



The Archbishops and Primates
of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia

The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia

Submission to the Minister of Immigration the Hon Michael
Woodhouse and the Minister of Foreign Affairs the Hon Murray
McCully concerning the New Zealand Government's Refugee Quota
Programme Three Year Cycle 2016 to 2019: Quota size and
composition

Submitted by:

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The policy and research data for this submission was prepared by the Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit, Anglican Social Services Hutt Valley Inc.



The Anglican Church

in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia

Te Hahi Mihinare ki Aotearoa, ki Niu Tireni, ki Nga Moutere o te Moana Nui a Kiwa

Dedication

To our brothers and sisters throughout the world; Anglicans, fellow Christians, people of faith and people of no faith, who are dispossessed of their lands and livelihoods, and separated from loved ones through war, oppression, persecution, famine and climate change.

And to those who have perished seeking a new life for themselves and their families:

‘For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me ... when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters you did it for me.’ The Gospel of Matthew Chapter 25 verses 35,36 and 40

Submission in Summary

This submission recognises and commends the Government's decision of September 2015 to increase the intake of refugees by 600 over the current quota during the following three years as a response to the Syrian refugee crisis.

The Anglican Church is one of a number of key stakeholders in refugee resettlement in New Zealand and has a long history of participation and service.

New Zealand ranks low among like countries who accept refugees and asylum seekers, and our current regional quota policy skews our intake away from those most in need.

In the light of the 76 percent increase of displaced people worldwide due to war and persecution in the five years to the end of 2015, from 34 million to 60 million people¹, we respectfully request the New Zealand Government to substantially increase the refugee quota.

Over and above that prospective increased quota, we request the Government to provide alternative pathways for refugees and asylum seekers to become legal residents of New Zealand, including community based private sponsorship, a sponsorship loan scheme, extended family reunification schemes, academic scholarships and labour mobility schemes.

We ask that particular consideration be given to developing policy and action for climate change refugees in the Pacific, as requested by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees², as neighbouring islands are threatened by rising sea levels and a substantial increase of extreme weather events.

We further ask that a focus on orphaned children, as some of the most vulnerable refugees, be incorporated into the refugee quota and alternative intake processes. We recommend these children arrive along with families of the same culture as occurred successfully with the Polish refugee children after World War II.

We recognise that improvements of the magnitude suggested will require increased funding from Government if the refugees and asylum seekers are to become independent and contributing members of the New Zealand community. We believe most New Zealanders will consider this a responsible use of the public purse, and we are prepared to contribute as a Church as well.

While the Anglican Church will continue its current involvement assisting with the resettlement of refugees and asylum seekers alongside other New Zealand national and community based organisations, it is offering to lift its commitment nationally and contribute more of its resources to the much larger intake it is requesting in this submission.

¹ UNHCR Global Appeal 2012-2013 - Populations of concern to UNHCR to UNHCR Global Appeal 2015-2016 - Populations of concern to UNHCR <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c11.html> and Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees address to the Third Committee of the General Assembly, 70th Session (New York, November 3, 2015) <http://www.unhcr.org/563a17566.html>

² Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees address to the Third Committee of the General Assembly, 70th Session (New York, November 3, 2015) <http://www.unhcr.org/563a17566.html>

Church as Stakeholder

HISTORY

The Anglican Church, along with most mainstream Churches in New Zealand, has a long history of commitment to refugee and asylum seekers resettlement in New Zealand.

*From the beginning of refugee resettlement until 1989 the churches played a leading role in resettlement support.*³

The Inter-Church Commission on Immigration and Refugee Resettlement agency (ICCI) was the first New Zealand NGO to provide support services for refugees and asylum seekers. It was established in 1976, morphing out of its earlier Resettlement Office, by the National Council of Churches and the Catholic Immigration Committee. ICCI's role, as cited by the Department of Labour, was to:

*Handle all matters relating to the admission of refugees into New Zealand and their settlement in this country.*⁴

This was the first time funding was provided for such services. It provided emergency accommodation hostels and case-preparation services for many hundreds of asylum seekers.⁵ In 1989 it then became the Refugee and Migrant Service (RMS) with the responsibility of resettling quota refugees.

Over this period parishes and congregations became adept at welcoming refugees and asylum seekers into local communities throughout the country and this tradition has never ceased. It has been involved providing household equipment, friendship and connections into the community, and frequently support through difficulties and transitions in New Zealand life.

After Prime Minister John Key confirmed to the news media in early September last year that he was about to announce a proposal to accept 100s of Syrian refugees above the quota, Archbishop Philip Richardson and Cardinal John Dew immediately announced that within their parishes there was “overwhelming” support. They followed that up with a commitment to look after 300 families involving 1,200 people.⁶ Two days later when announcing the numbers of the increased intake, the PM noted that the church community had put their hands up to help.⁷

Prior to this, the Cardinal and two Anglican Archbishops had written to the PM urging him to facilitate an “immediate and urgent” increase in refugees. They stated:

*These are global crises which require a global response. Our country needs to play its part and to respond with the compassion and the hospitality for which we are renowned.*⁸

They went on to say:

*We know that Catholic and Anglican Christians throughout the country will step up to provide support and assistance to those our country offers refuge to. We have done so in the past, we continue to support newcomers and we commit ourselves and our resources into the future to this task.*⁹

VALUES

The Churches' commitment to refugees and asylum seekers springs from its core values. At the heart of the Gospel stories, Jesus urged his followers to serve others. When articulating the essence

³ Mortensen, A. (2008) *Refugees as 'Others'*, Doctoral thesis Massey University p.35

<http://mro.massey.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10179/631/02whole.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁴ Department of Labour Immigration Service (1994) *Refugee Women: The New Zealand refugee quota programme*, Wellington: Department of Labour Immigration Service p.29

⁵ Refugee Services (2012) *Submission on the Immigration Amendment Bill 2012 to the Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee June 2012*, Refugee Services Aotearoa New Zealand Inc.

<http://www.parliament.nz/resource/0000195246>

⁶ <http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/283474/we-can-take-1,000-refugees,-say-nz-churches>

⁷ http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11509208

⁸ <http://anglicantaonga.org.nz/News/Common-Life/Church-leaders-plead-for-refugees>

⁹ Ibid

of faith, he spoke of the twofold commitment to love God and to “love your neighbour as yourself”.¹⁰ The notion of neighbour has always referred to all people, those close by and those far away. While it is impossible to always live up to this high ideal, it is nevertheless that which serious Christians strive for. This ethic is at the heart of the Churches’ motivation to care for those in the most vulnerable circumstances and to share what we have with them.

The story of Jesus’ birth in Matthew’s Gospel records the holy family being forced into exile as refugees soon after he was born. Herod the Great had heard rumours of a child born to be king and he did not want any threats to his lineage. The story says he arranged for all the children who were two years old or younger, close to Bethlehem, to be killed. Joseph and Mary escaped to Egypt to save their child Jesus’ life and stayed there until Herod’s death in 4 BC.¹¹ The story of the refugee experience of the holy family creates understanding and sympathy among Christians for refugees today.

The Gospel stories and the stories of all the great saints are always about service, compassion and the relief of suffering. The Church leaders’ response to the global refugee crisis, noted above, was to call our country to show compassion and hospitality, by giving support and assistance to the refugees whose lives have been tragically harmed by war and persecution. This is not to suggest other faiths and people with a secular disposition don’t show the same compassion, but simply to note that it is a central part of the Christian ethic and people in the Churches are taught to care for those who suffer. Many of them, along with other New Zealanders, are ready and prepared to accept a larger intake of refugees and asylum seekers, and support them.

The Unprecedented Size of the Global Crisis

At the Third Committee of the General Assembly, 70th Session in New York 3 November 2015, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres stated:

*60 million people worldwide are forcibly displaced as a result of war and persecution. With fifteen new or reignited conflicts in the past five years alone, the number of people forced from their homes by conflict every single day has nearly quadrupled – from under 11,000 in 2010 to 42,500 last year. The corresponding increase in humanitarian needs has overwhelmed the global response capacity. We need to face the truth: the international multilateral humanitarian community – UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, and NGOs – even when combining all its resources, is no longer able to provide the core protection and the basic life-saving assistance which the people we care for need and are entitled to receive.*¹²

This figure includes classified refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and people under UNHCR’s statelessness mandate. It has increased by 76 percent in the last five years from 34 million people to 60 million people¹³. The High Commissioner noted that the list of simultaneous large-scale humanitarian crises is longer than it has been in his entire time as High Commissioner (since 2005).

The size of the crisis is easier to appreciate if we look at the impact of the refugee and migrant movements into Europe, because there has been so much focus from the western media on that crisis. We can then view those figures in relation to the movement of Syrian refugees into the neighbouring Middle Eastern countries they are fleeing to and add those who are internally displaced, all of which has only been fleetingly reported.

- 1,000,573 refugees and migrants arrived in Europe through irregular means in 2015¹⁴.
- Of these 3,735 were believed drowned¹⁵

¹⁰ Luke 10:27

¹¹ Matthew 2:13-23

¹² Op. cit. <http://www.unhcr.org/563a17566.html>

¹³ UNHCR Op.cit in Summary

¹⁴ UNHCR <http://www.unhcr.org/5683d0b56.html>

¹⁵ Ibid

- Over 80 percent arrived by sea in Greece¹⁶
- This was a fourfold increase on 2014 figures¹⁷
- The numbers were largely driven by Syrians fleeing civil war (48 percent), but also Afghans (20 percent), Iraqis (9 percent) and Eritreans (4 percent) fleeing conflict and repression¹⁸
- Between 1 January and 9 February 2016, 76,263 new arrivals have been recorded¹⁹
- In that same period 409 are considered dead or missing²⁰

This is a terrible current story of fear, horror and carnage. But now consider the movement of Syrian refugees alone into neighbouring Middle Eastern countries and those who are displaced. The situation is far worse. The UNHCR count²¹ is as follows:

- There were 2,503,549 registered Syrian refugees in Turkey 31/12/15
- There were 1,069,111 registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon 31/12/15
- There were 635,324 registered Syrian refugees in Jordan 31/12/15
- There were 245,022 registered Syrian refugees in Iraq 31/12/15
- There were 117,658 registered Syrian refugees in Egypt 31/12/15
- The total registered refugees for the region including North Africa was 4,598,691
- As of July 2015 the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)²² said there were 7.6 million displaced people within Syria

Amnesty International²³ reports that 1 in 10 persons in Jordan and 1 in 5 in Lebanon is a refugee. Over 80 percent of refugees in Jordan live below the local poverty line and Lebanese refugees receive \$13.50 (USD) a month for food assistance, less than 50c a day.

The collection of data in this section provides a solid base of evidence for the unprecedented size of the global crisis for refugees and asylum seekers. The UN is calling on nation states to substantially increase their acceptance of refugees and to pledge more in aid.

New Zealand a Laggard Country

New Zealand, because of its Southern Hemisphere position and distance from other countries, is not beset with the large numbers of refugees so many other countries have with close borders and sea links. As such it has been able to become a minimal contributor to refugee and asylum seeker intake. The annual refugee quota of 750 has been unchanged for nearly 20 years since 1997 when it was reduced from 800 (1987-1996).²⁴ An impartial assessment of these figures, in the light of responses from most other like countries, is embarrassing for New Zealanders when they become aware of them.

Sometimes the New Zealand Government²⁵ argues that we are among the highest group who take in UNHCR refugees per head of population, but this is misleading. In most countries a large proportion of the migrants seeking residence are asylum seekers. These people are not part of a planned quota system, they just arrive at borders as the data above indicates. New Zealand takes in very few of this

¹⁶ International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Mixed migration flows in the Mediterranean and beyond <http://doe.iom.int/docs/WEEKLY%20Flows%20Compilation%20No4%204%20Feb%202016.pdf>

¹⁷ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/22/one-million-migrants-and-refugees-have-reached-europe-this-year-iom>

¹⁸ Op.cit. IOM <http://doe.iom.int/docs/WEEKLY%20Flows%20Compilation%20No4%204%20Feb%202016.pdf>

¹⁹ International Organisation for Migration Missing Migrants Project http://missingmigrants.iom.int/sites/default/files/Mediterranean_Update_09_February_2016_1.pdf

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ UNHCR Syria Regional Refugee Response <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

²² IDMC Syria IDP Figure Analysis <http://www.internal-displacement.org/middle-east-and-north-africa/syria/figures-analysis>

²³ Amnesty International, Syria's Refugee Crisis in Numbers <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/09/syrias-refugee-crisis-in-numbers/>

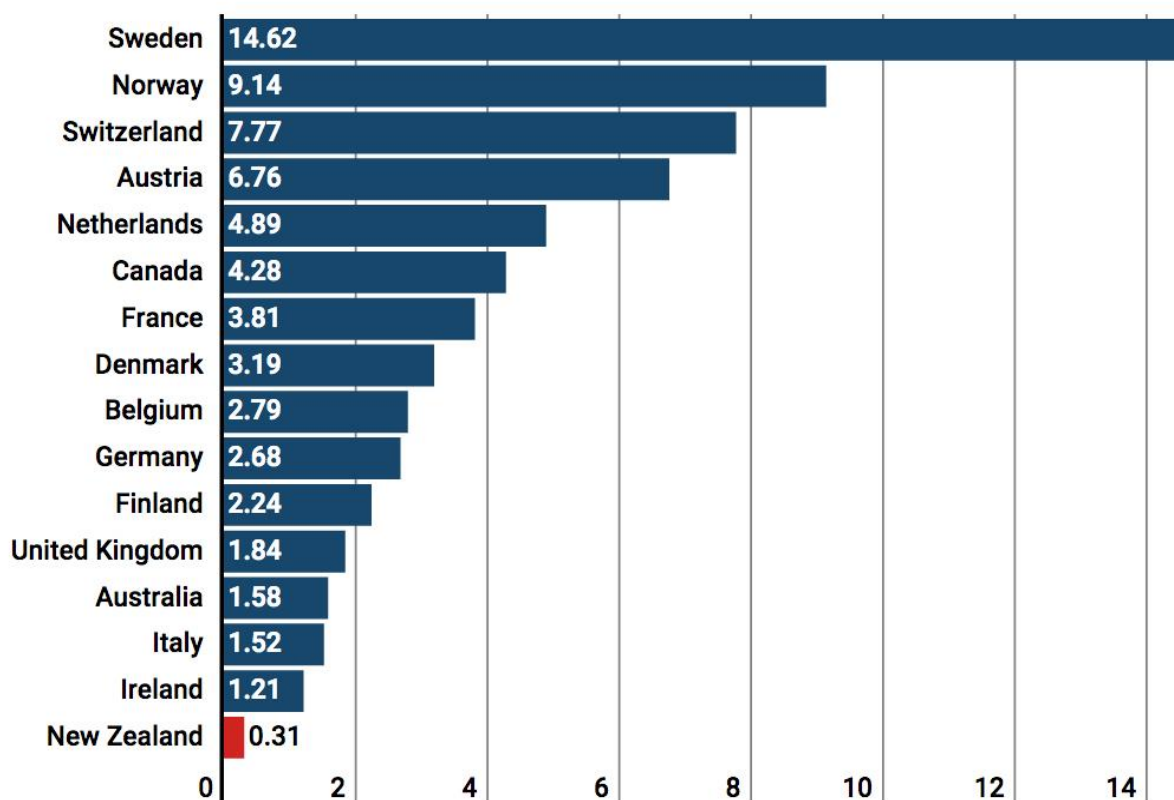
²⁴ The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, Story: Refugees p.5 <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/refugees/page-5>

²⁵ Hon Michael Woodhouse 28/3/14 <http://www.stuff.co.nz/nelson-mail/news/9879173/Refugee-quota-defended>

type of asylum seeker, nor others of concern to UNHCR. For example, in the last ten years, the annual intake figure reached 100 (2014/15) or more (119 in 2011/12) only twice. Within the last five years, annual totals have been as low as 39 (2010/11) and 69 (2013/14).²⁶ We can add to this the successful appeals to the Immigration and Protection Tribunal. In the 2014/15 year 100 asylum seekers were accepted and 81 refugee and protection appeals were allowed.²⁷ Although this was one of the highest intakes in the last decade, the numbers are very low by international standards.

