

22 November 2021

Submission on Immigration Settings

I intend to keep this submission short and simple.

At the outset, I wish to make clear this submission is not intended to be anti-migrant. Many migrants make an important contribution to New Zealand society. However, like most things in life, there is a need for moderation.

New Zealand has had the highest population growth in the OECD for the last 15 years. Most of this population growth is attributed to net migration of foreigners, as opposed to natural births (3.5 migrants to every new birth).

The consequences of extremely high migration levels have been devastating for many New Zealanders, especially the younger generation.

The negative impacts can be seen in the form of escalating house prices;¹ increased demand for stretched public services (i.e, hospitals, schools, courts, and even prisons); more congestion on the roads; and stagnant wages.

High migration is often justified due to a perceived need to fill so called "skill shortages". However, it is arguable that much of this skill shortage has been driven by unsustainable migration (for example, for every 200 new migrants, there would need to be at least one doctor, one police officer, two nurses and four teachers).

There is also a moral dilemma with encouraging skilled workers to leave developing countries and move to New Zealand. Is it right that New Zealand poaches a doctor from India or South Africa when their own citizens are in desperate need of primary health care?

The other argument in favour of high immigration is that we need migrants to do menial jobs that New Zealanders are unwilling or unable to do. That is nothing short of racist and disrespectful to the thousands of migrants who are forced to work abroad to support their family back home.

Likewise, the notion that we need high migration to cater for an aging population is an absurdity. Guess what: one day, those migrants will become old too and will need someone to care for them.

In short, New Zealand's immigration policies are in desperate need of reform. This problem has been 20 years in the making, and it will require another 20 years to fix.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for us to recalibrate our immigration settings. Let's not throw away this opportunity as soon as the borders re-open.

Yours faithfully



Joshua Pietras

¹ For example, in 2009, Motu Economic and Public Policy Research predicted that house prices would increase by 12.6% for every 1% increase in population. Yet New Zealand has maintained 2% annual population growth for the last six years.