

# People and place – what comes first?

Population Futures in an Uncertain World –  
The Changing Faces of Aotearoa New Zealand

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Final report

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NEW ZEALAND  
PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION  
Te Kōmihana Whai Hua o Aotearoa



## Rārangi upoko – topics

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- introduction to Productivity Commission
  - our kaupapa and mahi
  - noting our (economic) world has changed and is increasingly fragile
- migrants and Aotearoa
  - te Tiriti
  - building a nest
  - education and training
  - absorptive capacity



## Commission purpose

“to provide advice to the Government on improving productivity in a way that is directed to supporting the overall wellbeing of New Zealanders, having regard to a wide variety of communities of interest and population groups in New Zealand society”.

*section 7, NZPC Act 2010*



# Kaupapa and mahi

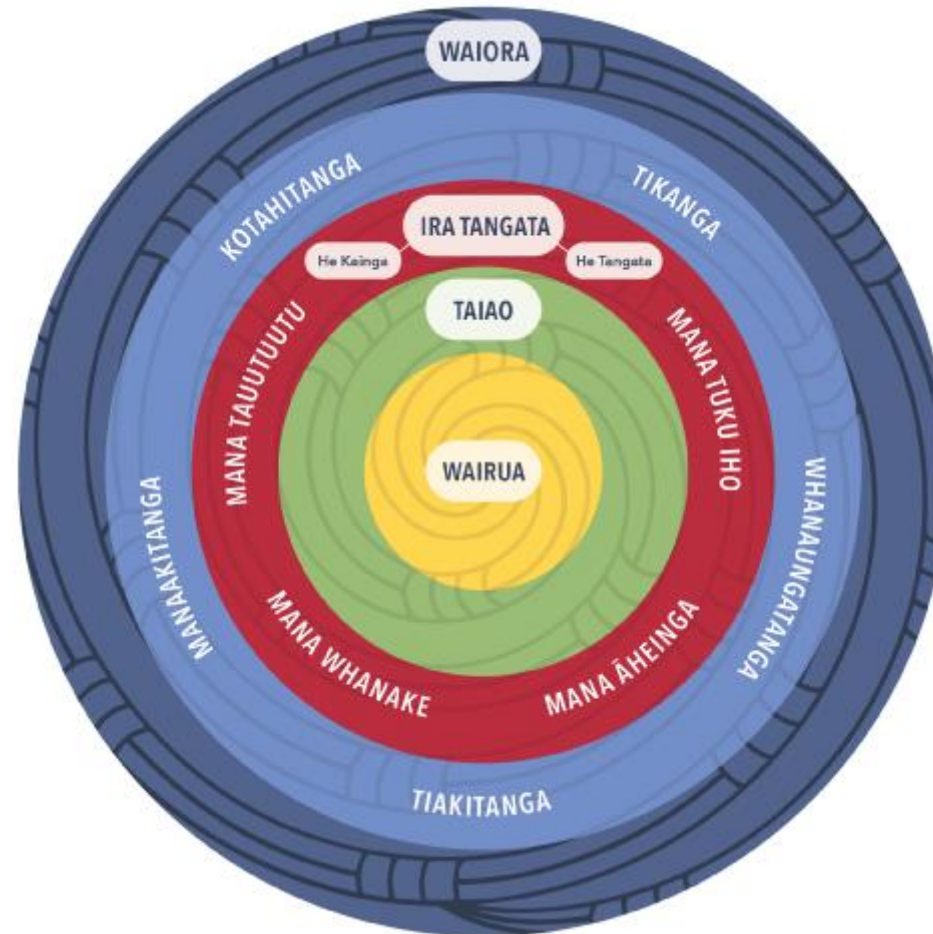
## *productivity, people, and place*

- *productivity* and wellbeing go together
- *people* drive economic activity
- *place* is central to tangata whenua
- *place* is what makes Aotearoa distinctive
  
- a long-term perspective is critical
  - inter-generational
  - community, business, and government

**improved  
productivity  
and wellbeing  
for current and  
future  
generations**

# He Ara Waiora

- mana tauutuutu  
connection, balance
- mana āhienga  
aspiration, capability
- mana whanake  
prosperity
- mana tuku iho  
identity, belonging



- kotahitanga  
unity
- whanaungatanga  
positive relationships
- manaakitanga  
care, respect
- tikanga  
protocol
- tiakitanga  
guardianship

Refs:

