



## 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  
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### 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

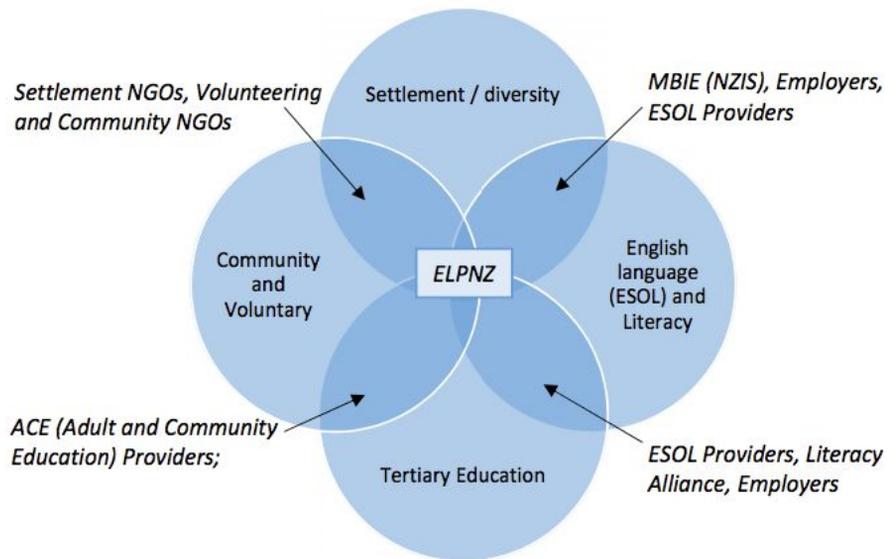
**ELPNZ's provides** English programmes delivered to groups of learners, employment related classes, and one-to-one programmes (**9** distinct services)

**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)

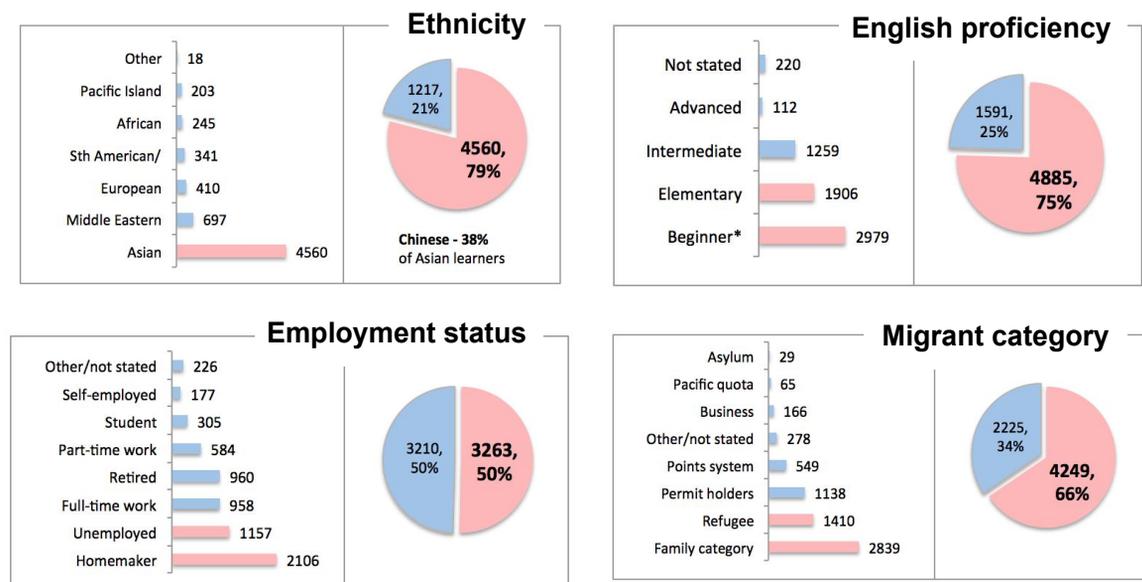
**Low-level language speakers** (for working and non-working newcomers)

**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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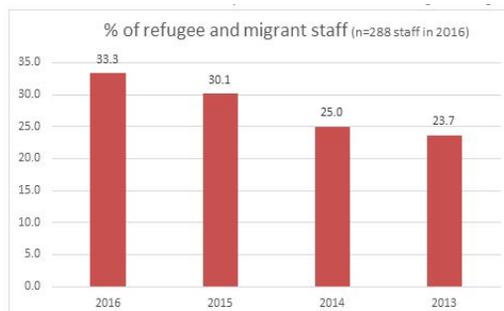


## DIVERSITY through an ELPNZ lens

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)**

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**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

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**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

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**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

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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

