

New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia and Asian peoples: 1997-2011

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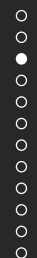
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Qui alibus, que nonsediti optatiam
qui corrupquodi inus prorecte
venisci licit, tectas aceste labore
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prendent que cus dictore landiciissi
coribusam dolupic iandebist odit
ad quamus ma dolorias aliquassi¹
doloritatem invel et doluptium et
odisinv eliquis ma nus.²

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Introduction



1



Introduction

In 1997, Tony Blair was elected Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the People's Republic of China resumed control of Hong Kong, the devaluation of the Thai baht triggered a currency crisis that devastated many Asian economies in the ensuing months, a car crash in Paris claimed the life of Diana, Princess of Wales, and in India, Mother Teresa died. The horrors of 9/11 and the bombings in Madrid and London, the invasion of Afghanistan, the Euro currency, the famous children's book character, Harry Potter, and United States Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama were still in the future.

In New Zealand in 1997, Jenny Shipley replaced Jim Bolger to become New Zealand's first woman Prime Minister, Auckland's Sky Tower was opened, and New Zealand's first Internet banking site was introduced. The proportion of New Zealanders identifying their ethnicity as Asian was around 5 percent, while Asians, mostly from Northeast Asia, made up around 20 percent of the 18 percent to 20 percent of the New Zealand population born overseas, and 12.5 percent of New Zealand's exports went to Japan, second only to the UK as an export destination (accounting for 20 percent).

In the same year, the Asia New Zealand Foundation (the Foundation) began regularly tracking New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia and Asians. This report describes how these perceptions changed in the 15 years that followed and analyses the forces that influenced them.

First, we document the changes in the flow of immigrants to New Zealand and discuss how these were reflected in New Zealanders' attitudes to immigration. Then we summarise New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia and Asians between 1997 and 2011, with a particular focus on trends in New Zealanders' attitudes towards Asia and Asian immigration and the factors that contributed to changes in these perceptions in the 15 years after 1997. We conclude by discussing the implications for the next 15 years.

Why Study Attitudes?

In his classic 1934 study, LaPiere travelled around the USA with a Chinese student and his wife (also Chinese) and recorded how the two Chinese were treated in hotels and restaurants.¹ On only one occasion were they treated inhospitably. Six months later, LaPiere sent letters to the places they had visited asking if they would accept Chinese clientele – 90 percent of those they had previously visited replied that Chinese would not be welcome. This was the first of many studies to question the assumed link between attitudes and behaviour, and illustrated the point that general attitudes to immigrants may not be reflected in behaviour towards individual immigrants (or, in LaPiere's case, two well dressed, English-speaking Chinese accompanied by a Harvard professor).

Nevertheless, general attitudes can be reflected in behaviours such as voting. A case in point was the establishment of, then the support for, the political party New Zealand First in New Zealand's 1996 general election. Anti-immigration sentiment was not the only reason for New Zealand First's success, but it was a significant factor, driven by fears of a so-called "Asian invasion". General attitudes are also a bellwether of the changing social climate, providing insights into public perceptions of immigrants and immigration and the underlying issues that create these perceptions. These insights help us to understand who we are as New Zealanders and where our country is heading.

Immigration: Summary 1997-2011

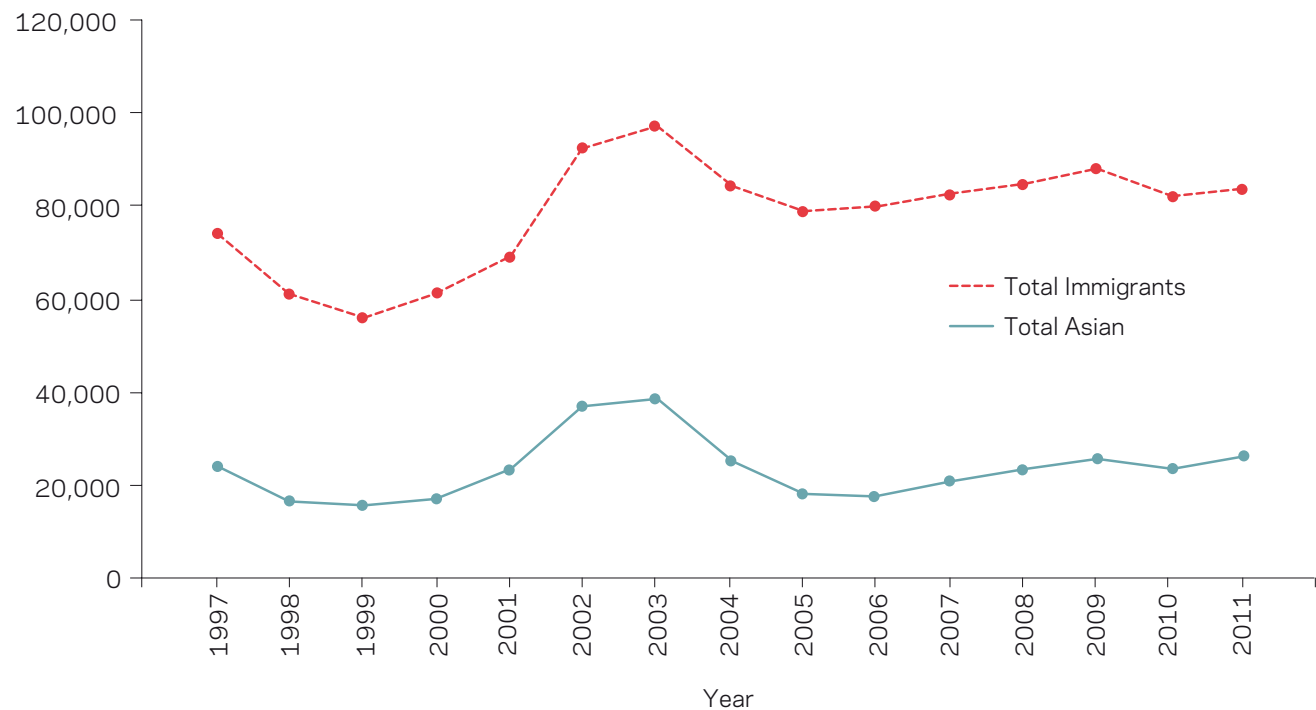


Immigration: Summary 1997-2011

The Scale of Asian Immigration

The number of permanent migrants entering New Zealand in 2011 was around 84,000, with 32 percent from Asia. Fifteen years earlier, the total number of immigrants was 75,000, with 33 percent from Asia.² On the face of it, not a great deal changed in the intervening years, but as Figure 1 shows, this apparent stability masked some significant variations in both total immigrant numbers and the proportion of those coming from Asia.

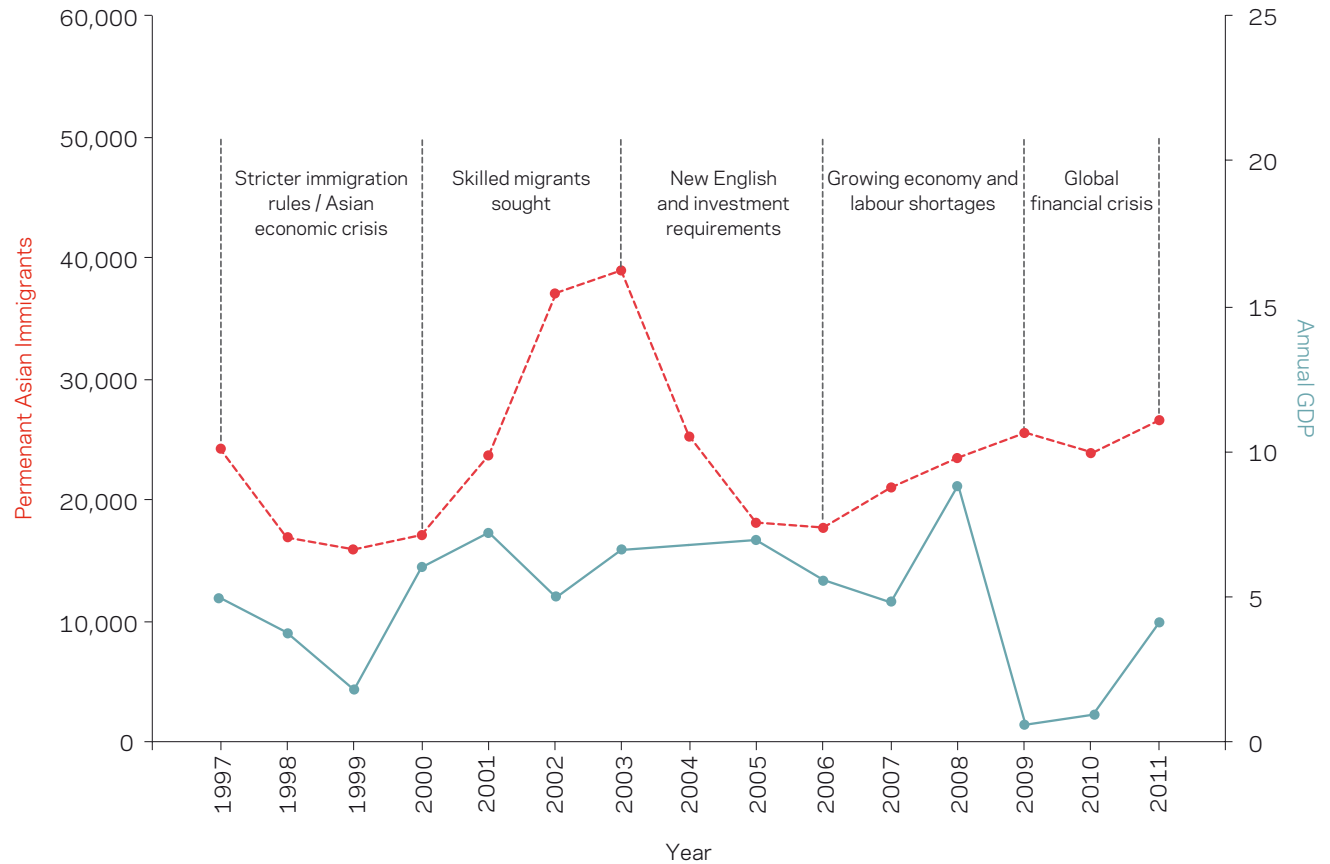
Figure 1. Permanent Immigration to New Zealand: 1997-2011



