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# **ASIA-ORIENTED POLICY**

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## Summary

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- As NZ's domestic population becomes more ethnically Asian and as NZ's international trade and diplomatic interests increasingly focus on Asia, both domestic and foreign policy needs to comprehensively address and recognize these shifts. **For NZ, the greatest work needs to be done in developing domestic policy and bringing it up to the Asia-oriented focus of its foreign policy.**



# Structure

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- Why Asia?
- Asians in NZ
- Implications for domestic policy
  - Health
  - The labour market
  - Education
- About the Asia NZ Foundation



## Why Asia?

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- The vast majority of international students who are in NZ are from Asia.
- NZ's population in 2006 was 10% Asian and is projected to be 16% Asian by 2026, putting NZ's Asian population in proportionate terms alongside that of Canada and above Australia's.
- By 2026, NZ's Asian population will equal that of Maori.
- Most of NZ's foreign policy priority countries are in Asia
- 2 of the 3 largest economies in the world are in Asia: Japan and China



## Why Asia?

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- Asia is home to ten of NZ's 20 top markets for goods exports and is becoming increasingly important for tourism and education.
- The strategic regional and political shifts in Asia will invariably affect NZ because of both its geographical and its economic proximity to the region.



## Asians in NZ

*“Dunedin’s links with the Chinese are the stuff of history – and not all of it makes pretty reading.”*

Peter Chin in Johnson & Moloughney, *Asia in the Making of NZ*, 2006.



## Asians in NZ

*"In the late 19th century, a small Chinatown was established around Haining Street [in Wellington], which was stereotyped as a slum and an area of crime by many in the dominant society, but was also an area of refuge and cultural association for Chinese."* (Friesen, *Asians in Wellington*, 2009)



## NZ's Asian populations

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Between March 1986 and March 2006, NZ's resident population that had been born in countries in Asia increased almost sevenfold, from 32,685 to 248,364

The population that identified with Asian ethnicities (including the NZ-born) increased by 550 %

The largest percentage increases for Asia-born populations between the censuses in 1986 and 2006 were recorded for people from South Korea and Taiwan



## NZ's Asian populations

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Growth in the China (PRC) and India-born populations, while not as large in terms of percentage increases, was by far the most significant in terms of actual numbers of people in NZ.

The total Chinese population in NZ increased by 456 % between 1986 and 2006, compared with increases of 562 % for the Indians and 770 % for the other Asian ethnic groups



## Developing domestic policies


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Health: some work here; more to be done

Labour market: Asians in the workforce

Education: Asia aware students?


# Health

do you feel good? 


## Asian Health

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## Health

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- Many Asian migrants and international students have significant mental health difficulties. This is a recurring theme in research. The challenge is that many of the countries they come from don't recognise or treat mental health problems in the same way we do in NZ.
- There are also particular physical health needs but for some a distrust of Western medicine.



## Asian health

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- South Asian children had lower prevalences of asthma, eczema and allergy than European children, while Chinese and Other Asian were similar.
- South Asian people had double the risk of being on treatment for high cholesterol than European.

Scragg, R. *Asian Health in Aotearoa in 2006 - 2007: trends since 2002-2003.*

Auckland: Northern DHB Support Agency, 2010.



## Asian health

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- The prevalence of being on treatment for diabetes was increased four-fold in South Asian and Pacific people, and two-fold in Other Asian and Māori, compared with European
- Asian children had similar prevalences of overweight and obesity to European children, using the standard international criteria.
- A longer period of residence in New Zealand by Asian people was associated with increased likelihood of being an alcohol drinker and of being overweight and obese, and decreased likelihood of being a non-smoker.



## Asian health

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- Asian people are not accessing the health services to the same degree as non-Asians.
- Given the continual rapid increase in the size of the Asian population living in New Zealand, there is an urgent need for
- Asian health data from national and regional surveys, in order to monitor the health status of Asian people in Aotearoa
- The prevalence of obesity has significantly increased among Asian adults in New Zealand from 2002-03 to 2006-07.

# The labour market





## Asians in the workforce

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- The housekeeping, restaurant and IT sectors employ larger percentages of North Asians
- The health and sales sectors register a larger representation of South Asians.
- Southeast Asians in the workforce tend to be employed in great numbers in nursing and midwifery (at a rate which is double the national average).
- Asians with a bachelor's degree were three times more likely to be working as clerks than the national average
- An increasing proportion of the Asian workforce will be NZ-born, and educated and trained in NZ

Badkar and Tuya, *The Asian workforce: a critical part of New Zealand's current and future labour market*, Wellington: Department of Labour, 2010.



## Chinese businesses in Auckland

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- The research shows that Chinese business owners depend extensively on other Chinese for employees, suppliers and customers.
- Many immigrant business owners we interviewed are satisfied with their migration to NZ, but there are others who feel frustrated, lonely and unhappy. English language difficulties are a common cause of frustration and discontent.
- ‘Ethnic precincts’, or the concentrations of small and medium-sized Chinese businesses in certain locations, have emerged rapidly in the past decade.

Spoonley and Meares, *Chinese Businesses and the Transformation of Auckland*, Asia NZ Foundation, 2009



# Asia aware students?

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## Asia aware students?

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- Asia-specific topics and projects are concentrated primarily within just two subject areas – history (59 %) and geography (67 %).
- More than half of all social studies programmes (55 %) did not include any Asia-specific topics or projects over the last two years, and the incidence of Asia-specific topics or projects is markedly lower for drama, economics, English, media studies, and music.

Colmar Brunton, *Educating for Asia:  
Asia in Secondary Schools*, Wellington:  
Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2010



## Asia aware students?

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- The three main motivations for including Asia-related content are:
  - appropriateness to the topic (30%),
  - the importance of the Asia region (16%)
  - and the presence of Asian students (14 %).
- The primary barriers to including more Asian content in school teaching programmes are:
  - availability of professional development, student
  - subject choice
  - and availability of resources



## Asia aware students?

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- Almost three-quarters (73 %) of surveyed schools with 50 to 499 students do not teach any Asian languages.
- Heads of Departments who are highly engaged with Asia are likely to *prioritise Asia-related content in their programmes*
- Another important motivation for including Asia-related content is the presence of Asian students.



# The role of Asia:NZ

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## **Preparing NZ for a future with Asia**

- Helping NZ teachers and students to become more Asia literature
- Identifying young leaders articulate in Asian and NZ cultures
- Equipping business leaders to engage with Asia on- and off-shore
- Leading debate and informing opinion through research on Asians in NZ and NZ in Asia
- Promoting Asian cultures and festivals
- Influencing the media's portrayal of Asian peoples and the Asian region
- Leading and participating in regional dialogues



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[www.asianz.org.nz](http://www.asianz.org.nz)