



Recommendations for the New Zealand Government
2023-2026

Multicultural New Zealand

8-point proviso from recent immigrant and former refugee communities

MNZ 8-Point Proviso 2023-2026

A NOTE TO OUR MEMBERS AND COMMUNITIES

Multicultural New Zealand (MNZ) is a pan-ethnic organization in Aotearoa with more than 30 years history as an independent advisor to New Zealanders and the Government. We are a non-political, community-based organization. We work with the incumbent Government to provide independent advice and advocacy for the voiceless volunteers who work hard to achieve better settlement outcomes for recent migrants and former refugees. This advice is provided prior to general elections through our 8-Point Proviso.

MNZ encourages all of its members and community networks to consider the following items when voting in the Aotearoa New Zealand 2023 general election. These items have been compiled as a representation of political priorities for Aotearoa's multicultural communities. It is crucial to make a well-informed decision when voting, and we urge individuals and groups to raise these matters during political forums and discussions. It is crucial that our politicians are aware of these issues when considering policy initiatives, and that the multicultural community is invited to provide input into policy directives.

Recent migrants and former refugees are fast becoming one of Aotearoa's major populations as well as being among some of the country's most vulnerable communities. Government needs to acknowledge this and build infrastructure for the future, not the past. It is imperative that we take advantage of the upcoming general election to enforce positive change. Our 8-Point Proviso provides expectations for the incoming Government, and a benchmark for recent migrants and former refugees to measure the achievements of the current Government during their term in office:

- 1. Implement long term population and immigration strategies**
- 2. Build and maintain robust cultural infrastructure**
- 3. Make changes to the Holidays Act to reflect the current demographics of NZ**
- 4. Establish an independent governing body for religious matters**
- 5. Appoint an Indigenous Rights Commissioner**
- 6. Create pathways for multicultural communities to flourish within a bi-cultural framework**
- 7. Ensure demonstrable access to and equitable participation in NZ socioeconomics**
- 8. Ensure fair and equitable access to media**

1. IMPLEMENT LONG TERM POPULATION AND IMMIGRATION STRATEGIES

Immigration policies have suffered under a lack of foresight by successive governments with regard to the impact on communities and the support volunteer communities are able to give to assist successful settlement outcomes in the communities

This approach has resulted in ad hoc policy changes and increased application and processing costs. New Zealand needs to invest in appropriate systems and infrastructure to create assurances of robust and flourishing communities, industries and quality of life for all New Zealanders. This must be backed by a vision of a Tiriti-based Multicultural New Zealand, where there is a place of value for everyone.

a. Priorities for Government

- Demonstrable inclusion of tangata whenua in immigration policy consultation and development
- Devise a 10-year immigration-based population strategy

b. How Government would achieve this

- Accept the recommendations of the Productivity Commission on immigration and population strategy
- All considerations for New Zealand infrastructure to be based on a projected annual 2% population growth

c. What this will achieve

- Alleviate pressure on housing, transport, health and other national infrastructure
- Stable immigration policy and clear immigration pathways and safe settlement in communities

d. Timeframe for commitment

- Within the first year in office

e. Reflections for the community

- What approaches to immigration policy have political parties currently made explicit?
- What is the view of your local constituent MP?
- What are their strategies for rapidly growing issues such as pressure on infrastructure and how far ahead are they looking?

2. BUILD AND MAINTAIN ROBUST CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Given NZ's active approach to immigration of people from a multitude of ethnicities, New Zealand needs an integrated cultural fabric to maintain a safe and stable society. Government must demonstrate equitable engagement with community groups to achieve good social cohesion outcomes. Reliance solely on the ethnic caucus of individual political parties & politically-affiliated ethnic groups are not a true representation of the aspirations multicultural communities and inadequate to drive multicultural policies.

a. Priorities for Government

- Retain population-based ministries as arms of policy
- Build sustainable, high-trust relationships with senior pan-ethnic community organisations
- Mandate territorial and local authorities to develop a multicultural strategy in partnership with local communities, community organisations and tangata whenua.