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Total immigration declined sharply between 1997 and 1999 as a result of a much more hostile local political climate (following the 1996 general election when New Zealand First came into Parliament), a toughening of immigration policy in New Zealand and the Asian economic crisis. Numbers of immigrants overall then began to rise sharply, reaching a peak of just under 100,000 in 2003. Numbers declined to around 80,000 in 2005, but after that recovered to 88,000 in 2009 before dropping back to 83,000 in the 2011 calendar year. (This number included returning New Zealanders who typically constituted 22,000 to 26,000 of the permanent and long-term arrivals; that is, those intending to stay in New Zealand for 12 months or longer.) Asian immigration followed the same pattern and was partly responsible for it – at the peak of immigration in 2002-03, Asian immigrants constituted 40 percent of total immigrants. This proportion decreased to as low as 22 percent in 2006, but in 2011 recovered to 32 percent.

Figure 2. Trends in Asian Immigration: 1997-2011



 Sources: Statistics New Zealand

The number of Asian immigrants arriving in New Zealand is provided in Figure 2 alongside the GDP figures for the country and key events. There was no obvious relationship between GDP and the number arriving, with the exception of the early 2000s. More important in explaining trends in Asian immigration are key events, especially economic – the Asian economic crisis of the late 1990s, the global financial crisis from late 2008 – and changes to New Zealand immigration policy.

In the late 1990s, stricter immigration rules and the Asian economic crisis of 1997–98 resulted in a sharp decline in Asian immigration to New Zealand. This trend was reversed in the early 2000s with a change in immigration policy to actively attract skilled migrants to New Zealand; this policy saw Asian migration peak in 2003 at just under 40,000. However, concerns that immigrants who spoke English as a second language (which included many, if not most, Asians) were finding it difficult to get jobs, prompted the Government to raise

English language and investment requirements for immigrants in 2002. The result was another sharp decline in Asian immigration between 2003 and 2006. Subsequently, a growing New Zealand economy and a low unemployment rate increased demand for labour; this was reflected in a change in focus for immigration policy on meeting New Zealand's labour shortage. Since 2006, Asian immigration has risen slowly but steadily, with this upward trend interrupted only (and temporarily) by the global financial crisis.

The changes to immigration flows and the resulting cultural diversity of New Zealand affected the ways in which New Zealand communities regarded these new New Zealanders and the nature of their interaction and inter-cultural experiences. The level of contact helped to explain some of the changes to New Zealanders' attitudes to immigration in general and to Asian immigrants in particular, although there were also populist and sometimes misleading perceptions of the numbers and proportions involved, arising from both media-sourced and informal views of immigration.

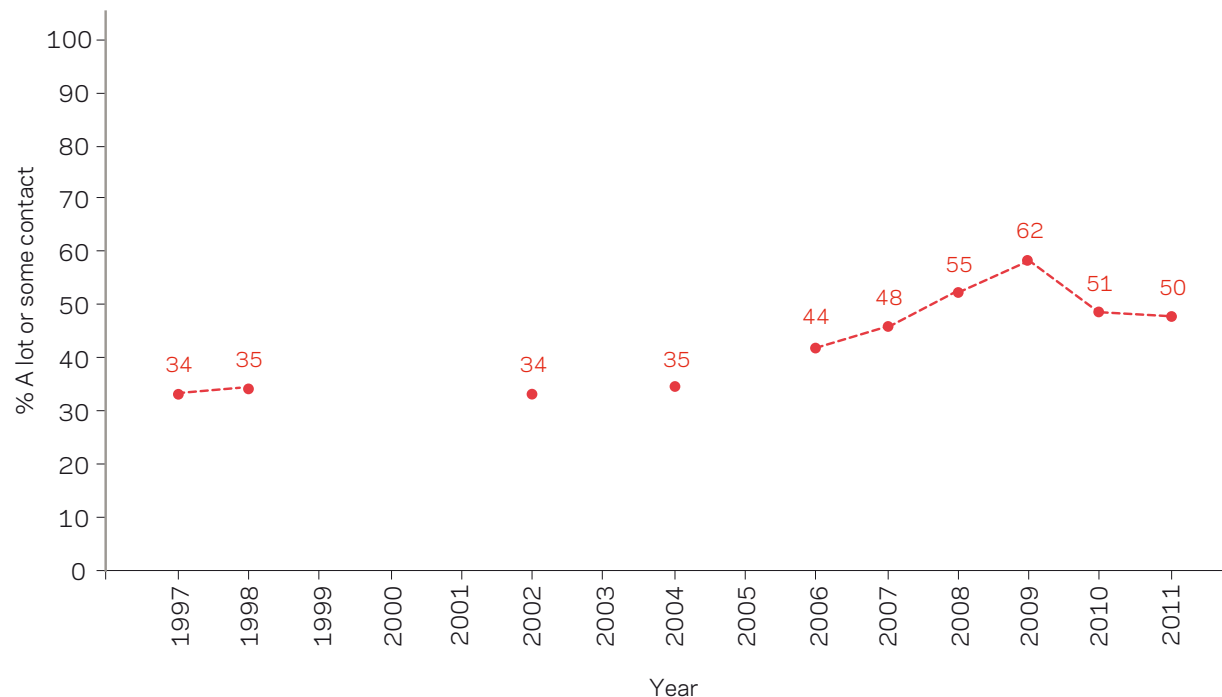


Contact with Asian Immigrants

As the number of Asian immigrants in New Zealand increased, contact between other New Zealand residents and these immigrants also inevitably increased. This contact was most marked in Auckland, but all over the country New Zealanders were increasingly exposed to Asian culture and had personal contact with Asian people in their neighbourhoods and communities, at work, and through friends. This trend in contact between 1997 and 2011 is shown in Figure 3, and is important because, as we discuss later, the level of contact with Asian immigrants is the main determinant of attitudes towards them.³ What is puzzling about the trend line in Figure 3 is the decline in reported contact between 2009 and 2011, when the contact trajectory was rising sharply. The reported decline is also counter-intuitive, because the number of Asians in New Zealand increased in this period; they were more visible in public spaces, more businesses were involved in servicing local Asian communities or as part of export activities, there were significantly more Asians in public institutions such as schools and the health system (especially compared with a decade earlier), and there was more media attention given to them.

One possible explanation is that the decline in reported contact in 2010 and 2011, was an aberration of the survey process. The same questions about contact were asked in all the surveys, although the question came later in the surveys in 2010 and 2011, than it had in 2009. This may have influenced how the question was answered, but it is not clear why this would have happened.

