Status and Promotion

Yu-Wei Luke Chu

Victoria University of Wellington

Susan J. Linz

Michigan State University

A growing literature suggests that noncognitive abilities are important determinants of earnings. But empirical research on nonwage labor market outcomes is still limited due to data availability. In this paper, we collect employer-employee linked data from six former socialist countries, and we empirically document three noncognitive abilities: the preference for challenge versus affiliation, locus of control, and adherence to work ethic, and their relationship with the likelihood of holding a supervisory position or receiving promotions. We find that one standard deviation higher in these noncognitive abilities are associated with around 2–3 percentage points more likely to be a supervisor or receive promotions. Based on the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition, while most of the gender differences in labor market outcomes remain unexplained, difference in these noncognitive abilities accounts for a significant proportion of the explained gender difference.

Too busy for school? The effect of athletic participation on absenteeism

Harold E. Cuffe

Victoria University of Wellington

While existing research supports that participation in high-school athletics is associated with better education and labour-market outcomes, the mechanisms through which these benefits accrue are not well established. We use data from a large public-school district to retrieve an estimate of the causal effect of high-school athletic participation on absenteeism. We show that active competition decreases absences, with most of the effect driven by reductions in unexcused absences---truancy among active male athletes declines significantly, with the effects larger in earlier grades and for black and Hispanic boys. Strong game-day effects are also evident, in both boys and girls, as truancy declines on game days are offset with higher rates of absenteeism the following day. Addressing the effects on academic performance, we find significant heterogeneity in the response to active athletic participation by race, gender and family structure, with boys not in dual-parent households exhibiting small academic improvements in semesters in which they experienced greater athletic participation.

Should paid workforce participation by older people be encouraged? Evaluating the Pros and Cons

Judith Davey

Victoria University of Wellington

The policies of many developed countries now aim to encourage older people to remain longer in the paid workforce. What are the pros and cons of this position? Longer lives and better health in later life provide opportunities for prolonging workforce participation. There is considerable evidence that having meaningful and appropriate work is beneficial to the physical, psychological and financial wellbeing of older people. Demographic trends suggest that labour and skills shortages will become more pressing in the future as younger people entering the workforce do not balance the numbers retiring. Firms which understand the implications of ageing will be better placed to address its challenges. Older workers represent a valuable and often untapped source of increased productivity. But how can we ensure that their working conditions are appropriate rather than precarious? There are social and economic benefits from having an economically active older population. It will contribute to economic growth and the maintenance of living standards and also, through taxation, help to meet the costs of an ageing population. But what about the impact on the employment prospects of young workers and on voluntary work?

Re-gendering of the workforce: women in non-traditional occupations and industries

Robert Didham

Statistics New Zealand

The New Zealand labour market has undergone a number of radical restructurings and transitions over time. Historical events, along with changing social and economic conditions have provoked significant changes in the work force. Among the longer trend processes are population aging and the international exchange of people which have contributed to re-gendering of the workforce across a number of occupations and industries. Much of the existing research on gender and work has focussed more on questions of rights, equity and access and less on the changes to the population base underpinning these processes. This paper considers some of the historical and demographic contextual aspects as women have moved into "non-traditional" occupations and industries. Given the topicality of the centenary of the First World War the starting point is the feminisation of the work force across the early part of the 20th century, continuing with themes that are still of relevance today, and are likely to become more important in the future.

Sex, migration and aging: demographic overview of a dynamic labour market

Robert Didham

Statistics New Zealand

The labour market in New Zealand has changed dramatically over recent decades. The labour market, unsurprisingly, reflects many of the social, geographic and structural changes taking place within New Zealand society as a whole. However there are also ways in which the labour force differs from the rest of the population. Information from the 2013 Census illustrates how the labour force sits within the New Zealand population.

Why has New Zealand's seasonal work scheme with overseas workers for the horticulture and viticulture industries been successful while Australia's equivalent scheme is struggling to fire?

Robert Didham

Statistics New Zealand

Richard Bedford

Waikato University

Charlotte Bedford

University of Adelaide

At the LEW conference in 2008 Richard Whatman (then a senior official in the Department of Labour) and Jerf van Beek (working with Horticulture New Zealand) presented a paper entitled: "The seasonal labour strategy and the role of the RSE in helping make transformative changes for employers and industry". The paper described an innovative approach to getting industry, labour and policy agencies to work together to address a major shortage of seasonal workers during peak periods of labour demand in the horticulture and viticulture industries. Six years later, in July 2014, the New Zealand Government approved the lifting of the annual cap of 8,000 seasonal workers to 9,000 after extensive reviews of the benefits of the scheme to New Zealand employers, workers, and source communities in the Pacific Islands. In August 2014, at a conference for officials, labour hire companies and employers in Australia, there was a review of progress with their seasonal work scheme that commenced in 2009. They had almost reached their target of 2,000 workers in the year ended June 2014. Why has New Zealand's scheme gone from strength to strength since its inception in April 2007 while Australia's has had very patchy success? This paper reviews some of the labour market-related factors that have influenced the progress of these two schemes.

