

From Labour Mobility to Integration: Migration to, from, within the Pacific

Panel Convenor: Associate Professor Ryan Edwards, Development Policy Centre,

ANU

Forced Settlement and Displacement: (Dis)integration on the Margins of Migration Policy Discourse

Dr Nayahamui Rooney, School of Culture, History and Language, ANU

Pacific-Australia Migration: Where It's At, Where It's Going, and Navigating the Rough Currents To Get There

Associate Professor Ryan Edwards, Development Policy Centre, ANU

Intra-regional Mobility: From Pilots to Mainstreaming and Scale

Dr Alisi Holani, PACER Plus Implementation Unit (PPIU) and Dr Charlotte Bedford, Development Policy Centre, ANU



FORCED SETTLEMENT, DISPLACEMENT, EXCLUSION: (DIS)INTEGRATION ON THE MARGINS OF MIGRATION POLICY DISCOURSE

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Australian
National
University

Australia's offshore detention policies

Historical white Australia policy.

Internal tension: Australian border security vs international obligations to protect asylum seeker rights.

➤ 2001: Pacific solution – opening of the Nauru and Manus Island asylum seeker detention centres.

- Tampa affair
- 9/11 terrorist attack
- Australian elections

➤ 2008: Closure of Pacific solution.



John Howard and his ministers ensured border security and anti-terrorism policies consumed the debate. MIKE BOWERS

“...we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come...”

Australia's offshore detention policies



Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (right) and Papua New Guinea Prime Minister Peter O'Neill shake hands after signing an agreement to deal with asylum seekers in Brisbane. Photograph: DAN PELED/AAPIMAGE Photograph: DAN PELED/AAPIMAGE

- 2012: Reopened with harsher border policy regime.
- 2012 – 2019: Manus Island Regional Processing Centre for asylum seekers (RPC).
- Big global picture issues:
 - High global mass migration – undocumented/irregular/illegal migration.
 - Border security debates.
 - Human rights debates.
 - Geopolitical strategic rivalries.
- National and local mobility: internal migration or displacement.



Flow of asylum seekers arriving to and transferred from Australia
International obligations to protect asylum seekers

Relationship with Indonesia
Rights of West Papua

Geopolitical rivalries

Manu

gendered impacts of Manus RPC

Rights of PNG women to live free from violence

Nauru

Bilateral PNG – Australia relationship

Mutual shared interest in security

Australian foreign aid to end violence against PNG women.

Domestic border security

Australia's "Pacific Solution"

