

National Radio Te Papa Debates: “Being There in 2021 –What will it be like?”

In late 1999, as a prelude to the Millennium celebrations in 2000, the NZFT collaborated with National Radio, Te Papa and others to present a facilitated series of debates entitled “National Radio Te Papa Debates: Being There in 2021 –What will it be like?” With live audiences, the debates were then broadcast over a six-week period and made available for sale on compact discs from Replay Radio. The first five debates were held at Te Papa in Wellington and the last at the Dominion Museum in Auckland. Each debate was a panel discussion, considering three different scenarios for 2021, focussing on the following topics:

Part 1 - Culture and Identity

Part 2 - Education

Part 3 - Rural New Zealand

Part 4 - Urban New Zealand

Part 5 - The Economy

Part 6 - Health

The debate was hosted by a moderator, with four panellists experienced in the topic. The broadcast also included some of the question and answer sessions that followed the formal panel discussion.

The scripts below were the scenarios developed by the NZ Futures Trust for the first five debates.

Scenarios for Radio New Zealand - Te Papa debates

CULTURE AND IDENTITY

1) Global New Zealand

- NZ brands have been taken over by multinationals; our beer is now the world’s beer
- NZ sports teams are now globalised; the All Blacks have disappeared and now play under the Adidas brand
- in a world linked by computer technology many NZ workers are now employed by global firms doing specialised jobs
- all media is owned internationally and there is no free-to-air TV but there are over 100 channels delivered by cable or satellite
- no exclusively NZ films are played in cinemas but there’s a strong local film-editing industry
- all entertainment is now international; companies fill our theatres with musicals and travelling orchestras while internationally relevant touring exhibitions dominate museums and galleries.
- the Waitangi Tribunal was settled by 2001 and Maori have invested the proceeds in self-education and tourism ventures. Maori economic activities have become integrated into the global economic world.

- Maori aspirations for the renaissance of the Maori language have been thwarted by the continued importance of the English language and western cultural forms in the international media
- In 2003 there was a major revision of the school curriculum resulting in an emphasis on international topics rather than subjects of a national interest
- NZ's values are no longer distinctive from those of the rest of the world

2) Diverse New Zealand

- ethnic diversity flourishes as new immigration policies opened up New Zealand to an influx of peoples from around the world
- multiple languages are taught in schools and a host of ethnic community groups have developed
- New Zealanders recognise the value of this new ethnic mix to its social and economic achievement
- NZ is sold internationally as a lifestyle destination and a safe place to do business
- there's a tradition of innovation and creativity and there's a varied mix of businesses and occupations
- there's been a devolution of govt control to local organisations after the recognition that central govt couldn't do justice to local needs and ethnic diversity within communities
- Maori have become more assertive in the expression of their own culture and more economically independent as Waitangi settlement claims gave them the chance to invest in cultural institutions like schools, marae and craft centres.
- there's a great range of choice on offer as a result of this ethnic diversity ; our museums and galleries display a range of artistic forms and styles, our theatres are lively centres for new dance and music and the choice in food is astounding
- the media offers a number of channels, some in non-English languages, all reflecting NZ's cultural diversity
- however there have been serious inter-racial conflicts as a result of the ethnic diversity and this has disrupted many people's sense of a cohesive New Zealand

3) Team New Zealand

- in 2000 New Zealanders chose to limit immigration as an economic depression hit the country and racial tensions increased. A renewed boom in Asia also tempted a large number of Asians back home and Kiwis who had lived overseas for many years returned to these shores.
- the population is now of mainly European and Polynesian background meaning a highly bi-cultural society in which Maori culture is much stronger and more diverse and in which almost all New Zealanders feel comfortable.
- there's a strong resistance to foreign ownership of the media; TV One is retained in public ownership and used as a vehicle for cultural nationalism while a 40% quota of local content has been imposed on other channels. Also the government invested heavily in a Maori language channel

