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NEW ZEALAND PATHWAY TO AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP STREAMLINED

19 February 2016

Prime Minister

Minister for Immigration and Border Protection

The Australian Government announced today it will **provide a streamlined pathway to Australian citizenship for many New Zealanders who have been living in Australia for at least five years.**

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull made the announcement after today's successful meeting with New Zealand Prime Minister John Key in Sydney.

It is an acknowledgement of the special relationship between the two nations.

New Zealanders and Australians have a shared history and destiny and no two nations could be closer than ours.

While New Zealanders already have special arrangements that allow them easily to enter and then reside in Australia, these arrangements do not provide a pathway to citizenship.

The new visa pathway will be **available from 1 July 2017** for Special Category Visa holders who are **ordinarily resident in Australia today and, at the time of application, have lived here for at least five years.** These new arrangements will give many New Zealanders permanent residence status and enable them to apply for Australian citizenship if they meet certain criteria, including:

- contributing to Australia, demonstrated through income tax returns which show assessable income at least equivalent to the Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT) for the qualifying period; and
- passing mandatory health, character and security checks.

The pathway will be made available within the Skilled Independent category of the General Skilled Migration stream of Australia's annual Migration Programme.

Further information can be found on the [Department of Immigration and Border Protection](#) website.