Occupation Transitions across the adult life course

Robert Didham

Statistics New Zealand

Kirsten Nissen

Statistics New Zealand

This paper illustrates occupational change over time as people move through adulthood. The primary objective of this paper is to introduce the New Zealand Linked Census (NZLC) as a data source to underpin the study of life course studies, labour market analysis and social change. The NZLC currently links census records across the 1981 to 2006 period and is a rich source of longitudinal information on real cohorts. Occupational mobility is known to be closely linked to education, geographic mobility and labour market conditions. Previous work has relied on snapshot data for individual censuses and has been restricted to the analysis of synthetic cohorts. The NZLC provides an opportunity to examine how occupational mobility at the individual level is observed within the New Zealand labour market.

Unemployment from 1896 to today

Brian Easton

Independent Scholar

The only really long-term series of unemployment derive come from the Census questions which commenced for non-Maori in 1896 (Maori form 1951). Reviewing their pattern over the period suggests there was a structural upward shift from about 1981. The main reason seems to be a mismatch between the demand for skills and the supply.

Skilled temporary workers and their pathways to residence

Michael Eglinton

Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment

This presentation looks at the Essential Skills immigration policy, one of the main temporary visa categories used by skilled migrants as they begin their journey to settlement in New Zealand, and a critical part of the New Zealand immigration system. The paper looks at trends in visa approvals over the last 10 years, how they change with economic conditions, and how this impacts on the number of skilled migrants settling permanently in New Zealand. It describes the characteristics of people approved on Essential Skills visas, the common pathways they take to gain permanent residence and how successfully they integrate into the New Zealand labour market.

Unemployment and Psychosocial Well-being: Findings from the Christchurch Health and Development Study

David M. Fergusson

University of Otago, Christchurch

This presentation will use data from the Christchurch Health and Development Study (CHDS) to examine the relationships between unemployment and a wide range of psychosocial outcomes including: mental health outcomes, crime, substance use, and adverse life events. The study examined the relationship between these outcomes and unemployment in a representative birth cohort studied at ages 18, 21, 25, and 30 years. Findings of the study suggest that when due allowance was made for confounding, unemployment had weak to moderate associations with: major depression ($p < .01$); alcohol abuse/dependence ($p < .05$); property and criminal offending ($p < .001$); serious financial problems ($p < .01$); and relationship problems ($p > .10$). The implications of these findings for understanding the interplay between employment and psychosocial well-being will be discussed.

Key words: Unemployment; Psychosocial Factors; Longitudinal Study

Conceptual confusions of precariousness: Defining the challenging to define

Melissa Goodman

University of Waikato

Gemma Piercy

University of Waikato

Precarious work is a popular concept used by researchers from a number of academic disciplines including psychology, sociology, education, economics, geography and labour studies. We have reviewed some of this varied research and our qualitative textual analysis has revealed a number of inconsistencies conceptually. These inconsistencies relate to how precarious work has been defined, categorised and applied both as a concept and as a way of working. We argue that this is in part because most of literature uses the term precarious work derivatively. Much of the literature masks both the complexities of the work to which the label of precarious work is applied and the assumptions which the authors bring to the research process. All too often work is described in binary terms with undesired work being precarious and desired work as any that is not precarious, however this does not dovetail with empirical realities. Furthermore the label of precariousness is often used interchangeably with categories and types of work. It is only recent and empirically driven research that acknowledges the complexity of precarious work and the challenges involved not only in defining it but also applying the concept. The preoccupation with work titles and categories suggests to readers that precarity is a fixed construct, however, our insights from the more recent research is that precarity is a fluid construct which varies between nation states, types of work and even within occupational classification. Based on this assessment we argue that categories of work type should not be used when characterising precarious work. The heterogeneous nature of precariousness can be taken into account when it is conceptualised as precariousness in work rather than of work. This can be achieved when precariousness is conceptualised in terms of the employment relationship as expressed through working conditions and workplace culture. In making this differentiation, between categories of work and levels of precarity, the vital acknowledgement of the perpetual complexity that is the worker's experience can be made. This extends the amount of work experiences that can be understood as precarious which not only validates workers experiences of precariousness but allows it to be expressed in a way that can inform further discussions.

Keywords: precarious, work, labour, employment, SER, non-standard

The impacts and consequences of precarity: A literature review of workers' experiences when engaged in precarious and insecure work

Melissa Goodman

University of Waikato

Gemma Piercy

University of Waikato

Precariousness in work involves the dissolution of previously established labour regulations and does not offer security. This change in the nature of work has led to workers' having to take increasing levels of individual responsibility to maintain on-going employment and employability. Conversely employers have increasingly reducing their levels of responsibility or duty towards their workers employment conditions. The loss of an easily understood reciprocal employment relationship has imposed a myriad of individual impacts for the workers who are engaged in what can be termed as precarious or insecure work. Understandably precarious work is most often conceptualised in negative terms, however, there is also a theme within literature that connects precariousness in work with the romance of self-employment, flexibility and autonomy. In this paper we describe the many and varied impacts and consequences associated with this form of engagement in the labour market. In particular we have drawn on an extensive literature review to paint a picture of work that is consumed by anxiety, unpredictability, health and safety risks and financial strain; not only to individuals but also to families, their communities and wider society. We also argue that while the autonomy experienced by some workers in precarious work is positive, the level of positive consequences for this kind of work are determined by specific workplace and labour market conditions. Finally we note that all workers, including those in secure employment, are to different extents affected negatively by the pervasive influence of precariousness often promoted by firms' use of downsizing, flexible specialisation and lean production. This demonstrates the urgent need for this transfer of risk to be mitigated by policy or better addressed at the level of the workplace.

