



4 May 2022

N.I.Alali

fyi-request-19023-9092200f@requests.fyi.org.nz

DOIA 2122-1906

Dear N.I.Alali

Thank you for your email of 31 March 2022 requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Could you please provide me with the following information:

- A weekly breakdown of the number of skilled migrant applications that have been allocated to a case officer since August 2021 to date (non-priority and priority applications) (excluding 2021 off resident visa);

- A weekly breakdown of the number of skilled residence applications completed since August 2021 to date (excluding 2021 off resident visa)

- A monthly breakdown of the number of applications that are still awaiting allocation to an Immigration Officer since August 2021 to date by the date of lodgement (excluding 2021 off resident visa)

- Number of case officers working on skilled migrant visa applications (priority and non-priority)- (excluding 2021 off resident visa);

- Are there any plans to change any of the criteria for prioritising skilled migrant applications (i.e. applicants who have an hourly rate equivalent to or higher than twice the median wage currently \$51.00 per hour or an annual salary of \$106,080 or more will have their application moved to the priority queue), if yes, could you provide the proposed changes and the date they will be in effect.

Our Response

Part one: *A weekly breakdown of the number of skilled migrant applications that have been allocated to a case officer since August 2021 to date (non-priority and priority applications) (excluding 2021 off resident visa);*

Please refer to appendix one, table one.



Part two: *A weekly breakdown of the number of skilled residence applications completed since August 2021 to date (excluding 2021 off resident visa)*

Please refer to appendix one, table two.

Part three: *A monthly breakdown of the number of applications that are still awaiting allocation to an Immigration Officer since August 2021 to date by the date of lodgement (excluding 2021 off resident visa)*

The number of unallocated skilled residence applications, broken down by the month the application was accepted for processing by Immigration New Zealand (INZ), can be found on the INZ website: www.immigration.govt.nz/documents/other-resources/skilled-residence-applications-onshore-general-queue.pdf

Part four: *Number of case officers working on skilled migrant visa applications (priority and non-priority)- (excluding 2021 off resident visa);*

The 2021 Resident Visa is a key priority for INZ. INZ continues to have a small team of immigration officers (IOs) processing skilled residence applications where the principal applicant is not eligible or does not apply for the new 2021 Resident Visa. There has been on average 10 IOs since December 2021, but lately as capacity allows, we have been able to increase the staff numbers temporarily.

Part five: *Are there any plans to change any of the criteria for prioritising skilled migrant applications (i.e. applicants who have an hourly rate equivalent to or higher than twice the median wage currently \$51.00 per hour or an annual salary of \$106,080 or more will have their application moved to the priority queue), if yes, could you provide the proposed changes and the date they will be in effect.*

As per CAB-21-MIN-0279 available online here: [Long-term direction for the immigration portfolio: a rebalance – Minute of Decision \(mbie.govt.nz\)](#)

Cabinet has agreed to undertake a review of skilled residence pathways to ensure that policy settings are consistent with the principles of the Immigration Rebalance. However, as officials are currently developing advice on this, we are unable to provide further information at this time and decline this section of the request under 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, or if you require any further assistance, please contact inzoias@mbie.govt.nz

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N. Hogg'.

Nicola Hogg
General Manager Border and Visa Operations
Immigration New Zealand

Appendix one

Table one: A weekly breakdown of the number of skilled migrant applications that have been allocated to a case officer since August 2021 to date.

Please note that due to the national lockdown in response to COVID 19 the Auckland offices were closed from 18 August 2021 therefore no allocations took place until 21 September 2021. Between October to December 2021 Auckland remained at Alert Level 3, only a small number of staff were able to return to the office therefore no allocation took place.

Week beginning	Total	Priority	Non-Priority
2 August 2021	100	79	17
9 August 2021	115	83	30
16 August 2021	122	91	28
23 August 2021	0	0	0
30 August 2021	0	0	0
6 September 2021	0	0	0
13 September 2021	0	0	0
20 September 2021	0	0	0
27 September 2021	33	33	0
4 October 2021	0	0	0
11 October 2021	0	0	0
18 October 2021	0	0	0
25 October 2021	0	0	0
1 November 2021	0	0	0
8 November 2021	0	0	0
15 November 2021	0	0	0
22 November 2021	0	0	0
29 November 2021	0	0	0
6 December 2021	0	0	0
13 December 2021	0	0	0
20 December 2021	0	0	0
27 December 2021	0	0	0
3 January 2022	0	0	0
10 January 2022	0	0	0
17 January 2022	0	0	0
24 January 2022	0	0	0

The number of skilled residence applications allocated from 1 February 2022 can be found on the INZ website on the following page: www.immigration.govt.nz/documents/other-resources/skilled-residence-applications-onshore-general-queue.pdf

Table two: Number of Skilled residence applications decided since August 2021, broken down by weeks.

Week beginning	Number of Applications decided	
	Approved	Declines
2 August 2021	111	<=5
9 August 2021	113	<=5
16 August 2021	46	0
23 August 2021	<=5	0
30 August 2021	0	0
6 September 2021	0	0
13 September 2021	0	0
20 September 2021	<=5	0
27 September 2021	94	7
4 October 2021	44	0
11 October 2021	59	0
18 October 2021	35	<=5
25 October 2021	60	<=5
1 November 2021	38	<=5
8 November 2021	48	<=5
15 November 2021	49	0
22 November 2021	60	<=5
29 November 2021	25	<=5
6 December 2021	<=5	<=5
13 December 2021	9	<=5
20 December 2021	18	<=5
27 December 2021	<=5	<=5
3 January 2022	<=5	0
10 January 2022	<=5	<=5
17 January 2022	<=5	<=5
24 January 2022	<=5	6
31 January 2022	13	<=5
7 February 2022	27	<=5
14 February 2022	48	<=5
21 February 2022	46	7
28 February 2022	38	<=5
7 March 2022	30	<=5
14 March 2022	29	<=5
21 March 2022	45	11
28 March 2022	57	7
4 April 2022	85	18
11 April 2022	90	<=5
18 April 2022	38	<=5
Total	1499	

Please note: Numbers equal or smaller than five are considered information that could identify a visa applicant therefore these numbers have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA because it is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons.