



**TALENT BEYOND
—BOUNDARIES—**

Displaced workers: An untapped talent source for Australian employers

Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration inquiry
into Migration in Regional Australia

20 September 2019

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Acknowledgements

Talent Beyond Boundaries would like to give special thanks to David Spear, BdesInd (Hon), MBA for his substantial contribution to this submission. David was formerly General Manager of Regional Australia Institute and joined TBB in February 2019 to pilot our model of employer-led, direct international recruitment of skilled refugees into regional Australia.

We would also like to thank Marina Brizar, Solicitor & Registered Migration Agent and 2018 Churchill Fellow, for providing her migration expertise into this submission. Thanks also to our partners at Refugee Talent for their exceptional work connecting talented refugees and migrants to job opportunities across Australia, and for their insights captured in this submission.

This submission is proudly endorsed and supported by the following organisations:

Business and industry



Regional organisations



Philanthropy



The Andrew &
Renata Kaldor
Family Foundation

Community sector



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Executive Summary

Migration has always played a central role in Australia's prosperity. Australia's economy is turbo-charged by migration, and Australia's creativity, dynamism, interconnectedness and stability are largely a product of its modern migration and multiculturalism policies. Refugees, skilled migrants and newcomers reuniting with family are all part of this story.

Today, regional Australia needs migrants more than ever. Many regional and rural areas are struggling to attract the talented and skilled people they need to develop their economies and maintain and grow their populations. Migrants are key to meeting the future workforce and community building needs of regional Australia, and yet current policy settings do not sufficiently empower regional communities to attract and retain migrants.

Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) has developed an international labour mobility solution to connect skilled refugees and other talented displaced workers with employers around the world. Working jointly with Australian social-enterprise Refugee Talent, and a group of high calibre employers, TBB has demonstrated this model works to deliver highly competent skilled workers to Australian businesses, whilst also delivering humanitarian benefits. Regional employers should benefit from these workers, but in order to do so Australia's migration and settlement policy settings need reform.

This submission draws on the lessons of TBB's employer-led, international displaced worker recruitment program in Australia. It sets out our vision and recommendations for how Australia's economy and regional businesses can tap into this formerly hidden source of talent which is going to waste in refugee communities around the world today. In particular, TBB recommends Australia create a new employer-led visa scheme within the skilled program which is accessible to skilled and talented workers who happen to be displaced and living under constraints; and designed in a way that maximises its utility to Australian employers, particularly those in regional areas.

This submission also provides TBB's insights into the ways Australia can empower rural and regional communities to attract and retain migrants and refugees, drawing on best practice and our own experience engaging with employers and community stakeholders in regional communities across the country.

Recommendations

TBB proposes the following recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration:

1. Australia should establish an employer-led Displaced Talent Visa scheme to increase the attraction of skilled and talented workers, especially to regional Australia. It should start modestly, with 50 primary applicant places in 2020-2021, and grow over time.

The scheme should be open to refugees and other displaced workers with skills in high demand in Australia. It would take into account the constraints which prevent displaced people from accessing existing skilled visas. For example, it could include:

- 1.1. Reduced visa fees and costs to applicants (given refugees and displaced people rarely have access to significant savings or income generation opportunities).
- 1.2. Flexibility around skills validation (such as allowing employers to validate skills remotely using technology, given refugees are often in hard-to-reach locations) and demonstrated work experience requirements (given that refugees in first countries of asylum are normally not permitted to practice their professions therefore will have gaps in their employment history).
- 1.3. Flexibility in relation to documentation requirements (given refugees are often unable to obtain documentation from the country they fled).
- 1.4. Amending and broadening the skills list to ensure that all occupations have a pathway to permanent residence (given it may never be safe to return home).
- 1.5. Allowing displaced workers to bring close family dependents with them.
- 1.6. Flexibility around English language competence at the point of visa application, in accordance with the employer's language requirements for the job. Applicants could be required to demonstrate a higher standard of English language proficiency after a period of time in Australia (for example, this could be a requirement to transition to Permanent Residence).
- 1.7. Applying the same health visa condition that applies to humanitarian entrants (as refugees and displaced people may have health conditions which require monitoring and treatment).
- 1.8. Providing flexible access to settlement support on arrival as required, as well as essential services such as Medicare, access to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) for adult family members and schooling for children.

2. The Displaced Talent Visa scheme should be designed to maximise the ability of regional employers to directly recruit workers to fill skills gaps and retain them and their families in the regions.

This could include:

- 2.1. Reducing the financial burden of sponsorship on Small-to-Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). SMEs in regional areas often have tight profit margins, and the cost of sponsorship is too high. This could be addressed by waiving or reducing the Skilling Australia Fund (SAF) allocation for regional SMEs.
- 2.2. Ensuring timely and predictable visa processing. This is critical for planning purposes and given the urgency of recruitment for many regional employers. Ideally visas would be approved within one month of applying.
- 2.3. Giving regional employers greater flexibility in the roles they can sponsor by adopting alternatives to the skilled occupation list approach. This would recognise the general challenges regional employers face in attracting workers across a dynamic range of occupations, as well as the challenges of recruiting workers into occupations with stringent professional registration requirements.

This could be achieved by:

- I. Allowing regional employers to sponsor any type of worker in a particular high-need sector (such as healthcare) - giving workers flexibility to advance into a higher skill role on the same skilled visa; or
 - II. Significantly increasing the number of roles on the Skilled Occupation List that regional employers can sponsor, and allowing employers to adopt a two-step approach to sponsoring workers - whereby initially the worker is sponsored on a lower skill level, and then once they have secured professional registration their sponsorship can be transitioned to the higher skill level. For example, a nurse could start out as a Personal Care Assistant, and transition to a Registered Nurse once they have met the registration requirements of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).
- 2.4. Visa incentives to encourage regional retention. For example, rewarding visa holders who have worked for a regional employer in a regional area for three years by waiving the fee to apply for permanent residence (this would also recognise regional salaries tend to be lower than in the cities).

3. Australia should adapt its current suite of migration and settlement programs to be much more tailored to the realities of regional Australia.

The Australian government should:

- 3.1. Provide flexible and multi-year settlement funding to empower local multi-stakeholder regional initiatives to attract, welcome and retain refugees and migrants in their communities. The funding mechanism should be flexible enough to enable a range of competent actors to take a coordinating role at the local level as required - including professional and experienced settlement organisations, local government actors and other reputable community institutions including Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups.
- 3.2. Establish a national driving program to give new migrants and refugees in regional areas access to driving lessons and test preparation.
- 3.3. Ensure all new migrants in regional areas have access to the AMEP upon arrival in Australia and until they no longer require it, irrespective of visa class, and expand access to the AMEP using outreach services, provision of transportation and also technology and distance learning.