Keywords: autonomy, work life balance, employment protections, precarious, flexibility, workplace stress, insecurity, risk

Where have they gone? Changes in occupations using 1991-2013 New Zealand census data

Andrew Hancock

Statistics New Zealand

Over the period 1991 to 2013 the way in which occupations have been reported and classified in the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings has changed. To look at the high level trends, an analysis of the top thirty occupations that have the highest counts in census data in that time period based on the New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (NZSCO) has been undertaken. The purpose of this analysis is to have a time-series barometer to see whether respondents change the way in which they respond, and to determine if occupation reporting is reflecting changes in the real world of the New Zealand labour market. A comparison is made using the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) to identify if classification changes have an impact. Have some of the old occupations really disappeared or are they being reported differently? Has the way the occupations are classified, and the changes in the classifications caused some interesting trends. What impact has been experienced with the introduction of a trans-Tasman classification? Are there new and emerging occupations in this top group and are there any labour market sectors that are not appropriately represented? The paper discusses the role of an occupational classification in relation to the processing of the responses given to the five yearly population census question on occupation, and questions whether the statistical need for processing survey responses has affected the viability of the classification for labour market analysis.

Mothers in the New Zealand workforce

Magdalen Harris

Statistics NZ

Sophie Flynn

Statistics NZ

Motherhood is a significant factor in how women participate in paid work. Women are likely to restructure their work arrangements or withdraw from the labour market while caring for dependent children (OECD, 2011). However, over time women's participation in the labour force has increased, in part due to more mothers remaining in and re-entering the labour market. The purpose of this paper is to look at the demographic and labour force characteristics of women in the prime parenting age group (those 25-49 years old), in relation to their parenting and partnership status. Data from the Household Labour Force Survey and the Survey of Working Life are used to create a picture of these different groups of women over time, to identify the factors impacting a mother's ability to participate in the labour market, and to understand how work arrangements and conditions differ for mothers in employment.

How should we measure and interpret the unemployment rate?

Fraser Jackson

Victoria University of Wellington

This paper explores the properties of labour force status tables from the HLFS over the period 1986Q2 to 2014Q1. A very simple model fits the aggregate data well, but what does it mean? We know very little about the error structures for our measures, and how we interpret the observed relationships depends very much on the model framework we are prepared to use. The HLFS provides an age and sex breakdown of the participation and unemployment rates and these subpopulations have shown very different experience. The paper explores how far a model based on supply side behaviour can describe this data.

Analysis of the proposed \$18.40 living wage

Anita King

The Treasury

Over the last two years, there has been significant public interest in paying employees a “living wage” of \$18.40/hr (recently increased to \$18.80/hr). This work looks at who in New Zealand is currently receiving wages below this level, by age, family type, education level, industry, gender, and ethnicity. This group has disproportionately high numbers of people who are under 30, or who are single adults without dependents. It does not take into account labour supply and demand effects, nor does it consider wage relativity effects on those currently earning above the living wage. We also calculate the increase in disposable income for a variety of different family types if they were to increase their wages from the minimum wage to the living wage, and find that those that are currently receiving the most government assistance (usually families with dependent children) benefit the least from this increase due to the abatement of that assistance.

The impacts of ethnic and social capital on entrepreneurship and entrepreneur wellbeing

Laura King

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Jacques Poot

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Both migrant entrepreneurship and social capital are topics which have attracted a great deal of attention in recent academic literature. However, very little econometric analysis has been done on their interrelationship. In this paper we ask, firstly, “is the impact of social capital on entrepreneurship different between migrants and comparable native-born people?” and, secondly, “is there a difference in the impact of social capital on economic wellbeing between migrant and native-born entrepreneurs?” The paper utilizes unit record data from the pooled 2008, 2010 and 2012 New Zealand General Social Surveys (NZGSS). The combined sample consists of 17,495 individuals who are active labour force participants. Entrepreneurs are defined as people participating in the labour market who earned an income from self-employment or who managed employees in the twelve months prior to sampling. Social capital is proxied by individual responses to questions on social networks, volunteerism and sense of community. Economic wellbeing is measured by either personal income or an Economic Living Standards Index (ELSIE) score developed by the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development. Our analysis identifies a number of demographic, geographic and human capital characteristics of entrepreneurship and its outcomes. We find significant differences between migrants and the native born in terms of the attributes of social capital that determine entrepreneurship. However, evidence that those who engage in volunteer work are more likely to be self-employed applies to both native born and immigrant entrepreneurs. At this stage we do not attempt to assess explicitly whether this partial correlation is causal but the evidence is supportive of the idea that volunteering is a personal trait that also coincides with an affinity to entrepreneurship. There is no evidence that volunteering “pays off” to entrepreneurs in a pecuniary sense. The living standards or incomes of entrepreneurs who engage in volunteering are not higher than those of entrepreneurs who do not. Instead, strong networks do appear to pay off in the sense that entrepreneurs who feel isolated from others have lower living standards and income.