The figure below demonstrates New Zealand's actual laggard status per 1000 people as at 2014.²⁸

Refugees per 1000 people (2014)



Source: UNHCR/CIA World Factbook

The data, which includes asylum seekers, quota refugees as well as others of concern to the UNHCR, demonstrates that New Zealand's refugee intake per head of population in 2014 was five times less than Australia, nearly six times less than the UK, 13 times less than Canada and 47 times less than Sweden.

The following figure shows a 23-year span of New Zealand refugee and asylum seeker intake using Immigration New Zealand data.²⁹ While the quota intake was roughly homogeneous (though in some years even that target is not reached despite the ten percent leeway), the asylum seeker intake

²⁶ New Zealand Immigration, The Refugee Protection Unit, Refugee Status Branch (RSB) Statistics, The last ten years (from 2005). <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/NR/ronlyres/00CBC69E-AB63-4C2A-876C-6A1BE7AFA2E8/0/RSBRefugeeandProtectionStatPak.pdf>

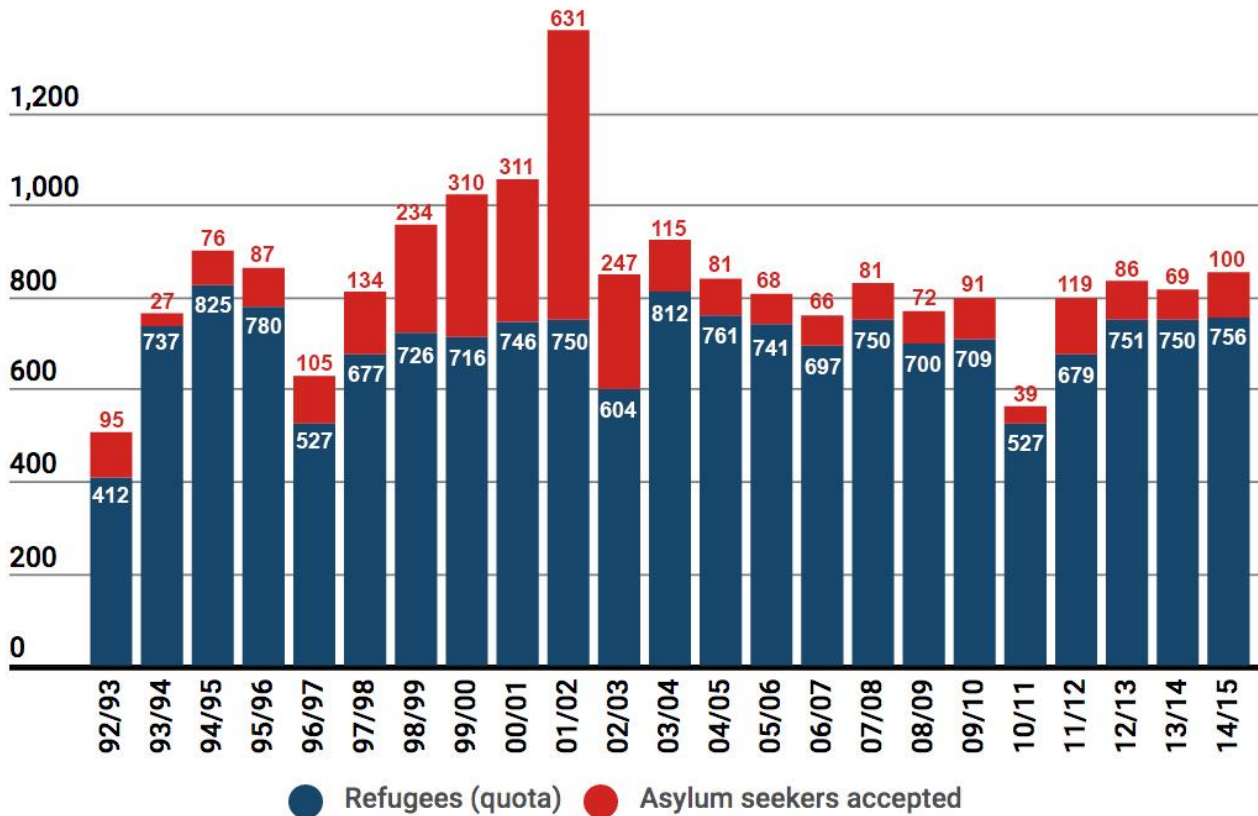
²⁷ Immigration and Protection Tribunal Annual Report 2014/15 <http://www.justice.govt.nz/tribunals/immigration-protection-tribunal/annual-reports/annual-report-2015>

²⁸ The figure appeared in an article by Andy Fyers in the DomPost 9/9/15 <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/71899378/How-New-Zealands-refugee-quota-stacks-up-internationally> The figures have been verified by the author of this submission by cross referencing with World Bank data, Refugee population by country or territory of asylum <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SM.POP.REFG>

²⁹ New Zealand Immigration, The Refugee Protection Unit, Refugee Status Branch (RSB) Statistics.

reduced substantially in the last decade. This has happened at the same time as the movement of asylum seekers across borders has been increasing dramatically globally as noted earlier in this submission. Our isolated geographic position has protected us from much of this.

New Zealand's refugee intake



Source: Immigration NZ

Various defences are used to support New Zealand's current laggard status. Sometimes it is suggested that our contribution is adequate given the size of our GDP or our land area, but the evidence does not support these arguments any more than the per capita argument did. The following table comparing countries with similar populations demonstrates this.

