



Research Brief

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Attracting and Retaining the Territory's Growing Multicultural Communities



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RESEARCH AIM

Four different data sources have been brought together to describe the migration experiences and future migration intentions of eight growing migrant communities contributing to the population of the Northern Territory. Factors associated with recruitment and attraction (pull), attachment and connection (retention) and out migration intent (push) were examined through responses to a large online survey and focus groups. The aim of this Brief is to inform policy considerations on enhancing the attraction and retention of migrants from these communities. We also provide insights about cultural and demographic nuances that should be considered in policy or initiatives to attract or retain migrants.

3 KEY FINDINGS

1. Each migrant community differs in their demographic and socio-economic profile which is likely to influence their settlement experiences and expectations. However, the desire to sponsor family reunion is consistently high among the Indian and African communities and is likely to have influenced the success of the large Filipino community. Initiatives and communications should account for these differences and consider ways to distinguish the Territory as a destination of choice.
2. Jobs and pathways to permanent residency are strong migration drivers for overseas migrants and a job matched to skills, experience and qualifications is linked to retention. Where these are satisfied, community connection and attachment to place, and lifestyle factors become important, especially during the initial period of settlement.
3. Charles Darwin University (CDU) is attempting to grow international student numbers including by opening a city-based campus under the Darwin City Deal. This research identifies overseas students as a potential resident market but highlights stronger education to employment pathways are needed. CDU, government and Industry bodies could facilitate growth by ensuring the investment in ready skilled, locally educated international students is fully realised.

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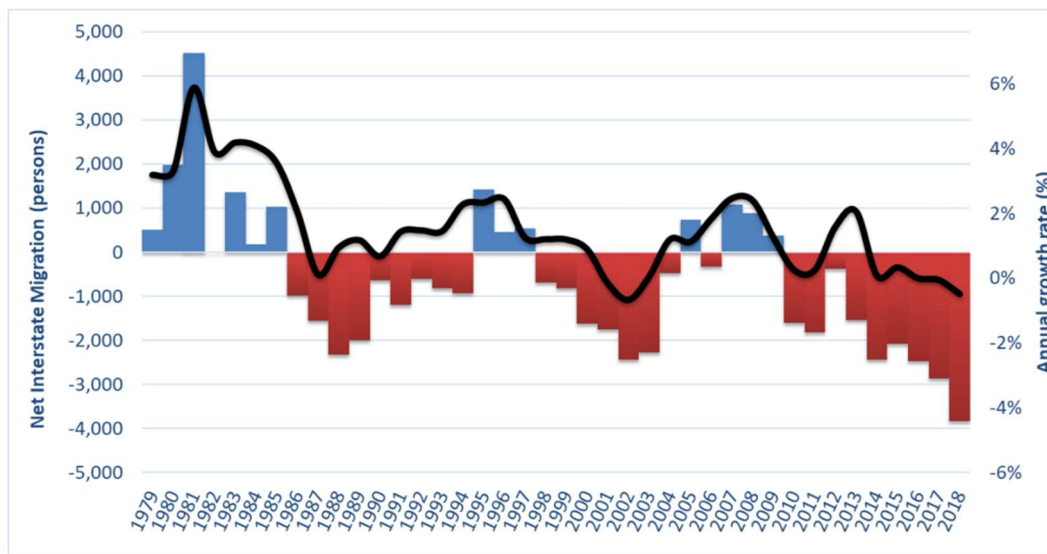
The authors extend thanks to the survey respondents and focus group participants. Without their enthusiastic contribution, this research would not be possible. We also acknowledge the key informants and thank them for their generosity in sharing their opinions and observations.



Section 1: Background

In 2019, the Northern Territory is in a lengthy period of low population growth after growing at above-average rates for 5 years prior to 2010 (denoted by the black line in Figure 1). The primary cause has been marked deteriorations in recorded Net Interstate Migration (NIM) outcomes, which is the difference between people moving to the Territory from interstate as residents and those leaving for interstate destinations. The blue (for positive NIM years) and red (for negative NIM years) bars in Figure 1 provide forty years of population data and show there have been a number of such low growth 'eras' in the Territory before; notably from 1986 to 1995 and 1997 to 2003. However, the present-day era is more protracted with NIM outcomes worse than previously experienced in the Territory's history of migration statistics. During 2018, for example, a 4,000 more residents migrated to other states and the ACT than arrived to take up residence in the Territory.

Figure 1 - Net interstate migration 'eras' (blue and red bars) and the Territory growth rate (black line), 1979 to 2018



Source: Author calculations from ABS, 2019: 3101.0 - Australian Demographic Statistics, Dec 2018

The Northern Territory Government has long recognised the importance of population growth for the economic and financial strength of the Territory. In 2017 it commissioned demographers at Charles Darwin University to synthesise twelve years of their research on the causes and consequences of population change and advise on areas to help address the low growth (see Taylor and Carson, 2017). Recommendations included developing a suite of initiatives to influence migration behaviors for specific population groups in relation to coming to live in the Territory (attraction) or staying as a resident in the Territory (retention). On-the-whole these recommendations were adopted as part of the *Northern Territory Population Strategy, 2018 to 2028* (see <https://population.nt.gov.au>).

The report pointed to large and growing migrant communities as a particularly important recruitment market. The success of overseas born communities in stabilizing population in places like Alice Springs has been noted in previous research (for example, Maertens and Taylor, 2017; Taylor, 2018b), with the



potential for chain migration (such as family migration) and active encouragement with peers from their home countries (such as postings through social media) also recognised as important. The growing international communities were identified as the Filipino, Indian, New Zealand, Nepalese and Chinese communities. In this research we analyse these communities along with two others – Taiwan, which is contributing growing numbers of international students to Charles Darwin University, and migrants from countries in Africa which are also significant if treated as a continental group.

1.1 The NT's multicultural embrace

Describing multicultural communities is not straightforward. Multiculturalism is in itself multi-faceted and can express where people were born or where their parents were born, people's ancestry, the languages they speak at home, and what religion/faith they practice. In 2016, Census data found 26 per cent of all Territorians were born overseas and a third had at least one parent who was born overseas. More than three-quarters identified an ancestry other than Australian and only 58% lived in 'English only' households. Some of the fastest growing religions practiced by Territorians from 2011 to 2016 were non-Christian with Sikhism (+160%), Hinduism (+118%), Islam (+47%) and Buddhism (+24%) prominent amongst these.

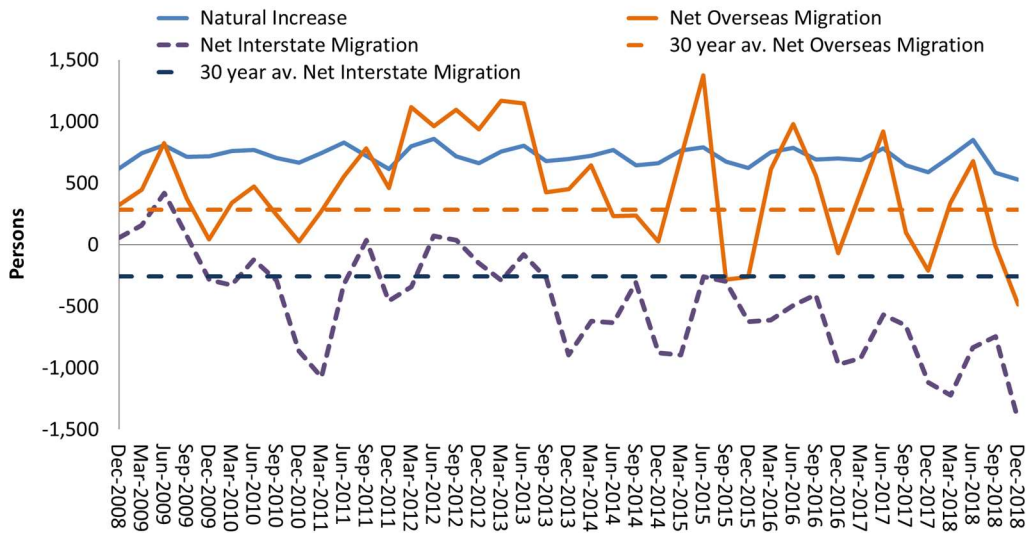
But multiculturalism is also about the receiving host community's acceptance and tolerance of new cultural diversity. The last General Social Survey (2014) found that 85% of Australians agreed that multiculturalism has been good for the country (ABS, 2014). This collective sense of embrace is reflected in Australia's Multicultural Statement by then Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull:

"We are defined not by race, religion or culture, but by shared values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law and equality of opportunity – a "fair go". The glue that holds us together is mutual respect – a deep recognition that each of us is entitled to the same respect, the same dignity, the same opportunities." (page 2, *Multicultural Australia – united, strong, successful*).

Taylor & Carson (2017) demonstrated the NT's increasing dependence on overseas migration for population growth. Despite seasonal volatility, net overseas migration has invariably been positive in recent years, in contrast to the long-term net interstate migration (see Figure 2).



Figure 2 - Components of population change compared to 30-year averages, 2008-2018



Source: Author’s calculations from ABS, 2019: 3101.0 - Australian Demographic Statistics, Dec 2018

1.2 Defining factors influencing migration decisions

Migrants settling in regional areas are primarily attracted by the availability of employment (Webb 2015; Griffiths et al. 2010; Massey and Parr 2012.). Other studies found attraction factors that influence migration to particular destinations over others include pre-existing social and cultural networks in place, access to foods and comfort items, the presence of cultural and faith infrastructure, feelings of being welcomed and safe, and a strong job match with skills and qualification/s (Sapeha 2017). Additional literature highlights the importance of access to appropriate housing, education opportunities for themselves and their children, and the opportunities for family reunification (Penman and Goel 2017).

Past studies have also highlighted that overseas migrants have tended to leave the Territory in the longer term for other parts of Australia (Hugo and Harris, 2011; Golebiowska, 2016). The *Synthesising Report* (Taylor and Carson, 2017) identified a dearth of research available on whether specific cultural factors differentially influence migration decisions according to specific migrant communities. Using a combination of data sources, the aim of this Research Brief is to better understand the key attraction and retention factors that are influencing migration decisions of growing multicultural communities in the NT. Results will highlight similarities and differences between the different nationalities to inform nuances in strategies and initiatives around migrant attraction and retention.



Section 2: Data sources and means of analysis

Source 1 – Population and migration statistics

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) produces a range of data on overseas migrants and their migration patterns. Data here are sourced from ABS.Stat (an online data repository), Migration Australia (an annual data publication) and the Census of Population and Housing. The latter enables analysis of person-level characteristics but does have limitations in so far as country of birth may differ from ethnicity as described by characteristics such as language, religion and ancestry and thus may over-estimate or under-estimate the population. Additionally, country of birth will only identify first generation migrants, excluding those born in Australia who had one or both parents born in an overseas country. Readers should also be aware of census coverage issues, which generally lead to an undercount of the total population. There is no estimate available of the size of the undercount for individual migrant communities.

Despite these limitations, census data is a high-quality source of information on migrant settlement in Australia. In this report country of birth data have been used to profile communities based on sex, age distributions, education, employment and income information to identify any key differences between the new migrant communities relative to the Australian born population.

Source 2 – *The Territory and Me* online survey

Although Census data can describe new migrant populations it does not provide factors associated with migration decisions and motivations. In response to this gap an online survey was developed to collect comprehensive information on the migration experiences of all Territorians, both past and present. *The Territory and Me* (TTaM) survey was not designed specifically for migrant communities but was developed as an omnibus instrument to capture migration push, pull and retention factors for the Territory. It did, however include questions to determine pull factors specific to overseas born participants.

Data on pull factors for overseas born participants included:

- reasons for moving to the Territory
- who they moved with
- whether received financial support or incentives to move
- factors that would encourage others from their county to consider a move to the Territory

Data on retention for all participants included:

- length of time in the NT (including cumulative multiple occasions)
- residency status
- home ownership
- employment status and satisfaction with current job
- connection to the Territory including number of children and grandchildren currently living here
- feelings of safety and participation in volunteering
- overall feelings of satisfaction

Data on push factors for all participants included:

- current migration intentions in 2 and 5 years



- reasons considering out migration
- factors that would influence out migration decisions

In the survey, an open text question provided respondents with the opportunity to share their ideas on how to grow the Territory’s population. The survey was actively promoted through general awareness campaigns, social media, as well as community promotion through activities, attendance at cultural forums, newsletters and webpages.

In this report where percentages were applied to question responses to TTaM, totals have excluded non-responses.

Source 3 – Migrant community focus groups

Six focus groups were conducted From August to November 2019 in Darwin and Alice Springs to overcome hesitations around survey participation (especially any language barriers) and gain a deeper understanding of migrants’ decisions and experiences. A total of 34 people participated. Focus group topics included:

- migration routes to the Territory
- knowledge of the Territory prior to migration
- current family connection/s
- factors that helped or hindered with the settling-in period
- main barriers to establishing self and family (including cultural/faith infrastructure)
- current migration intentions
- feelings of home, belonging and attachment

Table 1 shows the number of focus group participants were drawn from each new migrant community. Opinions and experiences were also garnered from Indian participants (approximately 70) at the *India Ideas Fest*, hosted by the office of Luke Gosling (MP) on 2 November 2019.

A pre-requisite of focus group participation was completion of the TTaM survey, with support provided as needed.

Table 1: Focus Group participant profiles, by country of birth

Characteristics of participants	African (Nigerian & Liberian)	Philippines	Taiwan & China	India (mainly Keralites)	Nepal
Number	9	8	6	6 (+ 70)	5
City of residence	Darwin	Darwin	Darwin	Alice Springs (Darwin)	Alice Springs
Occupation/ Skill area	Community Services	Community Services	Engineering Community services	Specialist/ Doctors Nurses	Hospitality and food (mostly VET skilled)



			Business	Community Services (various but generally professionals)	
Length of stay in Territory	3 – 5 years	1 – 15 years	3 – 5 years	3 – 18 years (various)	6 months – 10 years

Source 4 – Key informant interviews

Two interviews with key informants were conducted to provide information on the service and support infrastructure available to new migrants in the NT. These covered issues such as attraction factors, factors influencing settlement in the NT, main frustrations that could lead to early out migration, and main government levers that could improve migrant settlement success.

