

Outlook

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SOUTHEAST ASIA AND DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2009 IS THE YEAR OF THE DIASPORA. *Intersections: Southeast Asia and diaspora engagement* provides an overview of the Southeast Asian diasporas in New Zealand and of the New Zealand diaspora in Southeast Asia. Given the importance of the emerging Free Trade Agreement involving New Zealand and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries, along with China and Australia, these diasporas are set to become important players in this transnational future. The focus is on the connections between these diasporas and on the ways in which the diasporas engage with each other and with their respective host societies. Three broad levels of activity – social, commercial and policy – are identified and the connections between these levels of activity discussed.

WHAT IS A DIASPORA?

NEW ZEALAND IS A COUNTRY OF MIGRATION, firstly as a migrant-receiving country from the beginning of human settlement, then in the past century as both a migrant destination and a migrant source country. By the end of the 20th century, a quarter of the country's resident population had been born overseas and one in five people born in New Zealand lived overseas.¹ New Zealand's diaspora as a proportion of the resident population ranks first among OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries ahead of Ireland and Luxembourg. While there are intricate links between the inflows and outflows of people, the sheer magnitude of the New Zealand diaspora can be illustrated by a simple observation: the New Zealand diaspora in terms of the number of people is virtually the same size as Australia's.² Such a high level of exchange of people globally raises important questions about how we might define the effective population of New Zealand, how large this population is, who the New Zealanders are and how the New Zealand diaspora – people living overseas who retain or have developed ties with New Zealand or with New Zealanders overseas – connects with this country.³

For a proportion of this group, New Zealand will no longer be regarded as home and perhaps properly these people should be counted simply as expatriates rather than as part of the country's diaspora. However, there is no comprehensive information on the individual's degree of attachment and it is common for some analysts to include all people born in a country with no regard to their level of attachment. Moreover, other people would see the diaspora as also including both the people who have emigrated and their locally born partners and new families who have developed a sense of attachment towards and engagement with New Zealand through their family connections. This has implications for any policies or programmes concerned with engagement with the diaspora.

The view taken in this paper is that the diaspora comprises people born in and with a sense of attachment to New Zealand together with their families, along with people who have adopted New Zealand permanent residence or citizenship but do not reside in New Zealand yet retain a sense of attachment. Unfortunately, measuring the New Zealand diaspora by this definition is virtually impossible, but a conservative estimate may approach or even exceed one million people.

Approximately 80 percent of people who leave New Zealand initially move to Australia and the majority of the New Zealand diaspora lives in that country.⁴ A large proportion of the remainder moves to Europe or North America. However, an increasing number of people are settling for lengthy periods and, indeed, permanently in parts of Asia. Along with East Asia and South Asia, Southeast Asia remains a relatively minor location for expat New Zealanders, but Asia is an increasingly important destination. The attractions are clear: lifestyle, climate, diversity and opportunity.

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- 1 David Law, Murat Genç and John Bryant (2009a) *Trade, diaspora and migration to New Zealand*. NZIER Working paper 2009/4. The losses are more dramatic if we consider the talent migration: a quarter of highly skilled New Zealanders live overseas (Dumont and Lamaitre, 2004).
 - 2 Graeme Hugo (2006) *The Real Story: The Australian diaspora, its size, nature and significance*. Presentation to Advance: Global Australian Professionals, Board Room, Australian Mission to the United Nations, New York 3 May. Hugo estimates the Australian diaspora at 900,000 (4.3 percent of the Australian population) and the New Zealand diaspora at 850,000 (21.9 percent of the population).
 - 3 This definition is rather broader than some theorists adopt. For a discussion of definitional problems, see Jana Braziel (2008) *Diaspora, an Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.
 - 4 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009. Estimated resident population, selected countries of birth, age and sex – 2002 to 2008. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra. Website: www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3412.02007-08?OpenDocument
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“Unfortunately, measuring the New Zealand diaspora by this definition is virtually impossible, but a conservative estimate may approach or even exceed one million people.”



FIGURE 1: Map of Southeast Asia
SOURCE: Free Printable Maps⁵

5 <http://printable-maps.blogspot.com/2008/09/political-map-of-southeast-asia.html>

WHY ARE DIASPORAS IMPORTANT?

The focus of many studies on diasporas is on the economic aspects of diaspora engagement, driven in part by the benefits that derive from business activities and knowledge exchanges. For example, in a United Nations report in 2006, it was observed that:

Governments can encourage the engagement of expatriate communities in the expansion of trade, tourism, investment and knowledge exchange by improving communications and travel linkages with countries of destination and by facilitating circulation and return migration. Actively encouraging and supporting the formation of transnational associations involving researchers at home and abroad may be particularly important to enhance knowledge exchange.⁶

Southeast Asia sits on the doorstep of both Australia and New Zealand. Proximity is only part of the story. Strong social and political links are found between the New Zealand and Australian diasporas in Southeast Asia, just as there are extensive family and business links between Southeast Asians living in New Zealand and those living in Australia. For this reason it is useful to think of the connections as a set of interlaced diasporas.

This report is concerned with some aspects of the Southeast Asian diaspora in New Zealand and of the New Zealand diaspora in Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia is important to New Zealand, not simply as a destination for New Zealanders and as home to people educated in New Zealand with continuing attachment to this country. New Zealand is home to a significant number of people from Southeast Asia, many of whom have come as refugees, as family migrants and, increasingly, as skilled and business migrants. These two diasporas – New Zealanders living in Southeast Asia and Southeast Asians living in New Zealand – are linked by intermarriage, by business and educational connections, by shared experiences and by family links across countries.

THE SIZE OF THE DIASPORAS

It is important though, not to overstate the visibility of New Zealanders in Southeast Asia. The region is home to a large population. The number of New Zealanders in the region as a proportion of the Southeast Asian population is very much smaller than the proportion of the Southeast Asian diaspora in the New Zealand population.

How large these diasporas are is intensely debated. But the question does matter. The size and proximity of members of a diaspora define how the diaspora as a whole relates to the locality, the local population and itself. In some places, a diaspora may form a community that can exist as a semi-autonomous unit, whereas in the case of very small and scattered diasporas, as we find with New Zealanders in Southeast Asia, the relation within the diaspora and with the wider population is very different. This suggests that, for the present purpose, the most immediate question is the size of the New Zealand diaspora in Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, as with the size of the total New Zealand diaspora, this is the least easy question to answer.

Local censuses would seem to be a reasonable place to start. However, as with all censuses in the region, the measurement of the foreign-born population is poor for a raft of well known reasons, such as non-compliance of people with census participation and inherent difficulties in measuring populations that are highly mobile with very tenuous rights to live in the country.⁷

Southeast Asia has been subjected to considerable internal and external pressures, which have resulted in periods of political and civil unrest and, in some cases such as Viet Nam, Cambodia and Timor-Leste, civil war. This has resulted in very uneven coverage of population in historical data collections.

6 United Nations, 2006. Cited by: Richard Bedford, Robert Didham, Elsie Ho (2006) *The New Zealand Expats Programme: Tapping talent in the Kiwi diaspora*. Paper presented to the International Geographical Union 2006 Brisbane Regional Conference, 3-7 July.

7 It is not uncommon for people to live in a country for many decades quite legally by periodically crossing a nearby border and re-entering to renew temporary visas of various types. It should be noted though that some countries, such as Thailand, have moved to restrict or prevent this practice in recent years.

In most cases even census data is not available publicly, for a range of political reasons. An estimate by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade⁸ indicated that, among the 900,000 Australians living abroad, there were around 50,000 living in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries. This was likely to be an underestimate.

If we assume that New Zealanders and Australians are similarly attracted to this region, we might expect to find between 8,000 and 12,000 New Zealanders in Southeast Asia. On the other hand, the different histories of involvement within the region have resulted in slightly different distributions of New Zealanders and Australians, with, for example, proportionally more Australians in Indonesia and proportionally more New Zealanders in Malaysia.

It must be remembered that the Australian and New Zealand diasporas are not entirely independent, with many of the expat organisations and networks combining forces as joint exercises throughout the region.