Country	GDP (per capita)	Population (million)	Land Area (km ²)	Refugees hosted
Norway	100,819	5.084	385,178	46,106
Denmark	58,930	5.614	42,915.7	13,170
Finland	47,219	5.439	338,424	11,252
Ireland	47,400	4.595	84,421	6,001
New Zealand	40,842	4.471	268,021	1,403

Ireland with less than a third the land area and a slightly higher GDP per capita takes in more than four times the number of refugees New Zealand takes. Finland with more land (albeit frozen for large periods of each year) and a slightly higher GDP per capita receives eight times more refugees than New Zealand.

The further category of entry, called Refugee Family Support, has a ceiling of 300 people per annum. During the calendar years 2012 to 2014 they averaged just over the threshold of 300 people (310), being 215, 401 and 315 respectively over the three years.³⁰

Finally in this section, it should be noted that New Zealand has committed to receiving 600 Syrian refugees over and above the quota during the next two and a half years. This is an encouraging break with the tradition of previous Labour and National governments. However, it needs to be seen in context. Australia, for example, who accept five times the number of refugees per capita that we do, have agreed to take an extra 12,000 above their quota over the course of the 2015-16 year³¹. Australia is much more in step with the generous response other countries are making to the call of the UN.

Increasing the Refugee Quota

It follows from the above that there is a strong case to increase the refugee quota for New Zealand. It hasn't changed from 750 in nearly 20 years and that was decreased from 800 for the decade before that. It is clearly out-of-sync with other like countries and it is as though our Government is unconscious of the extent of the global refugee crisis that has emerged, particularly during the last five years.

Amnesty International New Zealand, using refugees under the UNHCR mandate, state:

*When compared with the rest of the world, New Zealand ranks 90th per capita in resettlement. If you take our wealth into account, we drop to an embarrassing 116th in the world. That's a record none of us can be proud of.*³²

A more conservative approach can be taken using just the recognised or resettled refugees. On that score, New Zealand's overall ranking is 51st ³³ being 43rd per capita in resettlement and 58th per size of GDP.

We have already noted Australia's contribution to refugee resettlement and their extra response for the 2015-16 year. They have also agreed to lift their current annual refugee quota from 13,750 to 18,750 people in 2018-19³⁴. There appears to be cross-Party agreement about lifting their quota because the Australian Labor Party is promising to double it to 27,000 by 2025.³⁵ It offers a lead from a close neighbour that New Zealand could follow.

The New Zealand Red Cross have outlined a number of advantages an increased intake would make for better resettlement. They consider refugees could integrate more easily into New Zealand communities if there were more of them.

Many of the communities we support in resettlement also face challenges maintaining cultural practices and norms due to small community numbers. A larger refugee quota would enable

³⁰ New Zealand Immigration, The Refugee Protection Unit, Refugee Status Branch (RSB) Statistics, The last ten years (from 2005). Op.cit.

³¹ Hon Julie Bishop, The Syrian and Iraqi humanitarian crisis
http://foreignminister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2015/jb_mr_150909a.aspx

³² Amnesty International, Facts about Refugee Resettlement in New Zealand
https://www.amnesty.org.nz/sites/default/files/family_reunification_fact_sheet.pdf

³³ Refugee Council of Australia. How generous is Australia's response to refugees? (Global rankings are provided)
<http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/latest/how-generous-is-australias-response-to-refugees/>

³⁴ Hon Julie Bishop Op.cit.

³⁵ Business Insider Australia. Australia's Labor Party wants to double refugee intake by 2025
<http://www.businessinsider.com.au/australias-labor-party-wants-to-double-refugee-intake-by-2025-2015-7>

*sustainable growth of refugee background communities that are resilient, participative and self-sufficient.*³⁶

It is well known among those who have spent a lot of time with refugees that many relocate in Australia where there are greater numbers of people with a similar culture and practices. It enables them to use their language more frequently, create a market for the food and clothing products they are used to and provides a broader base of people to share the struggles and joys of a new country with. It can also provide the confidence for them to be more innovative and make a greater contribution to the host country.

Related to that, are the improved outcomes that can be expected from economies of scale. It is much easier and more effective to provide English classes or mental health services, for example, if there is sufficient demand. Outside the main centres in New Zealand, these services often struggle or are carried out in an ad hoc manner. A larger number of refugees in cities and towns would generate a more consistent level of demand and create jobs and services.

In requesting an increase of the refugee quota, we are not putting forward a particular number. We are very sympathetic with the calls to double the quota³⁷ but in this submission we are also suggesting alternative ways of accepting refugees into the country. While these should, in our opinion, be over and above the quota, the balance can be worked out better once it becomes clear what the government is prepared to implement. It is suffice to say that we recommend a substantial increase in the refugee quota and beyond that a range of innovative alternative processes for accepting refugees which this submission will go on to outline.

Alternative Pathways for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Last year UNHCR, when addressing the incoming Presidencies for the Council of the European Union, encouraged:

*Member States to use other legal avenues to allow people in need of protection to reach Europe, including humanitarian visas, work and study visas, community-based private sponsorship, and family reunification as indicated in the European Agenda on Migration. Another important point mentioned by UNHCR is to ensure that the measures on legal migration will allow refugees to access labour mobility schemes.*³⁸

In resetting policy for the Refugee Quota Programme three-year cycle 2016 to 2019, we respectfully ask the Government to consider a range of innovative alternative legal avenues refugees could be accepted into New Zealand over and above an increase in the quota along the lines put forward by UNHCR referred to immediately above.

GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN FOCUS

Since 2009 the refugee intake policy has been primarily focused on the Asia Pacific region. Prior to that there was an ad hoc process that included Africa and the Middle East with roughly similar numbers to the Asia Pacific intake.³⁹ In 2014/15, for example, refugees from the Asia Pacific region made up 61 percent of the quota intake.⁴⁰ Whereas Middle Eastern refugees made up 21 percent and Africans a mere 6 percent. The remaining 12 percent were from the Americas.

³⁶ NZ Red Cross, Refugee resettlement: New Zealand can do more <https://www.redcross.org.nz/yk-files/b13608fb944549b64ee089c954780c05/Refugee%20Resettlement%20-%20NZ%20can%20do%20more.pdf>

³⁷ Murdoch Stephens <http://www.doingourbit.co.nz/p/my-story.html>

³⁸ European Council of Refugees, UNHCR advocates to incoming Presidencies: Save lives implementing the European Migration Agenda 10/7/15 <http://ecre.org/component/content/article/70-weekly-bulletin-articles/1130-unhcr-advocates-to-incoming-presidencies-save-lives-by-implementing-the-european-migration-agenda-.html>

³⁹ Stephens, M. (2014) *Pacific Insoluble: Contemporary issues in New Zealand's refugee quota policy* New Zealand Sociology, 29 (2) pp55-77

⁴⁰ New Zealand Immigration, The Refugee Protection Unit, Refugee Status Branch (RSB) Statistics <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/NR/rdonlyres/6D69584E-60E0-4D16-93D8-F6C00BC384F1/0/RQBArrivalsStatPak.pdf>

However, by far the largest refugee populations UNHCR is dealing with come overwhelmingly from the Middle East and Africa⁴¹ and their stories are well known to New Zealanders because they are constantly given media focus. Furthermore, African and Middle Eastern refugees are only eligible if they have a family in New Zealand.⁴² It raises serious questions as to whether the priorities of UNHCR are reflected in the New Zealand refugee intake policy. The Red Cross have noticed the regional skew in the figures and stated:

*The composition of the refugee quota should be determined according to humanitarian and protection needs, and reflect UNHCR priority populations.*⁴³

The international pressure of the Syrian refugee crisis moved our Government to add, on average, 200 a year Middle Eastern refugees over the next three years, but even that still leaves the scales skewed, particularly against Africa.

We recommend that the refugee intake policy focus on humanitarian need. i.e. those least likely to survive protracted displacements and are most at risk, as outlined by UNHCR and that regional targets be removed. This does not mean that there needs to be an equal weighting of risk for different regions, but simply that humanitarian need becomes the defining factor for acceptance.

COMMUNITY BASED PRIVATE SPONSORSHIP

Private sponsorship schemes are recommended by UNHCR as noted earlier, and are beginning to be implemented in a number of countries. The sponsors are typically faith based organisations, NGOs or groups of citizens who join for the purpose. Such schemes can be used for family reunification, especially for extended family members who don't qualify under formal family reunification categories. Sponsoring groups can also be matched with a refugee or refugee family by Immigration services.

The most established scheme is run in Canada, the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) program, and has been operating since 1979. It has brought more than 275,000 refugees into Canada since its inception.⁴⁴ Australia began a scheme in 2013, the Community Support Programme (CSP),⁴⁵ which last year became established as part of its humanitarian intake. Germany, Switzerland and Ireland have initiated private sponsorship schemes since the Syrian refugee crisis and the UK government announced plans last year to develop a programme.⁴⁶

There are a number of advantages these schemes can have. They offer a 'hands on' way for members of the public to engage directly in resettlement. In Canada, for example, a group of five citizens may group together to sponsor a family. They become involved in providing for the family and resourcing their first year in the country. This sort of involvement can aid integration for the refugee family because the sponsor has a higher stake in their wellbeing and success in the adoptive country.

Governments have become interested because of the cost saving element to them, given the pressure to take more refugees. However, the cost element to sponsors needs to be carefully thought through. The Australian CSP has come under criticism because sponsors are expected to pay A\$20,000 to A\$30,000 for the two-stage visa fee as well as providing support for the family for 12 months.⁴⁷ The Canadian programme estimates costs to be around C\$12,600 for an individual

⁴¹ UNHCR Global Appeal 2012-2013 - Populations of concern to UNHCR to UNHCR Global Appeal 2015-2016 - Populations of concern to UNHCR <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c11.html>

⁴² Department of Labour (2010) Cabinet Paper: The Refugee Quota 2010/11 to 2012/13: Managing pressures in the Asia Pacific region, 26 April. See Stephens, M Op.cit. p.62

⁴³ NZ Red Cross Op.cit.

⁴⁴ Canadian Council for Refugees <http://ccrweb.ca/en/private-sponsorship-refugees>

⁴⁵ Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Border Protection *Community Support Programme Discussion Paper – June 2015* <http://www.border.gov.au/ReportsandPublications/Documents/discussion-papers/cps-consultation.pdf>

⁴⁶ Kumin, J. (2015) *Welcoming Engagement: How private sponsorship can strengthen refugee resettlement in the European Union*, Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe

⁴⁷ Immigration Advice and Rights Centre, Details of private/community sponsorship of refugees pilot program announced [http://www.iarc.asn.au/blog/Immigration News/post/Details of privatecommunity sponsorship of refugees pilot program announced/](http://www.iarc.asn.au/blog/Immigration%20News/post/Details%20of%20privatecommunity%20sponsorship%20of%20refugees%20pilot%20program%20announced/)

refugee and C\$27,000 for a family.⁴⁸ Higher North American incomes may enable the costs to be carried more easily than in Australia or New Zealand.

The other criticism within Australia is that the CSP refugees are counted as part of the quota the Government commits to.⁴⁹ As a result the Government has been accused of cost-cutting and loading the responsibility on to community groups.

For the advantages of a community based private sponsorship scheme to be realised in New Zealand, a well-designed plan needs to be devised that will be affordable and encourage faith-based, NGOs and other civil society groups to take part, while at the same time take pressure off government and reduce some of the costs. There are costs getting to New Zealand and there are a lot more when they arrive.

A scheme could be devised by government and key stakeholders that balanced government and community contributions. The sponsored refugees would need to qualify for certain social entitlements, particularly health and education and probably standard housing subsidies. The sponsoring group would probably need to cover food costs, rent beyond the subsidy, furnishings and other living costs. They would also help with job searches, enrolling children in schools, etc. A time period would need to be set for when the refugee or family qualifies for the entitlements of other New Zealand permanent residents and citizens.

We recommend an interest free loans scheme be devised which could help with costs and be paid back over two or three years by both sponsors and refugees. The sponsors could stand as guarantors. As with the other arrangements, it will be important that government agencies work with community stakeholders to develop a workable scheme.

We recommend devising a community based private sponsorship scheme, an interest free loans scheme and we strongly recommend that such a scheme be over and above the refugee quota.

EXTENDING THE REFUGEE FAMILY SUPPORT CATEGORY

The Refugee Family Support Category is currently limited to 300 people per annum. To qualify as a sponsor, the person is essentially required to be single, a sole carer or a dependent child and have no other immediate family in New Zealand.⁵⁰ The category is over and above the refugee quota, but travel, settlement, housing and living costs are incurred by the sponsor.

Family reunification enables a refugee to invite a key relative with their partner and dependent children if they have them. It is a less costly process of bringing in other refugees for the government and can be expected to lift the quality of life of the sponsoring refugee. The sponsored group usually becomes quickly included in New Zealand communities because their loved one is already over here and gives them a head start.

This category could also be extended to reunify families from war zones who do not meet the current UNHCR requirements of a refugee. There are refugees in New Zealand who are deeply concerned about their family's safety in Syria or Iraq, for example, but they don't currently qualify for the Family Support Category.

There are considerable similarities between the sort of arrangements we recommend above for a community based private sponsorship scheme when it is used for family reunification. Aspects of both could be merged so that a broader range of extended family members could be invited to New Zealand in a manner that better reflects a range of cultural understanding of how families are defined. If that suggestion is followed up, it will still be important to have a separate community based private sponsorship scheme for those who wish to sponsor non-family members.

We recommend the Refugee Family Support Category be extended considerably, as also recommended by New Zealand Red Cross.⁵¹ We also suggest that this category be considered in

⁴⁸ Government of Canada, Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Application Guide (IMM 5413)

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/guides/5413ETOC.asp#appa>

⁴⁹ Immigration Advice and Rights Centre Op.cit

⁵⁰ Immigration New Zealand, Refugee Family Support Category sponsorship requirements

<http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/live/refugeefamilysupport/sponsorshiprequirements/default.htm>

⁵¹ NZ Red Cross Op.cit.

the light of its similarities with a community based sponsoring scheme when it is focused on family reunification, to add greater flexibility and cultural understanding.

UNACCOMPANIED OR SEPARATED CHILDREN

Refugee children who have lost their parents through war or persecution are some of the most vulnerable souls on earth. Many other children are separated from their parents not knowing whether they are alive or not. UNHCR recorded that among Syrian refugees in September 2013, there were 2,440 unaccompanied or separated children in Lebanon and 1,320 in Jordan.⁵² The High Commissioner for refugees noted late last year that the number of asylum applications lodged by unaccompanied children was “rising to levels unseen before”.⁵³

A number of these children find relatives in the Camps or on the roads and join them, often becoming part of their family. Other children simply join other families. Extended families of this type could be prioritized and the children accepted as part of the one family. There may also be situations, as with the Polish orphaned children who arrived in 1944 as a group with a mix of mothers and unaccompanied children. These families or groups of people won't fit tidily into the standard nuclear family structure for assessment.

Given the acute vulnerability of such children, we ask that families who incorporate unaccompanied children be accorded a priority category visa, and flexibility be given to the definition of family adequate to include the unaccompanied child or children within the overall family unit.

We are not suggesting children be uprooted on their own, nor are we unaware that children separated from parents during war are sometimes able to relink later on. UNHCR has clear protocols for these situations. We are referring to circumstances where children have lost parents through war or persecution and are attached to an extended family of one sort or another. Further, we are only recommending this after a thorough assessment shows they and their new family would benefit from the stability and opportunities New Zealand can supply.

CLIMATE CHANGE REFUGEES

There is now a greater awareness of the serious impacts of climate change on many of our Pacific neighbours as they are threatened by rising sea levels and a substantial increase of extreme weather events. Low lying countries like Tuvalu, Kiribati and Tokelau are vulnerable to rising sea levels, and devastating cyclones and hurricanes have become much more frequent.

It is our view that New Zealand should be preparing for climate change refugees. The High Commissioner for Refugees has requested countries address this matter urgently because there is currently no provision in international law for people displaced by climate events:

The Nansen Initiative,⁵⁴ a ground-breaking state-led consultative process spearheaded by Norway and Switzerland, has recently resulted in the adoption of a Protection Agenda to address the needs of people displaced across borders by the effects of climate change – something for which there is no provision in existing international norms. I encourage States to lend their full support to the implementation of this Agenda approved by more than 100 countries – and UNHCR of course stands ready to contribute to that process.⁵⁵

Given the Nansen Initiative and the impact of Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) negotiating bloc at the COP 21 conference in Paris, there is now a greater awareness and urgency to address these matters. The coalition of small island and low-lying coastal countries shared similar development challenges and concerns about the environment, especially their vulnerability to the adverse effects of global climate change.⁵⁶

⁵² UNHCR Fractured Families <http://unhcr.org/FutureOfSyria/fractured-families.html>

⁵³ Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees address to the Third Committee of the General Assembly Op.cit.