A stable/secure PNG is in Australia's interests

17/04/2026

View from Space

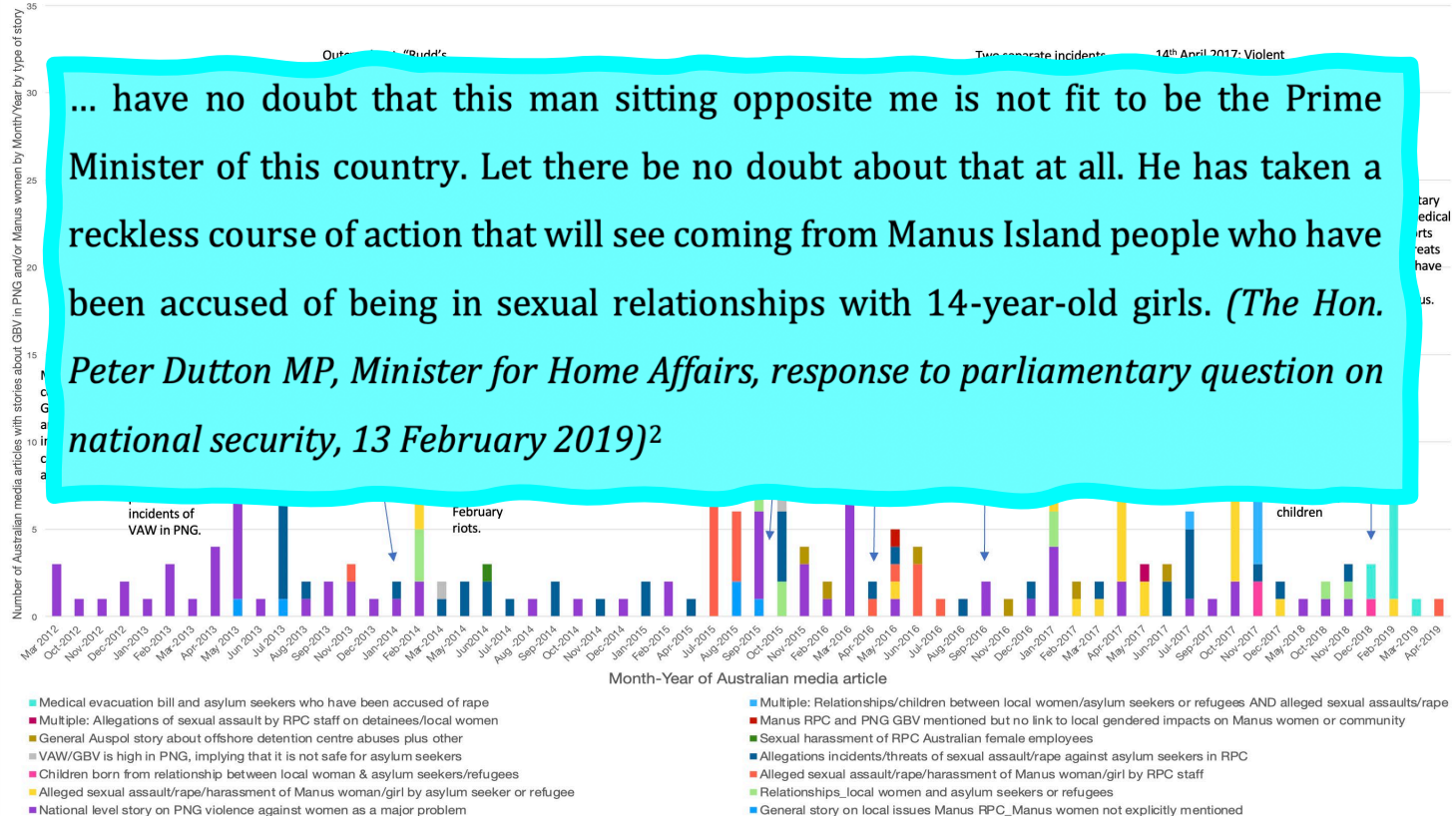
Graphics by Nayahamui Rooney

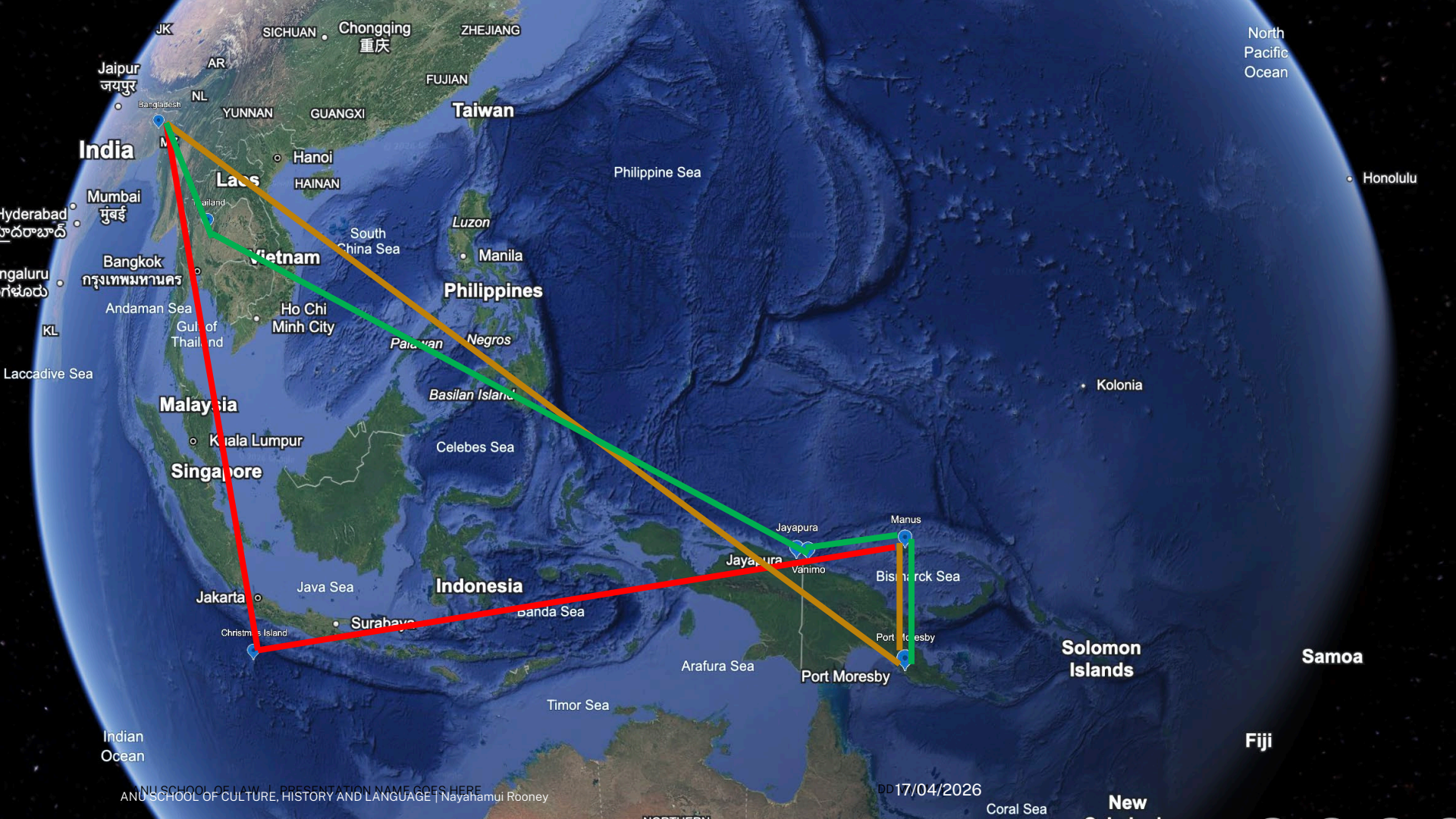
Satellite image from: Google Earth

Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO

Image Landsat / Copernicus ANU SCHOOL OF CULTURE, HISTORY AND LANGUAGE Studies

Weaponising alleged sexual assault on Manus: A gendered timeline of political discourse in the Australian media, 2012–2019





North Pacific Ocean

Honolulu

Kolonia

Samoa

Fiji

Solomon Islands

Port Moresby

Manus

Jayapura

Vanimo

Port Moresby

Bismarck Sea

Arafura Sea

Timor Sea

Indonesia

Surabaya

Jakarta

Singapore

Malaysia

Kuala Lumpur

Vietnam

Hanoi

Laos

Bangkok

Mumbai

India

Jaipur

Taiwan

Philippine Sea

Philippines

Manila

Luzon

HAINAN

GUANGXI

YUNNAN

NL

AR

JK

ZHEJIANG

SICHUAN

Chongqing

重庆

FUJIAN

Internal migration and displacement

Whose right in urban eviction processes?



Policy discourses since 2012

City upgrading

- APEC and other regional/international signature events.
- Rebranding: “Amazing Port Moresby”
- Affordable housing projects.
- Future strategy: *Port Moresby towards 2030: One City, One People, One Future*”
- Major construction program – roads and other infrastructure.
- Major city property and commercial developments.

Human rights

2010 UN OHCHR assessment on housing rights in PNG.
Some commentary but relatively subdued discourses.

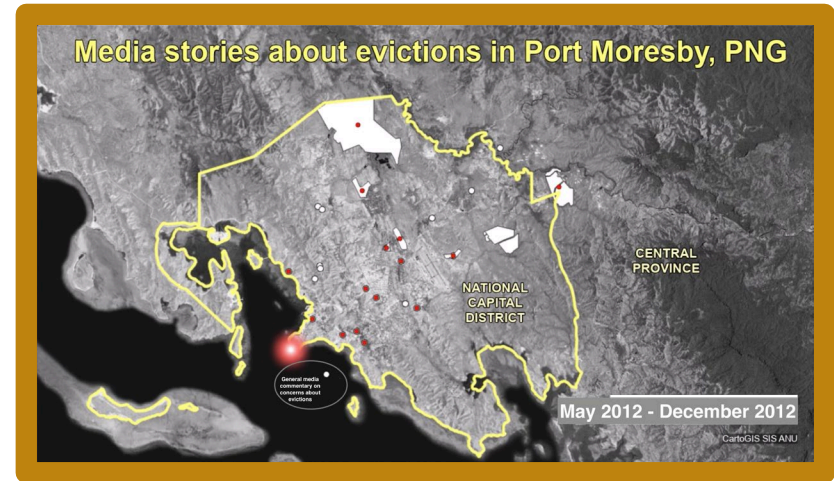
Settlement upgrades

“settlement to suburbs”
“Titles for settlers”

Ongoing land and development discourses

National political context and election cycles

Increasing attention to geo-politics



Case study	Name	State land Portion	Year	Court decision numbers
1	Paga Hill	1597	2012	Paga Hill Development Company (PNG) Ltd vs Kisu [2013] PGNC68; N5255 (OS 573 of 2012, National Court of Papua New Guinea, 2013) Paga Hill Development Company (PNG) Ltd v Kisu [2014] PGNC27; N5683 (OS 573 of 2012, National Court of Papua New Guinea, 2014)
2	Moresby/ Waigani Arts Theatre	1564	2013	Yalbees v Amaiu [2018] PGNC 264; N7393 (National Court of Papua New Guinea, 2018) Amaiu v Yalbees [2020] PGSC 133; SC2046 (Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea, 2020)
3	Erima Wildlife community	279	2014	Wama v Parkop [2018] PGNC 235; N7323 (National Court of Papua New Guinea, 2018) Wama v Parkop [2020] PGSC 67; SC1977 (Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea, 2020)
4	14-Mile	1221	2020	Kepe v Rosso [2020] PGNC 294; N8501 (National Court of Papua New Guinea, 2020)
5	ATS Settlement	695	2021	Rifu v Dun Lavin Ltd [2020] PGNC 99; N8847 (OS No. 166 of 2020; National Court of Papua New Guinea, 2020)
6	Garden Hills		2021	Emani v Assemblies of God Boroko Association Inc [2020]. PGSC4; SC1914
7	Morata	2733	2022	Philip and Tengere v Sixth Estate Limited [2018] PGNC 81; N7125 (National Court of Papua New Guinea, 2018)
8	ATS settlement	697	2023	Gamoia v Tamake Holdings Ltd [2022] PGNC23; N9438.
9	Bushwara	2156, 2157, 2159	2024	Nambawan Super Ltd v Occupants of Portion 2157 Milinch Granville Fourmil Port Moresby [2020] PGNC 295; N8632 (National Court of Papua New Guinea, 2020)

Common themes in court cases and decisions

- Collective group action vs individualized titled claims on urban state land.
- Multiple parties to cases.
- Erasure of customary discourses of land ownership and custodianship.
- Legal versus equitable interests in land.
- Human rights violations.

- In these case studies, the court upheld the indefeasible right of the title holder and considers human rights in terms of allowing reasonable time for residents to vacate the land.



Policy implications

State actors (government departments, courts, elected officials) have great control over outcomes in terms of prevention and responses to the many forceful evictions. Five policy suggestions:

1. Legislative reforms to strengthen legal rights to housing that protect the housing rights of communities impacted by mass evictions of informal settlements. Where the eviction is unavoidable or the court rules to enforce an eviction, there needs to be clear resettlement options that are in line with international human rights standards.
2. Policy reforms need to outline transparently the roles and responsibilities and accountability mechanisms of the different government agencies and actors in eviction processes.
3. Policies that mitigate against further marginalisation of the rights of customary landowners in urban land issues.
4. Dialogue between national and provincial governments, and customary landowner leaders as NCD outgrows its current boundaries and extends into Central Province.
5. In the absence of legislative reforms, an independent monitoring mechanism is needed to track and ensure that eviction processes adequately balance human and housing rights, land rights, and business and development priorities. This could include consideration for a moratorium on mass forceful evictions until a clearer policy framework is established and incorporated into the city's current policy vision.



A community leader's concerns about forceful eviction of Portion 695, Port Moresby, PNG, 2021

1. Introduction

My worry is that whatever happens, like the eviction, it happens, but when it comes to helping, why is it that we are in this heart of the city, and I have not seen any support? Some of us are homeless, we are sleeping on the ground. The next day, you would see help arrive. Like NGO groups or we have a government that should come and show solidarity with us that they are aware of our situation. This situation is like a disaster which is when we usually see support flow. How many children? How many disabled people? How many people have been impacted? Not one assessment has been made. They — the government — remain there and we remain here like this until now. (Dunstan Goviro, Community Leader, ATS Settlement, 22 June 2021; translated excerpts from interview transcript)

Dunstan Goviro is a community leader of the estimated 2000 people who resided on Portion 695 of Air Transport Squadron (ATS) Settlement, an informal settlement in Port Moresby, PNG's National Capital District (NCD), before it was razed by backhoes during an eviction exercise over several weeks from 28 April 2021. It is estimated that nearly



Where will they go?

by POST-COURIER
FEBRUARY 24, 2026 at 5:42 am



- Varying reasons for eviction: Court orders in favor of title holder vs as government sanctioned solution to crime
- Home/pledges is not always an option
- Pressure on other customary/state land in the city
- Political debates and shrinking NCD boundaries.
- Vagrancy Act - harsher regime/exclusion zones
- Housing - a human right and informal settlements are an expression of PNG ways of life
- Migration and human mobility: Where does dignity come in?





PACER Plus
IMPLEMENTATION UNIT

Intra-Pacific Labour Mobility under PACER Plus

Key Findings

PACER Plus Implementation Unit

2026

What is PACER Plus?

The Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus is a development centered regional trade agreement between Pacific island countries and Australia and NZ

Was signed in 2017 and entered into force in 2020. Parties are: Australia, Cook Islands, Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Aimed at supporting sustainable economic development in the Pacific through stronger regional trade integration and effective implementation of PACER Plus commitments.

