

Multiculturalism in Australia: Migration Policy and Its Economic Benefits

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Multiculturalism is "the practice of giving importance to all cultures in a society" (Oxford Dictionary). According to this quotation, people from various countries exist together in multicultural society and accept various cultures and values of each other's countries. Also, in recent years, people think it is important to understand various cultures in an increasingly globalized world. The United States and Canada are typical examples of multicultural countries; however, these are just the most well-known examples among many multicultural countries in the world. Australia is also one of the most successful multicultural countries. According to Australian Bureau of Statistics, currently, about 30 percent of the population in Australia were born in foreign countries (Migration, Australia). British people are the largest group of overseas-born living in Australia. Originally, Australia has built a deeper connection with England, so British people account for the highest rate of the total; however, the rate dropped from about a million recorded between 2012 and 2016. Following England, China was 2.7 percent, and India was

2.6 percent (Migration, Australia). Both of these countries have remained at a higher rate with strong growth in recent years. Statistics also show that Asian countries have a strong connection with Australia. Also, there are a lot of migrants as workers, and rapid economic growth is associated with them. Australia's migration policy includes three categories of migrants: Skill category, Family category and Humanitarian category. Especially, Australia puts effort into the Skill category to receive highly skilled migrants. Because of accepting these immigrants, Australia succeeded in meeting demand for the labor force. Also, if more migrants come to Australia, there is an increased consumption because the population is increasing. As a result, the economy has grown significantly. According to Australian Government, during the last 30 years, Australia's economic growth rate has averaged 3.2 percent, and it is higher than every other major developed economy in the world (Why Australia). Also, the migrants who come to Australia are relatively young people, so they contribute to reducing the effect of the aging society. Clearly, it is no exaggeration to say the economy of Australia is supported by migrants, especially those who belong to the Skill category.

The purpose of this essay is to explore Australia's migration policy, especially the skill category, in order to understand how the policy works for Australia. Also, in this essay, "the migration point system" and "the 457 visa" (changed to TSS visa in 2018) are explored in detail to understand the migration policy in Australia. The migration policy and the system are the

reasons why Australia has become one of the most successful multicultural countries in the world.

Australia is widely considered as a successful multicultural country; however, originally, it was not tolerant for accepting immigrants. Actually, in the 19th century, Australia adopted a policy which was far from multiculturalism - the White Australia policy. Australia originally had been a colony of England until the Commonwealth of Australia was established in 1901. It is important to understand Australia's history to know the reason why Australia became a multicultural country. In 1770, the British explorer James Cook landed at Botany Bay and decided to take possession of the land as a colony of England. This was the first time for Europeans to come to Australia. After a while, Captain Arthur Phillip arrived at Sydney Cove and established the first settlement in Australia. In the beginning, Australia was a place to accommodate criminals from England and Ireland because the prisons in England had become overcrowded at that time. According to Australian National Maritime Museum, "from 1788 to 1868 Britain transported more than 160,000 convicts from its overcrowded prisons to the Australian colonies, forming the basis of the first migration from Europe to Australia." (Australia's Immigration History) After a while, not only people who were captured as criminals, but also settlers from England settled down in Australia, and the British constitution and parliamentary system were introduced. In 1851, many people from various countries, especially Chinese people, came to Australia aiming to become rich quickly in the Gold

Rush. They worked actively to mine gold. Originally, non-Europeans were also allowed to come to Australia; however, because of the Gold Rush, white people were afraid of losing their jobs to the Chinese, so they felt like they should have excluded Chinese people from Australia. This is the beginning of "White Australian policy." In 1901, the Commonwealth of Australia was established, and at that time, the Immigration Restriction Act was also enacted, so non-Europeans were prohibited to come to Australia. Afterwards, Australia participated in World War I and World War II. Taking this opportunity, "Australian multiculturalism" was started. Australia needed laborers from other countries to revive the domestic economy because Australia had a small population under the influence of all-out war. Therefore, Australia came to accept immigrants positively, so non-Europeans were able to come to Australia again. As a result, Australian people felt like they should abolish White Australian policy. Also, by building a strong link with Asian cultures, people came to think all people in Australia were treated fairly regardless of their race. Finally, the White Australian policy was abolished in 1972. Today, immigration plays an important role in Australia's social and economic life and all Australian people are guaranteed by law that they have equal rights regardless of race, color of skin, gender, and age. While people in modern times think Australia is a multicultural country, it originally established the White Australia Policy and the Immigration Restriction Act, which did not allow non-Europeans to come to Australia; however, these policies are abolished after World War

, and Australia started to become a multicultural country. In the next section, this essay describes more deeply how Australia's multiculturalism was established.

