

**From:**  
**To:** [Committee, Migration \(REPS\)](#)  
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In regards to addressing the scope of migration policy to more effectively target skills gaps and shortages in critical sectors, dog walkers are on the short listed skill list. There are a range of so-called skills on the short list that are not skilled work. Clearly defined constraints on what can or cannot be included in the skills shortlist are needed in legislation. A professional skill requiring a period of study, apprenticeship or professional education pathway of no less than 1 year for example. For example you can become a certified specialist professional welder in India in less than 2 months. A massage therapist in Thailand in 3 days. These are unskilled workers with a short course under their belt. Australia needs domestic pathways for training and credentialing for semi skilled work. These foreign run courses are so much more efficient that they are able to somehow not run the full-time equivalent of a solid year of OH&S courses required in Australian TAFE courses.

In regards to the scope for skilled migration settings to more effectively support Australian businesses and boost productivity. Constant high flows of migrants provide a disposable source of labor for businesses and labor competition for jobs that removes the need for businesses to engage in inclusive or sustainable employment practices. It has also transformed the cost of workplace training where Australia was once a leader into exploitative labor practices masquerading as training that has been a huge boon for business. Business owners can officially advertise low wages for a position that requires no higher education but the domestic criteria requires a high level of education and instead cry labor shortage and hire someone with false papers from a degree mill to fill that position to game the migration system. They also pay a much higher income tax rate when non-citizens. The suppression of wage growth and labor costs boosts productivity and supports Australian businesses.

In regards to strategies to enhance public awareness and understanding of the role of skilled migration in Australia. The role of skilled migrants is not well understood and there is often policy misdirection and misinformation spread by policy makers and business leaders in this regard. We need to understand turnover of the migrant labor pool better. I believe it's important for the ABS to attempt to understand why so many young parent skilled migrants leave Australia. Strategically it's a no-brainer to raise children in Australia. No grenade lobbing gangs or cannibal warlords like the streets of Paris. No serious childhood illnesses like endemic polio, malaria or tuberculosis. No tent cities, no military crackdowns where students are gunned down or must flee through underground sewers like the U.S.A. No harsh winters like Canada. No civil wars. No draft. We really need a much deeper understanding of the decision making arithmetic. The key question that will reveal the role of skilled migrant workers is, "Why do they leave?"

In regards to approaches taken in other countries with similar migration objectives. In the U.S.A., Leader of the Free World, His Excellency President Donald Trump enacted reforms by presidential decree to the H-1B visa program. This maintains access to skilled immigrant labor while adding price parity. Prior to the reforms, something that was held to be exotic, special and rare was cheaper than the common and mundane yet there is no such thing as a free lunch so this market where diamonds are cheaper than garnet was a clear distortion of the market.

Various commentators weighed in on the subject. There has been billionaires Trey Parker and Matt Stone who are currently facing criticism for unfair labor practices<sup>1</sup> with, "Dey took 'er jerbs!! Durka der!!" Elon musk argued<sup>2</sup>,

"...Some companies out there... [fillers] They're making it more of a cost thing. [fillers] If they can employ someone for a fraction of the cost of an American citizen then [fillers] these other companies would hire people just to save costs but at my companies the issue is we just are

trying to get the most talented people in the world and we pay way above average."

Dr. Ron Hira, associate professor in the Department of Political Science at Howard University said<sup>3</sup>,

"So the workers are — can be easily exploited because they can be paid less, and they're also indentured to their employers, because the visa is actually held, their work permit and legal status in the U.S. is held by the employer, not by the worker themselves.

So they're really cheaper and indentured workers competing sort of head to head with U.S. workers. That distorts the labor market. It's bad for those guest workers who are being underpaid, but it's also bad for the U.S. economy and for U.S. workers who are competing with them, because it drives down the wages for U.S. workers and it also eliminates many job opportunities for those workers....

Now, in terms of wages, the prevailing wage sounds like a market wage, but it's actually artificially set by the Labor Department. And it's set way below what an American worker would earn. And so what happens is employers can hire these workers at below-market wages, bypass the U.S. labor market. They're not — they can even replace their U.S. workers, which happen quite frequently.

There's a huge business model around that....

And so this isn't really about innovation. There's certainly very talented people who come on the H-1B. Maybe that's an aspiration, but in fact that part of what the proclamation, the executive order that was issued, was to fix that prevailing wage, to raise those wages very significantly, to be much more selective, to ensure that these workers are actually — that are being imported, the guest workers, are actually filling real labor market gaps where there aren't U.S. workers available."

In order to fix the distortions in the labor market I would venture that a reasonable solution would be to require skilled migrants to be paid wages at a rate of at least 150% after deductions and tax of what a domestic worker in a similar situation would be paid. Violations must be dealt with swiftly with steep administrative penalties. These superior wages for superior personnel could be decided at the time of sponsorship of an application. This fair labor pricing would not be a penalty. It would simply be paying a fair wage for a superior worker. Incentivize businesses to inform domestic educational institutions of their labor requirements and better reveal deficiencies in real labor and skills shortages while incentivizing businesses to build the internal capacity to upskill workers for their requirements. We need to restore the duties and obligations of the first and second estates as the managerial classes.

In the United Kingdom, there was some miscategorization where dental nurses and ticket attendants were incorrectly lumped together with dentists and logistics experts so it became an easy migration pathway to study for one of those and enter as though they were a dentist which is actually in short supply in the UK. As a result the universities were training too many international students for jobs and migration pathways that didn't exist. They're also looking at imposing financial disincentives on universities to curb student exploitation.<sup>4</sup>

The Netherlands sets a threshold of a minimum annual salary of AUD\$113k or AUD\$50k for dutch graduates. For reference, supermarket shelf stackers make slightly more than AUD\$50k a year so this is not a wage appropriate for a graduate or "Highly skilled migrant." The system is highly vulnerable to fraud with ministerial investigations revealing highly skilled migrants being brought in under the scheme being employed as, "hairdressers, cable layers, cleaners, payroll workers, hospitality sector workers and nail salon workers."<sup>5</sup> They introduced trivial and insignificant increases to the salary threshold that still do not reflect the wages of a "Highly skilled worker."

Germany recently successfully negotiated for more favorable terms with India for the deportation of Indian migrants. One might be confused by Article 107 resulting in the overly immigration positive impression from German news outlets that have reported this as a planned increase in Indian immigration. It is not. The agreement aims to tackle human trafficking and to instead obtain more properly vetted highly skilled migrants. The purpose of their highly skilled immigration scheme is not to obtain Indians but to obtain exceptionally talented international workers. Some may happen to be Indian. They have also made drastic changes to family visas suggesting an actual goal is less Indians.<sup>6</sup>

A comprehensive review of this subject, as mentioned in the references, is to review the prior international student<sup>7 8 9</sup> and labor hire inquiries in order to understand this as the inevitable consequence of poor regulation of those sectors as many foreign jurisdictions have done. Part of the solution is to form working agreements where the foreign jurisdiction participates in the verification of candidates - something as simple as their foreign department calling the high school to ask if they passed English or interviewing them in English- to avoid international incidents and that is the current trend in international diplomacy.

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