



**Albanese's immigration overhaul:**  
*No relief in sight despite  
'sustainable immigration' pledge*

Jane O'Sullivan

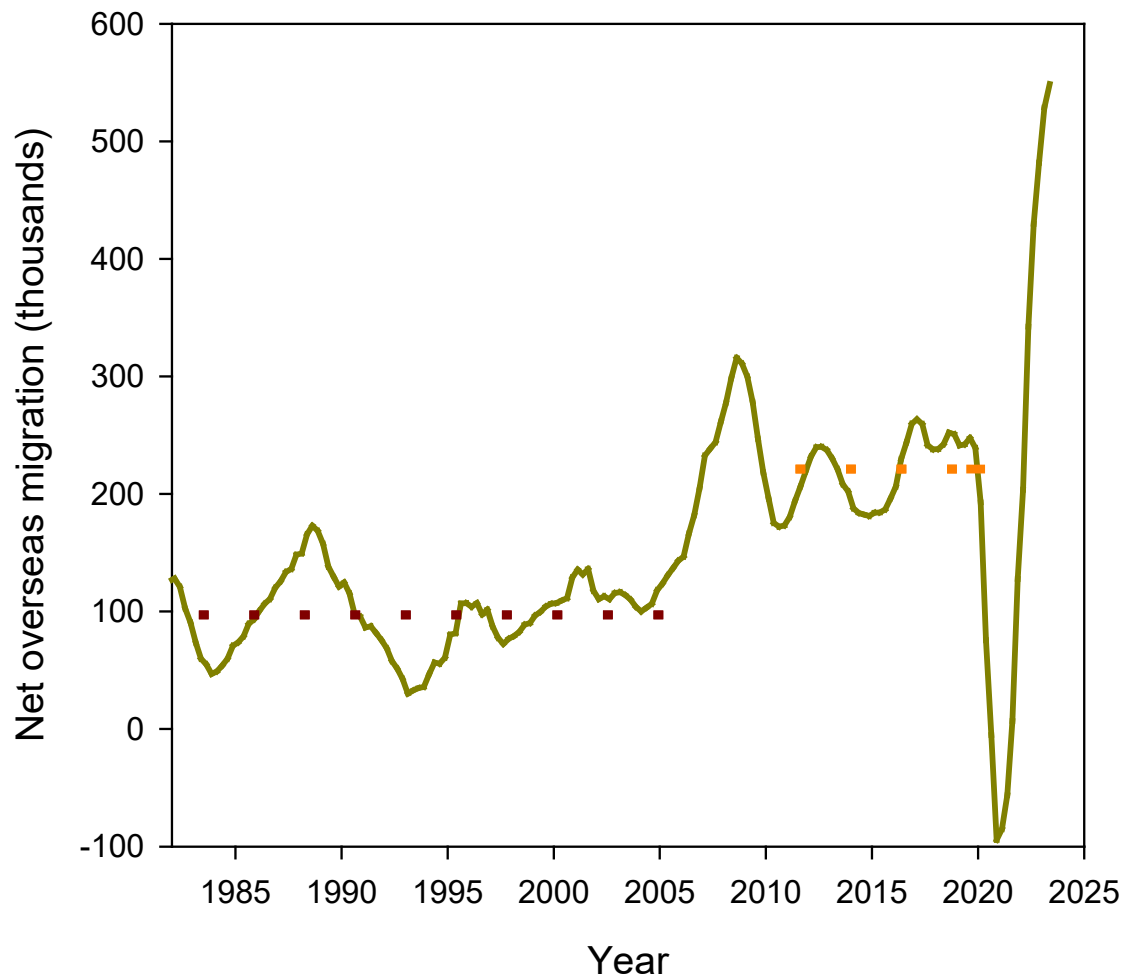
From housing crisis to eco-crisis: Is Australia's population growth sustainable?