While acknowledging the huge cultural diversity of countries within the continent of Africa, their importance as emerging communities within the Territory means they have been included in the analysis as a group. Issues with small sample numbers also sees the survey analysis combining Nepal with India, and Taiwan with China to provide robust information on a regional basis.

The four data sources were brought together to explain similarities and differences between the growing migrant communities. The remainder of this Research Brief is organized according to the following sections:

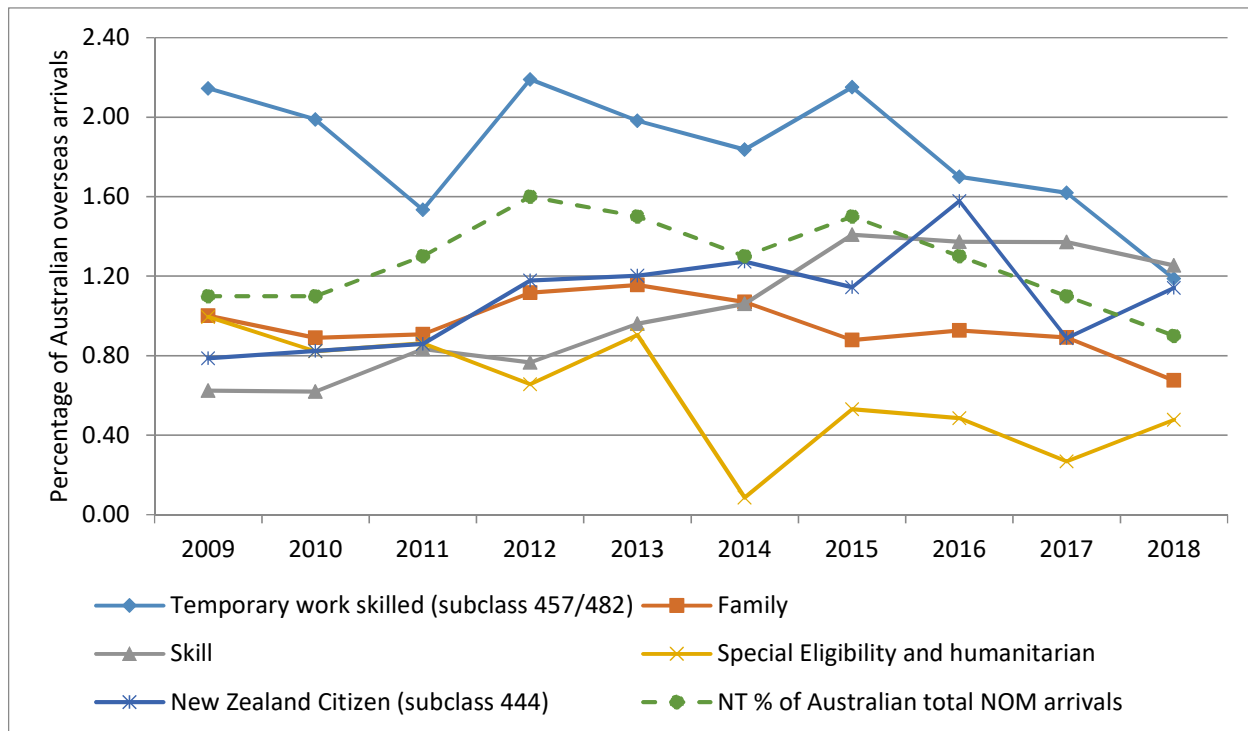
- Section 3 - Pathways from overseas: visa streams
- Section 4 - Multicultural demographics of the NT
- Section 5 - Key results from the TTaM survey and focus groups
 - 5.1 Introducing the survey responders and focus group participants
 - 5.2 Recruitment and attraction factors
 - 5.3 Attachment and retention factors
 - 5.4 Why are migrants leaving and what could encourage them to stay?
- Section 6 - Settlement experiences
- Section 7 - Service and support systems for new migrants
- Section 8 - Discussion and suggestions



Section 3: Pathways from overseas: visa streams

The Territory's share of Australia's overseas migrants has generally tracked at about 1 per cent of the national migrant intake over the last 20 years. In 2012 that proportion grew to 1.6 per cent but it has since fallen to below 1 per cent (0.9% in 2018) (see Figure 3). Over the last 10 years the permanent visa class of 'Skill' has made a growing contribution to migrant arrivals to the NT (270 people in 2009 and 510 in 2018). The temporary work skilled visa class (known as 457 and changed recently to 482) appears to have more 'year to year' volatility but is generally the largest contributor to migrant arrivals. As a proportion of the national intake it dipped slightly below the proportion of permanent skilled visa in 2018 and was also smaller in terms of absolute numbers (340 people). The New Zealand subclass was also a significant contributor to arrivals but has fallen in absolute numbers from a high of 710 people in 2012 to 350 people in 2018. Notably, in 2018 all three of these visa classes were above the overall Territory share of migrant arrivals to Australia. In contrast the 'Family' and 'Special eligibility and humanitarian' visas have seen declines in the Territory's share of the national intake, however the latter recovered between 2017 and 2018 increasing from 40 to 60 people.

Figure 3 – Migrants arriving in the NT from overseas as a proportion of national arrivals within each visa stream, 2009-2018



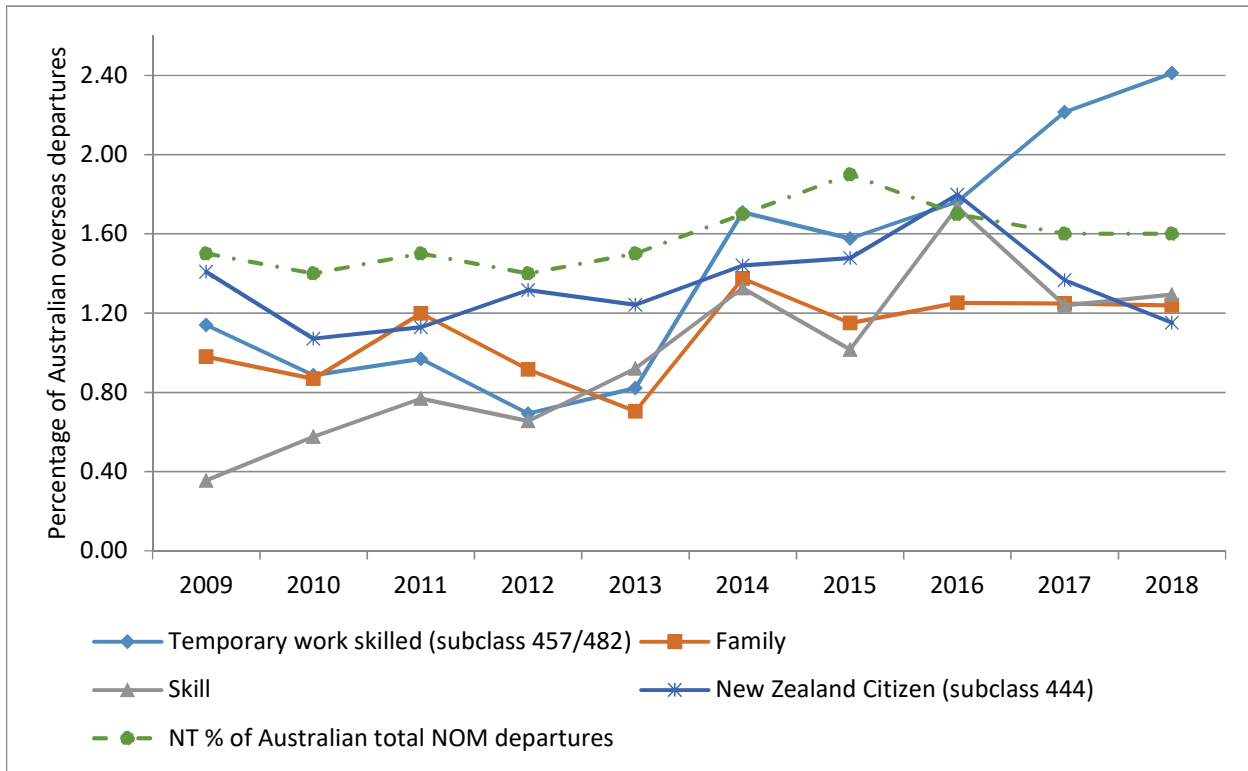
Source: ABS Migration, Australian 2017-18

Over the same ten-year period, the Territory contributed a larger share of migrant departures than arrivals (see Figure 4), however it dropped from a high of 1.9% in 2015 to 1.6% in 2018. A growing number of temporary 'work skilled visa class' departures (300 people in 2016 and 360 in 2018) made up the largest



proportion of overseas leavers with all other classes dropping below the Territory’s overall share in 2018. Readers should note that none of the people in the “Special eligibility and humanitarian” stream have left the Territory to overseas since 2009 however this does not mean they have not migrated interstate.

Figure 4 – Migrants departing from the NT to overseas as a proportion of national departures within each visa stream, 2009-2018



Source: ABS Migration, Australian 2017-18



Section 4 - Multicultural Demographic Characteristics of the NT

The rise of skilled migration intakes has fundamentally shifted the multicultural mix in the Territory with several new source countries (and regions within countries) becoming prominent while the established sources have been stagnant or growing slowly. During the past decade numbers of residents born in the UK, USA and continental European nationals like Germany, Italy and the Netherlands have either plateaued or declined.

The 2016 Census identified the Philippines as the largest source country for overseas born Territorians, the first time an Asian country has topped this list. Table 2 provides an overview of population trends of the new migrant communities. While there was negative growth in the Australian born population between 2011 and 2016, New Zealand was a strong contributor to the Territory's population, and the India community grew by more than 580% since 2001. More recently, the countries of Nepal and Taiwan have contributed the largest proportional population growth between the 2011 and 2016 Censuses (albeit from a low base). Communities from countries within Africa almost doubled in size during 2006 to 2016, with the majority coming from South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Table 2: Population trends for New Migrant Communities, Northern Territory 2001 - 2016

2001	2006	2011	2016	% growth 2011-2016
Australia 157,959	Australia 146,166	Australia 158,033	Australia 157,531	- 0.3%
New Zealand 3,671	New Zealand 3,295	New Zealand 3,968	Philippines 5,912	65%
Philippines 1,745	Philippines 1,871	Philippines 3,586	New Zealand 4,635	17%
India 523	India 587	India 1,917	India 3,595	88%
China 351	China 332	China 865	China 1,196	38%
Taiwan na	Nepal 30	Nepal 350	Nepal 1,126	222%
Nepal na	Taiwan 70	Taiwan 233	Taiwan 628	169%
Continent of Africa na	Continent of Africa 1,557	Continent of Africa 2,406	Continent of Africa 3,037	26%

Source: ABS Community Profile data, 2001 – 2016 Censuses

Table 3 profiles the growing communities by the key socio-economic indicators of education attainment, employment, income, and English speaking, relative to the Australian born population. It shows people born in India had the highest levels of educational attainment in 2016, with 61% holding a Bachelor degree or higher level qualification. It is notable that all communities had higher proportions with university



qualifications than Australian born, with those coming from New Zealand being the most similar (19% compared to 15%).

The labour force participation rate was also higher for all new migrant communities, with associated low unemployment rates. This is understandable within the context of Australia’s immigration policy emphasis on skilled migration. The Australian born and New Zealand born populations were more likely to be employed in public administration and safety, while those from the Philippines, India and Africa were predominantly employed in health care and social assistance. The remaining communities were most likely to work in accommodation and food services, despite their higher levels of educational attainment. Construction was the second most common industry of employment for the Australian born and New Zealand communities, however this may have shifted since the finalisation of the Inpex construction phase and the downturn in construction related activity since (NTG 2019). Like Australian born Territorians, people born in New Zealand, India and Africa were mostly working as professionals (professions requiring a specific qualification). In contrast, people from the Philippines were most likely to be working as technicians or in trades, people from China as machinery operators or drivers, while those born in Taiwan mostly provided community or personal services. People from Nepal were concentrated in the least skilled occupations of labouring, personal services and sales. These differences are reflected in relative personal income levels with low proportions of people from Taiwan and Nepal (6.5% and 5.3% respectively) having high earnings (\$1500 or more per week), compared with 36% of people born in New Zealand.

These outcomes may bear some relationship to confidence with speaking English. Census data showed those born in China, Taiwan and Nepal had the lowest proportions of people who spoke English only (<15%), compared with 95 per cent of people from New Zealand and 41 percent from Africa.

Table 3: Socio-economic characteristics, new migrant communities, 2016

Characteristics	Australia	Philippines	New Zealand	India	China	Taiwan	Nepal	African countries
Proportion of population 15 years and over								
Bachelor degree or higher	14.5	35.9	19.0	60.6	35.8	46.4	48.5	34.8
Unemployment rate	5.3	3.3	2.7	3.8	4.3	3.3	5.5	5.4
Participation rate	66.3	78.8	82.9	82.3	70.8	83.9	89.6	82.5
Proportion of population currently employed								
Top five industry of employment	Public Administration & Safety	Healthcare and Social Assistance	Public Administration & Safety	Healthcare and Social Assistance	Accommodation & Food	Accommodation & Food	Accommodation & Food	Healthcare & Social Assistance
	Construction	Accommodation & Food	Construction	Accommodation & Food	Healthcare & Social Assistance	Admin & Support	Healthcare & Social Assistance	Public Administration & Safety
	Healthcare & Social	Retail trade	Healthcare & Social	Public Administration	Construction	Healthcare & Social	Retail trade	Education &



	Assistance		Assistance	ion & Safety	n	Assistance		Training
Top three occupations	Professionals	Technicians/Trades	Professionals	Professionals	Machinery Operators/Drivers	Community/Personal Services	Labourers	Professionals
	Technicians/Trades	Labourers	Technicians/Trades	Community/Personal Services	Professionals	Labourers	Community/Personal Services	Community/Personal Services
	Clerical/Admin	Community/Personal Services	Community/Personal Services	Technicians/Trades	Managers	Technicians/Trades	Sales	Technicians/Trades
	Proportion of population 15 years and over							
Income \$1,500 or more per week	23.8	15.3	35.8	25.0	10.1	6.5	5.3	30.4
	Proportion of total population							
Speaks English only	70.2	20.6	94.5	21.8	7.0	13.6	3.7	40.9

Source: ABS Community Profile data, 2001 – 2016 Censuses

One way of describing the age structure of a population is through population pyramids. These can show the relative numbers in each 'life stage' and identify associated service needs. Figure 5 provides population pyramids by 5 year age cohorts and sex for each new migrant community. They illustrate very different shapes relative to the pyramid of Australian born Territorians which shows a large population of young people and a male bias (the last pyramid across the two pages). In contrast, the population of New Zealanders had a much older profile, with most aged over 45 years. This is distinct from the those born in India, Nepal and Taiwan which were younger, concentrated in their mid-twenties to late thirties. These were likely to be people in their early careers or perhaps still engaged in post school education. There were fewer children and fewer older people in these communities and the Taiwanese were predominantly female. The pyramids for Africa, the Philippines and China are diamond shaped but with higher proportions of children and older people suggesting a population that is starting to establish itself in place. These communities may become embedded through family and community growth including providing care networks and support for younger families and seniors.



After Marina Sirocchi

Figure 5: Population pyramids, selected country of birth, 2016

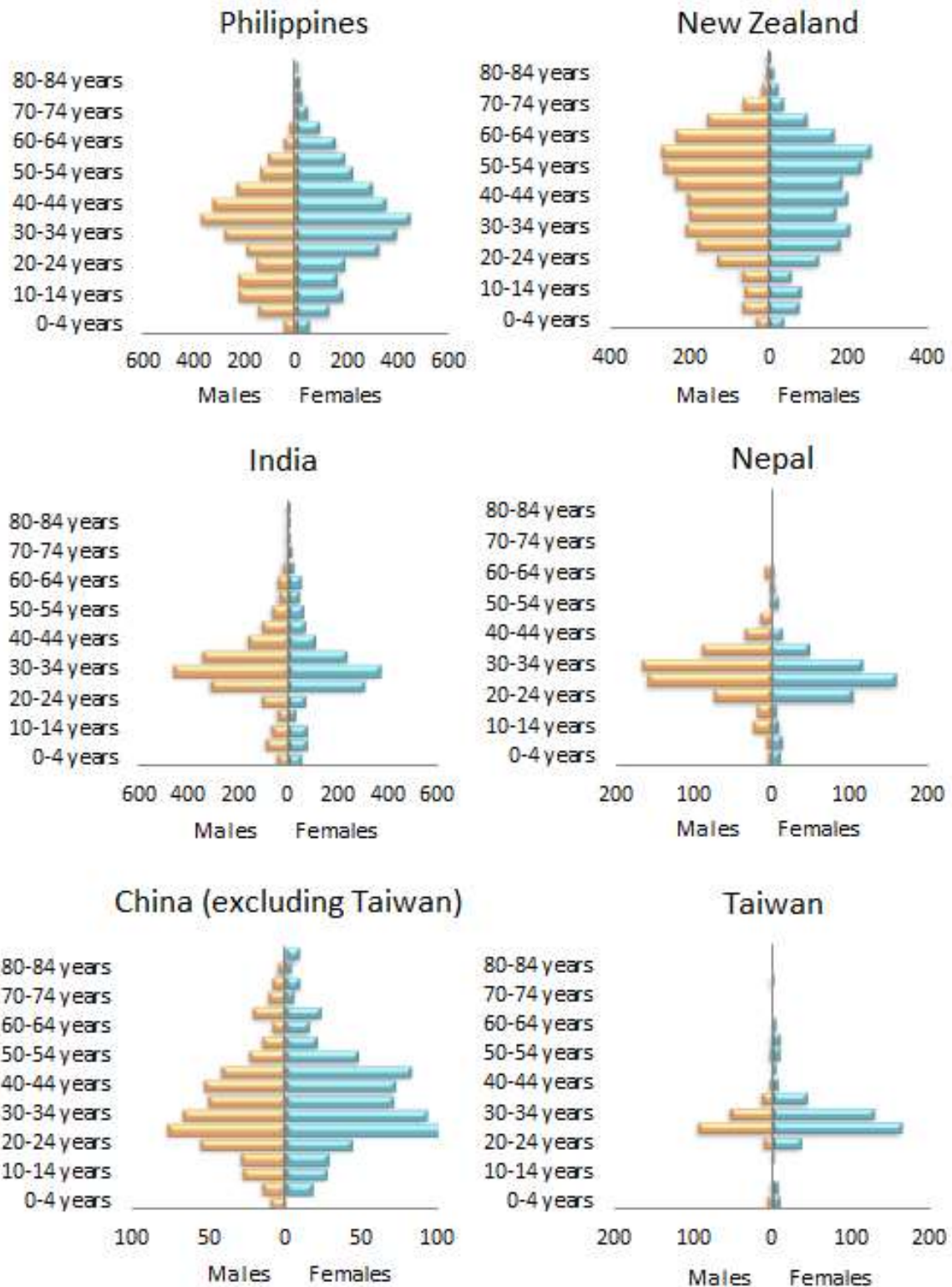
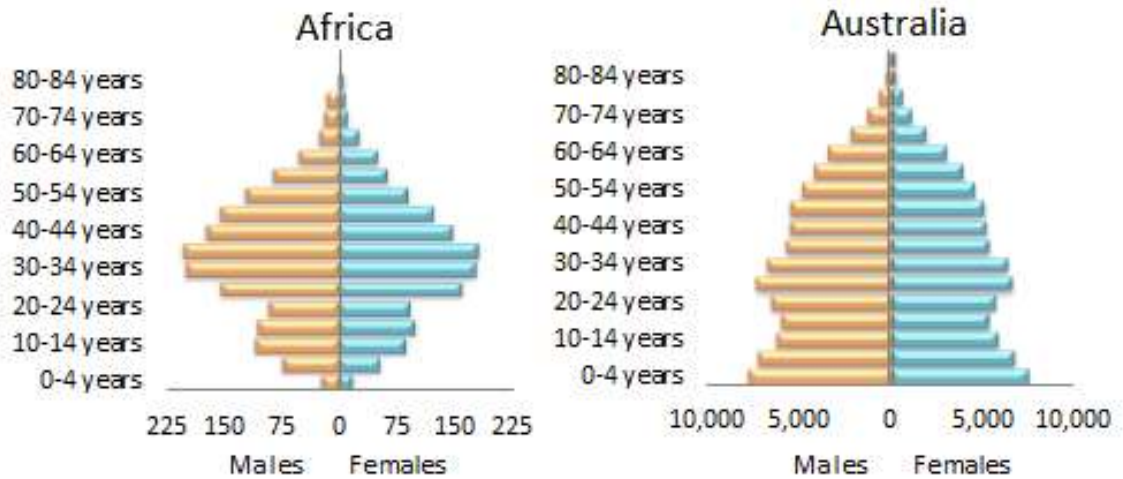




Figure 5: Population pyramids, selected country of birth, 2016 (cont.)



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing (2016)

In summary, the Territory’s new migrant communities analysed here were characterised by similarities and differences when compared to the Australian born population of the Territory with the main ones being:

- they were highly qualified (generally) and had relatively low rates of unemployment
- they were relatively concentrated in the ‘care’ and ‘service’ industries
- there were significant differences in average personal incomes associated with their main occupation
- English was spoken as a second language in many of the communities
- their communities were on a continuum of being very new (Taiwan/Nepal) to well established (New Zealand) with age structures that reflect the types of visas supporting residency in the NT



Section 5: Key results from the TTaM survey and focus groups

5.1 Introducing the survey responders and focus group participants

A summary of the characteristics of survey respondents is presented in Table 4. Generally, they were a good representation of the age profiles of the new migrant communities, however respondents had higher education and employment levels in comparison to the Census data on these communities.

Respondents from New Zealand were generally older compared to other new community respondents and those from China and Taiwan generally younger. These differences were reflected in the amount of time spent living in the NT, with 72% of New Zealanders living there for 6 years or more compared with 42% from China/Taiwan. Filipino people were also more likely to have lived in the NT for at least 6 years, however almost half of those from African countries had only lived there for 2 years or less (despite having high levels of citizenship or permanent residency at 87%).

Overall, the TTaM respondent profile was more female (60%) than male, but those from India/Nepal were more likely to be male (59% compared to 41%). Respondents were generally highly qualified as measured by having a bachelor level or postgraduate degree (65%), but Africans less so (61%), and New Zealanders least so (43%). Most were employed (85%), however 20% of respondents from China and Taiwan did not feel their job matched their skills or qualifications. New Zealanders stood out as being more likely to own or be in the process of owning their home (60%) and most were either citizens or permanent residents (95%) which is congruent with current migration policies between New Zealand and Australia. People from India/Nepal also had high levels of Australian citizenship or permanent residency (74%).

Table 4: TTaM respondent profiles, by country of birth

Characteristics	Philippines	India & Nepal	China & Taiwan	Continental Africa (a)	New Zealand	Total
Number	59	90	31	78	130	388
Age Profile	% of responders					
< 35 years	49.2	37.8	51.6	26.9	15.4	30.9
35 – 59	49.2	56.7	35.5	59.0	53.1	53.9
60 plus	1.7	5.6	3.2	14.1	31.5	15.3
Female	69.5	41.1	64.5	53.8	70.0	59.8
Currently living in the Territory	90.3	90.0	90.3	85.9	73.8	83.0



Bachelor or Postgrad degree	93.6	90.7	93.6	61.5	43.0	64.8
Employed	80.5	93.0	80.5	84.6	84.4	85.0
Current job does not match skills	14.0	12.5	20.0	7.7	2.8	9.5
Own or purchasing home	45.5	40.5	20.0	35.9	60.0	45.0
Citizen or permanent resident ¹	45.2	74.4	45.2	87.1	94.6	86.3
Total time spent in the NT						
2 years or less	24.4	33.8	33.8	46.9	11.6	29.6
3 – 5 years	12.2	24.6	24.6	14.1	16.3	21.3
6 years or more	63.4	41.5	41.5	39.1	72.1	49.2

(a) Countries in Africa: Africa (not further defined) - 10; Kenya – 6; Nigeria – 10; South Africa – 34; Zambia – 3; Zimbabwe – 11

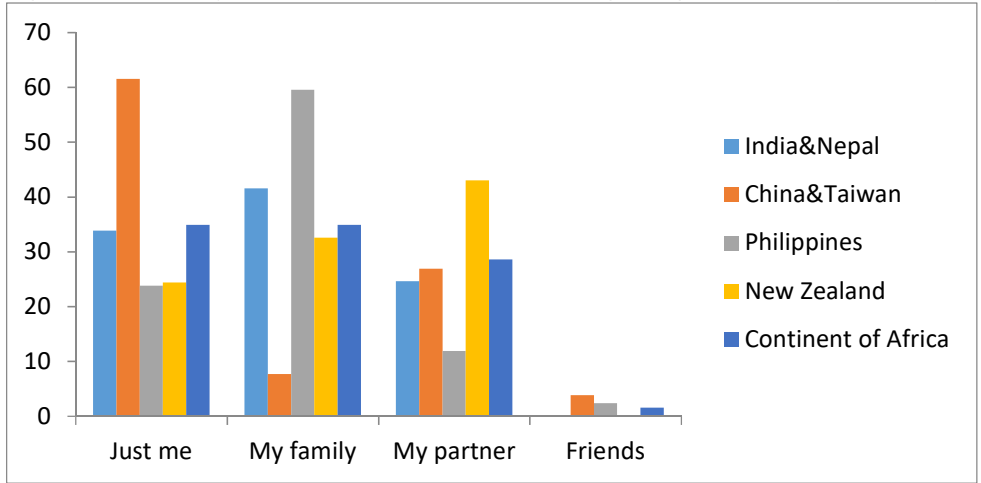
Source: TTaM, 2019

Respondents from China/Taiwan were much more likely to have migrated to the Northern Territory alone while those from the Philippines were more likely to have come with their family (Figure 6). New Zealanders were most likely to have come with their partner.

¹ Sponsored permanent residence (employer of Regionally sponsored) provides migrants with access to Medicare and other social benefits, as well as a faster pathway to citizenship. Student visas provide up to 5 years of temporary residency. Temporary Skill Shortage visas provide stay conditions of either 2 or 4 years but no access to social benefits.



Figure 6: Who respondents travelled with when migrating to the NT, by country of birth



Source: TTaM, 2019

Focus group participants were drawn from each migrant community with the exception of New Zealand. Participants from Taiwan and China were young international students and therefore may not be representative of the broader Chinese/Taiwanese communities. All focus group participants were also survey respondents apart from those involved in the 'India Ideas Fest', however many of these had responded to the survey.

Observation across the respondents from the new migrant communities again shows both similarities and differences in their socio-economic characteristics, as well as their migration journeys. These need to be considered when interpreting variations in their experiences of living in the Territory.