Partly this represents a purely pragmatic pooling of resources, but also it recognises that the two diasporas have substantial interests in common. Moreover, many of the New Zealanders living in Southeast Asia had previously moved to Australia, as can be seen by the qualifications of some of the academics working in the region who are New Zealand-born but obtained their higher degrees in Australia.

For the size of the Southeast Asian diasporas in Australia and New Zealand the position is rather more straightforward, or at least superficially so. There is good information on the number of people born in Southeast Asian countries who live in New Zealand (nearly 60,000 people in 2006) and in Australia (approaching 600,000 people in 2006). Table 1 shows the number of people born in Southeast Asia who were living in Australia and New Zealand at the time of the respective censuses in 2006.

TABLE 1: PEOPLE BORN IN SOUTHEAST ASIA LIVING IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, 2006 CENSUSES

COUNTRY OF BIRTH	AUSTRALIA			NEW ZEALAND		
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
South-East Asia (nfd)	207	178	385	9	18	27
Brunei Darussalam	1,140	1,247	2,387	135	144	282
Cambodia	11,378	13,148	24,526	2,775	3,078	5,856
Indonesia	22,800	28,175	50,975	2,094	2,520	4,614
Laos	4,515	4,857	9,372	483	411	894
Malaysia	42,030	50,307	92,337	6,867	7,680	14,547
Burma (Myanmar)	5,985	6,394	12,379	414	429	843
Philippines	42,687	77,851	120,538	5,625	9,657	15,282
Singapore	18,257	21,712	39,969	2,076	2,781	4,857
Thailand	10,493	20,057	30,550	2,145	4,014	6,159
East Timor	4,575	4,740	9,315	9	18	27
Viet Nam	75,290	84,559	159,849	2,355	2,520	4,875
TOTAL	239,357	313,225	552,582	24,987	33,270	58,263

SOURCES: *Statistics New Zealand and Australian Bureau of Statistics*

⁸ Cited by Hugo, Graeme (2006) *The real story: the Australian diaspora, its size, nature and significance*. Presentation to Advance: Global Australian Professionals, Board Room, Australian Mission to the United Nations, New York 3rd May 2006.

“Diasporas are increasingly interconnected in ways that might be considered better as transnationalism.”

However, just as the respective diasporas of New Zealand and Australia living in Southeast Asia also include their partners and children, many of whom are born either locally or elsewhere in the world, the diaspora would also include the locally born partners and families of the migrants.

As with the New Zealand and Australian diasporas in Southeast Asia, the Southeast Asian diasporas in New Zealand and Australia also keep in touch through local community and expat organisations, many of which now have trans-Tasman links and links to other community and expat organisations. This implies that diasporas are increasingly interconnected in ways that might be considered better as transnationalism. It has been noted that “migrant transnationalism reflects the argument that the contemporary world is structured in a way that permits (certain) individuals to engage simultaneously in more than one locale”⁹ and thus as members of more than one diaspora simultaneously.

Just as this is a feature of the Southeast Asian diaspora in New Zealand, it is true of the New Zealanders in Southeast Asia. Many migrants effectively operate as though they have two homes, yet are sufficiently distanced from both to feel a separation from both. As Butcher¹⁰ found in a study of Southeast Asian international tertiary students, this process of alienation and poly-local attachment develops quite quickly.

9 Collins, Francis (2009) Connecting ‘home’ with ‘here’: personal homepages in everyday transnational lives. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(6):839-859

10 Butcher, Andrew (2003) *No place like home? The experiences of south-east Asian international university students in New Zealand and their re-entry into their countries of origin*. PhD Thesis, Massey University

MIGRATION BETWEEN NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT TO WORK OUT HOW MANY NEW ZEALANDERS ARE LIVING IN ASEAN COUNTRIES, recent data for permanent and long-term migration for New Zealand is available and from this it is possible to gain at least some idea of the number of people moving to and from ASEAN countries. Tables 2 and 3 indicate that there is a significant exchange of people both with and without New Zealand citizenship, with an apparent average net gain by Southeast Asia of nearly 150 New Zealand-born New Zealand citizens per year. However, care is needed in interpreting these figures because people do migrate on from Southeast Asia to other regions and some New Zealanders move to Southeast Asia from other countries such as Australia.

TABLE 2: NEW ZEALAND CITIZEN PERMANENT AND LONG-TERM MIGRATION FLOWS, SOUTHEAST ASIA, 2001-2008

YEAR	ARRIVALS INTO NEW ZEALAND FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA			DEPARTURES FROM NEW ZEALAND TO SOUTHEAST ASIA		
	NEW ZEALAND BORN	SOUTHEAST ASIA BORN	TOTAL	NEW ZEALAND BORN	SOUTHEAST ASIA BORN	TOTAL
2001	338	79	417	562	37	599
2002	368	91	459	513	48	561
2003	379	82	461	394	41	435
2004	344	71	415	431	37	468
2005	339	93	432	457	68	525
2006	354	106	460	477	48	525
2007	340	83	423	589	63	652
2008	418	115	533	603	60	663

Source: Statistics New Zealand

It is important to note that data in Tables 2 and 3 reflects the citizenships of the passports on which people are travelling. Hence, in Table 3, New Zealand-born “non-New Zealand citizens” may at the same time be New Zealand citizens. Prior to 1 January 2006 they would have automatically been so by virtue of being born in New Zealand regardless of their parents’ citizenship(s) or residence status, unless they had renounced their New Zealand citizenship in favour of citizenship of a country that barred dual citizenship. From 1 January 2006 a baby born in New Zealand is automatically a New Zealand citizen if either parent was a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.

TABLE 3: NON-NEW ZEALAND CITIZEN PERMANENT AND LONG-TERM MIGRATION FLOWS, SOUTHEAST ASIA, 2001-2008

YEAR	ARRIVALS INTO NEW ZEALAND FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA			DEPARTURES FROM NEW ZEALAND TO SOUTHEAST ASIA		
	NEW ZEALAND BORN	SOUTHEAST ASIA BORN	TOTAL	NEW ZEALAND BORN	SOUTHEAST ASIA BORN	TOTAL
2001	21	3,678	3,699	33	990	1,023
2002	27	4,240	4,267	23	821	844
2003	21	3,683	3,704	18	927	945
2004	18	2,804	2,822	21	1,073	1,094
2005	18	3,041	3,059	23	1,032	1,055
2006	15	5,338	5,353	24	975	999
2007	25	6,565	6,590	34	946	980
2008	37	6,917	6,954	25	1,162	1,187

Source: Statistics New Zealand

The principal component of the New Zealand diaspora comprises the people born in New Zealand who are living overseas. We do not, however, currently have a ready means of determining how large this population is, although there are estimates for OECD countries and a larger global project is underway to improve both the quality and the coverage. To illustrate the extent of the difficulty, we use the example of Thailand, partly because this country has the most readily available data and partly because Thailand ranks, along with Malaysia and Singapore, as a major destination country for New Zealanders within Southeast Asia. If we were to look at the Thai census, we would find that it had counted 300 Thai residents who were born in New Zealand.

TABLE 4: PERMANENT AND LONG-TERM MIGRATION FLOWS, TOTAL 2001-2008

COUNTRY	ARRIVALS INTO NEW ZEALAND			DEPARTURES FROM NEW ZEALAND		
	NEW ZEALAND BORN	SOUTHEAST ASIA BORN	TOTAL	NEW ZEALAND BORN	SOUTHEAST ASIA BORN	TOTAL
Cambodia	81	1,464	1,545	161	171	332
Laos	29	80	109	54	24	78
Myanmar	22	100	122	30	15	45
Thailand	597	4,908	5,505	817	2,127	2,944
Viet Nam	126	2,248	2,374	230	638	868
Brunei Darussalam	156	293	449	190	36	226
Indonesia	277	2,374	2,651	443	1,093	1,536
Malaysia	484	9,294	9,778	569	2,752	3,321
Philippines	372	13,343	13,715	353	630	983
Singapore	899	2,857	3,756	1,329	813	2,142
Timor-Leste (from December 2002)	16	20	36	24	19	43
East Timor (to November 2002)	3	5	8	27	10	37
TOTAL	3,062	36,986	40,048	4,227	8,328	12,555

Source: Statistics New Zealand

If we consider Thailand, for the period 2001-2008 (Table 4), permanent and long-term international migration data from New Zealand implies that 220 more people born in New Zealand left for Thailand than returned to New Zealand from Thailand. This suggests that on the surface at least the number of New Zealanders present in Thailand increased by this number in the eight years covered. However, we do know that many New Zealand-born moved to Thailand from Australia or other countries, including other ASEAN countries, just as many returning from Thailand as permanent and long-term migrants would have originally migrated to different countries from New Zealand. It is therefore very difficult to arrive at a usable figure for the number of New Zealand expatriates in Thailand, some of whom have lived in Thailand for many decades. A fair estimate nonetheless would be between 1,000 and 2,000. This is consistent with the research of Robert Howard at the University of New South Wales, who estimated around 1,400 New Zealanders were living in Thailand, basing his calculation on the number of Australians there.¹¹ If we further include the partners and children of these expats, it is likely that the number is rather higher.

