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PUBLICATION:

REFUGEE



QUOTA REFUGEES IN NEW ZEALAND: APPROVALS AND MOVEMENTS (1999-2008)

New Zealand is one of a small group of countries committed to an annual intake of refugees through its Quota Refugee Programme. These refugees are referred to as 'quota refugees'.

Quota Refugees in New Zealand: Approvals and movements (1999-2008) summarises quota refugee approvals in New Zealand and examines the subsequent movement patterns of quota refugees to understand their mobility.

FINDINGS

Approvals

This section describes the characteristics of quota refugees approved for New Zealand residence during 1999-2008. A total of 7,843 people from 56 countries were approved for New Zealand residence through the Quota Refugee Programme over the period. These refugees were accepted under the International/Humanitarian Stream¹ of the New Zealand Residence Programme, which allows for the resettlement of 750 refugees annually.

The largest number of quota refugees over 1999-2008 came from Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Iraq. These refugees made up 17 percent, 16 percent and 13 percent of the total refugee quota intake respectively.

Between 1999 and 2008 the majority of the quota refugee population was aged under 25

(60 percent). Only 14 percent were aged over 40. Overall, 53 percent of the quota refugee population were male. On average, there were approximately two secondary applicants for every principal applicant² and 66 percent of principal applicants were male.

Movements

This section provides information on the movements of quota refugees to and from New Zealand. Of the 7,277 quota refugees who arrived in New Zealand over 1999-2008, 8 percent were long-term absent³ at the end of December 2008. Long-term absence was highest among quota refugees from the former Yugoslavia followed by those from Somalia.

Overall, quota refugees tended to have markedly fewer spells of absence⁴ compared with other migrant groups to New Zealand. Larger proportions of time spent absent were generally associated with longer residence periods in New Zealand. Two-thirds of all quota refugees who came to New Zealand over 1999-2008 had not been absent for any time. Twenty-two percent of quota refugees who came to New Zealand in 1999 were absent for at least 25 percent of their time since taking up residence. Large proportions of the working-age population of quota refugees were absent for at least 25 percent of their time.

- PACIFIC
- YOUTH
- LISNZ
- SETTLEMENT
- FAMILY
- ECONOMIC
- GLOBAL MOBILITY

REFUGEE

1. This stream includes the Refugee Quota Programme and refugee-linked categories such as Refugee Status and Refugee Family Support. Other categories include the Pacific Access Category, the Samoan Quota, ministerial exceptions to policy, and other miscellaneous policies.
 2. A principal applicant is the key person assessed against the policy criteria.
 3. Long-term absence is defined as being absent from New Zealand for six continuous months or more.
 4. A spell of absence is a departure from New Zealand and a subsequent arrival.

This report can be obtained from the New Zealand Department of Labour website at <http://dol.govt.nz/publications/research/quota-refugees/index.asp>.

➔ For more information please contact research@dol.govt.nz, or visit www.immigration.govt.nz/research