Moving out to stay at home: A study of Fly-in/Fly-out workers who live in New Zealand and work overseas

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The widespread use of Fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) workers in Australia's resources sector has made it the subject of ongoing policy debate and research there, but little is known about transnational FIFO workers who operate out of New Zealand. This paper describes key findings from the first study of FIFO workers who live in New Zealand and work overseas. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with FIFO workers (n=19) and their partners (n=10) who live in various North Island centres and work in Australia and other resource-rich countries including PNG and Russia.

Our study suggests that the choice to engage in transnational FIFO represents a compromise between PLT migration, which entails significant family disruption in pursuit of higher earnings, and remaining 'at home' but earning less. While financial advancement is the key driver, the FIFO lifestyle and large scale of overseas-based projects are also attractive features. FIFO workers operate in a global labour market and are skilled navigators of complex hiring systems. Pathways into FIFO are diverse, as are roster cycles, contractual arrangements, and professional development opportunities. Balancing the demands of work and home life is a constant challenge for FIFO workers. Few partners support FIFO as a permanent working arrangement and see it as a short to medium-term strategy to meet a specific financial goal. While the loss of skilled workers from New Zealand's resources sector is an ongoing concern for employers, the organic and fluid nature of international FIFO from New Zealand suggests that it is unlikely to be amenable to policy interventions.

Can we rely on our measures of dependency ratios?

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John Stephenson

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The dependency ratio – the ratio of the population considered outside the labour force to the fraction of the population available to work – is regularly used as a short-hand for demographers to assess critical stresses on the productive fraction of the population. We use Bayesian methods to produce age-specific forecast population densities for New Zealand's national population and indirectly, forecast densities for a number of dependency ratios. We test the forecast accuracy of our densities using probability integral transforms that measure whether our methods adequately capture the uncertainty around age dependency ratios. Initial results show our methods produce densities that are well calibrated and thus accurately capture the uncertainty with respect to critical national characteristics such as the old age dependency ratio. We discuss our findings with regard to the outlook for New Zealand's ageing population.

Safe at work? Employees experience of workplace health and safety

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Statistics New Zealand

Health and safety is an important issue for New Zealand workers. It is accepted that some types of work have more inherent health and safety risks than others; however it is important that employees experiences of different types of health and safety issues, as well as their perceptions of how well their employers manage risks, are looked at in greater depth.

The Survey of Working Life (2012) asked employed people how often, in the previous 12 months, they had experienced:

- physical problems or pain because of work
- stress from being at work, or the work itself stressful
- tiredness from work that affected life outside of work
- discrimination, harassment or bullying at work.

This paper aims to look what role – if any - age, sex, ethnicity, industry, occupation, and employment relationship played in the results.

Using the same breakdowns, employee's perceptions of health and safety risk management, and whether they felt they had reasonable opportunities to contribute to improving health and safety in their workplace will also be explored in further detail.

Hiring New Ideas - Migration and Innovation in New Zealand

Keith McLeod

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Richard Fabling

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

David C. Maré

Motu Economic and Public Policy Research

Poor productivity performance has been identified as a significant issue for New Zealand, and innovation is seen as a key mechanism for improving productivity growth. Understanding the drivers of firm innovation, therefore, represents an important step towards improving New Zealand's economic performance. In this paper, we combine firm-level innovation data with worker characteristics to examine links between innovation and the presence of new arrivals - both immigrants and returning New Zealanders - in the firm's workforce.

The Links Between Parenthood and NEET status

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Ministry of Women's Affairs

Deb Potter

Ministry of Women's Affairs

The Ministry of Women's Affairs analyses labour market under-utilisation from a gender perspective. A group of interest for policymakers are the NEET group (those aged 15-24 who are not in employment, education and training). The higher rate of female NEETs is often explained by larger numbers of female NEETs in parenthood caregiving roles.

This paper explores the links between parenthood and NEET status. Only half of young mothers of NEET age are actually NEET – the remainder are either in education or employment. 21 percent of young mothers of NEET age are unemployed, a very high rate that signals their interest and motivation to work and also suggests difficulty in accessing employment. This reinforces the need for targeted policy interventions that address the difficulties young mothers face in accessing employment and education.

Women in Paid Employment – The Care Factor

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63.7% of women are now in some form of paid employment in New Zealand, which is in line with the OECD average of 65%. However, of those women, approximately half are in part-time paid employment and women make up almost three-quarters of all part-time workers.

One of the most cited reasons for limited, or no, participation in the labour market is the cost and availability of childcare. This paper examines the childcare situation in New Zealand. Taking a broad perspective of what is captured by the term 'childcare', it outlines the various types of government support currently provided, and summarises the total cost of funding.

The paper considers the various mechanisms for government support, in terms of demand-led and supply-side funding, and looks at international experiences using each. The paper also looks at childcare which is not government funded – the informal childcare provided by family, particularly grandparents and older siblings, and friends – through reference to the Childcare Survey and Time Use Survey by Statistics NZ, as well as reports by the Families Commission.

The purpose of the paper is to collate the relevant information, including cost, so that a complete picture is available to policy makers.