Figure 3. Contact with Asian People and Culture: 1997-2011



Sources: UMR Insight⁴ and Colmar Brunton⁵

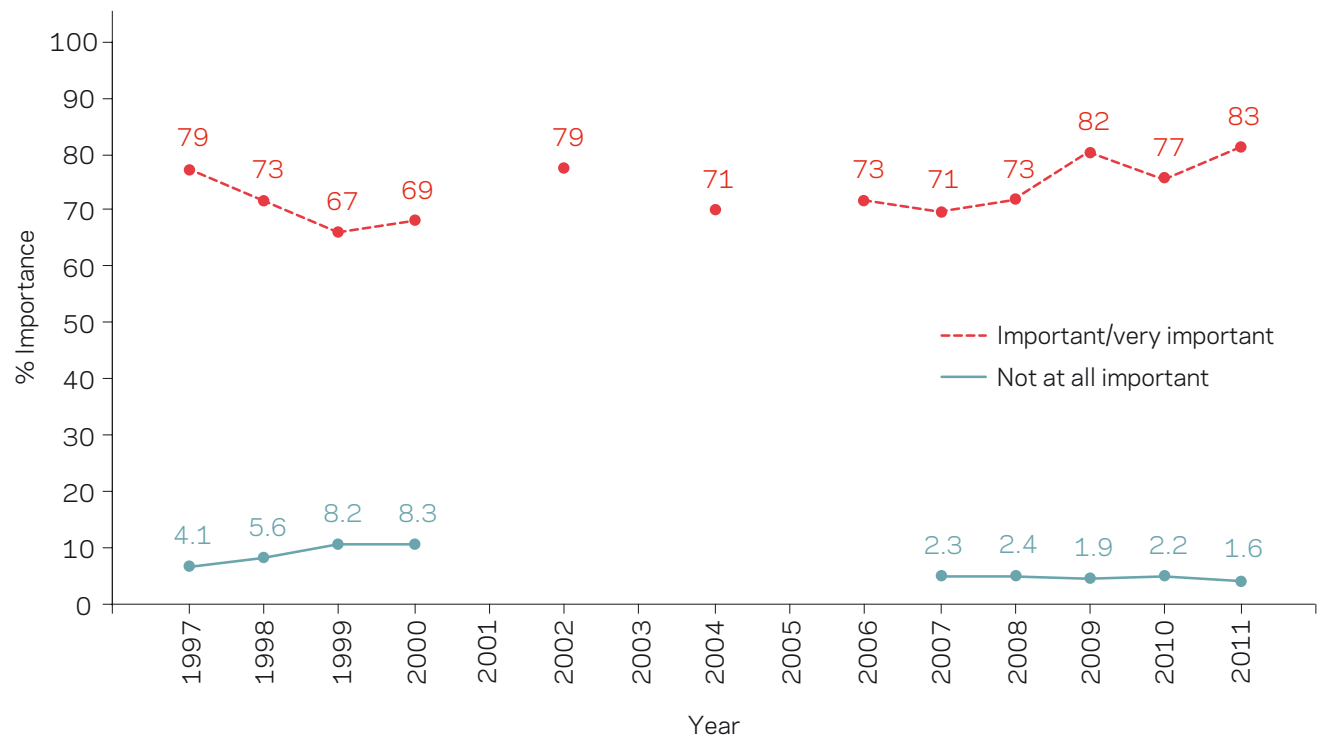
Attitudes to Asia: Geopolitical Shifts in the Orientation of New Zealanders



Attitudes to Asia: Geopolitical Shifts in the Orientation of New Zealanders

Since 1997, most New Zealanders (between 70 percent and 80 percent) have regarded Asia as important to New Zealand's future.⁶ Only during the Asian economic crisis of 1998-2000 did this proportion fall below 70 percent while, during the global financial crisis 10 years later, the perceived importance of Asia among New Zealanders was higher than it had ever been (see Figure 4). The average proportion of New Zealanders who rated Asia as important or very important to New Zealand's future increased from 70 percent between 1997 and 2000 to 77 percent between 2007 and 2011. This confirmed the increasing perception among New Zealanders of Asia's importance in the 15 years, from an already high level in the late 1990s.

Figure 4. Importance of Asia to New Zealand's Future



Of course, 'Asia' is not a single entity; it comprises a number of quite different countries (and even the definition of 'Asia' is debatable). Consequently, it is not surprising that New Zealanders feel differently about different Asian countries. As Table 1 illustrates, there is a clear gradient in the "warmth" of feeling among New Zealanders for people in different Asian countries.⁷ This gradient almost certainly reflects differences in New Zealanders' knowledge of, and experience in, the various countries.

Nevertheless, when New Zealanders think about Asia they tend to think mainly about China (86 percent) and Japan (68 percent), followed by India (31 percent), Thailand (27 percent), Malaysia (24 percent) and South Korea (24 percent).⁸ Consequently, perceptions of Asia are largely perceptions of China and, to a lesser extent, of Japan. The importance of Japan reflects the country's earlier and ongoing importance as a trading partner and, in 2011, the shared tragedies of devastating earthquakes in both Japan and New Zealand. But the major difference compared with the late 1990s is the significance – and dominance – of China as a trading partner (it briefly, in the first quarter only, overtook Australia as New Zealand's number one trading partner in 2013), as a significant global power and as the source of an increasing number of New Zealand residents and visitors to New Zealand. This suggests that what happens in China in the next 15 years is likely to be the major determinant of New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia in the same period.

Table 1. Feelings Towards People in Asian Countries in 2011

Asian Country	Warmth of Feeling (Scale from 0 to 100)
Japan	76
Singapore	74
Philippines	71
Malaysia	71
Thailand	71
China	70
India	70
Vietnam	69
South Korea	68
Burma (Myanmar)	67
Cambodia	67
Laos	66
Brunei	66
Indonesia	65
Average	72



Source: Colmar Brunton⁹

Perceptions of Asia: 1997 and 2011

In October 1997 (the first year that the Asia New Zealand Foundation began tracking New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia and Asians), 79 percent of New Zealanders thought Asia would be important to New Zealand's future; in fact, of the five areas of the world considered, Asia was rated as the most important (see Table 2).¹⁰ However, there was a feeling that Asian markets would not necessarily be easy for New Zealand to "crack"; some people were not convinced that New Zealand had much to offer that Asians really wanted and they also thought that Asian business partners would "bargain us down".

In September/October 2011, Asia was still seen as important to New Zealand's future (83 percent saw it as important or very important; see Table 2). Only Australia was rated as more important to New Zealand's future than Asia (88 percent). Reasons for the continued importance of Asia (four percentage points higher than in 1997) included a greater awareness of the economic and financial links between Asia and New Zealand, a realisation that New Zealand's growth was partly reliant on economic growth in Asia, and an awareness of the resilience of Asian economies following the global financial crisis and how this resilience had benefited New Zealand.

Table 2. Importance of Asia to New Zealand's Future

Country or Region	Important or Very Important	
	1997* %	2011† %
Australia	NA	88
Asia	79	83
Europe (includes UK)	67	69
South Pacific	50	51
North America	60	58
South America	32	30
Africa	NA	16



*Excluding Australia.

Sources: UMR Insight¹¹ and Colmar Brunton¹²

“Asia can’t be ignored as being the future economic powerhouse of the world. Asia brings export education, wealth and diversity to New Zealand.”

Female, NZ European, 50-59 years old

“[New Zealanders] are more aware of who the big players are (i.e., China and India) and how their economies affect us (e.g. Fonterra being our biggest money earner and Asia being their biggest customer).”

Female, Maōri, 50-59 years old

These reasons are consistent with the perception of most New Zealanders in 2011, that the benefits of a relationship with Asia were primarily economic, especially (but not only) in relation to tourism and access to growing Asian markets (see Table 3).

While trade and tourism were paramount in 2011, what is interesting are some of the other changes reflected in this table. For example, perceptions of both the impact of Asia as a tourist destination and the positive impact of Asian cultures and traditions increased significantly in the intervening years. Part of this increase can be explained by the growing number of Asians who were then New Zealand residents, who had travelled to Asian homelands and who continued to see Asian traditions and cultures as part of their lives in New Zealand. But this does not explain fully the size of the increases.

Table 3. Impact of Asia on New Zealand

	Impact Somewhat or Very Positive	
	1997 ¹⁰ %	2011 ¹¹ %
Asian tourism in New Zealand	83	92
Exports from Asia to New Zealand	80	92
Economic growth of the Asian region	-	83
Asia as a tourist destination for New Zealanders	47	76
Imports from Asia to New Zealand	80	67
Asian cultures and traditions	33	61
Population growth of Asia	-	49
Asian students in New Zealand schools and universities	62	-
New Zealand's economic links with Asia	47	-



Sources: UMR Insight¹³ and Colmar Brunton¹⁴

Obviously, non-Asian New Zealanders also increasingly saw Asia as part of their everyday lives and Asia as a desirable tourist destination. The reverse is true for the perception of imports from Asia; the impact of such imports was seen less positively than it had been more than a decade earlier, indicating some concern at the growing reliance on imports from Asia. However, it should be noted that more than two-thirds of those answering this question still regarded Asian imports as somewhat or very positive.

Despite the increasing recognition of the economic importance of Asia to New Zealand, only 22 percent of New Zealanders saw New Zealand as part of Asia in 2011.¹⁵ New Zealand was still regarded as distinct from Asia culturally, historically and geographically. While New Zealand's economic fortunes were seen as inextricably intertwined with those of Asia, the country's cultural identity was seen as quite different from that of Asia, reflecting, as the quote below illustrates, the influences of British and Māori cultural backgrounds and heritages.

“New Zealand lifestyle and culture is more aligned with the United Kingdom and former British colonies, thus influencing the lifestyle and values and behaviours of New Zealanders.”

Female, other ethnicity, 40–49 years old

“New Zealand is in the lower South Pacific, and its nearest relative is Australia. The distance from Asia is so great there is no way New Zealand could be considered part of Asia.”

