

Productivity Commission Immigration Submission

In response to recommendation eight, I strongly agree that visa conditions tying migrant workers to specific employers should be removed. I believe there is more migrant exploitation occurring than NZ would like to admit.

In response to recommendation nine, I agree that the government should proceed with expanding the Welcoming Communities programme.

In response to question one, there will always be jobs New Zealanders do not want to fill, or commit to as a lifetime career, regardless of pay and incentives. Migrants fill the gap. Hospitality is in desperate need of migrants willing to fill that gap, and it should be made easier for hospo workers to get residency. In the past, a worker had to be a General Manager or Head Chef to get a visa. There should be visas for line cooks, baristas and wait staff as well.

In response to question four, the annual number of residence visas on offer should not be reduced, it should be increased (and housing/infrastructure should increase to match). Having a set number of residence visas on offer will always cause an unfair backlog so long as demand outstrips supply. NZ is a haven compared to most of the rest of the world. Let migrants settle here and contribute, build their lives and invest themselves in their local communities. I am a migrant myself and have gained an abundance of wellbeing in relation to my quality of life. It was the first time in my life since graduating with a bachelor's degree that I didn't have to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. Instead, I was able to use my free time to volunteer and travel. Before the borders closed due to COVID-19, I had endless international visitors who came to spend money seeing NZ. Migrants are good for the economy. It was never my intention to settle in New Zealand when I moved here on a working holiday visa many years ago. I got lucky. I got a job where I could get residency, and I fell in love with this country. I only wish all migrants were able to have a similar experience in being able to stay, should they so choose. Additionally, so many New Zealanders move overseas that migrants are needed to replace them. Some New Zealanders come back and some don't. Migrants fill those gaps.

In response to question five, I do not believe in limiting rights of return for permanent residents who re-migrate. The world is a mobile place, and those who gain NZ permanent residency should always be allowed to return. Some countries do not allow their citizens to hold dual citizenship, and changing the conditions of permanent residency re-entry would be unfair to those people. Life happens, and sometimes permanent residents have to go back to their home country for a time. They should not be punished for this.

In response to question six, I believe efforts by migrants to learn te reo should be recognised in the residence/permanent residence approval process. I do not know how this could be fairly measured, but iwi and hapu should definitely be leading the conversation.

In response to question seven, yes, particular groups of migrants should get both additional and targeted support to settle. I am thinking specifically of refugee and asylum seekers. I have volunteered with the Red Cross on refugee resettlement, and there was one interpreter in the whole of NZ who spoke the language of the family I was helping. This interpreter did not work on weekends. Further, the language the family spoke was not on Google translate. All of this made communication very difficult. We managed, but I believe their settlement experience

would have been so much better if there were multiple interpreters that were accessible. NZ offers great support for refugee resettlement in comparison to the rest of the world, but I would love to see more offered. And also access to free public transportation for those resettled.