



EMN-OECD INFORM #3

MAINTAINING LABOUR MIGRATION

IN ESSENTIAL SECTORS IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC

MEASURES TAKEN IN NON-EU OECD COUNTRIES

Cécile Thoreau

Statistician and policy analyst

cecile.thoreau@oecd.org

International Migration Division

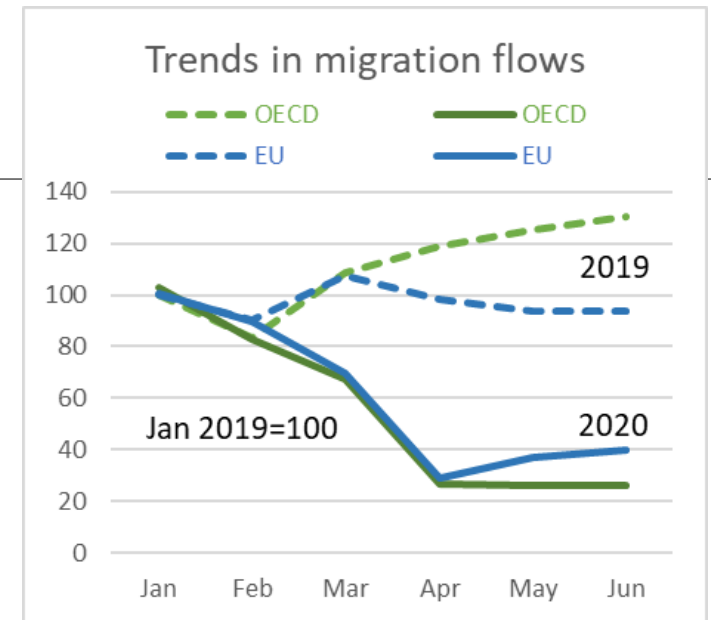
Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs

OECD

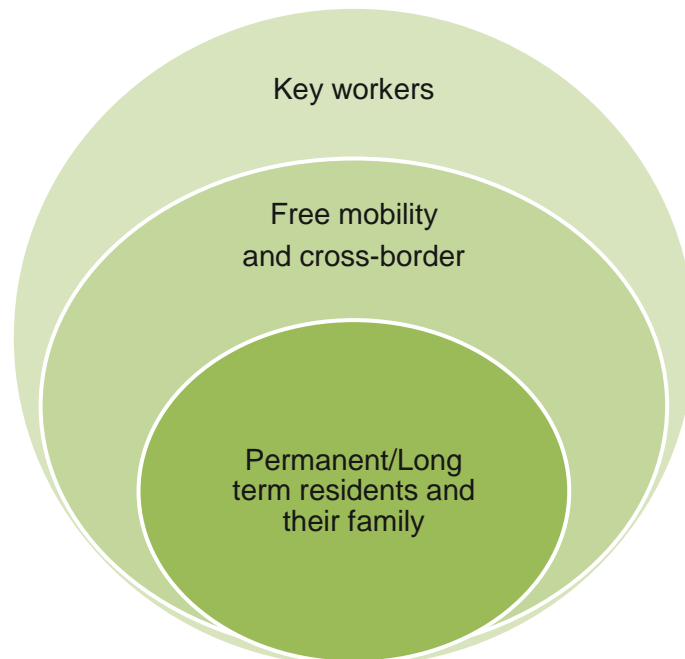


Are there differences between EU and non-EU OECD countries?

- Same reactions (closures, lockdowns)
- Also offered exemptions for “**essential**” workers
- Less reliance on **shortage lists** and more on **individual discretion**
- Different **policy streams** were affected



