

**FINAL DRAFT DECEMBER 2007**

**OUR WELCOMING WELLINGTON REGION**

**The Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy**

**DRAFT ADDRESSING CONSULTATION COMMENT:**

**DECEMBER 2007**

New Zealand Government

**He aha te mea nui i tenei ao,  
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata**

**What is the most important thing in the world,  
it is people, it is people, it is people.**

A strategy developed in partnership by local and central government, business and community organisations in the Wellington region and published by the Department of Labour.

## Foreword

Our Wellington region is one of the best places to live and work in the world. We enjoy a stunning natural setting and a quality of life that is world-class. It's easy to get around and, wherever you are, you're never far from the sea, the hills, work and home. It's a place where everything is possible. Our people excel in the arts, sports, science and research, education, government and business.

It is little wonder we are an increasingly attractive destination for other Kiwis and for a large number of newcomers from overseas who are looking to find a home here, and create a better life for their children. Part of the magic of the Wellington region is our ability to absorb all these diverse talents and create a positive, cohesive community.

The *Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* is about doing all we can as a region to welcome and support the successful integration of newcomers into our region. It contributes to the implementation of the New Zealand Settlement Strategy, *Our Future Together*, and focuses on how everyone across the region can work in partnership to improve opportunities for newcomers to settle well.

The development of the Strategy has been a partnership between the Department of Labour (as the lead central government agency responsible for settlement) and the Wellington City Council on behalf of the five territorial local authorities in the region (Hutt City, Kapiti Coast, Porirua City, Upper Hutt and Wellington City). Some preliminary work that focused on a strategy for supporting settlement across the region was undertaken in 2004. This intention has since been strengthened by the establishment of Settlement Support New Zealand co-ordinators based in the Hutt Valley, Wellington and Porirua as part of a national network connecting newcomers with existing services in local communities.

However more needs to be done. It's vital that we address settlement issues at a regional level, to maximise the economic and social contribution of newcomers and to enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities in the region, now and in the future.

A project to develop the *Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* was initiated in mid 2007 with the support of the Wellington Mayoral Forum. Since then an extensive consultation process has taken place. The Strategy outlined in this publication reflects the ideas and feedback of iwi,

local authorities, non-government organisations, business, central government agencies and communities. A Plan of Action, to advance the Strategy's vision and goals, is published in an accompanying document. This details the specific actions which will be taken in each of the areas critical for successful settlement.

My thanks to all those who have contributed to this process. Your commitment and enthusiasm will be invaluable as this Strategy is implemented in the years ahead.

Roger Blakeley

Chief Executive Porirua City Council

Project Sponsor

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## 1. Vision and goals for successful settlement in the Wellington region

The *Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* outlines a vision and goals to achieve improved settlement outcomes for the Wellington region over the next five years. The *Settlement Strategy* (outlined in the diagram following) has three key components:

1. **The vision** emphasises the two-way relationship involved in successful settlement – communities in our region have a role to play in providing welcome and support so that newcomers can contribute to the wellbeing of our communities.
2. **Settlement's contribution to the Government's goals for New Zealand** - the part that both newcomers and the people of the region are expected to play in relation to economic, social and cultural development.

### *Economic transformation*

Labour market participation underpins good settlement outcomes at an individual level. Obtaining appropriate employment is also the key activity through which newcomers contribute to economic growth. Additionally, many newcomers bring new ways of thinking, knowledge, and links to global markets through established networks and through language and cultural proficiency.

### *Families Young and Old*

The needs and aspirations of newcomers have much in common with those of other New Zealand families. Strong families are enhanced through inter-generational engagement and the handing-down of cultural values and knowledge. Families are also strengthened through equitable access to the services members need to be healthy and achieve their full social and economic potential.

### *National identity*

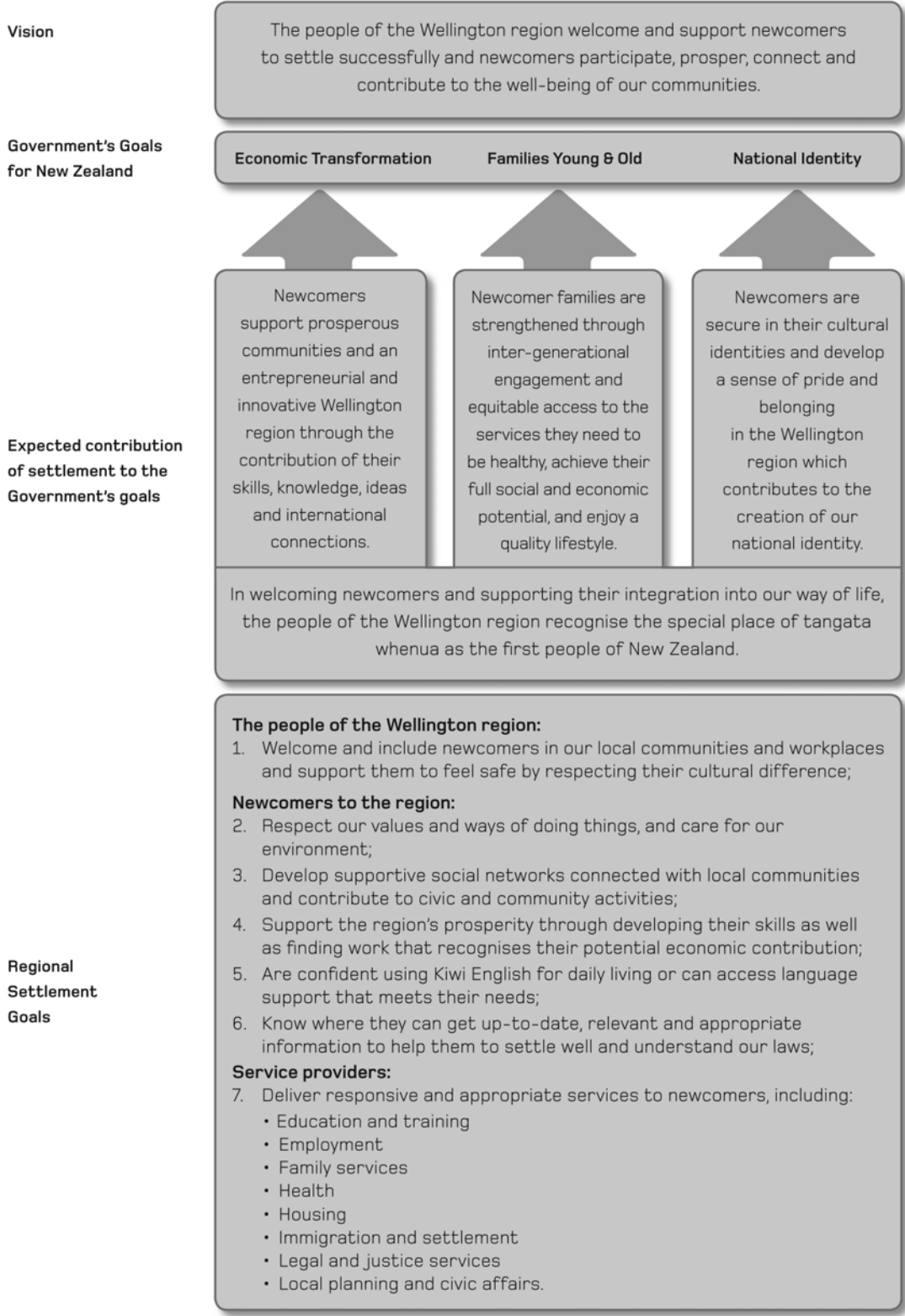
Our increasing cultural diversity presents both opportunities and challenges. Good settlement outcomes are essential to achieve social inclusion and a shared sense of national identity, while at the same time recognising and respecting the diversity that exists within our society.

3. **The regional settlement goals** reflect the important issues which need to be addressed to improve settlement and contribute to the outcomes identified in the proposed vision and Government goals. The expectations of community support for the process of

settlement and of newcomer integration can also be seen in these goals.

The *Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* has been developed with the input of recent newcomers and organisations with settlement-related interests in the region. It has a medium-term focus and covers the five-year period from 2008 to 2013. The *Settlement Strategy* will be reviewed as part of an on-going cycle to ensure that it remains up-to-date, strategically focused and relevant to settlement needs in the Wellington region.

**Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy 2008-2013**





## 2. Many newcomers, many journeys

The Strategy uses the term 'newcomer'. This term includes both individuals and family groups who come to live in New Zealand, and their diverse range of needs and interests.

The settlement process begins with people's perceptions of their future in our country and our region and it isn't complete until their expectations of life here are fulfilled. It is therefore open-ended and different for each newcomer depending on their circumstances.

In general terms the initial stage following arrival is usually the time of highest need for settlement support. As a result the *principal focus* of the Strategy is on *settlement services for newcomers who have been in New Zealand for up to five years*. Additionally, once newcomers have been here for five years as permanent residents they are eligible to apply for New Zealand citizenship. While the need for settlement support usually declines the longer newcomers reside here, some newcomers from a refugee background need ongoing support and services over many years, particularly in relation to their social integration and mental health.

### **Settlement support needs differ**

Many factors influence the level of support required and available to assist newcomers to settle well in the region. These factors include their pre-migration experiences, cultural backgrounds, English language ability and immigration status. While there is a common cluster of needs across various newcomers groups, the nature of these needs differs between groups. Additionally within each group there are specific needs (for instance, age or gender-related). It is important that these different needs are identified and addressed as part of supporting successful settlement outcomes.

### **Newcomers from similar backgrounds**

Newcomers from English speaking countries with similar systems to New Zealand generally settle relatively quickly and require minimal settlement support, as long as they have access to up-to-date settlement information and advice. It is less challenging for these newcomers to find their way around our systems which operate along similar lines to those they were familiar with in their pre-migration locations.

### **Newcomers from culture and language diverse backgrounds**

The settlement needs of newcomers from diverse cultural and language backgrounds vary depending on their pre-migration circumstances. In

general terms these newcomers fall into two main groups- those who are skilled and educated, and those from vastly different backgrounds, environments and experiences.

***1. Skilled and educated***

Some of those with skills and education will arrive with a job offer and have met English competency requirements. As such they are unlikely to face language or employment barriers. Other skilled and educated newcomers (secondary applicants under the skilled/business category, the family sponsorship category and the refugee quota system) face particular challenges with settling. These include a lack of confidence or competence with English, difficulties in having qualifications recognised and in obtaining employment, and barriers in connecting with local communities. Some skilled and educated newcomers from a refugee background may have been further disadvantaged by a lack of opportunity to familiarise themselves with the local environment before their arrival.