Job insecurity and job satisfaction

Philip S. Morrison

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Job satisfaction has been a major focus of research internationally but the New Zealand experience has received very little attention in published research. This paper addresses one of the most important influences on job satisfaction, namely the level of uncertainty associated with the continuation of the job. The paper forms part of the 'Understanding Insecure Work' project funded by the Industrial Relations Foundation, and as such draws on unit records from the large pooled sample from the two Surveys of Working Life (2008 and 2012) administered by Statistics New Zealand. The paper illustrates the way in which job satisfaction is related to worker's attributes, characteristics of the job, the level of stability of employment in their local labour market, the overall level of unemployment and their perception of their security in their current job.

Segmentation, Precarity, and the Relative Surplus Population: Beyond the Neoliberal Model of Development

David Neilson

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Precarity studies, usually focusing on contemporary empirical cases of insecure work, often leave aside deeper explanatory themes. In contrast, with particular reference to the current neoliberal era, this paper overviews how the institutionally overdetermined logic of capitalism explains changing patterns of work and (un)employment. More specifically, it examines contemporary precarity within a mid-range focus on labour market segmentation that takes Marx's theory of the 'relative surplus population' as its point of departure (see D. Neilson, 2012, *Renewing the Connections: Marxism and the French Regulation School*, *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 44(2); D. Neilson and T. Stubbs, 2011, *Relative surplus population and uneven development in the neoliberal era: theory and empirical application*, *Capital & Class*, 35(3)). Finally, the paper outlines an alternative 'model of development' which could address the global problem of labour market precarity.

Evolution of New Zealand local labour market catchment area boundaries 1991 to 2013

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Local labour market "catchment" area boundaries have been determined using NZcensus work commuting data since the 1991 census in NZ and 2001 in Australia. The method used in each case was a standardised "hybrid" agglomerative type method as outlined in Newell and Papps (2001). Newell and Perry (2002) found a high level of conservation of NZ labour market catchment area boundaries using the 1991 and 2001 census data. However, the number of areas reduced, primarily due to collapse of some smaller ex-urban into adjacent larger urban areas. This paper considers the extent to which boundary changes over the 2001 to 2013 period have continued that trend.

Renewing Unions through Social Movements: The Service & Food Workers Union and Living Wage Aotearoa

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Trade unions and trade unionism are under serious threat in most industrialised countries, in what has been referred to as the 'crisis in trade unionism'. The crisis is common to trade unions across the globe, consisting of a decline in membership and density, coupled to a loss of political influence and social standing. The crisis has been caused by changes in the political economies of the industrially developed nations. Social Movement Unionism (SMU) is one of the strategies to combat this crisis which has been embraced by unions and union movements in many of the Liberal Market Economies (LME). In the context of New Zealand Parker (2011) has looked at the possibility of SMU at a union movement level. However, at a single union level the Service and Food Workers' Union (SFWU) has engaged with this vision of renewal through participation in the Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand (LWANZ).

This paper will seek to place the SFWU's engagement with this campaign within a theoretical framework of union renewal; that is a re-imagining of trade union relationships in order to (re-)gain power along various dimensions (Hyman & Gumbrell-McCormick (2013), Berhens et al (2004)). Further consideration will be given to SMU literature and will draw on three concepts identified by Ross in her analysis of social unionism: the ethos, or "collective action frame"; the strategies or "repertoire"; and, the "internal organisational practices" (Ross 2007), and how these interlink with the literature on union renewal. Of particular note will be the response of both the union and non-union participants in the LWANZ about the development of their relationships, and whether and how this is contributing to the successes of LWANZ and of union renewal.

Conference on Labour, Employment and Work

International students employed in the care sector

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The increase in the number of those aged 65 and above has led to a dramatic rise in demand for aged care services. In the same vein, the factors that account for increased life expectancies have also caused a reduction in fertility rates resulting in reduced numbers of young people who, ideally, should look after the aging members of the population. Whilst the demand for aged care is rising, the labour supply, especially with regard to indigenous workers, has not responded proportionately. In response to the growing care gap, the Western countries, New Zealand included, have increasingly resorted to the employment of migrants as carers.

The purpose of this this qualitative research paper is to explore the implications of employing international students as careworkers especially in the context of quality care delivery. In-depth personal interviews lasting around an hour were conducted with sixteen managers of Aged care facilities that employed international students were interviewed.

The findings reflect that the majority of the managers' acknowledge that international students are increasingly becoming an important player in the delivery of care. The participation of these students has improved quality care delivery. Managers talked about reliability, willingness to work hard, an 'admirable' and 'good' attitude towards their work, good work ethics and they are highly motivated and self-directed people requiring minimal supervision. Managers experienced some challenges with recruitment, use of external recruitment agencies, visa issues, and language and communication barriers. Managers mentioned that the benefits outweighed the challenges.

This trend does not show any sign of abating and therefore calls upon all stakeholders to share ideas on how to manage this new group of care workers in order to avoid compromising quality of elderly-care delivery.

Decomposing the temporary-permanent wage gap in NZ

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Due in large part to the apparent growth of temporary relative to permanent employment researchers have become increasingly interested in the impact of non-standard or temporary employment arrangements on the wellbeing, conditions and pay of workers. Much of this literature finds that those in temporary employment experience poorer working conditions, higher turnover, lower wages, less opportunity for training and benefits than permanently employed workers (Green and Leeves, 2013; Jahn, 2010; Booth et al., 2002).