- school curricula are dominated by subjects emphasising the history, literature, problems and achievements of this country. As a result sales of NZ literature have boomed and more people can support themselves as writers. The distinctiveness of our schools has attracted international students
- there's been renewed interest in preserving historic sites and wahi tapu
- cultural tourism has continued to be NZ's biggest earner of foreign exchange
- by 2010 recreational spending of "empty nesters" skyrockets and they've demanded a range of tourism experiences including eco-tourism, educational tourism and special-interest tourism
- the government recognised that economic growth was going to come from unique trade in specialised products and the service industry and therefore invested heavily in selling NZ as a destination of unique environmental and cultural qualities
- international relations are now based more on cultural similarities than superpower dominance and ideology
- there's been a huge increase in the numbers speaking the Maori language and pakeha and Maori work well together in distinctive areas of the economy with respect for each other's differences
- there's been heavy investment in cultural infrastructure as the government recognised that educational achievement and economic wealth relied on strong cultural experiences for both its own people and those who came here. All forms of arts are encouraged and supported and there's been a huge development in cultural activities for the growing retired population
- New Zealand has a strong nationalistic pride and social cohesion

EDUCATION

1. Without Walls

- Developments in Information and Communications Technology mean that access to any educational programme in the world is available to anyone anywhere but mainly at home (those without private access can use public sites at libraries and "electronic cottages"). There is an "Ocean of Information".
- Access to elite programmes is still rationed by price, but "leakage" across programmes means that there is less and less differentiation between them. Value is perceived through "branding" of programmes
- Real value is added to the educational experience through the intervention of intelligent software and skilled, entrepreneurial facilitators able to tailor information to individual needs.

- The socialisation aspects of learning are provided separately through voluntary clubs, and traditional “bricks and mortar” providers have been sold and turned into inner-city apartments and parks.
- There is no need for the “critic and conscience” role of universities because there is a high level of informed civic involvement by the population, and intellectual property is not easily protected.
- Personal training and development is more than lifelong learning - it is an ever-present feature of life, like conversation.
- Due to rationalisation the cost of education is about the same as for utilities and incurring debt to pay for it is not seen as a big deal.
- Skills development is the absolute path to personal participation and wealth, but everyone is somewhere on a path.

2. Ladders of Opportunity

- Developments in Information and Communications Technology which allow global marketing of education programmes have also allowed protection of intellectual property and programme content.
- Anyone can enrol in a Harvard programme from anywhere, so long as they can pay the high price of participation. A few public and private sponsorships allow poorer students of merit to participate, but most who graduate are burdened with enormous debt that requires a lifetime of high incomes to pay off. Fortunately the high-paying jobs and business opportunities are available to those who qualify.
- Providers have tended to specialise to survive, and competition is cutthroat. In the Tertiary Sector, the concept of a single broadly-based university, covering all disciplines, is all but dead.
- The overall scene is one of polarisation into elite and non-elite streams in education, with consequent flow through into the economy. A large, low skilled sector of the community is herded into violent, drug-ridden institutions and excluded from real learning opportunities. The “graduates” of these institutions are locked into generational poverty. Similar polarisation exists between the “developed” and “less developed” world.

- Pre-school, primary and secondary learning is still delivered locally, but the same kind of streaming exists, and education is seen more as a series of steps in a ladder, wherein each step is dependent on the one preceding - i.e. there is intense competition from the age of two to get onto the “right” ladder and stay on it. There are no second chances.
- Learning is undertaken primarily for vocational reasons and nobody is interested in “critics and consciences”. Research is jealously protected and sold in the marketplace for high prices. It’s dog eat dog from the sandpit to the retirement home!

3. Learning equity

- Educational institutions are still the sites where learning occurs, providing chances to socialise and learn broader relationship and participation skills. IT is a tool rather than the medium of learning.
- Consumers are the Kings and Queens of the system. A huge menu of opportunities from a world full of providers is available for learners to select individualised programmes which are tailored with the help of on-site Teachers and Lecturers. Provider institutions still tend to specialise somewhat, but form strategic alliances with complementary agencies to maintain multi-disciplinary programmes.
- Educators’ skills have changed completely and they are now education brokers rather than providers, constantly updating their competencies through their own development programmes and research.
- There is emphasis on diverse approaches to learning and the gaining of wisdom. Developments in neurological science have enabled the development of a variety of learning systems which enable most people to reach their potential.
- Research informs contributions to the community, especially through innovations in social, environmental and economic spheres.
- While there is pressure to perform, there are chances for students to switch programmes without losing ground if they fail.
- Learning gained from various sources can be matched to form unique qualifications which are nevertheless recognised on a “seamless”, internationally recognised framework.
- A large number of graduates are generalists, quite good entrepreneurs but excellent specialists are still to be found.

