

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

26 February 2014

Question: AET 3001-3004

Topic: Net Overseas Migration #2 (ABS)

Written: Page 61, 26 February 2014

Senator DASTYARI asked:

3001-3004. Senator DASTYARI: Another one, which I completely understand you will have to take on notice: assuming that the fertility rate can be accurately predicted and modelled, **the combination of fertility rate and net overseas migration that will be required to keep our population below 36 million by 2050 (Question a).**

Also, there may be some information available now or you can take this on notice: we know that the net overseas migration is obviously increasing—**can we get a breakdown of the main visa categories contributing to the increase (Question b)?**

Again, I have other questions but if you could take two more on notice. **If it is possible to combine the net overseas migration report and the population projection report to estimate the percentage of people born overseas based on projection assumptions (Question c).**

Ms van Halderen: I am going to take that one on notice.

Senator DASTYARI: Indeed! And, if so, **if you can estimate the percentage of people born overseas for 2020, 2030, 2040 and 2050 using population projections outlined in scenarios A, B and C (Question d).** Broadly, the point of this will be that it will probably show the diversity proportion is not going to wildly fluctuate, meaning that high immigration and greater population may feel a lot like today's share of immigrants in the population. I am trying to make a 'Big Australia' multicultural point.

Mr Palmer: We will take those on notice but I think we would get a bit uncomfortable providing detailed projections at that level of granularity. That is why we only produced the three broad categories based on different net overseas migration assumptions. Once you are starting to factor in things like fertility rates and differences between the fertility rates of people born overseas—

Ms van Halderen: And visa classes. These are projections; they are not predictions. They are projections based on a series of assumptions, and if any of those assumptions are not true then the projections come into question. So the assumptions you would have to go into to do this by different country of birth and by different visa class—as you can appreciate, the further out you go, the more the veracity of your assumptions will change. This will be very difficult to do but we can certainly do our best around the broad projections to 2050.

Senator DASTYARI: Thank you.

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Answer:

3001-3004.

Question a The main projection assumption combination which results in a population below 36 million in 2050 is low net overseas migration (NOM) of 200,000 and medium Total Fertility Rate of 1.8, resulting in a population of 35.7 million.

Question b The broad visa group contributing the most to NOM over the last 5 years has been students at close to 30% of total NOM. Other contributors have been permanent skilled at 15%, New Zealand citizens at 14% and permanent family at 13% of NOM for the most recent 5 years of final NOM (2007-08 through to 2011-12).

Question c The ABS projection method is not able to disaggregate the projected population by percentage born overseas as it would require separate projections for subpopulations rather than the whole population. However, data in the ABS publication Migration Australia (cat no 3412.0), provides the proportion of the Australian population born overseas. Recent NOM increases are evident in the increase in the percentages of overseas born from around 25% in 2006 to around 27% in 2011.

Year	Percentage born overseas
1996	23%
2001	23%
2006	25%
2011	27%

Source: *ABS Migration, Australia, 2011-12 and 2012-13* (cat no 3412.0)

Question d Not possible. See question c.