b. How Government would achieve this

- Government departments approach senior community organisations to negotiate and sign a memorandum of understanding or similar agreement
- Repurpose settlement funding from Immigration New Zealand to resource local government and community groups in developing multicultural strategies
- Ensure all immigrants go through KiwiHost as part of their induction into the New Zealand workforce.

c. What this will achieve

- Engaged, empowered communities with a stronger sense of belonging and community participation.
- Well-informed and modern settlement policy and programmes

d. Timeframe for commitment

- Immediately

e. Reflections for the community

- How efficiently are population-based ministries and local government engaging with your community and how could you advise them to improve this?
- How can community influence the decision of who Government consults as community representatives?

3. MAKE CHANGES TO THE HOLIDAYS ACT TO REFLECT THE CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS OF NEW ZEALAND

Aotearoa's public holidays currently demonstrate a eurocentric disposition. Migrants from other parts of the world do not have the same given right to acknowledge the significant milestones in their cultural year. This can be done with recognition of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

a. Priorities for Government

- Demonstrate cultural inclusivity in national holidays.
- A referendum on how to implement these changes.

b. How Government would achieve this

- Introduce a floating Cultural Day where communities or individuals can nominate (through appropriate consultation) a day of cultural significance to their respective communities to have as a holiday.
- Work with communities to make changes to public holidays

c. What this will achieve

- Equal and inclusive support for our multicultural society

d. Timeframe for commitment

- Within the first year in office

e. Reflections for the community

- How will they influence community members to demand for all employment days with or without legislation?

4. ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT BODY FOR GOVERNING RELIGIOUS MATTERS

The foundational separation of the Church (being any religious institution) and State on which New Zealand stands has become evidently blurred. Religious issues cannot be handled impartially by population-based Ministries and supporting government agencies. Government needs an independent institutional arrangement to provide transparent guiding strategies for working appropriately with religious bodies.

a. Priorities for Government

- Maintain the Fourth Article of Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- The establishment of an institution independent of Government that is appropriately funded and designed to address all matters of faith in a culturally and theologically sensitive way.

b. How Government would achieve this

- Establish guiding legislation for an independent institution to refer to and enforce.
- Consult religious/cultural institutions and communities to ensure an appropriately representative body is assembled.
- Address all internalised attitudes of racism and hate crime toward religious groups
- Not to use population-based ministries to address religious issues

c. What this will achieve

- Eliminate confusion, bias and religious values filtering into government.
- Education for the wider community on religious awareness to facilitate a better understanding of the distinction between culture and religion.
- Enforcement of zero-tolerance policies for religious based discrimination and hate crimes.

d. Timeframe for commitment

- Within the first 100 days in office

e. Reflections for the community

- Does religious freedom in Aotearoa mean that government or the state have the final say on what religious practices are appropriate in any given environment?
- Is it possible to achieve a mediation that will not compromise each religious groups' understanding of tapu (sacredness) through an independent body?

5. CREATE PATHWAYS FOR MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES TO FLOURISH WITHIN A BI-CULTURAL FRAMEWORK

All newly arriving immigrants should be briefed prior to arrival on the Tiriti-based foundations of Aotearoa, and offered a pōwhiri onto the land with tangata whenua, with the focus of understanding Te Tiriti through local lore. There is indisputable evidence that connection with local tangata whenua contributes to stronger long-term settlement outcomes.

a. Priorities for Government

- All incoming immigrants to take part in a community-led noho marae as part of their settlement process.
- Provide pathways to encourage intercultural relationships based on Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Proper resourcing of community-based spaces, programmes and organisations working in the settlement and community wellbeing space.

b. How Government would achieve this

- Recognition of Huarahi Hou as the mainstream approach to welcoming migrants and former refugees in Aotearoa.
- Integration of tikanga Māori and whakawhanaungatanga within Aotearoa's settlement strategy for migrants and former refugees.
- Migrant levy being made available for community use more effectively.

c. What this will achieve

- Greater capacity to lead multicultural integration initiatives within communities.
- Culturally cohesive communities with high cultural awareness and good understanding of the history and bicultural nature of Aotearoa.
- A modern identity for empowered communities contributing to a national identity that will be the envy of the world.

d. Timeframe for commitment

- Within first 100 days in office

e. Reflections for the community

- Understand the political manifestos of individual political parties and their commitment to a Treaty-Based Multicultural New Zealand
- How can communities invest in sustained intentional relationships with local iwi?