Using data from the Survey of Working Life (SoWL) and standard Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition methods Dixon (2011), examined the characteristics and outcomes of those engaged in temporary work in New Zealand and found that, with the exception of women in casual employment, the temporary-permanent gap in average hourly wages could in large part be attributed to observed demographic, educational, and job characteristics.

This paper revisits and expands upon the work of Dixon (2011) in several ways; First, we will examine the temporary-permanent pay gap by repeating the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition - however in our estimation we will employ pooled data incorporating both the 2008 (and 2012 waves of the SoWL). Second, we will assess the temporary-permanent pay gap using a propensity score matching (PSM) approach. The use of PSM has a number of advantages over the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition, particularly in allowing the examination of the effects of observables and unobservables on the whole distribution (Frölich, 2003).

The state of the New Zealand labour market

Patterson, D.

Ministry of Employment, Innovation and Development

This paper will review developments in the New Zealand labour market over the last decade or so in order to highlight forthcoming research and policy challenges.

E Tu Ake! Raising the qualifications and earnings of low income women

Riripeti Reedy

Ministry of Women's Affairs

Increasing the economic contribution of women who are at risk of having low lifetime incomes is a priority of the Ministry of Women's Affairs. This paper looks at improving the economic independence of women with low or no qualifications and has a particular focus on Māori and Pacific women. Drawing on the findings of the E Tu Ake! report, the paper extends those findings by examining new evidence, interpreting it and arranging it so that it can better direct us as policy makers, as influencers within the broader policy-workforce interface and in our discussions with employers, to more relevantly support these women.

Precarious work in New Zealand: some steps towards identifying what it is and who experiences it

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, New Zealand Council of Trade Unions

William (Bill) Cochrane

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Descriptive accounts of the characteristics of temporary employment in New Zealand such as Dixon (2011) using data from the Survey of Working Life (SoWL), while undoubtedly useful to the debate concerning the rise of precarious employment, leave open questions as to the full nature of precarity, which is not reducible to the nature of the employment relationship alone.

Precarity is a multidimensional phenomenon that, following Tucker (2002), depends not only on the certainty of ongoing employment but also for example on the degree of employee control over the employment process and working arrangements, the adequacy and certainty of the income derived from employment and the degree of regulatory and union protection enjoyed by the employee.

The purpose of this paper is to take some steps towards quantifying a multidimensional identification of precarity, and then use that to examine the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of those involved in precarious work. We will first use a modified variant of Tucker's framework and nonlinear principal components analysis to derive an index of precarity from the 2012 SoWL. Second, this index will be used as the basis for disaggregating the 2012 SoWL sample by various attributes (age, gender, ethnicity, occupation and so on). Lastly the results of the disaggregation by our index of precarity will be compared to those obtained by Dixon for the more narrowly defined temporarily employed.

Measuring Workability and Sustainable work: Issues for New Zealand program

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For a number of years, and particularly since the release of the report *Working for a Healthier Tomorrow* in the UK in 2008, there has been growing interest in the work-health nexus, and the impact on workplace dynamics. This has included a number of areas including improving rates of return to work after illness or injury, adopting the workplace as a setting for both physical and mental health promotion initiatives amongst the adult population, changing job design and “Workplace Wellness” interventions. In Australia a “Healthy Worker Initiative” has been put in place to assist workers to manage life-style related risk factors associated with chronic disease in a workplace context, and in the UK, and new Health and Work Service has been established to help people with health problems remain in or return to work. In the Nordic countries a number of large scale programs, such as return to work or inclusion of mentally ill employees have been launched to ensure a sufficient as well as sustainable workforce in the future. To this end, the workability index has been developed as a tool to measure the workability of an individual as well as the suitability of the workplace.

In the context of this increased interest, new knowledge is being developed in the area of work and health, and is re-defining a core issue associated with the workplace around the concept of “sustainable work”. This paper looks at the concept of sustainable work, how it might be developed further in a New Zealand context, and data that is currently available that might be used to assess this.

Vulnerable Migrant Workers in New Zealand - What do we know?

Wendy Searle

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Keith McLeod

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Temporary migrants play an important role in the New Zealand labour market, participating in both skilled and unskilled work. However, the vulnerability of this workforce has received increasing attention recently as concerns are raised about the exploitation they may face and the vulnerable position in which their migrant status might leave them. To inform its work and ensure that migrants are lawfully employed and not exposed to workplace exploitation, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is conducting a programme of research on vulnerable migrant workers, with a focus on issues related to temporary migrants. This paper reports findings from the first stage of the research, which included a review of New Zealand and international literature and an analysis of existing data sources.

The gendered outcomes of moving

Michael K. Sloan

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Migration literature has long studied the less positive employment and income outcomes experienced by women when they move, particularly those who move as part of a family unit. However, these economic measures have been objective in nature. Recent evidence indicates that women who move do not experience poorer overall satisfaction outcomes. These converse results raise a series of questions as to why women experience similar overall satisfaction outcomes as men despite experiencing less positive employment outcomes, but these questions have yet to be explored by the literature. This study utilises the 2007 Survey of the Dynamics and Motivations for Migration and explores the post-move satisfaction of individuals moving within New Zealand. Differences in the objective and subjective outcomes of men and women are examined and then contrasted with their overall satisfaction outcomes. The results show the relationship between subjective and objective measures of employment related outcomes and the overall satisfaction that individuals have with their move.

