

**3.2 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St Helier North of the Chief Minister regarding net inward migration (OQ.96/2025):**

Will the Chief Minister advise whether the Council of Ministers has a target for net inward migration, and if not, why not?

**Deputy L.J. Farnham of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (The Chief Minister):**

I understand Deputy Alves will be taking the question.

**Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central (Assistant Chief Minister -rapporteur):**

The Council of Ministers does not have a numeric target for net inward migration. It is a priority for this Council of Ministers to address the needs of our population now and in the future, and the 2024 annual Report on the Common Population Policy set out competing demands of the need for economic growth, the need to maintain affordable living standards, and the need to prepare for our growing aging population. Population policies have an important role to play in all of these areas, however Ministers consider that these population policies need to be flexible so that they can quickly respond to short-term pressures while also supporting long-term aims. A numeric target is not helpful in this situation.

**3.2.1 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:**

What figure is being used to model demand for future services and resources, for example, when building new hospitals, schools, looking at water supplies and drains?

**Deputy C.S. Alves:**

It is difficult to measure at the moment because our population over the last 6 years has changed. From 2029 onwards, the Island's total population has remained relatively static, as has the size of the working population. However, we do have some better data coming from Statistics Jersey, so we are able to be much more responsive than we ever have in the past.

**3.2.2 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

When looking at long-term projections and building in those plans previously, the figure of 325 had been used and continued to be used even after it was no longer seen as a target or an appropriate figure for what was happening on the ground. It was still being used to put into plans for the future. Is that still the case?

**Deputy C.S. Alves:**

We do still have the 325 figure. We also have some other figures as well to ensure that we can plan for whatever is needed. We look at a variety of different figures depending on what may or may not happen and what the needs that we may have to respond to would be based on those figures.

**3.2.3 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:**

I am a little confused by that answer. Perhaps the Minister could explain, when long-term planning decisions are being made around things like service provision and so on, how is it possible to have a variety of different figures for net migration or total population anticipated in the future? How can that be the basis for decision-making?

[9:45]

**Deputy C.S. Alves:**

We have to be quite mindful that obviously population is always changing on a year-to-year basis and, given what has happened in the last 5 to 6 years, it is fairly unpredictable. We are sticking to the 325 figure as the base figure, however we have to be mindful that things could change and they can increase, and so we have to be as responsive as possible to those numbers.

**3.2.4 Deputy J. Renouf:**

The list of reasons that the Minister gave for flexibility were all connected in one way or another to the economy and to meeting needs of society. Does the Minister accept that there is a limit that applies in the other direction as well, which is to do with the environment and to do with the social need to maintain cohesion and so on, that would mean that we would not simply meet every need that would come from economic pressure?

**Deputy C.S. Alves:**

Yes, we are mindful of that and that is why we have done things like ensure that our new Control of Housing and Work Law can be as responsive as possible, and obviously monitoring I think is the key. I think we have never had such rich data as we do now. Previous Governments even before us always had to wait until the census. We are now able to access a lot better data. so that is something that we are mindful of.

**3.2.5 Deputy M.B. Andrews:**

How is the Assistant Chief Minister planning for potential forecasts where we could be potentially seeing net-zero migration forecasts, and what are the implications for individuals who are part of Jersey's labour market? Could they potentially see personal income tax and social security contributions increase?

**Deputy C.S. Alves:**

A lot of those things I cannot comment on because that would be a whole Council of Ministers approach, especially regarding income tax and things like that. However, I think we do all have to work in a holistic way across all departments and find ways to make Jersey as attractive as possible to ensure that people come here. We recognise that, obviously, post-Brexit, it is not as easy for people to come to the Island as it used to be. I think that is where we have got other projects within Government that are looking at ensuring that Jersey is much more attractive, whether that is to do with affordable housing or with our actual infrastructure. I know there is currently a consultation out for Fort Regent, for example. They are all things that we are mindful of, and I think it needs to be a whole cross-government approach.

**Deputy M.E. Millar of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:**

Sir, I have discovered, having made inquiries about Deputy Gorst's absence, I have inadvertently misled the House. I believed that he was travelling on States business, but he is returning from a personal trip today, so he is not on States business and I believe he will be here tomorrow, so I apologise. That is my mistake, I thought he was.

**The Bailiff:**

He is returning from a personal trip?

**Deputy M.E. Millar:**

He is returning from a personal trip, yes, so he is not excusé. I apologise.

**The Bailiff:**

No, it will be en défaut.

**Deputy M.E. Millar:**

Yes.

**The Bailiff:**

Very well. We will amend the records to reflect that accordingly.