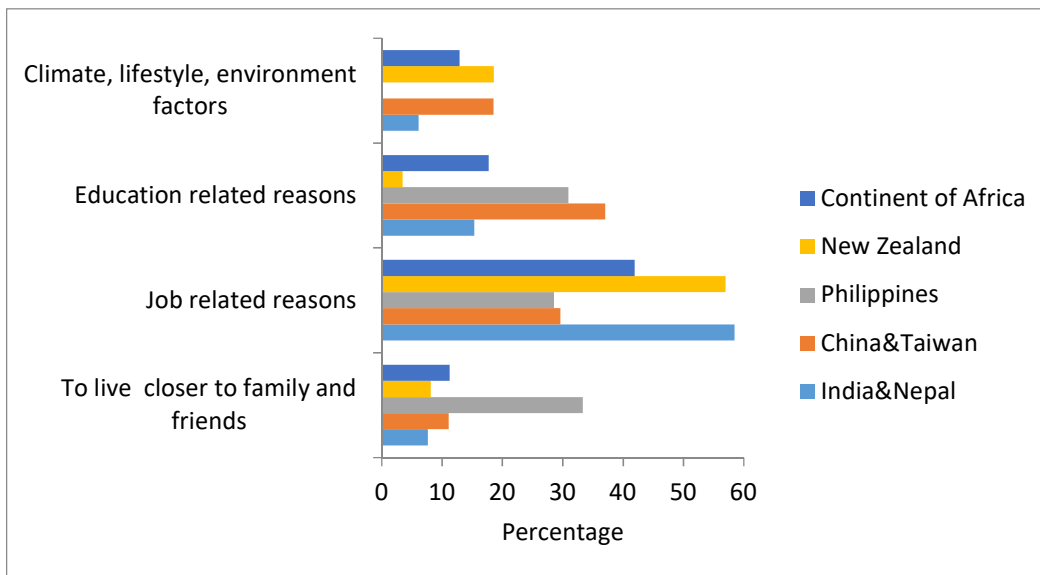


5.2 Recruitment and attraction factors – what is pulling overseas migrants to the Territory?

In the TTaM survey respondents were asked about their main reason for moving to the NT, choosing from a large pick list of responses. The main reasons were grouped into the factors most relevant to answers provided by the new migrant communities which related to: climate, lifestyle and the environment (including access to outdoor activities); education factors (associated with self or child/ren); job related factors (including specific jobs as well as general job and business opportunities); and to live closer to family and/or friends (Figure 7).

Overall, job related reasons were the most common pull factor, and were particularly influential for those from India/Nepal and New Zealand (58% and 57% respectively), followed by those born in African countries (42%). A third of Filipinos however were following family and friends (33%) whereas people from China/Taiwan were most likely to be moving for reasons associated with education (37%).

Figure 7: Main reason for migrating to the NT, by country of birth



Source: TTaM, 2019

Migration decisions are generally more complex than those provided in the survey pick list. Focus group participants indicated that decisions related to education were also closely linked with available employment opportunities. The majority of international students in the focus groups did not have part-time jobs that covered the basic 20 allowable working hours on their student visa. These participants reflected that if they were in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane getting part-time work and vacation work would be easy. To them Darwin is characterised as have a thriving economy for only six months a year, during the dry season. Critically, during the Christmas holiday period (the wet season), students can be forced to go inter-state to work full time and often maintain two houses for the period.

Students are only allowed to work 20 hours a week. My brother lives in Brisbane and I like Brisbane very much because during the holidays I can work full time there as an international student, but



there is also work there. In Darwin and NT generally, there is no work during the holidays. Once I achieve my permanent residency I will move to Brisbane because of jobs. I came to CDU because the fees are more affordable compared to Brisbane, however at least you can get more employment opportunities for 20 hours. In Darwin, I am only getting one to sometimes half a day worth of work. I cannot afford it as an international student. I think this is the reason it is better for international students in other states when compared to Northern Territory.

(Chinese female participant, student visa)

The importance of gaining permanent residency was discussed by other focus group participants and was also linked to employment. The following comment from a Nepalese participant is reflective of many of these sentiments.

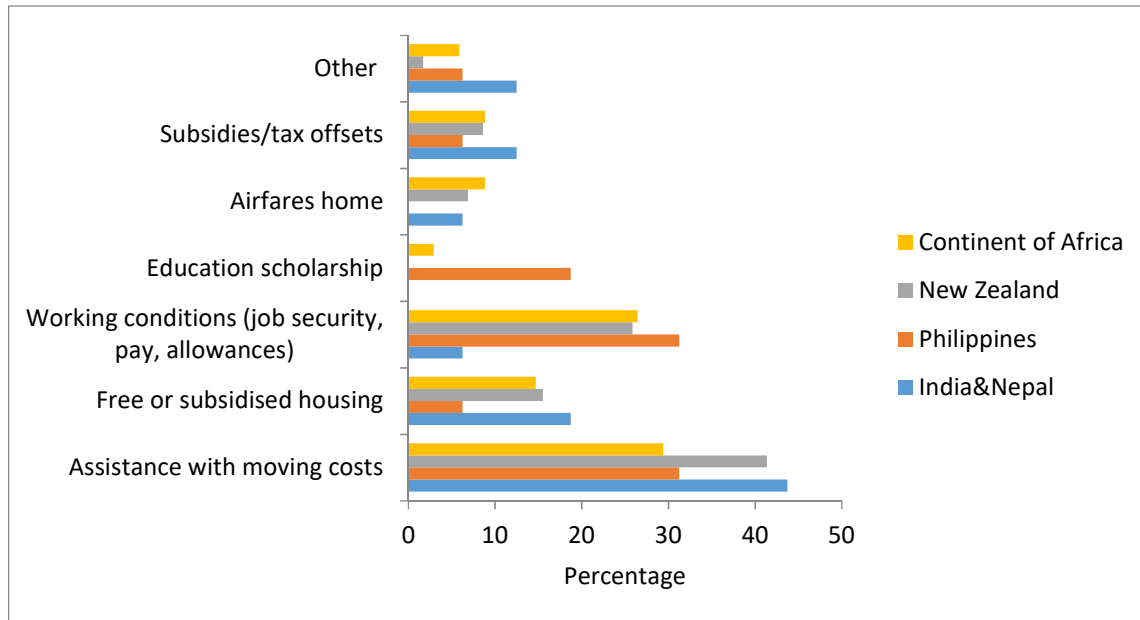
However, I am reassured that by staying in Alice Springs I will get residency. I want to move to Australia and want permanent residency. Alice Springs is a better small town than most small towns, because it is easy to get jobs here. Majority of Nepalese work in hospitality in Alice Springs, Kebab shops, hotels, waitress etc.

(Nepalese male participant, temporary visa)

The TTaM survey asked whether any particular incentives affected the participant's decision to migrate to the Territory. Respondents could choose all incentives that applied to their circumstances (Figure 8). Those from China/Taiwan nominated only one incentive, education scholarships, and notably 20% of respondents from the Philippines were also incentivised by education scholarships. However, assistance with moving costs was the most likely incentive received, again particularly so for New Zealanders and those from India/Nepal (41% and 44%) which was probably related to the job opportunities identified as their main reason for migration. Incentives associated with improved working conditions was the second most common inducement identified and was important to people from the Philippines (31%) where it was equal to assistance with moving costs. Free or subsidised housing and other subsidies or tax incentives were also applicable to respondents but less so for Filipinos respondents.



Figure 8: Incentives received for moving, by country of birth



Source: TTaM, 2019

Survey respondents were also asked to nominate ideas from a large pick list on what they felt would be most influential in attracting other people from their countries to consider moving to the (see Figure 9). Interestingly, lifestyle and environment factors (combined from a number of response categories covering work/life balance, the environment and access to the outdoors) were the most common attractors, with 37% of New Zealanders thinking they would be beneficial in promotional strategies, as well as 25% of responders from African countries, followed by China/Nepal (23%) and then the Philippines (22%). This was also picked up in the focus group discussion with some participants pointing out the similarities between their homeland and Darwin.

Darwin is similar to the Philippines as we are really used to the weather. For example, my aunty visited from the Philippines and she loves nature parks, she thought Darwin is amazing as the nature parks are for free here and in Philippines we have to pay. So, I think yes this is definitely a place that will attract more people. For us Filipinos this is just like home

(Filipino female participant, temporary visa)

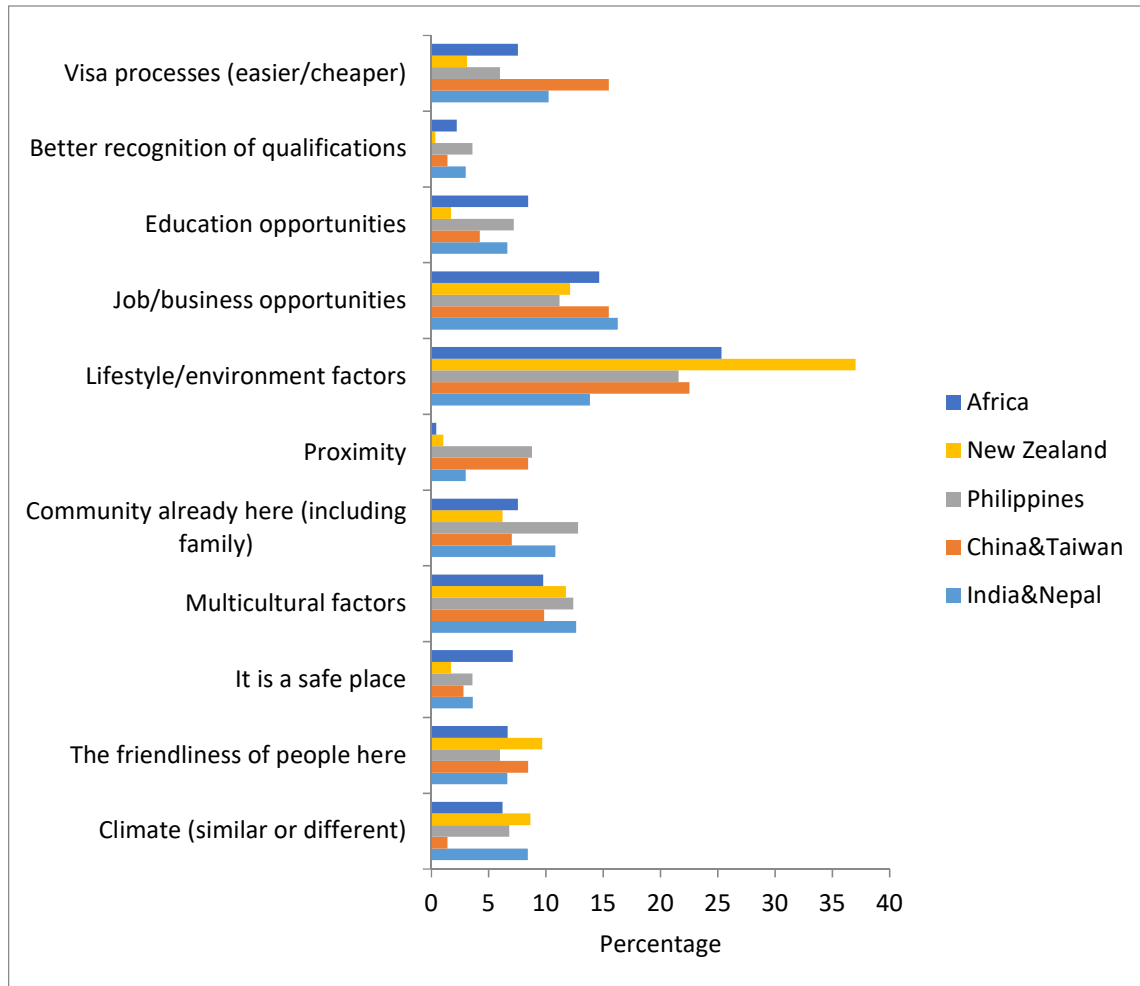
I have no problems therefore living in Alice Springs as the weather is like Dubai

(Keralite Indian male participant, citizen).

However, lifestyle and environment factors were not thought to be as potentially influential in attracting more people from India/Nepal (14%), rather they felt job and business opportunities would be a bigger attractor (16%). These sentiments were emphasised further in the Indian focus group where participants highlighted opportunities to build stronger business and economic ties between the two countries, with the success of migration programs seen as a significant enabler. People-to-people relationships were stressed by the participants as having primacy in establishing successful shared ventures.



Figure 9: Factors considered influential in promoting a move to the NT, by country of birth



Source: TTaM, 2019

Indian focus group participants also suggested a more targeted promotion strategy could have direct appeal to the migrant market in India if it was nuanced to make it culturally appealing. Suggestions included the use of cricket or Bollywood identities and developing an NT brand specifically focused on the education and economic opportunities in both countries. Other studies suggest that it is important for migrants to see themselves in promotional information, including on billboards and in tourist campaigns, as inclusive imagery helps to build a sense of potential belonging to a new homeland (Bugg, 2013).

In the TTaM survey visa issues (either being easier or cheaper) stood out for the Chinese/Taiwanese respondents (15%) as being a good way to promote the NT. Factors associated with community and family being already in place was felt to be a good promotional focus for the Filipino participants (13%). Nepalese focus group participants pointed to the importance of word of mouth in encouraging chain migration, not just for family but also for close friends.

Nepalese rely a lot on word of mouth. See my friend here who is like my brother requested me to move here, I did, and he helped me stay with him. I am going to do the same. I am going to tell all my friends to move to Alice Springs. I am going to of course make sure that there is job lined up for them.