6. APPOINT AN INDIGENOUS RIGHTS COMMISSIONER

New Zealand is still demonstrating failures as a fair and equal bicultural nation. Government needs tangible checks and balances in place to be held accountable for upholding Te Tiriti Waitangi and equal rights for Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti to be enforceable. New Zealand has committed to upholding UNDRIP, this now needs to be looked at from a legislative perspective.

a. Priorities for Government

- Acknowledge and repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery
- Acknowledge the need to include UNDRIP into all legislation

b. How Government would achieve this

- Establish a permanent Indigenous Rights Commissioner under the Human Rights Commission
- Work closely alongside the Waitangi Tribunal
- Legislative reform

c. What this will achieve

- World-class indigenous rights legislation and action
- Reparative actions for a post-colonial New Zealand

d. Timeframe for commitment

- Within the first year in office

e. Reflections for the community

- Why is justice and equality for the first nations people of New Zealand beneficial for the migrant communities of New Zealand?
- How can we build solidarity with other vulnerable or oppressed communities to create mutually beneficial support networks?

7. ENSURE DEMONSTRABLE ACCESS TO AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN NZ SOCIOECONOMICS

Equitable access to education, health, employment & income and other basic needs must be founded on a good appreciation of cultural needs. Government needs to consolidate the data across a broad spectrum of areas to obtain a clear overview of inequitable access and incorporate culturally inclusive legislation to remedy structural inequities and other areas of concern.

a. Priorities for Government

- Obtain a clear, cohesive understanding of inequitable access and outcomes for ethnic communities in New Zealand.

b. How Government would achieve this

- Implement a Royal Commission of Inquiry into equitable access across a range of socioeconomic systems
- Follow recommendations from the Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner

c. What this will achieve

- Government will have the foundations to redress structural inequities and implement truly multicultural systems and opportunities
- Improved quality of life for some of our most vulnerable citizens

d. Timeframe for commitment

- Within the first 100 days in office

e. Reflections for the community

- Understand which parties acknowledge socioeconomic inequity and have clear policies to address it.
- What are the current barriers for your community to being able to participate and have equal access to services and opportunities in New Zealand?

8. ENSURE FAIR AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO MEDIA

Misinformation and disinformation are prevalent in migrant communities. There are widespread concerns of foreign interference, backed by evidence. It is vital to have mainstream media providing a reliable platform with an integrated multicultural ethos that migrant communities can turn to, instead of a multitude of media platforms with overseas influences. Government needs to be responsible for addressing this gap as a proactive measure for New Zealand's national security and safety.

a. **Priorities for Government**

- Demonstrate equitable access to media platforms is being given to communities
- Support the establishment of an integrated multicultural broadcasting service

b. **How Government would achieve this**

- Develop a multicultural broadcasting service from the ground up, multicultural ethos must be central, not a series of add-ons
- Undertake broad and varied community consultation and research to achieve this

c. **What this will achieve**

- A locally owned and operated media platform that is safe, accessible and appropriate for all New Zealanders regardless of language or cultural background
- Improved safety of emerging communities and reduced risk of radicalisation
- A broadly engaged multicultural population

d. **Timeframe for commitment**

- Within the first year in office

e. **Reflections for the community**

- What are the issues and content that are important to your community but not centred in mainstream media?
- What are the barriers to your community connecting effectively with regional or national media platforms with important issues?