



English Language Partners New Zealand:

what enables and constrains their contribution to
newcomer settlement

Presentation by Geoff Stone and Robin Peace
for the Pathways Conference
Wellington, 10 November 2016



What is a **CaDDANZ INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION**



CaDDANZ institutional evaluations investigate how New Zealand institutions can **better understand and maximise the benefits of an increasingly diverse population.**

This evaluation is focused on the **English Language Partners New Zealand** and its **settlement support work.**

We have been looking at **ELPNZ's responses to increasing diversity**, with a focus on how the wider policy, legal/administrative and operational context **constrains and enables** an environment in which good settlement outcomes are likely.

We present some **preliminary conclusions and insights.**

The **CONCEPTUAL APPROACH**



Developmental Evaluation - research and development support to an organisation, sensitive to **complexity**, applying **systems thinking** (Patton).

Sensitivity to policy context, i.e. Immigration New Zealand's migrant/refugee settlement strategies.

Education and Training	English Language	Inclusion	Health and Wellbeing	Employment
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Diversity-relevant theories, starting with **Superdiversity** (Vertovec). In the context of ELPNZ, we have been able to explore only some aspects of the complexity Vertovec identifies, and to varying degrees.

- Particularly, **ethnic diversity** and **immigration status**, and
- the policy challenges related to the role of **community organisations** and **the public service**, and **patterns of service provision**

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About **ELPNZ** - some fast facts



Started as **ESOL Home Tutoring** - a volunteer home tutoring programme (1970s)

Now a **registered Private Training Establishment (PTE) and charity** that operates from **23** centres around New Zealand, and has a head office in Wellington

ELPNZ works with **learners from non-English speaking backgrounds**, **6,474** adult migrants and refugees in 2015.

ELPNZ's workforce comprises **259** staff (51.5 FTEs), **2,222** volunteers @ 2015

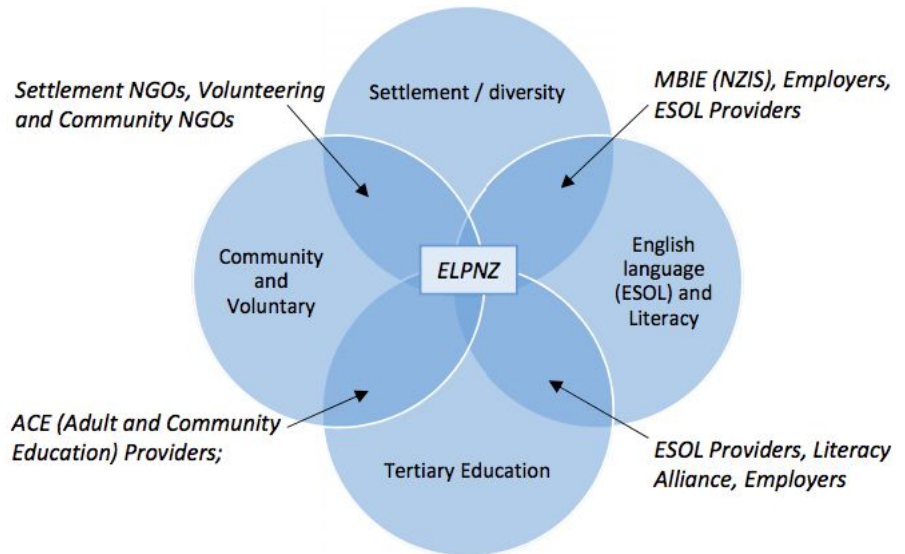
ELPNZ's provides English programmes delivered to groups of learners, employment related classes, and one-to-one programmes (**9** distinct services)

ELPNZ's outcomes align with New Zealand's Refugee and Settlement Strategies **4**

Where **FIT** within systems



ELPNZ's depiction of itself in relation to sectors it works within



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ELPNZ's **FIELD OF VIEW**



Information is lacking about the diversity of newcomers in terms of **language-related barriers** to settlement.

ELPNZ prioritises certain newcomers over others

1. Refugees and their families,
2. Migrants with permanent residence status, then
3. Non-permanent residents applying for residency status (e.g. individuals on working visas and spouses).

However, ELPNZ is concerned about **Non-PR's missing out**.

ELPNZ inevitably **serves and benefits some newcomers more than others**, ie., ELPNZ works mostly with women and does not engage so much with Pacific people

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Newcomers that **BENEFIT MOST** from ELPNZ



Newcomers - women (75% of service recipients) **NB.** most volunteers are women

Refugees (20% of service recipients)

Chinese Asian - the largest ethnic group accessing services (38% of Asian learners)

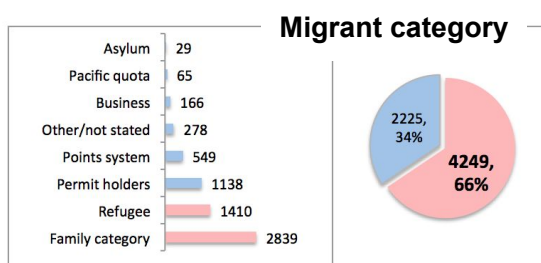
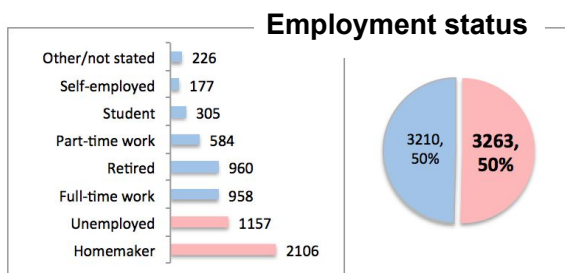
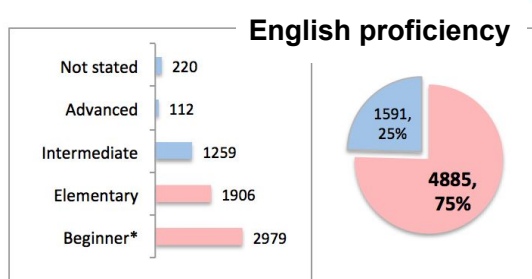
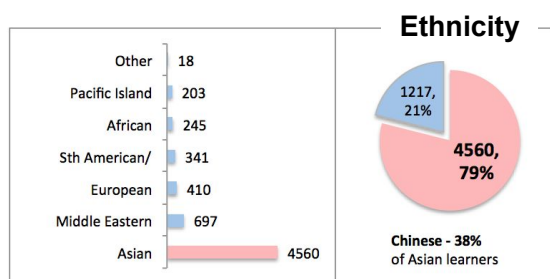
Low-level language speakers (for working and non-working newcomers)

Family Category Learners

Isolated rural women

People who need **1:1 services in the home**, due to work requirements

Newcomers that **BENEFIT MOST** from ELPNZ



Newcomers who **ENGAGE / BENEFIT LESS**



Pacific people

Chinese people

Culturally insular people

People with **unconducive employment conditions**

People who (understandably) **prioritise working**

People **wanting/needing more specialised or intensive learning**

People in '**culture shock**'

Older-less literate people

Transient people

Males (only 25% of learners)

Rural and isolated people, especially women

Limited services for **non-permanent residents**

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ENABLERS for ELPNZ - impacting outcomes



History - ELPNZ is into its **fifth decade of operation** and has evolved considerably from comprising ESOL home tutoring schemes to having a unitary structure with a mix of paid teaching staff and volunteers.

Scale/comprehensiveness - ELPNZ spans New Zealand and has sound working relationships with organisations that reach into areas ELPNZ does not serve.

Volunteers - ELPNZ harnesses communities as a resource to both facilitate English language learning and intercultural [training?] exchange (a '**smart practice**').

Recognition - ELPNZ has an established brand, enjoying widespread recognition and credibility in the sector.

Cooperacy - works in with other organisations to address gaps - NZ Police, Electoral Commission, MBIE. This results in **innovations** such the Police Recruit Literacy Programme.

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CONSTRAINTS on ELPNZ - impacting outcomes



Resources - what is offered vs. what is needed. This is compounded by ELPNZ having an **under-diversified** funding base; **over-reliance on government** (TEC) \$s

Misalignment - policy, funder, provider split.

Sustainable services - providing services in smaller centres and more remote areas is challenging.

Un-integrated sector - there are multiple sectors and devolved services. In addition working well together is hard, and fairly uncommon or variable.

Learning English is hard for some speakers of other languages - it can require more skilled input, and additional effort and time to overcome multiple barriers to learning. A significant number of refugees are pre-literate. Most ELP learners have low or very low levels of English proficiency when they arrive.

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CONSTRAINTS on ELPNZ - impacting outcomes



It's not just about language - facilitating enculturation - the gradual acquisition of the characteristics and norms of a culture or group, sufficient to make a successful new life

So much is about **relationships** - learning outcomes and effective service implementation are heavily dependant on relational dynamics

Some **place-based barriers**

- Rural distributed newcomers find it harder to access services / hard-to-reach
- Having enough trained TESOL teachers and/or volunteers in some regions
- Lack of access to transport is a significant barrier for low income newcomers
- Competition between providers in some locations
- Insufficient (changing) employment opportunities in some locations
- 'Conservative townships' create a barrier to integration

