

PREFACE

The purpose of the LEW conference series remains the same as when the first conference was held in Wellington in May 1984 – to share contemporary research on what continues to be this country's most fundamental social and economic issue - our ability to provide adequate paid work for those seeking employment. Communicating research findings is one of the ways in which universities and the research community in general can make a contribution.

The LEW conference series is the result of an on-going collaboration between the human geographers in the School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences and the staff of Victoria University's Industrial Relations Centre. There is no formal organisation behind the LEW conference series – the two groups simply take turns in running two successive conferences each and editing the proceedings.

This thirteenth conference in the series was held in December 2008 at Rutherford House on the Pipitea Campus of Victoria University of Wellington. After nearly 25 years of LEW conferences focussed solely on New Zealand issues we decided to combine our thirteenth meeting with the Australian Labour Market Research Workshop (ALMRW). The resulting joint conference was the largest in the LEW series attracting papers from academics and graduate students from the major universities throughout Australasia, many of the most prominent research organisations and an impressive number of staff within government departments.

Just as convening the first LEW conference in 1984 grew out of the rising unemployment so similar concerns across the Tasman lead to the formation of ALMRW under the Australian Society of Labour Economists in 1989. Professor Jacques Poot of the University of Waikato suggested joining the Australian and New Zealand conferences for the December 2008 meeting and he assumed the responsibility for working with the Australians to present the work of 12 labour economists in their own stream. The collaboration could not have taken place without the support and encouragement of Russell Ross (University of Sydney), President of the Australian Society of Labour Economists and his colleagues together with support from Greg Connolly of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations in Canberra (DEEWR).

A special feature of the thirteenth LEW conference has been the very active role played by the Department of Labour, thanks in large part to the energy of Jason Timmins. Not only has the department contributed financially but they have also been instrumental in organising a special session with their Australian counterparts on Leading Indicators of Employment as well as helping organise a special session on Seasonal employment. We were very pleased also that the New Zealand Treasury offered to organise a special session on Social Mobility.

The 2008 LEW team would like to express their appreciation for the funding and organisational support offered by Statistics New Zealand, SPEaR (Social Policy Evaluation and Research Committee – a cross-agency group established by the New Zealand Government in 2001 to oversee the government's investment in social policy research and evaluation). We also appreciate the assistance we received from Vic Marketing (Victoria University of Wellington) and the Population Studies Centre (University of Waikato).

The presence of ALMRW and LEW participants at the same conference was a stimulus for a number of papers dealing with comparisons between labour markets, trends and practices in the two countries and these are detailed in the overview to follow.

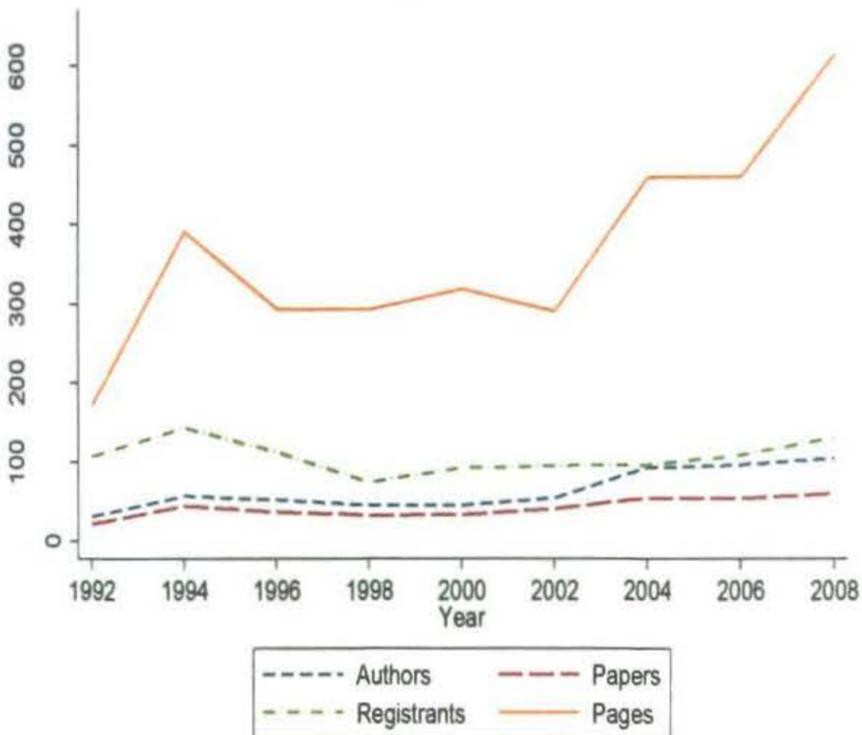
The joint organisation of the two research groups, LEW and ALMRW, together with the participation of the New Zealand Treasury, DEEWR and the Department of Labour in Wellington allowed the pooling of resources to bring three keynote speakers to the conference: Drs Geoff Mason, Manula Luthria and Miles Corak. Dr Geoff Mason is a Senior Research Fellow at the National Institute of Economic and Social Research in London (NIESR) and he addressed the international comparisons of skill and productivity. Dr Manula Luthria is a Senior Economist for the Pacific Region at the World Bank, and she focussed on the role of temporary migration in the Pacific. Dr Miles Corak, a professor with the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa, reported on cross country comparisons in generational earnings mobility, focusing specifically whether poor children become poor adults.