(Nepalese male participant, temporary visa)

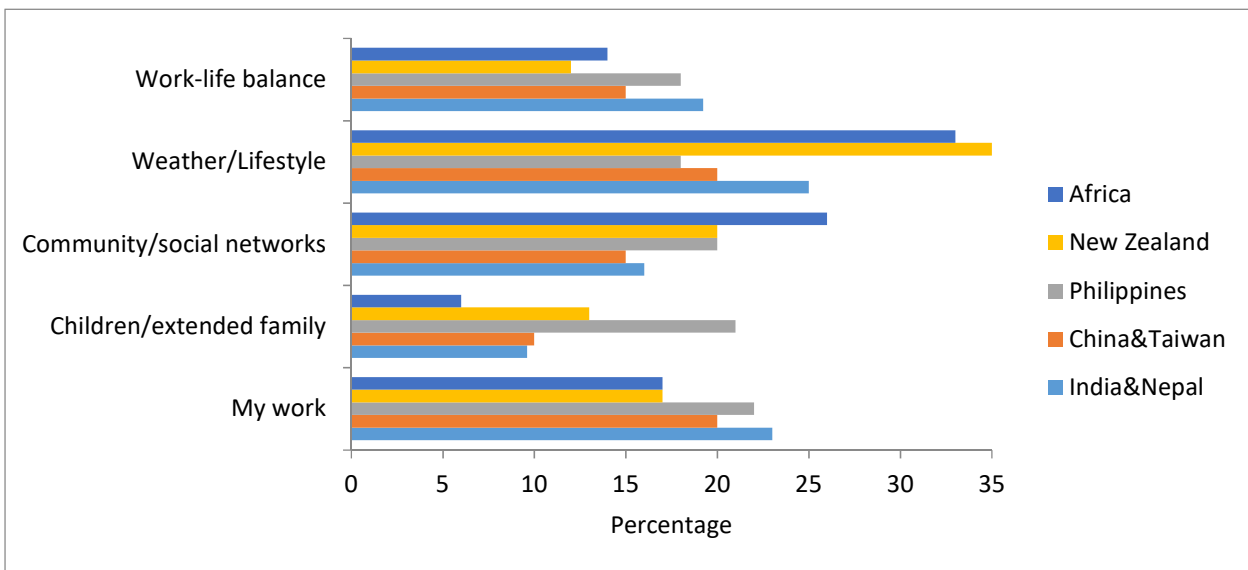
General factors focusing on the NT's multicultural diversity and activities were chosen by at least 10% of all respondents, more so than climate, proximity or safety factors. Despite focus group discussion about skills mismatching souring migration experiences, better recognition of qualifications was only selected by small numbers of respondents for promoting NT to people from their countries.



5.3 Attachment and retention factors – what is helping people stick with the Territory?

Survey respondents from the new migrant communities who indicated no intention to migrate out of the Territory within 5 years were asked about what keeps them in the Territory (see Figure 10). The weather and lifestyle factors stood out for respondents from African countries and New Zealand, while those from the Philippines were more likely to nominate their job, children and extended family, as well as community and social networks (all just over 20%). Although weather and lifestyle were important to respondents from India/Nepal (25%) and China/Taiwan (20%), both groups were also strongly attached through their work (23% and 20% respectively) and having a good work-life balance (19% and 18%).

Figure 10: Respondents not intending to migrate within next 5 years, what keeps them here, by country of birth

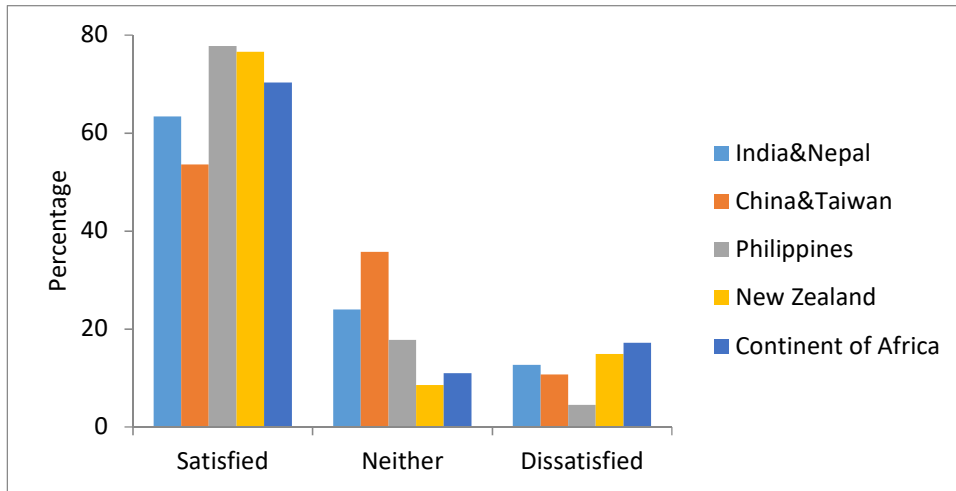


Source: TTaM, 2019

Overwhelmingly respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied, with their experience of living in the Territory, however there were some differences between communities (see Figure 11). Filipinos were most satisfied (78%), closely followed by New Zealanders (77%). Those from China or Taiwan had lower satisfaction levels (54%) and were more likely to be ambivalent about their overall experience (36%). It was rare for Filipino respondents to be dissatisfied (4%), while those from African countries were more likely to be dissatisfied followed by those from New Zealand (17% and 15% respectively).



Figure 11: Overall satisfaction with living in the Territory, by country of birth



Source: TtAM, 2019

Settling in place with children provides an extra level of attachment compared to the experience of those who settle as a single person or as part of a couple. Settlement outcomes have been found to be more successful for migrants who move with families (Wali & Renzaho 2018). The importance of family migration was picked up as a theme in both the African and Indian focus groups. When migrants know their children are being supported and educated for success, have access to sport and other activities, and have good friendship networks, then decisions to migrate away become harder. More than 60% of respondents from India/Nepal, New Zealand and African countries had children, and children from participants from India/Nepal and New Zealand were more likely to live in the Territory (see Table 5). Therefore, the importance of meeting expectations around the quality of childcare and education cannot be underestimated.

We are very involved in our children's lives, probably for a longer time than most Australians. We always want the best for them. We want our children to have access to good education and opportunities. If they have to move away then we would move with them.

(Indian male participant, permanent visa)

I need a better day care facility so that I can have a peace of mind, otherwise one partner must stay back at home to look after children, and you know but we still need money to live.

(Keralite Indian male participant, citizen).

African respondents had the highest likelihood of being grandparents (43%) but only 1 in 5 of their grandchildren lived in the Territory, therefore the migration push on African respondents to move out of the Territory to be closer to their family is likely to be higher. Responding to what keeps them here could be influential.

Access to sport was considered very important to parents in both the African and Indian communities and discussed at length in the focus groups. A lack of access was raised as a potential out-migration driver.



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I think Darwin is a nice place, however I feel when compared to Melbourne there are not many options to play soccer. I would like my son to play soccer and I feel in Darwin they do not really support soccer activities. So that is definitely an area I would like to explore

(Nigerian male participant, citizen)

In the TTaM, 20% of New Zealand respondents had grandchildren who were all living in the Territory. This could signal a higher level of commitment to retiring in the Territory. The lower likelihood of respondents from the Philippines and China/Taiwan having children was probably related to their younger age profile. The children of these respondents were highly likely to live in the Territory because they were also younger.

Table 5: Whether have children/grandchildren who live in the Territory, by country of birth

	Philippines	India & Nepal	China % Taiwan	Continent of Africa	New Zealand
With children	35.9	66.2	24.0	60.0	69.9
% in Territory	92.9	86.0	83.3	25.0	74.1
With grand-children	0.0	4.6	4.0	43.3	20.5
% in Territory	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.2	100.0

Source: TTaM, 2019

The importance of extended family in providing support for parents with small children was reiterated a number of times in focus group discussions. Managing familial obligations to older parents was also of high concern to Indian participants, particularly responsibilities associated with being the eldest child. Participants emphasised that the economic overhead to the government could be low if medical insurance costs for their parents were covered by the migrant, and the benefits of extended family in providing cultural continuity and guidance to younger generations was held in high regard. Participants called for costs and conditions associated with the family reunion visas to be reviewed to help encourage longer-term retention.

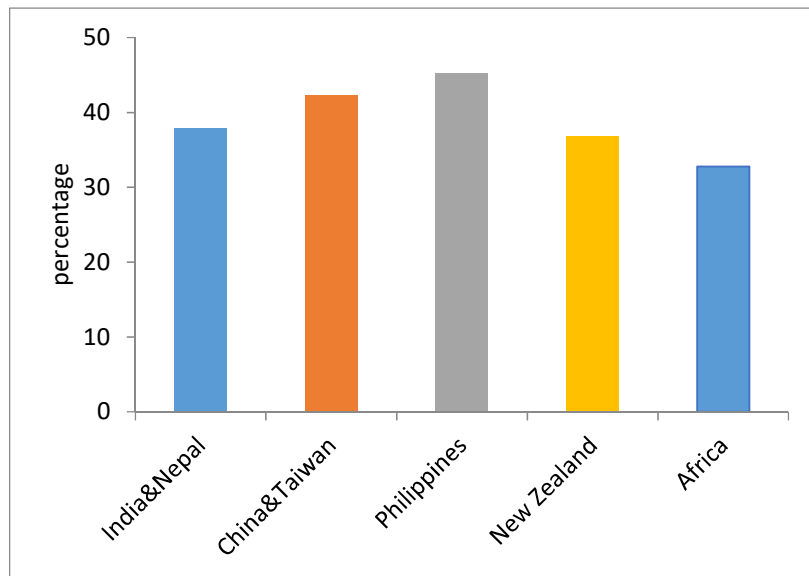
I have moved from the UK, although I cannot compare Alice Springs to the UK, I was shocked to find out that if me and my family need to travel to India each year it costs us collectively 12,000 Australian dollars. It also takes us over two days, due to flight connectivity. In the UK, I could get flights as cheap as 75 pounds per person. Of course, there is no comparison, however, it is surprising that there is no other way out for us from the dilemma. Eventually, because my parents are ageing, despite having a job, I will be forced to relocate to a city that may be offering the cheapest flights to India as we may need to travel often to see my ageing parents. This is the reality.

(Keralite Indian male participant, citizen).



Volunteering provides evidence of social capital and community participation and is an important indicator of attachment and acceptance by the broader community. Respondents across the multicultural communities had similar levels of volunteering, with people from the Philippines most likely to volunteer (45%) and those from Africa least likely (33%) (see Figure 12). This was higher than for immigrants (22%) and more similar to Australian born people (34%) in volunteering data reported in the last ABS General Social Survey (ABS 2014). General Social Survey results also suggested that immigrants who had been in place longer accrue social capital and increase their volunteering as their networks develop over time. This lines up with the Filipino TTaM respondents being in place longest and African respondents the shortest. Additional research by Webb (2015) suggests volunteering is an activity that migrants engage with to access ‘local experience’ and gain a local referee who can speak to their suitability for employment.

Figure 12: Whether volunteers, by country of birth



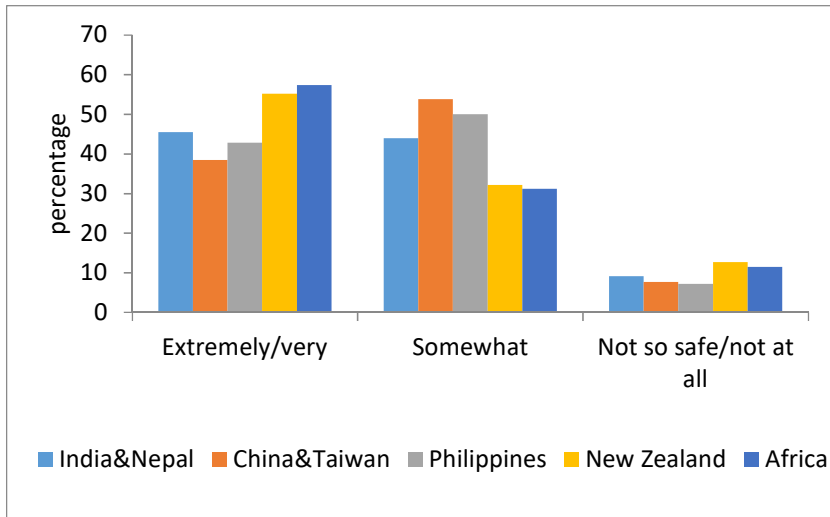
Source: TTaM, 2019

Feeling safe is an important indicator for retention as it can be related to feelings of confidence in participating fully in the broader community. People from African countries reported the highest feelings of safety living in their neighbourhood (57%), while those from China/Taiwan were least likely to feel safe (38%) (see Figure 13). Filipinos were also more likely to feel ‘somewhat safe’ than feel completely confident about their safety (43% compared with 50%). Respondents from India/Nepal had similar proportions feeling extremely/very safe compared to those just feeling ‘somewhat safe’ (45% and 44%). Twelve people identified direct experiences of victimisation and they were part of the 10 per cent of respondents who reported they did not feel safe at all. When prompted to explain their low feelings of safety most indicated a perception that incidences of robbery and break-ins were increasing, and no action was being taken to effectively address the issues. Being isolated (e.g. husband away for work) was also included in comments associated with feeling unsafe.



After Marina Sirocchi

Figure 13: Feelings of safety living in local neighbourhood, by country of birth



Source: TTaM, 2019

In the focus groups, participants were prompted to think more about their attachment to the Territory, particularly around their sense of belonging and connection. The ideation of 'home' and 'belonging' in migrant memory can be associated with both positive and negative memories depending on their migration journey but often the new homeland is viewed with a lens of positivity even when challenges arise.

I arrived as a refugee from Liberia. I have been living in Darwin for more than 10 years. I love Darwin, I prefer to raise my children in Darwin than in a bigger city. I like the laidback lifestyle of Darwin. My children love it here. I can get to uni and work within 15 minutes it is great. When I first arrived here there were many more Liberians, however they have all left. I have chosen to stay here. There is no drama here in Darwin for us Africans

(Liberian male participant, citizen)

A very positive observation from a female Chinese international student pointed to the affordability of the university campus accommodation/fees and the strong connection with a neighboring student.

I am happy, I live on campus here at CDU with my husband. I am also happy because my neighbour at CDU international house is also from China. So, we both cook the same country foods, we also go on excursions together and we really enjoy. I am doing a four-year social work degree here, I really like it. Especially because international house residential fees here are cheaper than any other residential accommodation on any other university in Australia. I was lucky fees and accommodation both were relatively cheap than other states, hence I stay here.

(Chinese female participant, student visa).

For the majority of participants in the Filipino focus group, Darwin has been their window to Australia and their perceptions about Australia have been shaped through their interactions with the locals. Darwin has clearly been observed as being a good first choice of settlement.



I have arrived first here in Darwin, I like it very much here as I have also come from a similar province in the Philippines which is quiet. I have been comparing Darwin to other states. I actually went to Sydney and nobody says hello to each other. The locals in Darwin are really friendly and they say hello. I think that connectivity and the warmth of the people really has made me feel welcome in Darwin.