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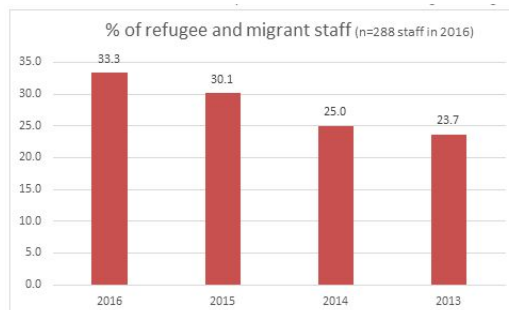


DIVERSITY through an ELPNZ lens

The concepts of diversity and superdiversity are **ambivalently used/engaged with**

ELPNZ has a **Diversity Recruitment Strategy** and uses a **Diversity and Inclusion Checklist** for shaping and ascertaining ethnic diversity in the organisation

Newcomers experience ethnic/cultural diversity as beneficial in their process of settling in.



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DIVERSITY through an ELPNZ lens

Volunteering is intrinsic to enhancing the social dividend from diversity.

Home tutoring contributes to New Zealanders direct experience of diversity while facilitating settlement outcomes for newcomers.

ELPNZ provides Treaty of Waitangi training but **active engagement with Māori iwi has been variable** and by implication so too the extent of newcomer engagement/relationship with Tangata Whenua through ELPs. This is something ELPNZ's board is looking into.

Diversity amplified - ELPNZ staff foresee continuing migration of foreign nationals, and climate change refugees from the Pacific.

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Some general evaluative **CONCLUSIONS (1)**



ELPNZ is a settlement service but is funded more like a language school and is subject to a policy emphasis on literacy learning (often narrowly and inappropriately applied to English language learners from other countries).

ELPNZ helps newcomers **acquire English language for living and working** and through **volunteers creates linking and bridging social capital**. This is its main unique contribution.

ELPNZ is engaged in service development and advocacy. Advocacy is a core function, and ELPNZ's scale enables this contribution. However, usefully collaborating on developing systems and programmes to benefit newcomers and the sector takes **time and money**. Resultant projects can be **fragile**, even when promising. **This adds pressure on ELPNZ to increase and diversify its funding base**.

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Some general evaluation **CONCLUSIONS (2)**



Government organisations are tripping each other up in relation to newcomer settlement. Examples: **TEC does not fund ESOL for non-permanent residents** who are on a settlement pathway. Work and Income **directs non-working newcomers to undertake activities that prohibit attending ELPNZ ESOL classes**. This impedes English language learning and, potentially, valued employment outcomes.

The hidden nature of newcomers at risk. It is not clear who to tell, who is best positioned to intervene, and how many are having a hard time (beyond tracking retention rates).

Insufficient information/feedback about newcomers' experience as an input into policy development and alignment.

Resiling from community development in favour of economic development

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Some general evaluation **CONCLUSIONS (3)**



The settlement system remains under-developed, with insufficient infrastructure to facilitate **integrated** service delivery and support to newcomers. Immigration NZ formulating an outcomes framework is a good start.

An increased focus on settlement outcomes appears to be undermined by increasing **compliance reporting** requirements. This demotivates the workforce.

Service sustainability is important but elusive. This notion is about how to best serve newcomers/English language learners in different locations catering for particular learner circumstances. It is not about maintaining **organisational viability**, yet it is NGOs that deliver services and therefore need to be able to attract, train, coordinate and retain staff and volunteers.

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INSIGHTS for enhancing settlement outcomes 1



Services/systems design approach. Seek to understand and shape the settlement system as a whole, starting with **user and value-centred research** into the perspectives/settlement experience of various kinds of newcomers.

Identify 'positive deviance' - examples of good outcomes achieved through **novel service delivery arrangements** (e.g., Waikato ELPNZ's regional hub and consortia approach)

Support innovation and going to scale. Consider an **innovation fund**, **leadership and coordination functions** that help service deliverers formulate and scale policy innovations.

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INSIGHTS for enhancing settlement outcomes 2



Reporting on outcomes. Seek to **make reporting easier and more meaningful.** It is more motivating and efficient to gather data for multiple purposes, i.e.

- external accountability
- feedback to newcomers on integration progress, and
- to drive practice and system improvement.

A focus on service sustainability is likely to drive increased partnering, organisational mergers, and 'hub' models of service delivery to overcome a fractured service system.

FINAL CONSIDERATION C/- Kathleen Newland



Paraphrasing (via Robin Peace)

*Refugees might be a net fiscal drain at the beginning but a net contribution over time [extending to many other kinds of newcomers]. This requires an **integration effort that is serious** and **that works***



CaDDANZ

Capturing the Diversity Dividend
of Aotearoa/New Zealand



ELPNZ Ethnic Advisory Group members - Kiwis from non-English speaking countries