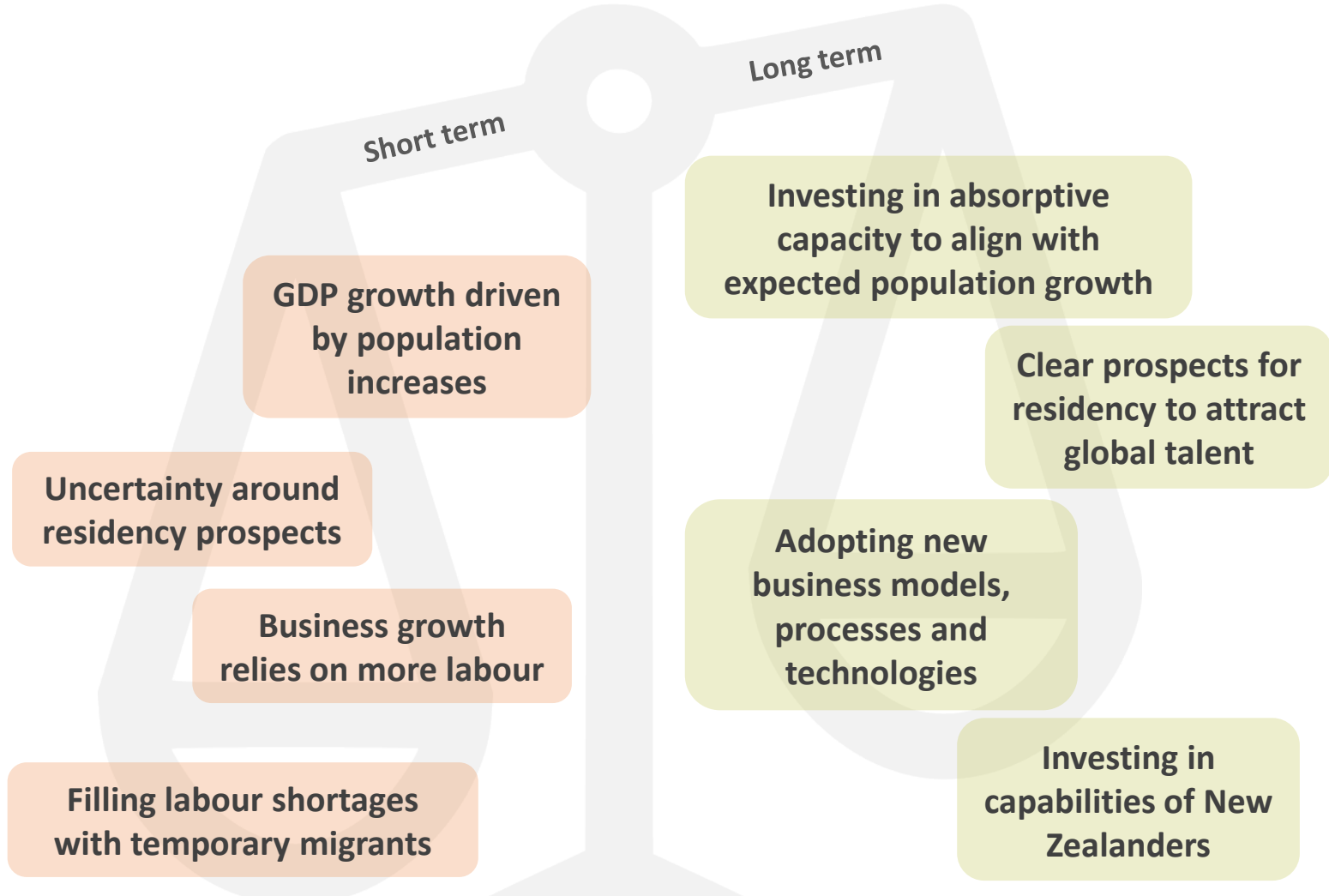
McMeeking et al, (2019), He Ara Waiora: background paper on the development and content of He Ara Waiora, <https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/handle/10092/17576>  
and <https://www.budget.govt.nz/budget/2023/bps/he-ara-waiora.htm>

# Immigration policy

## (another) battle between the short and the long term



**we continue to prefer short-term choices while deferring the long-term challenges**



# Te Tiriti o Waitangi

## Preamble

... kai wakarite ki nga Tangata maori o Nu Tirani – kia wakaaetia e nga Rangatira Maori te Kawanatanga o te Kuini ki nga wahikatoa o te wenua nei me nga motu – **na te mea hoki he tokomaha ke nga tangata o tona Iwi Kua noho ki tenei wenua, a e haere mai nei.**



# Te Tiriti o Waitangi

## English translation of Te Reo Māori text of Preamble

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... to maintain peace and good order  
considers it just to appoint an administrator  
one who will negotiate with the people of  
New Zealand to the end that their chiefs will  
agree to the Queen's Government being  
established over all parts of this land and  
(adjoining) islands and also **because there are  
many of her subjects already living on this  
land and others yet to come.**





# The Treaty of Waitangi

## English version of part of Preamble



... in consequence of the great number of Her Majesty's Subjects who have already settled in New Zealand and the rapid extension of Emigration both from Europe and Australia which is still in progress ...

# Te Tiriti and immigration

## Finding 27

The Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti) is fundamentally connected with immigration. Immigration policy and institutions should reflect Te Tiriti. The Commission has neither the mana nor the expertise to make definitive recommendations on how to achieve this, but the Commission is making some recommendations as a starting point.

## Recommendation 21

The Government should work with Māori on how to reflect Te Tiriti o Waitangi in immigration policy and institutions. This engagement should be in good faith and allow Māori to define their own interests. As a starting point, engagement with Māori should be a fundamental part of the proposed Government Policy Statement process.

# He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata

Hutia te rito o te  
Kei whā

was removed,  
bellbird sing?  
ed what was  
the world?  
d to reply,  
is people

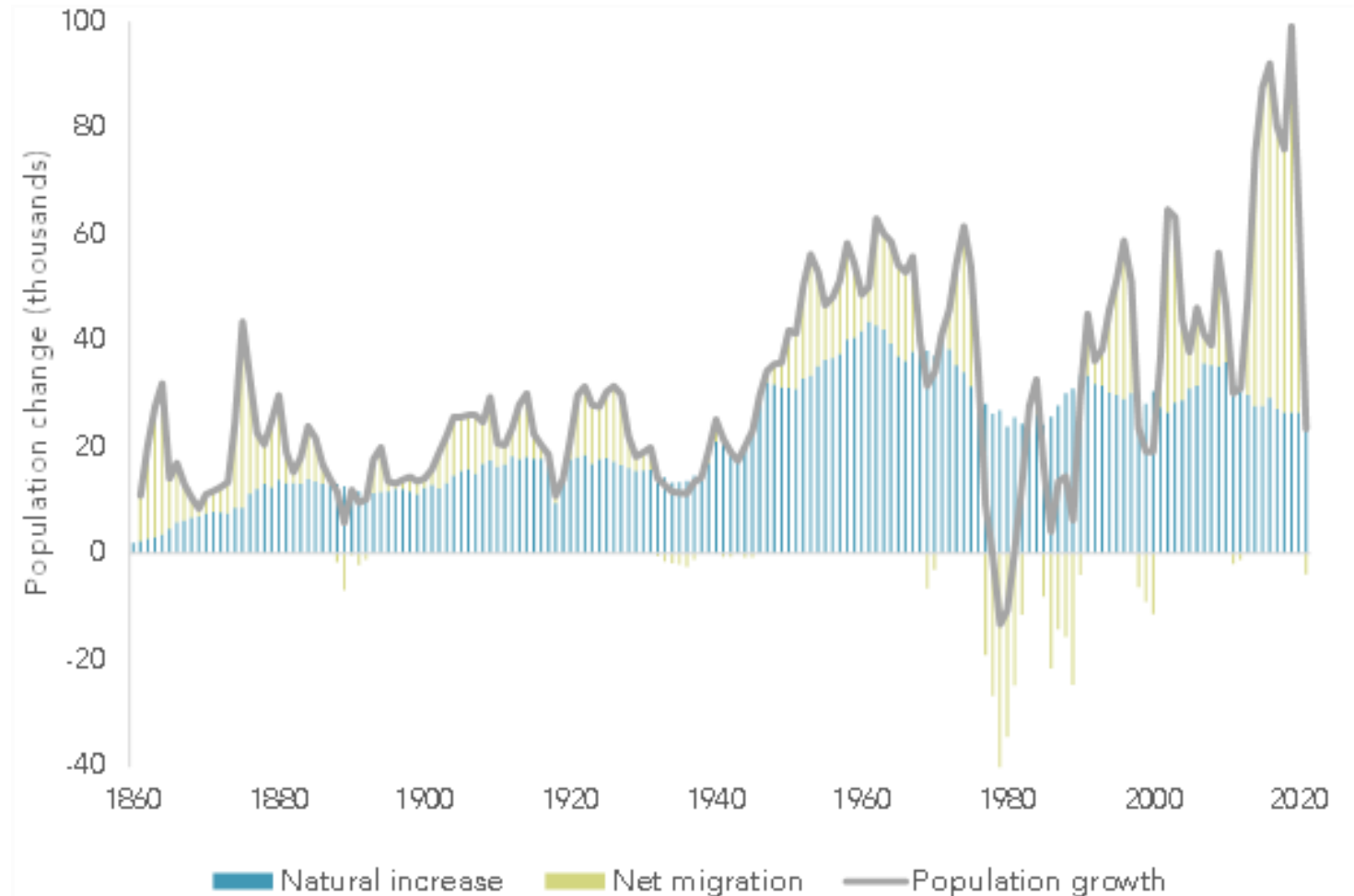
Yes, it is people, but it is also the nest that surrounds people and their communities

