

Kim Stevenson



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Submission on Immigration policy

Thankyou for the opportunity to make a submission.

I think that most people would accept that:

1. NZ is generally a desirable place for people to come and live: There will never be a shortage of those wanting to immigrate here.
2. There are many Kiwis living off-shore who may want to return.
3. NZ birth rate of 1.61 children per woman in 2020, and falling (NZ Stats website) is way below natural 'replacement' rate and some immigration may be needed to maintain our population, longer term.
4. As climate change and geo-political instability accelerate, the pressures created by 1 and 2 above are also likely to accelerate.
5. We could debate what previous immigration has created in terms of GDP, and increased pressure on infrastructure and the housing market. Appended is an excel file (which I assume you already have this data) showing a net migration value of perhaps 2000-5000 per month, with obvious variation. So perhaps 30,000 to 60,000 net migrants per year over the last 30 years.
6. So New Zealands' population growth reflects this: Again, from NZ Stats web site: from May 1991 to May 2021 (30 yrs) the population grew from around 3.5m to 5.1m, an average annual increment of 53,300, which has been mostly fuelled by immigration.

The main point of my submission is there doesn't seem to be a "Goal": what is the end point you are trying to achieve? Can I suggest that there is no population 'policy': what do you seek to achieve?

In this 'new age' of increased awareness around sustainability, theoretically shouldn't we have a policy of ZERO population growth? What would that do the paradigms of an ever increasing GDP, increasing demand for goods and services, and the commissions own comment:

Point "38. Which costs and benefits of **population growth** are most important?"

So How about a population policy? How about being really brave and recognising "Sustainable growth" is an oxymoron, and setting a target of zero population growth? This then sets how many immigrants can come. The ethnicity, skills and age structure become secondary considerations.

What a paradigm change!

If it doesn't happen now, when will it?

With current figures (to March 2021) of annual births at 57105, and deaths at 32907, giving a net increase of some 24,000 +/-, there wouldn't be any nett migration!!

Over time, with the expected increase in deaths as "boomers" die off, and the low birth rate changes the figures above, then migration will become necessary to maintain our population.

Planning ahead. I accept there is a need to plan ahead: our population age structure means there will need to be some strategic planning to retain a viable 'breeding age' population, but again the concept of zero growth could still be the goal.

Refugees: NZ does have an obligation to help. The overall numbers are over-whelming however: we cannot help them all. To take perhaps some is the right thing to do.

Thankyou.

Kim Stevenson