Sustainable Population Australia forum: Adelaide, 20 April 2024

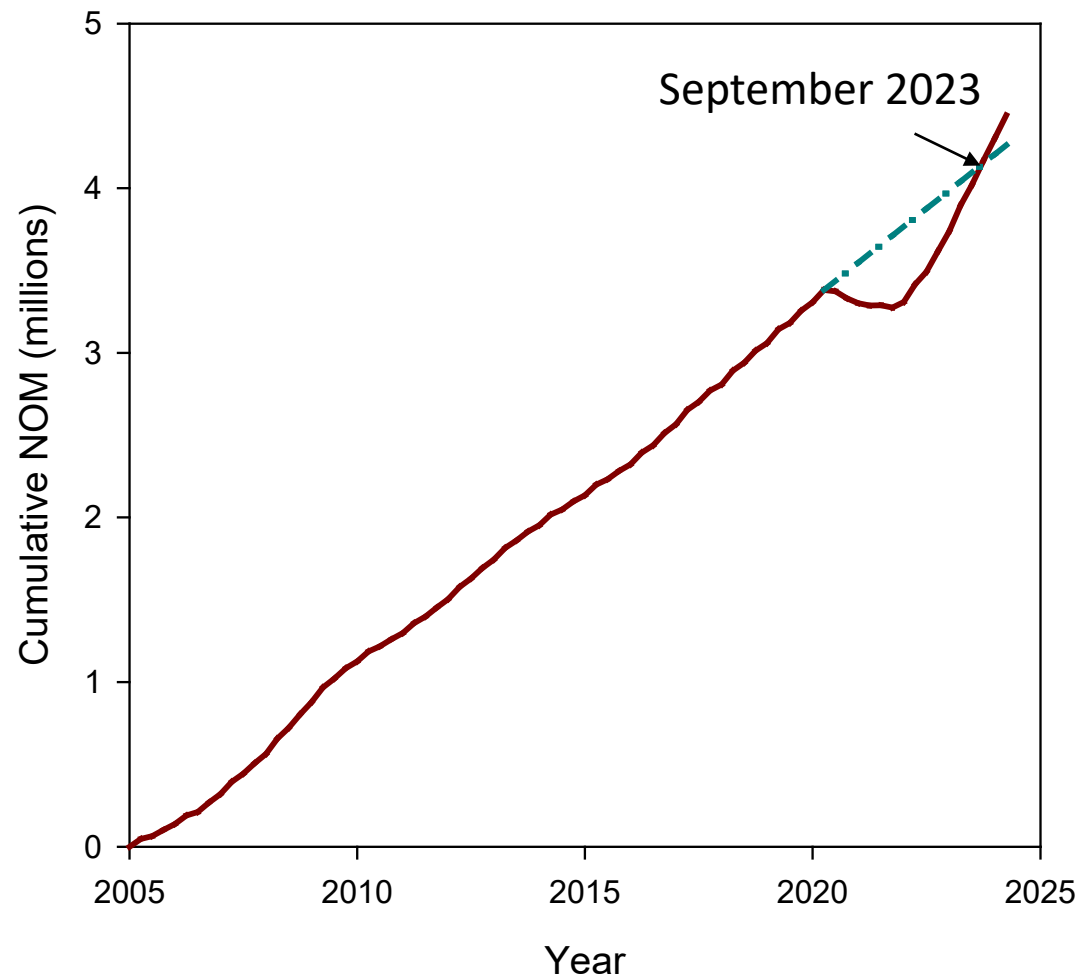


# Australia's immigration

Annual migration



Cumulative migration since 2005



2% Growth means  
doubling every  
35 years:

2024: 27 million

2059: 54 million

2094: 108 million

2129: 216 million

2164: 432 million

2199: 964 million







Racist!

Blame  
consumption, not  
population!

Don't  
blame the  
poor!

People-  
hater!

Hands off  
women's  
bodies!

*Shouldn't we stop  
population growth?*

Why don't  
you kill  
yourself first!

# It's not pro- or anti-migrant: it's a question of numbers

According to Gallup surveys,  
900 million people wanted to  
emigrate in 2021

36 million (4%) nominated Australia  
as their preferred destination

548,800 net migration to September 2023  
(highest annual intake ever)

235,000 Albanese govt target  
(similar to pre-Covid decade)

60,000 sustainable NOM





Iran's 'Comprehensive Population and Exaltation of Family Bill' 2015 restricts contraception access

Abortion access tightened to increase births in Poland and Turkey

"What if we grow old before growing rich?"

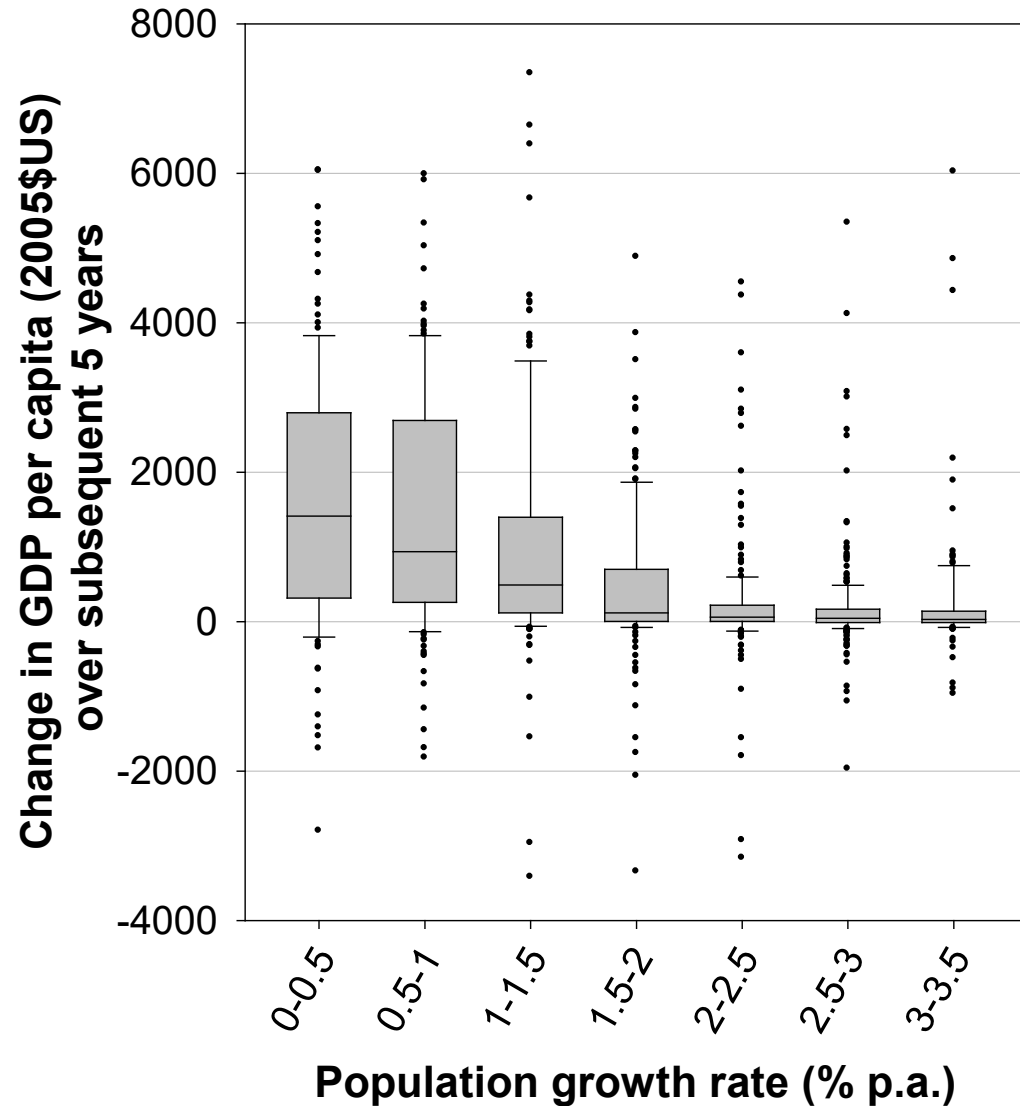
"Women are lazy if they won't raise a large family"

"Our economy depends on population growth!"

# The myth that we need more workers

- Our population is ageing, but that's not likely to reduce the proportion of workers.
  - Across the OECD countries, ageing hasn't reduced employment, it has reduced unemployment, underemployment and *exploitative* employment.
- Skills shortages are exaggerated.
  - Australian graduates struggle to find relevant employment. Employers want experience but aren't willing to provide it.
- High population growth generates skills shortages.
  - To build all the new infrastructure and housing, a growing population needs more workers than a stable population.

