

Migration System for Australia's Future Submission

What reforms are needed to ensure the migration system can meet the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead?

The main reason for my public submission is to bring light to the complete lack of local consultation, from a citizen's perspective, on the level of our migration. We currently operate in a 2-party political system where the likelihood of any independent group taking power being virtually nonexistent. Further the 2 major political parties roughly receive around 30% of the vote each yet can form government.

Given that our 2 major political parties favor high levels of migration, typically the highest of all OECD countries, the local populace has no say in this at all. I would suggest that any review in Australia's migration type and levels include a public referendum per decade to reassess the desired levels required.

The outlook on migration, including the discussion paper is on economic outlook and how Australia can be desirable for migrants, but not the existing population. The paper does not address overpopulation, destruction of the environment, lack of housing or a drop in standard of living. If you are looking to strengthen public confidence, consultation would be key and even more so if you included a say.

The population growth and demographic changes of the migration program since the end of the Howard era has had a profound impact on the local culture, both socially and in workplaces. The system is also currently set up that any contest to these changes is considered discriminatory to the migrant populace, further stifling mature debate on this topic. These cultural differences and the large levels of migration from vastly different historical cultures has seen the formation of enclaves within Australia. While the 20th century migration allowed and ensured social cohesion by a slower pace, the current levels are creating parallel societies within the country. This needs to be addressed to improve public confidence.

Pertaining to the migration of the previous 2 decades is also the evidence that people are not working in the fields they were given citizenship for. Business leaders have pointed this out though this is also evident to the normal person, by low skilled work being filled by recent migrants. I do agree we need workers in these fields, but I think the answer pertains to improving local attitudes, which is a different topic. Part of this is due to the assessment that people are qualified for a job on formal qualifications alone. Communication is clearly lacking as a key indicator of job suitability when assessing migrant intake. Now that migration predominantly comes from Eastern cultures with both different language and cultural backgrounds to the West, it is creating more barriers for people to work cohesively. English comprehension is very different to being able to speak a language, particularly when communication more advance ideas within a workplace. There needs to be a key shift where this is taken more comprehensively into consideration. Further now that migrants can live in complete parallel communities to the traditional Australian culture, they do not need to socially integrate either, further creating disparities within workplaces. These issues continue to grow because of high-level intake, which needs to be reconsidered.

The other issue with the migration system moving forward is the complete lack of acceptance that migrants do also age. Unless the long term vision for Australia is that it will continue to grow its populace indefinitely for centuries ahead, it essentially runs as a Ponzi scheme. Given the fact this is not possible, measures should be taken now to try to stabilise Australia's

population while keeping it economically viable. Migration will play an important part in this as we transition to a more sustainable model. The Nordic countries are a great example of success with a lower population, while their countries are centuries older.

In summary

- There is no public say in migration type/amount and a referendum should be done every decade to improve public confidence, given it is the most pivotal change to our country's identity
- Migration policy needs further input on environmental destruction, lack of housing and how it effects standard of living on metrics outside GDP
- Communication and English comprehension needs a larger focus when accepting migrants, particularly for the higher skilled work
- Australia's migration model needs to address when population will stabilise and shift its attitude towards that in a long term plan