***2. Vastly different backgrounds and environments***

While the number of newcomers to the region from vastly different backgrounds, environments and experiences is relatively small, their settlement needs are complex as a result of minimal English language and limited literacy in their first language and their pre-migration experiences. This means that they require considerable support over an extended period to make a successful adjustment to life in the Wellington region.

Many newcomers from a refugee background have faced the loss of family members, culture and educational opportunities and been forced into poverty and resettlement through war or violence. As a result and in general terms they are likely to require more intensive and longer-term support in a range of areas to successfully settle and integrate into our communities.

### **3. The big picture**

The Wellington region's future growth and prosperity is dependent on building a dynamic, regional economy. Immigration has an essential role to play in this. Newcomers bring fresh ideas, talents and skills. They connect us to the rest of the world and help us think and act globally. They spark entrepreneurial activity and generate fresh investment.

Attracting and retaining skilled and motivated newcomers is an indispensable part of creating the thriving region we all want to live in. There is, however, intense international competition for talented and skilled migrants. People are more mobile right across the globe. By 2050, it is predicted there will be 230 million people living and working outside their country of origin.

The Wellington region is part of this international labour market – we must rise to this challenge and provide the information, support and welcoming environment that will attract the people we need for our region to prosper.

Our country is well-regarded for its international contribution in assisting others in need. As part of this commitment, New Zealand accepts an annual quota of 750 refugees from priority areas identified by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Wellington region has played its part by resettling a total of 646 quota refugees since 2002. These refugee newcomers have come to the Wellington region from various parts of the world – principally Iraq, Myanmar and Sudan. Most of them were resettled in Wellington City (319) and the Hutt Valley (239) with the remaining 88 settling in Porirua City.

New Zealand is also committed to reaching out to our Pacific neighbours. Pacific peoples from a number of nations are able to migrate to New Zealand under special access categories. A strong community of Pacific peoples is now well-established in the Wellington region, making notable contributions particularly to the region's sport, music and creative industries. Their churches, in particular, have been an important first point of contact and a key avenue of assistance with the settlement of Pacific newcomers to the region.

There's much more to successful settlement than simply opening our doors to newcomers. We have to welcome them and support them to settle well so they can contribute their skills and talents, values, culture, and experiences to enrich our communities.

The *Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* is all about a proactive and coordinated approach to supporting settlement. It is shaped by extensive feedback from newcomer communities, it builds on the great work being carried out already by a host of organisations, and it focuses on the crucial areas that will help newcomers to settle well. An important element is the ongoing partnership between a wide range of central and local government, business and community organisations that is essential for a coordinated approach to delivery of the Strategy. The Settlement Strategy also acknowledges the importance of helping newcomers to learn about the bicultural dimension of our society and the history of our region.

An accompanying document, *Plan of Action for Wellington Regional Settlement*, sets out the practical steps that the region will take to achieve the Strategy's vision.

All of us who live in the Wellington region have a part to play in making this Strategy a success. While we have a number of organisations and agencies dedicated to meeting the specific needs of newcomers, it's up to all of us to provide a supportive and welcoming community. For it's only when newcomers feel they belong, that they will commit to our region and its long-term future.

## 4. Connections, collaborations and contributions

*The Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* connects with a number of important strategies and inter-sectoral approaches at the national, regional and local level<sup>1</sup>.

### ***National***

Good settlement outcomes in the Wellington region contribute to the Government's goals for New Zealand over the next decade – economic transformation, strong families and national identity. This important contribution and the way we expect it to be delivered is reflected in the strategic diagram on page 8. *The Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* also provides for the effective regional implementation of *Our Future Together, the New Zealand Settlement Strategy* and is in turn informed and supported by national strategies and action plans in education, housing, healthcare and Pacific economic development.

### ***Regional***

The successful settlement of newcomers has a vital role to play at the regional level. It is one of the building blocks for our economic growth and thus has a key contribution to make to the *Wellington Regional Strategy: Internationally Competitive Wellington*. This contains "a range of initiatives to realise our economic potential and to enhance our "regional form" - transport, housing, urban design, open spaces – the things that contribute to our quality of life"<sup>2</sup>. Like other regions, the Wellington region must address the challenges of slowing rates of economic growth, an ageing working population and a tight labour market.

In many skill areas there is a global labour market and we face stiff competition from other countries to attract and retain skilled workers. The Wellington region has significant skill shortages for professionals, trades people and technicians. *The Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy* is the mechanism for implementing key labour market development activities that support economic growth. The strategic areas of focus are:

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<sup>1</sup> World-wide web references for the strategies and action plans referred to in this chapter are provided in Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> [www.wrs.govt.nz](http://www.wrs.govt.nz).

productivity; participation; work choices (skills development) centres of excellence (tertiary sector) and business and regional capability.

Newcomers are a vital source of new talent for the region. Research shows there is limited scope to increase productivity from the region's current workforce and our rates of workforce participation are already high, (70 percent). Labour market development and economic growth in the region will be greatly assisted by the skills and knowledge that newcomers bring. By making our economy more productive, newcomers help boost business, wages and job opportunities for all of us. They also help us to link to global markets through their networks, language and cultural proficiency.

Population health is an approach that aims to improve the health of the entire population and to reduce health inequities among population groups. The approach provides a key focus for identifying, prioritising, coordinating and monitoring health issues in the region, recognising that a healthy population has an important contribution to make to the region's economy and vibrant communities. The Wellington Regional Public Health Strategy is currently under review and a strategic plan for population health for the Wellington Region is under development. *Keeping Well 2008-12: Wellington Region Strategic Plan for Population Health* is a plan to improve the health of people in the Wellington Region, and to increase the performance of the population health system. It is currently at working draft stage. **[Status will be updated in 2008 before publication].**

The *Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* provides an agreed strategic direction for the *Wellington Regional Action Plan for Refugee Health and Wellbeing*, which was launched in 2006. This plan draws together efforts across a range of sectors and contains collaborative actions by stakeholders to address the wellbeing of refugee newcomers in the region. It focuses on six key priority areas for action. They are: community capacity building; living well; economic well-being; safety and security; housing and knowledge and skills.

### ***Local***

Newcomers make up a significant proportion of the population and settlement impacts on all aspects of life. Therefore it is essential that the *Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* connects strongly with and flows through to relevant planning initiatives at the local level. *Long Term Council Community Plans* are one important connection. They focus local

authorities on promoting the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of their communities and provide the flexibility for councils to work cooperatively and collaboratively with other public and private organisations to advance community goals and meet community needs. Actions by local authorities to implement the *Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* will be considered for inclusion in these Long-Term Plans.

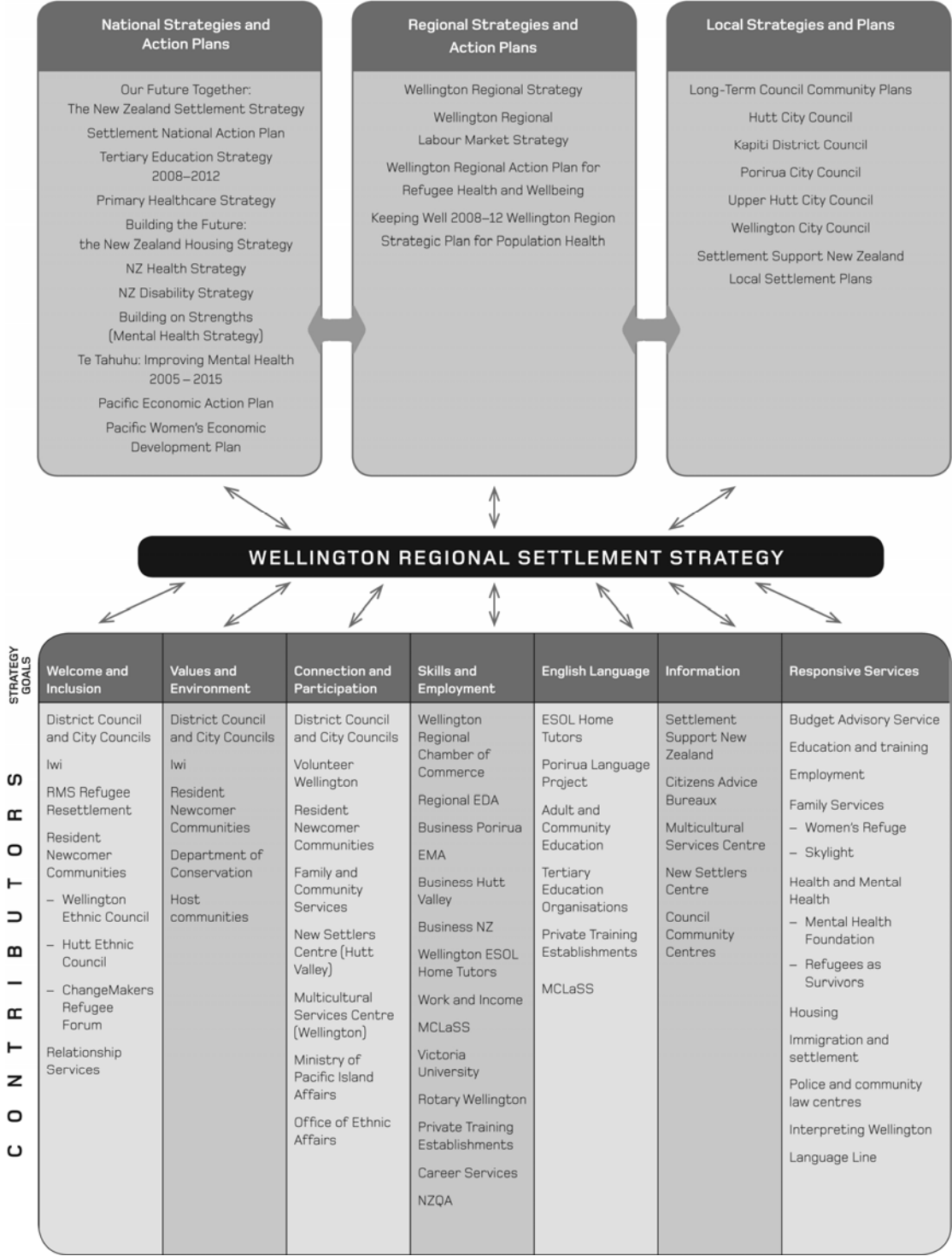
Another important local connection is with the Settlement Support New Zealand initiative (SSNZ) in the Hutt Valley, Porirua and Wellington. SSNZ has an operational role to act as a clear point of contact for newcomers to access information that will support their settlement. The initiative also maps local settlement stakeholders and services, contributes to plans for settlement locally, and has developed a Local Settlement Network of stakeholders to achieve this. It is therefore an important source of information and advice for joined-up settlement activities at the regional level to meet the settlement needs of newcomers.