# Population growth is bad for the economy





# Australia

State of the Environment 2021



## Assessment Pressures from population

2021

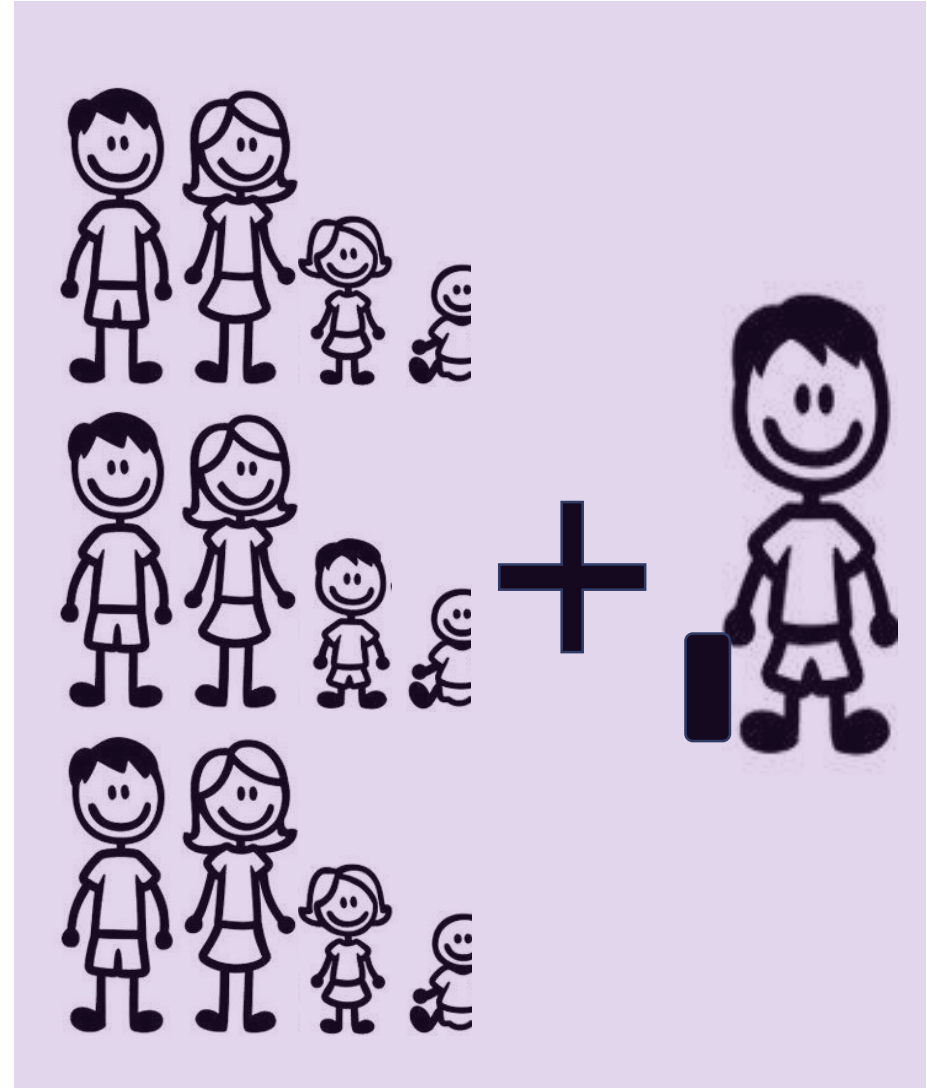
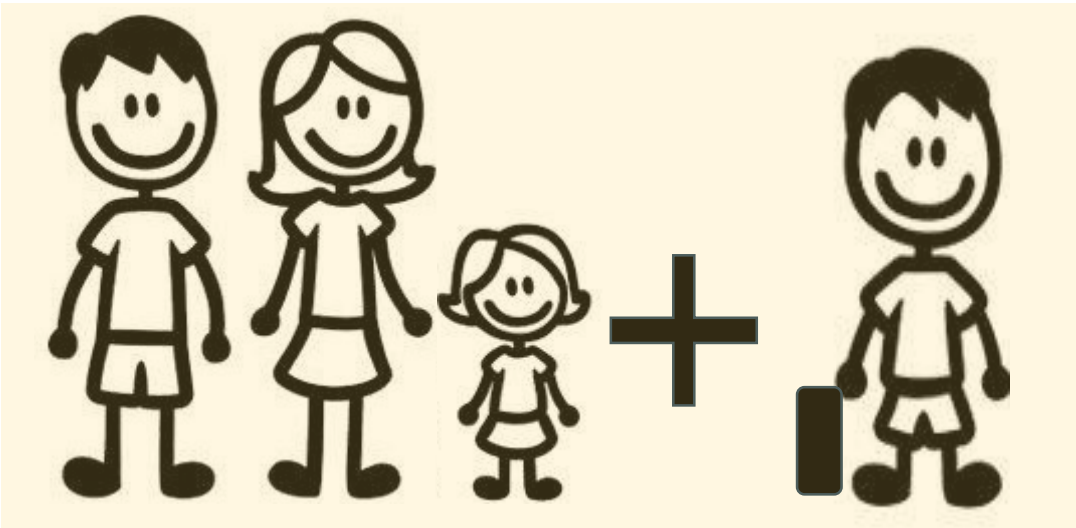


Adequate confidence

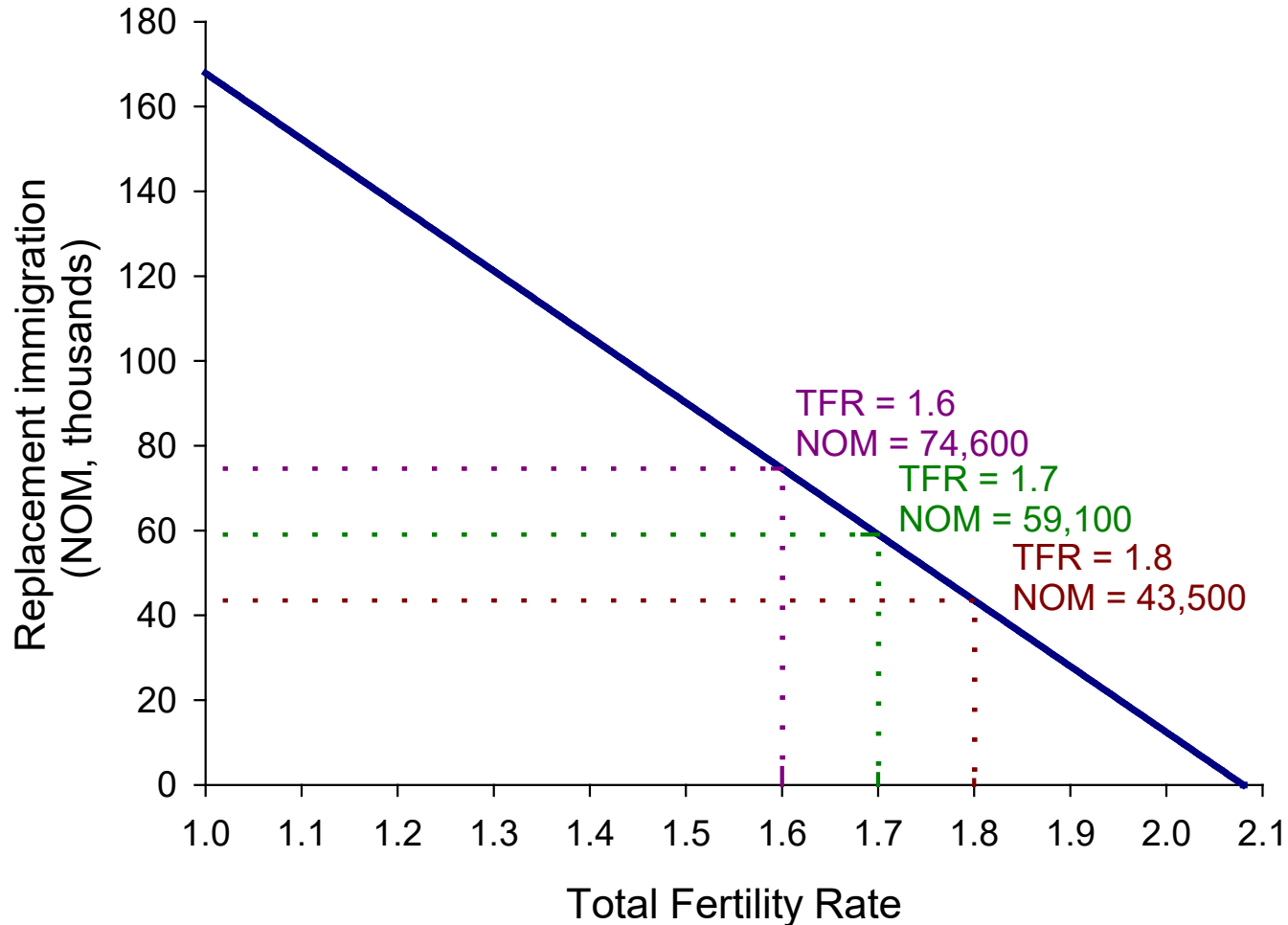
Human activity and population growth are major drivers of many pressures on biodiversity. Impacts are associated with urban expansion, tourism, industrial expansion, pollution, fishing, hunting and development of infrastructure. The impacts from population growth are extensive and increasing in many areas. Related to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal targets 6.3, 11.6, 12.1, 12.4

“Population growth contributes to all the pressures described in this report. Each person added to our population increases demand on natural resources to provide food, shelter and materials for living.”

# Sustainable migration allows population stabilisation.



# Sustainable migration allows population stabilisation.



- If Australians are having fewer children than replacement, immigration can “top up” to keep generation size equal.
- The lower the fertility, the higher is “replacement immigration”.
- If TFR = 1.7 children per woman, Sustainable NOM  $\approx$  60,000.
- If Australians emigrate at a net rate around 20,000 per year, then 80,000 could immigrate.

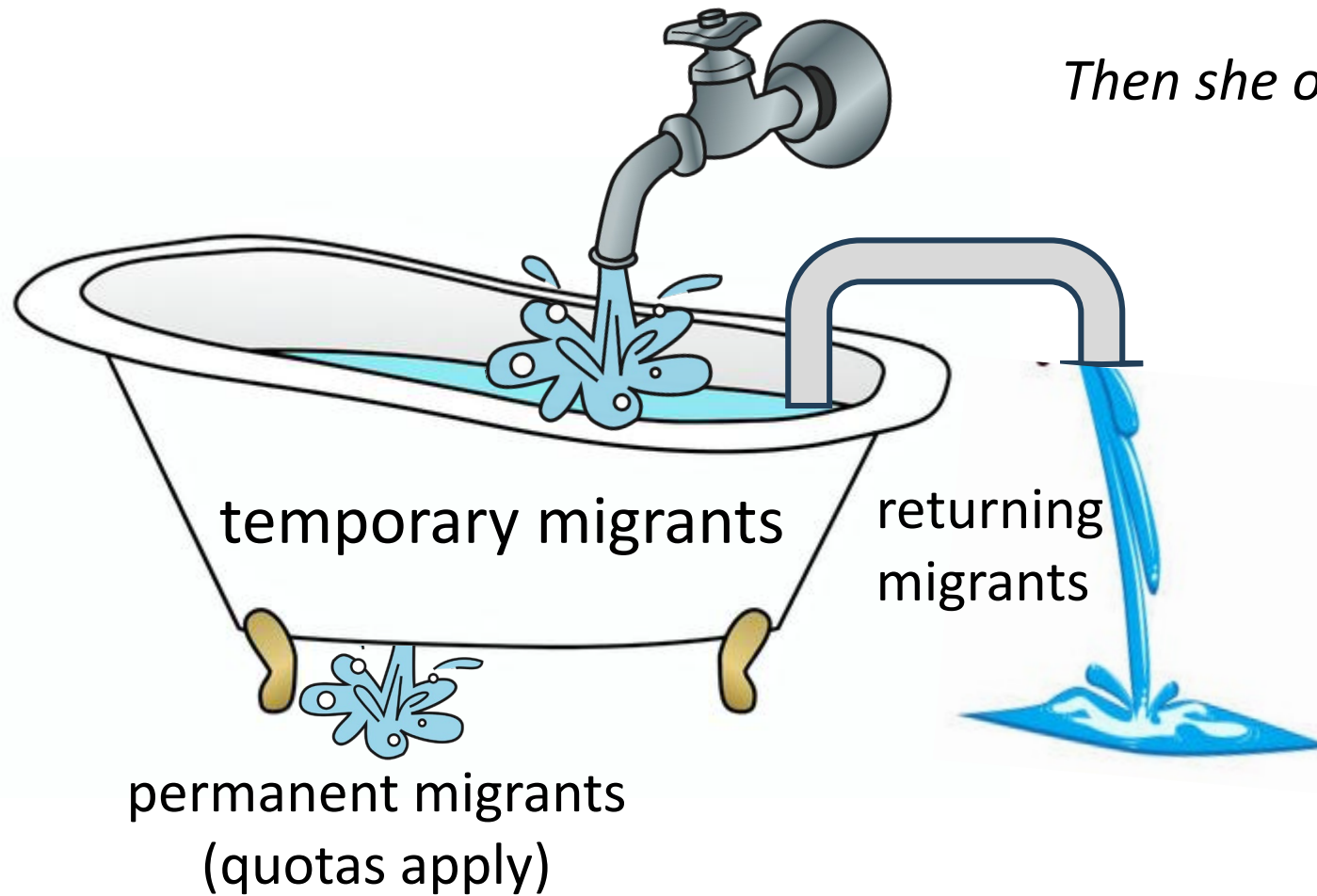
# High immigration undermines the Albanese government's own goals for migrants

- SPA maintains that *lower*, not higher, immigration *concurrently*
  - *unlocks the potential of each migrant,*
  - *minimizes worker exploitation,*
  - *enhances growth in productivity and workforce participation, and*
  - *strengthens pathways to permanent residence and citizenship.*
- To improve pathways to permanence, two measures are needed:
  1. *Reduce the inflow of temporary migrants,*
  2. *Stop giving permanent visas to off-shore applicants.*
- All skilled migrants should be initially temporary and employer-sponsored.
- Temporary categories must be capped.

