

A Fair Chance for All



New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services

Terms of Reference for Inquiry 2022

Tirohanga Whānui | Overview

Hon. Grant Robertson has asked the Productivity Commission to investigate the drivers and impacts of economic inclusion and social mobility. Drivers in this instance are factors which put momentum behind people participating in the economy, namely welfare. This economic participation is considered to be a driver of social mobility: the ability of an individual, family, or community to earn more and therefore live a more comfortable life. The full terms of reference can be found [here](#).

The purpose is to understand how trends in economic inclusion and social mobility impact on both individuals and population groups, as well as understanding the drivers of persistent disadvantage.

The investigation into drivers is intended to highlight the distinct situations and structures which drive these issues in the distinct cultural and structural environment of Aotearoa. Following on from this, the aim is to provide publicly available recommendations to break the cycle of economic disadvantage, as it relates to economic productivity.

Terms of Reference

- Data and evidence from both prior inquiries and new data from both quantitative/longitudinal data such as the Household Labour Force Survey and qualitative data asking the question “what works?” to lift people out of poverty.
- Establishment of Aotearoa based definitions for economic inclusion, social mobility, and persistent disadvantage.
- Draw on Māori/Pacific approaches to apply both individual and collective lenses to research/analysis, alongside the principles of mana motuhake (collective/self-reliance), rangatiratanga (independence) and mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge).
- Attempt to establish a clear link between reducing persistent disadvantage and direct increases in wellbeing as relates to the He Ara Waiora framework.
- Integrate findings from other Commission inquiries.

The Commission inquiry will also include recommendations on:

- Improvements to current measurement and data collection systems across government departments.
- The way public services are designed, commissioned, funded, and delivered. This analysis applies to public services and not necessarily the public sector.

Tirohanga | Perspective

The terms of reference, while progressive in many areas and certainly intended to create change, are not broad enough to introduce a change in basic assumptions in the economic functions of Aotearoa. An acceptance and commitment to enact te Tiriti o Waitangi and to investigate the structural causes of inequality within our economy will need to be addressed. Based on the ToR this inquiry does not have scope to review or challenge these.

Whai Wāhitanga | Engagement

The draft results of this inquiry are required to be presented to the public for comment on an unspecified date, with the final report due for presentation the Government by 31 March 2023.

Before this time, the Productivity Commission is looking to ‘engage with key interest groups, organisations, and practitioners, across the public, private, not-for-profit, and philanthropic sectors...’ It is unclear what the engagement following on from the publication of these terms of reference will look like, however it will be a chance to provide feedback on the key issues facing our members and those they serve.

The consultation period has concluded for the scope and implementation of this inquiry. NZCCSS were one of those interviewed and who provided a written submission (linked [here](#)). We will continue to look to engage across 2022.