(Filipino female participant, student visa).

A second narrative that emerged from the Filipino focus group was one of community connectedness. The relatively young cohort however changes the dynamic about how community connectedness is viewed.

I think whilst we enjoy the places of worship, and we have familiar food available in Darwin, the shopping choices are limited in Darwin. Back in the Philippines if we want to hang out with friends, we would really go to the shopping centers and hang out in the malls. However, in Darwin the shops close early and we have nowhere else to go and connect with friends

(Filipino female participant, temporary visa).

This was also picked up by the Taiwanese and Chinese student participants. They have higher recreational needs and their views matched the Filipino focus group.

We Asians enjoy a fast pace of life, it is very difficult when I ask my Chinese and Taiwanese friends if they like Darwin, they all say it is too slow, too quiet... We need some recreational opportunities in Darwin. I am not satisfied with the international student activities on campus, CDU can do better. Even I wish if there was an IKEA or Dan Murphy. This is also linked to transport connectivity, it is very poor in Darwin

(Chinese female participant, student visa).

In addition to comments about the shops “closing early”, the other theme that emerged around connectedness was the lack of sufficient public transport. It was cited as a significant barrier to going and seeing friends, getting to work and connecting with other community members.

The distances in Darwin are large and transportation is a major problem, if you are working in the city then there are not many buses available after 6:00pm. Uber is really expensive. So, I think it is a real issue as I cannot meet with my friends or reach my employment on time. I am finding that sometimes I end up walking after school (university).

(Filipino female participant, student visa).

It is important to note that for a young cohort, the city’s nightlife, opportunities to be with friendship networks and access to shopping can become enablers to stronger feelings of being well connected. Whilst all participants attended Filipino church services, they did not view the church as enhancing community connectedness. Instead the shopping mall was identified as central to connecting with peers. Consideration of the social needs of the international student cohort, over and above their studies, must form part of any strategy to actively recruit them.



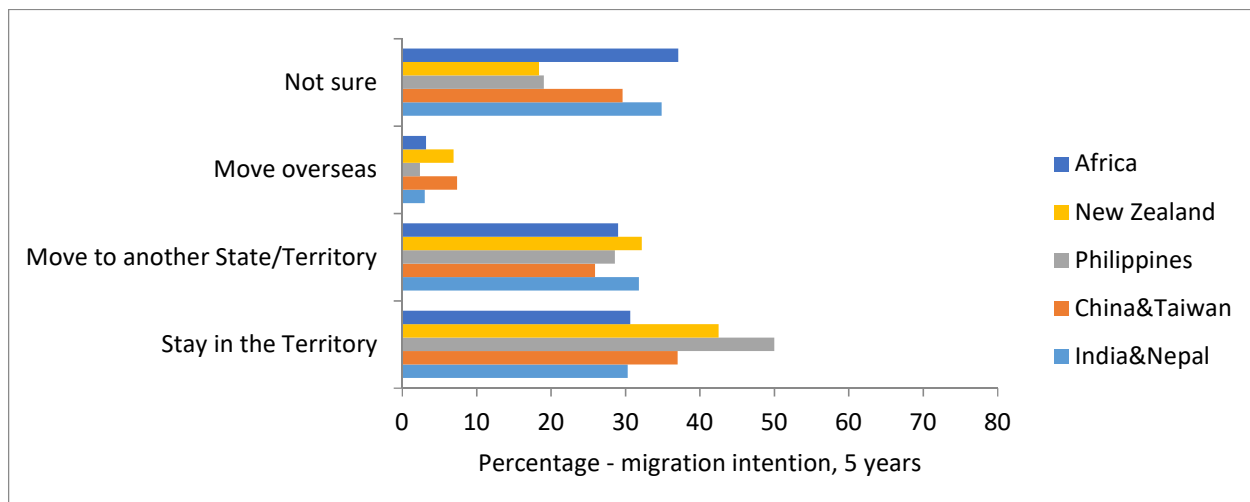
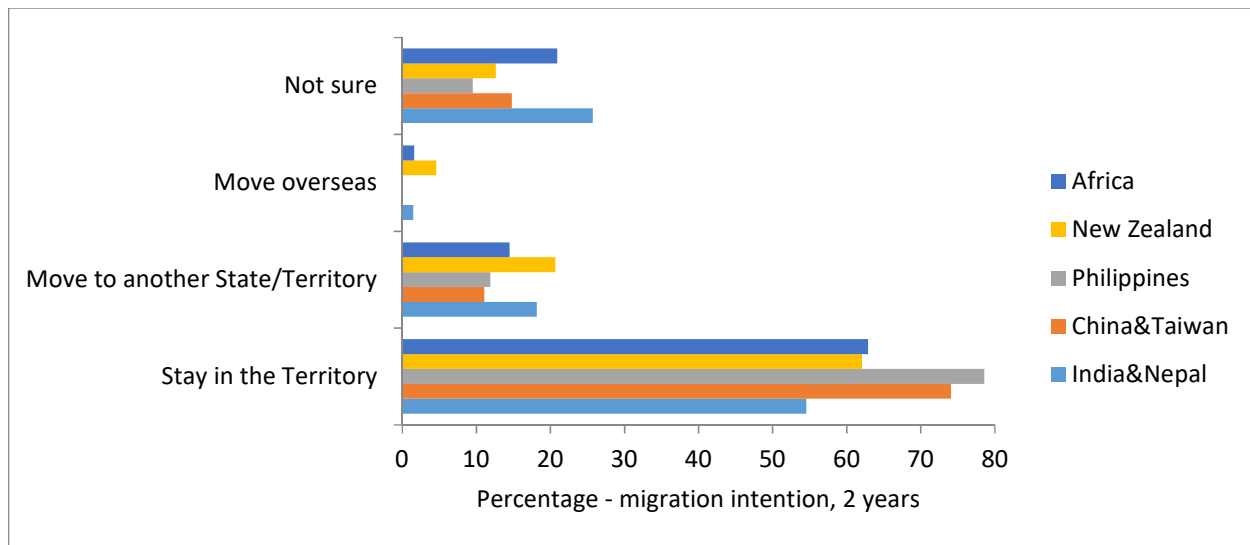
After Marina Sirocchi

5.4 Push factors - Why are migrants leaving and what could encourage them to stay?

TTaM respondents from the Philippines were the most likely to think they will still be in the Territory in 2 years and 5 years (79% falling to 50%) while those from India/Nepal were the least likely (55% falling to 30%) (see Figures 14 & 15). Respondents from China/Taiwan had the largest drop in their intention to stay between the 2 and 5 year horizons which may relate to the completion of their studies (74% falling to 37%). Respondents mainly indicated that they were thinking about moving interstate rather than overseas.

Respondents who intended to migrate were less likely to think they would still be in the Territory in 5 years, compared to 2 years, however they generally felt less certainty about the 5 year intentions. Indeed, more than a third of African responders were unsure where they would be in 5 years (37%). This provides a window to influence their migration decisions.

Figure 14: Migration intentions, 2 years then 5 years, by country of birth



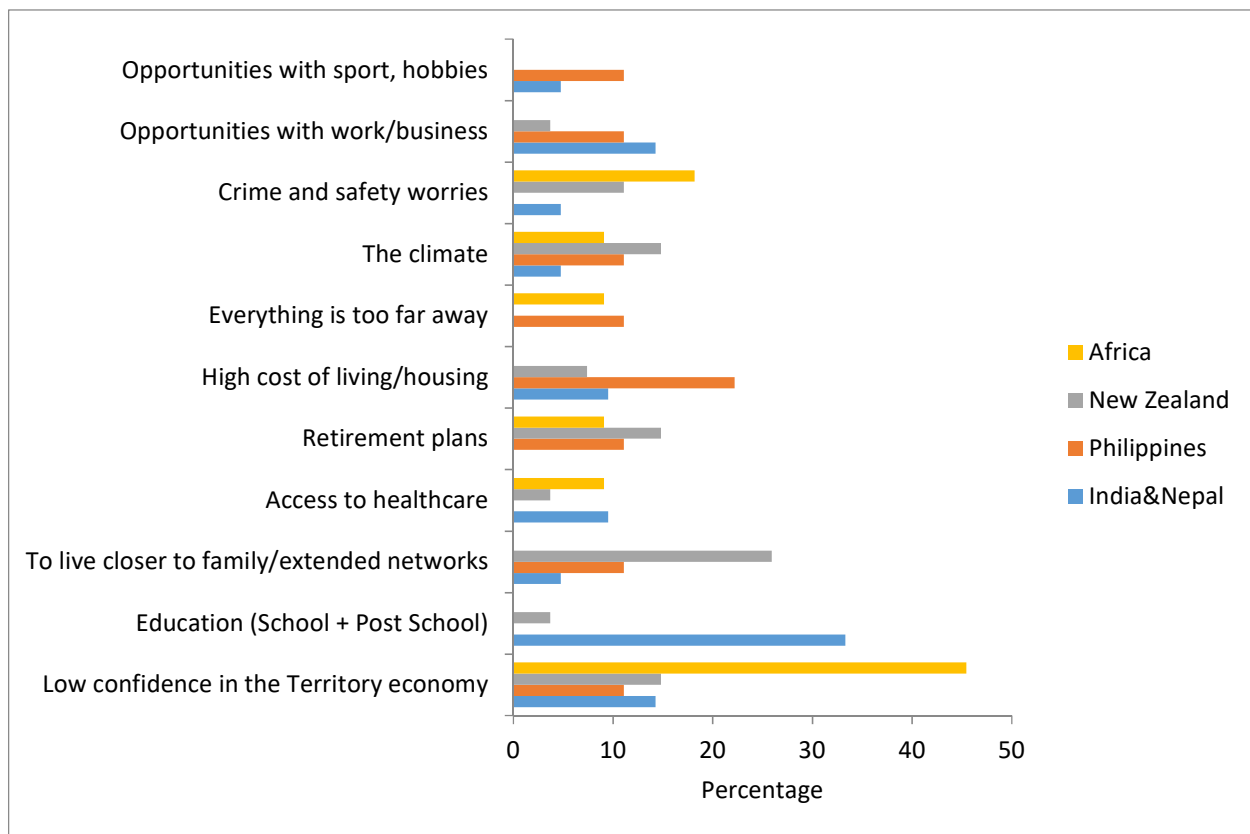
Source: TTaM, 2019



Push factors were separately analysed based on whether the respondent was a citizen or on a permanent visa (Figure 15) compared with those on a temporary visa (see Figure 16). There was insufficient survey sample to disaggregate those on temporary visas by country of birth, so they have been reported as a single group.

For those who were citizens or permanent visa holders, African respondents cited their low confidence in the Territory economy (45%) followed by concerns about crime and safety (18%) as reasons for intending to leave the NT (see Figure 15). In contrast a third of respondents from India/Nepal would leave to access better school or post school education opportunities (33%). Those from New Zealand were thinking about moving closer to family and friends (26%) while those from the Philippines had higher concerns about the cost of living in The Territory.

Figure 15: Citizens/permanent visa holders, main reason associated with migration intention by country of birth



Source: TTaM, 2019

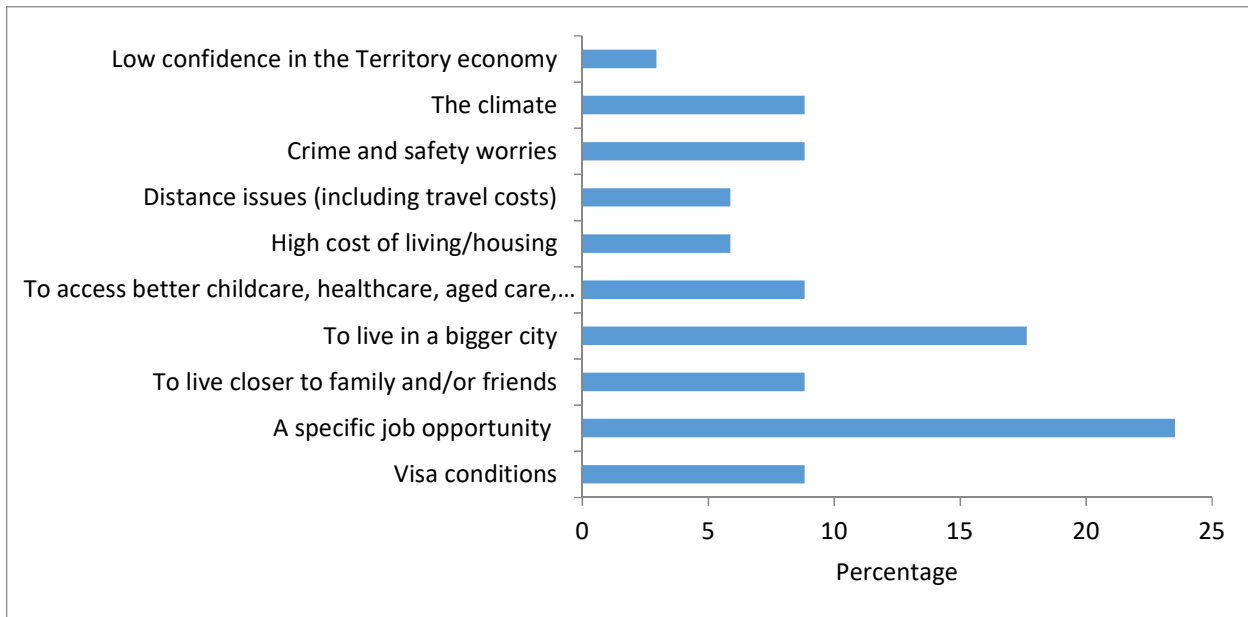
(note: The sample of citizens or permanent visa holders from China/Taiwan was too small to report separately)

For respondents on temporary visas, specific job opportunities were the main reason for considering out migration from the Territory (24%) (see Figure 16). The attraction of living in a bigger city was the second most common reason (18%). Interestingly, visa conditions did not play a primary role in influencing out-migration intentions from the Territory (9%), however it was still more important than issues of distance/isolation and travel costs, as well as general living and housing costs (both 6%).