This is the eighth set of proceedings published from the thirteen conferences held to date. All have been hosted by Victoria University of Wellington. The first conference was held in May 1984.¹ The second conference was held in 1986, the third in 1988 and the fourth in October 1990. The fifth was held in November 1992 and attracted 21 papers from which the first set of proceedings were produced.² The sixth conference was held in November 1994 where 57 authors produced 44 papers resulting in a volume of 390 pages.³ The seventh conference saw 51 authors produce 35 papers.⁴ The eighth conference resulted in 32 papers from 45 authors.⁵ The ninth conference also produced 32 papers from 45 authors.⁶ The tenth conference had 39 papers delivered by 54 authors.⁷ The eleventh was the longest yet with 53 papers by 92 authors resulting in 458 pages, 2.7 times the size of the first proceeding from the 1995 conference.⁸ The twelfth conference has resulted in 53 papers from 86 authors.⁹ This thirteenth conference resulted in 59 papers from 104 authors.

For this thirteenth issue we have gathered together the historical statistics on the growth of LEW since we began publishing the proceedings. As Figure 1 shows, registrations have fluctuated around 100 over the last decade with this 2008 joint conference drawing 130

participants. The number of papers and number of pages in the proceedings have continued to grow as a wider set of researchers seek exposure for their employment related work. Indeed, over the years an increasing proportion of registrants are also authors, sharing their work with other authors.

Figure 1. The growth of the LEW conference series 1992-2008



As in our previous proceedings we begin with an overview which points to the key ideas developed within each paper. In order to encourage networking, the full list of registrants has been included at the end of these proceedings together with their email addresses. This is in addition to details on authors which follow this preface. Full positions and affiliations are also supplied at the end of each paper. We continue the practice begun in the 1996 proceedings of including photographs of the authors, a feature which personalises the papers and fosters interaction within the LEW research community.

Although it is one of the purposes of the university to make its facilities and service staff available for such conferences, contemporary university cost recovery practice now means that the conference has to bear its share of the real cost. At the same time we welcome the assistance we have been given by Victoria University of Wellington, and Erin Kilgour of VicEvents in particular together with Suzanne Weaver of the School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences who maintained the conference web site. We appreciated the willingness of the Vice-Chancellor Pat Walsh, to officially open the 2006 Conference.

Philip S. Morrison
(School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences)

Some copies of proceedings of conferences 7 through 12 are still available, please contact the editor for details (philip.morrison@vuw.ac.nz).

Notes

1. See Brosnan P.A. and Morrison P.S. (eds) 1984 *Labour and Employment Research in New Zealand*. Bibliography and proceedings of a workshop held at Victoria University May 14-15, 1984. This volume was published jointly by Geography Department and Industrial Relations Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, 183 pages. The bibliography was subsequently updated with financial support from subsequent conference and appeared as Brosnan, P.A. 1991 *New Zealand Labour and Employment Research 1859-1990*. A bibliography of research and research materials. Published by the New Zealand Institute of Industrial Relations, Wellington.
2. See Morrison, P.S. (ed.) 1993 *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*. Proceedings of the Fifth Conference, November 12 & 13th, 1992. Published by the Department of Geography, Victoria University of Wellington, 171 pages.
3. See Morrison, P.S. (ed.) 1995 *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*. Proceedings of the Sixth Conference, November 24 & 25th, 1994. Published by the Department of Geography, Victoria University of Wellington, 390 pages.
4. See Morrison, P.S. (ed.) 1997 *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*. Proceedings of the Seventh Conference, November 28 & 29th, 1996. Published by the Institute of Geography, Victoria University of Wellington, 292 pages.
5. See Morrison, P.S. (ed.) 1999 *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*. Proceedings of the Eighth Conference, November 26 & 27th, 1998. Published by the Institute of Geography, Victoria University of Wellington, 291 pages.
6. See Morrison, P.S. (ed.) 2001 *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference, November 23 & 24th, 2000. Published by the Institute of Geography, Victoria University of Wellington, 317 pages.
7. See Blumenfeld, S.B. (ed.) 2003 *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*. Proceedings of the Tenth Conference, November 21 & 22nd, 2002. Published by the Industrial Relations Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, 289 pages.
8. See Blumenfeld, S.B. and Lafferty, G. (eds.) 2005 *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*. Proceedings of the Eleventh Conference, November 22 & 23rd, 2004. Published by the Industrial Relations Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, 458 pages.
9. See Morrison, P.S. (ed.) 2007 *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*. Proceedings of the Twelfth Conference, November 15 & 16th, 2006. Published by The Institute of Geography, Victoria University of Wellington, 444 pages.

THE LEW13 TEAM



Back row: Sarah Van Iddekinge, Michael Sloan, Jamie Burford

Front row: Shabana Kahn, Eunica Aure, Kate Satterthwaite, Harrison Esam-Awuh