Ageing of the Workforce: Effects on the Labour Market with Participation and Retirement

Ram SriRamaratnam

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Julian Williams

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Xintao Zhao

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

The need to replace the present workforce due to retirement is becoming equally important as the demand created by an expanding industry or occupation in most Western Economies, including New Zealand. The baby boom generation has approached their retirement years and hence the age structure of the working age population has also significantly altered. Hence, the retirement of older workers will make-up an important source of new job openings over the coming decades and also pose some challenges filling them.

An internationally used methodology known as the cohort component method adapted to allow for anticipated participation by older age groups was employed to derive the recent historical retirement rates for broad (3-digit) ANZSCO occupational groups. For this purpose, the occupational employment data by age extracted from the recently released 2013 Census was analysed along with the corresponding data from the 2006 Census to estimate the average retirement rates over the 2006-13 period. These rates are then used to project future retirement rates over the 2013-20 period for the same broad occupational groups based on the Working Age Population (WAP) projections for various age groups and corresponding participation rates.

The macro-labour market is affected by the ageing of the work force on the supply side and by the ageing of the population as consumers on the demand side. Both of these impacts are influenced by the business cycles differently. This has consequences for labour market outcomes for different age cohorts, especially those at each end of the age spectrum. Forecasting likely future retirement rates by occupational groups will provide further insights into labour supply arising from ageing of the workforce. In addition to those in the pre-retirement age cohorts, other cohorts of interest include new entrants into the working age population; those age cohorts potentially involved in training; and those in the prime age cohorts.

Career Clarity: A hazy construct Can Career Crafting be an answer?

Mohini Sukhapure

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The research explored the concept of Career Crafting as a holistic career development design. The study is primarily based on the model of job crafting, which was developed further to include the professional as well as personal life of an individual. It captures what individuals consider significant for themselves and enables them to visualize and achieve the personal goals. The main components of Career Crafting are- Cognitive crafting (creating visualised futures and defining personal success), Task crafting (work and personal activities to enable achieving desired goals), and Relational crafting (nurturing relationships at different levels with people who matter).

Career clarity is an integral part of career development and this paper focuses on Career Crafting as a framework that can assist individuals gain career clarity. Career clarity indicates clearness of thought, intelligibility about career direction and goals, and an understanding of self and environment. This paper is a part of the doctoral research, in which career pathways of 36 professionals were explored in a qualitative study with the probes- How many participants were clear about their initial career goal and subsequent career pathway? What factors contributed to the clarity? How were the career pathways explored?

The results revealed that the level of clarity varied among the participants, with only eight participants being crystal clear about their initial career goal. Career Crafting was found to play a significant role in forming career clarity about initial and subsequent career pathway. Research findings also confirm the important role played by family of origin, and of procreation (more specifically spousal support); and organization- school in early career orientation and workplace in career maintenance and exploration.

The Global Economic Recession and Settlement of Skilled Migrants in New Zealand

Manuila Tausi

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Skilled migrants are becoming an increasingly important element in global migration flows, and New Zealand continues to face stiff competition, particularly from Australia, for these skilled migrants. However, with deteriorating economic conditions in New Zealand and other migrant receiving countries following the onset of the global economic recession in 2008, it is important that New Zealand's immigration policies as well as its attraction and retention strategies work together to identify and facilitate entry for skilled migrants that can make the biggest contribution to the economy. This paper uses integrated data available through Statistics New Zealand's Integrated Data Infrastructure to analyse the settlement outcomes, measured through their employment in the labour market as well as their income and earnings, of these skilled migrants in New Zealand during the global economic recession.

Finnish Developmental Work Research – a powerful research paradigm with policy consequences

Rupert Tipples
Lincoln University

Roberta Hill

WEB Research

Ken Wilson

WEB Research

Finnish Developmental Work Research (DWR) has been used in New Zealand by WEB Research, who have been world leading exponents of the approach. Over a twenty year period they used the approach in such varied research locales as the public sector (IRD, Immigration, NZQA), public/private organizations (Dutch Rail; the New Zealand Pip Fruit and Dairy Industries), and the private sector (a furniture manufacturer, two meat companies; and in the Wool and Meat Industries).

However, the requirements of the approach, and of Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) on which it is based, often did not sit comfortably with the New Zealand research environment at the end of the twentieth century. Consequently, sometimes research was foreclosed early before full results were apparent.

This presentation will review the original DWR research approach and WEB's use of it. It will then contrast two recent New Zealand primary industry applications in the Pip Fruit and Dairy Industries. The former led to spectacular policy success with the development and adoption of the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme. The latter's research component has been terminated. Application of the research results now rests with DairyNZ, the sponsors of the project, who have taken the extension of the research into their own hands. Conclusions are drawn on the key components of a successful application of the approach.