Male, NZ European, 50–59 years old

New Zealand's different cultural heritage was also seen as creating a different view of the values of egalitarianism and justice, values that some New Zealanders perceived to not be given the same weight in Asia. The perception of New Zealand as separate from Asia was also reinforced by its geographic location in the South Pacific, surrounded by sea and relatively distant from even its closest neighbour, Australia.

Thus, rather than perceiving New Zealand as part of Asia, most New Zealanders considered it to be part of Australasia or the Pacific region. Nevertheless, the perception of New Zealand's separateness from Asia depended on the factors considered when making this judgement.

A significant majority of New Zealanders (90 percent) agreed that it was important for New Zealand to develop cultural and economic ties with the people and countries of Asia.¹⁶ The perceived advantages and disadvantages of developing such ties are summarised in Table 4, on the following page.

Table 4. Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Closer Ties with Asia

	Advantages	Disadvantages
New Zealand as part of Asia	Increased knowledge of Asian cultures and exchanges	Loss of identity and “Kiwiana”
	Strong economic and business links	New Zealand “suppressed”, “swallowed up and overrun”, and under control of the Asian region
	Access to more trading partners	New Zealand potentially entangled in local Asian conflicts
	Recognition of New Zealand’s importance in Asia	
New Zealand not part of Asia		Perception that New Zealand does not want to acknowledge its ties with Asia
	Preservation of our unique culture and identity	
	Promotion of our country’s branding	New Zealand dismissed as irrelevant by more powerful Asian countries
	Business and trade with Asia happen nonetheless	New Zealand’s small size makes it vulnerable to changes in trading patterns or partners
	Autonomy, preservation of our own political voice	New Zealand’s opportunities in the “global village” limited

 Source: Colmar Brunton, 2012¹⁷

Attitudes to Asian Immigrants



Attitudes to Asian Immigrants

Historically, many New Zealanders have not welcomed Asian immigrants. From the late 1880s through to the Immigration Restriction Amendment Act in 1920, some 33 Acts were introduced that sought to exclude or limit Asian (especially Chinese) migration to New Zealand, or that reduced their rights once they were in the country. Populist racism and negative beliefs about Asians underpinned these political developments. This view of Asian immigrants changed through the mid-decades of the 20th century before once again emerging as an issue in the mid-1990s, especially in the lead up to the 1996 general election.

Between 1997 and 1999, the average proportion of New Zealanders who rated Asian immigration to New Zealand as positive or very positive was only 31 percent. However, by 2011, this proportion had increased to 55 percent, indicating a significant re-evaluation and much more positive attitudes. While this was not an overwhelming endorsement of Asian immigration, it represented a significant change from earlier perceptions and the trend was clearly one of increasingly positive attitudes to Asian immigration (see Figure 5, on the following page). However, New Zealanders were much more positive about the economic impacts of Asian immigration than they were about its social impacts. Furthermore, opinion polls after 1997 consistently reported that a significant proportion of New Zealanders believed there were too many immigrants from Asia.



Figure 5. Trend in Attitudes to Asian Immigration: 1997-2011



Sources: UMR Insight¹⁸ and Colmar Brunton¹⁹

Table 5, on the following page, provides an indication of the trends in negative views about Asia and Asians between 1997 and 2011. The proportion of those who saw Asia as “not important” or “not at all important” reached double figures in 1999, and 2000, but after that it trended down to a very low 3 percent. In other words, the proportion of those who thought Asia was unimportant to New Zealand’s future was very small indeed.

By contrast, negative perceptions of Asian immigration were not so low. Those with these views were as high as one-third of the population around and after the time of the 1996 general election, when the issue of Asian immigration became highly politicised. However, the numbers generally tracked downwards after that time, and less than a quarter of respondents had negative views of Asian immigration by 2011.

Later we offer some comments on the effect of contact on attitudes. As Table 5 shows, on the following page, there was a steady reduction in the proportion of New Zealanders who had had little contact with Asians. From a high of almost 70 percent in 1997, the proportion of those with little contact dropped to about half in 2011, (although it had been as low as 38 percent). As we argue, contact with Asians has a significant influence on attitudes towards Asians and Asia, and there is some evidence of this relationship in Table 5.



Table 5. Analysis of Trends in Extreme Attitudes²⁰

Attitudes	1997 %	1998 %	1999 %	2000 %	2007 %	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %
Importance of Asia to New Zealand's future									
Not at all/Not important	8.2	9.7	13.3	13.4	7.2	7.1	5.0	4.4	3.0
Impact of immigration from Asia to New Zealand									
Very negative	17.2	15.7	16.2	14.1	7.6	6.2	5.5	7.7	5.8
Very negative/Negative	36.4	33.3	32.3	29.3	24.9	26.6	23.0	28.9	22.4
Contact with Asians									
Hardly any/Not much	69.7	66.0	64.7	51.0	51.6	44.6	38.3	49.4	49.8



Public Opinion Polling on Immigration

After 1997, the question of whether there were too many immigrants in New Zealand from different countries or regions of the world was regularly asked in various public opinion polls. The results are shown in Table 6, on the following page. Although the figures for Asia are not strictly comparable over time (because sometimes respondents were asked about Asia and sometimes about China, India and “other Asian countries” separately), the proportion of New Zealanders who considered there were too many immigrants from Asia tended to mirror the pattern of Asian immigration: relatively moderate levels in the late 1990s, a sharp rise to 50 percent in 2003, maintained at this level until 2006, followed by a decline.

Some insights into the reasons for many New Zealanders believing there were too many immigrants from Asia can be gained from a nationwide survey conducted in 1996, the year before our reference period started, when the number of Asian immigrants had risen to 36 percent of total immigrants. The results of this survey are shown in Table 7,²¹ on the following page. The year 1996, was significant in the trajectory of attitudes towards and perceptions of Asians for another reason: it was the year in which New Zealand First was elected to Parliament with a platform that was based (to a significant degree) on popular concern at the arrival of Asian immigrants and what this would do to New Zealand’s culture, schools and health system – amongst other matters. Over half of those surveyed considered that there were too many Asian immigrants in New Zealand (presumably from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea) and, if India were considered as part of Asia, that figure rose to about four-fifths. However, the unpopularity of these immigrants appeared to stem more from the belief that “Asians” took jobs from New Zealanders (40 percent) than from their assumed effects on crime rates (28 percent).

In contrast to Pacific peoples (at 11 percent), Asian immigrants were regarded as good for the New Zealand economy (58 percent). In fact, of all the groups considered, those from Asia were judged highest on this criterion.

In 2002, when the number of Asian immigrants was nearly at its peak, a poll by the business newspaper *The National Business Review* reported that 45 percent of respondents agreed that there were too many immigrants from China. However, in a Colmar Brunton poll conducted in that same year; 61 percent of respondents agreed that Asian immigration was a good thing for New Zealand as the country was becoming more multicultural with a stronger economy as a result; 55 percent agreed that Asia as a region represented an important market for New Zealand exports and that we should encourage more Asian immigration to take better advantage of this market; and only 27 percent agreed that the Government should stop any further immigration of Asian people to New Zealand.²²

Table 6. Do you think there are too many immigrants in New Zealand from the following Countries or Parts of the World?

Country or Region	Percent Too Many							
	1997 ²³	1999 ²⁴	2002 ²⁵	2003 ²⁶	2004 ²⁷	2004 ²⁸	2006 ²⁹	2008 ³⁰
Asia	37	40	45	51 (China)	47 (China)	45	51 (China)	38
India	-	-	-	41	36	-	36	-
Other Asian countries	-	-	-	51	47	-	48	-
Pacific Islands	42	47	35	47	52	39	50	-
South Africa	-	18	12	16	13	13	15	-
UK and Ireland	-	13	9	9	8	11	8	-

Table 7. Attitudes to Immigration 1996

Origin	Too Many Immigrants in New Zealand from... %	Immigrants who Increase Crime Rates %	Immigrants who are Good for New Zealand Economy %	Immigrants who Take Jobs from New Zealanders %
Pacific Islands	54	62	11	33
Asia	50	28	58	40
India	34	6	26	28
South Africa	16	3	32	16
UK	11	3	37	20
Australia	6	4	35	17
Other European	8	5	43	17
None of these	-	28	17	37



