

Australian Social Trends September 2010

New Zealanders in Australia

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Australia and New Zealand enjoy a unique relationship, nurtured by a number of factors including close geographic proximity, shared histories as members of the British Commonwealth and the ANZAC tradition. This relationship has led to arrangements that enable citizens of Australia and New Zealand to migrate freely between the two countries. Over recent decades, the most significant trans-Tasman movements have been of New Zealanders moving to Australia, with the pattern tending to reflect the relative economic conditions and opportunities within the two countries.

The article looks at the growing number of NZ-born people living in Australia, their demographic profile and distribution, and the extent to which they participate in the labour force and in education.

In 2009, there were over half a million NZ-born people living in Australia, up 89% from 1989.

New Zealanders in Australia

The number of NZ-born people living in Australia increased by 89% over the last two decades, from 280,200 in 1989 to 529,200 in 2009.

Annual growth in the number of NZ-born people living in Australia averaged 13,100 between 1989 to 2009. However, from year to year there have been variations in annual growth, with increases exceeding 25,000 on four occasions (1989, 2001, 2008 and 2009), and negative growth in 1991 (-860). This decrease coincided with the early 1990s recession within Australia, which may have discouraged some NZ-born people from coming to Australia, and prompted others to return 'home'.

Data sources and definitions

The data presented in this article come from several different sources including ABS [Migration, Australia, 2008-09](#) (cat. no. 3412.0), ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing, ABS 2009 Survey of Education and Work, ABS Overseas Arrivals and Departures collection and other unpublished ABS data.

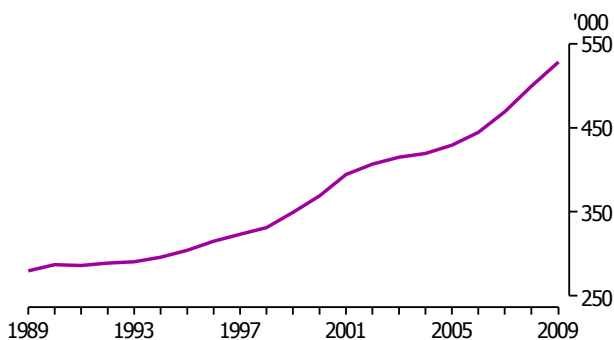
NZ-born people living in Australia refers to people who were born in New Zealand but were counted as a part of Australia's Estimated Resident Population. In census data, this refers to people born in New Zealand who were resident in Australia on census night, but who were not considered overseas visitors. For the purposes of this article these people are also referred to as *migrants*.

Estimated resident population (ERP) is the official measure of the population of Australia. It is based on the concept of usual residence. For the purpose of ERP, a person is regarded as a usual resident if they have been (or are expected to be) residing in Australia for a period of 12 months or more. As such, it refers to all people, regardless of nationality, citizenship or legal status, who usually live in Australia, with the exception of foreign diplomatic personnel and their families. For more information see ABS [Migration, Australia, 2008-09](#) (cat. no. 3412.0) [Explanatory Notes](#) paragraphs 9-10.

Between 1989 and 2009, the proportion of NZ-born people in Australia's estimated resident population (ERP) increased from 1.7% to 2.4%. This makes New Zealand the second largest single country contributor to Australia's overseas-born population (the United Kingdom is the largest contributor at 5.4% of ERP). In 2009, the proportion of the Australian population that was born in China (1.6%) or India (1.4%) were both smaller than the New Zealand share. Nonetheless, in recent years there has been very strong growth in both China-born and India-born Australian residents (see [Australian Social Trends September 2009 'Expanding links with China and India'](#)).

NZ-born people living in Australia – 1989-2009(a)

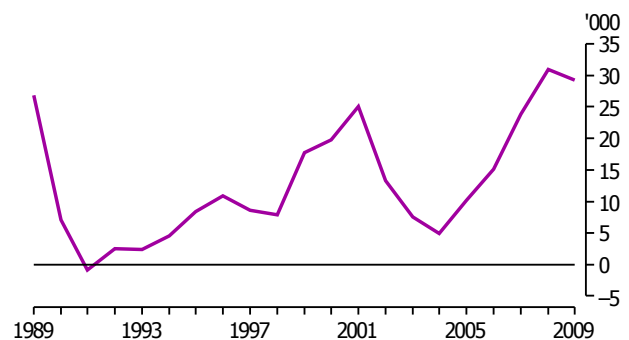
TOTAL



(a) At 30 June.