After Marina Sirocchi

Figure 16: Temporary visa holders, main reason associated with out-migration intention



Source: TTaM, 2019

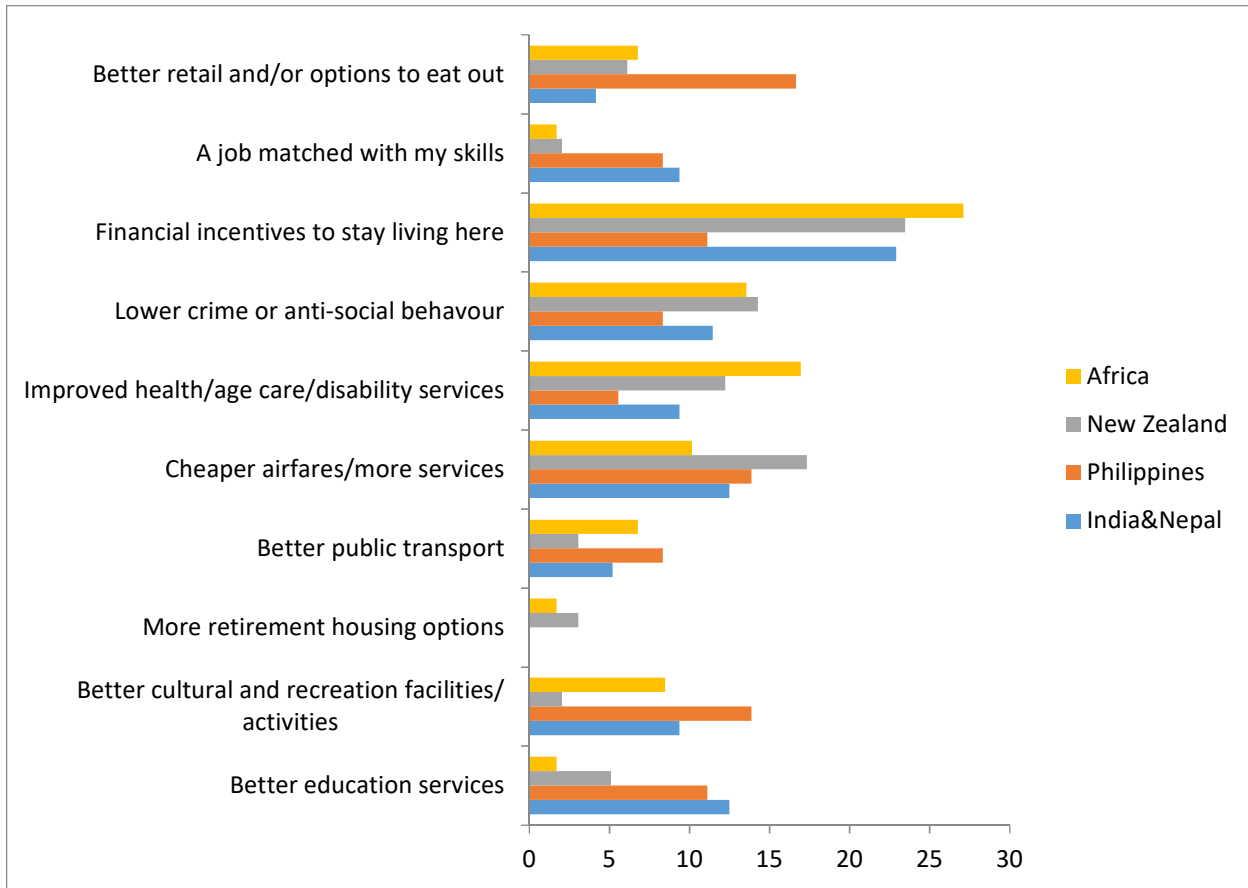
When asked about what changes might keep them here, respondents who were permanent residents (citizens or on a permanent visa) were most likely to identify financial incentives if they were from Africa, New Zealand or India/Nepal (27%, 23%, 23%) (see Figure 17). Respondents from the Philippines were looking for better retail and more options for eating out (17%) followed by better cultural and recreation activities and better air services (both 14%).

Although the most common factor that might convince temporary visa holders to stay was also financial incentives (15%), they were also looking for jobs matched with their skills and easier and cheaper visa processes (both 10%) (see Figure 18). Some temporary visa holders emphasised the additional costs associated with having no access to child care rebates and other subsidies or financial support.



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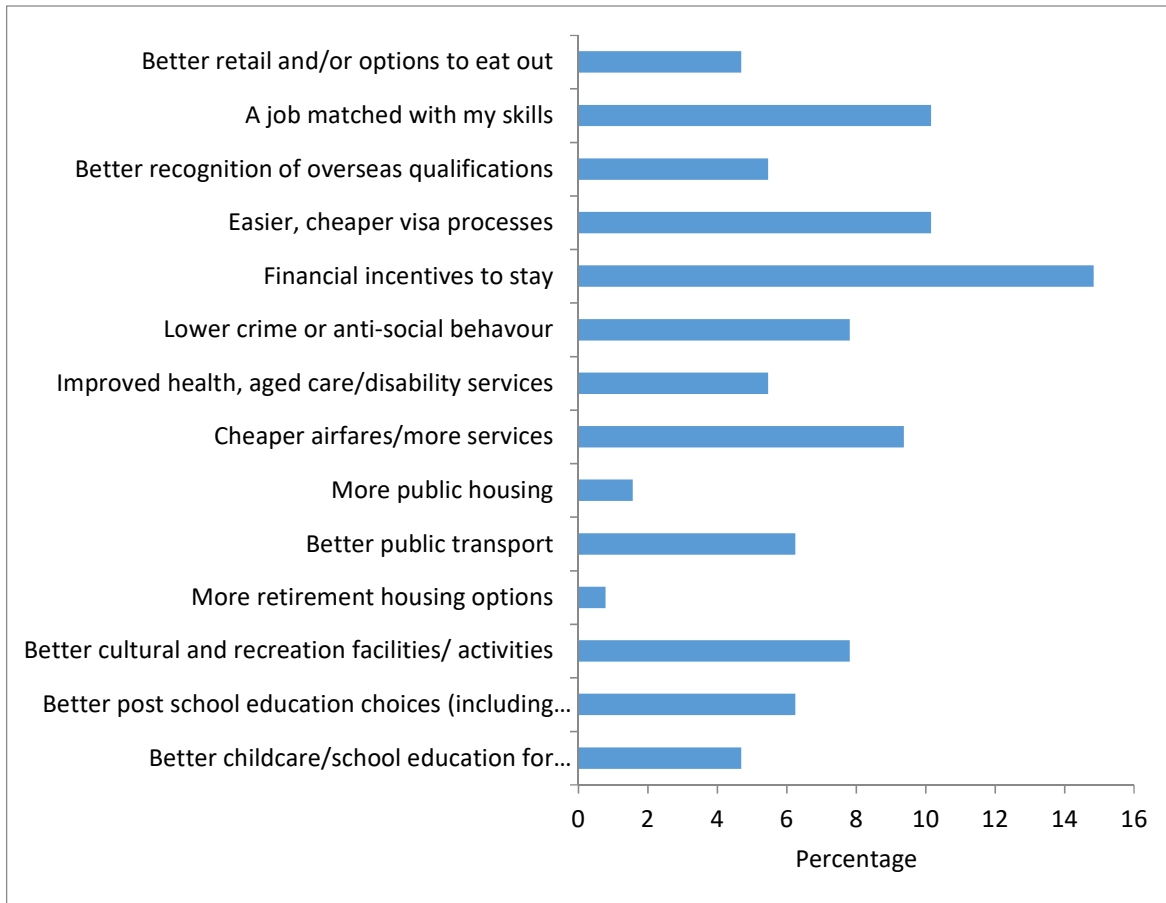
Figure 17: Permanent residents, reasons might stay by country of birth



Source: TTaM, 2019



Figure 18: Temporary visa holders, reasons might stay



Source: TtAM, 2019



Section 6: Settlement experiences

A deeper understanding of settlement experiences was explored with focus group participants. The literature around the settlement process for new arrivals clearly indicates that the sooner individuals find employment the better their settlement experience and longer-term integration (Henderson 2004; Udah et al. 2019). Immigrants have already engaged with the enormous financial, emotional and sometimes professional risk of relocating to a new country and therefore they can become risk averse once they find employment.

A case study highlighting the success of attracting Keralite migrants to Alice Springs to fill key gaps in the health care sector (see Taylor, 2018b) is reinforced by the positive stories of many of the Indian focus group participants. Their employment situations were particularly secure and their experiences related to strong connections with a very close-knit community that accommodated their cultural needs (covering both food and faith). Indian Keralite participants had no plans of moving interstate and many had established thriving careers.

I guess the main reason for me to arrive in Alice Springs was job opportunities. So, the fact that I had known people who had come to Alice in the past was also reassuring. We felt a real connection here to the church and it was very important for us to make us feel welcomed. The church and the employment opportunities are both binding factors for us in Alice Springs.

(Keralite Indian male participant, citizen)

We have close to 230 families now and we celebrate all the major you know cultural events in the town, in this town we can celebrate festivals that we could back home. In any given year we have at least four to five major events that we are part of. It has also been good because we now have 3 Indian restaurants that serve reasonably good food.

(Keralite Indian male participant, citizen)

But others were not so positive. Although the issues of a skills mismatch did not come out strongly in survey responses, some focus group participants were much more likely to discuss their negative employment experiences. These stories relate to both recognition of qualifications and frustrations around requirements for local Territory experience in their search for employment.

I was lucky, I was sponsored by the Northern Territory regional visa sponsorship. I have a qualification in aeronautical engineering. ... I also found out that the roles I was being offered in Darwin were much lower. In one instance, I was being offered a role in aircraft cleaning. This was way below my skills and expectations. So unfortunately, yes, I have the visa to stay in Darwin. I am now retraining to work in the communities sector. Once I achieve my citizenship, I may choose to move interstate. However, I had decided to make Darwin home, there is a very large Nigerian community here so I feel very well connected. I am disappointed that my skills are going to waste.

(Nigerian male participant, NT Regional Government sponsored permanent resident)

The main concern for me has been to deal with the challenge of 'local experience'. I did not have any local experience. Despite working in a multinational company, I was unable to get a job. It took me a long time.

(Nigerian male participant, temporary visa)



If the Government is bringing people here, opportunities need to be available and Territory experience should not be a criterion for jobs and overseas experience should be considered.

(Indian male participant, permanent visa)

Recognition that other skill regimes exist (over and above relevant qualifications and experience) when overseas skilled migrants seek out employment opportunities was emphasized in research by Webb (2015b). She discussed the importance of “who you know” when migrants are trying to secure employment commensurate with their qualifications and previous employment histories. This includes knowledge of local networks and building visible social capital through community involvement (Webb, 2015b). However, it is generally learned on arrival rather than something that the migrant is prepared for.

An additional anxiety shared by another participant was around the ranking and reputation of Charles Darwin University. They mentioned known cases where individuals have moved inter-state to pursue another degree or employment elsewhere because their qualification did not lead to employment.

One of the couples worked very hard and paid all these fees, they also got permanent residency in NT. They completed their degree at CDU, however, they could not get jobs in NT or any other states.

(Chinese male participant, student visa).

Passing the International English Language Testing System (IELTS)² at band 8.0 is a requirement of all international students if they are seeking permanent residency. It appears to be particularly challenging for Chinese and Taiwanese students regardless of whether they have successfully completed their degree.

I am not happy about the IELTS, it is tough for me. The government has set a very high mark for IELTS for international student's permanent residency pathway. I will have to leave NT. I have been spending lot of money on additional IELTS testing. Many talented people from my community are returning to the homeland, because despite having talent and qualifications, they are not able to pass IELTS. This is a major barrier and reason why many people from my country left NT.

(Chinese male participant, student visa).

Chinese/Taiwanese focus group participants felt there was a racial bias inherent in the testing regime, even suggesting that the level requirement may not be met by many people who are Australian born. Research has supported what appears to be a discrepancy in English requirements for purpose of entry to Australia and government policy around university English requirements for international students seeking permanent residency (Craven, 2012). Opportunities within the Territory to establish more English classes for international students to improve their language skills could mirror the success of the English mentoring programs that have been established for refugees. These connect volunteer residents with individual refugees and could be explored further with CDU student services.

In the African focus group, limited access to important community food staples was raised by a number of participants.

² The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is an internationally approved English language proficiency test for study, work and migration in Australia. <https://ielts.com.au/>



There is only one Nigerian supermarket in Darwin....due to fewer numbers of people of African descent, the price of African specific groceries is relatively high when compared to Sydney, Melbourne, Perth. Once I paid a huge amount to import shipment of African groceries, however these expired by the time the quarantine took their time to approve my shipment. We are a family of five and purchasing from our local African grocer in Darwin means our food bills remain relatively high. Also, the food available is not fresh, we found that this could become a health issue for us."

(Nigerian male participant, citizen).

The importance of food has been picked up in other research. Beretta, Sayyad Abdi, & Bruce (2018, p376) argue that for successful settlement to occur, a level of 'social absorption' needs to be created by the host community. They present a social inclusion model whereby the host country prepares for the needs of the immigrant including information about what to expect. These needs include easy access to one's own cultural food, established community networks, housing, access to safe transportation, knowledge about local health facilities, and employment opportunities.