**“Too many migrants are stuck in permanently temporary limbo.”**

**Clare O’Neil, Immigration Minister**

*Then she opened the spigot wider!*





# Most Albanese changes increase NOM

## Changes increasing immigration:

- Increased permanent visas from 160,000 to 195,000 (then reduced to 190,000)
- Increased refugee quota to 20,000.
- Expanded PALM scheme
- Pacific Engagement Visas: 3000 permanent visas for low-skilled people, in addition to 190,000 permanent visa quota.
- NZ residents can apply directly for citizenship (frees up 8-10,000 permanent visas/year)
- India free trade agreement – MATES 8-year visas for 3000 graduates & their families.
- Longer graduate visas (soon to be reversed, but not for Indians due to FTA)
- Expanded regional & state sponsorship quotas (generally poor employment outcomes)
- Working Holiday visas for UK extended age and duration
- Aged Care Labour Agreement

## Changes decreasing immigration:

- Raised skilled migrant income threshold to \$70,000
- Raised the bar for some student visas
- Restricted grounds for second student visa (All still uncapped programs)
- Ending 'Covid' visa
- Ended 'golden ticket' visa for rich investors.
- Faster processing of asylum applications (so non-genuine refugees can be sent home)
- Proposed bill to facilitate repatriation of failed asylum seekers

# Sophistry masks radical social engineering



“It’s not just about numbers.”



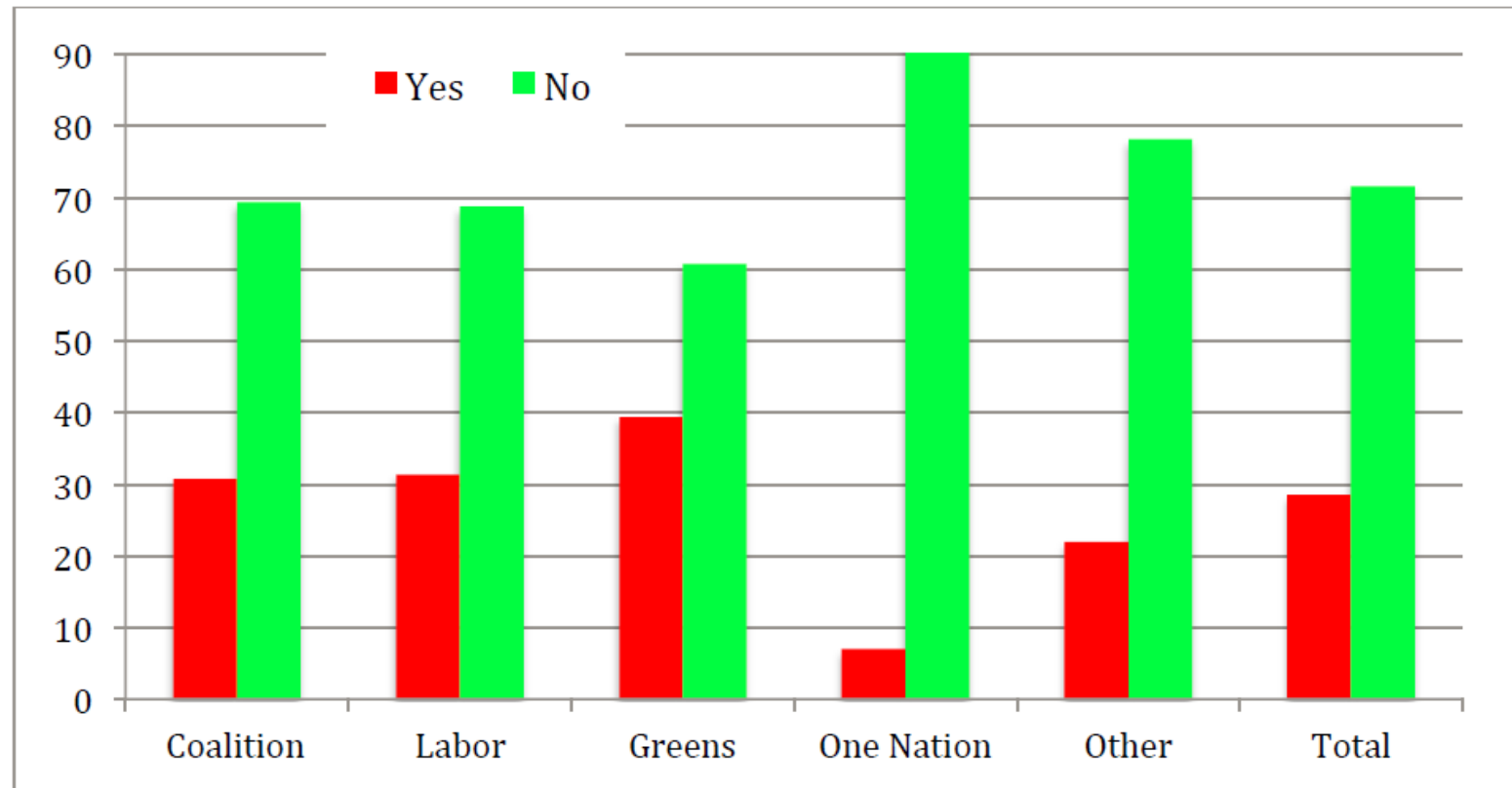
“This is not about a bigger Australia or massive increases in - migration numbers. It doesn’t have to mean any increase at all.”



