

From: Allison Spork
Sent: Monday, 4 July 2005 8:03 PM
To: Committee, Migration (REPS)
Subject: Skilled Migration

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To the House of Representatives,

My name is Grant Mitchell Spork, of 18 Wallaroo Way, Ashmore, Gold Coast, Qld. Australia. My wife and I spent most of the 1990's as a Migrant in London, England. For two of these years my status as a working Australian in the UK was marginal, as to the UK rules restricted working visas, as they applied to Australians on a working holiday. I worked on the Sydney Olympic Stadium and other landmark buildings as a student Architect whilst residing in the UK. This was valuable experience which should be more readily available to other Australians if we have a reciprocal agreement to exchange visas with other countries.

Many of our friends were in a similar situation, tertiary educated Australians, who did not have a right to a working Visa. Many of these Australians gained valuable professional experience whilst working in the UK. These connections with the UK remain intact after Australians return home and trade and commerce between both donar countries are enhanced in the future.

I believe strongly that the basis of any skilled migration should be that of reciprocation. ie. Australia should provide working visas only where the counterparty, or country to whom a citizen is granted a working visa, will permit skilled migration by an Australian. A major problem for tertiary educated people to gain experience and cross fertilisation, is overcoming beaurocratic and prohibitive visa restrictions. Surveys in the UK and Europe have shown that many young professionals would like to work here. The opportunity to work and experience other cultures is often lost at present, unless one can be sponsored into a position overseas. From the perspective of cultural exchange and the encouragement of utilising our educated and skilled workforce to encourage trade in goods and services, a reciprocation agreement should be encouraged.

Wherever Australians have a high demand for gaining working visas, these countries could be the target for skilled migration. Those countries include the UK, Ireland, Europe, the USA. Asian countries such as Singapore, Japan, China (Hong Kong) and Thailand. These countries have highly developed financial markets and are looking for ways to engage Australia in mutually beneficial relationships.

Foreign students should be given preferential treatment when considering any exchange. S.E. Queensland benefits from asian and pacific students and we can afford to be generous.

When my wife and I returned to Australia we returned with savings to buy a house and have benefited from our ability to work in the UK and Ireland.

The impact on our economy of allowing foreigners to work should be mitigated by allowing our skilled workers and some unskilled people to exchange visas.

UK, European, USA and the economies of Asia benefit from an internationally experienced workforce. I am writing to encourage the Skilled Migration Committee to assist Australians who wish to gain experience overseas by undertaking skilled migration only where the counterparty and country of origin is willing to reciprocate by allowing Australians to work in their country.

I may be contacted on 0416 140060 or on this email address allison_spork@bigpond.com.au should you require any further information regarding this submission.

Yours Sincerely,

Grant Spork.
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 B. Architecture (Hons)
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