About Talent Beyond Boundaries

Skilled refugees need jobs.

Global employers need talent.

We connect them.

TBB is driving a new migration solution to fill skills gaps and drive economic growth, whilst delivering a profound humanitarian benefit to refugees and stateless people. The solution is a labour mobility pathway for displaced people: based on skills, and enabled by private enterprise, technology and data. This employer-led approach offers great potential to contribute to meeting Australia's labour force needs, including in regional Australia.

TBB links with employers and governments around the world to facilitate talented refugees being able to fill skills gaps. By doing this, TBB is opening a new pathway for refugees to find self-reliance through international employment and contribute skills to the global workforce. So far we have successfully placed refugees candidates into high skill roles in Australia, Canada and the UK.

TBB in Australia is the successor to the 'Refugee Jobs Marketplace Leadership Forum', a multi-stakeholder initiative spearheaded in March 2016 by philanthropist John Cameron and involving Amnesty International, AMES Australia, Andrew and Renata Kaldor, the Business Council of Australia, Refugee Talent and others. TBB in Australia was initially established with funding from Cameron Foundation and since its inception has partnered closely with social enterprise Refugee Talent on all aspects of our program.

In 2018 TBB and Refugee Talent began a pilot in Australia to empower employers to recruit and sponsor skilled refugees. The pilot was initiated with support from the Australian Government's Minister for Home Affairs, The Hon Peter Dutton MP, and the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). Using a mix of skilled and humanitarian visa pathways and working with a group of high calibre employers including Accenture, Deloitte, Ernst and Young (EY), Harvey Beef, IRESS, John Holland and Maurice Blackburn, we proved this model can work to meet employer skill needs whilst providing a complementary pathway for refugees to find safety and stability in Australia. So far six displaced workers and their families have relocated to Australia under the pilot (14 people in total), with several more still to arrive.

Making displaced talent visible

There are 70.8 million forcibly displaced people in the world today¹ - almost half of them working age. Yet refugees and other displaced people in most countries around the world are primarily shut out of the formal economy - denied work rights where they are, and subject to barriers which limit their ability to compete in the international market for jobs. Displaced people are highly motivated to relocate for work and the chance of a safer future - and yet their mobility is largely restricted.

The result is an unacceptable waste of human potential, and perhaps the largest hidden talent pool in the world today. Employers in regional Australia stand to benefit enormously from this talent pool if they can get access to it - and that's what TBB seeks to achieve.

TBB runs an online Talent Catalogue of skilled refugees in Lebanon and Jordan, on which approximately 15,000 people have registered since July 2016. Registrants on the Talent Catalogue are mainly Syrian, Iraqi and Palestinian refugees as well as stateless people and a range of other displaced nationalities. TBB is also now working with refugees in Kenya through a partner organisation, Refuge Point, and we aim to expand into other large refugee hosting countries over time.

TBB's Talent Catalogue is a rare datasource which captures the range of skills currently going to waste in refugee communities which are in high demand across the world and in regional Australia - from healthcare professionals to IT workers, skilled tradespeople and engineers. See Annex 1 for an outline of the most common occupations on the Talent Catalogue.

Employers see the potential

As part of TBB's remote refugee recruitment pilot we have engaged extensively with employers about the potential of hiring from this hidden talent pool. Since 2018 over 100 employers in Australia have expressed interest in hiring displaced workers through our program, demonstrating significant scale potential.

¹ UNHCR, Figures at a glance: Statistical yearbook 2019
<https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

Through our pilot, 8 companies have hired 10 displaced workers to relocate with their families to Australia.² Employers are sponsoring workers either on Temporary Skills Shortage visas (subclass 482 - Medium term stream - with a pathway to permanence) or on a limited number of humanitarian visas (with permanent residence), as per our pilot arrangement with the Department of Home Affairs.

- IRESS hired two Syrian Software Engineers now based in Melbourne and Sydney.
- Accenture hired a Management Consultant, who is stateless, and is now working in Sydney.
- Harvey Beef has hired two butchers, one now working from their abattoir in Harvey (regional Western Australia) and the other whose visa is pending.
- EY hired an Executive Assistant based in their Melbourne office. She was a small business owner before the war in Syria.
- John Holland has hired a Syrian mechanical engineer, who is due to arrive in Melbourne on the 23rd of September and will start work on the West Gate Tunnel Project shortly thereafter.
- Maurice Blackburn has hired a Syrian lawyer to work in their Melbourne office as a paralegal, visa pending.
- Deloitte has hired an IT professional for their Sydney office, visa currently being prepared.
- Wimmera Super Meat Market has hired a butcher/chef to relocate for work in Horsham, Victoria, visa currently being prepared.

We are currently actively recruiting for another ten companies, in addition to re-recruiting for several of the abovementioned companies (demonstrating the positive experience they have had with the skilled workers they have already recruited through the pilot).

Australian financial technology company IRESS was the first company to hire through TBB's remote refugee recruitment program. In addition to hiring software engineers in Australia, they have also recruited a Syrian software engineer into the UK through TBB's program. According to IRESS CEO Andrew Walsh the business case is clear:

² See TBB video showing impact of the program here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLOv59A1BFY&t=8s>

With talent shortages expected to affect the future of the world's largest economies in the coming years, developing new and creative solutions to address these shortages is an economic imperative. It makes perfect sense that the global refugee population should be part of the solution.

We began working with TBB ultimately because it's the right thing and the smart thing to do. We cast a wide net locally when looking for people to join our team. Through the TBB program we've been able to include in that net an even wider pool of high quality potential candidates who go through the same recruitment and selection process as any other candidate would. With the potential for positive outcomes for both businesses and these individuals, I'm convinced this will become a solution with which organisations will increasingly seek involvement.³

The Business Council of Australia also sees the benefits that Australian businesses can yield by tapping into displaced talent from abroad. According to Jennifer Westacott, Business Council chief executive:

This program is a win-win. Australia gets the benefits of new and diverse skills, our businesses have the opportunity to fill genuine skills shortages and it gives workers the dignity and economic security only a job can provide ...That doesn't just pay a moral dividend, it helps keep Australia competitive.⁴

A talent source for regional Australia

Many regional and rural areas struggle to attract the international migrants they need to grow their populations and meet their labour force requirements, and displaced workers could help to solve that problem. Research from the Regional Australia Institute (RAI) highlights 46,250 job vacancies in regional Australia in March 2019, 12% higher than in March 2017.⁵ Many of these vacancies are in high skill areas such as health, engineering, professional services, advanced manufacturing, and skilled trades. The health and social

³ IRESS, "Solving the global skill shortage the smart way", January 2019, <https://www.iress.com/support/blog/2019/02/solving-the-global-skill-shortage-the-smart-way/>

⁴ Quote supplied by the Business Council of Australia to TBB on 22 January 2019 via email.