Similarly a report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) noted 326 New Zealanders living in Malaysia in January 2003.¹² However, this represents only a fraction of the New Zealanders living in Malaysia. It is likely that the number of New Zealanders in Malaysia is similar to the number in Thailand. As also was the practice in Thailand until recently, most, including many foreign-born male spouses, would not be registered with IOM and keep their residence permits alive by regular border crossings. In the case of Malaysia, the size of the diaspora has fluctuated over the years because it from time to time has included a significant number of Malaysia-born people with New Zealand permanent residence obtained while living and studying in New Zealand and who returned to Malaysia while retaining very strong ties with New Zealand.¹³ Many are now associated with the increasingly important trade and commercial activities between the two countries and with neighbouring Singapore, which is home to an estimated 3,500 New Zealanders.¹⁴

11 Howard, Robert (2009) The migration of Westerners to Thailand: an unusual flow from developed to developing world. *International Migration*, 47(2): 193-225

12 IOM (2003) Total Expats in Malaysia by Country as at January 2003 Website: <http://www.iom-seasia.org/index.php?module=pagesetter&func=viewpub&tid=6&pid=111>

13 Butcher, Andrew (2003)

14 Estimate supplied along with other valuable information by HE Martin Harvey, New Zealand's High Commissioner in Singapore, based on figures supplied by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

SOUTHEAST ASIANS IN NEW ZEALAND

TWO OF THE WAYS OF IDENTIFYING PEOPLE ARE BY ETHNICITY AND BY BIRTHPLACE. Taking ethnicity first, there were 44,000 people of Southeast Asian ethnicities living in New Zealand at the time of the 2006 Census. Some of the groups have origins in refugee flows of people escaping conflict, with continued migration through family reunification and family formation. Other groups have origins in labour and education migration – moving to New Zealand for work or education and staying. Most have relatively recent migration histories. The Lao population differs from the other groups in that one in three was born in New Zealand and, as the census shows, on average, those born overseas have been living in New Zealand for almost two decades, with few arriving in the past decade. Moreover, they are distinct in having more males than females born overseas.

TABLE 5: PEOPLE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN ETHNICITIES, RESIDENT IN NEW ZEALAND, 2006 CENSUS

ETHNICITY	NUMBER	NEW ZEALAND BORN	SEX RATIO NEW ZEALAND BORN	SEX RATIO OVERSEAS BORN
		PERCENT	MALES PER 100 FEMALES	
Filipino	16,938	17	104	59
Cambodian	6,915	23	112	91
Vietnamese	4,773	21	96	93
Burmese	729	16	90	99
Indonesian	3,261	19	109	75
Lao	1,344	33	95	109
Malay	3,537	17	87	77
Thai	6,057	16	103	49
Other Southeast Asian	702	14	65	79
TOTAL	43,959	19	103	69

Source: Statistics New Zealand

As noted earlier though, there are around 60,000 people living in New Zealand who were born in Southeast Asia. Among this group are people of Indian and Chinese ethnicities, such as Tamils, Punjabis and Hakkas, who have moved to New Zealand from Southeast Asia. While Southeast Asia has been very closely connected with both India and China throughout the past two millennia or more of its history, Table 6 (page 10) shows that people of Indian ethnicities in New Zealand have originated from those countries where significant Indian populations were relocated under British rule, notably Malaysia and Singapore. Chinese born in Southeast Asia have moved from all ASEAN countries to New Zealand. Malaysia, however, still dominates as the country of birth, largely because of the social situation of the Chinese in Malaysia and the close relationships between the two countries. Many of the students who studied in New Zealand, then stayed and settled were Malaysian Chinese in origin. Almost half have lived in New Zealand for longer than ten years and many of the more recent arrivals have moved as families and in some cases are related to the previous migrants.

One of the striking features of the Chinese population is the diversity with respect to mixed ethnicity. Few Chinese born in Malaysia and Singapore reported identification with other ethnicities, whereas almost half of those born in Thailand did. This will at least partly be a reflection of ethnic recording practices in the country of origin. For example, in Malaysia the official ethnic classification is primarily determined paternally, so that in actual fact ethnic Malaysian Chinese with multiple ethnicities are likely to be under-reported. This can vary even within a country. Many Malaysian Chinese in the state of Sabah are officially classified as Bumiputra partly due to the State Enactment Law, which defines Bumiputra on the basis of both paternal and maternal lineages. It is likely that the tendency to subordinate one identity in these cases has a consequential effect on how people define their ethnicities after settling in New Zealand.

TABLE 6: PEOPLE OF INDIAN AND/OR CHINESE ETHNICITIES BORN IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, 2006 CENSUS

COUNTRY OF BIRTH	CHINESE	INDIAN	PERCENT ALSO WITH OTHER SEA ETHNICITIES	
			CHINESE	INDIAN
Myanmar	39	27	15.0	11.1
Cambodia	1,128	3	20.3	n.a.
Laos	30	0	27.6	n.a.
Thailand	177	30	44.9	30.0
Viet Nam	1,236	3	10.5	n.a.
Brunei Darussalam	132	18	6.9	5.3
Indonesia	1,209	24	24.3	17.4
Malaysia	9,837	1,356	4.4	4.6
Philippines	279	24	34.5	20.8
Singapore	2,505	369	0.7	1.1
Timor-Leste	3	0	n.a.	n.a.
TOTAL	16,575	1,854		

Source: Statistics New Zealand

EDUCATION ENROLMENTS IN NEW ZEALAND

In recent years the relative importance of Southeast Asians among education enrolments has risen, so that in secondary education more than ten percent of the enrolled Asian international students are from Southeast Asia, with more than half of these from Thailand. They differ slightly from the Asian international students as a whole in that they are more likely to be enrolled at year 11 and year 12, whereas the Chinese, Korean and Japanese international students are more likely to be enrolled across years 11 to 13.

TABLE 7: NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA ENROLLED IN SECONDARY YEARS 11-13 AND IN TERTIARY SECTOR PROVIDERS, AS AT 1 MARCH, 2003-2008

	YEAR 11		YEAR 12		YEAR 13		TERTIARY ENROLMENTS	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
2003	184	101	229	178	188	113	1,807	1,821
2004	178	111	238	155	169	132	1,817	1,865
2005	157	105	215	164	136	93	1,786	1,949
2006	104	78	201	119	127	87	1,925	2,130
2007	107	103	156	129	110	63	2,118	2,377
2008	120	94	165	163	117	86	2,394	2,563

Source: Ministry of Education

Southeast Asian students are also prominent among the tertiary sector enrolments. The patterns have changed, however, in the past decade, from more than half of tertiary-sector Asian international students coming from Southeast Asia to a period around 2003-2005 where this group represented less than ten percent of the Asian total. Currently almost one in five is from Southeast Asia. However, the percentages are influenced by the major changes in students from China. As Table 7 (page 11) shows, the number of students from Southeast Asia has remained very steady but is showing signs of gradually increasing.

This stability of market is an important factor in maintaining satisfactory servicing of the sector and may be assumed to be a factor in the high reputation this country holds in the Southeast Asian region as an education provider. Interviews with current students have indicated that the development of their functional English language capability is regarded as at least as important as the training in their specific disciplines.