### ***Working together***

Strategies and actions plans are organising frameworks. They provide mechanisms for working together in our complex world in ways which contribute to the achievement of common results. Their development is often led by government agencies where whole-of-government efforts and outcomes are sought. Because of this it is important not to lose sight of the fact that their successful implementation involves many contributions across sectors, and from within organisations outside of government. This is particularly so in the settlement area where community-based organisations play a key role and are significant providers of services accessed by newcomers in the Wellington region. A number of these organisations are co-located: in the Multicultural Services Centre in Wellington City, the New Settlers' Centre in Lower Hutt and at Porirua. This facilitates both their collaboration and their service provision to newcomers.

The complexity of these connections, collaborations and contributions are represented in the diagram below.

**CONNECTIONS, COLLABORATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**





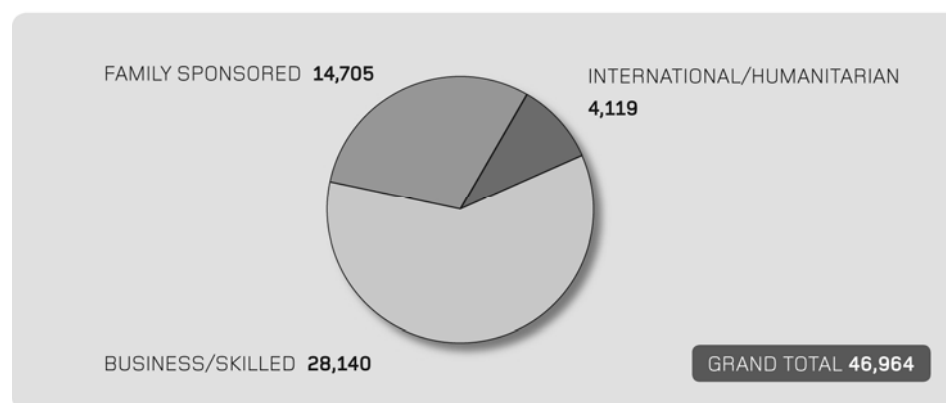
## 5. Who the newcomers are and what brings them to the Wellington region

New Zealand welcomes nearly 50,000 newcomers as permanent residents each year. People who wish to migrate to New Zealand must apply under one of the three streams of the New Zealand Residence Programme. The three residence streams are:

1. **Skilled/Business** – this stream is for those whose skills will contribute to New Zealand’s economic and social development. It has three categories:
  - **Work to residence** where applicants work for accredited employers, or in occupations under the long-term skill shortage list or in their area of art, culture or sport as a pathway to permanent residence.
  - **Skilled migrant** for those who have a recognised qualification and work experience including in identified future growth areas.
  - **Business** (including categories for investors, entrepreneurs and employees of a relocating business).
2. **Family Sponsored** - this stream helps reunite families in New Zealand by granting residence to family members of New Zealand citizens and residents.
3. **International/Humanitarian** –This stream is for those from Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga and Samoa (including their partners and dependent children) who settle in New Zealand under the Pacific Access Category or the Samoan Quota. It also includes refugees arriving as part of this country’s annual quota, as asylum seekers or to reunite with their refugee family members.

The overall number of residence approvals for New Zealand in 2006/07 was 46,964. A total of 28,140 newcomers were approved under the Skilled/Business stream, 14,705 under the Family Sponsored stream and 4,119 under the International/Humanitarian stream.

### NEW ZEALAND RESIDENCE PROGRAMME STREAMS 2006/07



In the Wellington region, according to the 2006 census, 23.4 percent of people are overseas-born. This is second only to the Auckland region, which has a 37 percent overseas-born population. A breakdown by local authority is provided below. As the figures show, the biggest numbers of newcomers to the region settle in Wellington City, but there are also significant numbers in other parts of the region.

**Table 1 – Overseas born and New Zealand born in the Wellington Region**

Territorial Authority	Overseas born		New Zealand born		Not specified		Total
	n	percent	n	percent	n	percent	
Kapiti Coast District	9,021	19.5	35,346	76.5	1,830	4.0	46,197
Porirua City	10,602	21.8	35,262	72.6	2,682	5.5	48,546
Upper Hutt City	6,897	18.0	30,393	79.1	1,125	2.9	38,415
Lower Hutt City	20,769	21.3	74,076	75.8	2,856	2.9	97,704
Wellington City	48,750	27.2	123,930	69.1	6,786	3.8	179,466
Total Wellington region	96,039	23.4	299,007	72.9	15,279	3.7	410,325
Total New Zealand	879,543	21.8	2,960,214	73.5	188,187	4.7	4,027,947

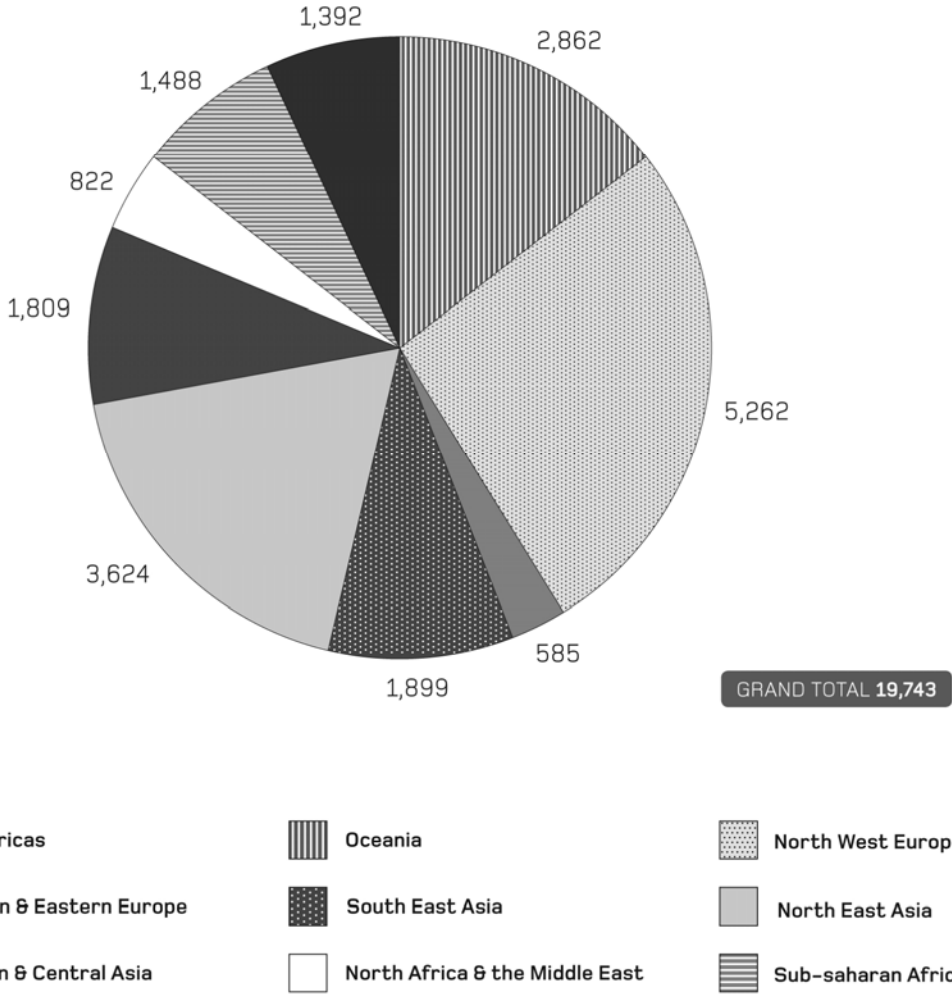
Source: Statistics New Zealand. Census 2006.

Of the 96,039 people in the Wellington region who were overseas-born, slightly more than one-quarter of them (25,110) are 'recent migrants' who have been here less than five years. As might be expected, most of these recent migrants (19,743) are of working age.

As the following chart shows, the biggest grouping of these recent newcomers to the Wellington region come from North West Europe but there are also substantial numbers from the Pacific and various Asian regions.

Further information on recent newcomers by Territorial Local Authority in the Wellington Region can be found in Appendix 2.

**Number of working-age newcomers in the Wellington region (in New Zealand for less than five years) by global region of origin**



Source: Statistics New Zealand. Census 2006.

**What brings newcomers to the Wellington region**

A key reason for choosing to settle in the region is work. Skilled newcomers often come with prearranged jobs or find agencies to provide work for them. Thus the perceived availability of work in the region - especially in skill shortage areas - creates a strong attraction to the region. In diverse sectors such as the creative industries through to Government services, the Wellington region provides an appealing range of opportunities and possibilities to build, or continue to develop, a career.

*"Wellington has a job market in my professional area. It's the biggest city for employment in the IT field."*

– British newcomer

The nature of the region itself is also a factor in the choice to settle here. Newcomers are attracted to the scale of the cities and strong transport networks which enable ready movement and contribute to a perceived quality of life which is both higher and often safer than that which they left. The multicultural dimension of the region, the range of cultural events and natural attractions are also identified as motivations to settle in Wellington.

*"The region has lots to offer for its size. Music, arts, culture, beaches, rugby, the film scene with Weta. The diversity of concerts and the artistic life are a vital part of the attraction of the Wellington region."*

– Russian newcomer

*"It's the smallness and the culture of Wellington; Auckland is too big and commercial."*

– Chinese newcomer

For other newcomers, a major factor underpinning their choice of location is the presence of families already in the region. Newcomers from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds often come to join well-established families. For Pacific Island peoples especially, their families have built strong communities on the basis of settlement reaching back fifty years or more.

*"My family first came out because of the resettlement programme in the 1960s and we followed them."*

– Member, Pacific Community Reference Group

For those newcomers from refugee backgrounds, there is little choice. The decision about Wellington as the initial resettlement location is made by RMS Refugee Resettlement working in conjunction with key organisations charged with providing important settlement services such as housing and health services. The proximity of other resettled refugee communities, including family members, who can provide support is one of the influencing factors.

## 6. What settlement involves

Settlement is an open-ended process and is different for each person and family. As it begins before arrival with newcomers' perceptions of New Zealand and life here, it's vital to ensure that their expectations of life in the Wellington region are realistic and well-informed.