⁵ Regional Australia Institute, *Regional Jobs Update March 2019*, <http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/regional-jobs-update-march-2019/>

assistance sector is forecast to experience the fastest growth of all, adding 250,300 new roles by 2023 with 84,102 (34%) in regional Australia.⁶

This explosion in demand for workers presents an opportunity, but also a threat if jobs cannot be filled. Without skilled employees, many regional organisations are unable to sustain high performance, grow to their full potential, or deliver enough services to meet demand. This limits economic prospects for businesses, and in some cases threatens their continued existence. It also impacts peoples' quality of life - forcing tough decisions about where to live, work and invest for the long term.

Traditional forms of migration, training and recruitment are not adequately addressing the high numbers of existing skilled job vacancies; and these challenges are compounded by ageing demographic profiles in regional areas. According to RAI, attracting international migrants should be considered "the first priority for rural communities looking to grow their population base and fill labour gaps".⁷ Innovative approaches are required to connect regional employers with the skilled and talented people they need to grow their businesses.

Displaced people with skills are a logical source of talent. Most refugees, displaced or stateless people living in temporary settings overseas would jump at the chance to move into a job in a regional location where they can use their talents and their rights will be respected. TBB has demonstrated that there are highly skilled, qualified and capable individuals in these populations who are ready to move. In order to empower regional employers to recruit from this talent pool at scale, Australia will need to consider and implement a number of reforms.

⁶ Regional Australia Institute, *A Healthy Check-Up: The healthcare and social assistance industry in regions*, March 2019, p.2, http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2019_RAI_HealthyCheckUp_Final2.pdf

⁷ Regional Australia Institute, *The missing workers: Locally-led migration strategies to better meet rural labour needs*, Policy paper, May 2018, p. 4, available from: http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/180510-The-Regional-Australia-Institute-2018-The-missing-workers_policy-paper_FINAL.pdf

Case study: Harvey Beef in Western Australia

Harvey Beef is a good example of the benefits regional employers stand to gain by recruiting from the global displaced talent pool.

TBB and Refugee Talent started working with Harvey Beef in 2018. According to Harvey Beef's General Manager, Wayne Shaw, the business was being constrained by local skilled labour shortages:

Due to skilled labour shortages in some sections of our local industry, we were investigating all options to source labour when we came across Talent Beyond Boundaries. TBB introduced Harvey Beef to a wide range of candidates that were available through their refugee international hiring pool. Among them we discovered one fantastic candidate that checked all the selection criteria for a position at our abattoir.



Ali accepting his job offer from TBB's office in Beirut, June 2018.

Harvey Beef hired Ali Wawi, a Syrian refugee and man of many talents, to work as a butcher in their abattoir. Ali comes from a family of butchers, and learned all about the trade from his family's butcher shop at a young age. With an innate passion for the maths and sciences, he has also tutored high schoolers in Physics, Algebra and Chemistry and used to help run the accounts for a private business on a regular basis.

Ali's family is Syrian by origin from Aleppo, but they spent much of their time in Lebanon. When the war began, Ali began to face a number of issues due to tightened laws targeting Syrians in Lebanon. He could no longer continue to renew his residency and the threat of being forced into military duty in Syria became very possible. On top of all of this, Ali married the wonderful Laurine, who comes from the Druze faith. They received threats on account of their interfaith marriage. They were running out of options when Ali heard about TBB on Facebook.

Under TBB's refugee labour mobility pilot Harvey Beef sponsored Ali, Laurine and their daughter Acinat to come to Australia on a humanitarian visa. The application took 5 months to process, and Ali and his family were settled in the town of Harvey in April 2019. Ali started work straight away.



Photo: Ali, Laurine and Acinat arriving at Perth Airport, April 2019.

Harvey Beef provided Ali and his family with relocation support and transitional housing when they first arrived in the beautiful town of Harvey, two hours south of Perth. The Australian Red Cross has linked them with services and connections in the town, particularly for Laurine and Acinat. With the support of an Australian government *Fostering Integration Grant* the Red Cross is building a women's group in Harvey for migrant and local women to share and build connections. Laurine is now officially a Red Cross volunteer on the project. Laurine is also now learning English and has aspirations to study dentistry in nearby Bunbury when the time is right.

Refugee Talent has also provided post-placement support to both Ali and his manager, ensuring that everything is going well and Ali is on track for career progression at Harvey Beef over time.



Ali, Laurine and Acinat's first day in Harvey.



Ali at work at Harvey Beef, May 2019.

Given the success of the program Harvey Beef has now decided to recruit more refugees through TBB. They have just extended a job contract to Ali's brother, Hussein, also an experienced butcher. And they are now on the hunt for more butchers and potentially in future, skilled tradespeople.

According to Wayne Shaw, Harvey Beef sees both the business case and the humanitarian imperative of recruiting displaced talent:

We expect the skills shortages in regional Western Australia to continue to tighten due to a pickup in local industries and see initiatives like TBB as vital to us achieving our goal of trading at full capacity.

As a company that prides itself on maintaining a high standard of corporate citizenship, we are proud to be involved in initiatives that contribute to solving global issues, like the settlement of refugees. We look forward to working with TBB to recruit more quality, international talent in the future.

1. The case for a Displaced Talent Visa

Recommendation 1: Australia should establish an employer-led Displaced Talent Visa scheme to increase the attraction of talented and skilled workers, especially to regional Australia. The scheme should address the constraints skilled refugees and other displaced workers face. It could start modestly, with 50 primary applicant places in 2020-2021, and expand over time as business interest grows. It should be a skilled visa aiming to deliver economic benefits for Australia, whilst also making a humanitarian contribution.

Currently TBB is using existing skilled and humanitarian visa pathways to facilitate job matches between displaced workers and employers in Australia. While these visa pathways are viable (demonstrated by the fact that displaced workers have been able to relocate through the program), they are not fit-for-purpose.

Opening up skilled migration to displaced workers

TBB proposes a new mode of migration which empowers employers to recruit skilled and talented people who happen to be displaced and living under constraints. This approach is distinct from Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program, which aims to protect refugees, resettle the most vulnerable people and those with family links in Australia. While Australia's humanitarian program also contributes to economic output and growth over time,⁸ this is not a central purpose of the program - and nor should it be. The policy intent of the Refugee and Humanitarian Program is and should remain the humanitarian imperative.

TBB's approach is also distinct from traditional skilled migration. While Australia has a long history of recruiting displaced people for work, particularly in the aftermath of the Second World War, Australia's modern migration system was not designed with the needs and circumstances of displaced people in mind. As a result, skilled refugees and other displaced

⁸ Deloitte Access Economics, *Economic and social impact of increasing Australia's humanitarian intake*, Oxfam Australia, August 2019, available from: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/au/Documents/Economics/deloitte-au-economics-social-impact-increasing-australias-humanitarian-intake-280819.pdf>

and stateless people face real barriers in securing skilled visas to Australia. This includes:

- The cost of skilled migration - including visa fees, which are prohibitive for refugees who have often exhausted all their savings in displacement;
- Skills validation requirements - for example, requirements that an employer or third party skills assessor physically observe the worker while on the job or require them to sit tests overseas (this is almost impossible for refugees living in insecure locations, locations where tests are not provided, and those who are not able to work as a result of not having work rights in their first country of asylum).
- Rigid documentation requirements - such as the requirement to have a valid travel document, which can be difficult for refugees who are unable to obtain documentation from the country they fled because of protection concerns);
- The “Genuine Temporary Entrant” test - which is applied to several visa categories and occupations, and is difficult for a refugee to meet given they often will not be able to return to the country they fled or to their country of first asylum, even if they genuinely would like to;
- Not being able to include certain members of a family unit - skilled visas generally don’t allow the inclusion of dependents other than spouse/children. This means a displaced worker would not being able to bring a parent or sibling with them even if they were totally dependent and would be left in a vulnerable refugee situation on their own if not included on the visa application;
- Rigid English language requirements at the point of visa application - which can be extremely difficult for refugees to meet while living in displacement. For example, workers on the 482 visa typically have to meet an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level 5 across all bands, and many professions (eg. nursing, medicine) require a minimum of IELTS 7. This is a significant bar for a worker to climb over whilst living in displaced conditions. IELTS tests are expensive, as are test preparation courses. Alternative (and typically easier) available tests such as the Occupational English Test (OET) are not available in many refugee-hosting countries (including Jordan and Lebanon, where TBB is working). There is little support available to displaced workers to meet these strict English language requirements, and as they are not typically living in an English speaking environment their language acquisition progress is slow. Yet once workers are in an English speaking environment, obviously their ability to learn the language is significantly increased.

- **Rigid health requirements:** Many refugees may require medical assessment and treatment or counselling services as a result of having lived through a crisis. This may result in them failing to meet the health requirement of a normal skilled visa.

None of these barriers are insurmountable. Australia should work with business and the community sector to co-design a Displaced Talent Visa which addresses the constraints preventing refugees and other displaced people from accessing existing skilled visas such as the Temporary Skills Shortage (TSS) visa (482) or the Skilled Regional Visa (489). For example, the following accommodations could be made:

Constraint	Potential accommodation in design of Displaced Talent Visa
Refugees and other displaced people are often in situations of financial hardship due to having exhausted savings and being unable to work legally in their first country of asylum. This makes the cost of skilled visas prohibitive.	Recommendation 1.1: Reduce visa fees and costs to applicants, and require employers to cover essential relocation costs (eg. flights).
Refugees and other displaced workers are often living in locations that are not easily accessible to employers or skills assessors; and they are often unable to demonstrate recency of work if they do not have work rights.	Recommendation 1.2: Apply flexibility around skills validation requirements, such as allowing employers to validate skills remotely using technology, using technical interviews or testing, and waiving any arbitrary requirements around years of experience or recency of experience.
Refugees and stateless people are often unable to obtain documentation required for visa applications from the country they fled because of protection concerns or lack of access to consular support (such as a current valid passport).	Recommendation 1.3: Apply flexibility in relation to documentation requirements (for example, allowing the use of expired passports or other forms of identification, and issuing ImmiCards to visa holders where necessary, as is normal practice in the humanitarian program).
Refugees are generally unable to meet the "Genuine Temporary Entrant" test required for skilled visas in short-term occupations, given they often will not be able to return to their home country or to their country of first asylum, even if they genuinely want to.	Recommendation 1.4: Amend and broaden the skills list to ensure that all occupations have a pathway to permanent residence. This would be welcomed by regional communities who are keen to promote retention in regional areas.

Refugees and displaced workers are generally not in a position to leave behind dependents (including spouse/children but also potentially elderly parents or dependent siblings) because they would be left in a vulnerable refugee situation.	Recommendation 1.5: Allow displaced workers to bring dependents with them where they can prove they are genuinely dependent (applying the same approach as in the humanitarian program).
As a result of financial and logistical constraints refugees and other displaced workers are often not empowered to develop the English language skills needed to meet strict skilled visa testing requirements at the point of application.	Recommendation 1.6: Apply flexibility around English language competence at the point of visa application, in accordance with the employer's language requirements for the job. Applicants could be required to demonstrate a higher standard of English language proficiency after a period of time in Australia (for example, this could be a requirement to transition to Permanent Residence).
Some refugees and displaced people may fail to meet the health requirement of a normal skilled visa.	Recommendation 1.7: Apply the same health visa condition that applies to existing humanitarian visas.

Addressing settlement barriers

Recommendation 1.8: Australia should provide prospective Displaced Talent Visa holders with flexible access to settlement support on arrival as required, as well as essential services such as Medicare, access to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) for adult family members and schooling for children.

Temporary skilled visas do not entitle visa holders to the same settlement and orientation support provided to visa holders under the Refugee and Humanitarian Program (eg. access to the Humanitarian Settlement Program⁹). TSS visa holders and their family members also do not have access to the AMEP or a basic social safety net - such as Medicare and free government schooling.

On one hand it makes sense that temporary skilled workers have lower access to services once they arrive in Australia - given the purpose of the program is purely economic and

⁹ See Department of Social Services, Humanitarian Settlement Program, <https://www.dss.gov.au/settlement-services-programs-policy-settlement-services/humanitarian-settlement-program>

meant to be cost-positive to the Australian taxpayer. However, this approach is short sighted when applied to displaced people coming to Australia. Displaced Talent Visa holders would be expected to make an immediate economic contribution and be taxpayers from day one and over their lifetimes. However, they are still people who have faced extremely difficult circumstances, may have been exposed to traumatic events and have for at least a period of time lived in a vulnerable displaced situation. Investing in their integration and settlement and ensuring they have a safety net in Australia makes common sense, and any costs of this investment will be more than offset by their economic and tax contribution.

Further evidence

TBB has been working closely with 2018 Churchill Fellow Marina Brizar who has conducted an extensive global study this year of the context, benefits and mechanisms for establishing a labour mobility framework for displaced workers, and how this could apply to the Australian immigration system. Ms Brizar's findings support the conclusions and recommendations in this submission. Ms Brizar will provide a separate and complementary submission to the inquiry which sets out her research in greater detail.

2. Making the Displaced Talent Visa work for regional employers

Recommendation 2: The Displaced Talent Visa scheme should be designed to maximise the ability of regional employers to directly recruit workers to fill skills gaps and retain them and their families in regional locations.

TBB has already proved our model works - placing software engineers, management consultants and people with specialist skills in organisations like IRESS, EY, Accenture and Harvey Beef. The employer-led recruitment approach TBB adopts has particular advantages for regional employers struggling to attract international migrants.

As a logical progression, in the first half of 2019 TBB and Refugee Talent implemented a regional pilot specifically designed to understand how we can achieve success in regional settings - focusing on Midura, Bendigo, Ballarat, Heathcote, and Horsham in regional

Victoria. The pilot was funded by philanthropy (specifically Cameron Foundation and Morris Family Foundation).

Lessons from regional pilot

The pilot involved conducting outreach to employers, local government and industry groups in each of the regional locations to assess demand for displaced talent and the willingness of employers and communities to welcome displaced workers and help them to settle. We also used the pilot to sign up employers and start recruiting from our international displaced talent pool.

The pilot demonstrated a high level of employer demand for migrants to fill skills gaps in all regional locations and a clear willingness for employers to consider refugees and displaced workers for these roles. This translated into a lot of excitement about what TBB and Refugee Talent could offer: 18 employers signed up to recruit with us, providing 60 roles to recruit for. So far we have facilitated one firm job contract for a chef/butcher who will relocate with his wife to Horsham for work, subject to his visa being granted. We also have a number of active recruitments ongoing in Bendigo, Horsham and Mildura for physiotherapists; electrical engineers; a mechanical engineer and a construction production manager.

While the pilot proved significant demand and interest in TBB/Refugee Talent's program, it also highlighted substantial barriers limiting wider uptake by employers. Several employers decided not to pursue recruitment in the end because of a number of factors including: lengthy and uncertain visa processing times (particularly for humanitarian visas); the financial costs of visas and facilitating relocation (particularly for skilled visas); and professional accreditation requirements for some specialist roles which were assumed to be too difficult for displaced workers to meet.

TBB and Refugee Talent are taking a number of steps to work around these issues. However many of these factors are out of our control and require government consideration and reform. The current situation is at odds with state and federal government policy agendas - which seek to directly increase business and population growth outcomes in regional Australia. There is therefore a strategic imperative to fix the alignment between policy promoting regional settlement and economic growth, and the imposts of cost, time and accreditation blocking progress. Each of these issues is addressed below.

Reducing costs

Recommendation 2.1: The financial burden of sponsorship should be reduced for Small-to-Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). SMEs in regional areas often have tight profit margins, and the cost of sponsorship is too high for them. This could be addressed by waiving or reducing the Skilling Australia Fund (SAF) allocation for regional SMEs.

Recent changes to Australia's TSS program (formerly the 457 visa) have made nominating workers through this scheme prohibitively expensive for many SMEs, particularly in regional Australia. Regional employers have raised concerns with TBB about the requirement they pay into the SAF for training and further education programs for local workers. The employer's SAF contribution on a 4-year TSS visa is \$4,800 for a company with less than \$10 million turnover, which of course includes SMEs that are significantly smaller than this threshold.

In addition to the SAF, nominating employers are also required to cover a number of other costs including migration agent fees, medical checks, visa fees, flights and relocation costs. While migrants are often in a position to be able to cover many of these items themselves, displaced workers are almost always unable to cover these upfront costs (see section 1 above), and employers are often required to cover these costs if the recruitment is going to work. The bill for sponsoring an overseas worker can easily exceed \$20,000 if they have a family to bring with them.

TBB is exploring a range of loan fund options which will assist displaced workers to contribute financially to the cost of migration and repay the loan once they are earning a salary. We believe a micro-loan scheme has great potential. However we take the view that the costs of migration should be substantially covered by the employer and the Australian government, given the obvious economic benefits the worker will bring to the company and the economy, and to avoid the risk of displaced workers being overly exposed to debt on their arrival in Australia.

Through our regional pilot we have found the additional fees required for the SAF create an investment hurdle that is too high for many regional SMEs to progress. When employers have been presented with the option of sponsoring a worker on a humanitarian visa, which

would not require these additional costs, they have been very willing to proceed.¹⁰ Reducing the sponsorship cost barrier would be an investment the Australian government could make to achieve a broad based economic uplift in regions, which would provide a positive net return in the long term.

Shorter visa timeframes

Recommendation 2.2: Australia should ensure timely and predictable skilled visa processing in order to support regional business productivity. Ideally visas would be approved within one month of application.

Regional employers tell us that being able to recruit international workers to fill skill gaps in a timely manner is a significant challenge for them. Bringing a worker in from overseas is an inherently time consuming exercise involving many steps. A rigorous recruitment and selection process may take two months or longer (often after an already lengthy and unsuccessful local search for workers); followed by contract negotiations; visa preparation; visa processing; arranging logistics of relocation; and allowing the worker some time to settle their family into the local community before they start work.

Visa processing times for the TSS visas (medium term stream) are manageable for employers, with the Department of Home Affairs reporting that 90% of applicants are granted their visa in less than 51 days.¹¹ However processing times for humanitarian visas are significantly longer. TBB currently advises employers to expect a 3-6 month wait for their new employee if they are coming in on a humanitarian visa, but some employers in our pilot have had to wait as long as 8 months.

To make the recruitment of displaced workers a viable option for regional employers these visa processing times need to be in line with the current TSS timeframes. Ideally, visas would be approved within a month of application.

¹⁰ Note - throughout the pilot TBB has only given employers the option of using a humanitarian visa where the worker they have hired has no option to apply through a skilled visa. This is a measure to ensure we use humanitarian visas only sparingly, given TBB is aiming to increase the number of refugees and displaced people who are able to access a solution via this complementary labour mobility pathway, not take places from the humanitarian program.

¹¹ Department of Home Affairs, Temporary Skills Shortage Visa - Medium term stream - checked 9 September 2019, available from: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/temporary-skill-shortage-482>

Flexibility with occupations

Recommendation 2.3: The Displaced Talent Visa should allow employers greater flexibility in the roles they can sponsor, which is of vital importance in regional areas. This could be achieved by:

- Allowing regional employers to sponsor any type of worker in a particular high-need sector (such as healthcare) - giving workers flexibility to advance into a higher skill role on the same skilled visa over time; or
- Significantly increasing the number of roles on the Skilled Occupation List that regional employers can sponsor, and allowing employers to adopt a two-step approach to sponsoring workers - whereby initially the worker is sponsored on a lower skill level, and then once they have secured professional registration/skill recognition their sponsorship can be transitioned to the higher skill level.