⁵⁴ The Nansen Initiative. Towards a Protection Agenda for People Displaced across Borders in the Context of Disasters and the Effects of Climate Change <https://www.nanseninitiative.org/secretariat/>

⁵⁵ Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees address to the Third Committee of the General Assembly Op.cit.

⁵⁶ Wilson Center. Small Island States and the Paris Agreement <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/small-island-states-and-the-paris-agreement>

While 2016 may be early from the perspective of quota, it is likely to be a much larger issue by 2019.

We recommend the Government address the matter of climate change refugees and prepare policies to adequately address it for the next Refugee Quota Programme Three Year Cycle.

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS AND LABOUR MOBILITY SCHEMES

Refugees have their lives put on hold through no fault of their own. Among them are university students who are part way through their studies. Some of these will be high achieving students. The German Government funds a refugee academic scholarship programme called DAFI which it gives to UNHCR to administer. DAFI refers to Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative. It began in 1992 and it has enabled over 2,240 refugee students annually to study at universities and colleges in 41 countries of asylum in 2014.⁵⁷

An innovative way to attract high achieving academic young refugees into New Zealand would be to develop scholarship visas. Whereas the German scheme generously funds students to study in different countries, New Zealand could offer our own universities and provide scholarships that cover fees and living costs. Students who benefit from it may stay and contribute to the country, but even if they leave there can still be gains, not the least for their own country if they can return. This sort of initiative prevents the tragic loss of critical talent and offers an easier path to manage life in a new country with other students.

Similarly, refugees often have specialized labour skills. A fast track labour mobility scheme could provide an alternative route to the usual one for refugees. Where we have labour shortages and there are refugees with the requisite skills, single people or families could be accepted earlier than they normally would be. They are much more likely to adapt to a New Zealand way of life if they can move directly into work and engage with work colleagues.

Opening a labour mobility path to legal status helps prevent dependency and enhances dignity. As people work and begin contributing to a country, their perceived status moves from refugee to migrant.⁵⁸ Refugees often take years to reach this status. Furthermore, the person in work can contribute to their own cultural refugee population by opening opportunities and linking others with labour market contacts.

These two initiatives, refugee academic scholarships and labour mobility schemes, both recommended by UNHCR, offer innovative alternative ways of responding to the refugee crisis that are separate from the refugee quota.

We recommend them both as providing solutions that generously respond to the awful situations refugees find themselves in and also benefit New Zealand.

Government Investment and the Church's Commitment

The purpose of this submission has been to demonstrate, with a solid base of evidence that New Zealand can and should respond much more generously to the unprecedented international refugee crisis, by granting many more visas through a diverse intake system. As a Church, we are not simply calling upon the Government to make all the contribution. We have publicly committed people and resources to work with Government and other agencies to help resettle refugees. This will require us all to invest more both financially and in-kind.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT

We recognise that improvements in quota and modes of entry of the magnitude suggested in this submission will require increased funding from Government. We believe most New Zealanders will consider this a responsible use of the public purse. It would have the beneficial policy outcome of an

⁵⁷ UNHCR DAFI Scholarships <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e4a2dd6.html>

⁵⁸ Long, K. (2015) *From Refugee to Migrant? Labor Mobility's Protection Potential*, Washington DC: Migrant Policy Institute

improved response to the global refugee crisis, and at the same time enable more refugees and asylum seekers become independent and contributing members of the New Zealand community.

The time is ripe immediately after the Supporting Syria and the Region London Pledging Conference held earlier this month 4 February 2016. The co-hosts, UK, Germany, Kuwait, Norway, and the United Nations set out to raise significant new funding to meet the immediate and longer-term needs of those affected.

The conference raised over US\$ 11 billion in pledges – \$5.8 billion for 2016 and a further \$5.4 billion for 2017-20 to enable partners to plan ahead.⁵⁹

This is aid money, but nevertheless it displays the responsibility like nations are taking around the Syrian crisis.

We recommend the New Zealand Government lift its total funding commitment to the quota, alternative modes of entry and resettlement programmes along the lines put forward in this submission.

ANGLICAN CHURCH COMMITMENT

As noted at the beginning of this submission. the Cardinal and two Anglican Archbishops wrote to the PM urging him to facilitate an “immediate and urgent” increase in refugees. They stated:

These are global crises which require a global response. Our country needs to play its part and to respond with the compassion and the hospitality for which we are renowned.

They went on to say:

We know that Catholic and Anglican Christians throughout the country will step up to provide support and assistance to those our country offers refuge to. We have done so in the past, we continue to support newcomers and we commit ourselves and our resources into the future to this task⁶⁰

In response, the PM noted that the church community had put their hands up to help.⁶¹

We are not requesting the Government to carry out this task alone. We have publically committed resources, both financial and in-kind. We wish to work together for New Zealand to develop a response to the global refugee crisis that we can all be proud of because it makes a difference, and is commensurate with our place in the world.

⁵⁹ Supporting Syria and the Region London 2016 <https://www.supportingsyria2016.com/>

⁶⁰ Op.cit.

⁶¹ Op.cit.