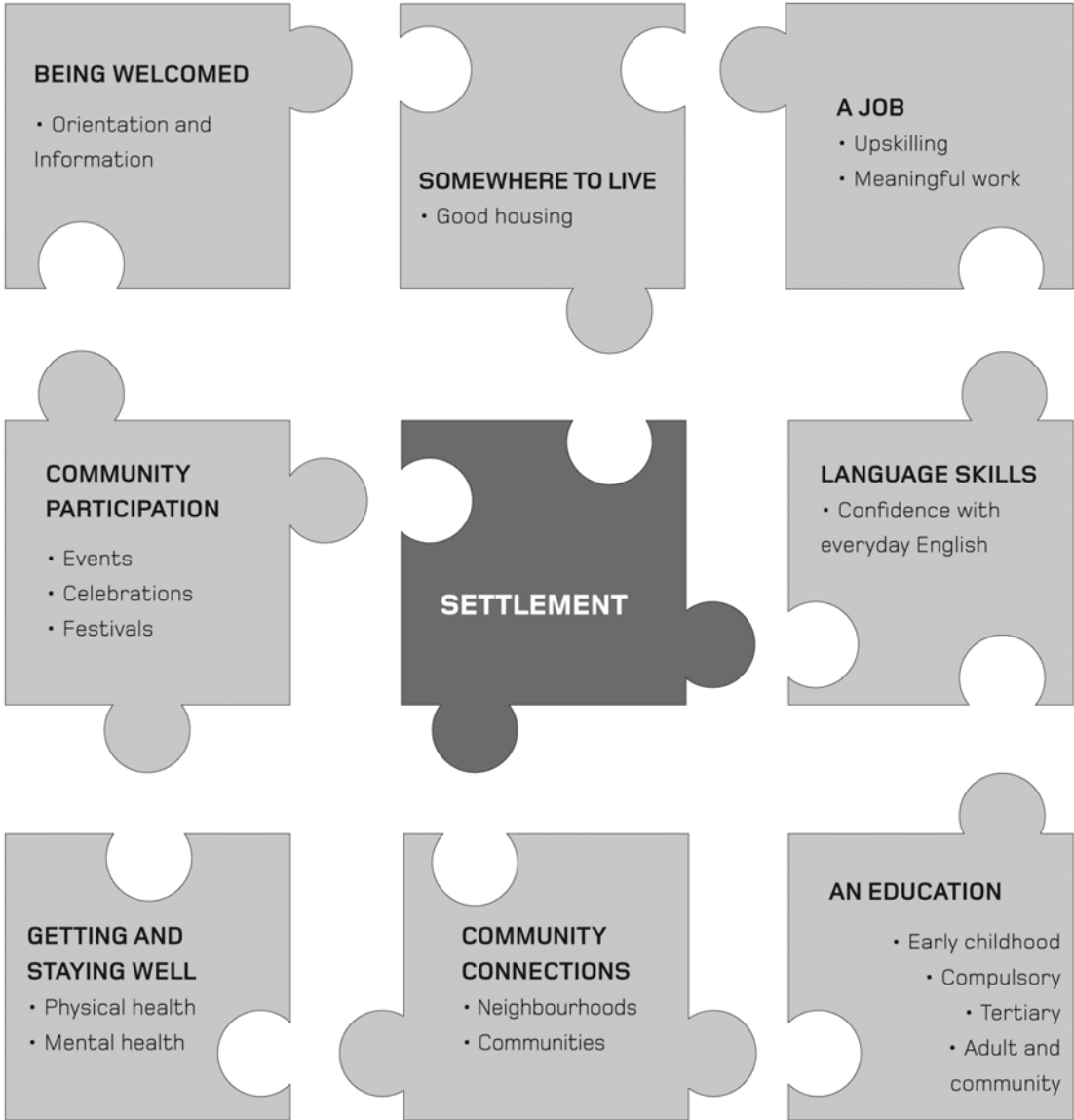
The foundations of our nation embodied in the Treaty of Waitangi give Māori as tangata whenua a special status within New Zealand. Newcomers must have good information, both before they come and after they arrive, about the cultural context they are entering and the tikanga and history of our region.

From the time they arrive, newcomers need to feel welcomed. Settlement is a two-way process, requiring learning and adaptation by receiving communities as well as by newcomers. Those who live here need to provide a warm welcome, and appreciate the contribution that newcomers will make to the region and its everyday life. At the same time newcomers have to learn about and adapt to a new culture and to new ways of doing things.

In the settlement process newcomers move from dealing with immediate issues, like finding somewhere to live and adapting to unfamiliar systems and ways of doing things, to becoming active participants in the affairs of their new community. Settlement takes time and involves all aspects of life – social, economic, environmental and cultural. That's why it involves the understanding and responsiveness of so many sectors and organisations and why all those working with newcomers need to work collaboratively.

The integration of newcomers into our region and way of life depends on many factors. Like all New Zealand families, newcomers need a strong foundation from which to contribute to society. They need to be able to easily access support to reach their full potential as members of our community. Those from diverse cultural and language backgrounds may require additional assistance, especially in the early stages.

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUCCESSFUL SETTLEMENT OUTCOMES**



Settlement is an interactive process involving newcomers, communities and the provision of a range of services. There are three key stages:

## THE THREE STAGES OF SETTLEMENT

### Learning – Informing Expectations

**PRE-ARRIVAL:** This involves newcomers finding out all they can about their possible destination and whether they meet immigration criteria. Then newcomers must make the decision to apply, get accepted, and plan their move.

Some newcomers, particularly those from refugee backgrounds receive very limited information about the country and region they will be settling in before their arrival.



### Adapting – Adjusting Expectations

**ON ARRIVAL:** At the outset, newcomers need to be welcomed. If they haven't come with a job they need to find one as well as somewhere to live, settle the family in, find out about the region, make connections, and start adjusting to the new way of life. Many newcomers seek contact with local members of their home community as they adjust to their new environment. Newcomers from similar cultures are often able to progress through this phase of adjustment quickly. The challenge may be greater for others who need extra support with English language, job seeking and interpreting. Mainstream services need to be responsive to the range of needs at this phase.

Newcomers from refugee backgrounds have a six week orientation period at the Mangere Refugee Reception Centre on arrival in New Zealand and RMS Refugee Resettlement provides one-on-one settlement support for 12 months once they arrive in their resettlement region.



### Integrating – Expectations being fulfilled

**ONGOING:** As newcomers adjust and develop a sense of belonging and make friends, they will increase their engagement with the wider community, sharing and celebrating aspects of Kiwi culture and life here, as well as their home culture. They will also be comfortable accessing more general and mainstream services.





## 7. Barriers and challenges to successful settlement

The *Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy* and accompanying *Plan of Action for Wellington Regional Settlement* have been informed by the recent settlement experiences of a range of newcomers to the region. It was important to obtain the input of those whose experiences and memories of settlement were still fresh. For this reason, most of those consulted were newcomers who had arrived in the Wellington region within the last five years.

Contributors included newcomers from a broad range of countries, as indicated in the map below. Their views were gathered through public forums, community meetings, research and one-on-one discussions.



Settling in the Wellington region brings great benefits as well as major challenges for many newcomers. Despite the diversity of newcomer groups consulted, common themes emerged in relation to the barriers and challenges they experienced. These included: community acceptance; adjusting to a new way of life; accessing work; English language support; information; and responsive services. These findings are consistent with international literature on settlement<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Go to [www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz) for the following literature reviews: *Migrant Settlement: A review of the literature and its relevance to New Zealand*, Michael Fletcher September 1999; and *Refugee Resettlement Project Refugee Voices Literature Review*, Alison Gray and Susan Elliott May 2001. [Updated refugee literature (2007) available February 2008 – check reference then].

This chapter summarises the barriers and challenges in the Wellington regional context identified by recent newcomers, and is supplemented with the perspectives of representatives of some iwi of the region, central and local government and business and community organisations.

### ***Some general considerations***

Many newcomers settle in the region without requiring much in the way of special support provided that they have access to up-to-date information and advice. However, our consultation identified particular settlement issues associated with some specific newcomer groups.

First, the free provision of some key settlement support services (for example language support, most work experience programmes and job seeking assistance) is currently limited to those with permanent residence. Current funding does not extend to those with different immigration status. Since many temporary newcomers often stay for extended periods and even permanently, policy consideration is being given to the nature of support services that should be available to enable their settlement and integration into our communities.

Secondly, while the proportion of quota refugees within the Wellington region is small within total newcomer numbers, this group has high needs and requires specialised support often over extended periods. The circumstances which led to their refugee status, concerns for family safety and reunification alongside ongoing turmoil in their home countries add to the complexity of the challenges for resettling newcomers from refugee backgrounds.

Finally, there are increasing numbers of New Zealanders returning home and many of them bring partners who were born overseas. These partners also have settlement support needs which often need to be addressed outside of the family support networks they have available to them.

### ***1. Welcome and inclusion in our communities and workplaces***

There is a need for communities in the region to be more welcoming, to learn how to interact with newcomers and to make them feel welcome on their arrival. Local community organisations reinforced the importance of this community responsibility, and of the importance of welcoming support and inclusion to help newcomers settle.

A lack of acknowledgement on their arrival and of community understanding and acceptance of their presence are barriers to newcomers' feeling a sense of belonging - particularly for those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Maintaining their culture and language and meeting their spiritual needs is challenging for some groups among the newcomers. There is a view that resource consent for acquiring community centres and places of worship often requires greater time and resources because of the perceptions of local communities.

Newcomers from a refugee background have reported racist comments in some housing areas and schools.

*"In New Zealand schools where the Sudanese children are learning, they said there are a lot of bad things happening e.g. "You black, get out of here." Sometimes they say, "Get out of this country. This country is not your country." This causes the kids to fight one another. In most cases they feel very sad and badly treated."*

– Sudanese community dialogue

Many newcomers asked for better information about Māori culture and beliefs and were keen to learn about these.

## ***2. Respect our values and ways of doing things and care for our environment***

A willingness to accept change and rates of adaptation to living in the Wellington region often differ within newcomer families. As a result, tensions have been experienced between parents raised in their home country and their children growing up in New Zealand. For many parents, there are challenges in adapting to different approaches to discipline, cultural and gender role expectations and how they expect their children to follow their cultural beliefs and worldviews. Many young newcomers must deal with the tension between their parents' rules and expectations and the different expectations and experiences of their Kiwi peers with whom they are interacting on a daily basis.