Source: ABS [Migration, Australia](#) (cat. no. 3412.0)

ANNUAL CHANGE



Australian and New Zealand Travel Arrangements

While under various agreements there has been a free flow of people between Australia and New Zealand for a long time, this situation was further cemented by the 1973 Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement. The Arrangement has allowed Australian and New Zealand citizens to freely enter each country to visit, live or work, without any need to obtain authority.

From 1 September 1994, all non-citizens residing lawfully in Australia were required to hold visas. For New Zealanders this involves a stamp in a valid New Zealand passport, given at immigration clearance (subject to health and character considerations).

On 26 February 2001, the Australian and New Zealand governments introduced a new bilateral social security arrangement. New Zealand citizens are now required to obtain Australian permanent residence if they wish to access certain social security payments, sponsor family members for permanent residence or take out Australian citizenship.

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Fact Sheet 17 - New Zealanders in Australia*, viewed 5 August 2010, <www.immi.gov.au>

Compared with the other contributor countries of migrants, New Zealand has a relatively small population, with an estimated 3.0 million NZ-born people living in New Zealand in 2006.¹ This means that for every 100 New Zealanders in New Zealand in 2006 there were 15 NZ-born people living in Australia.

The annual change in the size of the NZ-born population in Australia tends to hide the two-way movement of the NZ-born population. Although there was a net migration of 94,300 NZ-born people to Australia between 2005 and 2008, this included 156,000 NZ-born arrivals and 61,500 NZ-born departures. Of those who departed in this period, around one-third (32%) had been resident in Australia for less than two years, while over half (58%) had been here for less than five years.

Despite the relative fluidity of migration to and from Australia by NZ-born people, the majority have been living here for a decade or more. The 2006 Census of Population and Housing showed that 65% of Australia's NZ-born population had been in Australia since 1996, including 41% who had been here since 1986.

In addition to longer-term migratory movements of the NZ-born population, a large number of them are frequent flyers back to New Zealand on short-term trips. In 2009–10 there were 297,000 departures of NZ-born residents of Australia back to New Zealand for a period of less than 12 months. This was equivalent to 56 departures for every 100 NZ-born people living in Australia (for more information see Australian Social Trends, September 2010, ['Holidaying abroad'](#)).

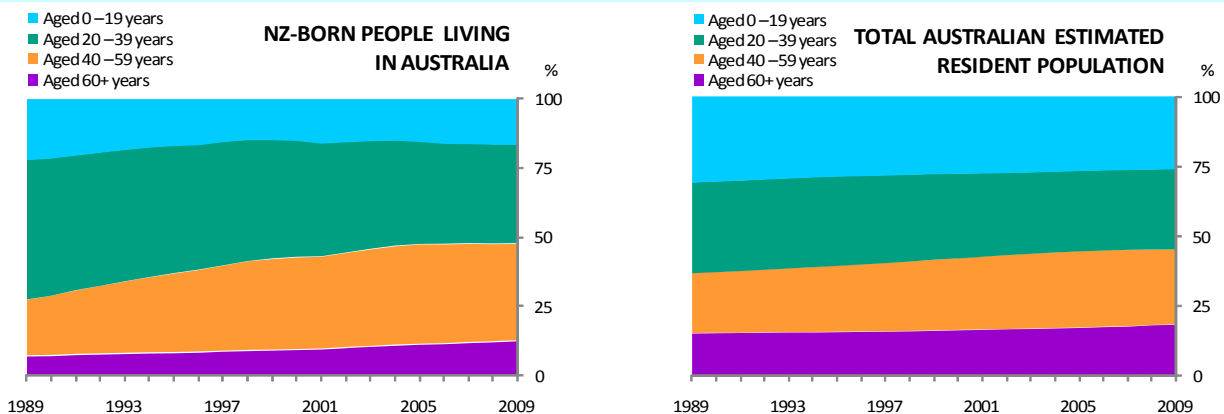
Profile

...more likely to be middle-aged

In 2009, the NZ-born population living in Australia had a higher proportion of people in the 20–59 years age group than the Australian population in general (71% compared with 55%). In contrast, children and adolescents (aged 0–19 years) made up a lower proportion of the NZ-born population living in Australia (17%), compared with the overall Australian population (26%). This was also the case with the older age group of those aged 60 years and over (13% compared with 18%).

