

How to attract and retain skilled British migrants



RESEARCH

‘Migration change model: Exploring the process of migration on a psychological level’

by Aidan Tabor and Dr Taciano Milfont (2011)

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Background

In this age of globalisation, New Zealand laments the ‘brain drain’ occurring as skilled employees leave to pursue opportunities overseas.

New Zealand continues to compete with other Western countries to attract highly skilled migrants to meet job market demands. It can be difficult to attract skilled migrants to New Zealand, and even more difficult to keep them here.

The Centre for Applied Cross-cultural Research, part of Victoria University of Wellington, undertook a study of British migrants to further understand their reasons for migrating to New Zealand.

Main research findings

A clean green environment, less crime, and an improved lifestyle are the main reasons skilled British migrants choose to move to New Zealand. For example, providing a better childhood was seen as more important than financial gain.

The perception that there exists good employment opportunities in New Zealand are important for skilled migrants, while uncertainty over job prospects is a large concern for pre-departure migrants.

It is extremely important for skilled migrants to be provided with sufficient information prior to departure. Being fully informed lessens the stress of the move, and allows migrants to feel a greater sense of control of the process.

Better employment opportunities and family issues are among the main reasons for migrants returning to their country of origin.

Relevance of findings to New Zealand

Providing potential British migrants with sufficient information to assist them to make the decision to migrate to New Zealand is important.

Stress is a major component of pre-departure concerns for British migrants. Future employers can lessen these uncertainties through clarifying expectations and arrangements prior to migrants departing.

The desire for a better quality of life is one of the main reasons British skilled migrants move to New Zealand. It is important for employers to provide benefits such as good working environments, flexible working hours, and flexibility around childcare arrangements.

Better employment opportunities are one of the main reasons British migrants leave New Zealand. It is important migrants are given clear career pathways and career planning to encourage retention in the New Zealand workforce.