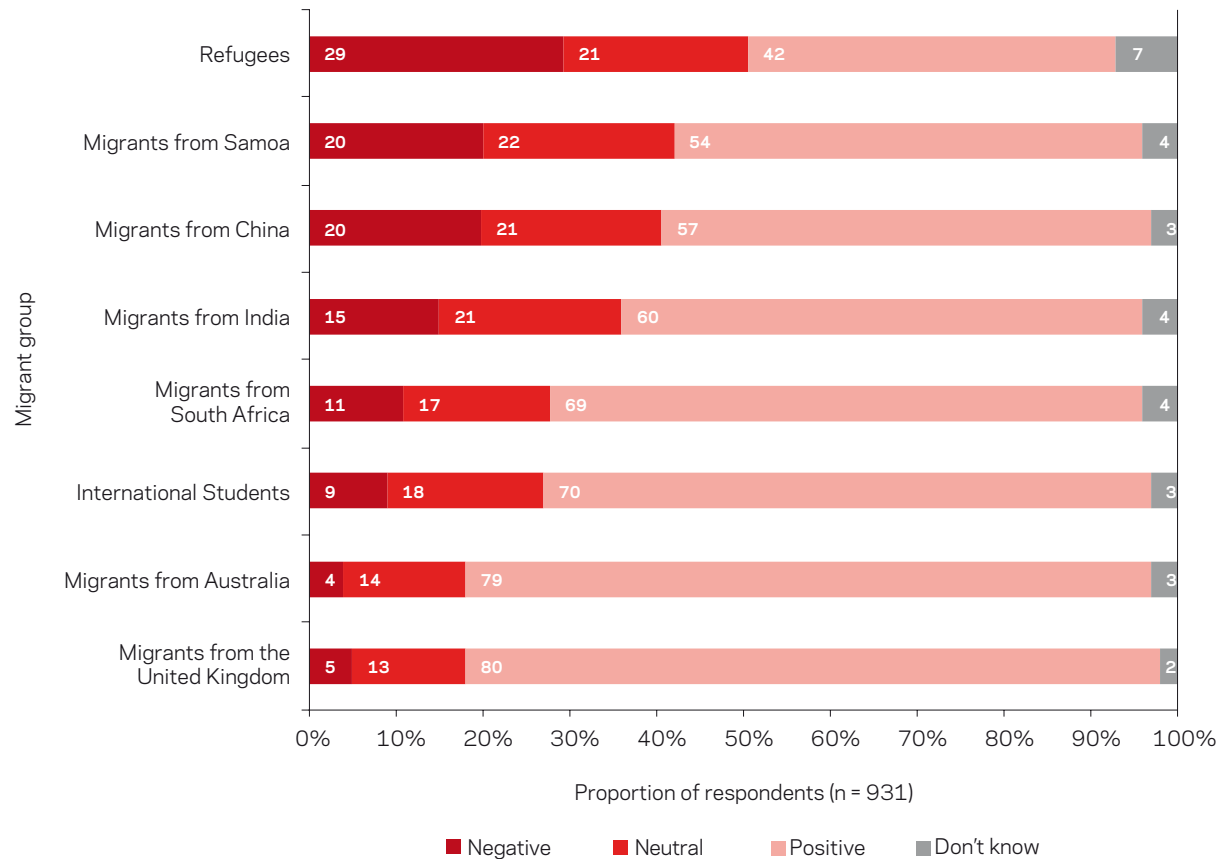
Source: International Social Survey Programme

Note: Respondents could nominate more than one group, so percentages may add up to more than 100 percent.

The discrepancy between the two polls almost certainly reflected differences in the questions asked. However, the results of the Colmar Brunton poll suggested that even when the proportion of Asian immigrants was at its highest, the number of New Zealanders with positive perceptions of Asian immigrants was increasing. This conclusion was supported by a 2010 Department of Labour survey that asked for New Zealanders' views of specific migrant groups.³¹ The results are shown in Figure 6.

When asked to describe their views of specific migrant groups on a scale from 0 (= not at all positive) to 10 (= very positive), 60 percent of respondents gave positive ratings for immigrants from India and 57 percent did the same for immigrants from China. These proportions were lower than for immigrants from the UK, Australia and South Africa. Similarly, negative ratings for Indian and Chinese immigrants were also more likely to be higher than the ratings of these other groups. However, the fact that the majority of those surveyed had positive perceptions of Asian immigrants is an indication of the change in New Zealanders' attitudes between the late 1990s and the late 2000s.³²

Figure 6. Views of Specific Migrant Groups: 2010



 Source: Department of Labour

Perceptions of Asian Immigrants in 1997

In 1997, only 32 percent of New Zealanders considered that the impact of Asian immigration on New Zealand was positive, despite the economic benefits of trade between Asia and New Zealand and Asian tourism in New Zealand. In other words, most New Zealanders were happy to do business with Asia or to have Asians here as tourists, but were not happy with the idea of Asians immigrating to New Zealand.

In 1997, most New Zealanders appeared to be aware that the term “Asian” applied to a range of diverse cultures and they differentiated between mainland Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese, as well as between Taiwanese, Korean, Malaysian and Japanese immigrants. However, New Zealanders’ perceptions were largely that Asian immigrants were wealthy, despite some awareness that there had been another wave of poorer but well educated Asians, and some political refugees from Asia. These perceptions were both positive and negative.

Generally, Asians had a reputation for being polite, courteous, quiet, obedient and well behaved. Those with good Asian friends talked about their consideration and respect for others, and about acts of kindness and generosity. New Zealanders were impressed by the Asian work ethic and

commitment and their strong sense of honour – expressed in honesty and loyalty among Asians. Asian resourcefulness and opportunism and their perceived ability to identify wealth-generating opportunities in new environments were linked to their academic prowess, which was seen, in turn, partly as a function of intelligence and partly a function of the value that Asians place on education.

Negative perceptions of Asian immigrants included their perceived insularity – the tendency of recent Asian immigrants to isolate themselves and stick together, choosing to speak their own language rather than English (in front of other New Zealanders), refusing to mix and generally acting as if they were not interested in becoming “integrated”. Asians were also seen as arrogant because of their perceived tendency to flaunt material wealth in the form of expensive cars, ostentatious homes and the latest technology. Some New Zealanders also described Asians as “cold”, “clinical” and “unspontaneous”, qualities that prompted a fear that Asians would force New Zealanders to compete on their (Asians’) terms with negative consequences for New Zealand’s relaxed, laid-back culture.

These negative perceptions were reinforced (or even created) by concerns that Asians were “invading” desirable areas in New Zealand cities, driving up property prices, aggravating urban sprawl and creating Asian enclaves where New Zealanders no longer felt comfortable (“Chowick” in Auckland, “Asianhead” in Christchurch) and taking employment opportunities away from (other) young New Zealanders. Highly motivated and competitive Asians were doing well in the New Zealand education system and were expected to compete strongly with their New Zealand counterparts for good jobs. As well as being seen as buying New Zealand real estate and natural resources, Asians were also seen as “exploiting” the New Zealand economy, but not necessarily contributing locally – sending profits “back home”, employing other Asians in their businesses rather than creating jobs for New Zealanders, and not supporting or sponsoring “New Zealand” causes. Fuelling these negative perceptions were complaints about Asians’ erratic, inconsiderate and aggressive driving and a characteristic failure to signal, their pushiness in queues, their poor treatment of women and the activities of Chinese triad gangs.



New Zealanders' response to the arrival of Asian migrants in the late 1990s could be described as ambivalent – a mixture of admiration and concern. When New Zealanders looked at wealthy Asian immigrants, they saw people who had made their money in fiercely competitive environments and who must therefore have formidable skills. Furthermore, many of these Asian immigrants lived by the ideals to which New Zealanders often claimed to aspire – the importance of education, parental responsibility, supportive family structures and self-reliance.

At least some New Zealanders conceded that the average new Asian immigrant was probably better off, better educated, smarter, harder working and more motivated than the average New Zealander. Asians seemed to know who they were, where they came from and where they were going; they were people with a strong sense of identity, something that many Pakeha New Zealanders felt that they themselves lacked. However, these qualities that led to admiration for Asians also made them seem a potential threat to (other) New Zealanders and their way of life.

At the time, these perceptions of Asian immigration suggested best-case and worst-case scenarios for the future. The worst-case scenario involved uncontrolled Asian immigration, with large numbers of immigrants refusing to integrate, creating exclusive suburbs and an (Asian) elite. By virtue of their wealth and ability, some Asians would rise to positions of financial and political power and they could own large amounts of New Zealand land. They would create wealth and jobs, but this would mostly benefit other members of the Asian community. Maōri would not like what was happening, but at least they would have their own resources as a result of Treaty of Waitangi settlements and a sense of their own identity. However, some Pakeha New Zealanders would feel that their cultural identity (however defined) and their economic well-being were under threat.

In the best-case scenario, Asian immigration would be controlled, Asians would lease – but would not own – New Zealand land and they would learn English (and the road rules) as a matter of course. Asians would make it clear that they appreciated and respected the uniqueness

of New Zealand and its culture and the relaxed “Kiwi lifestyle”. They would continue to honour their own traditions and customs, which would also enrich New Zealand culture, but would be integrated into New Zealand society. New Zealand would evolve into a well adjusted multicultural society, with everyone sharing the same overall values and aspirations. In 1997, New Zealanders held a range of views about Asian immigration and its consequences, with elements of each scenario. However, a consistent theme was the importance of Asian immigrants as contributing to both the New Zealand economy and its culture, and a willingness on the part of immigrants to adapt to the New Zealand way of life. Although most New Zealanders were keen for Asians to share the richness of their culture, they were adamant that integration should be a “two-way” process and that this required Asian immigrants, as well as other New Zealanders, to adapt. Many New Zealanders also believed that the genuine integration of Asian immigrants would not happen for one or two generations.