Gough Whitlam was a politician who led Australia's multiculturalism. He served as prime minister of Australia during 1972 to 1975. The Whitlam government accepted multiculturalism positively and introduced some migration policies. Actually, some parts of the White Australia policy had been removed before the Whitlam government was set up; however, discrimination against immigrants was remained. The Whitlam government tried to remove this discrimination. For example, the eligibility for citizenship was applied equally for all migrants through the Australian Citizenship Act, which the Whitlam government passed in 1973. Originally, immigrants from non-commonwealth nations were allowed to acquire eligibility for citizenship if they resided in Australia for five years. On the other hand, the immigrants from commonwealth nations could be eligible after they resided in Australia for one year. In the Australian Citizenship Act, the Whitlam government declared that all immigrants were eligible after they resided in Australia for three years. The Whitlam government also put emphasis on immigrant support services. Multicultural radio stations and telephone translation services were introduced to support immigrants in Australia (A Multicultural Australia) The government also concentrated on the educational support for migrant children. According to Whitlam Institute within Western

Sydney University, "the Whitlam Government also provided additional educational support for migrant children, with additional teachers, learning spaces, and specialised classes for new migrants at school." (A Multicultural Australia) Also, he decided to accept Vietnamese refugees after the Vietnam War in 1975. Through accepting the refugees, he succeeded in abolishing the White Australia policy, and as a result, it enabled Australia to become a multicultural country. In 1973, Al Grassby, who was the minister for immigration under the Whitlam Government, argued the importance of accepting multiculturalism. He also presented "multiculturalism" as the basis for immigrant settlement, welfare and social cultural policy in his speech entitled A Multi-Cultural Society for the Future ("A review of Australia policy statements"). In this speech, he argued that people in Australia should be treated equally if they have different cultural backgrounds. The Whitlam government succeeded in removing the discrimination against immigrants and introduced some policies for migrants while arguing that cultural difference in Australia should be accepted.

The Galbally report was presented as the real foundation report of multiculturalism. In 1978, this report was represented by Frank Galbally, who was a Melbourne barrister, and it worked to promote Australia's multiculturalism. This report was uniquely published in Arabic, German, Greek, Italian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese. These are the parts of the report:

- a) all members of our society must have equal opportunity

- to realize their full potential and must have equal access to programs and services;
- b) every person should be able to maintain his or her culture without prejudice or disadvantage and should be encouraged to understand and embrace other cultures;
 - c) needs of migrants should, in general, be met by programs and services available to the whole community but special services and programs are necessary at present to ensure equality of access and provision;
 - d) services and programs should be designed and operated in full consultation with clients, and self-help should be encouraged as much as possible with a view to helping migrants to become self-reliant quickly.

(Jupp 84)

In this report, it was guaranteed that all people in Australia were treated equally. The report argued that people who seriously needed help were those who did not have English skills. Originally, the British migrants could receive support; however, the migrant assistance was delivered to non-British migrants after the Galbally report was represented. According to *From White Australia to Woomera*, "The Galbally report goes well beyond a new structure for migrant welfare delivery in its discussion of multiculturalism and the media" (Jupp 85). With the introduction of the Galbally report, migrants were treated equally, and multiculturalism was promoted. Multiculturalism was accepted for Australians gradually in 1970, especially under the Whitlam government, and the Galbally report indicated that

people had to help immigrants and live while respecting each other in Australia's growing multicultural society. In the next section, this essay describes the current status of Australia's multiculturalism.

Immigrants who come to Australia are increasing year by year. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, "more than 7.5 million people living in Australia in 2019 were born overseas, with those born in England continuing to be the largest group" ("Australia's Population"). These figures show that just under 30 percent of the population of Australia were born in foreign countries. Originally, immigrants from England or Europe have accounted for the majority of Australia's overseas-born residents. However, in recent years, there have been some changes in the composition of the influx of immigrants. Although there are still a lot of British immigrants, the numbers from England and Europe are declining compared with the past, and immigrants from Asia, particularly China and India, are increasing. According to the Parliament of Australia, it is said that "In terms of new (permanent) migrants, for the first time in Australia's history, entrants from China overtook those from the UK in 2010-11" ("Migration-Australian migration flows and population, Philips and Simon-Davies"). Not only that, migrants from India overtook migrants from China and England for the first time in 2012. It shows that these Asian countries and Australia have good relationships. Originally, it was mainstream for Australia to trade with European countries; however, England, which had been associated with Australia for

