



HR LANDSCAPES:

New Zealand and the Workforce 2020 Program

| FELIPE CARNEIRO


The world's 123rd country in population (4.3 million people), New Zealand ranks much higher when it comes to its development index, being a reference point in education, economic freedom and lack of corruption. It is considered one of the best countries to live in; and now, it is also a reference in workforce planning.

The Workforce 2020 Program, conducted by the New Zealand Department of Labor, is designed to ensure the country's needs for a prepared and productive workforce for the next 10 years and beyond. The program consists of an analysis of the forces, impacts and drivers of an appropriate future workforce, and their relationships with each other. As an example, population changes, demographic shift, globalization, and resource pressures are all likely to have an impact on employment, skills, productivity, and economic performance over the medium to long term.

The program's first step is to understand the future impacts for the five key areas below; and make it possible to plan what actions need to be taken in order to achieve the ultimate goal of a prepared and productive workforce for 2020 and beyond:

- Recession: economic downturn, decreased job opportunities, and longer term unemployment;
- Demographic changes: the population is becoming older and more diverse;
- Globalization: changing demand for jobs and the resulting migration of workers;
- Productivity: support increased productivity in the workforce and in workplaces;

- Resource pressures: limited or sensitive natural resources.

In a future labor market where current skills and flexibility are fundamental characteristics, the program will provide a key mechanism for setting out the challenges to support future increases in economic growth through improvements in labor productivity.  (Source: New Zealand's Department of Labor)

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