Perceptions of Asian Immigrants in 2011

By 2011 most New Zealanders agreed that Asian people contributed significantly to our economy (83 percent) and brought valuable cultural diversity to New Zealand (79 percent). However, some still believed that Asians did not mix well with New Zealanders (46 percent) and could do more to learn about New Zealand culture (70 percent; see Table 8). In other words, the ambivalence between the economic and the social benefits of Asian immigration was still evident.

Table 8. New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asian People: 2011

Statement	Agree or Strongly Agree %	Disagree or Strongly Disagree %
Asian people contribute significantly to our economy	83	15
Asian immigrants bring a valuable cultural diversity to New Zealand	79	19
It is good for our economy that companies in Asia invest in New Zealand's businesses	74	20
Asian people could do more to learn about New Zealand culture	70	28
Asian employees improve workplace productivity	46	15
Asian people do not mix well with New Zealanders	35	46
New Zealand is allowing too much investment from Asia	29	43
Asian immigrants take jobs away from New Zealanders	25	54

Note: Percentages for "Strongly Agree" and "Strongly Disagree" are reported in Appendix Tables D and E.



Source: Colmar Brunton, 2012, p.6

However, in 2011 there was still a substantial minority of New Zealanders (around 20 percent) who believed there were too many Asian immigrants coming to New Zealand and feared that these immigrants were “taking over” the country (a fear bolstered by the controversy surrounding the sale of the bankrupt Crafar dairy farms to a Chinese company in 2009-10). Other concerns of those with negative views of Asian immigrants were the perceived unwillingness of Asians to speak English or integrate with, contribute to or adopt the “New Zealand” way of life, and the perceived threat they posed to jobs for New Zealanders and New Zealand culture.

“It’s not me, but a general feeling that some Asian people are quite insular, and I would say also there has been some negative press around Chinese companies trying to buy New Zealand farms”

Male, NZ European, 40-49 years old

Regardless of these negative perceptions of Asian immigrants among some New Zealanders, there was almost unanimous agreement in 2011 that it was important to develop cultural and economic ties with the peoples and countries of Asia (90 percent agreed that it was either very important or quite important). However, 60 percent of New Zealanders did not believe that the country was doing enough to help New Zealanders

understand Asian traditions and customs, 56 percent thought that we were not doing enough to prepare young New Zealanders to engage confidently with Asia, and 33 percent considered that we were not doing enough to develop business links between New Zealand and Asia.³³

On a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 meant “feeling very cold and unfavourable” and 100 meant “feeling very warm and favourable”, the average “warmth” of New Zealanders towards people from Asian countries was 72 (see [Table A](#)). Although scores for individual countries ranged from 76 to 65, in general New Zealanders were warmly disposed to Asian people, more so than Australians or Canadians for whom the equivalent scores were typically 10 or 15 percentage points lower (23 percentage points in the case of Canadians’ perceptions of China).³⁴ This is another manifestation of the change in New Zealanders’ perceptions of Asia and Asians between 1997 and 2011.

The main reason for New Zealanders’ changes in perceptions in the 15 years was more contact with Asians – there were more of them around – and this helped to reduce some of the prejudice that had previously coloured many New Zealanders’ attitudes.

“Because day by day and week by week people have more contact, whether it’s through business, shopping malls, or social occasions, and there’s a growing realisation that people are no different than anybody else. I can think of circumstances where people have started off with a prejudice but when they get to meet or socialise at family gatherings those sort of issues melt away.”

Male, NZ European, 50-59 years old

“I think it’s just that people are more used to accepting people from different countries – different immigrants – and their different cultures. You’ve got to learn to accept them; you can’t just live in your own little world. Different ones I’ve met I’ve found to be very nice.”

Female, NZ European, over 70 years of age

This contact increased, sometimes significantly, between 2007 and 2011. This was most apparent in work situations, and in shopping, but also reflected the ongoing and important contact that took place in schools and the growing presence of Asians in tertiary education institutions. There were more Asian retailers – and a greater possibility of mingling with Asians in shopping areas – while there was growing contact with Asians in the workplace (see [Table 9](#), on the following page).



Table 9. New Zealanders' Contact with Asian People and Culture: 2007 and 2011

How much do you personally have to do with Asian peoples or cultures? Can you tell me whether you have a lot of contact, some contact, or no contact with Asian peoples through each of the following...?	A Lot of Contact	
	2007 %	2011 %
Personally	15.0	18.3
Different ways:		
Through work or business	21.5	27.3
Through schools or educational institutions	18.0	21.3
Through friends, including family friends	13.2	19.3
In your neighbourhood or community	10.4	13.4
Through your religion or spiritual group	6.6	7.4
Through clubs/social events	4.8	6.3
At Asian events held in your area	4.5	6.9
Through sports	3.6	4.3
Through shopping/shops/services	-	24.9
Through travel	-	17.4
Through marriage, either personally or through other family members	-	13.9
Through the healthcare system, such as hospitals and the doctor's surgery	-	12.9



Determinants of Attitudes to Asian Immigration



5



Determinants of Attitudes to Asian Immigration

What determines attitudes and, in this case, attitudes towards immigrants, is the subject of an extensive international literature.

There is broad agreement that socio-economic factors (both of the respondent and in relation to issues such as labour market competition), education and contact are all important factors. Some other contextual influences – the role of the media, for example – are also important, while Hiebert observes that, in Canada, support for immigration is highly correlated with economic events.³⁵

There is also research that points to the significance of contact for attitudes, in relation to both New Zealand and elsewhere.³⁶ As McLaren notes, contact can change stereotypes and reduces the perception that immigrants compete for resources or that they differ from one's own.³⁷ As Colmar Brunton³⁸ note:

Contact through friends, through work or business, and through schools or educational institutions is most likely to promote closer, more in-depth relationships and the potential for improved cross-cultural understanding.

New Zealanders' overall attitudes to Asia and Asian immigrants between 1997 and 2011 concealed differences in the perceptions of different groups in society. As Appendix, [Tables A and B](#) show, Maōri and women were less likely to consider Asia important to New Zealand's future or that Asian immigration had had a positive impact on New Zealand. Older people tended to be more positive than younger people about Asia and Asian immigration, but this relationship was weak and inconsistent. Living in Auckland compared with elsewhere in the country had no effect on these attitudes, which is surprising since, as [Appendix, Table C](#), shows contact with Asians has consistently been higher in Auckland than in other parts of New Zealand. However, the relative effects of these demographic variables are difficult to discern from these tables alone; a more sophisticated analysis is required.

Demographic Influences on Support for Asian Immigration

To quantify the effects of demographic characteristics on New Zealanders' attitudes to the social impacts of Asian immigration, data from the 2011 Colmar Brunton tracking study were analysed. (The economic impacts of Asian immigration were not included because there is almost universal agreement that these are positive.) A scale was formed by summing then averaging the responses to the following agree-disagree statements:

- Asian immigrants bring a valuable cultural diversity to New Zealand (scale responses reversed)
- Asian people could do more to learn about New Zealand culture
- Asian people do not mix well with New Zealanders
- Asian immigrants take jobs away from New Zealanders

On this scale, 41 percent of respondents had positive views of the impacts of Asian immigration and 22 percent had negative views (the rest were neutral). Respondents with these strongly positive and negative views were defined as supportive or not supportive of Asian immigration, and this variable was used as the dependent variable in a logistic regression analysis, with age, sex, ethnicity, place of birth, Auckland vs non-Auckland location, and contact with immigrants as independent variables. The results are shown in Table 10, on the following page.

Table 10. Determinants of Support for Asian Immigration 2011

Variable	Support for Asian Immigration ¹		Odds Ratio (95% Confidence Interval)
	Support %	Don't Support %	
Contact			
Not much/hardly anything	42	58	1.00 (Referent)
A lot/a fair amount	73	27	1.73 (1.14-2.65)**
Ethnicity			
Non-Maōri	67	33	1.00 (Referent)
Maōri	50	50	0.46 (0.22-0.97)**
Born in New Zealand			
No	70	30	1.00 (Referent)
Yes	65	35	0.49 (0.28-0.86)**
Gender			
Female	63	37	1.00 (Referent)
Male	70	30	1.10 (0.73-1.67)
Auckland vs non-Auckland			
Non-Auckland	67	33	1.00 (Referent)
Auckland	63	37	0.83 (0.51-1.35)
Age			
Under 25	75	25	1.00 (Referent)
25 to 39	66	34	0.44 (0.18-1.07)*
40 to 59	67	33	0.59 (0.25-1.41)
60 and older	61	40	0.43 (0.18-1.03)*
Total	66	34	

1. Support among those with either positive or negative views. Those with neutral views not included.

** significant at $p < .05$ * significant at $p < .10$

The most important determinant of support for – or opposition to – Asian immigration (measured by the strength of agreement or disagreement with its social impact) was the amount of contact with immigrants. Predictably, the more contact people had with Asian immigrants, the more positive their attitudes were towards them. Those with a lot or a fair amount of contact with immigrants were more than twice as likely to support immigration from Asia as those who had not much, or hardly any, contact. This result is consistent with the conclusions of Johnston *et al*,³⁹ who found that the more contact respondents had had with Asian immigrants, the more likely they were to support immigration and multiculturalism, and vice versa. It is also consistent with Ward *et al*'s⁴⁰ finding that New Zealand territorial authorities with the most negative perceptions of migrants in general were all in areas of low new-migrant density.