In terms of completion of qualifications, Southeast Asian students have traditionally performed extremely well, exceeding completion rates for students from other regions within Asia. This reflects the selection process and the involvement of organisations such as NZAID and the legacy of the Colombo Plan.¹⁵ The striking aspect from the point of view of diaspora engagement is that most of the students interviewed by the author have a clear set of visions for Southeast Asia as a region that extend beyond their own national borders. While these visions are diverse and vary both with the individual and with the country of origin, they do have some common themes such as transnational thinking, regional development and strong bilateral relationships with the rest of the world, and especially with China.

SETTLING IN TO NEW ZEALAND

To find out more about the settlement of migrants in New Zealand, the Department of Labour and Statistics New Zealand are conducting the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to New Zealand (LISNZ).¹⁶ The small sample of migrants who were of Southeast Asian citizenship (birthplace was not collected) was almost evenly split between family (43 percent) and skilled migration (49 percent) streams, with a few in other categories.

As expected in an environment with substantial emphasis on skilled migration, two-thirds of those being granted permanent residence were tertiary educated. There were slightly fewer males than females overall, but the two largest source countries, the Philippines (60 percent) and Thailand (17 percent) were strongly gendered with around two-thirds of the migrants being female. The migrants tended to be in the prime working and partnering age groups: predominantly in their 20s and 30s. Of the Southeast Asians who were partnered, one in five had a New Zealand-born partner at the time of interview, although the majority had either arrived with their partners or arrived as partners to previous migrants, with 22 percent stating that the reason for their migration to New Zealand was marriage.

Among the topics this survey covered was the reasons why migrants were satisfied or dissatisfied with their migration experiences. What is significant about the things that make people happy with or displeased with their location intensely colours the way they articulate their enthusiasm or otherwise for their new country and engage with people in their home country. While a much-underrated aspect of the development of productive relationships between diasporas, the level of comfort with the adopted homeland is at least as important as other factors. This has a considerable influence on how intersecting diasporas communicate and cooperate.

In part these results can be read as a response to local conditions, although at a different level they can be read as a statement of contrast with their origins.

¹⁵ Smith, Anthony (2005a) *Southeast Asia and New Zealand: a History of Regional and Bilateral Relations*. Victoria University Press and the New Zealand Institute for International Affairs, Wellington. Smith, Anthony (2005b) *New Zealand-Southeast Asia Relations: A Survey of the Contemporary Relationships*. Outlook 01. Asia New Zealand Foundation, Wellington. Butcher, Andrew (2003)

¹⁶ The survey sample was selected from migrants aged 16 years and over who were approved for permanent residence in New Zealand from 1 November 2004 to 31 October 2005. The sample excluded refugees, but included those who had already been in New Zealand for some time before on other permits who transitioned to residence. Wave 1 interviews were conducted between 1 May 2005 and 30 April 2007, and wave 2 interviews between 1 May 2006 and 30 April 2008.

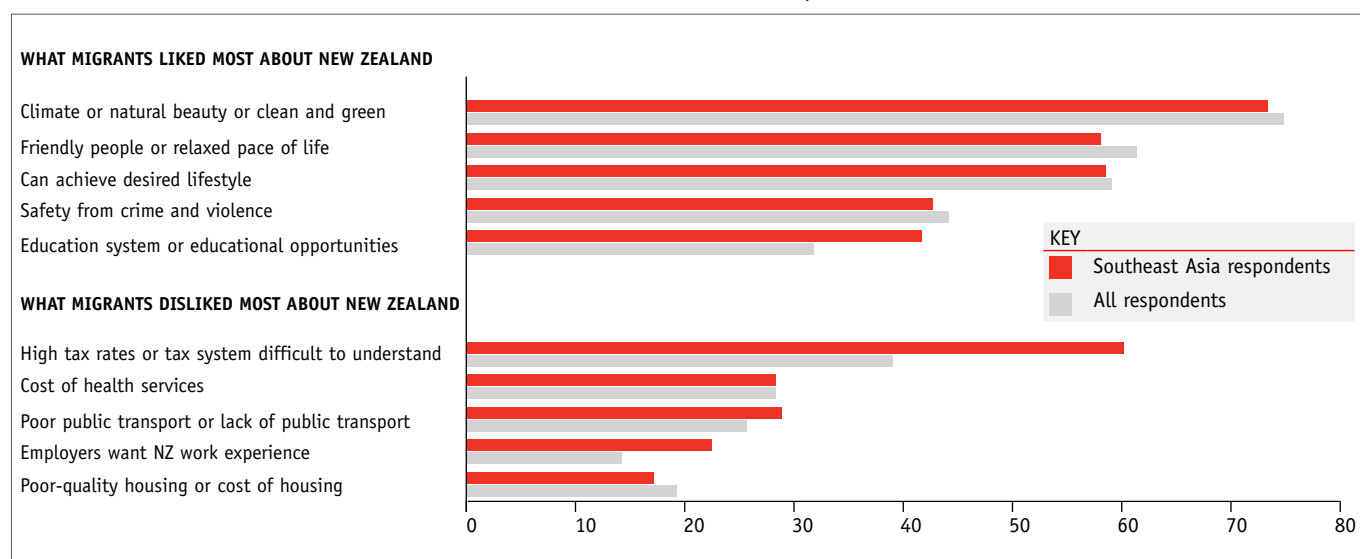
TABLE 8: MIGRANTS FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA, REASONS FOR SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION WITH MOVE TO NEW ZEALAND, LISNZ, 2008-2009

TOP FIVE REASONS CITED	WAVE 1	WAVE 2	TOP FIVE REASONS CITED	WAVE 1	WAVE 2
WHAT MIGRANTS LIKED MOST ABOUT NEW ZEALAND	PERCENT		WHAT MIGRANTS DISLIKED MOST ABOUT NEW ZEALAND	PERCENT	
Climate or natural beauty or clean and green	70.0	73.2	High tax rates or tax system difficult to understand	58.2	60.0
Friendly people or relaxed pace of life	55.8	57.9	Cost of health services	27.1	28.2
Can achieve desired lifestyle	50.5	58.4	Poor public transport or lack of public transport	26.5	28.8
Safety from crime and violence	42.6	42.6	Employers want New Zealand work experience	24.7	22.4
Education system or educational opportunities	37.9	41.6	Poor-quality housing or cost of housing	14.1	17.1

Source: LISNZ

Among the top five aspects of New Zealand cited by Southeast Asian respondents, the importance placed on environment and education is clear (Table 8). These reasons need to be read with care as Southeast Asians are recognised as reluctant to criticise, although it needs to be noted that this group of migrants already tend to be achievement oriented and likely to identify these aspects as centrally important.

FIGURE 2: MIGRANTS FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA COMPARED WITH ALL RESPONDENTS, REASONS FOR SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION WITH MOVE TO NEW ZEALAND, LISNZ WAVE 2, 2009



Source: LISNZ

“A distinctive feature of the Southeast Asian migrants to New Zealand is that they are more likely to settle outside Auckland than people of other origins.”

More revealing though, are the reasons for dissatisfaction. Standing out above all other reasons is the complexity and weight of the taxation burden on the individual and businesses, and it is also a topic of substantial interest to the current students working in development areas planning to return to Southeast Asia to contribute to regional advancement. While one in six found nothing to be dissatisfied with, well over half of those who gave reasons for dissatisfaction gave taxation as a reason. Partly this is a response to previous experiences of societies with low tax burdens and a low provision of associated social services, but it would be too simplistic to regard this as universally true of such a diverse set of regimes as the ASEAN countries. As Figure 2 (page 12) shows, at 60 percent, Southeast Asians are much less satisfied with this aspect of New Zealand than other migrants, among whom less than 40 percent expressed dissatisfaction. In some Southeast Asian source countries, primary tax collection tends to be indirect and is proportionally as burdensome, just less visible. In other countries, for example in Cambodia, tariffs on imports along with other formal and informal mechanisms generate sufficient revenue to permit very low rates of personal and business taxation.

Health costs and public transport are regularly cited as problematic in New Zealand by most migrants and this is not peculiar to those from Southeast Asia. It is perhaps noteworthy, though, that one of the major elements of tourism in Southeast Asia is medical tourism, with people making use of high-quality and relatively inexpensive providers of medical and dental services available in countries such as Thailand. This implies a good awareness of value for money in health.

A distinctive feature of the Southeast Asian migrants to New Zealand is that they are more likely to settle outside Auckland than people of other origins. Partly this could reflect the extra points in the immigration points system applied to applications for settlement outside Auckland, but a feature of this group is that its members generally already have family in New Zealand or contacts within the communities and these play a major part in their choice of settlement location.

NEW ZEALANDERS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Turning now to consider New Zealanders living in Southeast Asia, the lack of data discussed above is an abiding issue. Nevertheless, there is sufficient information to be able to derive at least a partial picture of the characteristics of this diaspora. It needs to be acknowledged that this picture is drawn from a wide range of local official sources, New Zealand government officials, expats currently living in Southeast Asia or who have since returned to New Zealand, academics working in the field, including expat teaching staff at a number of universities, and connections with the Southeast Asian communities in New Zealand and in Southeast Asia. A key conduit of information, mechanism for transnational activity, and engagement among and between diasporas is the internet.

While there is no data source on New Zealanders living in Southeast Asia that compares in coverage or analytical power with the LISNZ data, in March and April 2006 KEA New Zealand (the Kiwi Expat Association) conducted a survey of expatriates.¹⁷ This was a web-based survey conducted to coincide approximately with the New Zealand 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings. The survey netted more than 18,000 New Zealanders living abroad. Included among these were 492 people living in Southeast Asia (Table 9) of whom 74 said they were either not likely to or definitely not intending to return to New Zealand and 245 said they would be likely or certain to return. What does emerge though, from this data, is that the key pull factors that attract Southeast Asians to New Zealand are very similar to those that draw New Zealanders to Southeast Asia and influence decisions on whether to stay or to return. These basically cover a range of factors that include lifestyle, environment, career opportunities and security of tenure.

This information needs to be treated with some caution since the survey was more likely to capture people who remained quite strongly connected to New Zealand, and even among those who did participate there were a large number of people who had not yet decided about their future plans or were keeping their options open – it has often been noted that migrants are typically those with “get up and go” and they do indeed get up and go if things do not suit. It is unlikely that the sample is representative of all New Zealanders overseas given the high proportion of the respondents who were university graduates or had other tertiary qualifications.

Although the survey did provide very useful information on expats in some regions, for Southeast Asia there are reasons for considering this data to be representative of those who responded to the survey rather than expats living in Southeast Asia as a whole. Much of this though has to be treated as impressionistic since there has been no systematic count, let alone survey, of expats in the region. The key constraint was that this survey was web based and a significant portion of the expat community would have had no awareness of the survey's existence. However, it might be reasonable to conclude that those sections of the diaspora of most interest to policy-makers and economic strategists were among the respondents. The KEA survey confirmed that New Zealanders living overseas tend to be on average more highly educated, motivated and ecologically centred than other diasporas. In this respect they carry with them the ideals of their homeland.

TABLE 9: RESPONDENTS TO KEA SURVEY, NEW ZEALAND EXPATS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

COUNTRY WHERE SURVEYED	NUMBER OF PEOPLE
Brunei	11
Cambodia	15
Indonesia	37
Laos	3
Malaysia	49
Myanmar (Burma)	3
Philippines	16
Singapore	236
Thailand	103
Timor-Leste	6
Viet Nam	19
Total	498

Source: KEA (NZ)

17 For details of the Every One Counts global survey of expats, see website: <http://www.keanewzealand.com/news/eoc-summary.html>

A DIVERSE DIASPORA: SOME INDIVIDUAL GLIMPSES

Survey data, however, gives an aggregate view, which tends to gloss over the diversity of the groups within the diaspora. This can be illustrated by looking at the individual experiences of New Zealanders living in Southeast Asia and considering how these experiences demonstrate the connections within and between diasporas.

A typical example of the environmental awareness that characterises New Zealand, together with business experience, especially when married up with extensive local knowledge and a passion for a place, can be seen in Bronwen Evans, a New Zealand expat who has been working in public relations in Bangkok since 1999. Along with Surin Laopha, she is owner and director of an eco-resort in Chanthaburi known as the Faasai Resort and Spa, which featured as a finalist in the 2008 Wild Asia Responsible Tourism Awards. Bronwen Evans is also the President of the Bangkok Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). Not only does this have echoes of the high interest in eco-tourism that has been the hallmark of much of the local-grown tourist development in New Zealand, but also it connects to the rapidly growing awareness of environmental assets throughout Southeast Asia. In this way the environmental and lifestyle ideals that New Zealand espouses find resonance in emerging ideals across Southeast Asia.

International interest in wild places and the environment has led to adventure tourism being a rapidly growing sector across Southeast Asia. Helicopters New Zealand, a New Zealand company operating in Southeast Asia, is one of the potential beneficiaries of this growth. The company operates in Southeast Asia as two companies: Helicopters (Cambodia) Pty Ltd and the Lao Westcoast Helicopter Co. The former, based in Phnom Penh, provides support for the tourism industry in Cambodia, primarily servicing the main tourist centres such as Seam Reap and the neighbouring Angkor complex, although increasingly servicing other transport needs for tourism in other parts of Cambodia. The latter company, based in Vientiane, is heavily involved with the United States Department of Defense Missing In Action Programme and in servicing the mining industry and mineral exploration operators, but also is available for charter by private and corporate businesses. Expansion is signalled, with services available in Viet Nam and Myanmar.

These are just two of a large number of examples to indicate that expats fall into several diverse and broad categories – among these are professional employees in the business sector, people working in the education and aid sectors, and the self-employed. The example of Bronwen Evans, as a professional and as a self-employed entrepreneur, shows that these categories may overlap. However, the majority of employed professional expats working in the business sector are employees in foreign firms, with considerable emphasis on maintaining relations between markets.

For this reason, public relations features prominently among the occupations of New Zealanders in Thailand, and indeed other parts of Southeast Asia. For example, the New Zealand public relations firm Baldwin Boyle Group established an office in Bangkok in 1997, following a long history in Singapore as a result of securing a contract with Singapore Airlines over a quarter of a century ago. Expats feature prominently, with the group being headed by Greg Shand from 1986 until 1992 and currently under the directorship of Louise Nicholson. Similarly, Alastair Carthew, formerly of Air New Zealand and TVNZ, moved to Thailand with Star Alliance and now lives in Phuket and runs his own public relations company, AC Public Relations Counsel, and is actively involved with the IABC, which provides a useful international professional network in the field of communications.

Potentially, public relations operations will provide an increasingly important link across the region as the ASEAN-China Free Trade Group becomes fully operational. Businesses entering the various and diverse markets in the region will be dependent for success on the skills and local knowledge afforded by public relations specialists, and those organisations with expats in prominent positions are best placed to link the business cultures of the partners in an effective way. It has often been noted that developing business relations in a number of countries such as Thailand, Indonesia and China requires time, patience and perseverance but what is less often noted is that the models are not a one size fits all.

One should not overstate this, however, as Mike Holt of Holt Gardyne, operating from Auckland but establishing a wider regional presence with an office in Bangkok, noted in May 2009:

Conversely, apart from language, most societies around Asia are remarkably similar to our own. I find this particularly so when it comes to business.

I see books and articles and so on, and increasingly, I'm approached also for comment about what it's like to do business in Asia, and what are the principles involved. IT'S THE SAME AS HOME, FOLKS! People want to know that you're trustworthy, that you can do whatever it is that you say you can do, that you'll remember favours and so on. In Asia, there is probably a higher sense of personal estimation when someone decides to do business with you, and that leads perhaps to one or two eating and drinking sessions... and to be honest, I think that's a good thing. To do business, it's helpful to know that there is something we like about each other. We each understand that behind the transaction is a personal regard or awareness that always, always a transaction goes well because there is a level of personal honour involved.

Smart people know that intuitively anywhere in the world, and it's the same everywhere. In Asia, people go about establishing that in ways we could learn from.¹⁸

There are some shrewd observations in this quote. However, it may not hold true for other sectors of the market. Each sector is to be understood on its own terms and each is different, each developed to respect the ways of working of each of the partners and seeking a compatible model that benefits all parties. For this reason, there are potential opportunities for New Zealand, Singaporean and Thai firms to operate as mediators between markets and provide gateways throughout the region alongside the links into the larger markets such as China and Australia. Singapore will be vital for access to some specific markets such as resource-rich Myanmar.