“immigration should never be a substitute for what we need to do to train Australians for local opportunities”

# Most Australians (quietly) don't want more population growth

Figure 11: 'Does Australia need more people?' by voting intention %



Source: Betts & Birrell (2019) *Immigration, population growth and voters: who cares, and why?* The October/November 2018 TAPRI survey.

# Who benefits from population growth?

- The property industry
- The big business lobby
- The university Vice Chancellors
- Migration agents

All have disproportionate influence on immigration policy

# Magical thinking ...

“SEQ will have reduced greenhouse gas emissions and be more resilient to the projected effects of climate change. SEQ will be carbon neutral and have zero net waste, and the region’s food, water and energy supply systems will be flexible, reliable and secure.”

South-East Queensland Regional Plan-2023 Update, p 31







---

Complacent  
optimism:

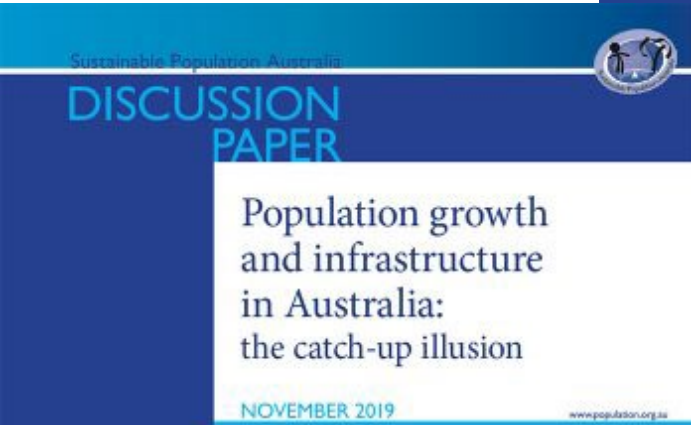
Will we act  
before it's  
too late?

---

***Say NO to Big Australia!***

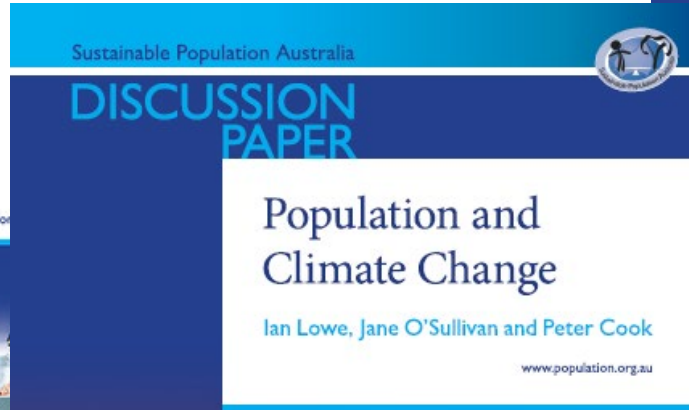
# SPA Discussion Papers

<https://population.org.au/discussion-papers/>



Silver tsunami  
or silver lining?  
Why we should not fear  
an ageing population

OCTOBER 2020 [www.population.org.au](http://www.population.org.au)



How many  
Australians?

The need for Earth-centric ethics

Paul Collins [www.population.org.au](http://www.population.org.au)