National skills shortage figures are not a reliable tool for determining what roles are in shortage in rural and regional towns. During our regional pilot TBB spoke with employers across a wide range of sectors who lamented the fact that certain skills they needed were in short supply locally but were not on the “Skilled Occupation List”.¹² While some industries and regional organisations have sought to rectify this issue by establishing respectively Labor Agreements and Designated Area Migration Agreements (DAMAs), these agreements are complex to negotiate and require a high level of government and employer collaboration and investment. Many regional employers, particularly SMEs, simply do not have the bandwidth to engage in these processes.

During the pilot TBB also spoke to a number of regional healthcare employers desperate to recruit nurses, doctors, mental health clinicians, physiotherapists and other allied health professionals to their ranks in order to address critical skills shortages. Healthcare is a sector that has extremely stringent professional registration requirements in Australia, requiring overseas trained health professionals to sit multiple exams, conduct some level of bridging training and/or supervised practice prior to being fully registered with AHPRA.

¹² See Department of Home Affairs, <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/working-in-australia/skill-occupation-list>

There are significant barriers facing refugees and other displaced workers in undertaking these steps - including English language testing barriers (see section 1 above), as well as a lack of technical testing options in most refugee hosting countries. For example, TBB is working with a number of experienced Syrian and Iraqi doctors who would like to sit the Australian Medical Council (AMC) multiple choice question exam (MCQ), which is a prerequisite to seeking employment in Australia as a doctor. However the AMC MCQ is not available in Jordan or Lebanon, nor is it provided in any of the world's largest refugee hosting countries, and refugee doctors are not in a position to move freely to a country where the test is offered.¹³

A logical solution is for displaced workers to relocate to Australia to complete the steps required for professional registration, whilst performing duties at a lower skill level that do not require registration. For example, a nurse could enter the country as a Personal Care Assistant, and once they have met the Australian requirements of a Registered Nurse they could transition to being employed at that level. However this raises the question, what occupation should they be sponsored to enter the country on? The current skilled migration program applies rigid requirements around sponsorship - whereby a worker can only be sponsored for a particular occupation, and if they change their occupation, they have to be nominated again. This limits the ability of regional employers to apply a long-term and flexible approach to their workforce planning.

Because TBB's pilot has given us access to a limited number of humanitarian visas, which do not require workers to be nominated to work only in one occupation, we have been able to experiment with the two-step recruitment pathway approach outlined above. For example, we are currently assisting Princes Court Homes, a regional aged care facility in Mildura, to recruit two trained physiotherapists initially as Personal Care Assistants while they take the steps required by the Australian Physiotherapy Council and AHPRA for professional registration. We aim to demonstrate success with this 'two step' talent pipeline approach so that this model can be replicated by other healthcare providers - helping to tackle critical healthcare skills shortages across the country.

There is an urgent strategic imperative to resolve the regional health sector skills crisis, and many other regional employers and industries would benefit from greater freedom and

¹³ See list of the countries where AMC MCQ test is offered:
<https://www.amc.org.au/assessment/mcq/mcq-examination-venues/>

flexibility to adopt creative solutions to address their talent gaps. While opening up the entire skilled migration program to this level of flexibility may carry risks in terms of impacting local labour markets, applying a flexible approach to the Displaced Talent Visa is low-risk given its modest scale.

Visa incentives to encourage regional retention

Recommendation 2.4: The Displaced Talent Visa should facilitate a direct migration and employment solution in order to ensure workers hired by regional employers are anchored to a regional area. Regional retention could also be incentivised by waiving the fees to apply for permanent residence for workers who stay in a regional area for at least three years. The aim should be to incentivise retention in a regional area, rather than limit or punish freedom of movement.

TBB is aware of efforts being made by a range of groups to help migrants and refugees relocate from the cities to the regions (often called “secondary migration”) by providing regional employment opportunities. An often cited example of an extremely successful secondary migration program has been the relocation of Karen refugees to Nhill in regional Victoria, in partnership with Luv-a-Duck.¹⁴ TBB is also aware of a range of fantastic programs being driven by professional settlement organisations such as AMES Australia, Settlement Services International, the Australian Red Cross and MDA Ltd, as well as national regional organisations like Regional Australia Institute, Rural Australians for Refugees and Regional Opportunities Australia to promote secondary migration with some impressive results. As another example, Refugee Talent is pioneering a range of innovative technology-driven solutions to connect migrants and refugees currently residing in the cities with job opportunities in the regions.

Secondary migration is a tried and tested strategy which, under the right conditions, can revitalise local regional economies. However, one complication with the secondary migration approach is that migrants generally have an anchor in the cities to go back to if their expectations are not immediately met in the regions. This is a major concern of

¹⁴ See AMES Australia and Deloitte Access Economics, *Small Towns, Big Returns: Economic and social impact of the Karen resettlement in Nhill*, March 2015, <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/au/Documents/Economics/deloitte-au-economics-small-towns-big-returns-nhill-resettlement-270415.pdf>.

regional employers, many of whom have invested in helping a worker to relocate from the city into a job, only to have them resign six months later and return to the city.

This risk can be partially managed by ensuring effective and tailored settlement support to migrants relocated into regional areas (see section 3 below). However irrespective of the welcome secondary migrants receive in regional areas, the pull to return to a place of first settlement in Australia can be very strong.

TBB's model circumvents this risk by facilitating direct migration into a regional area with the anchor of a job in the first instance. We work with prospective job applicants to manage their expectations about location and confirm their intention to stay in the regional job for at least the medium-term (3-5 years depending on the employer's expectations). In our view, migrants are much less likely to uproot themselves and their families to move to the city in the first few years if they have a regional job that aligns with their skillset. Migrants who gain a foothold in a regional location as their first experience in Australia are also likely to maintain a strong connection to that place, even if they do ultimately decide to relocate after a few years. Refugees recruited internationally also identify their employer as the organisation who gave them a chance at a new life, leading to a high level of employee loyalty. TBB therefore sees our model as a valuable approach to complement secondary migration efforts.

In addition to facilitating a direct migration and employment solution, the Displaced Talent Visa could encourage workers to stay in a regional location for the medium-to-long term by providing non-discriminatory incentives. For example, workers who stay and work in a regional area for at least three years could be rewarded with a fee waiver when applying for permanent residence. This would take into account regional salaries tend to be lower than in the cities, making it potentially more challenging for regional workers to save up for permanent residence.

3. Tailoring settlement support to rural and regional realities

Recommendation 3: Australia should adapt its current suite of migration and settlement programs to be much more tailored to the realities of regional Australia.