When skills in general are not enough: Lessons from Australia's social experiment with skilled migration

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Sarah Voitchovsky

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Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research

During the last 2 decades Australia has embarked on a grand social experiment, essentially increasing its skilled migration intake to offset the effects of declining fertility and increased longevity. Between 1996 and 2011, permanent arrivals in Australia increased from 85k to 195k per year, with 91k of the increase accounted for by migration through the Skill Stream. Furthermore, since the mid 2000's, Australian skilled migration policy has shifted from a "supply driven" model that favoured independent General Skilled Migrants, to a "hybrid model" which balances supply driven migration against Employer Sponsored "demand driven" migration. This study explores the effects of the recent shift toward a hybrid system of skilled migration in Australia. We find that the policy shift resulted in substantively improved employment outcomes amongst skilled migrants, in terms of both rates of employment and occupational distributions.

New Zealand's migrant Asian nurses: Recent trends, future plans.

Leonie Walker

New Zealand Nurses Organisation

Jill Clendon

New Zealand Nurses Organisation

Nurses make up the largest component of the health workforce. New Zealand currently has around 46 thousand registered and enrolled nurses, of whom, about a quarter originally trained overseas. For the last six consecutive years, new overseas registrations have approximately equalled or exceeded the number of New Zealand trained new registrations, with 19 per cent of all new registrations in 2013 coming from India, China and South East Asia. The average age of nurses in New Zealand is now 48, and attracting and retaining younger nurses (both New Zealand and overseas educated) will be essential if the predicted increase in demand for nurses due to an ageing population coincides with peak retirement of older nurses in approximately fifteen years. Using multiple data sources, this paper summarises these changes and reports the findings related to career plans reported by Asian respondents from a recent New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) survey (the New 2 NZNO study) that have potentially serious implications for the sustainability of New Zealand's nursing workforce. Foremost among these is that modelling assumptions currently proposed to ensure an adequate nursing workforce are likely to severely overestimate the effectiveness of relying on internationally trained nurses to fill a predicted skill shortage long term.

Immigrants' Location Choices and Employment in New Zealand

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The University of Auckland

In this paper we examine location choices and employment outcomes of recent immigrants to New Zealand, using a new longitudinal individual-level Statistics New Zealand data—New Zealand Longitudinal Immigration Survey (LisNZ). Location choices and employment outcomes of immigrants are important factors that influence their post-migration economic integration and labour market success. By selecting a location, immigrants may access different social and ethnic resources provided by earlier immigrants which profoundly influence their economic performance in the host country. Among recent studies that have investigated this question, there is disagreement as to whether immigrant settlement in locations that offer a strong linguistic or ethnic concentration is beneficial or harmful to their economic success. As immigrants continue to comprise significant and increasing proportion of populations in western countries, this question is worthy of close examination. We inspect both location choices and employment outcomes for recent immigrants in New Zealand by language background and controlling for skill levels. We examine the strength and quality of resources for different immigrant ethnic groups across geographic locations and time. We find that stronger ethnic networks significantly influence the settlement decisions of recent immigrants and assist their employment outcomes.

Labour force projections to 2024 by age, gender and qualification. Insights from recent studies.

Michael Webster

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Julian Williams

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Ram SriRamaratnam

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Labour supply numbers are primarily influenced by working age population numbers and to a lesser extent by labour force participation rates. We recently prepared forecasts and long-term projections of labour force participation rates (LFPRs) by age, gender and qualification. Historic LFPR data used in the forecast work showed characteristic step changes as age, gender and qualification are progressively changed to produce different compositions of the working age population. The projections work identified and accounted for time varying cohort behaviour of LFPRs. Both studies identified emerging LFPR trends for compositional groups that shape future outcomes.

Overall LFPRs are currently declining due to population ageing. In part, some of the expected decline may be mitigated by future rises in LFPRs of certain compositional groups.

This paper draws together the key findings of our recent work and discusses some implications for labour supply to 2024.

Issues for Women's Leadership Pathways

Maria Williamson

Ministry of Women's Affairs

Ruth Wilkie

Ministry of Women's Affairs

This paper proposes that work culture changes are needed to increase opportunities for women to achieve at the highest level, and stop them from dropping out of the 'leadership pipeline'. The research identifies three barriers to women continuing to advance their careers at the same rate as men. These barriers have been identified as:

- Unconscious bias against women taking up leadership roles can affect recruitment, assessment and development practices (both formal and informal). This can make it more difficult for women to progress into senior roles.
- Employer attitudes to breaks in employment (for example, for child-rearing), or a non-traditional career path (for example, community leadership or executive roles), can make it difficult for women to re-enter the mainstream workforce and to maintain an upward career trajectory.
- Lack of options for flexible work, or workplace culture which applies informal or formal penalties for using flexible work options, mean that women can stop progressing in their career, or leave the workforce altogether.

The evidence behind this analysis, and the solutions available including actions that have the most impact, are set out in two reports published by the Ministry of Women's Affairs: *Realising the opportunity: addressing New Zealand's leadership pipeline by attracting and retaining talented women* (2013); and *Inspiring Action: action plans and research to help you attract and retain talented women* (2014).

Creating age-friendly workplaces

Virgina Wilton
Ministry of Social Development

Research over the past couple of decades has clearly shown that employers and employees know what they need to attract and retain older workers – that is – increased flexibility (not to be confused with casualization). Despite policies, and the expressed desire of employees to work more flexibly, this is still the expectation rather than the rule in New Zealand workplaces. New Zealand and international research suggests that the problem lies in beginning the conversation between managers and workers. The PSA is currently developing a resource that will bridge this gap.