



DESIGNING SUCCESSFUL SELECTION SYSTEMS

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All OECD countries have channels for admitting highly skilled workers



EU Blue card



Passeport Talent



Red-White-Red Card



Express Entry



Skill Select



Quebec SWP



H-1B, O-1A; EB



Turquoise card



High Skilled PBS



Tier 1 (and 2)



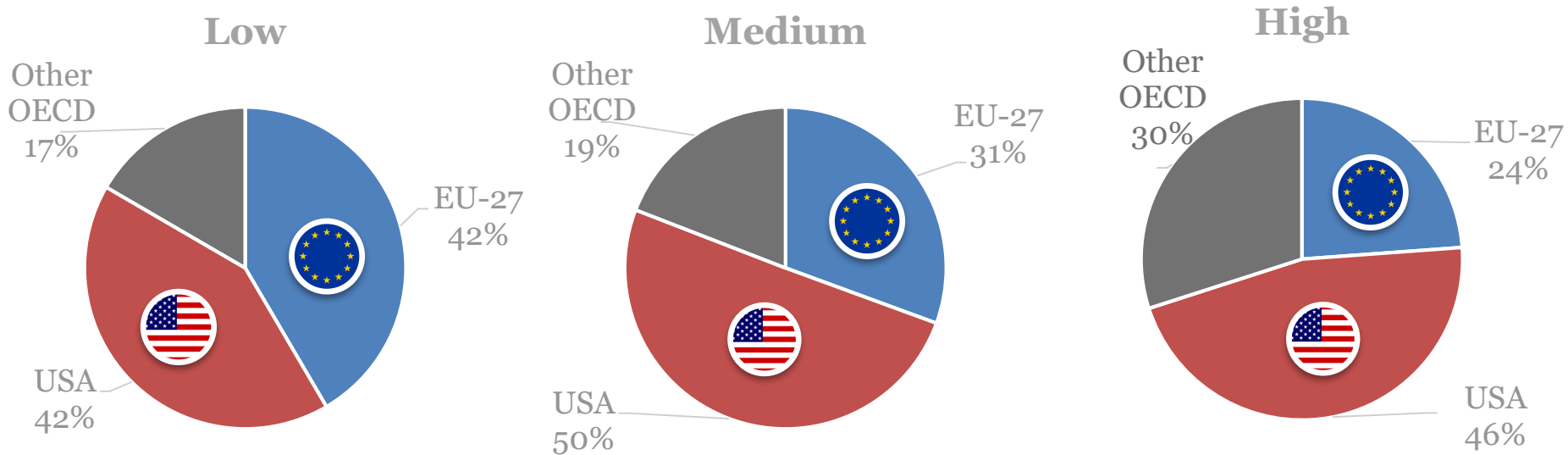
Skilled Migrant Visa



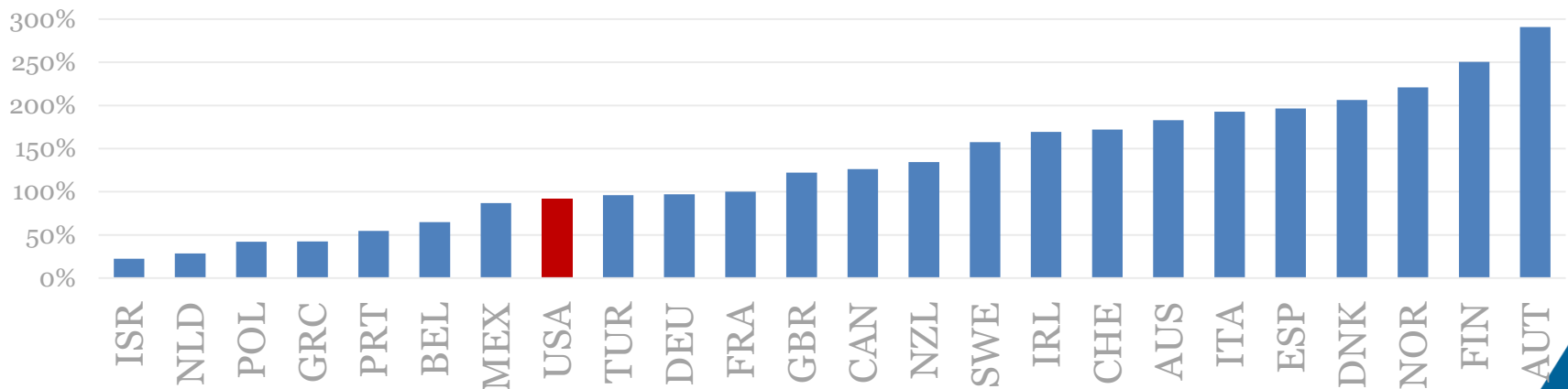
...