Admissions



Extension of stay/work conditions

Temporary migration programmes

Agri and non-agri seasonal workers

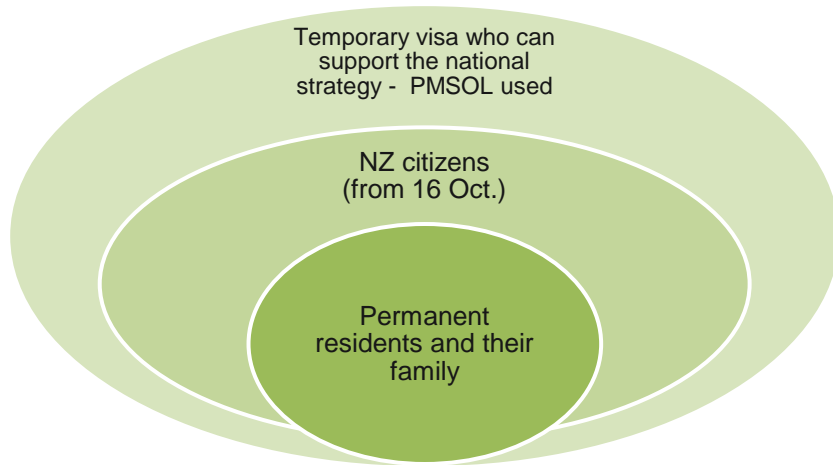
WHM moved to critical sectors

Working international students



Australia - “In the National Interest”

Admissions



Continuity in admin services

Discretion in admissions:

- Priority given to applicants in occupations on the PMSOL (revised in Sept)
- Applicants upload documentation to justify exception

Extension of stay: Application required

Seasonal

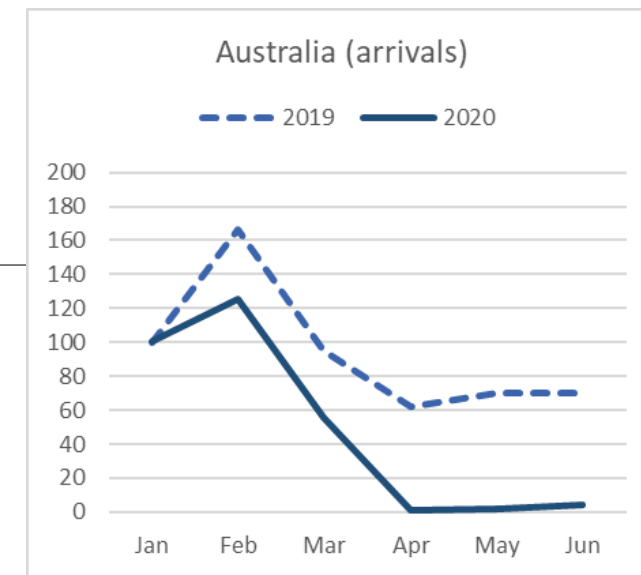
Can stay, continue working, change employer

WHM in critical sectors

No inflows, but extension of stay and eligible for a temporary visa (class 408)

