

PREFACE

The seventh conference on Labour, Employment and Work took place in November 1996, twelve years after the first conference was held in May 1984. The aim of these conferences has not changed over that period; their purpose remains the communication among New Zealand scholars on what still remains this country's most pressing social and economic issue- the ability of this country to provide paid work for those seeking employment. Promoting research into questions of labour, employment and work and communicating these findings widely is one of the ways in which universities and the research community in general can make its own contribution.

The purpose of this series of national conferences is to offer a forum for the early airing of research ideas and findings and to obtain feedback from colleagues and potential users of the information. The papers included here constitute work in progress. In several cases views will change as research progresses. In others there will have already been progress between initial delivery at the conference and the delivery of the written text. Authors were asked to limit their contribution to 5000 words of text in order to focus attention on the most important issues. In several cases readers are referred to the authors' more extended reports published elsewhere. All papers delivered at the conference have been included in these proceedings.

The papers published here were grouped under nine headings after they were read. Although they approximate the organisation of the conference programme itself, in several cases regrouping has given the volume greater coherence.

This is the fourth set of proceedings published from the set of seven 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 1985, the third in 1987 and the fourth in October 1990. The fifth was held in November 1992 from which proceedings were produced.² The sixth conference was held in November 1994 in which 57 authors produced 44 papers leading to a proceedings of almost 400 pages.³ This seventh conference hosted 105 participants, and 51 authors produced the 35 papers included here. As in the last proceedings we have also included an overview paper which points to the key ideas developed within each paper.

We would like to thank each of the presenters, those who willingly served as chairpersons of the sessions and the staff of the host departments, the Industrial Relations Centre and the Institute of Geography. Thanks also to those contributors who provided clean copy on readable disks, addressed editorial requests and above all delivered on time. In order to encourage networking, the full list of participants has been included at the end of these proceedings. We continue the practice begun in the last proceedings of including author's

photographs which we hope will continue to personalise the papers and help foster the development of a research community.

Although it is one of the purposes of the University to make its facilities and service staff available for such conferences this is not taken for granted and we greatly appreciate the assistance we have been given by Victoria University of Wellington. This year the conference was opened by Athel Mann, the outgoing Dean of Commerce who spoke of the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of employment.

Finally we would like to acknowledge those individuals who have been active in supporting these conferences and workshops since they began. At the same time we were delighted to welcome the participation of so many researchers new to the field. The value of having the two groups sharing ideas is considerable.

We hope readers of these proceedings of the seventh conference in this series will be able to join us at the eighth conference to be held on Thursday 26th and Friday 27th November 1998 at Victoria University of Wellington. The web site for the conference is:

<http://www.geo.vuw.ac.nz/conferences/lew8>

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Notes

1. See P.A. Brosnan and P.S. Morrison (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 the Geography Department and Industrial Relations Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, 183 pages. The bibliography was subsequently updated with financial support from subsequent conferences 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.

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