Representatives of some iwi in the region report that newcomers lack information and an understanding of Māori protocols and ways of doing things. These include the responsibilities and practices that come with their status as kaitiakitanga or guardians of the environment. As a result of different cultural norms newcomers can fail to respect the aquatic and

terrestrial ecologies, instead employing unsustainable fishing practices and being ignorant of areas of sacred Māori land.

### ***3. Supportive social networks connected with local communities and civic and community participation***

Newcomers need to develop strong social networks to support their settlement in the region. The continuation of their links with their home communities can be an important source of support and connection in a new location. However, representatives of some iwi of the region expressed concern that some newcomers had not also created supportive linkages into their surrounding communities. Legacy issues relating to poor information and gaps in settlement support had resulted in additional integration challenges for poorly connected newcomer groups.

An emerging issue reported by community organisations is the abandonment of aging newcomers in the region by family members moving on to other countries. This practice is creating a socially isolated group with particular support needs. They are not eligible for superannuation until they have been here for ten years. Additionally, other elderly migrants who had been fully functioning and participating in their communities often resort to their first language as they age and need additional support and assistance. Community organisations are currently observing this with members of the Dutch community who had migrated here in significant numbers between the 1950s and 1970s as a result of a bilateral agreement with the Netherlands Government. While this latter issue is not a settlement issue of itself it does suggest the need to consider the longer-term impact of aging migrants within our communities and their support needs.

Many newcomer communities are looking for opportunities to build on their strengths. They want to progress their own capacity and community-building initiatives and are actively seeking ways to cement these into more established community centres and activities. They report that they face barriers accessing information on resources available and processes to follow. Opportunities to develop knowledge of systems such as grants application processes, and for skill enhancement in project planning and governance have been requested. Support for community centres so that newcomers can share their language and customs, and ultimately build community capacity, have also been proposed. Practical support to reduce social isolation (such as driving courses for newcomer women) has also been requested.

*"There are some government funds for us but the overall procedure to get these funds is very difficult especially for minor communities like us."*

– Oromo community dialogue

*"The major concern of the Assyrian community is to have a community centre where we can maintain our culture and customs to share with NZ run seminars in which we shall try to resolve outstanding issues and community social gatherings."*

– Assyrian community dialogue

#### **4. Skills development and employment**

Finding suitable employment presents a significant challenge across all newcomer groups. The first issue relates to the recognition of educational or vocational qualifications obtained overseas. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority equivalence process to have such qualifications recognised is lengthy and complicated. Community organisations report that it is nerve-wracking for newcomers, and may require them to retrain at every level. To better manage newcomer expectations and assist their transition into employment, the immigration system now requires equivalence certificates before arrival in New Zealand. Nevertheless a considerable number of newcomers, such as accompanying spouses, will still need to go through this process.

Newcomers told us that their overseas work experience is not highly valued by employers in the Wellington region. Some newcomers have the perception that this is because employers believe there are lower professional expectations in their countries of origin, and because they place a higher premium on New Zealand-based work experience. Many newcomers then face the challenge of being overqualified when trying to apply for entry-level positions. For a small number often from refugee backgrounds, their skill base does not lie in areas sought by Wellington employers and there needs to be a focus on transferable skills.

Many newcomers to the region report that gaining access to work opportunities can be difficult if they are not recommended to an employer, illustrating how much New Zealand culture is based on 'word of mouth' interaction and networks. Some newcomers also believe that employers are reluctant to employ people who look and sound different from the rest of their workforce. Representatives of the business community confirm that, while they complain of skills shortages, many small employers are keen to maintain 'family-style' work cultures and are wary of taking on employees from culturally different backgrounds. They also often use

trusted networks to both advertise and recruit, helping to ensure what they see as an appropriate 'cultural fit' within the workplace. The pathway to apprenticeships is also often generated through family and social ties.

*"Wellington is a network culture, getting that initial foot in the door is hard. It is really difficult to get work, 90% of it is who you know."*

- Dutch newcomer

*"There are people within the community with skills and knowledge. Language is not the only barrier for getting training."*

- Sudanese community dialogue

A poor level of English can be a real hurdle to getting a job and to integrating into the workplace. Many newcomers find their levels of comprehension are below that required even to understand the style and language in an advertised job description. They also have difficulty interpreting their experience in ways that local employers can recognise.

*"We faced language barriers when we were looking for work. Because we look and speak differently we can find gaining work here very hard."*

- Chinese newcomer

From an employer perspective, many who are able to support newcomers are already doing so. However, the business community advises that a significant barrier to employment is the risk of an employer taking on an unsuitable worker, be they newcomer or not, since employment termination processes are costly.

Finally, in terms of employment, some newcomers want to set up their own business either because they have found it difficult to obtain other employment or because they prefer to work for themselves. For many without English as a first language, there are additional challenges around this relating to language appropriate information and advice on the options for business structures and tax issues including compliance requirements.

## ***5. English language support***

Many newcomers reported barriers to accessing English language courses in the region. For some, such as mothers with childcare responsibilities, this is related to the associated lack of affordable and 'legal' childcare.

Community ESOL providers in Porirua, Wellington and the Hutt Valley all reported that current Early Childhood Education Regulations are considered to be a major obstacle for childcare provision at community ESOL classes, because the childcare provided takes place in spaces not specifically designed for children.

It should be noted that current early childhood regulations – particularly those relating to playgroup centres do not allow parents to attend classes while younger children are minded in a non-licensed premise without the presence of at least half the parents at any given time. However, proposed amendments are intended to allow parents to attend classes if they are:

- In close proximity and able to be contacted; and
- Able to resume responsibility for the children at short notice.

It is unclear at this stage when these amendments will come into force [to be checked in 2008 closer to the publication of the Strategy].

Community organisations report that the provision of English language services across the Wellington region is uneven and does not reflect needs. For instance, ESOL Assessment and Access Specialist Services is a strength in Wellington City but it is not sufficiently funded to provide the same level of service to the Hutt Valley. This is in spite of the fact that more than 20 percent of the overseas-born population of both Hutt City and Upper Hutt City are recent newcomers<sup>4</sup>.

Community organisations also told us of difficulties with the approach that Work and Income New Zealand takes in assessing the availability for work of those seeking to access part-time English language courses. For those who do manage to access courses, the required 20 hours full-time class participation is often higher than their learning capacity. People with low literacy skills cannot usually cope with full-time classes. When alternative options are brokered with a local WINZ manager, this knowledge often isn't communicated to others in the office, requiring the duplication of the brokering process for other such clients.

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<sup>4</sup> At the time of Census 2006, 1,419 residents of Upper Hutt city and 4,650 residents of Hutt City had been in New Zealand less than five years. This equates to 20.5 percent and 22.4 percent respectively of the overseas born population in these two cities at that time.

Additionally, literacy funding allocated by the Tertiary Education Commission applies to those newcomers who are pre-beginners in English and who hold no more than a primary level of education from their home context. As a result, many with higher levels of schooling but lacking in English language competence are ineligible for Government-funded courses in spite of their needs. [TEC is to comment on this]. Unfunded places on courses are still made available for these newcomers by ESOL providers who recognise the importance and overarching need to provide this tuition in spite of the inflexible funding rules.

#### ***6. Information to settle well and understand our laws***

Across the board, newcomers expect higher quality and better delivery of information than what is currently provided. A lot of information which supports settlement is available before arrival from a large number of sources however the onus is on newcomers to locate and identify the information relevant to them.

A key challenge identified by a number of agencies and organisations is managing newcomers' expectations about the region and service provision before they arrive. Some newcomers rely on family members and arrive without accessing any other information, while others have unrealistic impressions of life here as a result of marketing campaigns.

Newcomers suggest that information received after arrival is fragmented, insufficiently comprehensive and not always readily understood. Newcomers refer to information being out-of-date as well as pitched at a national level and not informing them about the Wellington region. It also does not fully cover the key service areas where they need reliable knowledge and contacts such as health, education, housing and legal services.

*"We were disappointed with information. We were expecting to find some direction to local agencies, on how to look for a flat, on the health system, how does it work, what does it cost. We needed better information – all we got was a thin pamphlet on housing."*

– Nepalese newcomer

For many newcomers, finding out about the legal system, and their rights in New Zealand is a challenge. Obligations under New Zealand law may be different from newcomers' prior experience and the New Zealand Police reinforced the importance of newcomers having good information about their obligations.



## ***7. Responsive and appropriate services***

If newcomers are to be supported to settle well, they need access to responsive, appropriate services across the spectrum of their need. Some challenges in relation to the provision of particular services were raised during the consultation.

### *Education and training*

Some young adult newcomers find it difficult to successfully complete their education. For newcomers from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds particularly, barriers to education include their own lower educational aspirations and the lack of tertiary-level educated role models from within their own community.

The cost of tertiary education is also a barrier to many young newcomers from Pacific and refugee backgrounds who also find challenges in accessing information on available support.

Newcomers have also identified a need for greater transitional training and support to move from secondary to tertiary education especially in finding ways to improve literacy competence to deal with the step-up in comprehension which is required at the tertiary level.

The cross-cultural competence of some education practitioners who deal with a diverse range of students has been questioned. This has been reported across differing levels of institution, from pre-school to university. Community organisations reported that the Wellington Free Kindergarten was establishing a centre of Excellence in relation to the pre-school barriers identified but a key difficulty had been the lack of support from local and central government agencies.

Newcomer students from refugee backgrounds report a lack of teacher understanding about their cultural experience in some educational contexts in the region. Parents and community leaders have also reported concerns about what they perceive as a lack of support for students, parents and communities from schools in the region. While some school services such as homework clubs are proving helpful, many report a lack of knowledge of these services.

*“African Youth feel that these negative attitudes and unsupportive environments de-motivate them and impede their success in and advancement through the education system.”*

- Evolve African youth dialogue

*Employment*

The issues related to employment services are discussed under ***Skills development and employment*** on pages 28 and 29.

## *Health*

Knowledge of, and access to health services is important in the early settlement stages, especially for more vulnerable groups. This includes access to appropriate primary care services that recognise the importance of using trained interpreters for those who require such support.

Some Wellington health services suggested that the content and suitability of health-related information created its own challenges for newcomers. For many newcomers there is a lack of understanding of the New Zealand health system including the use of waiting lists for treatment in the Wellington region. Because of this, expectations of ready access to treatment are not met.