Funding provided by Australia and New Zealand for implementation of the Agreement and is administered by the PACER Plus Implementation Unit (PPIU)



Arrangement on Labour Mobility

- A non-legally binding regional framework for labour mobility cooperation amongst PACER Plus Parties
- Key focus is enhancing the development benefits of labour mobility for Pacific labour sending countries
- Initially focused on labour mobility to Australia and New Zealand but labour receiving Parties have requested inclusion of intra-pacific labour mobility (temporary)

Temporary Movement of Natural Persons Chapter

- Legally binding chapter of the Agreement aimed at facilitating temporary movement of service providers to support trade in services
- Scope is largely limited to highly skilled professionals, but Pacific countries have also included semi-skilled and low-skilled labour – providing scope for intra-pacific labour mobility

Niue – Solomon Islands Intra-Pacific Labour Mobility Pilot



- Niue was recognised at PLMAM (2022) alongside Cook Islands as a labour receiving country
- The Niuean government requested a managed labour mobility programme in 2023
- A scoping study (2023) by PACER Plus and ANU in 2023 recommended a Pilot programme with Solomon Islands
- Niue approved the pilot targeting the aged care sector. The 6-month pilot was launched in 2024 under an Inter-Agency Understanding (IAU) between Solomon Islands and Niue
- 5 retired nurses (55–60) recruited from Solomon Islands to work at the Niue hospital
- Final evaluation (2025): Successful — met aspirations of both countries and demonstrated viability of managed intra-Pacific labour mobility.
- Learnings now informing development of Niue’s national labour mobility strategy

Key Drivers of Intra-Pacific Labour Mobility



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Labour shortages due to declining or stagnant population growth in some Pacific countries e.g: Populations of Cook Islands and Niue significantly declined in 1970s after Free Association with New Zealand. Niue's population dropped from 5000 in 1974 to 1,681 in 2022.

Skills shortages due to outflow of skilled workers and limited domestic supply e.g: Tonga - significant shortages in medium to high-skilled professionals particularly for accountants, engineers, IT technicians, secondary and TVET teachers, medical professionals, registered nurses and health care workers, scientists, and policy analysts.


Uneven distribution of labour and skills in the Pacific – Solomon Islands 2019 census 2.7% population growth rate suggests large proportion of unutilized labour and skills

Rising demand from businesses and public sector across the Pacific for job-ready skilled workers



Skills shortages
are now a binding
constraint on
Pacific economic
growth

Across the Pacific,
employers are not
struggling to find workers—
they are struggling to find
the right skills



WE HAD TO
CLOSE OUR CAFÉ
BECAUSE OF
STAFFING SHORTAGES

Multiple pressures are shrinking and weakening skills supply in the Pacific:

- Permanent migration is removing skilled and semi-skilled workers at scale, including those in their most productive years
- Skills gaps persist, reflecting weak alignment between education, training systems, and local private sector demand
- Weak incentives and working conditions are discouraging youth from entering and remaining in the domestic workforce
- Skills mismatch - over-skilled workers are taking low-skilled jobs abroad, including on PALM and RSE, exporting scarce talent
- Demographic decline in some countries is reducing the future skills pipeline
- Remittance reliance may be weakening incentives for skills development and participation in local employment

HOW CAN THE PALM SCHEME HELP?

PACIFIC SKILLS MOBILITY PARTNERSHIP
WITHIN THE PALM

- A TOURISM & HOSPITALITY PILOT



OBJECTIVE

- To design and deliver a mutually beneficial skills development-centred labour mobility initiative that can support sustainable development in both Pacific labour sending and labour receiving countries like Australia by:
 - ❖ Leveraging existing Pacific labour mobility schemes to meet industry skills needs in the Pacific and Australia thereby mitigating long-term skills losses in Pacific labour sending countries while addressing labour shortages in labour receiving countries
 - ❖ Enabling and building effective partnerships between labour mobility and skills development stakeholders in Pacific labour sending and labour-receiving countries

SCOPE

A multi-year tourism and hospitality apprenticeship programme for selected low-skilled/semi-skilled workers from a Pacific tourism and hospitality business to work in a partner tourism and hospitality business in Australia.

The selected employers will establish expected outcomes including agreed skills training outcomes to address their identified skills gaps

Selected workers will be contracted to both their Pacific and PALM employer with the expectation that they will deliver a service that meets the skills needs of the PALM employer and return to transfer those skills to address skills needs of their Pacific employer

Relevant agencies (labour mobility, qualifications authorities, tourism and hospitality departments, etc) in both labour sending and labour receiving countries will establish a collaborative programme of support to ensure skills anticipation, skills training, skills recognition and reintegration outcomes are achieved

Key elements of the Pilot:

Cooperation between Countries of Origin and Destination:

- Collaboratively designed and supported by key stakeholders in both labour sending and receiving countries e.g: tourism industries, relevant government departments, qualification agencies

Skills Needs-Based:

- Designed to address identified skills needs of employers in both labour sending and labour receiving countries

Skills Training:

- A suite of training at pre-departure, during employment and at return to upskill Pacific workers while also meeting skills needs of employers in labour sending and receiving countries.

Skills Recognition:

- Relevant authorities to provide necessary support to ensure that skills acquired during the pilot are transferable and are recognized in both labour sending and labour receiving countries

Labour market integration:

- Pacific workers are able to be effectively integrated into the labour markets in both the labour sending and labour receiving countries



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Pacific-Australia migration

Where it's at, where it's going, and
navigating the rough currents to get there

Ryan B. Edwards

Deputy Director, Development Policy Centre
Associate Professor of Economics, Crawford School of Public Policy
Australian National University

Where we're at: a brief snapshot

~1.4%

of Australian population

from Pacific island countries

~32,515

PALM scheme workers**

15,380 short-term + 17,135 long-term

~3,000

PEV places per year

permanent, random ballot, skill-neutral

~315%

overestimation

Australians think 3x more Pacific migrants*

~1%

of temporary visas

PALM as share of all temp visa holders

~1%

of permanent intake

PEV as share of perm migration program

**Yet Pacific immigration enjoys more public support than rest of the immigration program (Leng, Edwards & Wood 2025)*

*** DEWR, PALM Scheme, February 2025.*

Navigating rough currents

Three key shifting discourses and policy tensions

01

Regulatory ratchet vs. growth imperative

PALM growth has stalled.

Compliance costs have risen, worker protection demands remain, employers are leaving.

How do we rescue the scheme?