Between 1989 and 2009, the Australian population aged as the proportion of people in the younger age groups decreased and those in the older age groups increased. This ageing process was much more dramatic among the NZ-born population living in Australia. While one-half (50%) of NZ-born people living in Australia were aged 20–39 years in 1989, only 36% were of this age in 2009. Over the same period, NZ-born people aged 40–59 years living in Australia increased from 20% to 35%. This

Age structure of the population – 1989-2009(a)



(a) At 30 June.

Source: ABS [Migration, Australia](#) (cat. no. 3412.0)

changing age structure was reflected in the median age of the NZ-born population increasing from 30.6 years to 39.0 years over the past two decades.

The more rapid ageing of the NZ-born population in Australia can be partly attributed to the change over time in the age of arrivals from New Zealand. Of all arrivals of NZ-born people into Australia in the five years to 1989, 11% were aged 40 years and over. This proportion had grown to 21% in the five years to 2009. Another contributing factor is that children born to New Zealanders while they are living in Australia do not influence the age structure of the NZ-born population in Australia.

In 1989, 50% of the NZ-born people living in Australia were aged 20-39 years, but by 2009 this had reduced to 36%.

...more likely to be male

Among NZ-born people living in Australia, there were more males than females, with 106 NZ-born males for every 100 NZ-born females. This contrasts with the overall sex ratio for Australia of 99 males per 100 females.

...Maori and other ancestries

The 2006 Census of Population and Housing asked people about their ancestry.² Of NZ-born people living in Australia, 15% stated Maori ancestry. This was similar to the rate in New Zealand, where 16% of people usually living in New Zealand said that they are of Maori descent.³

Almost two-thirds of NZ-born people living in Australia stated that they had European ancestry (65%). One-fifth reported having ancestry of 'New Zealander' or 'New Zealand peoples', while a small proportion stated Polynesian ancestry (6.0%).

...partnering up

In 2006, just over three-fifths (62%) of NZ-born people aged 15 years and over living in Australia were in a couple relationship, slightly higher than the general Australian population (59%).

In around one-quarter (26%) of couple relationships involving a person of NZ birth, the second person was also of NZ birth. It was more common for both partners to be NZ-born in relationships between older people than among younger couples (34% where both were aged 60 years and over, and 22% where both were aged under 40 years).

Place of usual residence(a) – 1986 and 2006

	New Zealand-born		Australian population	
	1986 %	2006 %	1986 %	2006 %
NSW	35.1	27.4	34.6	33.0
<i>Sydney</i>	27.6	20.8	21.6	20.7
Vic.	16.4	16.4	26.0	24.8
<i>Melbourne</i>	13.4	13.5	18.3	18.1
Qld	28.2	38.2	16.3	19.7
<i>Brisbane</i>	14.2	18.8	7.4	8.9
<i>Gold Coast</i>	3.0	9.0	0.7	2.4
WA	12.0	12.2	9.0	9.9
<i>Perth</i>	8.7	8.9	6.5	7.3
Other	8.3	5.8	14.0	12.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	'000	'000	'000	'000
ERP(b)	218.0	445.1	16 018.4	20 697.9

(a) Capital cities are Statistical Divisions and Gold Coast is a Statistical Sub Division in the Australian Standard Geographical Classification.

(b) Estimated Resident Population is at June 30, while the proportions in the table are based on the respective Census nights.

Source: 1986 and 2006 ABS Census of Population and Housing

Where do they live?

In 1986, the majority of NZ-born Australians were living in New South Wales or Queensland (35% and 28% respectively). While these two states still held the majority of NZ-born people living in Australia in 2006, Queensland overtook New South Wales as their most popular state of usual residence (38% in Queensland and 27% in New South Wales).

NZ-born residents were almost twice as likely as the overall population to live in Queensland in 2006 (38% compared with 20%). In particular, they were just over twice as likely to live in Brisbane and more than three times as likely to live on the Gold Coast.

