

Australian Multicultural Council submission on the Productivity Commission's Joint Study on Closer Economic Relations initiatives

I would like to express my support for the submission made by Judge Rauf Soulio, Chair of the Australian Multicultural Council on 25 October 2012 regarding the social implications of changes to the accessibility of entitlements by New Zealand citizens living in Australia coupled with the limited pathways to Australian citizenship available to this group.

As a New Zealand citizen who has been living and working in Australia since January 2011 I can confirm that the current situation must be addressed urgently to prevent the growth of negative attitudes to New Zealanders living in Australia. There is a strong sense that we can never properly integrate with our current temporary status. I was unable to vote in recent council elections and this just highlights the bizarre situation of taxation without representation also affecting some New Zealand citizens in Australia. I have also found that there is a degree of confusion amongst Australians about the situation - many encountered at work have no idea about the 2001 and 2007 changes and are quite shocked.

I think it would be reasonable to set a time limit anywhere from two to five years, after which New Zealand citizens living in Australia could apply for full entitlements and citizenship. Unfortunately, the approach taken has affected 280,000 New Zealand citizens living in Australia in a very adverse way. I agree with Judge Rauf Soulio that this can only be to the detriment of Australia in the long-run.

Yours sincerely

Murray Newth