- Without the same competitive edge in the domestic marketplace the country's economic performance suffers somewhat, even though there is quite a high level of social cohesion and New Zealanders are sought after for management positions in other countries

RURAL NEW ZEALAND

The main drivers of change are globalisation and technology. What creates the different scenarios are the different possible impacts of these tsunamis and the different options for responding.

(1) Corporate Farming

- high-tech farming methods (eg computer control of all inputs, spreading, stock management etc) used which means fewer people living and working on farms and in the rural environment. Consequently, a hollowed out rural sector i.e. few people consequently few services located in the countryside, little infrastructure (including roads). Goods and services are delivered via the internet and helicopters.
- High tech farming and collapse of infrastructure means that small family units can't compete. Globalisation of capital and economies of scale means corporate ownership of farms. The farming sector is on the stock market and very much part of the global economy. Rich people from other countries have bought up large numbers of desirable properties in resorts like Queenstown and Taupo.
- Drive for returns pushes production methods into genetic engineering - in fact many of the corporate owners are nutraceutical companies vertically integrating their businesses.
- There is very little social interaction between town and country, but economic interdependence

(2) Rural Lifestyle

- Many people are living in the country for lifestyle reasons. They accept lower standards of living for the better lifestyle and pace of life. Non-farmers are living rurally but working in IT jobs for organisations either in cities or globally. Consequently there is a vital and

close interaction between town and country. Domestic crops are plentiful and nutritious and highly valued.

- A large proportion of the farming industry is still engaged in commodity markets, mainly in developing countries of South Asia and Africa.
- Secondary towns have just managed to survive as service centres, although communications and financial transactions are all carried out through the internet.
- Almost-forgotten skills in building and maintaining unsealed roads have been rediscovered to ensure a comprehensive network of surprising quality, albeit lower than previously.
- There are few schools but self-schooling and neighbourhood classes cater for young people.

(3) Organic New Zealand

- Farmers and horticulturalists are working in a purely organic environment, and low input (organic) farming and a legitimate clean green image gives New Zealand produce an edge in very wealthy markets in the developed world.
- The high prices received mean that biological production once again asserts itself as the mainstay and glamour sector of the New Zealand economy. Service centres for the industry boom and attract people back out of the big cities and countryside. In fact suburbs are demolished to bring fertile land back into production as the rural sector encroaches back into the cities - a reversal of the trend of the twentieth century. Crime relocates to the decaying inner cities. Meanwhile a network of new concrete roads brings wealthy tourists to sample gourmet foods where they are grown. New Zealand cuisine is more famous than the French.

URBAN

Drivers: Demographic change
 Movements of people

(1) **Auckland is all**

- An aging pakeha population has not reproduced at replacement levels whereas Maori and Pacific Nations populations are predominantly young. In fact, the population at most North Island schools is 50:50 Maori:non Maori. The South Island is still predominantly pakeha, but its population is only one fifth of that of the total country. Half of all New Zealanders (about two million) live in Auckland.
- The city of Auckland is choked. Various initiatives to improve traffic have all foundered on the inescapable fact that hundreds of thousands of people still try to funnel into a narrow isthmus at about the same time every day. Other public infrastructure is crumbling as the chickens of years of underinvestment come home to roost. There are however a number of private water supply and sewage treatment schemes for those who can afford them.
- Older people who have been able to save for retirement are clustered in the sunshine cities of Bay of Plenty and Hawkes Bay. However the poorer old have migrated southwards to take up cheaper vacant housing in secondary towns which are slowly dying in every sense. There is little family support due to the breakdown of traditional structures and many older people are single.

(2) **Mainland**

- The age structures of Māori and non-Māori populations are still the mirror image of each other but increased racial tolerance has reduced differences between ethnic groups and created a unique, homogeneous “kiwi” culture. Population is spread much more evenly across the country as significant numbers have migrated out of Auckland to more affordable and less congested areas. As a result, there are viable secondary towns scattered throughout the country. South Island teams have won the Super 12 for the last ten years in a row.
- Auckland’s infrastructure has been maintained in working order thanks to the lessening population pressure and the introduction of new, cheaper technologies. At last traffic gridlock has been solved through a mix of public transport initiatives and the effect of teleworking.

- People have found creative ways to recreate the support traditionally found in families of related people. For example, flatting is popular among people in their seventies and eighties.

(3) Clusters of Growth

- Age profiles have become almost irrelevant as people live so much longer and healthier and participate in the workforce until well into their eighties. National Government is virtually irrelevant as regions have become economically autonomous, each centred on particular industrial “clusters”. For example, the North Shore of Auckland is New Zealand’s equivalent to Silicon Valley, Hamilton is the centre of a Dairy-based nutraceuticals industry, Wellington is the film capital, Christchurch is into electronics and Dunedin genetic engineering. These clusters communicate as much with “sister clusters” in other countries as they do with each other.
- There is great emphasis on “self-discovery” and personal uniqueness so there is a huge variety of lifestyles and unique cultures have grown up around some clusters. This has led to a lot of internal migration within New Zealand as people migrate to live in sympathetic enclaves.

THE ECONOMY

(1) Managed Globalisation

- Significantly increased investment in R&D has increased our international competitive advantage in the food and fibre sectors, and in niche hi-tech industries.
- Government plays a major role in facilitating R&D applications; it also supports new ventures by attracting venture capital from local and overseas investors.
- Reductions in international trade barriers and an increase in Asian living standards have allowed NZ to earn better prices for its food and fibre exports.
- Our competitive advantage in agricultural exports is based on sustainable, non-genetically modified and organic farming practices.
- The main agricultural resource is forestry, which doubles in size by 2011, with the export of more value-added products.
- Tourism, high-technology and knowledge-based production have increased significantly, and comprise the majority of our export earnings.
- Service sector jobs continue to increase at the expense of manufacturing, which has become more focused on low volume, high value technology-based products.
- Value-added tourism is having more impact than any other sector on the strength of our currency, and consequently on the future shape of our economy.

- NZ has significantly improved its ranking on the OECD ladder.

(2) Australia Fair

- NZ has effectively become part of Australia, with NZ businesses investing more in their Australian operations and shifting more activity offshore.
- NZ has become a 'taker' of R&D, not generating new knowledge but adapting what has been developed overseas.
- Our agricultural sector still has a competitive advantage, largely due to new management regimes.
- Further recession has increased the drift of smart New Zealanders to Australia, and the movement of population and business activity to Auckland has slowed down.
- Sydney has become the commercial capital of Australia and NZ, while all banking decisions are driven from Melbourne.
- NZ adopted the Australian dollar as its currency in about 2007, and the NZ economy is strongly influenced by Australian government financial management.
- Australia and NZ have both become republics, but NZ has retained its sovereign independence.
- NZ has successfully marketed itself as a world playground for tourism.
- NZ has maintained its ranking on the OECD ladder.

(3) Out on a Limb

- NZ has continued the pattern it followed from 1985-1999, based on free-market, laissez-faire economic policies.
- Foreign investment in and control of the NZ economy have increased.
- The economic base is still agriculture, and genetically modified food products have become a major proportion of our total output.
- The economy still suffers from fundamental weakness; it is subject to currency fluctuations, and vulnerable to changes in international market conditions.
- The NZ economy is in recession, as high foreign debt causes currency flight; the economic ratings decline.
- Foreign debt forces a major economic meltdown, leading to a major restructuring of the political economy and a change to more interventionist economic management.
- Economic crisis forces NZ to renege on foreign debt, which increases pressure from the Left for a return to domestic ownership of key businesses. Foreign debt is replaced by domestic savings – we are poorer, but more self-sufficient.
- Tourists visit NZ for its 'quaintness' as much as for adventure and scenic holidays.
- NZ's ranking on the OECD ladder has slipped further.