Meri  
Te Aup



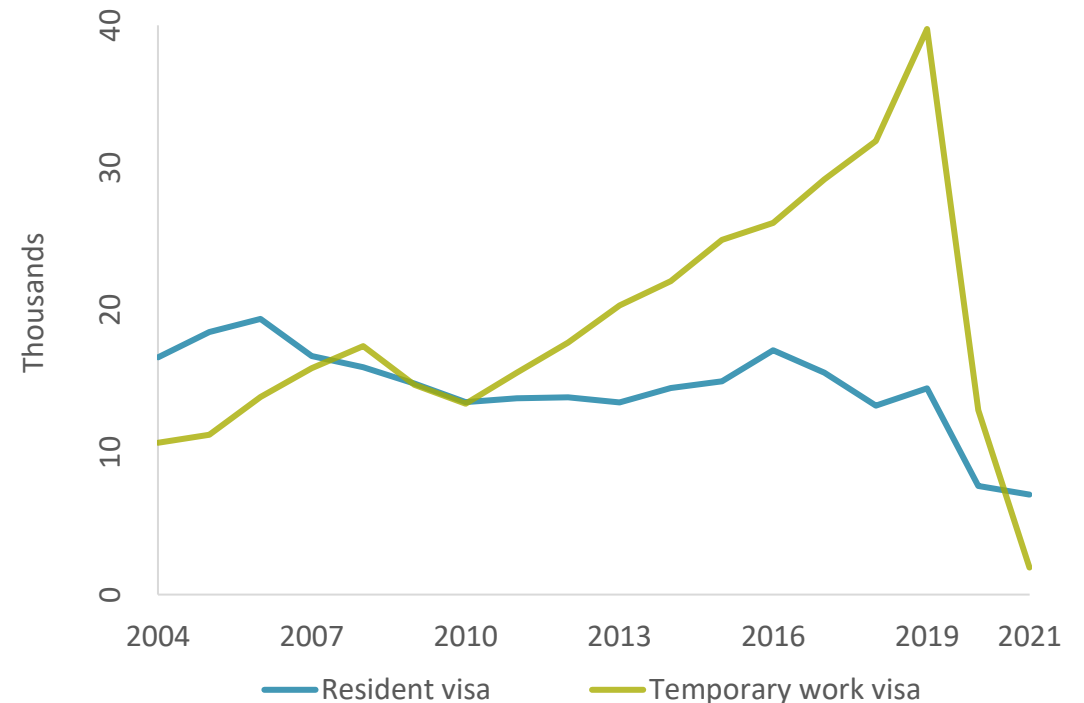
# Migrants and Aotearoa

- Tangata whenua
  - Māori emigration from Hawaiki c1300
- Tangata Tiriti
  - since 1860 migrants have over most years added to the population of Aotearoa
  - latest (pre-COVID) period saw the largest addition from migrants



# System becoming increasingly unbalanced

- after the GFC short-term economic growth stimulated by migrant inflow
- but unbalanced
  - many temporary workers expecting a pathway to residency
  - but no changes to the residency selection criteria
  - also, combined with low rates of emigration, exacerbated pressures on some aspects of absorptive capacity



# Immigration, population and our *nest*

## Squaring the circle?

### Finding 7

There is a disconnect between immigration policy and the investment to expand capacity in the infrastructure needed to support population growth.

### Finding 11

The current immigration system

- lacks transparency, clear objectives
- struggles to make trade-offs between employment, productivity, absorptive capacity, and other goals
- has a very short-term focus
- takes incremental decisions that fail to take account of cumulative or wider impacts or other government policy objectives.

# The *nest* must include opportunities

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## Incentives to train – the “make or buy” decision

- unregulated access to migrants
  - reduces incentive for employers to train workers or adopt new technologies
  - particularly so for small fast-growing firms
- industry peak bodies often take responsibility for training
  - but they also have incentive to lobby for occupations to be on Skills Shortage List
- there are few (or no) links between the Skills Shortage Lists and education and training system
- investment in education and training part of building nest for current and future generations
  - for both migrants and those born in Aotearoa

# Absorptive capacity

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## Recommendation 3

The Government, in an Immigration Policy Statement, should describe

- what the Government considers New Zealand's absorptive capacity to be (based on a range of indicators)
- where and how short-term immigration flows are likely to put additional pressure on that capacity (if at all)
- how the Government intends to invest to expand capacity (if needed) to align it with expected population growth over the medium to long term.



**Papatūānuku**