a long time, joined the EU in 1973 and boosted its relationship with European countries more than with Australia. Therefore, Australia also came to trade with Asian countries which were close to Australia. By trading with these countries, there was a great benefit for Australia because of reduced costs and transportation time for trading goods. Thanks to trading with Asian countries, the connection between Australia and Asian countries was getting stronger. Also, China and India are known as countries which give high priority to education. Therefore, highly educated migrants come to Australia as workers. The number of migrants is increasing, especially from Asia recently, and Australia has become one of the most successful multicultural countries. The next section describes about the migration policy of Australia.

The three categories of migrants in the Australian migration policy are the Skill category, Family category and Humanitarian category. The migration policy was introduced in the 1990s. The skill category requires people who are educated people or skilled workers. They are needed as workers to contribute to the labour market in Australia. The family category is mainly people who have family relationships with migrants in the skill category. If the category did not exist, migrants of the skill category might hesitate to live in Australia. Therefore, this category is needed for Australia to attract skilled workers. Humanitarian indicates political refugees and economic refugees. Australia has put special effort into the Skill category making it the main category of migrants in Australia. This category accounts

for about 50 percent of migrants, and the rate is increasing year by year. It is predicted that the number will increase more and more in the future. According to Australia's Immigration Revolution, in 1999 to 2000, there were 38,000 in the Skill category; however, there were 98,000 in 2006 to 2007 ("Table 4.3," Markus, Jupp and McDonald 59). Compared with this, the number of people in the Humanitarian category has not changed in a decade. This shows how Australia tries to have the migrants who belong to the Skill categories. Also, the Skill category has several sub-categories. The largest sub-category, Skilled Independent, accounts for about 50 percent of the Skill category (Markus, Jupp and McDonald 60). The second largest sub-category consists of various types of Employer Nominations and accounts for about 25 percent of the total. These are skilled persons who qualify mainly on the basis that they have a job with an Australian employer for at least three years and are sponsored by their employer (Markus, Jupp and McDonald 60). Skilled Australian Sponsored category which is similar to Skilled Independent category accounts for over 15 percent of the total. This category requires the people who satisfy a migration points test similar to that of the Skilled Independent. However, they have additional points because Australian residents sponsor them, which is described below. The sub-national State/Territory Sponsored category is the next largest. The Business Skills category accounts for 6 percent of the total, and these are persons who enter on the basis that they will open a business in Australia, and they have assets of at least 500,000 dollars that

can be moved to Australia in a two-year period (Markus, Jupp and McDonald 60, 61). The Family category accounts for 40 percent of migrants. Most migrants who belong to the Family category consist of spouses and partners of Australian citizens or permanent residents. The category of spouses and partners is not limited and rises according to the number of Australians who want their partners who are not from Australia to live with them in Australia. At first, spouses or partners of Australians are provided with a temporary two years of residence. If the relationship between Australians and their overseas partner is not changed at the end of this period, they are confirmed as permanent residents. Only 10 percent of migrants are granted entry in the Humanitarian category. One of the famous refugee groups was the Vietnam refugees, who were accepted by Australia after the Vietnam war. It shows how Australia put effort into the Skill category to secure the labor force. Australia has three categories of the migration policies; however, it is clear that the Skill category is recognized as the most important category, and the Family category is also necessary to keep the migrants of the Skill category in Australia.

The migration point system is a system to secure skilled workers and educated people efficiently. It was released in the 1970s when Australia abolished its White Australian policy. By removing the system, Australia had a strong association with non-European countries, especially Asian countries. The migration point system was effective to explain that Australia abolished Immigration Restriction Act and indicate that migration

selection was changed and newly based not on race but on ability. "Skills for the migration points system are based on a listing, the Migration Occupations in Demand List. This list, published on the website of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, is revised twice a year according to perceived labour market shortages" (Markus, Jupp and McDonald 61). At first glance, it seems like a system to acquire migrants who have high-level academic skills. Of course, highly educated people are accepted positively; however, "skill" does not necessarily mean high-level academic or professional skills. Actually, occupations such as painters, gardeners, cooks and bakers are included in the list. There are eleven categories in the migration point system: Age; English language skills; skilled employment experience, which is divided into overseas skilled employment and Australia skilled employment; educational qualifications; specialist education qualification; Australian study requirement; professional year in Australia; credentialed community language; study in regional Australia; and partner skills. Applicants have to score 65 points or more in these categories. For example, the Age category is divided in four categories. People who are 25-32 years old are given 30 points, and it is the highest point in the Age category. The second highest point is 25 points, and it is applicable to 18-24 years old and 33-39 years old. Finally, the category of 40-45 years old is given 15 points (Points table for Skilled Independent visa (subclass 189)). Clearly, it can be seen that Australia requires young people because they are valued as skilled workers. Among the eleven categories, the partner skill

category seems strange because the category is not about the applicants, but the partner or spouses. According to Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, this category is divided into three parts. First, it accounts for 10 points of the total. This is conditions about the category:

