



HOW TO SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE A VISA - REVISITED

Free labour mobility between Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom



We need to welcome our friends with open arms when they visit us, and in doing so, work to ensure as much free mobility as is workable. Between Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom this flow and interchange of talented people is especially vital. This polling is invaluable as it shows the views and wishes of these fellow Commonwealth friends in strong support of closer ties. Governments must find ways build them and to remove the obstacles that stand in their way.

Lord Howell of Guildford, President of the Royal Commonwealth Society

TIMELINE

AUG 2013

Boris Johnson, during his visit to Australia, called for a bilateral labour mobility zone between the UK and Australia.

OCT 2014

Think-tank Commonwealth Exchange's *How to Solve a Problem like a Visa* report presented ways in which Boris' idea could work practically based on the Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement. Called for inclusion of Canada and New Zealand.

MAR 2015

Kick-started a Change.org petition which has received over 100,000 signatures.

NOV 2015

All prompted YouGov to poll British public opinion.

MAR 2016

The RCS then commissioned polling for Australian, Canadian, and New Zealander public opinion.

POLLING HEADLINES

AUSTRALIA



CANADA



NEW ZEALAND



UK



OF THOSE POLLED SUPPORT THE RIGHT TO LIVE AND WORK FREELY IN EACH OTHER'S COUNTRIES

Canada example: Currently British citizens have the right to live and work in other European Union (EU) countries and EU citizens have the right to come and live and work in Britain. Would you support or oppose Canadian citizens having similar freedom of movement rules with Britain, New Zealand and Australia. If adopted Canadian citizens would be able to live and work in Britain, New Zealand, and Australia and their citizens would have the right to come and live and work in Canada.

THESE NATIONS POSSESS A UNIQUE BOND

- Share the same language
- Share the same legal system
- Strong economic and family ties
- Share the same Head of State



Aptly, this appears on each nation's passport where the Queen or the Governor-General as her representative 'allows the bearer to pass freely without let or hindrance...'
This union should be demonstrated in a contemporary way through free movement of their people.



UNITED KINGDOM

(YouGov, UK: 1687 people polled between 11 -12 Nov 2015)

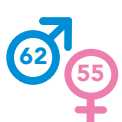


58% of those polled support free movement
1/5 are opposed, while 1/4 are unsure



Additional YouGov polling: UK citizens are more in favour of Australia, Canada, and New Zealand mobility than EU free movement (46% support with 35% opposed)

British adults aged between 25-39 are the most supportive
63% 14%



62% British males are in favour compared to 55% of females. Although, opposition across gender is the same, but with more women unsure (27% f -18% m)

The highest support regionally is found to be London and those in Scotland with 63%



AUSTRALIA

(OmniPoll, Australia: 1247 people polled between 28 Jan - 2 Feb 2016)



70% in favour. Only one in ten Australians polled are opposed to the idea - the lowest amongst the four nations. 1/5 are unsure

80% Younger adults (18-34) indicated the most support

The middle age group (35-64) are least supportive on 64% due to an average 27% selecting an unsure response. Opposition did not increase significantly

There is no gender disparity at 70% approval each

The highest support comes from Queensland and Western Australia with 72% each. Lowest support is in Tasmania with 59% and South Australia and the Northern Territory on 63% - although 30% selected 'unsure' responses



CANADA

(Nanos Research, Canada: 1000 people polled between 30 Jan – 1 Feb 2016)



75% in favour. Only 15% opposed. 10% unsure



Young Canadians aged 18-29 are the **least in favour with 71%** support while those aged 30-39 indicated the highest support of **77%**. This is in contrast to Australia and New Zealand. Although the support percentages all remain high



77% of Canadian females signalled support compared to 73% of Canadian males. Of note, nearly 1/4 of Canadian males are opposed compared to 1/5 females. This is in contrast to the UK where the larger support is in males

78% of those polled from Ontario are in favour compared to 74% from British Columbia. The latter also has one of the highest rates of opposition at 16%



NEW ZEALAND

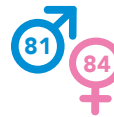
(Curia Market Research, NZ: 1000 people polled between 18 - 27 Jan 2016)



82% in favour. This is the highest level of support amongst the four nations. Just over 1/10 were against. 7% were unsure



90% of New Zealanders aged 18-30 are in support. This is the **highest** level of support across all nations and their respective age ranges



84% of New Zealand females are in support which is slightly higher than males (81%)



Australia and New Zealand already share a free labour mobility scheme through a Special Category Visa and the Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement

CONCLUSION



Collectively, these polling figures demonstrate that public opinion is strongly in favour of free labour mobility between each of the four countries.



This policy opens up opportunities for ethnic minority communities and wider diasporas in these four Commonwealth nations such as the diverse cities of Toronto, Sydney, Auckland, and London.



There is also a general trend that shows the younger generations are more supportive which implies that this is a policy which is not outdated.



Free labour mobility policy works most effectively on social and political grounds with those nations of similar economic parity. Notably, the recent Singapore-Australian Prime Ministerial meeting mentioned offering the same work and residency situations as those between Aus-NZ.

NEXT STEPS

This report is one of a series that investigates the barriers to strengthening the engagement and sharing of talents in the contemporary Commonwealth. It is intended that this specific policy could apply to additional Commonwealth countries with comparable economic characteristics over time.

We have intentionally not articulated what freer labour mobility would look like. The polling was undertaken to ascertain the public mood so politicians can take note. It is up to governments to discuss variations and possibilities.



MPs: We urge them to ask Parliamentary Questions and call for debates.



PUBLIC: We urge them to share their own stories of difficulty when living and working in each other's nations; write to their MP seeking their support; and we recommend that people sign the Change.org petition which has over 100,000 supporters.



GOVERNMENTS: To conduct a feasibility study that focuses particularly on the economic case and share with counterparts.



CX is now the policy arm of the Royal Commonwealth Society