Singapore holds a special position in this process because it is home to the largest portion of the New Zealand diaspora in Southeast Asia. Partly this is because Singapore has a significant English-speaking population and along with Hong Kong has served as a major focus for British Commonwealth activities. The island has also hosted New Zealand military and police personal for most of the last century, many of whom later settled in Singapore and raised families there. Singapore also holds a central commercial and political position as host to a several thousand large multinational companies, which provide employment opportunities for foreign-born employees.

It should also not be forgotten that there are a number of other expats who are not engaged in commercial activity, or at least not primarily so. Among these are a growing group of retirees, people who have moved to Southeast Asia for various educational purposes, religious advancement or promotion, along with the people who have been euphemistically referred to as marginal. Each of these groups has its own set of interests and expectations, and each impacts in different ways on relations between New Zealand and its host country. Retirees include both New Zealanders who have chosen to retire to the more developed parts of Southeast Asia¹⁹ and Southeast Asian-born New Zealanders who have returned to their countries of birth but maintain close contact with their New Zealand families and are frequently supported by them with remittances. Other people support themselves by running small local businesses, especially guest-houses and local ethnic restaurants, often with distinctive Kiwi names like Puku in Ha Noi and the now defunct Kiwi Bar in Phnom Penh.

Many of these enterprises are short-lived, very small scale and have a Kiwi flavour; they can be found throughout Southeast Asia but are more commonly based in Thailand, Cambodia, Viet Nam and the Philippines. What does become clear is that these represent connections between the expat community and tourism. In part this is a way of keeping in touch as well as achieving the more overt objective of providing familiar services to New Zealand tourists travelling abroad. Most of these guest-houses, hotels, restaurants and eateries are small family businesses; some are underfunded and poorly run while others are highly successful and efficiently run by highly motivated and trained operators. While this is typical of this market throughout the world, the quality of those enterprises that command the highest profile is fundamental to how one might manage the development of inter-regional connections.

¹⁸ Website: <http://www.gardyneholt.co.nz/blog/1347/design-relationships-in-asia/>

¹⁹ Generally retirees report a satisfactory lifestyle (Howard, 2007) but this relates primarily to those who retire to Thailand. Little is known of retirees who have chosen to retire to other parts of Southeast Asia, although Singapore, Malaysia, Viet Nam and to a lesser extent the Philippines are also countries to which people are known to retire.

“However, by far the majority, some prominently so, are also involved with non-government organisations and humanitarian aid organisations, primarily working to alleviate poverty.”

New Zealanders are increasingly involved in various aspects of specialist sectors of tourism, especially in medical tourism and eco-tourism, with relatively little involvement in sex tourism, which has a longer history of connection with the Australian and Japanese diasporas in Southeast Asia. In this region, medical tourism has largely remained the preserve of Thailand, where the facilities are well developed and the foreign market is specifically targeted. Eco-tourism though, is much more rapidly growing and has regional importance, with well developed operations in most countries in Southeast Asia. There is real potential for the development of a coordinated network of eco-tourism operations that could incorporate similar activities in New Zealand.

A relatively small proportion of the New Zealanders in Southeast Asia is there for educational and religious purposes. Among these are Buddhists who have joined the sangha, Muslims who have gone to Malaysia or Indonesia for education and Christians who have chosen to work as missionaries.

However, by far the majority, some prominently so, are also involved with non-government organisations and humanitarian aid organisations, primarily working to alleviate poverty. Under the aid umbrella, passing acknowledgement should also be made of the New Zealand military's valuable contribution to the landmine clearance programme²⁰ under the auspices of UNTAC (the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia), although it did not form part of the diaspora in the sense used here.

People who settle in a new country generally maintain ties with their homelands. New Zealanders who have moved to Southeast Asia are no exception. In fact this may extend to an intergenerational attachment. We are all familiar with the people who have moved overseas but periodically return temporarily for the births of their children so they continue New Zealand citizenship into the next generation. However, even among locally born children, the sense of identity often continues to be fostered to the extent that the children may be sent to New Zealand for education and eventually move to New Zealand to live. Dale Edmonds of Singapore typifies this. Both of Dale's parents were born in Wanganui and moved to Singapore in the 1970s and raised their children in Singapore, although four of her siblings have since moved to New Zealand where they live and work. Dale herself was educated at a boarding school in Dunedin but continues to live in Singapore, where she operates an important charitable organisation called Riverkids (www.riverkidsproject.org), working in Cambodia to help alleviate poverty and prevent the trafficking of children.

A number of people born in Southeast Asia have returned to live in Southeast Asia as part of the New Zealand diaspora. While this group includes former students who maintain permanent residence or hold New Zealand citizenship, it also includes people with different migration histories.

Among these are people who arrived as refugees and have since returned to assist in the development of their birthplaces, with stated intentions of returning eventually to New Zealand to live. Typical of this group is a telecommunications engineer who was born in Cambodia, came to New Zealand as a young refugee, gained a good education in electronic engineering in Canterbury and has since returned to work in Cambodia in his field and is involved in the development of internet coverage and computer networking in that country. One of his siblings lives in Auckland, while his other brother and parents migrated to Australia from New Zealand, and he has stated an intention to return to New Zealand or to settle in Australia in due course.

Technology transfer of this type provides a significant and potentially most effective long-term advantage in diaspora engagement. Largely this relates to what Grant Fuller, New Zealand's Trade Commissioner in Malaysia, refers to as the weightless economy. At a multinational scale in Southeast Asia, there are a number of New Zealand companies employing both expats and a large local workforce in providing across a number of countries in the region high-quality services based on exported New Zealand-designed technology in such diverse fields as electronics and jet boats.

²⁰ The history of the military connections with Southeast Asia is covered in Smith (2005a).

“The pastime passions of New Zealanders often lie at the heart of the direction the diaspora takes, and this distinguishes the New Zealand diaspora from other diasporas in the region.”

Technology transfer also operates on a currently smaller scale in a wide range of fields. For example, Tangaroa Aquaculture Sdn Bhd, situated in Sungai Burung in Balik Pulau, Penang, is an abalone-breeding facility based on ezo awabi, a Japanese cold-temperature abalone species. Tangaroa Aquaculture was set up by a New Zealander, Llewellyn McGivern, and is believed to be the only one supplying fresh, sashimi-grade abalone in the northern region. He has commented that “people are often surprised when they find out that there’s an abalone farm in Malaysia and even more so when they discover that it is located in Penang”, but he chose Malaysia as the location because it is economically stable and strategically located.

The company has invested significantly in equipment sourced in a number of countries including New Zealand.

The pastime passions of New Zealanders often lie at the heart of the direction the diaspora takes, and this distinguishes the New Zealand diaspora from other diasporas in the region. This can be seen in the eco-tourism of the Faasai Resort and Spa and the passion for seafood in Tangaroa Aquaculture. A similar passion lies behind an enterprise called Kiwi Fishing Bangkok, which operates in Bung Sam Run and Nichada Thani, focusing on big-game fishing. This company has imported substantial expertise from New Zealand and uses custom rods and reels. It has been credited with establishing the first registered International Game Fish Association weigh station in Thailand.

Seafood features also in an enterprise of a quite different nature. The chain of traditional New Zealand fish and chip shops operating under the name The Fish Shop²¹ is a franchise operation catering not just for the expat community in Malaysia (and in other parts of Asia) but also the local market in the way that Chinese, Thai and Cambodian takeaway businesses serve the local population in New Zealand. This chain serves New Zealand’s export interests by selling New Zealand fish in preference to local fish. The potential for high-quality franchising throughout the region is regarded as a huge and largely untapped market.

A CONNECTED DIASPORA

Connections between diasporas operate at a range of scales and levels. For the present purpose, these have been loosely grouped as business, academic, governmental and individual. The connections at the individual level have been noted above.

Business connections across Southeast Asia are of primary interest considering the centrality of the recent Free Trade Agreement to intercourse intra- and inter-regionally.

Some examples of these connections have been discussed above, although no survey of businesses is available to provide a full picture, and it is clear that there are many hundreds of small businesses and several large corporations operating within the region with connections across the region and between regions. This is part of the globalisation process. The significance of these connections lies in the fields of trade development, technology transfer and mutual creation of wealth. Paramount among the outcomes of these connections is the creation of a pool of resources with expertise in cross-cultural commerce out of which global networks can develop.

What seems to distinguish the corporate activity of the diasporas in Southeast Asia is the way in which engagement is either as employees in foreign firms that are positioning themselves with larger external markets such as China while minimising manufacturing and freight costs (as can be seen with recent developments in Fisher and Paykel Appliances Ltd) or as small-scale local firms operating primarily intra-regionally. The key to the character of this are the linkages between these enterprises and both the local and international markets, and here the intercessionary role of the public relations firms cannot be underestimated in easing the way between markets.

The role of government is very important in this process too, especially the activities of MFAT and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE). These agencies play major roles as support and information sources for New Zealand expats and for the New Zealand Chambers of Commerce throughout the region. The role is supported by periodical ministerial visits such as the recent trip by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Murray McCully, which coincided with the New Zealand Trade Forum in Singapore in April 2009.

²¹ Website: www.franchise.co.nz/article/view/73.

“New Zealanders feature prominently in the historical development of an awareness of Southeast Asia as a region, and many are themselves members of the diaspora.”

This was followed in that country by a New Zealand Season run by MFAT from April to June of 2009, which involved a number of expat networks including the local New Zealand Chamber of Commerce and KEA (New Zealand). These types of coordinated promotional activity have a direct part to play in linking commercial activities and the engagement of the New Zealanders living in Southeast Asia with wider global activities.

Academics and teachers have a direct role to play in this process. New Zealanders feature prominently in the historical development of an awareness of Southeast Asia as a region, and many are themselves members of the diaspora. They include the many teachers at primary and secondary levels who have chosen to live and teach in the region. The majority, although by no means all, are people who were born in Southeast Asia, were educated in New Zealand and may hold New Zealand permanent residence or citizenship, but live in their original countries of birth. Interviews with and comments from some of the people in this sector indicate that these teachers take back with them positive memories of living in New Zealand and pass on these experiences to their students, many of whom become, in turn, enthusiastic students in New Zealand and future contributors to regional cohesion. Thus there is an ongoing and largely self-sustaining link with New Zealand. In addition a significant number of New Zealand-born New Zealanders are to be found teaching at all levels in the education systems of the ASEAN countries, either as permanent migrants or as people on extended overseas sojourns. While the visibility of New Zealand in the region may not be universally high, these roles taken on by expats provide a platform for dissemination of information on New Zealand.

University-based academics are also prominent, although the numbers have proved as elusive as other numbers. A search of university calendars and university websites for New Zealand qualifications discovered some examples but missed other New Zealanders who did not list New Zealand qualifications because they had received their higher degrees in other countries. More frustrating was the number of universities that do not publish information of this type. However, there are currently many New Zealand-born or New Zealand-educated academics teaching in Southeast Asian universities and some returned expats who have done so. It should be noted that in general New Zealanders who have academic posts are proud of their heritage and have played an active role in the promotion of connections with New Zealand. Serving to illustrate this is the biographical note on the National University of Singapore’s website for Anthony Reid, one of the most prominent historians of the region. This note indicates his continued identity as a New Zealander:

Anthony Reid is a historian of Southeast Asia, who has at different times worked on political, economic, social and intellectual history, both on a Southeast Asian canvas and in particular studies of Aceh, South Sulawesi, Sabah, and twentieth century Indonesia. Born and bred in New Zealand, he held positions at the University of Malaya (1965-70), and the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies of the Australian National University (1970-99), where he ended as Professor of Southeast Asian History, and coordinator of projects on the Economic History of Southeast Asia, and the Chinese Southern Diaspora. In 1999 he went to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) as Professor of History and founding Director of the UCLA Center for Southeast Asian Studies. In 2002 he became founding Director of the Asia Research Institute at NUS, Singapore. His wife, Dr Helen Reid, is with him in Singapore, and two children in the UK and USA. From 2002-07 he was founding Director of the Asia Research Institute at NUS, where he continues to work.²²

A number of universities have set up their own campuses within Southeast Asia. A successful example is the Victoria University, Ho Chi Minh City Campus. At this facility students study for the first year courses of a Victoria University Bachelor of Commerce and Administration but currently need to travel to Wellington to complete their second and third years of study.

This is a highly successful enterprise and illustrates the more common path in establishing connections inter-regionally whereby individual universities establish joint programs and collaborative arrangements. These developments have not been without their problems historically²³ but demonstrates the value of coordinated development planning which has grown out of the work of the Colombo Plan.

²² Website: www.fas.nus.edu.sg/hist/aridir.htm

²³ Butcher, Andrew (2008). *International Education and Asia* Lecture to marketing 407, Business in Asia 10 April 2008, on Asia:NZ website.

“The role of key government agencies is fundamental to the relationship between countries and their diasporas”

This process is very largely an organic outcome of the success of the Colombo Plan.²⁴ The Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic Development in South and Southeast Asia originated at the Commonwealth Conference on Foreign Affairs held in Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) in January 1950 as a cooperative venture for the economic and social advancement of the peoples of South and Southeast Asia and involved a group of seven Commonwealth nations, including New Zealand. By March 1957, 206 Colombo Plan students, mostly from Southeast Asia, were studying in New Zealand.²⁵ From these beginnings Australasian universities, medical schools, technical and nursing colleges and other education providers continue to provide education to many thousands of students. The sheer scale of the significance of the Plan over its more than half a century of operation can be gained by considering that Australia has hosted more than 200,000 students from Malaysia alone²⁶ with proportionally similar numbers of students in New Zealand. The importance for New Zealand is that many of the former students are not only in very influential positions but maintain close links with New Zealand and are key to diaspora engagement throughout the region. Many thousands of people, some of whom have gone on to be leaders in their fields, have benefited from education under the Plan's objective of raising skill levels to facilitate transfer of physical capital and technology. The current programmes of the Colombo Plan are in the areas of public policy formulation in an environment of globalisation and market economy, private sector development as a prime mover for growth and in drug abuse and prevention in member countries. With the shift in focus, other institutional connections and exchanges have developed.

Academic exchanges introduce temporary members of the diaspora. The Greater Mekong Subregion Tertiary Education Consortium (GMSTEC) is a university-led initiative that combines the academic resources of leading New Zealand, Australian and Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) universities to support mutual development and to assist with the development of the GMS. Among the stated aims of the GMSTEC is “to promote cultural and academic exchange among member universities including staff and student exchanges and other programmes that enhance the cross-cultural and academic understanding”.²⁷

The significance of cooperation in education is well recognised in the relationship between governments, especially in the mutual development of skills required for the efficient progress of development programmes. This process occasionally has unexpected outcomes, such as the development of locally identified elites. Former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark at a Parliamentary Lunch for Prime Minister Phan Van Khai of Viet Nam on 9 May, 2005 noted that “a programme greatly appreciated by Viet Nam has been New Zealand's English Language Training for Officials (ELTO). Since 1990, around two hundred and fifty Vietnamese officials have studied here under the programme. Meeting some of the Vietnamese officials who have studied English in New Zealand – the so-called ‘kiwi mafia’ – was a special part of my visit to Ha Noi in 2003”.

Inter-governmental involvement extends beyond exchange visits by senior politicians, although these serve a vital role in maintaining profile and energy. The role of key government agencies is fundamental to the relationship between countries and their diasporas, not simply as providers of administrative and diplomatic services as required, but as arbiters in the development of major aid and development programmes, often with the assistance of international agencies. One of the major success stories, though with a relatively modest profile locally and internationally, is the Mekong Institute based in Khon Kaen. This institute was founded in 1996 following the declaration that New Zealand was part of Asia in 1993. The importance of New Zealand and the direct involvement of the New Zealand government in the development of the institute are recognised in the James B Bolger Conference Room. The ongoing support of NZAID in sponsoring high-quality educational programmes at the institute has ensured the successful transition of the institute to a position where it is now independent and self funding, but New Zealand expats remain involved in many of the teaching and development projects with which the institute is associated.

