

Migration Strategy

On the 11th of December 2023, the Minister for Home Affairs, Clare O'Neil released Australia's Migration Strategy, available [here](#).

The strategy is underpinned by five core objectives:

- **Raising living standards for Australians** by boosting productivity, meeting skills shortages and supporting exports.
- **Ensuring a fair go in the workplace** by complementing the jobs, wages and conditions of all workers and preventing migrant worker exploitation.
- **Building stronger Australian communities** by better planning the migration intake, and giving migrants the opportunity to invest in their lives in Australia through permanent residence and citizenship.
- **Strengthening international relationships** by building stronger economic and social connections with our region and international partners.
- **Making the system work** by being fast, efficient and fair for migrants and employers.

A roadmap comprising 8 key actions has been developed to achieve the five core objectives.

1. Targeting temporary skilled migration to address skills needs and promote worker mobility

Commitments include:

- Raising the Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT) from \$53,900 to \$70,000.
- A new Specialist Skills Pathway to attract highly skilled workers.
- A Core Skills Pathway to meet targeted workforce needs.
- New visa settings that give migrant workers more mobility in the labour market.
- Streamlined labour market testing and visa processing.

2. Reshaping permanent skilled migration to drive long-term prosperity

The Government has highlighted two priorities for future reform:

- A reformed points test for permanent skilled migration.
- A new Talent and Innovation visa for migrants who can drive growth in sectors of national importance.

3. Strengthening the integrity and quality of international education

Commitments include:

- Higher English language requirements for international students and graduates
- More targeted scrutiny of student visa applications from high-risk providers and a \$19m investment into the Home Affairs student visa integrity unit

- Restrictions on onshore visa hopping that undermines system integrity and drives ‘permanent temporariness’
- Strengthened and simplified Temporary Graduate visa settings

4. Tackling worker exploitation and the misuse of the visa system

The Government has committed to:

- Introducing legislation, new powers and larger penalties to punish unscrupulous employers and migration agents.
- Supporting migrant workers by introducing protections against visa cancellation and giving migrants opportunities where they have experienced exploitation
- Establishing real-time priority processing of Protection visa applications
- Creating a united intelligence, investigations and compliance capability in the Department of Home Affairs.
- A new public register of employer sponsors to improve integrity and support migrant worker mobility

The Migration Review highlights improving post-arrival monitoring and compliance including through coordination with the tax system as an area of future reform.

5. Planning migration to get the right skills in the right places

The Government has committed to:

- A longer-term, evidence-based approach to planning migration that closely collaborates with states and territories and ensures population planning is based on the best available population data and forecasts.
- Establishing a formal role for Jobs and Skills Australia in defining Australia’s skills needs using evidence, including advice from tripartite mechanisms

6. Tailoring regional visas and the Working Holiday Maker Program to support regional Australia and its workers

The Government has committed to:

- Increased skilled migration to help meet labour shortages in regional Australia.
- Designating visa processing to regional Australia as the highest processing priority.
- Evaluating regional migration settings and the Working Holiday Maker program to ensure migration supports development objectives in regional Australia and does not contribute to the exploitation of migrant workers.

7. Deepening our people-to-people ties in the Indo-Pacific

Existing Government commitments include:

- A direct pathway to Australian citizenship for eligible New Zealanders to reflect the strong ties between our two countries

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- A Reformed the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Scheme
- Providing a special visa arrangement for Tuvalu citizens under a bilateral treaty, the Australia Tuvalu Falepili Union
- Making it easier for Southeast Asian businesses and eminent people to travel to Australia

8. Simplifying the migration system to improve the experience for migrants and employers

The Government has committed to:

- Modernising the visa system experience for migrants and employers
- The removal of 20+ unnecessary and duplicative visas to simplify the visa system.

For more information, please contact Hawker Britton's Managing Director Simon Banks on +61 419 638 587.