02

View from the Pacific: gains versus pains

Brain drain, social costs, and sovereignty concerns persist.

Evidence is weaker than the rhetoric, as leaders steadily push towards freer movement.

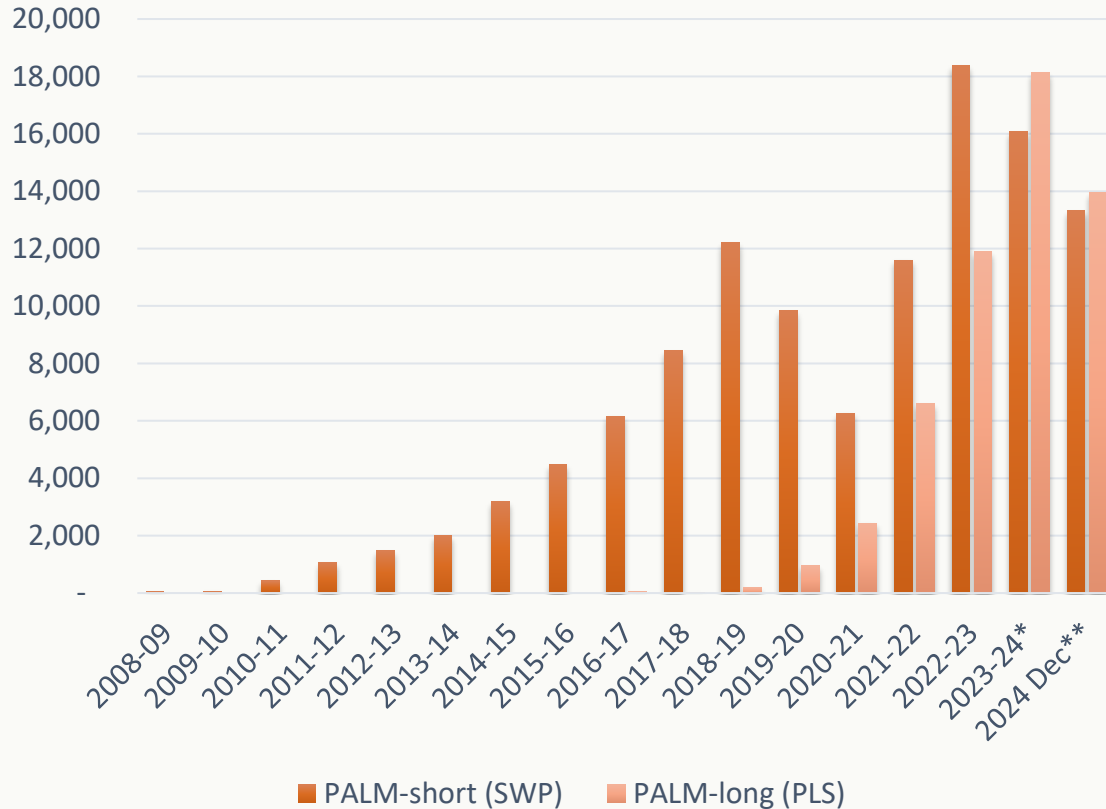
03

Australian immigration politics and the future

Labor re-elected but silent on Pacific migration. PEV survived.

Social license amidst immense political pressure on migration.

Current 1: from growth to stagnation



Peaked at ~34,230

June 2024

Down to ~32,515

February 2026

Short-term numbers down sharply
Over a quarter, mid-2023—late-2024

Growth era is over without reform

What happened? The regulatory ratchet

Demand-side pressures

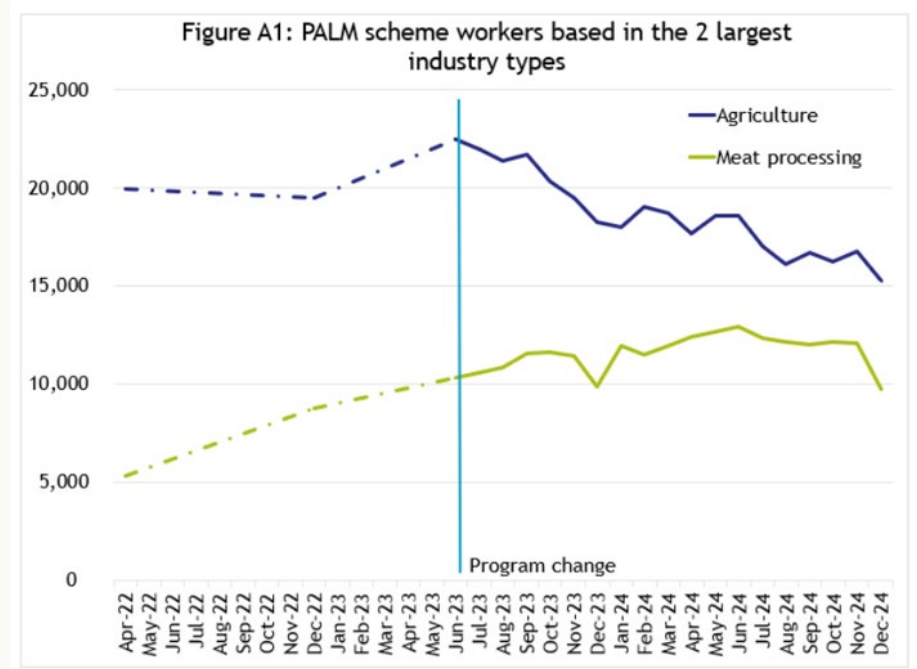
June 2023 AE Deed: new compliance obligations raised costs of participation along several margins

Backpackers returned post-pandemic in record numbers (less regulated)

Employer frustrations: recruitment timelines stretch now to more than double the standard

DEWR analysis shows program changes associated with falling demand for workers in agriculture

March 2026 Guidelines v2.1 adds additional reporting and compliance requirements, and makes the temporary hours averaging standard policy



Source: DEWR PALM scheme quarterly update, published 7 March 2025 [\[link\]](#)

What happened? The regulatory ratchet

Demand-side pressures

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Supply-side pressures

Disengagement / asylum: surge in protection visa applications from PALM workers, though now down

Brain drain politics: high rates of working-age population abroad in smaller countries and substantive domestic political pressure

Sending country reviews: Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu introduced new policies, including caps

Hard for demand to respond quickly when both sides are tightening simultaneously and policy settings on both sides increasingly volatile.

