



## Two problems searching for solutions...declining population and growing hate speech

Prof Paul Spoonley, Catalyst Trust Conversation, Monday, November 14

Covid has highlighted two related geopolitical issues that will be the focus of our next Catalyst Trust Conversation: the dependence of high-income countries on migrant workers and the rise of hate speech in the face of ethnic diversity.

New Zealand's leading demographics expert, Prof Paul Spoonley, says labour shortages around the globe caused by Covid border closures highlight a much broader and long-term issue – the decline in fertility and birth rates across much of the developed world.



What will be the impacts on economies that rely on migrant workers, permanent or temporary, low-paid or high skilled? “The significant challenges New Zealand employers are currently seeing from Covid are likely to be ongoing. What might be some solutions?”

He says Covid has exacerbated another issue that started growing during high migration times; anti-diversity politics including misogyny and hate speech against ethnic minorities.

“This is problematic. We saw how serious this can be with the Christchurch Mosque attacks.

How do we respond to hate speech as a society, as individuals? At a fundamental level, how can we have mana-respecting conversations?”

The government recently announced it expects to have draft hate speech legislation to Parliament for debate and passing before the 2023 election. No details as to its likely contents have been released.

*Monday, November 14, 6 – 7.30pm in The Rees Hotel Queenstown's conference room. Registration required [HERE](#) as seats are limited. Please bring cash for your koha. This will be given to the [Whakatipu Wilding Conifer Control Group](#).*

### **Bio**

Distinguished Emeritus Professor Paul Spoonley is New Zealand's leading commentator on population trends. His specialist areas include social change and demography, and how these both impact on policy decisions at the political level. He is the author or editor of 29 books, on subjects from the demographic disruption facing New Zealand, rebooting the regions and the radical right to diversity and racism. He is co-editor of a forthcoming book, *Histories Of Hate*, on extremist groups in New Zealand. He is co-director of He Whenua Taurikura, National Centre of Research Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism.