

22th November 2021

To New Zealand Productivity Commission,

I would like to provide my feedbacks on *Immigration: A fit for the future* and some free and frank thoughts.

1. For medium to high skilled occupations, immigration does not discourage local people to get training

For relatively high-skilled occupations, migrant labour does not reduce training and upskilling activity by employers, as NZ education system lacks comprehensiveness. In some (or even many) cases, when local people want to get training, NZ tertiary education system is unable to deliver that.

For example: subjects like naval architecture, offshore engineering, digital communication, etc. do not (or rarely) exist, and all naval architects are supposed to be “imported” from overseas.

2. Competition is necessary

From another hand, relatively cheaper migrant labour delivers a more competitive labour market, which may not be liked by some locals but would be beneficial in a long run:

- Local people who are willing to upskill themselves would be encouraged to take more training and upskilling activities; and
- Some un-competent people who do not have the willingness to upskill can be gradually knocked out.

3. Treat all ethnic groups and cultures equally

Highlighting one certain ethnic group’s culture and language in the immigration system is unfair and unjustified:

- Human rights are fundamental rights for all human beings, overriding written laws even constitutional documents. All ethnic groups being treated equally is a way to demonstrate human rights, and none specific ethnic group’s culture should be specifically highlighted; and
- The Crown also has obligations under a number of legislations, including international conventions/treaties relating to human rights, Human Rights Act, etc. All these legislations require NZ’s Crown to treat all ethnic groups equally and fairly.
- The Treaty itself is a result of implementing equity as a fundamental principle, and it gives a good example in how the earlier and newer immigrants get along with each other in equity. This principle should be naturally extended to all ethnic groups: all people coming and living in NZ shall respect and recognise the sovereignty and dignity of the Crown (Her/His Majesty and Her/His Government in NZ), and the Crown ensures equity to all people (covering all ethnic groups).

4. PRV is an essential and good reward

I strongly oppose removing the unlimited returning rights of permanent residents. Because:

- Unlimited returning right is one of a few advantages of NZ (as a migration destiny), as NZ’s average

income, housing price, the ability to accommodate highly skilled people, and prosperity are not attractive to immigrants.

- The weakest chain is not the unlimited returning right of PRV (Permanent Resident Visa), it should be the time required in transferring from Resident Visa (RV) to PRV (ordinarily 2 years).

5. Lack of planning in immigration settlement

How to effectively accommodate the recently planned 165K new resident visa holders? I believe it would be a big challenge. Hopefully, this kind of event does not occur in the future.

NZ should have more control over the annual number of immigrants, but should offer more stable privileges to immigrants who successfully and genuinely settled in NZ and contributed to NZ

Regards,

Dr Xiaojing Liu