Two competing narratives on PALM

Protection

Exploitation headlines demand more regulation.

Worker protections: minimum hours guarantees, better accommodation, robust compliance.

Regulatory tightening responds to real problems.



Growth

The development gains (e.g., 3–10x earnings) are among the largest available to Pacific countries.

Employer burden: no PALM without demand.

Every compliance cost increment widens the gap with the unregulated backpacker workforce.

The missed opportunity

Guidelines v2.1 are one half of what was needed: a more robust worker protection framework.

The other half, reforms to arrest the decline in employer participation, remains unwritten.

PNG, Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste all want to send significantly more workers.

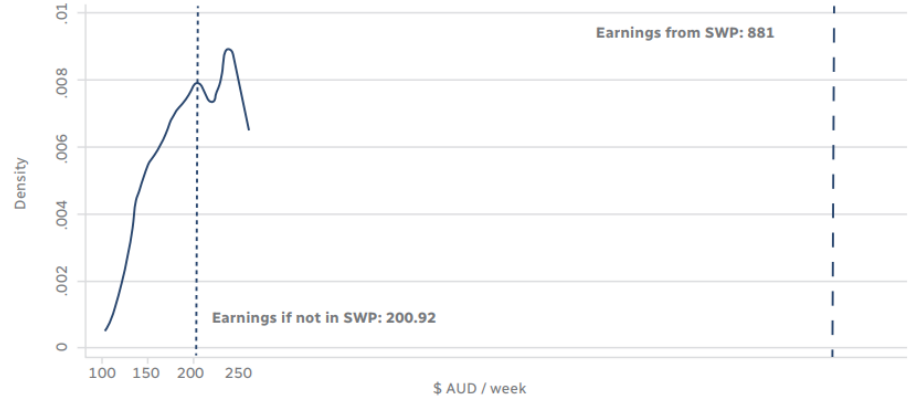
What does the evidence actually say?

Earnings and remittances

Workers earn 3–10x pre-departure income.

Typically remit or save up to 60% of earnings.

FIGURE 13. Estimated place premium for Tongan SWP workers

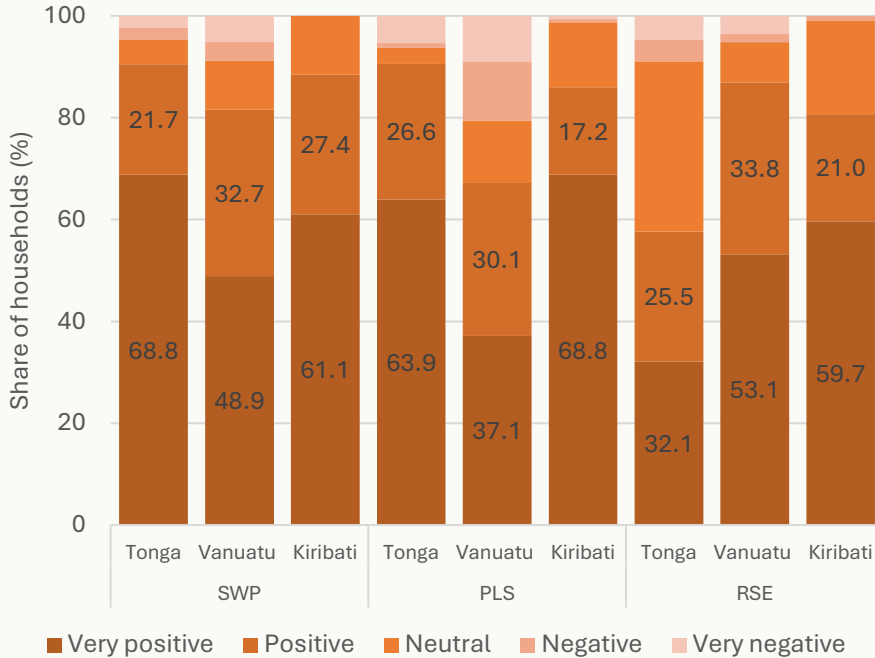


Note: This figure shows the difference in the average earnings of a Tongan SWP worker, net of tax and deductions (long dash line on the right) compared with the distribution of what all SWP workers in the PLMS are estimated to earn back in Tonga according to the individual data in the PLMS household survey (the navy curve; short dash line is the median).

Sources: Edwards, Dornan, Dung & Edwards (2023); Nguyen & Edwards (2025); Leng, Edwards & Wood (2025)

What does the evidence actually say?

Perceived impacts of LM schemes on the community in sending countries, non-sending households



Worker and community views

92% want to return. 7% expressed dissatisfaction.

Community perceptions overwhelmingly positive.

What does the evidence actually say?



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No domestic wage suppression

No evidence that the Seasonal Worker Program suppressed earnings of local farm workers.

Rather, the SWP fills genuine gaps.



Australian public opinion

Pacific migration more supported than the broader Australian immigration program.

Public not well informed and do update with information.

Current 2: the view from within the Pacific

Pushing for the gains over and through the pains

The discourse

Persistent domestic discourse within some Pacific countries about costs and risks of labour mobility.

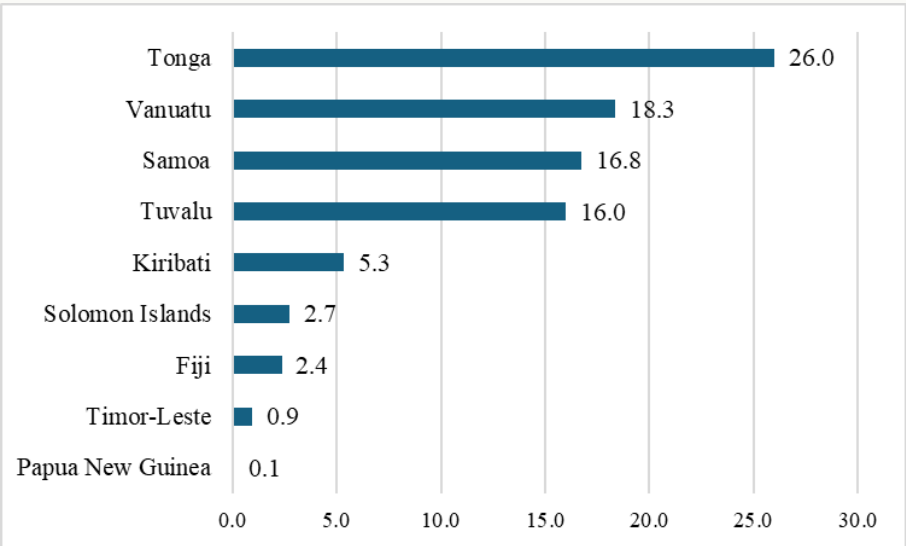
Concerns beyond brain drain: care drain, brawn drain, and community disruption—and sovereignty concerns. Overseas employment rates help explain in which countries these issues are most salient.