Maōri were 50 percent less likely to support Asian immigration than non-Maōri, a finding similar to that reported previously by Spoonley *et al*.⁴¹ This finding has been consistently reported and is trending more negatively, while the trend for other New Zealanders is increasingly positive. Similarly, those born in New Zealand were 50 percent less likely to support Asian immigration, and this is consistent with Ward *et al*'s finding that New Zealanders born overseas valued immigrants (in general) more.⁴²

Those living in Auckland were less likely to support Asian immigration than those living outside Auckland when the effect of contact was removed, but the effect was not statistically significant.⁴³ Women were also less likely to support Asian immigration, but the effect was relatively small and not significant.

Those over the age of 25 were between 40 percent and 50 percent less likely to support Asian immigration than those aged under 25, but the effect was only significant at the 10 percent confidence level.

Other studies, Spoonley *et al*⁴⁴ and Ward and Masgoret,⁴⁵ found that higher levels of education and income were associated with more positive attitudes to immigrants in general, and the same is likely to apply to New Zealanders' attitudes to Asian immigrants.



Conclusions



6



Conclusions

Perceptions of Asia and Asians: 1997-2011

Asia - often regarded as China and Japan - is seen as part of New Zealand's geopolitical future. This is underlined by the attitudes reflected in opinion polls. The trend data reviewed here generally indicated a steady (if not spectacular) improvement in the attitudes of New Zealand respondents towards Asia and Asian immigrants. The perceptions of Asia and its importance to New Zealand tended to track in a positive, upward direction - after a dip in the late 1990s - while the proportion responding negatively to questions declined from a high (again in the late 1990s) of 8 percent to less than 2 percent in 2011.

In the 1990s, the positive attitudes about Asian immigration were tracking around one-third of all respondents, while negative responses ranged from 17 percent to 14 percent. By 2011, the positive responses were at 55 percent and the negative were at 6 percent, indicating a significant shift in the 15 year period. However, there remained indications of ambivalence, reflected in two ways. First, there were different perceptions of different immigration source countries. Asia, along with the Pacific, was still seen more negatively as an immigrant source (as a region) than countries such as South Africa and the UK. Second, while Asian immigrants were seen by most respondents (80 percent or more) as contributing significantly to the economy, concerns were still expressed about

the adaptation of Asians to "New Zealand culture" (70 percent). The contribution of Asian immigrants economically, to cultural diversity and to food, was acknowledged, but there appeared to be ongoing concern about how Asians were adjusting to their new lives in New Zealand - at least by some other New Zealanders. What was significant, though, was the growing contact between non-Asian and Asian New Zealanders and the importance of this contact in contributing to positive attitudes. Overall, there was a noticeable shift towards seeing these new connections with Asia and Asians more positively at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century compared with the 1990s.



Maōri vs Non-Maōri Attitudes

If New Zealanders' attitudes to Asian immigrants have generally become more positive over time, there is a significant caveat. The attitudes expressed by Maōri respondents have not. Particularly since 2000, Maōri attitudes in the Asia New Zealand Foundation polls have tracked negatively, especially when it comes to economic issues (Asian economic contribution, taking jobs from New Zealanders) and social/cultural issues (adapting to New Zealand culture, mixing). The attitudes of Maōri towards Asian immigrants have also been the subject of comment in other attitude surveys.⁴⁶ For example, a 2010 Department of Labour report notes that "Maōri were most likely to disagree with positive statements about immigrants and most likely to agree with negative statements".⁴⁷

It appears from the responses and comments provided that there were several dimensions to these concerns among Maōri, including competition for employment between recent Asian arrivals and Maōri (underlined by the soft labour market after 2008 as a result of the global financial crisis), the concern that Asian cultures and languages competed for attention and resourcing with tikanga and te reo Maōri, and the perception that Asian immigrants did not adequately acknowledge the Treaty of Waitangi. These attitudes indicate a tension point between at least some Maōri and Asian communities, and a matter that deserves more attention. In coming decades, the number of Asians resident in New Zealand will equal the number of Māori, and Chinese (Mandarin) will be a widely spoken language. If there are issues now, they will become more significant in the future.

How Does New Zealand Compare With Other Countries?

Immigration has become an important political and policy issue in many, if not most, OECD countries. In the UK, the issue has consistently been one of the top three publicly identified issues in the past three decades, and in many countries the attitudes expressed in public opinion polls have tracked negatively.⁴⁸ For example, anti-immigrant attitudes increased significantly in the UK from the mid-1990s through to 2003. Two-thirds of Britons wanted to reduce immigration in 1995 but this increased to three-quarters by 2003. In 2003, 75 percent of Britons wanted immigrant levels reduced a little or a lot, whereas in New Zealand (in the same year), the response ranged from 51 percent for immigrants from China to 9 percent for those from the UK and Ireland, suggesting less concern in this country. On specific questions (such as: "Do immigrants take jobs away from New Zealanders /British?"), British respondents tended to be twice as likely to answer negatively on most issues. This pattern was also apparent in nearly all European countries, including in major surveys such as the Eurobarometer.⁴⁹

Two things are apparent: concern about immigrants (anti-immigrant attitudes) has historically been high but has grown in the past decade. By comparison, New Zealand has been part of a small group of countries – Canada and Australia are similar – where positive attitudes to immigration have been relatively high but have also grown more positive, not less, recently. It is important to note that these polls are not strictly comparable – the survey instruments and questions are different and the issue canvassed here (attitudes towards Asians and Asia) is not a particular concern elsewhere. In Europe, anti-immigrant sentiments are often part of concerns about the spread of Islam. Nevertheless, it appears that the acceptance levels towards immigrants are higher, and trending in a more positive direction, in New Zealand than in many other countries.

What is interesting in relation to the two countries that are most similar to New Zealand in terms of the composition of immigration flows and policy frameworks – Canada and Australia – is that attitudes have diverged, especially recently. In relation to some issues (conformity with local culture), the responses are often broadly similar.⁵⁰ But in comparison with Australia, attitudes in New Zealand have become more positive in recent years. As Watanabe points out (using directly comparable data for both countries), New Zealanders express more warmth towards Asian countries and Asians. As she notes, New Zealanders “feel” 10 degrees warmer towards Asia and Asian than do Australians, suggesting different attitudes on either side of the Tasman.⁵¹

The Future: 2012 - 2026

According to Statistics New Zealand, New Zealand's Asian population is expected to grow 3.4 percent a year, rising from about 400,000 in 2006 to about 780,000 by 2026. Asians, the fastest-growing ethnic group in the country, will make up an estimated 16 percent of the New Zealand population by 2021, up from 10 percent in 2006. The relatively rapid growth of the Asian population will be driven mainly by migration, with a net inflow of about 240,000 migrants assumed in the 15 year period.

This trend is expected to be even more pronounced in Auckland. In 2006, the Asian population of Auckland was 19 percent (5.5 percent in 1991) but that is projected to reach almost 30 percent by 2021, and Auckland's Asian population is likely to have distinctive characteristics, making it different from the rest of the country.



For example, Auckland already has a higher proportion than the rest of the country of Asians in the 15–30 age group, reflecting the presence of international students, and Asian females are over represented in the 30–50 age group, possibly because of the high number of families from Korea and China with absent fathers, so-called “astronaut families”. Given the projected increase in Auckland’s Asian population in the next 15 years, the influence of Asians on food, retailing, culture, religion and the media can also be expected to increase. The effects on sport might be less obvious, at least those sports that are nationally significant.

These population trends, both nationally and in the Auckland context, reinforce the significance of tracking the attitudes of other New Zealanders towards these new and growing members of their communities. In general, this report indicates that those surveyed as part of the Asia New Zealand Foundation surveys between 1997 and 2011, grew more positive towards the presence of Asians in New Zealand and the importance of Asia for the economic future of the country. The exception was Maōri, who continued to express concern about the arrival of Asian immigrants and the presence of Asians in New Zealand communities. In all of this, the key influence was the degree of contact that other New Zealanders had with Asians. The more contact, the more positive were the attitudes expressed. Asia, and China in particular, was seen as critical to New Zealand’s economic future, and while there were certain misgivings about the activities of Asian immigrants, they were seen as contributing to the development of New Zealand in several ways – even if this was something as commonplace as food. In contrast to an earlier period of New Zealand’s history, there was a significant level of acceptance that Asia and Asians were part of New Zealand’s present and future. What is interesting is that this was even greater than in the two countries that are most similar to New Zealand in terms of immigration policy and the composition and origin of contemporary immigrants – Canada and Australia.

Profiles – About the Authors



Profile: Professor Phil Gendall

Phil Gendall is an Emeritus Professor of Marketing from Massey University and a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Otago. His main areas of interest are market and social research, particularly aspects of survey research methodology, question wording and questionnaire design.

