

Africans in New Zealand

David Lucas
Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute
The Australian National University

In the 1956 census there were only 1701 persons identified as being born in South Africa (Statistics New Zealand 2007). Subsequent censuses show a rapid growth in the numbers of persons born in sub-Saharan Africa, with the South Africa-born forming the majority (Table 1). Unfortunately the diversity of African birthplaces is obscured by the size of the ‘Other Sub Saharan Africa’ category that has been consistently larger than all the country totals except for South Africa, and for Zimbabwe in 2006.

Table 1 shows the doubling of the South Africa-born and the Somali-born between 1991 and 1996. For South Africa this coincides with the movement towards majority rule and what Louw and Mersham (2001:309) describe as ‘waning optimism’. In discussing the ‘African’ ethnic group in the 1991 and 1996 Censuses, Thomson (1999:32) wrote that this included ‘people whose ethnic groups originated in Africa’, and ‘between 800 and 1,000 Somali who were former refugees.’

Table 1 Africa-born in New Zealand Censuses 1981-2006.

Country of Birth	1981	1991	1996	2001	2006
Zambia	444	489	717	945	1314
Kenya	864	921	1077	1152	1509
Somalia		45	873	1770	1857
Zimbabwe	714	750	1,443	2,886	8151
South Africa	3999	5652	11,334	26,061	41676
Other Sub-Saharan	1410	1323	2004	3399	4611
Total	7431	9180	17448	36,213	59118
South Africa-born as a % of the total	54	62	65	72	71

Sources: For 1981 see Bedford, 2004. For 1991 see Statistics New Zealand 2001. For 2006 see Statistics New Zealand 2007: Table 7.

From Table 1 the increase in the number of South Africa-born and Zimbabwe-born in New Zealand between censuses can be calculated, also as shown in the last two columns in Table 2. Furthermore, Table 2 introduces Australian data for comparative purposes, and shows that increases in the numbers of South Africa-born in both New Zealand and Australia in the five-year period 2001-2006 are only slightly higher than in the period 1996-2001.

Table 2 Intercensal Increases in the number of South Africa - and Zimbabwe-born in New Zealand and Australia.

	Number resident in Australia			Intercensal increase			
				Australia		New Zealand	
Birthplace	1996	2001	2006	1996-2001	2001-2006	1996-2001	2001-2006
South Africa	55756	79425	104128	23660	24703	14727	15615
Zimbabwe	8957	11734	20157	2777	8423	1443	5265
Total	64713	91159	124285	26437	33126	18765	22905

Sources: For New Zealand, as for Table 1. For Australia: for 2001 Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, *The People of Australia*. Canberra Table 3, pp 3-7.

http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/pdf/people_of_australia.pdf

(Accessed 17 June 2008). For 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics. Cat. No. 2068.0 – 2006 Census Tables. Country of Birth of Person (full classification list) by Sex.

Yet Tables 1 and 2 show that for the Zimbabwe-born the situation is entirely different. Between 2001-6 the numbers of Zimbabwe-born in New Zealand had more than tripled (Table 1) while in Australia they had nearly doubled. These increases were influenced by political events in Zimbabwe with the confiscation of white farms from 2000 onwards. One view is that South Africa and Zimbabwe-born who were unable to get into Australia as settlers might go initially to New Zealand, obtain New Zealand citizenship and then take advantage of the free movement between New Zealand and Australia. The data for Australia (2008) shows that at 30/06/07 there were 3,600 South Africa-born New Zealand citizens in Australia, an increase of 416 compared with 30/06/06. As shown by Bedford (2008), permanent residents of New Zealand, unlike its citizens, have no right of residence in Australia, but since it was easier to gain citizenship in New Zealand than in Australia, some migrants saw this as a ‘backdoor’ method of entering Australia.

Table 3 below confirms the peak years for the arrival of the Zimbabwe-born, and also of the Somali-born. Statistics New Zealand also publishes annual data on net international migration. In this case ‘net’ means, for example, the number whose last country of permanent residence was South Africa who arrived in New Zealand intending to stay for 12 months or more minus the number departing for South Africa. Net migrants from South Africa only numbered 71 in 1990 but a decade later this number had peaked around 3,000 (see Lucas et al 2006: Table 1) before falling to 1013 in the calendar year

Table 3 African Birthplace by years since arrival in New Zealand

Birthplace	Years since arrival in New Zealand									
	<1	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	20 or more	Other	Total
South Africa	3,609	3,012	3,270	4,098	4,284	14,001	5,667	2,877	858	41,696
Zimbabwe	468	714	903	1,908	1,449	1,467	564	537	144	8,148
Kenya	78	96	81	93	66	183	195	684	36	1,857
Zambia	84	72	96	132	99	243	234	330	27	1,509
Somalia	84	141	135	144	135	786	276	15	144	1,314
Other	492	312	360	288	297	1188	525	960	186	4,611
Total	4,815	4,347	4,848	6,683	6,330	17,868	7,461	5,400	1,386	59,115

Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2007. *2006 Census by Years since arrival in New Zealand*. Table 12.

Table 4. Persons reporting African ethnicity in New Zealand 1996-2006.

Ethnic Group	Census Year			
	1991	1996	2001	2006
European:				
South African nec	2007	6762	14913	21609
*Zimbabwean				2556
*Afrikaner				1341
Somali			1971	2319
Ethiopian				1032
African, not further defined	429	738	2013	4053
African, not else- where classified	273	1689	1905	1029

Source: Statistics New Zealand 2007:Table 2. **Notes:** Where a person reported more than one ethnic group, they are counted in each applicable category. * Zimbabwean and Afrikaner are new categories introduced in 2006. Zimbabweans were previously included in the African nec (not elsewhere classified) while Afrikaners were included in South African nec.

2004 and then rising again to 2,100 in the 12 months ending March 2008 (Statistics New Zealand 2008:7). The net arrivals 2001-2006 are considerably less than the 2001-2006 gain in the South Africa-born shown in Table 2, suggesting that some of the South-Africa born are coming to New Zealand from other countries such as Zimbabwe. Another possibility, suggested by van Rooyen (2000 :148), is that since 1997 South Africans have not required visas, they pay 'LSD' ('Look, See and Deposit') visits to New Zealand when some might then formally apply for residency. This option was curtailed in 2005 by New Zealand's Citizenship Amendment Act which extended the time to qualify for citizenship from two to five years, removed the principle that birth in New Zealand automatically confers citizenship, and corrected the relatively relaxed approach to calculating the time 'ordinarily resident' to qualify for citizenship.

Table 4 above shows the responses to the 2006 census ethnicity question. Before 2006, only those reporting South African (nec or not elsewhere classified) have been sufficiently numerous to be shown separately, and many of the South Africa-born must have reported their ethnicity as 'European'. However, the percentage of persons reporting South African ethnicity as a percentage of the numbers born in South African (see Table 1) rose dramatically from 35% in 1991 to 59% in 1996, falling away to 52% in 2006. The corresponding percentage for Zimbabweans is 31%. According to Katzen-Guthrie (2007) the total Jewish population of New Zealand is around 5,000 and includes a considerable number of recent arrivals from South Africa.

In contrast 2319 persons were shown in Table 2 as having Somali ethnicity in 2006, whereas a lesser number, 1857, were born in Somali. This is largely attributable to children being born to Somali mothers in New Zealand or in refugee camps. Ironically the literature on the Somali in New Zealand seems to be dominated by Guerin and Guerin who are now based in Adelaide (see for example Guerin et al., 2006).

In Table 5 below where a person reported speaking more than one language, they were counted in each applicable language group. Although van Rooyen (2000:151) accepts a newspaper report that almost half of South African emigrants to New Zealand are Afrikaaners, Table 5 shows the number who speak Afrikaans in 2006 is considerably more than the number reporting Afrikaner ethnicity in Table 2. Although this may give some support to anecdotal evidence that Afrikaners were more likely to go to New Zealand than to Australia, under apartheid Afrikaans and English were the two official languages and persons who had passed Matriculation in South Africa would be officially bi-lingual.

Table 5. Speakers of African Languages reported in the 2006 Census.

Language	Census Year		
	1996	2001	2006
Niger-Congo:			
Bantu (nec)	669	1,152	2,373
Zulu*	...*	804	1,134
Swahili	816	951	1,086
Other Niger-Congo	183	552	486
Somali	816	1635	1878
Afrikaans	5106	12783	21123

Source: Statistics New Zealand 2007: Table 16.

Notes: * In 1996 Zulu was counted in Bantu, nec (not elsewhere classified).

In a study of 15 Afrikaans speakers who were about to emigrate from South Africa to New Zealand, de Klerk and Barkhuizen (no date:16-17) have commented that all the participants have opted for a totally English life style in New Zealand, where only 'limited cultural and linguistic support is available for Afrikaans through the Afrikaans Club (established in 1999) and through Afrikaans church services in various places'.

Further analysis (Statistics New Zealand 2007: Table 19) shows that most Bantu, Zulu, and Swahili speakers were in the European ethnic group, reflecting the situation whereby persons who speak English or other European languages may also speak an African language.

The Tables suggest that Statistics New Zealand has not been totally successful in measuring the diversity of African immigrants. Yet this can be expected to increase, as evidenced by the March, 2006, announcement in the *Manuwatu Standard* that refugees from the Congo had arrived in Palmerston North and were glad to be finally 'home' (refugee.highway.com).

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