Not an abstract academic debate but shaping policy.

“I really don't like” the idea of Pacific nations as “outposts where we grow people”—PM Fiaame Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu have all introduced new policies, including new conditions and caps.

Yet, the tide towards freer movement is stronger.

Key policies have not had “teeth”, relevance. Most leaders are actively pushing for visa free travel.



Proportion of male population 20-54 years in 2024 in each sending country working in Australia and New Zealand on temporary labour mobility (PALM ST & LT, RSE) programs in 2023-24, per cent

Source: Richard Curtain 2025

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The evidence

Does not straightforwardly support “brain drain” fears.

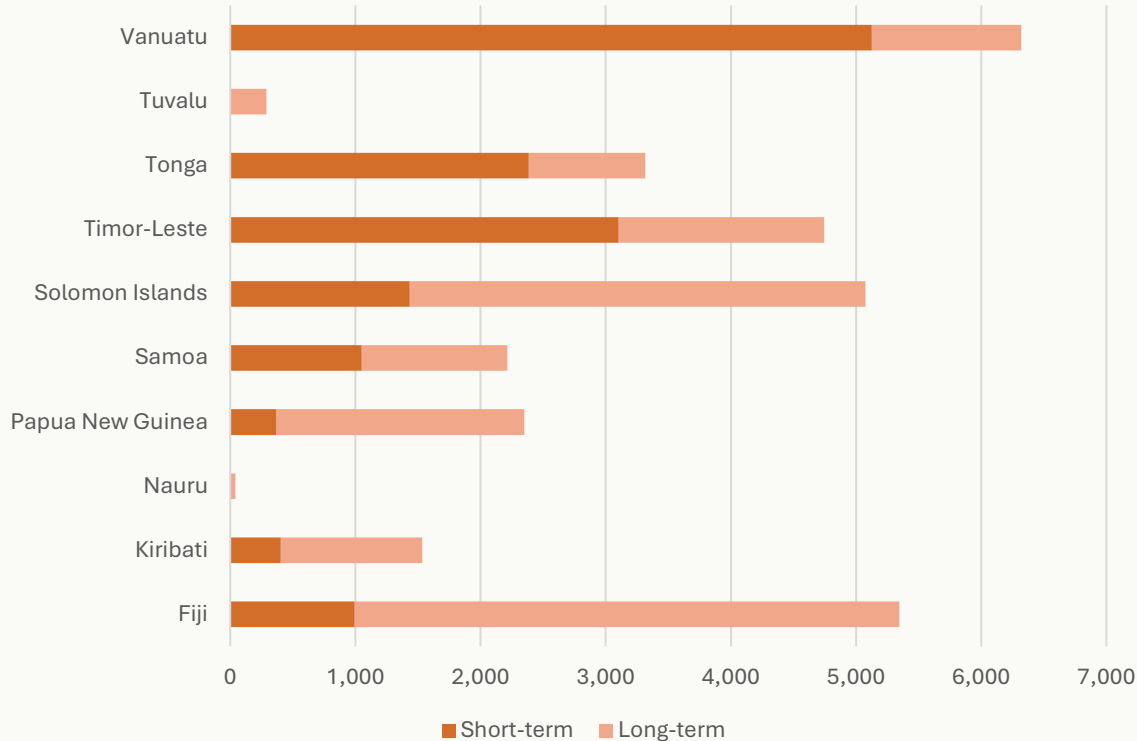
1. Supply of skilled workers is not perfectly inelastic (Abarcar & Theoharides; Chand & Clemens).
2. Substantial ancillary benefits: remittances, return migration, skills transfer, and investment.
3. No relationship between sector-specific emigration and sector outcomes (e.g., health).

The Pacific context matters a lot here:

1. PALM is low/semi-skilled and PEV skill-neutral.
2. High-emigration countries in the region tend to also be high-income (Cook Is, Palau, Niue); vice versa.
3. No country would be better off withdrawing.

Regardless of evidence, salience of discourse matters.
Whether PALM grows. What leaders need to be seen doing.

Sending country diversification



Key trends

Shift away from Vanuatu and Tonga concentration (e.g., VU 33 to 22%)

Rise of Timor-Leste, Fiji and Solomon Islands

Competition between countries has meant that countries that wanted to grow (e.g., PNG, SI, TL) could do so while others contracted

But that space is now becoming exhausted without renewed aggregate growth

Two new special visa pathways

Pacific Engagement Visa (PEV)

3,000 permanent visas/year, by random ballot
Skill-neutral: anyone can apply, equal chance
Job offer required to convert ballot win to visa
Full access to services once visa granted
Country quotas across 10 countries
Countries that opted out first year (Kiribati, Samoa)
all joined by the second year
2024 and 2025 ballots completed

Falepili Mobility Pathway (FMP)

Australia-Tuvalu security-migration deal, framed
around climate change and migration with dignity
280 places/year (~2.5% of population)
No job offer requirement
No age or disability restrictions
No "use it or lose it" rule
Large share of of Tuvalu's population applied
2025 ballot completed

Both are important policy experiments: skill-neutral selection, random ballot, and different conditions.

Falepili is the more generous comparator: should its settings become the standard for migration with dignity?

PEV is immensely popular but faces challenges

186,781

total applicants in 2025 ballot
(+9% on Year 1)

Country	Quota	Applications	Apps/slot
Timor-Leste	300	56,092	187
Fiji	300	47,432	158
PNG	1,350	30,717	23
Tonga	150	16,438	110
Samoa	150	16,533	110
Kiribati	100	10,145	101

Slow conversion at the start: ~1,000 visas granted by July 2025 from 2024 ballot, 59 percent by December. ~1000 visas granted FY 2024—25 but ~2000 visas already granted for FY 2025—26.

