

I would like to start this submission by pointing out what has happened recently in terms of immigration. Not the 2020 reduction due to Covid-19 but rather the extraordinary rise that happened the second half of 2019, before anyone had even heard of Covid. From about August 2019 to December 2019 net immigration increased dramatically, and by December the net figure was 72588 (*source: Stats NZ website*) which was far in excess of the approx. 50,000 figure for July of that year. No real explanation was given for the substantial rise, and it continued even higher into January, Feb and March of 2020 before coming down due to Covid border restrictions.

Immigration is a good thing, especially for a geographically isolated place like NZ, the mixing of different peoples and ideas has a positive effect. However the numbers entering the country need to be reasonable to satisfy a few fundamental criteria. Firstly the country's infrastructure needs to be taken into account. Our largest cities are straining under the weight of all these extra numbers and especially with plumbing were seeing our urban spaces becoming increasingly squalid. Barely a week goes by without hearing about sewage erupting in the streets or beaches closed due to faecal contamination.

Housing is the second and probably most serious issue that needs to be considered when counting the population. The situation is truly dire, and by OECD measures we have the worst homelessness and home affordability amongst that organizations countries. It's becoming increasingly depressing to witness the poverty that continues to grow in the cities, and will only be a matter of time before it becomes slightly dangerous to walk the streets in daylight hours. You could argue were there already in fact. Walking the suburban streets is often devastating to see well dressed and sober people exit their station wagons and vans of which they are obviously using as a home, and then enter a nearby flat to presumably have a shower or cook a meal. 20 years ago absolutely no such thing happened on the scale you see now – not even close. Affordability and getting people off the streets and out of vehicles should be a priority before bring greater numbers into the country.

As far as work goes limiting the numbers entering offers a great opportunity to increase our use of technology. The Japanese for example are renowned for the use of technology to perform tasks that they consider drudgerous or unappealing to humans. It's a very humane, modern and progressive concept which all people should take up. Civilisations thousands of years ago poured people into their core areas to perform the most menial of tasks, copying this pattern in the 21st century is not only backwards but kisses goodbye an opportunity for technological advancement. One area of visa application however could actually increase – and that is say 1 year visas for those under perhaps 35 who can show proof of sufficient funds upon gaining the visa. Its something I did in my twenties and consider it an excellent cultural exchange without being a long term issue for the country involved.

Finally a word about so-called GDP reporting. Some consider the measure of Gross Domestic Product to be insufficient to take in long term environmental or social issues but that is another matter. So lets talk GDP then. If, for example, GDP rises 2% per annum but the population has increased 2.5% over the same period, then on average, we have become poorer. If GDP is to be reported it should be *GDP per capita* and never straight GDP as this gives no indication whatsoever on the increase in wealth of the average kiwi.