



NEW ZEALAND

# Immigration Minister denies residency queue is 'shambles'

1 DAY AGO • SOURCE: 1 NEWS



Immigration Minister Kris Faafoi has rebuffed Breakfast host John Campbell's suggestions the [expressions of interest](#) queue for residency is a "bit of a shambles".

Expressions of interest (EOI) for the Skilled Migrant Category visa — which enables those 55 and under who are selected and their families to live in New Zealand indefinitely — has been frozen since April 2020.

The [backlog](#) stands at about 12,000 EOIs for those who are already here, while there are about 1500 applications from people offshore.

Campbell described the situation as a "bit of a shambles" and said National was occupying the moral highground on the issue, in the wake of it revealing a [plan to the fix the "broken immigration system"](#).

This includes clearing the residency backlog and providing a pathway for skilled migrants already in New Zealand to gain residency.



Campbell also said Labour was "flat-footed" on the issue, which Faafoi rejected - "No we don't, I disagree with that."

He said EOIs had been suspended for "a number of reasons", including having "way larger" applications than expected and being unable to process them in a timely manner, as well as Immigration New Zealand staff needing to process critical purpose visas.

"Immigration is under pressure, but as we said earlier this week, we are going to be making some decisions very soon about how we can deal with the queue and get on with making sure we can give some of those people some certainty," Faafoi said.

"There is no perfect decision you can make when the border is closed."

Also on Breakfast this morning, Anu Kaloti from the Migrant Workers Association said Faafoi's words "amounts to not a lot" and that migrants were continuing to hear the "same old, same old" from the minister.

"We've been hearing this for over a year now — 'soon' — and migrants are feeling frustrated and fed up. How soon is 'soon'?"





Anu Kaloti from the Migrant Workers Association says migrants in NZ are "frustrated and fed up" with immigration uncertainty. Source: Breakfast

Kaloti said migrants were facing a "very uncertain" future in New Zealand and pointed out some highly-skilled professionals were already leaving due to the uncertainty and being split from their families.

"It won't be long before we see a mass exodus," Kaloti warned.

"The migrants it wants are the ones who are leaving," she said, referring to the [Government's immigration "reset"](#) announced in May, which has been [labelled "migrant scapegoating" by advocates](#).

"Let's look after the people who are already here. Make it easier for people to stay here."

Kaloti also described National's immigration plan as "rich", describing how it had raised points for skilled migrants from 140 to 160 while it was in power.