For more than 20 years he led New Zealand's involvement in the International Social Survey Programme and he has also been a contributor to Massey University's New Settlers Programme of research into immigration in New Zealand. Professor Gendall has published in a number of journals including *International Journal of Market Research*, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, *BMC Public Health* and *Tobacco Control*.



Profile: Professor Paul Spoonley

Paul Spoonley is a Distinguished Professor at Massey University and the Pro Vice Chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

He is the Programme Leader of the Integration of Immigrants Programme and Nga Tangata Oho Mairangi, both of which are funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. Recent books include *Welcome to Our World? Immigration and the Reshaping of New Zealand* and *Diverse Nations, Diverse Responses. Approaches to Social Cohesion in Immigrant Societies*, both published in 2012. He was awarded a Fulbright Senior Scholar award in 2010 to spend some time researching second generation identities at the University of California Berkeley. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society and the recipient of their Science and Technology Medal for his contributions to cross-cultural understanding.



Profile: Dr Andrew Butcher

Andrew Butcher is the
Research Director at the Asia
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In 2011, he was a visiting fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, in 2012, a Teaching Fellow in the Political Science and International Relations programme at Victoria University of Wellington and in 2013, an invited participant in the State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program in the USA. He holds degrees in history and criminology from Victoria University of Wellington and a PhD in sociology from Massey University. Andrew is a member of the Royal Society of New Zealand and the International Institute for Strategic Studies and is the author of more than 30 articles, reports and book chapters.



Appendix



Appendix

How important to New Zealand's future do you consider the following regions are on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means it is very important and 5 means it is not important at all: Asia?

Table A. Trends in Importance of Asia to New Zealand's Future by Ethnicity, Gender, Geography and Age

Date	Asia Important ^{1,2} %										
	Total	Maōri	Non-Maōri	Male	Female	Auckland	Other	<30	30-44	45-59	60+
1997	79	73	80	82	75	78	79	73	82	81	74
1998	65	-	-	76	66	67	73	68	74	77	61
1999	67	-	-	71	64	72	65	61	69	71	70
2000	69	52	70	76	62	66	70	68	71	74	62
Average 1997-2000	70	63	75	76	67	71	72	68	74	76	67
2007 ²	71	53	73	76	67	75	69	70	69	73	70
2008	73	66	74	77	70	72	74	67	75	76	74
2009	82	67	83	83	80	81	82	76	88	82	84
2010	77	60	79	79	76	75	78	73	75	80	79
2011	83	70	83	87	79	81	84	78	85	86	82
Average 2007-11	77	63	78	80	74	77	77	73	78	79	78

1. Sum of responses to "very important" and next scale point.

2. In 2007 age categories were changed to: <30, 30-49, 40-59, 60+.

Table B. Trends in Attitudes to Asian Immigration to New Zealand by Ethnicity, Gender, Geography and Age

Date	Positive Impact ^{1,4} %										
	Total	Maōri	Non-Maōri	Male	Female	Auckland	Other	<30	30-44	45-59	60+
1997	32	28	33	35	29	29	33	31	32	38	24
1998	31	-	-	33	29	33	30	28	36	33	26
1999	31	-	-	34	27	36	29	25	31	35	32
Average² 1997-99	31	28	33	34	28	33	31	28	34	35	28
2007	53	43	53	51	54	54	52	53	48	52	58
2008	54	52	54	55	53	56	53	54	57	53	54
2009	55	46	56	60	50	53	55	48	58	56	60
2010	49	50	49	48	50	50	49	43	46	52	51
2011	55	54	55	57	52	53	55	54	57	53	57
Average³ 2007-11	53	49	53	54	52	53	53	50	53	53	56

1. Sum of responses to “very positive” and next scale point.

2. What are your personal views on Asian immigration in New Zealand, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means you have very positive views and 5 very negative views?

3. Thinking about the Asia region in particular, and thinking about New Zealand in the next 10-20 years, how much of a positive impact do you think each of the following will have on New Zealand’s future? You can choose a very positive impact, a somewhat positive impact, neither a positive nor a negative impact, a somewhat negative impact, or a very negative impact. Immigration from Asia to New Zealand.

4. In 2007 age categories were changed to: <30, 30-49, 40-59, 60+.

How much do you personally have to do with Asian peoples or culture?

Table C. Trends in Contact with Asian People or Culture by Ethnicity, Gender, Geography and Age

Date	Contact With Asian Peoples or Culture ^{1,5}										
	%										
	Total	Maōri	Non-Maōri	Male	Female	Auckland	Other	<30	30-44	45-59	60+
1997 ²	34	40	33	31	48	45	30	38	31	39	29
2007 ³	48	35	50	46	50	64	41	56	43	49	41
2008	55	47	56	53	58	70	49	58	59	56	49
2009	62	54	63	63	60	80	54	77	56	61	48
2010 ⁴	51	45	51	49	53	67	44	57	46	50	47
2011	50	52	50	49	52	65	44	53	46	52	46
Average 2007-11	53	47	54	52	55	69	46	60	50	54	46

1. A lot plus a fair amount of contact.
2. How much do you personally have to do with Asian people or culture?
3. How much do you personally have to do with Asian peoples or cultures?
Can you tell me whether you have a lot of contact, some contact, or no contact with Asian peoples through each of the following...?
4. Involvement with Asian peoples and cultures.
5. In 2007 age categories were changed to: <30, 30-49, 40-59, 60+.



Table D. New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asian People, Strongly Agree, 2007-11

Statement	Percent Strongly Agree				
	2007 %	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %
Asian people contribute significantly to our economy	26.4	29.4	30.0	28.2	27.1
Asian immigrants bring a valuable cultural diversity to New Zealand	25.9	25.1	24.4	25.2	23.4
Asian employees improve workplace productivity	13.3	12.9	13.3	12.8	13.1
Asian people could do more to learn about New Zealand culture	-	-	19.4	28.3	19.5
Asian people do not mix well with New Zealanders	-	-	8.1	13.6	7.8
Asian immigrants take jobs away from New Zealanders	-	-	5.4	8.5	5.0

Dark blue are negative attributes.

Table E. New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asian People, Strongly Disagree, 2007-11

Statement	Percent Strongly Disagree				
	2007 %	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %
Asian people contribute significantly to our economy	1.5	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.8
Asian immigrants bring a valuable cultural diversity to New Zealand	3.6	3.5	2.0	2.3	1.2
Asian employees improve workplace productivity	3.3	2.9	2.8	3.3	2.2
Asian people could do more to learn about New Zealand culture	-	-	1.1	1.4	1.8
Asian people do not mix well with New Zealanders	-	-	5.8	6.9	8.2
Asian immigrants take jobs away from New Zealanders	-	-	14.4	12.6	13.5

Dark blue are positive attributes.



Endnotes



Endnotes

Clicking on individual endnotes will return you to the original text within this document.

- 1 LaPiere, R T. (1934). Attitudes vs. Actions. *Social Forces*, 13, 230–237.
- 2 Statistics New Zealand. (2012). Permanent & long-term migration by country of residence, age and sex (Annual-June). <http://www.stats.govt.nz>.
- 3 The question asked was: How much do you personally have to do with Asian peoples or cultures?.
- 4 UMR Insight Limited. (1997-2000). *Asia 2000 Tracking Study*. Asia New Zealand Foundation, Wellington.
- 5 Colmar Brunton. (2008-2012). *New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples*. Asia New Zealand Foundation, Wellington.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 The question asked was: Thinking specifically now about, please rate your feelings towards people from, using a scale of 0 to 100, with 100 meaning you feel very warm and favourable, and 0 meaning you feel very cold and unfavourable.
- 8 Colmar Brunton. (2008-2012). *New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples*. Asia New Zealand Foundation, Wellington.
- 9 Ibid
- 10 The question asked was: How important to New Zealand's future do you consider the following regions are on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important?
- 11 UMR.
- 12 Colmar Brunton.
- 13 UMR.
- 14 Colmar Brunton.
- 15 Colmar Brunton.
- 16 The questions asked were: 1997: What are your personal views on the following – on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you have very positive views and 5 very negative views? 2011: Thinking about the Asia region in particular, and thinking about New Zealand in the next 10-20 years, how much of a positive impact do you think each of the following will have on New Zealand's future? You can choose a very positive impact, a somewhat positive impact, neither a positive nor a negative impact, a somewhat negative impact, or a very negative impact.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 UMR.
- 19 Colmar Brunton.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Gendall, P, Healey, B, Kennedy-Moffat, J & Jeffcoat, M. (1996). *National Identity*. International Social Survey Programme, Palmerston North: Department of Marketing, Massey University.
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Asia New Zealand Foundation

The Asia New Zealand Foundation was founded in 1994 as a non-profit, apolitical organisation dedicated to building New Zealand's links with Asia. Through its activities in education, business, media, culture, research and policy, the Foundation aims to promote initiatives that deepen understanding and relationships between New Zealanders and the peoples of Asia.

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