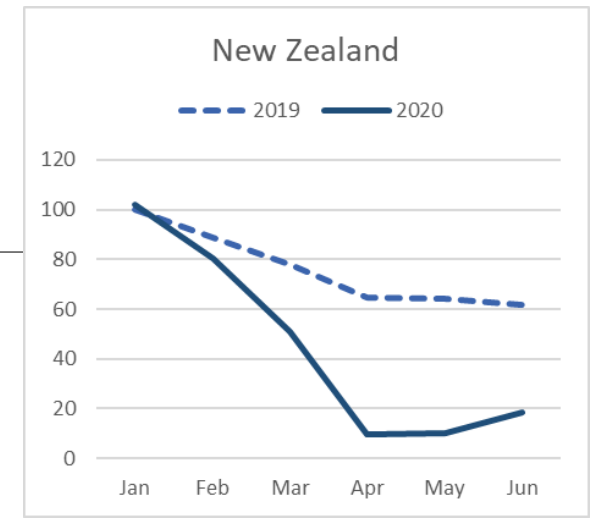
Students

Can work 40 hrs in supermarket, aged care, nursing

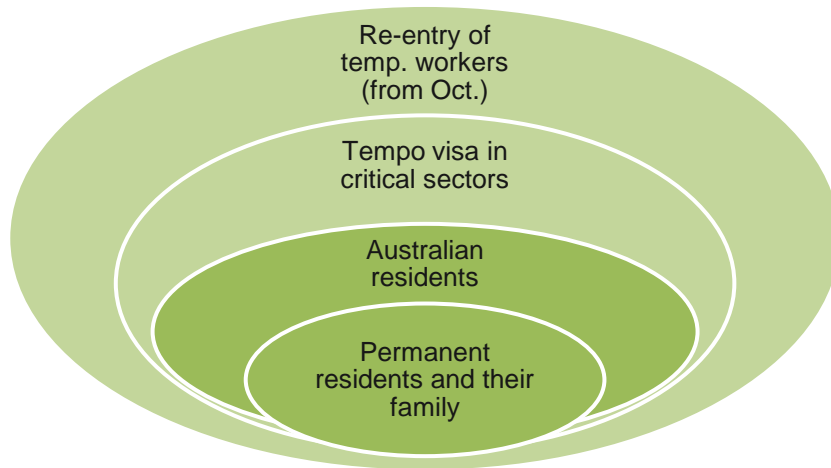




New Zealand - “Support Government Response to COVID-19”



Admissions



Continuity in admin services

Interim visas obtained online
Priority to applicants in the country (from May)

Extension of stay:

Possibility to extend / modify current conditions of temporary visas

Students

Possibility to work longer hours with same employer

Seasonal (RSE)

Can apply to stay longer

Work visa holder in essential services

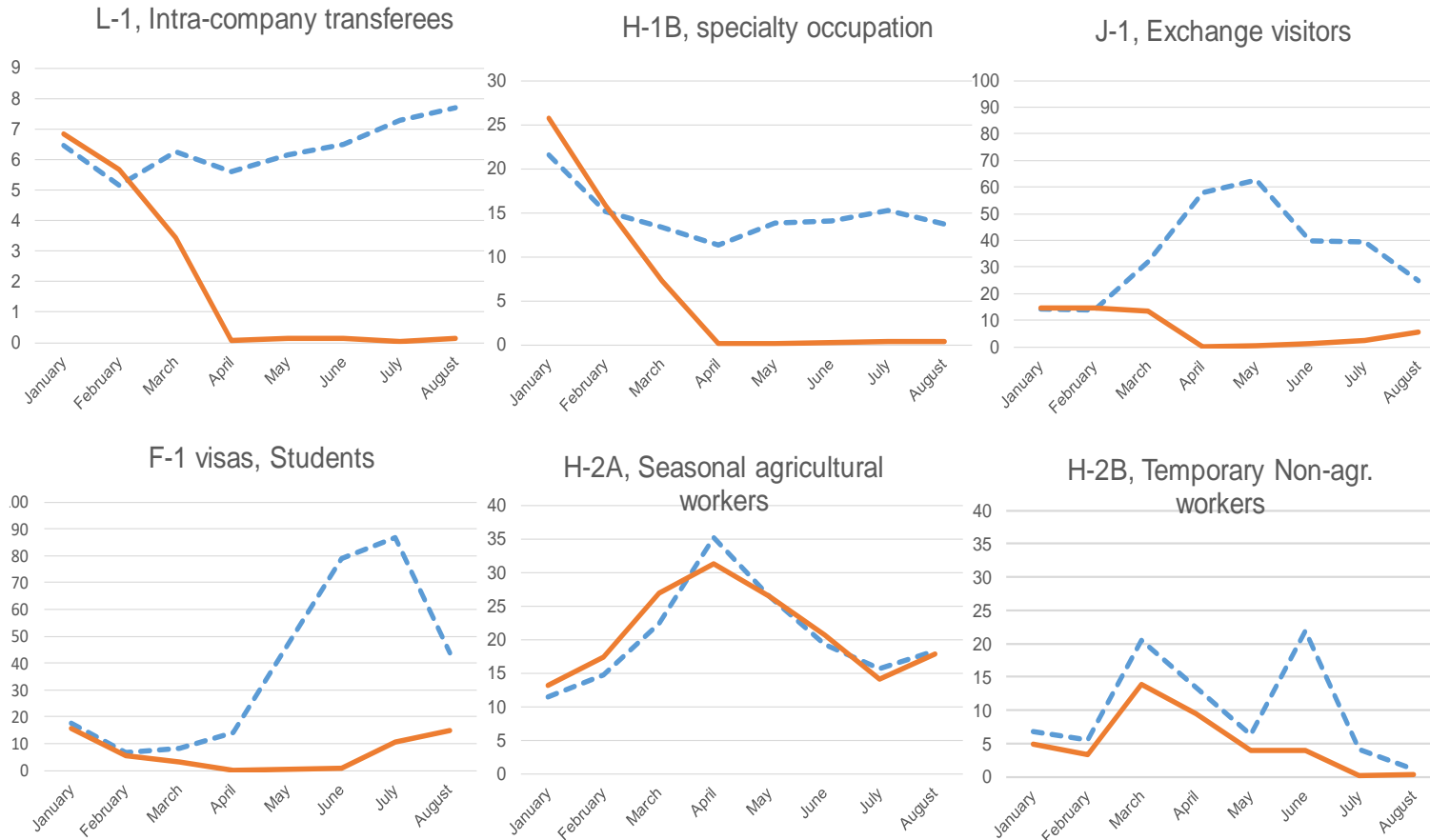
Able to extend hours worked / Change employer



United States – “National Interest Exceptions”

Limited exceptions, June restrictions with exemptions clarified in August

Admissions to the United States - First semester 2019 and 2020

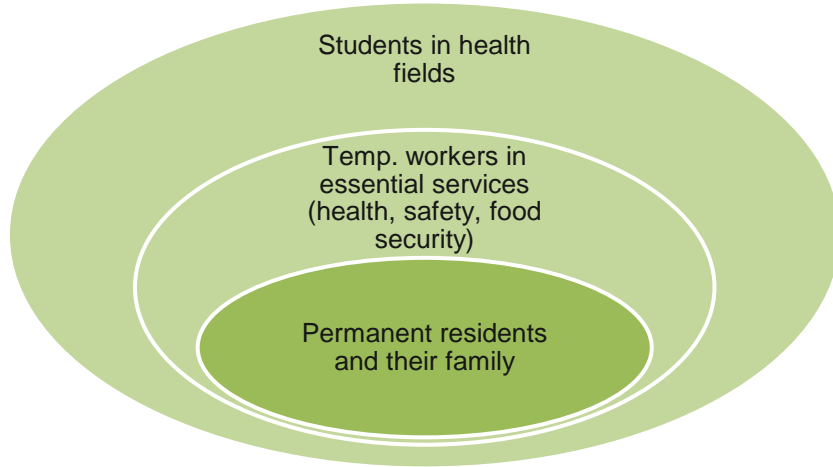


H-2 Exempted from in-person interviews as “national security priority”



Canada - "Essential Service"

Admissions



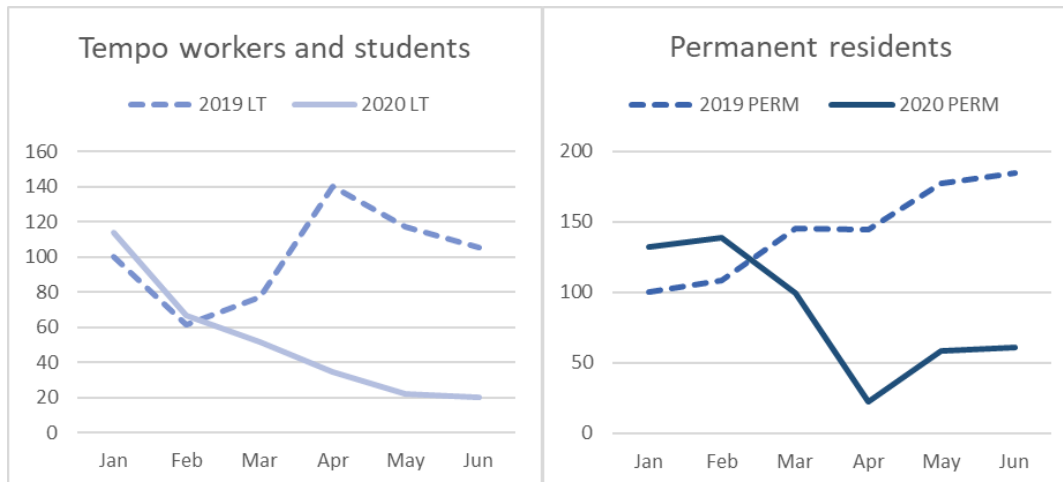
Extension of stay:

