

Overseas New Zealanders Policy

Vision

The Green Party celebrates the large and diverse diaspora of Aotearoa New Zealand, fosters mutually-beneficial and meaningful links to home, and safeguards our rights and well-being.

Values and Principles

Waiho i te toipoto, kua i te toiroa
Let us keep close together, not far apart

This policy is grounded in the Green Party charter, international Green values and elementary policies of fairness, equity and human rights.

- *Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi:* Tangata whenua should lead all kaupapa related to Māori living overseas.
- *Ecological Wisdom:* Overseas New Zealanders should be supported with sustainable and environmentally-conscious connections with home.
- *Social Responsibility:* Overseas New Zealanders should have human rights, democratic rights and access to the principles of citizenship, regardless of where we live.
- *Appropriate decision-making:* Overseas New Zealanders should have the opportunity to contribute to our home country and have their voices heard.
- *Non-violence:* States have a basic duty of care to their citizens. This must include overseas New Zealanders and be free of political bias, favouritism or status based on perceived worth to our home country.

Connected Policies

The Aotearoa New Zealand diaspora are impacted by policy in several areas including [Democracy and Constitutional Transformation](#), [Disability](#), [Health](#), [Global Affairs](#), [Immigration](#), [Income Support](#), [Rainbow](#), [Tertiary Education](#), [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#), and [Workforce](#).

Policy Positions

1. Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Aotearoa New Zealand Diaspora

Māori hold a distinct and special status as the indigenous people, or tangata whenua, of Aotearoa New Zealand. The particular rights of Māori living overseas, outlined by the articles of te Tiriti o Waitangi, must be fully explored and upheld, enabling Māori leadership in supporting the Māori diaspora.

- 1.1. Ensure all individuals with Māori whakapapa are eligible for Aotearoa New Zealand citizenship, regardless of country of residence or birth.

2. Services, Support and Human Rights

Our interconnected world creates situations where many migrants do not have access to services, support, or basic rights in either their country of residence or country of origin. New Zealanders living overseas are no exception, and their basic needs must be met, including in times of crisis. Our ability to return home must be equitable and accessible.

- 2.1. Affirm the right of New Zealanders to hold multiple nationalities.
- 2.2. Affirm the rights of New Zealanders to access pathways to citizenship in other countries including by advocating against health and disability cost-based discrimination.
- 2.3. Ensure that measures to address risks from current and future crises protect the rights of New Zealanders to return home and do not impose additional costs.
- 2.4. Provide adequate resources to allow diplomatic staff to act as advocates or provide support for New Zealand citizens in emergency situations.
- 2.5. Investigate digital or embassy-based health services for New Zealanders living overseas.
- 2.6. Allow New Zealanders living overseas to claim a one-off emergency loan payment in the event they have to leave their country of residence due to hardship or other circumstances.
- 2.7. Pursue reciprocal healthcare support arrangements with more states and widen existing agreements to include fixed-term residents.
- 2.8. Pursue new and extended reciprocal working visa programmes with other states.
- 2.9. Pursue reciprocal welfare arrangements with other states.

3. Meaningful Connections

The relationship between New Zealanders living overseas and our home is affected by Government policy and must be strengthened and supported. The government must be responsive and represent the interests of the diaspora by understanding our unique and diverse characteristics.

- 3.1. Establish a government institution with responsibility for the Aotearoa New Zealand diaspora.

- 3.2. Establish a formal channel for overseas New Zealanders to communicate with the government directly on all issues relevant to them.
- 3.3. Ensure that demographic data collection for New Zealanders overseas gives an accurate understanding of our diaspora.
- 3.4. Remove the requirement for people to be physically present in Aotearoa New Zealand to renew or replace government-issued documentation and ensure renewable processes are accessible, including to disabled people.
- 3.5. Lengthen the repayment holiday for overseas student loan borrowers.
- 3.6. Abolish border arrests for student loan repayment violations.
- 3.7. Restore the ten-year eligibility-threshold for time spent in Aotearoa New Zealand to be eligible for a full or partial superannuation.
- 3.8. Ensure that people who leave Aotearoa New Zealand intending to return within six months, but are unable to do so for exceptional reasons, remain eligible for superannuation.
- 3.9. Ensure that assessment of applications to be paid superannuation while overseas for more than 26 weeks takes full account of financial position, family obligations, and cultural considerations.

4. Participation in Society

Our ability to participate in the democracy of Aotearoa New Zealand must be upheld and improved. We must have a voice and both ourselves and our families should feel part of Aotearoa New Zealand society.

- 4.1. Lengthen the time spent outside Aotearoa New Zealand before losing voting eligibility.
- 4.2. Investigate and implement digital voting procedures for voters based overseas.
- 4.3. Ensure that sufficient accessible voting options are available so that all overseas voters can vote, regardless of barriers (such as disability).
- 4.4. Ensure overseas partners of New Zealanders are issued with provisional residency status so that the overseas partners can have the advantages of Aotearoa New Zealand residency while Immigration New Zealand is processing their application.
- 4.5. Make it easier for parents and immediate family members (including children) of Aotearoa New Zealand citizens, permanent residents, and immigrants to apply for residency in Aotearoa New Zealand, including removing all health assessments to enable disabled people and people with health conditions to be reunited with family.
- 4.6. Ensure investigations into relationships for a foreign national partner of an Aotearoa New Zealand citizen or resident are non-intrusive and culturally sensitive.
- 4.7. Hold New Zealanders accountable for any international crimes committed at home or overseas, while:
 - 4.7.1. Upholding the fundamental protections provided by international and Aotearoa New Zealand's criminal and human rights laws; and
 - 4.7.2. Ensuring prosecutions are not undertaken for partisan purposes.