Access to appropriate mental health services is also often difficult, especially for many newcomers from refugee backgrounds. They report low levels of awareness of their prior background and experience within the health system. Their limited English language skills allied with the low uptake of translation services by health professionals to reduce costs can mean many visits in an attempt to get effective diagnosis. To help in these situations, children are commonly used as interpreters for their parents. This is inappropriate and, without trained interpretation, runs the risk of miscommunication which may affect diagnosis and subsequent treatment.

*"Interpreters are not being used and this is a very big problem. They are made to feel like they are in a very far land and no means of communication."*

– Middle Eastern community dialogue

As with other sectors of the community, transport can also be a barrier for accessing health care particularly for some newcomer groups such as women with children, the disabled and older people.

There is also limited information available and few opportunities for discussion around sexual and related health issues for young people.

*"None of your parents mention about sex, and if they did mention it, [it is] in a bad way kind of thing, which is sad. It's just like it's bad, bad, bad, bad."*

– Evolve African youth dialogue

### *Housing*

Accessing suitable housing is also a challenge. For families with children, the Wellington houses they are living in are smaller than what they were used to in their home countries. Others report challenges with the costs of heating and a lack of insulation which can in turn result in health issues for newcomers. Newcomers from refugee backgrounds also experience problems with the suitability and affordability of housing. Particular issues relate to housing size because of larger families, poor insulation and an inability to access private accommodation due to cost, when public housing does not meet their wishes.

*"Buying a house is hard with costs, interest rates and tax so high. We would like to get our own house."*

– Chinese newcomer

*"Housing is not big enough and it is damp, cold and very old. Sometimes the location is not safe. There are no gardens for children to play. It consumes electricity just to be warm."*

– Somali community dialogue

### *Legal and justice services*

Community law centres in the region report that they are dealing with information gaps and a range of issues arising from the complexities of our immigration system for the newcomer population which results in the need to seek legal advice. There were particular difficulties for newcomers from refugee backgrounds who brought wives from overseas. Many wives entered the country on visitors' permits and as a result they were not eligible for the free services they needed to settle well, including language support. This created high emotional stress in the first two years while they waited for a decision on residence. This often created power and control issues within families and led to family violence.

Many newcomers have finance and debt issues, some of which are culturally driven. Community law centres also identify that knowledge gaps and lack of understanding can present significant problems for newcomers in areas such as car finance contracts, where many sign as guarantors without an awareness of the full legal obligations and potential financial consequences.

Some African youth believe they have been singled out for police attention while driving, and that they are subject to frequent unwarranted police

contact. As a result they have identified a need for knowledge about the New Zealand law and their rights and responsibilities.

*Interpreter services*

Many newcomers need interpreter support in their interactions with service providers until they are comfortable and proficient in using English for daily living. Similarly, providers often need interpreters to support the delivery of appropriate and responsive services to their clients.

The perceived reluctance of health professionals to use interpreters because of cost constraints was identified earlier. Our consultations also identified other challenges associated with the use of interpreters.

There is a range of interpreter services available in the Wellington region free to newcomer clients<sup>5</sup> and as a result access should not be a problem. Additionally there have been information and training initiatives to ensure service providers have a better understanding for the need for interpretation and are trained in its use. In spite of this community organisations suggest there is a low uptake of services by government agencies.

Some community providers are concerned that there is no way for them to confirm that often technical legal advice is being reliably translated. The degree of confidence should be higher with professionally trained interpreters but some community law centres also call on their culturally diverse workforce to support translation needs.

There are also challenges associated with telephone interpreters. Some newcomers are uncomfortable with this mode and prefer to bring a friend they can trust to interpret for them on a face-to-face basis. Secondly it is problematic for staff members in open-plan office environments since it

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<sup>5</sup>Interpreting Wellington (formerly the Wellington Community Interpreting Service) provides on-site and telephone interpretation as required on a 24 hour/7 day a week basis. Language Line (based in the Office of Ethnic Affairs) is a telephone interpreting service in 39 languages to participating, mainly government, agencies. In the Wellington region, these include central government departments, the Capital Coast District Health Board and the Hutt Primary Health Organisation. The region's Citizen Advice Bureaux also have access to the Multi-Lingual Information Service, a telephone interpreter service based in Auckland.

requires both a speaker-phone and a private office to preserve client confidentiality.

***A final consideration***

Successful settlement requires a number of agencies and organisations to work collaboratively at a regional level as well as in localities. Community organisations we consulted suggested that adequate funding for the purchase of settlement services and the capacity of non-government organisations to meet settlement needs are key issues in successful provision and delivery across the region. They noted that their funding had been frozen for some time and that the contribution of non-government organisations needed to be better valued and resourced if improved settlement outcomes are to be achieved.

## **8. Meeting the challenges-addressing the barriers**

The preceding chapter outlined the barriers and challenges to successful settlement that were identified in developing this Strategy. This chapter highlights some key programmes and recent initiatives designed to address the barriers and assist newcomers meet the challenges associated with settling in the Wellington region.

### ***Welcome, inclusion and connection***

The territorial authorities in the region support their communities by providing venues and resources for community celebrations and sports events, all of which aim to showcase the diversity and vibrancy of newcomer communities across the region.

The inaugural Multi-ethnic Sports Soccer Tournament in Upper Hutt ran over two months in 2007 and will again provide a fun way for a range of groups to come together and show their skills at soccer. The Diwali Festival of Lights is now in its sixth year and continues to provide the Indian community in Wellington City with its largest annual celebration. Alongside the Chinese New Year, the Irish Festival is also enjoyed by many, together celebrating the cultures of many newcomers and those long-resident in the region.

Citizenship ceremonies including tikanga have been held by the Kapiti Coast and Masterton District Councils in partnership with iwi since 2005 and hosted on marae.

Various activities run by ESOL Home Tutors have incorporated both language learning as well as practical opportunities for newcomers to learn about various aspects of life in the region. These have included

- A day at the Hongoeka Marae (Plimmerton);
- An introduction to New Zealand's wildlife at the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary;
- A Human Rights Commission presentation on the Treaty of Waitangi and the changing face of New Zealand; and
- The celebration of Matariki at the Carter Observatory.

As part of a focus on ensuring that communities are well networked and have opportunities to develop their capacity, the Wellington Community Law Centre is providing a workshop during 2007/08 on how to run a

community organisation as a legal entity for newcomers from refugee backgrounds. This will be complemented by a financial management course provided ChangeMakers Refugee Forum to support participants to manage their associations' finances.

### ***Skills development and employment***

Government funded Career Services provides career planning assistance to newcomers to help them understand their local labour market, pathways to work and further study and to plan a way forward. Selected career consultants have been trained to deliver this service (with ongoing training and newcomer-specific professional resources provided). Depending on the client's particular needs, career planning includes assistance with CVs and how to present overseas experience and skills to local employers.

Work and Income in the Wellington region is supporting newcomers into employment and addressing recruitment and retention issues in local government through a scheme administered across the five territorial local authorities. This identifies under-employed and unemployed newcomers for employment into unsubsidised positions through standard council employment processes. In addition, two specific programmes operated in conjunction with the Upper Hutt City Council and Wellington City Council specifically target newcomers. They provide subsidised cadetships on 12 month fixed-term contracts so that successful candidates gain valuable paid work experience to support their transition into permanent work on the completion of the internship.

Work and Income also provides a Job Search Service for those seeking employment, and development opportunities for those that are unable to work immediately. A number of seminars are run at local service centres to promote employment and industry opportunities. These also consider the nature of any support required for those clients seeking work or requiring other social development services so that services can be tailored to the individual's circumstances and work-readiness.

Work Brokers are employed to engage with employers and businesses to source employment opportunities for clients. Services to employers may include pre-employment training of new employees with a focus on reducing skill and labour shortages and increasing labour market participation.



There are a number of other opportunities available through Work and Income to support those who may be disadvantaged in the local labour market. Skill investment subsidies provide a contribution to wages and are available to attract employers to train and develop candidates. Local Industry Partnerships funding addresses skill and labour shortages through pre-employment training and support. Enterprising Communities Grant Funding assists community organisations implement projects that will create skills and work opportunities.

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs is pursuing a number of initiatives to support the development of a skilled workforce and to increase employment in Pacific communities. These include:

- The development and implementation of a Pacific Achievers initiative that will utilise successful Pacific role models to promote a range of career pathways and choices to Pacific students as well as information and advice on grants and scholarships.
- A mentoring scheme for top female tertiary achievers which supports them into jobs and develops a success-focused model.
- A campaign to raise awareness of the opportunities for Pacific people in regards to trade training with a specific focus on women and youth.
- A Pacific business mentoring initiative to support and assist new Pacific business owners.
- Community-based seminars on practical up-skilling for business and proactive support for start-up and early development of business.
- A government internship opportunity for Pacific undergraduates that will provide them with public sector experience and enhance their academic development and future career path.

Other key programmes supporting newcomers' progression to employment are provided by community organisations. The Multicultural Centre for Learning and Support Services undertakes career pathway planning and appraisal of newcomers' employment skills. The Wellington job mentoring programme (ESOL Home Tutors, Wellington) organises weekly skill development workshops for job seekers which address skills such as writing a CV and interview skills.

### ***English language support***

ESOL Assessment and Access Specialist Service (funded by the Tertiary Education Commission) provides impartial, specialist assistance of newcomers' English skills free-of-charge and referral advice relevant to the background, goals and proficiency of the individual. In addition the service collaborates with ESOL providers in the region to develop courses that meet gaps in current provision and advocates to government and non-government organisations on the language needs of the region's newcomer communities.

*Workplace Communication for Skilled Migrants* is a 12 week course within the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies (Victoria University of Wellington). The course provides professionally qualified newcomers with an awareness of the way English is used in New Zealand workplaces, as well as the opportunity to start networks and get relevant local work experience. Community volunteers, including recruitment and human resource personnel work with the university tutors in the delivery of the course. Workplace consultants provide support during the six week internship to both the workplace and the intern. Following graduation each participant is supported for up to six months by a mentor (matched by profession) from the Wellington Branch of Rotary. Another recent language initiative is a new Weltec course *English Language for Employment* which includes provision for work placement in the last term.

A further new initiative focused on workplace language is provided by ESOL Home Tutors as a joint initiative with the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research Ltd (NIWA). Twelve NIWA employees attend a weekly class in Kiwi English at their workplace. New services planned for 2008 include three *English for the Kiwi Workplace* ten hour classes in Porirua and the Hutt Valley.

A range of additional English language initiatives in the region also support the establishment and building of important community connections for newcomers. These include:

- A multi-service centre by the Wellington Free Kindergarten that combines early childhood education for children with ESOL classes for newcomer caregivers and parenting classes and resources.
- An intergenerational literacy programme by the Multicultural Learning and Support Service.
- The Rongotai Mothers English Support Group at the Rongotai Plunket Centre for newcomer mothers and their toddlers/preschoolers (a joint ESOL Home Tutors Wellington and Plunket initiative).
- A weekly social literacy class for Somali women and their children in the community room at the City Council Rintoul Street Flats (a joint

- initiative between ESOL Home Tutors Wellington, the Somali community and the South East City Primary Health Organisation).
- Two intergenerational family literacy ten-hour classes for young families in the Hutt Valley (from 2008).

### ***Information to settle well and understand our laws***

Since 2005, the Settlement Support New Zealand initiative has provided a clear point-of-contact to help newcomers get in touch with the local information and services they need to support their settlement. This point-of-contact is delivered in the Wellington region through the city councils at Porirua, Wellington and Upper Hutt and through the New Settlers' Centre in Lower Hutt.

During 2007/08, the Wellington Community Law Centre is providing education workshops for newcomer youth from refugee backgrounds about their rights and responsibilities under New Zealand law. The Whitireia Community Law Centre is also undertaking community education with newcomer communities and is holding two meetings during the year to provide basic information on legal issues.

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs is leading some key initiatives focused on improving the financial literacy of Pacific communities. These include developing an awareness campaign around the availability of budgeting services, research on the impact of high interest loan providers, and providing information for specific purposes (KiwiSaver decision guides and car buying information). Additionally work is planned to ensure that financial education in schools is responsive to Pacific cultural and value systems.

### ***Responsive and appropriate services***

#### *Education and training*

A bilingual assessment service is now available to schools in the Wellington region. There are five Wellington resource teachers of learning and behaviour who have been trained in administering the bilingual assessments with newcomer students who do not seem to be making progress at an expected rate. These assessments are used to distinguish between language learning needs, additional special learning needs and social/emotional needs through dual assessment in first language and English.

In addition to the standard ESOL funding provided to schools for the provision of English language support programmes for newcomer students, the Ministry of Education provides additional funding to schools for education-related programmes for newcomers from refugee backgrounds. These include:

- Homework programmes for academic support for refugee students.
- Employment of bilingual liaison workers to engage with the families, and liaise with school staff on the needs of refugee students.
- Discretionary funding to cover the development of individual education plans for refugee students.

The Computers in Homes project for refugee background families provides computers, free internet access, technical support, basic training for parents and bilingual family liaison. Around 20 families in the Wellington region benefit from the project each year.

The Ministry of Education is currently developing the Team Up website ([www.teamup.co.nz](http://www.teamup.co.nz)) to include education-related information for parents in a range of community languages. It is anticipated that this will be available in March 2008.

Trained TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) teachers are critical in providing support to newcomer English language learners. In 2008, a further 22 teachers from the Wellington region will commence a Ministry of Education scholarship to study towards a Diploma in TESOL at Victoria University of Wellington. They join 14 teachers who commenced study in 2007.

In 2008 targeted schools in the Wellington region are participating in two training programmes for teacher aides working with English language learners. The English Language Assistants Programme supports those working with newcomer students. The Pasifika Bilingual Teacher Aide Programme supports bilingual teacher aides working in mainstream primary classrooms to encourage effective use of Pasifika first languages to support learning.

Nine secondary schools in the Wellington region are participating in the CPaBL programme (Creating Pathways and Building Lives). Those schools are: Bishop Viard College, Porirua; Hutt Valley High School; Naenae College; Porirua College; Rongotai College, Wellington; Taita College; Wainuiomata High School; Wellington East Girls College; and Wellington High School and Community Education Centre. This programme is focused on building a school-wide approach to career education. It involves

developing guidelines with schools for meeting the needs of specific student groups such as newcomers.

The Ministry of Education provides extra funding to selected schools in the region through the *Refugees Pathways and Careers Planning* initiative to address the special needs of newcomer students from a refugee background and their families. Five secondary schools are receiving this funding. They are Wellington High School, Wellington East Girls' College, Rongotai College, Naenae College and St Catherine's College (Kilbirnie).

The CPaBL programme complements the work of Youth Transition Services which assist young people aged 15 to 19 years as they transition from school to further education, training, work or other activities that contribute to their long-term independence and well-being. Youth Transition Services are operating in Porirua (as a partnership between the Porirua City Council and a coalition of community providers) and in the Hutt Valley delivered by Vibe (youth health centre).

As a further initiative to better support newcomer students in their transition to tertiary study and integration into the university, the ESOL Assessment and Access Specialist Service is developing a pilot volunteer tutor/mentor scheme to support senior secondary and first year tertiary students in their study and transition.

### *Health*

A number of initiatives are underway to improve the provision of health services to newcomers from refugee backgrounds. These reflect the high and complex health needs that this group generally presents which in turn require appropriate mental health and primary care.

The Regional Public Health Service is leading efforts to improve data collection by primary health organisations and district health boards so that refugee background status is captured in the future, and information is available on the demographic makeup of regional communities.

The Regional Public Health Service is holding a workshop to provide additional training for primary health care workers dealing with newcomers from a refugee background. Two training sessions are also planned across the region during the year by Interpreting Wellington to support interpreter use by health providers.

New sexual health resources are being developed for newcomer youth from a refugee background and these will be trialed and evaluated during 2007/08 by Evolve, which provides health and education services to Wellington youth.

Wellington Refugees as Survivors provides specialised mental health services to refugees resettling in New Zealand who have experienced torture and trauma. They have extended their core services in particular with child and youth services and also work with school teachers where they consider this will benefit their clients. They are currently working with other agencies to establish an inter-sectoral group to consider ways of promoting mental well-being to people from a refugee background and to providers of services to this group. They are also supporting the development and implementation of appropriate health promotion activities by cross cultural workers addressing mental and sexual health issues in communities with refugee backgrounds.

### *Housing*

A total of 11,698 social housing units are provided in the Wellington region. The majority of these (9,002) are owned by Housing New Zealand Corporation<sup>6</sup> with the balance (2,696) owned by the five territorial local authorities<sup>7</sup>.

Ongoing modernisation of social housing will ensure that housing stock meets present and future tenants' needs and addresses some of the barrier to settlement identified earlier. A \$43.6 million Government funding package in Budget 2007 provided for the extension of two successful housing programmes into the Wellington region.

The Healthy Housing Programme, a partnership between Housing New Zealand Corporation and District Health Boards targets overcrowded

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<sup>6</sup> Housing New Zealand Corporation's housing stock is located within the region as follows: Lower Hutt 3,697; Porirua 2,744; Wellington City 1,892; Upper Hutt 436; Kapiti 233.

<sup>7</sup> Wellington City holds the majority of the housing stock with 2,350 housing units. Hutt City has 186 units, Kapiti District 118 and Porirua City 27. While Upper Hutt City Council has 15 rental properties, these are let at close to market levels and managed by a private real estate company.

households and assists them into more appropriate housing. It originally grew out of concerns about the incidence of infectious diseases in the Auckland and Northland regions. A recent evaluation of the programme in Counties Manukau showed a significant decrease in hospitalisations for housing-related illnesses and large decreases in respiratory conditions. Additional funding has provided for this programme to be extended to the Hutt Valley where HNZC has identified a high concentration of at-risk families.

The Housing Innovation Fund aims to encourage councils to maintain or increase their existing rental housing through loans to buy, modernise or reconfigure homes. One of the conditions of a loan is that the housing be retained as social housing for 20 years. Through this fund, the Wellington City Council has recently agreed to an upgrade to their social housing units over the next 15 years to improve their security, safety and ensure they meet current standards. The Council works closely with tenant communities, many of whom are newcomers. Council initiatives include installing computer and internet facilities at two major complexes, seeking to build community through tenant engagement groups and playgroups where City Library outreach officers visit, and assigning a community employment worker at one complex. During 2007/08, the Wellington City Council will be facilitating input into the development of the investment plan for the Council's housing stock from refugee newcomer communities.

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs is scoping and developing a pilot Pacific home ownership programme/product in partnership with financial institutions and Housing New Zealand Corporation New Zealand that is aimed at significantly increasing home ownership and providing another means of capital equity for Pacific business set-up.

Habitat for Humanity (a charitable organisation that gives low income families a first step towards financial security by working with them to build or renovating houses they can occupy) will also be encouraging families from a refugee background in the Wellington region to apply for a Habitat for Humanity house.

#### *Legal and justice services*

The New Zealand Police have a range of roles which provide advice and increase responsiveness to newcomer population groups. A new position of Community Engagement Manager has been established for the region and there are also 12 community constables throughout the region who are dealing with issues at the ground level by linking in better with

communities. The Police are planning to hold regular meetings with refugee community leaders to enhance communication during 2007/08.

The Legal Services Agency produces a training and education kit on immigration law in New Zealand for community service providers who support people with immigration law issues. It is presented in modular format and includes a facilitator's guide, information and activity sheets and presentation material. The resource is managed and distributed for the Agency by the Auckland Regional Migrant Services. The Agency is also considering further translations of its legal information publications to increase uptake and understanding by residents from culture and language diverse backgrounds.

#### *Interpreter Services*

Language Line (within the Office of Ethnic Affairs) has two initiatives currently underway to improve newcomers' access to information on government services and thus reduce problems with English language proficiency as a barrier to settlement. These involve:

- Outreach to providers of ESOL tuition (teachers, tutors and their trainers) to promote awareness of Language Line as a tool to help newcomers access information; and
- Working to secure the participation of Primary Health Organisations in the Wellington Region in the Language Line Service.

Interpreting Wellington is also promoting interpreter training opportunities to communities with refugee backgrounds.



## 9. Successful settlement—the next steps

Successful settlement is about completing the transition from one cultural context to another, engaging in and adapting to all that this new context offers. For the newcomers we consulted, building a successful life is about finding again all the pieces of a jigsaw to complete the picture of connection, contribution and community, and to work for themselves or to provide for their family.

Newcomers seek authentic relationships with real Kiwis, to fully participate in the social fabric of life. However many also seek continuities with their home community, including its language and customs where appropriate. This is not necessarily negative or insular. Many are looking at how their connections to their home context might benefit themselves, the region and the country. All newcomers are seeking a better life, most especially for their children. For newcomers particularly from refugee and Pacific backgrounds, their vision for good settlement is to ensure an increase in the health and economic prosperity of their wider families and communities.

