

generally contributing to economies well into their retirement years. Assuming fixed conditions is an ageist and frankly insulting concept – it essentially treats retirees as useless members of society.

Simplistic dependency ratios used to justify a looming demographic ‘crisis’ are also inherently xenophobic and racist. The Earth’s human population is **nowhere near reaching a peak or decline**, meaning that there is a plentiful pool of able-bodied people of working age in most of the world. The problem of insufficient number of labourers in any one country is then entirely based on a distribution issue – limited or suffocating immigration policies (including welcoming and open refugee policies) could ‘fix’ any labour shortages anywhere with the right policies. There is ample evidence now that **migrants provide net benefits to the receiving economies**, not the other way around.

Talks of demographic crises also ignore the overwhelming benefits population reductions have for the average person (mitigation of climate change and biodiversity loss notwithstanding). Fewer people clamoring for insufficient housing means that lifestyles improve and become more affordable. Fewer people also alleviates potential food-supply and -distribution crises. Fewer people also alleviates a society’s reluctance to welcome foreigners, thereby potentially reducing the incidence of xenophobic, right-wing populism. Fewer people means fewer cars on the streets, easier access to public transportation, freer medical services, and less-competitive educational opportunities. For the average punter, fewer people = better life.



So, why do we constantly hear from our politicians (and their corporate backers) that population declines are ‘bad’? It boils down to the fact that fewer consumers means lower net profits for shareholders. From what I can determine, that’s about it. The mega-rich will be slightly less mega-rich if there is a moderate drop in total number of consumers. Corporate capture of governments worldwide perpetuates the myth that an ageing population is bad for us, when in reality it’s great for us, it’s good for the planet, and it’s only (slightly) bad for them. My heart bleeds.

Don’t believe the ‘crisis’ hype of declining populations. It’s a good thing for everyone.

CJA Bradshaw

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