Partner skills:

1. are under 45 years old,
2. have competent English,
3. have nominated a skilled occupation list as your nominated skilled occupation,
4. have a suitable skills assessment from the relevant assessing authority for their nominated skilled occupation, and the assessment wasn't for a Subclass 485 visa.

("Points Table for Skilled Independent Visa" [subclass 189])

Second, the spouses or de facto partners need competent English skills. This gives 5 points. Finally, if he/she is single or if the partner of the applicant is an Australian citizen or permanent resident, the applicant receives 10 points. This category allows the de facto partner or spouse of the applicant to get the visa; however, people have to meet age, English and skill criteria to obtain the highest points. The migration policy was introduced to promote accepting immigrants, and Australia succeeded in acquiring people who are educated professionals or skilled workers.

The "457 visa" is a special long-term temporary visa, which is another migration system to acquire skilled workers. Until the middle of 1990s, Australia gave strong importance to permanent

migration, so at that time, the rate of long-term temporary migrants was small. Australia has to accept migrants more and more to meet the labour demand: "In order to compete for those with the highest skills in the global labor market, the decision was made in the middle of 1990s that a form of temporary skilled migration was required" (Markus, Jupp and McDonald 62). It is said that the recruitment of temporary migrants could be streamlined in a market where speed is regarded as important. Therefore, Australia succeeded in having temporary skilled migration more efficiently. Also, thanks to the scheme, multinational companies could move their employees into and out of Australia more easily. According to Australia's immigration Revolution, the number of 457 visas rose from zero in the middle of 1990s to around 32,000 in 2001-2002 and to 111,000 in 2007-2008. Also, in 2009, 58,000 people applied for this visa as primary applicants (Markus, Jupp and McDonald 63). Most applicants of the 457 visa must have been in the four occupational skill groups: managers, professionals, associate professionals and skilled trades. It was the same as applicants for permanent residence. The partners and spouses of people who have 457 visa were also allowed to work in Australia, and it was said that they usually had high skills as well. If people hold a 457 visa, they can remain in Australia for up to four years. Also, they could apply for another 457 visa at completion if they want to stay in Australia. Not only that, 457 visa holders were allowed to apply for permanent residence. Around 25 percent of 457 visa holders were people from England. India, Philippines, South Africa and China were

recognized as other prominent countries. These countries were also prominent in the permanent migration stream as well, although advanced countries like the United States, Canada, Germany and Japan did not figure prominently in the permanent migration stream (Markus, Jupp and McDonald). Therefore, the temporary migration scheme could have connection with the labour markets of these countries. 457 visas were abolished in 2018, and Temporary Skill Shortage visas (TSS visa) were newly introduced. The visa includes Short-Term stream (up to 2 years) and Medium-Term stream (up to 4 years). As the main improvement points, it contains stricter rules of the occupation list. It allowed entry for people who did not have job careers when they applied for the 457 visa. However, at least two years of work experience of the related job is required. Besides, there are some new rules: the mandatory submission of a police clearance certificate and a reinforcement of English skills. By accepting the new visa, Australia has succeeded in having skilled workers more efficiently. The 457 visa was abolished in 2018; however, it was recognized as an effective way to secure skilled people, and the TSS visa also contributes to accepting skilled people.

Migrants in Australia succeeded to meet demand of the Labor market in Australia and develop the economy. Actually, in 2017, it was recognized that Australia's economy had been experiencing continuous growth, and it broke the record held by the Netherlands ("How Australia broke the record for economic growth"). According to Australia's Immigration Revolution, it

is said that "Migration is the only way that Australia can meet labour demands effectively in the medium and long term" (Markus, Jupp and McDonald 67). Thanks to increased migrants, the economy of Australia developed, especially by the migrants who belong to the skill category, those who are educated people or have high skills as workers. Therefore, these excellent migrants help to improve Australia's economy. It is predicted that the migrants who meet labour demand will increase in the future: "By 2050, migration will have increased the rate of labour participation by 15.7 percent, or approximately 0.4 percent per year" (The Economic impact of Immigration). Also, by consulting data, Australia tries to get skilled people efficiently. In recent years, the food service industry of Australia is in a labor shortage, so people who have cooking skills are in demand. Actually, there are a lot of ethnic restaurants in Australia such as Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese. As the multicultural society progresses, it must be inevitable that various cultures, such as food are needed. To meet labour demands is one of the biggest benefits of migration policy, and especially skilled people contribute to Australia as a labour force.

Migrants contribute to increase productivity in Australia. If a lot of migrants come to Australia, consumer spending in the country increases. As a result, the economy is getting better. Actually, the birthrate of Australia is decreasing, so if Australia stops accepting migrants from other countries, the population will be reduced. Also, because of decreasing consumption in

Australia, the domestic productivity decline. Therefore, it is impossible to develop the economy. Thus, accepting migrants is very important for Australia not only to meet the labour demand, but also to encourage consumption and promote productivity. "By 2050, migration will continue 40 percent to GDP in a multi-trillion dollar economy, with a per capita GDP benefit of 5.9 percent" (The Economic Impact of migration). This analysis shows that more and more immigrants will come to Australia in the future, so the consumption will be also increasing. Since Australia adopted a migration policy, it has become successful in recruiting the people who contribute to Australia as a labour force; however, not only that, migrants also contribute to encourage domestic consumption, and thanks to that, Australia succeeds to promote productivity.

The migrants in Australia have prevented an aging society. According to *From White Australia to Woomera*, "there is a case that the first 50,000 to 100,000 migrants have a worthwhile impact on reducing the aging of the population" (Jupp 171). Australia positively accepts the migration of the Skill category, and the rate of age is relatively young. Therefore, Australia is successful in having young people, and it connects to reducing the effect of the aging society. The aging problem is a serious problem in a lot of developed countries; however, the population of Australia is aging gradually compared with other developed countries. Also, according to Jupp, the net migration of 80,000 is necessary to avoid population decline and substantial falls in the size of the labour force (Jupp 171). Australia has to have young

people not only to develop the economy, but also to reduce aging, and if it can be more successful, Australia would be a more developed country. Also, according to The New York Times, 70 percent of migrants to Australia are skilled at working age (Australian Government Acknowledges Immigrants Are Boon to Economy). Therefore, immigrants contribute to slowing the aging population because they are associated with less spending per person on social services like health care. It is no exaggeration to say that accepting the young skilled people using the migration points system contributes to not only the economy of Australia, but also reducing the effect of the aging society.

In conclusion, this essay discusses the migration policy in Australia and how immigrants contribute to Australia's economy. Australia originally was not a multicultural country and adopted some policies such as the White Australian Policy and the Immigration Restriction Act. However, it gradually accepted migrants from other countries. Also, the Whitlam government started accepting the Vietnams refugees in 1975, so the White Australia Policy was abolished completely, and the migrants from various countries, including Asian countries, are allowed to come to Australia. Under the Whitlam government, migration support services, Multicultural radio stations and telephone translation services were introduced (A Multicultural Australia). Also, the Galbally report was presented in 1978, and Australia's multiculturalism was promoted. Australia adopted the three categories of Australian migration policy. These are the skill category, family category and the humanitarian

category. The skill category accounts for the highest rate of the migrants. It is important to accept the skilled migrants to meet labour demand and improve the economy of Australia. The migration point system and 457 visa are essential for Australia to obtain high skilled people. Thanks to the system, Australia could acquire skilled workers efficiently. By accepting immigrants, there are some benefits. Australia could succeed in meeting the labour demand and develop the economy. Besides, consumption was promoted by increasing immigrants, and as a result, productivity improved. Also, the migrants are relatively young, so they reduce the aging society of Australia. Immigrants are important for Australia to develop. Today, Australia has become one of the most successful multicultural countries in the world. Australia is relatively a young country; however, the growth of the economy is very remarkable, and migrants contribute to the economy of Australia. If Australia can have a connection with more countries in the future, the multiculturalism of Australia would be more developed, and the economy would also be much better. In the future, it is predicted that more migrants will come to Australia. "The Australian population is projected to be 38 million in 2050, rising to 40.1 million by 2055" (The Economic Impact of Immigration). If immigration is promoted, migrants can contribute to the economy of Australia more and more, and Australia will continue to see economic growth supported by its immigration policy.

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