In 2006, New Zealanders in Australia were over three times as likely to live on the Gold Coast (9.0%) compared with the overall population (2.4%).

In 2006, there were several Statistical Local Areas on the Gold Coast where around one in ten residents were of NZ birth, the result of strong growth in the NZ-born population living in this region. These areas were Pacific Pines-Gaven and Surfers Paradise (both 11%), and Coombabah, Kingsholme-Upper Coomera, Broadbeach-Mermaid Beach and Robina (all 10%).

NZ-born people were also slightly more likely than the overall population to live in Western Australia (12% compared with 10%).

What are they doing?

...work

In 2009–10, information from the Labour Force Survey showed that NZ-born males aged 15–64 years had a higher rate of labour force participation (90%) compared with the overall Australian male population (83%). They were also more likely to be employed full time (76% compared with 66%).

NZ-born females aged 15–64 years also had a higher rate of labour force participation compared with the overall Australian female population (75% and 70% respectively), and a higher rate of full-time employment (44% compared with 36%).

Construction and Manufacturing were the most common industries of employment among working 15–64 year old NZ-born males (21% and 13% respectively). Of those in Construction, just under half were Technicians or trade workers (46%), and a further 28% were Labourers. Being a Technician or trade worker was also the most common occupation of those in Manufacturing (29%), while being a Machinery operator or driver (20%), Manager (19%), or Labourer (18%) were equally popular jobs.

Health care and social assistance was a common industry of employment among NZ-born female workers aged 15–64 years (16%).

Employed people aged 15-64 years, selected industry of main job – 2009-10(a)

	New Zealand-born		Australian population	
	Males %	Females %	Males %	Females %
Construction	20.7	3.1	14.9	2.4
Manufacturing	13.1	8.2	12.4	5.4
Transport, postal and warehousing	9.3	3.9	7.4	2.6
Retail trade	8.2	13.4	8.7	13.6
Professional, scientific and technical services	7.2	8.0	7.9	7.2
Accommodation and food services	5.1	8.7	5.6	8.5
Health care and social assistance	2.4	15.8	4.2	19.1
	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total	177.8	142.7	5 815.4	4 911.8

(a) Average of four quarters, year ending May.

Source: ABS 2009-10 Labour Force Survey

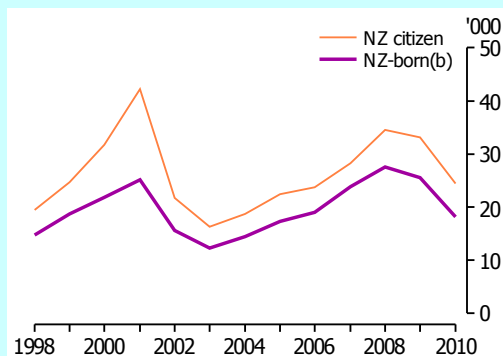
Third country movements through NZ

One of the influencing factors in the development of the 2001 bilateral social security arrangement (see 'Australian and New Zealand Travel Arrangements') was an increasing proportion of NZ citizens who were migrating to Australia being of third-country origin (i.e. people who had initially migrated to NZ, but then migrated to Australia after gaining NZ citizenship). These 'third-country' movements were perceived as a possible way to bypass Australian immigration requirements, which these people may not have met without their New Zealand citizenship.

In 1997–98, permanent arrivals to Australia of New Zealand citizens outstripped those of people of New Zealand birth by 4,700. This difference grew to 9,700 in 1999–2000 and spiked at 17,100 in 2000–01, in part due to the early warning of the impending social security changes. The figure dropped back to 6,000 in 2001–02.

Changes to New Zealand passports since 2005 have meant that country of birth information has had to be imputed and isn't strictly comparable with data prior to the change. Between 2005–06 and 2009–10 the difference in the number of New Zealand citizens and NZ-born people coming to Australia on a permanent basis rose from 4,800 to 6,400.

Permanent arrivals(a), NZ-born and NZ citizens – 1998-2010



(a) Year ending June 30.

(b) Excludes a small number of arrivals who did not have New Zealand citizenship.

