



Elena Yu

By email: [fyi-request-13630-33ff7ad8@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-13630-33ff7ad8@requests.fyi.org.nz)

File No: DOIA 2021-0639

Dear Elena Yu

Thank you for your email of 16 September 2020, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

*The number of applications that are currently held in the non-priority skilled residence queue, with lodgement dates between 1st March 2019 to 15th March 2019 (inclusive), onshore and offshore both.*

#### **Our response**

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) does not have a specific Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) queue but one for skilled residence applications. These applications are SMC and Resident from Work (RFW) and are all processed in the Manukau office. The applications are not split into two separate queues based on the application category.

As at 26 September 2020 there were 33 offshore applications and no onshore applications in the non-priority skilled residence queue, which were accepted from 1 March to 15 March 2019 (inclusive).

Allocations of applications to immigration officers occur weekly and the number of applications that are allocated is dependent upon processing capacity.

Visa processing for overseas applicants is still on hold. This is because people who are not New Zealand citizens or residents are unlikely to meet the current entry requirements. INZ is not able to legally grant a visa to people who are unlikely to meet the entry requirements. As such, offshore applications have been separated and tagged non-priority. Processing for offshore applications will resume when the border re-opens.

The New Zealand Residence Programme (NZRP) Planning Range sets the upper and lower number for residence visa approvals. The previous Planning Range was 50,000 to 60,000 residence approvals from 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2019. The Government is currently reviewing its approach to the NZRP and is considering replacing the planning range with a more targeted approach that focuses on management of specific residence visa types. In the meantime, INZ will continue to process applications at same volume and with the same level of resourcing as the previous NZRP allowed for, this does have an impact on the number of applications that can be allocated and the timeliness of application processing.

Any updates in regards to the allocation of applications can be found at the following link:  
[www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/how-we-prioritise-resident-visa-applications/smc-and-rfw-timeframe-information](http://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/how-we-prioritise-resident-visa-applications/smc-and-rfw-timeframe-information).

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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact Anna McLachlan, Business Advisor, Operations Support, Immigration New Zealand at [Anna.McLachlan@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Anna.McLachlan@mbie.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely



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