



Image right: Tourism Auckland

# Land of opportunity

With skill shortages and no visa waiting lists, New Zealand is now widely tipped to be an emigration hotspot for migrating Brits, writes **Paul Arthur**

**N**ew Zealand is now widely tipped to be the new emigration hotspot for Brits looking to migrate. The country has huge skill shortages and is actively encouraging Brits to migrate. There is now no waiting list, which means Brits applying for a visa can have one in a matter of months and even if you don't have a job offer you can still qualify for permanent residency status in NZ.

Anyone thinking about starting a new life overseas should consider New Zealand, and do it now. There are great job opportunities in NZ, and you have a much better chance of qualifying to live and work in the country.

On average, more than 200,000 Brits leave every year to start a new life overseas and New Zealand is currently the third most popular

place for Brits to move to. The country is popular for many reasons, from the cost of living to the climate and quality of life Kiwis enjoy. But job opportunities are now proving the big lure.

## SKILL SHORTAGES

New Zealand's economy has weathered the recession far better than other countries and is now recovering with unemployment rates falling to six per cent, with 22,000 job vacancies added in the first quarter of this year. With the rapidly recovering economy, Brits who are struggling now could find better job opportunities in NZ.

A recent survey has highlighted the extent of skills shortages in New Zealand. An example is a Department of Labour survey which revealed that four out of 10 vacancies were filled within six to

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eight weeks of being advertised.

The job market in New Zealand is definitely a huge contrast to the UK, with NZ's robust economy fuelling job creation and providing good opportunities for people in a range of different industries.

The survey also showed that the number of fully qualified people entering skilled professions through training and immigration is not keeping up with losses from retirement or people who are switching occupations.

New Zealand Immigration has stated that it is now seeking 45,000 to 50,000 people to fill the skilled

**Above** There are plenty of job opportunities in the city of Auckland



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**“WE BOTH GET MORE TIME TO SPEND WITH THE KIDS AND ENJOY THE OUTDOORS MORE”**

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workers gap in the country. The country has released a Long Term Skills Shortage List which reveals the skills in demand.

Career opportunities in New Zealand are in a huge range of job types and sectors, but roles which are particularly in demand and covered in the Skills Shortage List include healthcare jobs, teachers, electricians, chefs and IT professionals. If you apply for a role with a recognised skills shortage, there is a good chance of getting a job offer which adds further weight to any visa application you make.

**A NEW LIFE**

Phil Wilson, his partner Noleen and kids Faith, Levi and Mathew left County Armagh in Northern Ireland a year and half ago to start a new life in New Zealand, and the couple have never looked back,

Noleen said: “We’ve been living in Thames on the North Island of New Zealand now for a year and a half and really love the laidback lifestyle. Now we both get much more time to spend with the kids and because of the better climate we get to enjoy the outdoors more.

Back in Ireland we were often put off getting out and about because of the weather, but here we regularly go down to the beach or

into the countryside and in general we’re all quite active.”

The couple were surprised how quick the visas took to come through. Noleen said: “Within 12 months of applying we had our residency visa. We could have actually had it sooner but we delayed the process because we were trying to tie up loose ends back in Ireland.”

Noleen has currently taken a year off to look after her newborn baby Daniel but has been working as a dietician at a local hospital, a job she was offered before emigrating, which came with a good relocation package. Phil works as a correction officer for the Prison Service.

The family currently live in a rented two-storey house in Thames, a beachside town in the Coromandel, near Auckland. She said: “Our new home has great sea views but is within walking distance of work and all the amenities of Thames. The good thing about the area is that we are really close to some fabulous national parks yet only an hour and half from major cities like Hamilton and Auckland.”

According to Noleen, the local community has been really open to the family and they’ve found it easy to make friends. She said: “People in Thames have been very welcoming. I’ve met lots of friends through work and Phil has made lots of friends through the kids being in local clubs. It’s surprised us all how fast we’ve become part of the community.”

**Above** The Wilson family love their new life in NZ’s Coromandel

**Above right** The Wilsons live in a two-storey home near the beach

Noleen added: “My advice to anyone thinking of migrating is that you only live once, so go for it. It is better to do it now than regret never going.”

**LOWER TAX RATES**

Noleen and Phil’s experience is typical of many who emigrate to New Zealand. Because of the skill shortages in NZ, many migrants have ended up having job offers before they arrive in the country.

New Zealand offers lower tax rates with 70 per cent of earners now paying no more than 17.5 per cent. Even the top rate of tax for the highest earners is only 33 per cent, compared to 50 per cent in the UK (turn to page 29 to find out more). This, along with the generally lower cost of living and cheaper houses is proving an irresistible lure for Brits. 🇺🇸



**■ Paul Arthur is director of The Emigration Group. For more information on emigration to New Zealand or Australia call 0845 230 4391 or visit [www.emigrationgroup.co.uk](http://www.emigrationgroup.co.uk)**