Central and local government agencies, and business and community organisations, will contribute to the implementation of the *Plan of Action for Wellington Regional Settlement*. This Plan of Action (published as an accompanying document) addresses the further opportunities to improve settlement outcomes identified through the Strategy's consultation process, and builds on services, planning and collaboration in the Wellington region.

## Appendix 1: Web references for connecting strategies and action plans

**Chapter 4 Connections, collaborations and contributions** refers to a number of important strategies and inter-sectoral approaches. For those who wish to refer to the full contents of those documents, web references are provided below:

### National

<p><b>Building on Strengths: A Mental Health Promotion Strategy</b> (Ministry of Health, 2002)</p> <p><a href="http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/2102?Open">http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/2102?Open</a></p>
<p><b>Building the Future: The New Zealand Housing Strategy</b> (Housing New Zealand Corporation, 2005)</p> <p><a href="http://www.hnz.co.nz/hnzc/web/research-&amp;-policy/strategy-publications/nzhs/online-version/building-the-future.htm">http://www.hnz.co.nz/hnzc/web/research-&amp;-policy/strategy-publications/nzhs/online-version/building-the-future.htm</a></p>
<p><b>New Zealand Disability Strategy</b> (Ministry of Health, 2001)</p> <p><a href="http://www.odi.govt.nz/publications/nzds/index.html">http://www.odi.govt.nz/publications/nzds/index.html</a></p>
<p><b>New Zealand Health Strategy</b> (Ministry of Health, 2000)</p> <p><a href="http://www.moh.govt.nz/publications/nzhs">http://www.moh.govt.nz/publications/nzhs</a></p>
<p><b>Our Future Together, New Zealand Settlement Strategy and the Settlement National Action Plan</b> (Department of Labour, 2007)</p> <p><a href="http://www.immigration.govt.nz/community/stream/support/publications/futuretogether.htm">http://www.immigration.govt.nz/community/stream/support/publications/futuretogether.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Pacific Prosperity Strategy, Pacific Economic Action Plan and Pacific Women's Economic Development Plan (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2007)</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=30425">http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=30425</a> (Check when this will go up on MPIA website)</p>
<p><b>Primary Healthcare Strategy</b> (Ministry of Health 2001)</p> <p><a href="http://www.moh.govt.nz/primaryhealthcare">http://www.moh.govt.nz/primaryhealthcare</a></p>
<p><b>Te Tāhuhu–Improving Mental Health 2005-2015: The Second New Zealand Mental Health and Addiction Plan</b> (Ministry of Health, 2006)</p> <p><a href="http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/mentalhealth-strategicdirection">http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/mentalhealth-strategicdirection</a></p>
<p><b>Tertiary Education Strategy 2007-12</b> (Tertiary Education Commission, 2007)</p> <p><a href="http://www.tec.govt.nz/templates/standard.aspx?id=1183">http://www.tec.govt.nz/templates/standard.aspx?id=1183</a></p>

## Regional

**Keeping Well 2008-12: Wellington Region Strategic Plan for Population Health [Working draft only at this stage] [Access details to be added when finalised].**

**Wellington Regional Action Plan for Refugee Health and Wellbeing**

[http://www.rms.org.nz/document/1\\_Action\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.rms.org.nz/document/1_Action_Plan.pdf)

**Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy**

[http://www.wrs.govt.nz/docs/wrlms\\_implementation\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.wrs.govt.nz/docs/wrlms_implementation_strategy.pdf)

**Wellington Regional Strategy: Internationally Competitive Wellington** (Greater Wellington Council, 2007)

<http://www.wrs.govt.nz/>

## Local

**Long-Term Council Community Plans**

***Hutt City Council***

<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz/publications-forms/Long-Term-Community-Plan/>

***Kapiti District Council***

<http://www.kapiticoast.govt.nz/Home/CommunityPlan2006/>

***Porirua City Council***

[http://www.pcc.govt.nz/web\\_frameset.asp?pageID=100018917&id=&link=yes](http://www.pcc.govt.nz/web_frameset.asp?pageID=100018917&id=&link=yes)

***Upper Hutt City Council***

<http://www.upperhuttcity.com/page/454/LTCCPupperhuttcity2016.boss>

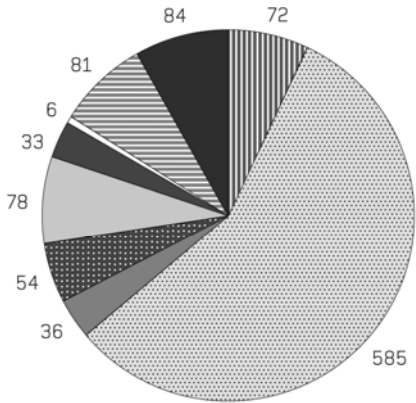
***Wellington City Council***

<http://www.wellington.govt.nz/plans/annualplan/0607/volume01.html>

**Settlement Support New Zealand (individual references for each to be added)**

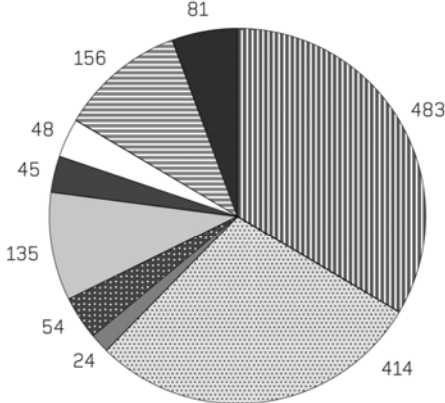
# Appendix 2: Profile of recent newcomers to the Wellington region

KAPITI COAST DISTRICT



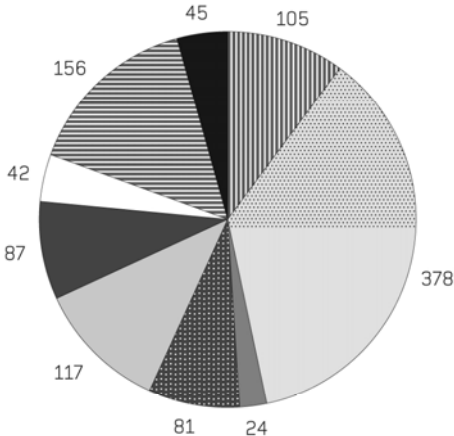
GRAND TOTAL 1,029

PORIRUA CITY



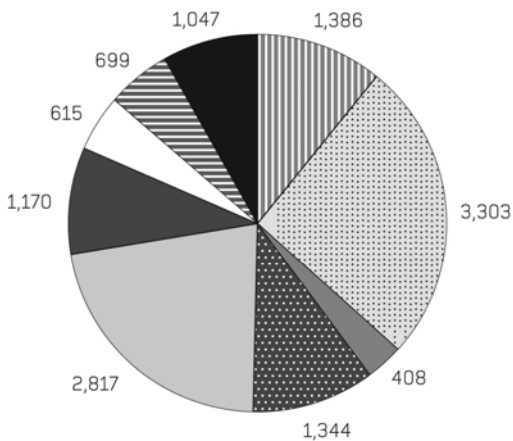
GRAND TOTAL 1,440

UPPER HUTT CITY



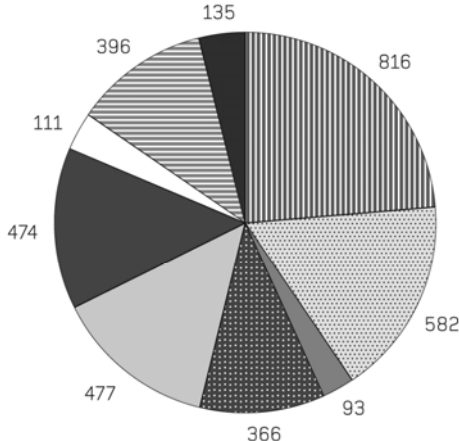
GRAND TOTAL 1,035

WELLINGTON CITY

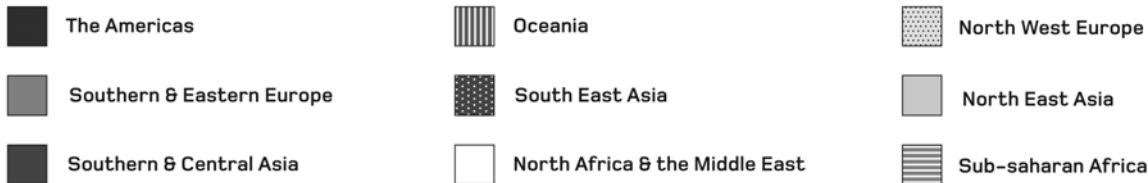


GRAND TOTAL 12,789

LOWER HUTT CITY



GRAND TOTAL 3,450



Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

## Appendix 3: Contributors to the Strategy

### Iwi

Ara Tahi, the inter-iwi representative group associated with the Greater Wellington Council and comprising representatives of:

- Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai
- Ngati Toa
- Ngati Raukawa
- Rangitāne o Wairarapa
- Taranaki Whanui
- Wellington Tenths Trust

### Pacific Community Representatives

Community Reference Group, Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs

#### Territorial Local Authorities

Hutt City Council

Kapiti Coast District Council

Porirua City Council

Upper Hutt City Council

Wellington City Council

#### Business Organisations

Business Hutt Valley Ltd

Business NZ

Business Porirua

Employers and Manufacturers  
Association (Central)

Pacific Business Trust

Regional EDA Ltd

Wellington Regional Chamber of  
Commerce

### **Non-Government Organisations**

ChangeMakers Refugee Forum	Porirua Language Project
Citizens' Advice Bureaux	Refugees as Survivors
ESOL Assessment and Access Specialist Service	Relationship Services
ESOL Home Tutors (Wellington) Inc	RMS Refugee Resettlement
ESOL Home Tutors (Hutt) Inc	Salvation Army
ESOL Home Tutors (National Office)	Skylight Trust
Mental Health Foundation	Volunteer Wellington
Moa Trust	Interpreting Wellington (formerly the Wellington Community Interpreting Service)
Multicultural Learning and Support Service	Wellington Community Law Centre
NET Pacific	Wellington Women's Refuge
New Settlers' Centre Hutt Valley	Whitireia Community Law Centre
Porirua Budget Service	

### **Central Government Agencies**

Capital and Coast District Health Board	Ministry of Health
Career Services	Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
Child Youth & Family	Ministry of Social Development
Department of Labour	New Zealand Police
Housing New Zealand Corporation	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
Hutt Valley District Health Board	Office of Ethnic Affairs
Legal Services Agency	Regional Public Health Service

Ministry of Education

Te Puni Kōkiri

Ministry of Economic Development

Tertiary Education Commission

Work and Income