Job requirement frictions: offshore applicants struggle to find employment; a large share from onshore.

Survived the election: Coalition voted against PEV legislation and may have abolished it, despite laying foundations in late 2010s. Labor now have three years to bed it all down and secure broad bipartisan support.

Current 3: Australia's shifting domestic politics

2022. Labor's Pacific migration reforms

PEV introduced. PALM family accompaniment piloted. Agriculture Visa abandoned.

Ushered in a new era of Pacific labour mobility.

But regulated PALM into stagnation.

2025–26. New Guidelines, same old problems

PALM needs to get back to growth, but the DEWR Guidelines v2.1 tightened regulation further.

Backpacker reform has not happened, as politically costly, and the gap with PALM now widens further.

Asylum/disengagement is improving, but still a problem.

2025. The consequential election

Pacific migration invisible in the election. Labor said little, while the Coalition threatened both PALM and the PEV.

Labor's reelection likely saved the PEV, but the political energy of 2022 is gone, with no major changes since.

The future is uncertain as tensions grow between policy achievements and sustainability of these achievements.

2026—. Second-term priorities (Howes)

Bed down PEV	7/10
End PALM family separation.	2/10
Rescue PALM / reform backpacker visa.	2/10
Address asylum/disengagement.	6/10
New initiatives/dedicated portfolio.	0/10

From ad hoc pathways to purposeful integration

Parallel visa options and conditions

PALM short vs PALM long

PALM short 1 year vs multi year

PALM regular vs family accompaniment

PALM vs PEV and Falepili vs TPV, etc. etc.

Most common visa transitions

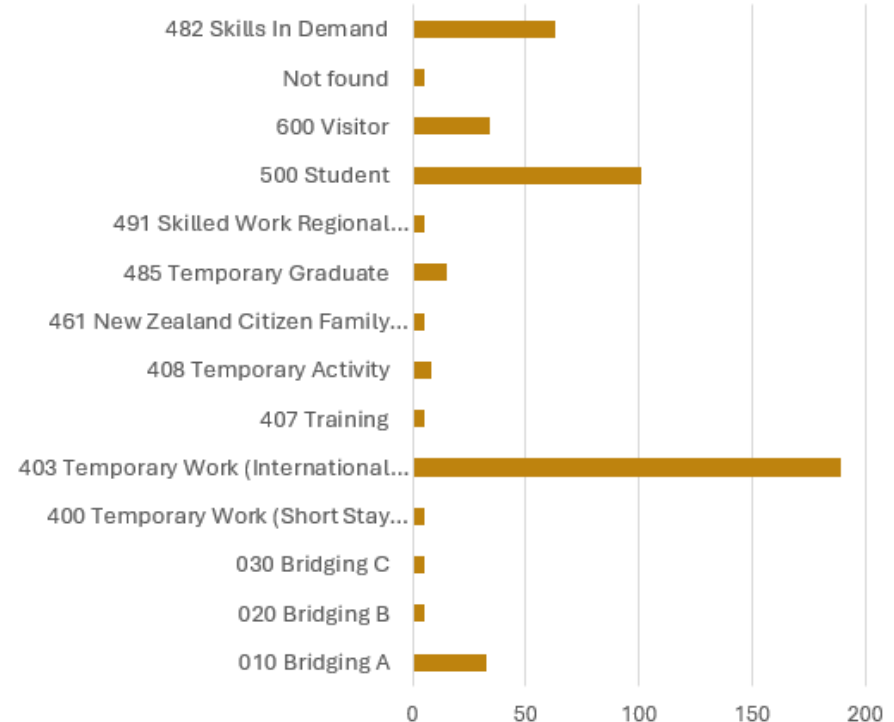
Sponsorship for other visas

Onshore PEV applications

Temporary protection and bridging visas

New workplace justice visa also in play

Visa held at 192 visa lodgment FY24—April 25
(i.e., 478/2268, or 21 % already held visas)



From ad hoc pathways to purposeful integration

How should Pacific visa pathways relate to one another and to the broader migration system?



Three key principles for further Pacific labour integration

Formalise pathways: PALM-long outcomes (i.e., transitions to permanency) should not be ad hoc coping strategies but purposeful and managed. Encourage 'PALM graduation' via sponsorship, training cost/fee waivers, skill transitions.

Preserve PEV integrity: no queue-jumping from PALM. Preserve random ballot. Prioritise policy stability.

Broader migration control: disengagement requires a solution beyond PALM, but migration must be perceived as under control to retain social license for Pacific pathways. Recent media on regional crime is an emerging threat.

Where to from here? Time to go beyond the 1%

1 Rescue PALM

Simplify and reduce regulatory burden and backpacker competition

Remove area restrictions, especially for aged care in cities

Open to construction and trades, and expand services

End family separation

Formalise PALM-long pathways to permanency

2 Expand permanent pathways

Increase PEV and FMP quotas where demand is high

Address the job search frictions

Extend to other nations? Relax terms even further? Should Falepili terms become standard?

Remarkable research opportunity to study settlement, costs, benefits

3 Freer movement in the Pacific

Firmly on the PIFS agenda.

Most leaders calling for visa-free travel. Minimum: match NZ.

Introduce an APEC-type Pacific business travel card.

Continued incrementalism:

- More bilateral compacts
- Qualification recognition
- Expand intra-regional pilots

What does integration mean to me? Where Pacific islanders living, working, and studying in Australia vs. home more closely reflects their wishes, and where New Zealand is not the way to Australia.

Navigating the rough currents together

Tensions and threads to weave together in discussion

What does "integration" mean on the margins?

Forced settlement and displacement in PNG is the other end of the (dis)integration spectrum.

How can we talk coherently about integration when the same discourse produces deportations and displacement?

Can intra-regional mobility learn from or challenge the PALM/PEV model?

How do intra-regional schemes fit in the ecosystem? Do they face the same regulatory ratchet?

How do sending country politics differ when the destination is another Pacific country vs. Australia?

How do we foster coherence across these disconnected themes?

Resettlement, internal migration and displacement, short- and long-term labour mobility, and intra-regional pilots.

What policy architecture or framework can link and bind these together?