Source: ABS 1998-2010 Overseas Arrivals and Departures collection

Around two in five of those working in the Health care and social assistance industry were Professionals (37%), while around one in three were Community and personal service workers (32%) and around one in five (19%) were in Clerical or administrative positions.

Retail trade was also a common industry of employment for NZ-born females (13%). Around half of these NZ-born female retail workers were in Sales (53%) while a further 18% were in Managerial positions.

...study

Education participation rates of young NZ-born people (obtained from the 2009 Survey of Education and Work) are lower than among young Australians generally. Among those aged 18–24 years who were not still at school, the NZ-born were half as likely as the overall population to be enrolled in study (22% compared with 44%). Furthermore, around one in ten (12%) young NZ-born people were studying full-time compared with around one in three (32%) young people generally.

In 2009, NZ-born people aged 25–64 years had the same rate of attainment of a non-school qualification as the overall Australian population (both 62%). These similar attainment rates, together with NZ-born people in Australia having lower rates of participation in study, suggest they have a tendency to complete their studies prior to migrating to Australia.

However, NZ-born people tend to have a slightly different skills profile to the general Australian population. It was more common for 25–64 year old NZ-born people to have an advanced diploma or lower as their highest non-school qualification (39%), compared with the overall Australian population (34%). Around one in five (19%) NZ-born people aged 25–64 years had a Certificate III or IV.

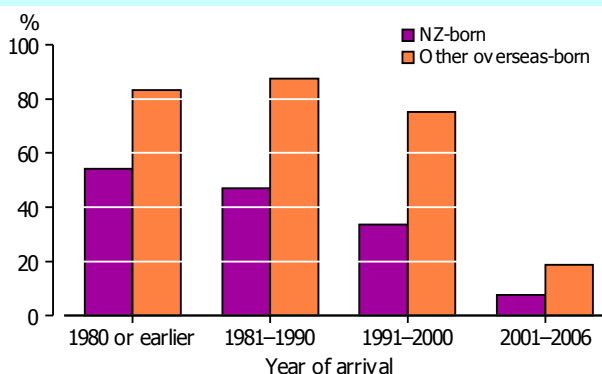
NZ-born Australians aged 25–64 years were less likely than Australians in general to have a bachelor degree or higher (22% compared with 27%).

Information from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing suggest that recent NZ-born migrants are more likely than previous NZ-born migrants to have a bachelor degree or higher. Around one in four (23%) 25–64 year old NZ-born people, who arrived in Australia in 2002 or later, had a bachelor degree or higher as their highest non-school qualification. In contrast, around one in five (18%) of those who had arrived in Australia between 1997 and 2001 had a bachelor degree or higher, as did 16% of those who arrived prior to 1997.

Becoming Australian Citizens

NZ-born people living in Australia are less likely to become Australian citizens than other overseas-born Australian residents. Of the NZ-born population counted in the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, 37% had Australian citizenship. In contrast, 71% of people who were born in other countries (excluding Australia) were Australian citizens.

Australian citizenship of overseas-born residents, by year of arrival – 2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing

The high rate of movements back and forth between New Zealand and Australia may contribute to this low rate of citizenship. For example, the Census may count people living in Australia who do not consider taking up citizenship because they plan on moving back to New Zealand in the longer term. The low rate of citizenship may also be influenced by NZ-born people not having the same incentives to seek Australian citizenship as people from other countries, because their New Zealand citizenship provides them with certain benefits within Australia. For example, New Zealand citizens who migrated to Australia prior to 27 February 2001 are eligible for certain social security payments from the Australian government without needing to apply for Australian permanent residency or citizenship, unlike other migrants to Australia.

Nevertheless, NZ-born people living in Australia, like any migrant population, are more likely to become Australian citizens the longer they have lived here. Over half (54%) of those who had arrived in 1980 or before had obtained Australian citizenship by 2006, while only 7.7% of those who arrived in 2001 or later had become Australian citizens.

Endnotes

- 1 Statistics New Zealand, 2006, *Quickstats About Culture and Identity – Tables* viewed 27 August 2010, <www.stats.govt.nz>.
- 2 People could put a maximum of two ancestries on their Census form.
- 3 Statistics New Zealand, 2006, *Quickstats About Maori*, viewed 22 March 2010, <<http://www.stats.govt.nz>>.