Possibility for workers to "recover" their status/change employer

Students

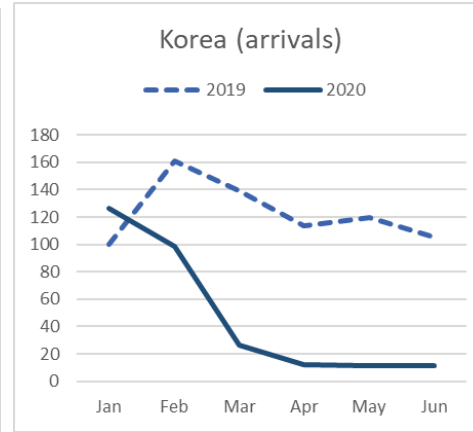
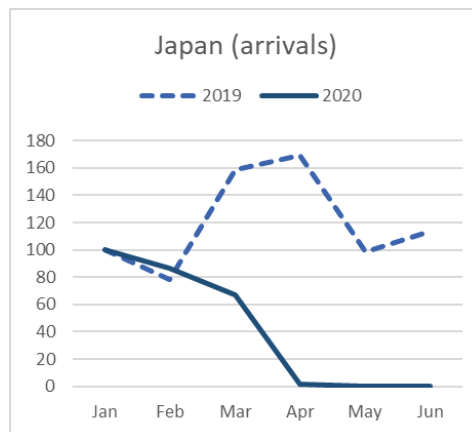
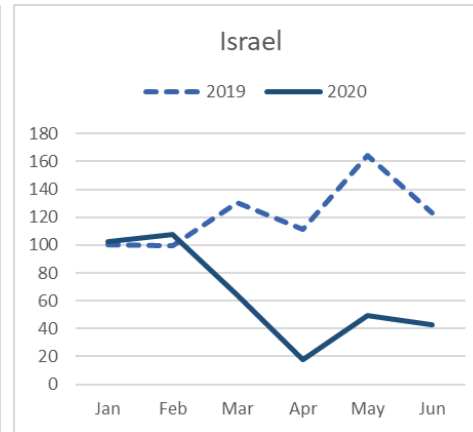
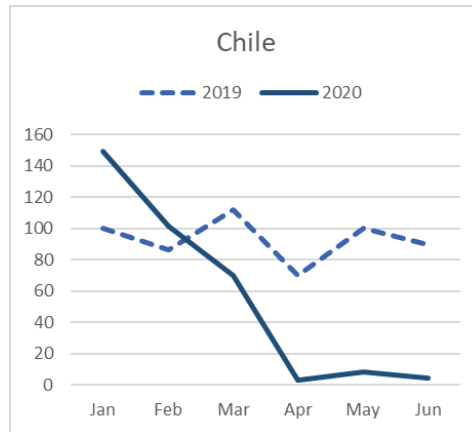
Easing work limits if essential serv.
Facilitating recognition of diploma in medical occupations (Ontario, British Colombia)

Facilitating existing temporary foreign workers to change employers in Canada





Restrictions in other non-EU OECD countries



Japan/Korea

- Strict entry bans
- Invalidation of past visas
- Extended periods of stay
- Eased work conditions

Israel

- Strict entry bans
- Automatic extension of work permits

Chile/Colombia

- Strict entry bans



Can we generalise?

Management of the crisis

- Island/isolated countries are different
- Digitalisation of processes is key
- Existing occupation lists were often redrafted
- No sectoral migration policies (except in agriculture)

What next

- Divergence in labour migration policy thinking across countries
- Rethink labour migration system
- Reconsider attractiveness factors for highly skilled migration
- Difficult to predict the future / lots of uncertainties



THANK YOU!

Contact:

Jonathan.chaloff@oecd.org

Cecile.thoreau@oecd.org

Further references:

International Migration Outlook 2020 (released on Monday 19 October)

<https://www.oecd.org/migration/international-migration-outlook-1999124x.htm>

What is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on immigrants and their children?

<http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/what-is-the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-immigrants-and-their-children-e7cbb7de/>

