

From the early "sixties," however, the Government became directly interested in the encouragement of immigrants to the colony. In 1862 the then Governor, Sir George Grey, arranged for the reception of some German immigrants at the request of a German company. The company found the capital to send the immigrants to New Zealand, who, if approved on arrival, were to receive 1 acre village allotment and 20 acres of country land (plus 1 additional acre for each child) at a cost of £2 per acre. The Provincial Governments agreed to find rations for the immigrants for one year, the costs to be recouped over a period from the immigrants. It was proposed to settle five hundred of these immigrants in Taranaki to form a military settlement, but the plan was not proceeded with owing to the outbreak of hostilities with the Maoris and the non-agreement of the company to the conditions imposed by the New Zealand Government.

The next year, 1863, a Danish company arranged for 150 Danish immigrants to come to New Zealand. The Government, on its part, agreed to find 40 acres per immigrant in the Waikato and also to pay one-half of the passage-money. The Government stipulated that the age of the males was to be under forty.

For the first time, in 1863, the Government decided actively to encourage immigration. The chief motive behind this move was the recognition that peace in the North Island could be maintained only if a larger European population were available so that strong settlements in certain districts could be founded. The policy was to encourage labourers, mechanics, small farmers, and capitalists [*sic*]. For the first two classes the Government offered either to pay all the passage-money and grant a few acres of land, or half the passage-money and grant a larger area (say, twenty-five acres) of land. As a further inducement the Government promised that there would be no unemployment, as public works would be undertaken on a large scale. In general, emphasis was to be placed on the character of the immigrants with a view to the building-up of a well-balanced nation. It is interesting to notice that in defining the types of labourers required the Government specified that people who would work in manufacture, shops, or warehouses were not suitable, but that labourers who were qualified as bricklayers, carpenters, miners, masons, wheelwrights, and as agricultural and railway workers were urgently required. While married men were not disqualified, it was specified that people with more than two children were not acceptable. With this qualification, men and women in equal numbers were desired. As an inducement the Government was prepared to make allowances of up to £15 for the erection of houses—repayable in monthly instalments. In general, it was proposed to create self-supporting settlements with a view to opening up the country. It was agreed that in the early years the immigrants would be engaged chiefly on public works, but it was considered not desirable to encourage immigrants to remain as public-works employees. Immigrants, if acceptable to a board of examiners in England, were required to pay a deposit at the rate of £1 for each male and 10s. for each female over the age of fifteen. Free passages from England to Auckland and from Auckland to the place of settlement were granted by the Government. Settlements were to be surveyed and prepared by the Government, and were to consist of town, suburban, and farm sections. Each settler was to have town, suburban, and farm sections, and if he repaid half his passage-money within three months he was entitled to one ten-acre-farm section for himself and one five-acre-farm section for each child over twelve. When such grant was made, the settler was not permitted to leave his district for three years.

To encourage the larger agriculturalist the Government was prepared to make a free grant of land, not exceeding 500 acres, to encourage further land development.

In 1864 an Immigration Board was established in England and a sum of £200,000 was set aside for immigration purposes. The administration of the settlement was left to the provinces, which were authorized to recoup their expenses either from the sale of land within their borders or from their ordinary revenues.

All four provinces in the North Island pursued an active policy of encouraging immigration, Wellington and Hawke's Bay particularly obtaining large loans for public works and settling immigrants. In Auckland immigrants were impoverished because of a lack of a public-works policy.