TBB's model provides a direct, employer-led solution to connect skilled people with the right employment opportunities to help regional economies and populations flourish. Our model is one of a number of innovative solutions to attract migrants and refugees to regional areas to work. However, employment is just one part of a successful settlement journey.

Evidence compiled by the former Department of Immigration and Border Protection in 2014 indicates a range of critical success factors are required to retain migrants in regional areas in addition to employment, including family connections; availability of services and infrastructure; social connections and welcoming community attitudes; and alignment of interests with regional characteristics (such as lifestyle factors, suitable activities for youth etc).¹⁵

Drawing on the evidence of what works, informed by a range of community consultations,¹⁶ the RAI recently produced a Rural and Regional Migration Toolkit to help local communities attract and retain migrants.¹⁷ The toolkit identified “seven building blocks of settlement success” at a grassroots community level in regions:

1. Initiating a settlement strategy;
2. Organising and consulting local community;
3. Welcoming and hosting new migrants;

¹⁵ Department of Immigration and Border Protection, *Regional retention of migrants: critical success factors*, 2014,

<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2014/01/apo-nid162996-1131101.pdf>

¹⁶ See learnings captured in RAI, *Understanding Regional Settlement in Australia: Key learnings from past experiences*, 2019,

http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019_RAI_Toolkit_Supporting_Material-1.pdf.

¹⁷ RAI, *Steps to Settlement Success: A toolkit for rural and regional communities*, 2019, supported by Scanlon Foundation and Welcoming Cities,

<http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/migration-toolkit/>

4. Securing employment for new migrants;
5. Securing housing for new migrants;
6. Fostering community cohesion; and
7. Considering culture, customs and environment.

To ensure each of these building blocks are present in a regional area, many local stakeholders need to be engaged, organised and well resourced to collaborate.

Employment just one piece of the puzzle

Employment therefore needs to be seen as just one component of a holistic, community informed and driven settlement approach. As part of our regional pilot TBB and Refugee Talent have been looking for ways to plug our employment solution into grassroots multi-stakeholder regional migration initiatives. For example, we have recently joined forces with the City of Greater Bendigo and Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services and a range of other community partners as part of the “Regional Ready Pilot Program” program, aiming to attract and retain refugees and migrants in the Loddon Campaspe region of Victoria.

As part of the program, TBB and Refugee Talent are assisting businesses to attract and retain skilled workers, while local government and community partners are supporting the other building blocks of settlement success. The program is made possible because of local actors driving it from the grassroots, enabled by flexible funding provided by the Victorian Government.

Another positive example of a community-driven multi-stakeholder initiative is the Great South Coast Economic Migration project to which Refugee Talent is contributing. An exciting component of that program is the use of Refugee Talent’s innovative technology to facilitate connections between all the key stakeholders required to make regional migration viable: employers, community actors and prospective migrants themselves.

TBB is also aware of a range of other complementary models which could help to support successful settlement of humanitarian migrants in regional Australia. The Community Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (CRSI), for example, is advocating for an affordable regional community sponsorship scheme that engages members of Australia's regional community in sponsoring and welcoming humanitarian migrants, in particular those without links to

family in other parts of Australia.¹⁸ A similar scheme, which has operated in Canada for more than 40 years and is now being replicated around the world, has seen refugees successfully settle in more than 400 regional and metropolitan locations in Canada, with only 34 of these being cities that support government-funded settlement services.

A grassroots funding model

Recommendation 3.1: The Federal Government should provide flexible and multi-year settlement funding to empower local multi-stakeholder regional community groups to attract, welcome and retain refugees and migrants in their communities. The funding mechanism should be flexible enough to enable a range of competent actors to take a coordinating role at the local level as required - including professional and experienced settlement organisations, local government actors and other reputable community institutions including Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups.

In TBB's experience, the current Australian government funding models for refugee and migrant settlement in regional towns are not empowering communities to develop and deliver these seven building blocks to settlement success. Funding delivered at a local, state and federal level is patchy and inconsistent across regional locations, and often regional actors are relying on short-term grant funding (such as the *Fostering Integration Grants* offered annually by the Department of Home Affairs) to do ad hoc integration projects.

What is needed is a funding model which empowers local actors across the country to work in partnership with established national settlement organisations to develop multi-stakeholder initiatives to attract, settle and retain migrants. Funding should be flexible in order to be tailored to the realities in each rural and regional location. For example, some regional locations are proximate to excellent healthcare options but do not have great options for higher education or English classes; whereas others will have a fantastic university and TAFE options but poor healthcare options, including no access to mental health support. Local communities are best placed to fill in the gaps to ensure newcomers have access to the services they actually need.

¹⁸ CRSI model available from:
<http://www.ausrefugeesponsorship.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/CRSIPositionPaper.pdf>

Moreover, some of the most critical programs for promoting retention are less about service delivery and more about building social connections. It doesn't matter if you have all the services in the world and a great job in a regional location - if you feel isolated, misunderstood and alone in your local community, or at the extreme end, if you are facing racism and harassment - you are unlikely to stay long-term.

Flexible local funding for regional settlement should empower local communities to invest in programs to recruit and coordinate volunteers/mentors/community liaisons to connect newcomers and, in particular, their spouses and children, into the local community. Building community and friendship networks is one of the recognised success factors of community refugee sponsorship initiatives (such as Canada's private refugee sponsorship program)¹⁹ which could be adapted to Australia's regional settlement approach.

Another innovative funding model to consider is the 'Community Deals' approach which has emerged out of the Centre for Policy Development's Cities and Settlement Initiative, in consultation with stakeholders across the sector, including TBB, and volunteers from the Boston Consulting Group. Under the Community Deals approach the operational structure for coordinating local delivery of key government services (employment, settlement, English language and entrepreneurship support), is a local consortium, informed by holistic case management and strategic employer engagement in line with local strategies. It adapts service and funding models locally to achieve concrete economic and social participation outcomes for refugees and is currently being trialled Wyndham, Victoria, with positive early results.

Access to transport

Recommendation 3.2: Australia should establish a national driving program to give new migrants and refugees in regional areas access to driving lessons and test preparation.

A consistent challenge across regional areas is a lack of public transport options, which is a particular challenge for new migrants and refugees who do not yet have an Australian state or territory drivers license. This can have intergenerational impacts as well, with parents

¹⁹ For more on Canada's private refugee sponsorship programs see: Steph Cousins, *Harnessing the Kindness of Strangers: Lessons from Canada's refugee sponsorship programs for Australia*, December 2018. Available from: <https://www.makerefuge.org/s/Harnessing-the-kindness-of-strangers-Dec-2018.pdf>

unable to supervise their teenage children as they learn to drive.²⁰ This impinges upon the ability of migrants and refugees to access English classes, employment opportunities and take part in social activities. It also restricts the housing stock available to migrants and refugees in regional areas, which is already a challenge.

Many displaced workers know how to drive, but their drivers' licenses are expired and, given they fled their country, cannot be renewed. Driving lessons are not part of the HSP program and there is no nationally funded program to offer driving lessons and test preparation. Volunteer programs are filling the breach in many locations, but in some areas there are really no options available.

Migrant workers relocating to regional locations and their spouses should be offered assistance to secure their drivers license and information about car finance as a standard practice. Free lessons and test preparation should be provided through a nationally funded program, or potentially delivered as part of the HSP or Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program.

English classes

Recommendation 3.3: Ensure all new migrants in regional areas have access to the AMEP upon arrival in Australia and until they no longer require it, irrespective of visa class, and expand access to the AMEP using outreach services, provision of transportation and also technology and distance learning.

Learning English is absolutely fundamental to social and economic integration in Australia, particularly in regional Australia. Compared to the cities, regions lack multilingual services and also their populations are less multilingual. Providing access to the AMEP should be a priority for all migrants and refugees, irrespective of their visa status, given the long-term economic and social dividend of investing in English. Currently there are a number of barriers which prevent migrants from accessing AMEP in a timely manner:

- **Lack of availability in regional areas:** While there is an abundance of AMEP class options in the cities, many regional areas are not proximate to classes - or may only be proximate to basic English learning options rather than intermediate or advanced.

²⁰ See Grace Jennings-Edquist, "Learn-to-drive programs give refugees independence and a world of possibilities" in *ABC Life*, 3 July 2019, <https://www.abc.net.au/life/refugees-getting-drivers-licence-opens-world-of-possibilities/11225732>

For example, the spouse of one of our regional skilled workers has been unable to access AMEP classes since she arrived in April because the closest class is 40 minutes away and until recently she has not had any viable transport options.

- **Lack of information:** The AMEP is a complex program with many streams and different providers. It is extremely difficult for new migrants to navigate these options to find out where to access suitable English classes when they first arrive, particularly in regional areas. Not all AMEP providers are the same - some offerings are better for literate/professional people and others are probably better for people looking for connection and conversational English. These options should be better laid out for migrants when they first arrive so they know what classes will best suit their needs.
- **Lack of distance learning/technology options:** One AMEP provider provides classes via distance learning (NSW Tafe). However this offering does not appear to be well understood by settlement agencies and in TBB's experience candidates who may be eligible are not being referred to this service. Particularly for migrants in rural areas distance learning via use of technology (eg. one-to-one English tutoring via Skype) is a logical service and should be offered and expanded much more widely.
- **Lack of visa eligibility:** The AMEP is only available to migrants on certain visa classes. For example, spouses of workers on the TSS (482) visa are not eligible for AMEP. Given many skilled workers in regional areas are on TSS visas this is a real issue.
- **Time limits on eligibility:** AMEP is only provided to humanitarian entrants if they register within six months of arrival, commence classes within 12 month and complete tuition within five years of arrival in Australia.²¹ These arbitrary cut-offs disproportionately impact women of child bearing age, who due to many of the barriers above and the additional time pressures of raising a young family may not be able to make full use of English classes in their first five years in Australia. This makes very little sense given we should be encouraging migrants to learn English at every stage where they need to.

In TBB's experience access to English language classes is much more complicated for new migrants and refugees than it should be, particularly in regional areas. Gaps in English language training options should be filled as a matter of urgent priority.

²¹ See Department of Education, Adult Migrant English Program: <https://www.education.gov.au/adult-migrant-english-program-0>

Conclusion

Refugees and other displaced workers can be an incredible asset to regional Australia. In order to connect the dots and enable regional employers to harness the skills and talents of displaced workers, Australia needs to introduce innovations to the skilled migration program. The creation of a Displaced Talent Visa would be a world-first solution to benefit Australian employers and regional economies, whilst making a profound humanitarian contribution. In addition, Australia can ensure that migrants of all walks of life are encouraged to settle in regional communities by tailoring settlement services and plans to regional realities.

Annex 1: TBB Talent Catalogue data

August 2019

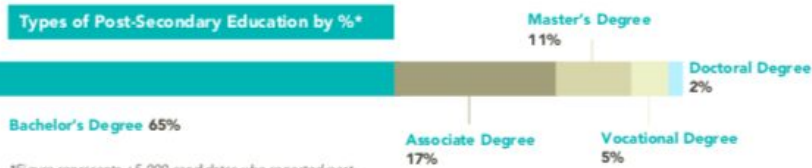
Snapshot of TBB's Talent Catalog

This analysis surveys refugees currently registered in Talent Beyond Boundaries' (TBB) Talent Catalog. Please note that all active TBB candidates are based in Jordan and Lebanon. TBB cooperates closely with UNHCR and can conduct targeted outreach to additional UNHCR-registered refugees.

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www.talentbeyondboundaries.org



Types of Post-Secondary Education by %*



*Figure represents +5,000 candidates who reported post-secondary education. Note, incomplete degrees not included.

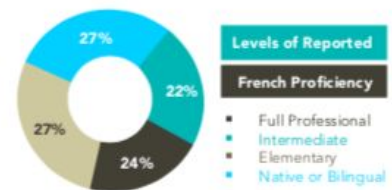
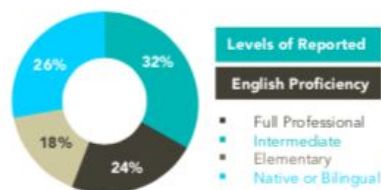
Top 5 Nationalities of Male Registrants

- 1 Syrian
- 2 Palestinian
- 3 Iraqi
- 4 Yemeni
- 5 Sudanese

Top 5 Nationalities of Female Registrants

- 1 Syrian
- 2 Palestinian
- 3 Iraqi
- 4 Yemeni
- 5 Sudanese

Language Skills. Over 15 languages are spoken among TBB registrants, with Arabic, English, French, Turkish and German among the most common. If an employer is interested in a candidate but requires stronger language skills, TBB works with the candidate to get him or her to the desired level. The following demonstrates levels in spoken English and French. Note, not all registered candidates have informed TBB of their language abilities and these results are from the +12,650 that responded for English and +1,500 for French.



Professional Skills. TBB registrants represent over 200 professions across various sectors. The following represents some of our most common in our Talent Catalog.



*Categories of engineers include: Civil (268), Mechanical (201), Electrical (139), Other (165), Electronic (105), Petroleum (35), Biomedical (17), Chemical (15); Categories of healthcare professionals include: Pharmacists (100), Nurses (121), Medical Doctors (106), Medical Assistants (26), Physical Therapists (34), Dentistry Professionals (88), Nutritionists (26), Other (185)