24 <http://www.colombo-plan.org>

25 http://www.asianz.org.nz/files/CRIE%20presentation%20July%202009_final%20version.pdf

26 http://www.emaac.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=50&Itemid=61 and renumber current FN 24 as 27 13.5 percent of GDP in the Philippines is reported as coming from remittances (United Nations, 2009).

27 Website: www.gmstec.org

REMITTANCES

GROUPING CONNECTIONS UNDER THE HEADINGS business, academic, governmental and individual should not be taken to mean that these are discrete sets of activity. They overlap in many ways and one way in which this can be seen is in the transfer of remittances. “Remittances” is the term used to describe the transfer of money and goods from one location to another for the personal benefit of individuals and families, and may also operate at a community level. Remittances form a vital component in the economies of developing nations and in some cases (not among the ASEAN countries with the possible exception of the Philippines²⁸) remittances represent the majority of international transfers. Unfortunately, many countries do not capture data on remittances. New Zealand is among these countries, although this gap in the national accounts system is currently being addressed. Those countries that do collect remittance data do not have data available by individual source and destination country, so the actual network of remittance flows remains unknown. One key difficulty is that a large proportion of the transfers is informal. In the case of remittances to and from Southeast Asia, these take the form of direct bank transfers between individuals, capital transfers, monetary and material support for satellite families, direct physical transfers of cash in the informal sector, and transfers of goods.

Reverse remittances are often overlooked in this process.²⁹ The flow of remittances is usually noticed as the flow from the developed to the less developed locations. However, remittances flow in both directions. Parents of children studying in New Zealand regularly send money to their children for their education or living expenses, families occasionally provide finance for new migrants to buy businesses or to buy homes, and at the community level goods, services and donations are forwarded to set up cultural facilities such as temples and community education resources. Remittances may extend beyond individual activities in the case of setting up temples, as was seen in the donations given to the Wat Samakhee in Christchurch, which received donations from a number of major businesses, from individual businessmen and from the Thai royal family. In this case the remittances supported the efforts of the local Southeast Asian communities and the wat has become a focal centre for all Southeast Asian and South Asian Buddhist communities for religious support but also as a teaching facility for language and music cultural maintenance. This is a typical situation with most of the wat, temples, mosques and community centres in New Zealand. While the cash donations are sought throughout the diasporas as well as from home countries, it is common for goods and services to be sourced in home countries because of the difficulty in sourcing the necessary skills and knowledge locally.

²⁸ 13.5 percent of GDP in the Philippines is reported as coming from remittances (United Nations, 2009).

²⁹ Didham, Robert and Denise McGregor (2008) ‘Diaspora, Integration and Population Mobility - A view from the edge’. *Measuring Population Mobility and Integration in a Globalised World*, UNECE/CES meeting in Paris 10-12 June.

THE ROLE OF AUSTRALIA AND CHINA

AT THE LEVEL OF TRANSNATIONAL CAPITALISM, Australia and China are likely to play a central role in regional engagement with diasporas for New Zealand and for the countries of Southeast Asia because these two countries will provide direct linkages into the networks formed by the largest globalised corporations.³⁰ But at the level of the individual diasporas and of individuals within these diasporas, the majority of the activity remains and will remain at the sub-national scale.

Australia and China also feature as major source and destination countries for migrants moving to and from Southeast Asia as well as to and from New Zealand. A substantial part of this movement is on-migration to third countries, as has been a feature of trans-Tasman migration for a number of years and the increasingly important flows between Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. This mobility generates increasingly strong links between all parts of the wider Free Trade area, which will continue to ensure that the synergies between sub-regions improve at the social as well as the corporate level. The importance of family in this process cannot be underestimated and it would appear to be one of the major potential advantages of the promotion of increased family migration and the freeing up of the flow of people along the migration pathways. This has two key consequences: firstly extensive and meaningful links can be forged between countries and transnational trade and business activities, and secondly by providing a broader local family basis to migration, people have cogent reasons to stay and set up their transnational links *in situ*. In this way the skill base is retained, yet benefits directly by engagement with skill bases in the migrant source countries, enhanced by intersections between the diasporas.

30 Carroll, William (2009) Transnationalists and national networkers in a global corporate elite. *Global Networks*, 9(2): 289-314.

CONCLUSION

THE YEAR 2009 WAS DECLARED THE YEAR OF THE DIASPORA. One of the objectives of this paper is to examine the New Zealand diaspora in the Southeast Asian region. It quickly became clear that this could not be done without considering the Southeast Asian diaspora in New Zealand. At one level this was because the Southeast Asians in New Zealand form a demographically larger proportion of the New Zealand population than the New Zealanders do in the Southeast Asian populations, and therefore make interconnections with the host society more visible. At another level it quickly becomes apparent that many of the actors are common to both diasporas, and each supports the other either directly or indirectly. Nor could these diasporas be seen completely independent of the wider regional geopolitics, invoking the significance of Australia and China as players in the dynamic for both geographic and historical reasons. In the case of Australia this was obvious because of the close association of the Australian and New Zealand diasporas living in Southeast Asia. But the role of both China and Australia as partners in Free Trade Agreements adds a dimension that extends beyond the activities of individuals.

It would be fair to say that the New Zealand diaspora in Southeast Asia, while of significant interest to New Zealand at the social, policy and political levels, is barely visible within Southeast Asia. This does not, however, imply that it is without significance. Size is by no means everything. Developments in technology, educational advances, aid-related activities and social networks directly involve people living in the region who are New Zealand-born or have strong family and historical links to this country. The key components of the diaspora – the New Zealand-born and their families, the returned migrants who have once lived in New Zealand, and international students who have studied in New Zealand – each play a part in establishing and maintaining links across Southeast Asian society and between the region and New Zealand. Integral to this are the Southeast Asian diaspora communities in New Zealand, particularly where people are part of active transnational networks. One of the key cross-cutting resources that these connections open up is access to the language skills of migrants and their families.

The number of people born in Southeast Asia in New Zealand is currently approximately five times larger than the number of New Zealand-born in Southeast Asia, but these figures do not include the locally born families or define the impacts of the communities either at the local level or in terms of inter-regional connections. The typology of the diasporas is important from this perspective, with implications in three key areas – society, commerce and policy.

From the perspective of the social spectrum, diasporic people are found in all classes and social positions, with some well connected, motivated and integrated and others dependent and on the margins of the host society. For the purpose of engaging with diasporas, one of the important links across the region are the various expat organisations, since these are one of the common ways in which people with common connections within a region keep in touch with each other.

Two questions arise from this typology. The first question is, what are the lessons for doing business? Commercial activity is most likely to become increasingly important to the expansion of regionally sustainable development. Business connectedness in relation to the scale and type of enterprise involved would seem to be the key. In part this is facilitated by the expat organisations, but in a more focused way the various chambers of commerce provide a forum for connection between business enterprises involving both New Zealand and Australian business people throughout the region.

The second question is, what are the lessons for policy? The involvement of governments ultimately provides the mechanisms that permit migration and open the doors for the development of strong, sustained links. The policies that appreciate the needs of business in a very pragmatic way are productive. The example of the Mekong Institute illustrates one way in which policy initiatives can result in outcomes to the benefit of all players.

What has become clear in the course of this study is that in the case of Southeast Asia the underlying impetus has been ultimately the contribution that New Zealand has made to the educational programmes for Southeast Asian students, through the Colombo Plan and its successor initiatives including NZAID.

Not only has the awareness of Southeast Asia been raised as a destination for emigrants, the returning students have themselves remained a key part of the New Zealand diaspora. Among these are teachers who have been the source of enthusiastic future students studying in New Zealand, as well as people who have become key players of importance to the local development of New Zealand businesses in the region, either because of their own business activities or because of their intimate knowledge of the local legal requirements and familiarity with New Zealand conditions. These skills are particularly important in situations where there may be conflicts of laws or protocols that need to be reconciled.

At all levels, the activities and support of key agencies such as, in the case of New Zealand, MFAT and NZTE, are vital to the successful development of connections between local commerce and export industries. Policy support, whether in the form of Free Trade Agreements or encouragement of family migration and the easing of the flow of people globally, is central to the continued vibrancy of the intersections between the diasporas across the Southeast Asian and the wider East Asian and Australasian regions.

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