The last question in the TTaM survey asked respondents for ideas on how to grow the Territory's population. Key themes from these open text responses closely reflect the migration expectations discussed in previous sections and provide ideas for addressing issues of attraction and retention (refer to Appendix for summary table). Although many of the themes were of shared interest/concern, there is an element of nuance between the different migrant communities. These are abridged below:

- family sponsorship was particularly emphasised by Indian/Nepalese and African respondents.
- an Asian focus to promoting the NT should highlight effective regional diplomacy, geographic proximity and similarities in weather. This was mainly suggested by the Chinese and Taiwanese respondents but a focus on Asia was a common sentiment in many comments, including from New Zealanders.
- Indian/Nepalese and New Zealand respondents suggested practical approaches to increasing economic development including leading in sustainable technologies, investing in smaller projects, offering business incentives and encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship.
- all groups pointed out the need to rehabilitate the city centre infrastructure (both for Darwin and Alice Springs) and increase leisure and entertainment options that would attract both tourists and locals.
- Indian/Nepalese and the Chinese/Taiwanese respondents continued to stress the importance of improved education options for attracting population and particularly for those in Alice Springs. They suggested expanded tertiary offerings in Alice Springs.
- respondents from New Zealand wanted positive action for addressing cost of living. Attention to the costs of airfares and availability of air services was a consistent theme across all the migrant groups.
- issues of crime and safety need to be addressed. This was mentioned by many respondents but particularly those from the Philippines and New Zealand.

A short summary point from one African responder reflects the sentiment of many from the new migrant communities - incentivizing people to stay could be a growth stimulus.

"People always come to the NT, focus on keeping people here."



Section 7: Service and support systems for new migrants

Two key informants were interviewed to better understand the range of support services available to new migrants. The first was from an organisation based in Darwin contracted to provide key programs to new refugee and humanitarian migrants, particularly focused on English learning and settlement skills. The second works in a community-based organisation in Alice Springs that delivers a range of services to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds including settlement engagement and transition support.

The informants emphasised that the key attractors for migrants include marriage, employment opportunities, visa points, and dependents seeking permanent residency (partners, children and the broader family). They felt the relative success of the settlement period was closely linked with opportunities to build social and friendship networks, personal adaptability, support from faith-based and cultural groups, activities and opportunities for their children, and connection with the community through services focused on children (e.g. play groups). Confident English skills were also identified as key to migrants establishing themselves in the broader community and these were fundamental to gaining access to services, communicating their needs and securing employment.

In addition, one informant emphasised the need to ensure services avoid the trap of dependency which can become generational. Therefore, it was important that migrants were connected to their new communities and involved in the broader society. Success involved contact from their neighbours and others who genuinely looked out for them, explained “stuff” like colloquialisms and unwritten local protocols, and identified helpful networks and pathways, particularly for their youth.

Key informants observed the main migrant frustrations in relation to settlement as finding permanent full-time jobs (a requirement for permanent residency), expensive housing, loneliness and not having their extended family to support them, access to specialist services for their children, extreme weather, lack of recreation, entertainment and shopping opportunities, remoteness and isolation, and expensive air travel. A further comment discussed the line between what is culturally acceptable in Australia compared to what would be expected in their community. This was identified as impacting people’s integration success and ability to fully participate.

Suggestions around potential Government levers and policy/practice responses included funding for community services to find appropriate accommodation, more affordable housing for eligible workers on the occupations list and low-cost housing for low income families, more tertiary courses offered in Alice Springs, and subsidies for the high cost of flights. Access to computer training was identified as a big enabler for employment success as technological literacy is often assumed in most jobs. Industry mentorships were also identified as being important to define the pathways to work, but also to help migrants tap into the local networks which are an influential part of local recruitment processes and career progression. New migrants can be excluded from these networks, intentionally or unintentionally. People on skilled migrant visas are often not eligible for many of the services provided but there appears to be some real support gaps that require attention, including English language skills, health services and job placement services.



The Northern Territory's small population precludes the range of migrant support services that are generally available in other States. The informants suggested this means the Territory requires investment in expertise that can make the services that are provided effective and efficient.

Final observations from the key informants focused on generating a deeper understanding of the cultural challenges associated with acceptance of diversity, the social inclusion of migrants and the social cohesion that can result from a community that is properly connected. Ironically many migrants seek out Australian teachers, they want to speak with an Australian accent, and they want an Australian to help them understand Australian values. This is a test for the broader community and to get it right needs dedication to the values of multiculturalism, attention to the celebration of different cultures, and social education around accepting and valuing difference.



Section 8: Discussion and suggestions

Four different data sources have been brought together to describe the migration experiences and future intentions of eight growing migrant communities which are contributing to the population of the Territory. Factors associated with recruitment and attraction (pull), attachment and connection (retention) and out migration intentions (push) were examined through responses to an online survey and focus group enquiry.

Differences in their demographic profiles are likely to have influenced migrants' settlement experiences and their motivations for staying in the Territory or leaving. However, results suggest some nuanced differences that may be connected to cultural needs or specific migration drivers for individual source communities. These include:

- *Main migration reason* – job related reasons were the driving factor for Indian/Nepalese and New Zealanders, education was attracting people from China/Taiwan, and Filipinos were often following family and friends. Migrants from African countries had more variation associated with their migration drivers, however employment opportunities factored highly.
- *Those who are staying* – weather and lifestyle factors were most important to New Zealanders and Africans while satisfaction with their jobs were keeping Indian/Nepalese in place. Filipinos were influenced by a range of factors and were the most satisfied with their overall experience of living in the Territory. Similarities in climate and proximity to their homeland were likely to factor in their high satisfaction levels as well as the large community already in place.
- *Those who may leave* – Africans were concerned about the economy, Indian/Nepalese people were looking for improved education opportunities, while cost of living pressures appeared to be impacting people from the Philippines. New Zealanders were most likely to want to move closer to family and friends. The Chinese/Taiwanese signalled the highest intention to leave, which may be linked to their lower confidence and proficiency with the English language. However, regardless of country of origin, whether respondents were a permanent resident or on a temporary visa influenced their motivation around out-migration: job opportunities and the lure of a bigger city were the biggest influencers for those on temporary visas.
- *Main factors in decisions to move or stick* – economic and education opportunities, and family reunion (particularly the sponsorship of elderly parents) were factors that shaped out migration decisions for the Indian community; the African communities were also looking for better family reunion opportunities, local economic stimulus and more recreation and entertainment, particularly focused on families. Taiwanese/Chinese and Filipinos wanted more shopping malls and public transport to support their social connections, while New Zealanders were seeking economic stimulus that supports smaller business ventures, and Filipinos were seeking action on the cost of living.

However, these community-based distinctions were certainly influenced by age, as needs and aspirations are primarily life-stage dependent. Migrants who are in their early to late 20s are often still in education and seek opportunities to gather with friends. More shopping malls (with their inbuilt temperate climate) offer an experience that is similar to their home country expectations. They also highlighted good public transport that is timely and easy to get to, and that supports their socialising and employment commitments. In contrast, young families are looking for child friendly activities, high quality school education and sporting and other extra-curricular opportunities. The support provided by extended family



was highlighted as needing critical attention in visa programs. Older parents provide cultural support and alleviate the costs associated with child care. Responsibilities for their care can also be an out-migration driver.

Employment opportunities were highlighted as the main influencer of migration decisions and the availability of jobs must also be considered in programs targeting education migration as well as pathways to permanent residency. If the jobs are not available then the migrants won't come, or if here, they won't stay.

Although not explicitly identified in the migration reasons, international student participants unanimously confirmed that they arrived at CDU to undertake a degree that would enable permanent residency. Embedded within the new permanent resident visa stream is the need to demonstrate employability in their field, and in the regional area. Therefore, it is critical that strong education to employment pathways are entrenched within their study arrangements.

An exemplar is the MOU between Territory Families (Department of), and the disciplines of Psychology and Social Work at CDU (see promotion in CDU News, April 2019). This arrangement ensures all Psychology and Social Work graduates are offered priority employment pathways to improve retention of both international and domestic students within the Territory. This allows Territory Families to tap into locally trained students and the practice could be mirrored in several disciplines to ensure CDU graduate retention within the NT.

Successful settlement experiences are strongly associated with community attachment factors. Some are obvious and include assistance with housing and support around being job ready and having their community and faith infrastructure in place. Others are less obvious, including access to their food staples of choice which can have impacts on health and household economies, and being confident to volunteer and feel safe. And finally, there are the least tangible factors that define how easily new migrants feel accepted by their host communities. These include being "let-in" on local knowledge, networks and understandings that operate to facilitate access to opportunities that are open to others.

Suggestions that could have a positive influence on attracting and retaining migrants belonging to the new migrant communities are included below.

Attraction strategies:

1. Consider promotion strategies that are branded to attract specific communities. Use of sporting, or entertainment identities are likely to appeal. Create 'vox populis' vignettes of positive NT migrant experiences and support the 'word of mouth' campaigns that can be very effective in recruitment. Consideration of culturally inclusive imagery is also important for migrants who are already here. Seeing themselves in general advertising will make them feel part of the community of the NT.
2. Negotiate with Department of Home Affairs around specific enabling visa allowances for NT associated with sponsoring extended family, particularly older parents. This has real potential to attract higher income professionals to the NT over other Australian destinations and would help alleviate costs around the tyranny of distance.
3. Support in-place industry mentorship for skilled migrants. Word of mouth about positive employment experiences can be a very effective grapevine for attracting qualified people.
4. Consider opportunities to support a broader range of university offerings in Alice Springs.



5. Work with the Commonwealth Government and airlines to attract better services and where possible influence price points available to people in the Territory.
6. Provide new migrants with welcome kits that include information about culturally relevant services and activities, faith groups, employment networks and food staples.

Retention strategies:

1. Encourage sporting clubs to have active recruitment drives focused on migrant communities – soccer and cricket were highlighted.
2. Invest in recreation experiences and activities that are attractive to the young adult market, and to families with young children.
3. With CDU and Industry Bodies, design strong employment pathways into tertiary courses that facilitate access to local jobs and provide the ‘local experience’ that is often required.
4. Increase access to English learning with extension courses focused on IELTS standard requirements for permanent residency.
5. Consider investment in increased public transport – more services, greater time coverage.

This Research Brief highlights that the new migrant communities share some similar experiences but are distinguished by their demographic profile and their relationship to an established in-place community that caters for their cultural needs. Success stories point to the importance of targeting migration strategies to countries or regions aligned with these established communities. Building successful communities requires an evidence-based understanding of the influential factors around good settlement outcomes. These are likely to be the same factors that will also attract migrants to the NT because word of mouth remains a powerful recruitment strategy. The potential of the Darwin City Deal to realise many of the needs-based expectations highlighted in this Brief is recognised, however a program of research is needed to ensure these investments continue to be targeted to the areas that directly influence migrant attraction and retention outcomes.



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After Marina Strocchi

Appendix

Table 6: Comments about what factors would increase population in the territory, by country of birth

What would help grow the Territory?	Philippines	India & Nepal	China & Taiwan	Continental Africa	New Zealand
Main themes	Expanded sentiments				
Improved policies around migration and visa issues		<p>Family friendly promotion</p> <p>Improved policies around Migration/visa – easier sponsorship of parents</p> <p>Provide an easier visa with a strict 5 years in the NT</p>	<p>Broader diplomacy – focus on Asian countries. They are closer and often similar climate</p> <p>More encouraging visa policies</p>	<p>Reduce age restrictions associated with visas</p> <p>Cheaper family reunion visas</p> <p>Permanent Residency should mandate 5 years in NT</p> <p>Improve timelines of processing. Migrants often take up another offer in the meantime</p>	
Economic development	<p>Develop more sustainable industries</p> <p>Increase breadth of industry sectors</p>	<p>Increase jobs/stimulate economy</p> <p>Stop discrimination in the application process– what does “needs Territory experience” really mean</p> <p>If encouraging more students they need employment opportunities to earn money</p> <p>Focus on</p>		<p>Encourage young entrepreneurs</p> <p>Encourage ‘real’ innovation</p>	<p>Large infrastructure projects</p> <p>Focus on smaller projects that employ local people</p> <p>Incentives for new business, tax breaks – tech hub for Australia</p> <p>Cut rates of payroll tax</p> <p>Use Industry focused campaigns around</p>



		<p>opportunities for renewable energies</p> <p>Increase manufacturing industries</p> <p>Develop Darwin as gateway to rest of the world</p>			<p>employment</p> <p>Build closer ties with Asia</p>
<p>Improved recreation and city infrastructure to increase tourism and local activity</p>	<p>Need more recreation facilities and tourist attractions – think about the power of the selfie</p>	<p>Add vibrancy to the CBDs</p> <p>More shade</p> <p>More activities that attract people – small community activities often very effective</p> <p>Focus on things for families to do – increase opportunities for inside recreation</p>	<p>Young people need more things to do</p>	<p>Increased shopping</p> <p>Concentrate recreation infrastructure – build attractions for tourists that also meets needs of locals</p>	<p>Get the city centres back on their feet</p> <p>Green up the city</p>
<p>Increased education opportunities</p>		<p>Prioritise education and development of local people</p> <p>Build another university</p> <p>Give 5 extra points to international students – makes NT better than anywhere else in the world</p>	<p>More scholarships mean more students</p>		
<p>Address areas associated with high cost of living</p>	<p>Reduce housing costs</p>	<p>Direct flights to India (maybe another international airport located in Alice Springs)</p> <p>Cheaper flights</p>		<p>Cheaper flights</p> <p>Better designed houses that are not as reliant on air-conditioning</p>	<p>It's a long way from New Zealand – cheaper airfares</p> <p>Bring the costs of airfares down, and offer better services</p>



					<p>Everyone has lost a fortune on their houses</p> <p>Stop local gouging</p> <p>Rents higher than they should be</p> <p>Costs of building is excessive</p>
Improved public infrastructure	<p>More public transport services</p>		<p>Better public transport – difficult to hold down a job is you don't drive or have a car</p> <p>Shore up the water supply</p>		
Address crime and safety issues	<p>Itinerant behaviours</p> <p>Level of youth crime</p>				<p>Address crime and safety – better solutions for Aboriginal peoples</p>
Other		<p>Keep the old people here</p> <p>Spend money to keep people here</p>	<p>Sell the outdoor lifestyle in the winter</p>	<p>Promote activities in the wet season – locals not afraid of the rain</p>	<p>Incentivise people already here to stay</p>

Source: TTA, 2019