

Submission to the inquiry into Migrant Intake into Australia

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I fully endorse the opinions below of the realities of Australia's current immigration program. I want to live in an Australia that is ecologically and socially sustainable, with a stable population not much greater than, and even considerably below the current 23.7 million.

The issue of auctioning immigration places is an irrelevance. Rich people might have a greater environmental impact to begin with, but poor people would be going their hardest to catch up. The problem is the *numbers*, not whether people are rich or poor, their ethnicity or religion. That makes no difference when they turn on the water for a shower or try to squeeze themselves onto the last place on the freeway or the train to work.

1. Nothing can grow forever. There must ultimately be a limit to Australia's population, so principles of good economic management should not be dependent on population growth. The lower the peak population in Australia, the more resources per person to sustain our quality of life into the future.
2. Even in the immediate term, the costs of increasing our population outweigh the benefits. These costs include crowding of public infrastructure and government services, housing inflation and unaffordability, more unemployment and insecure work, environmental impacts including biodiversity loss and more carbon emissions, among many others. Most benefits are ephemeral, while most costs are cumulative over time.
3. The direct costs to the government bottom line include public infrastructure, which costs over \$100,000 per extra person across all government-provided facilities. Migration-related costs, provision of multilingual services and welfare costs are additional to this burden.
4. The idea of auctioning places is of limited relevance, if our aim is to minimize net migration and population growth. Once we fulfill international obligations to accommodate refugees, allow reasonable access to family reunion and global recruiting for high-level expertise, there would be few if any places to auction.
5. Vested interests dominate the pro-growth advocacy. The property industry is a primary beneficiary and a major sponsor of both major political parties and of pro-migration peak bodies. Their speculative profits are at the expense of housing affordability for ordinary Australians. Employers seeking cheap and compliant labour have exaggerated skills shortages. The benefits that these groups claim Australia will get from high immigration have not been realised.
6. The benefits currently attributed to the skilled migration program can be achieved by better investment in young Australians.