

Bottom up immigration policy must be balanced with national leadership on infrastructure

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The Prime Minister's proposal to develop an immigration policy from the bottom up needs to be balanced with national leadership on infrastructure says the Urban Taskforce.

"Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, is proposing that immigration policy is developed by asking cities and towns how many extra people they would like." Says Urban Taskforce CEO Chris Johnson "But this will lead to towns with no jobs wanting extra people and small cities calling for growth when many people prefer the energy of a large city."

"The reality around the world is that people are attracted to larger cities because of the greater job opportunities and the diversity of cultural activities. So most immigrants will be attracted to the larger cities like Sydney and Melbourne."

"What Australia needs is national government investment in urban infrastructure to ensure that the cities people want to live and work in have the rail networks and the hospitals and schools that are needed. The most important infrastructure for Australian cities as they transition from a low rise suburban model to a higher rise urban model is a metro rail network like the ones in London, Paris and New York."

"Australia needs skilled younger migrants to balance the large number of baby-boomers moving into retirement so that taxation income is maintained."

"The Prime Minister should ask cities for growth options based on varying contributions to transport infrastructure. A good example is the federal government's funding of Sydney's second airport and related infrastructure. Clearly it is this new infrastructure that generates the possibility of future growth."

"Ultimately the discussion on immigration numbers and where growth should occur will be a balance between bottom up opportunities for growth and top down leadership on how to manage growth through new infrastructure. A condition of federal funding for infrastructure must be the minimising of red tape in planning systems which is adding unnecessary costs to housing especially in Sydney."

"The Urban Taskforce believes significant growth can occur in Australian cities like Sydney if new infrastructure is matched with the new growth. We also believe that federal leadership is needed on the benefits of growth and the changing nature of our cities."

*The **Urban Taskforce** is a property development industry group, representing Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers.*

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