The USA beats Europe but not Canada and Australia in the global competition for talent

Distribution of (non-EU) migrants by education level and destination, stock 2015/16



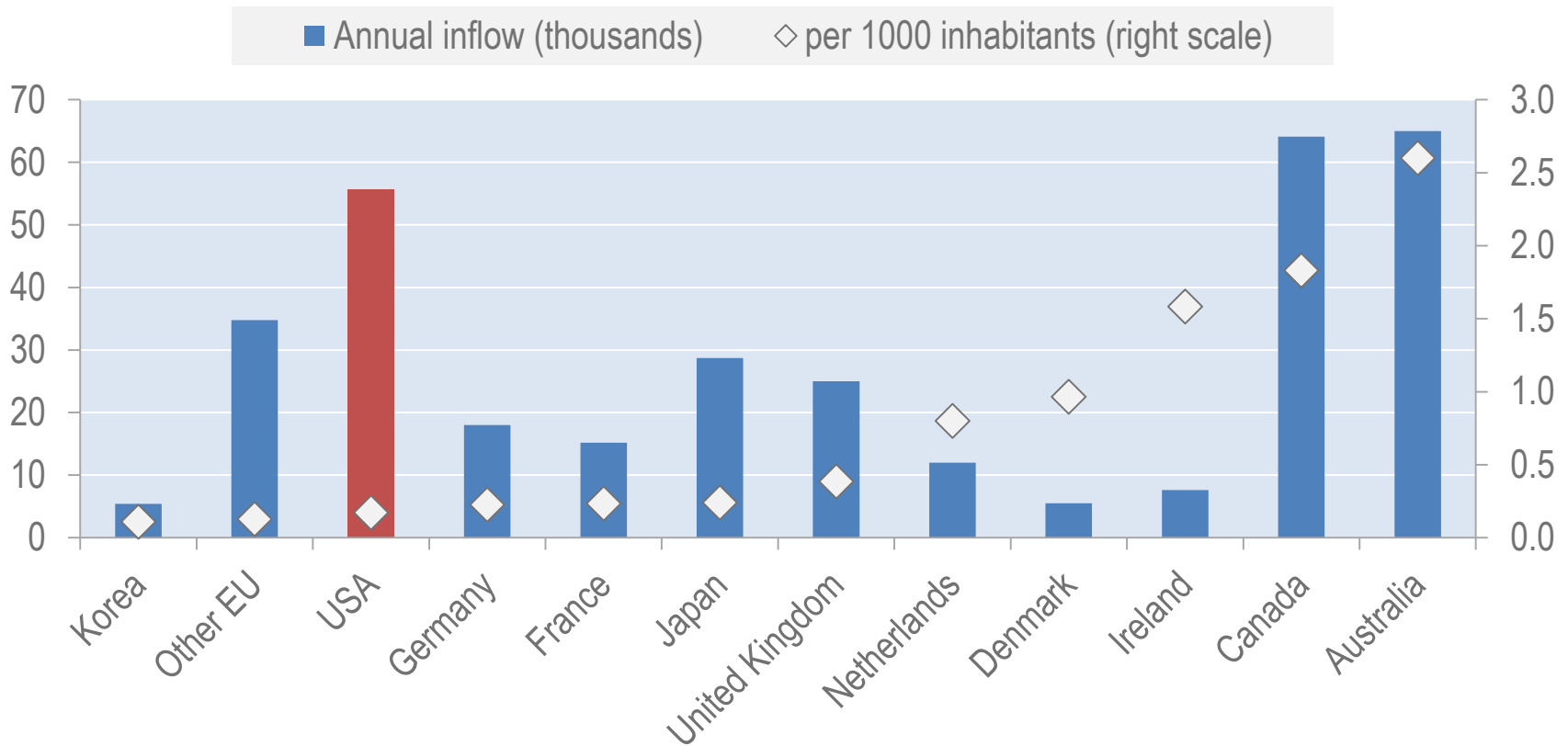
Growth rate of high-skilled migrant population (non EU, 15+) between 2001 and 2016





The US admits fewer permanent-type skilled economic migrants than many OECD countries

Estimated annual inflow of skilled and highly skilled labour migrants, selected OECD destinations, 2014-2016



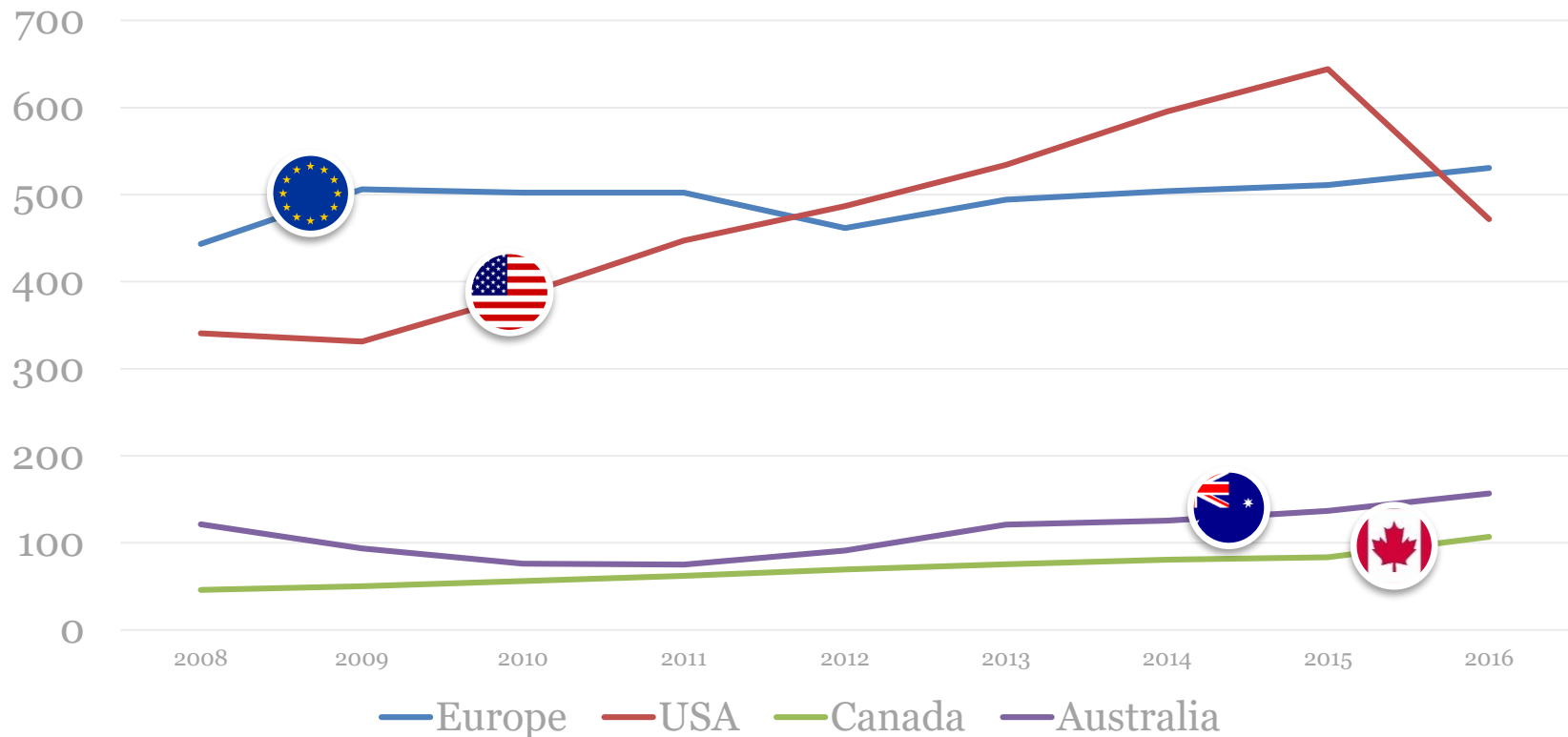
Note: USA, Canada, Australia: primary applicants under permanent economic migration programmes. USA: FY2014-2017, excludes unskilled EB3. Canada: 2014-2018, NOC 0/A/B. Other: temporary renewable (OECD standardised statistics permanent-type) permit. Korea, Japan: 2014-2017, see <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264307872-en>. EU: MS covered by legal migration framework, summing different permit types (high estimate), see <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264257290-en>. Source: OECD Secretariat calculations.



The EU competes with the US to attract international students

Number of permits granted to international students, 2008-16, excluding intra-EU mobility

Thousands

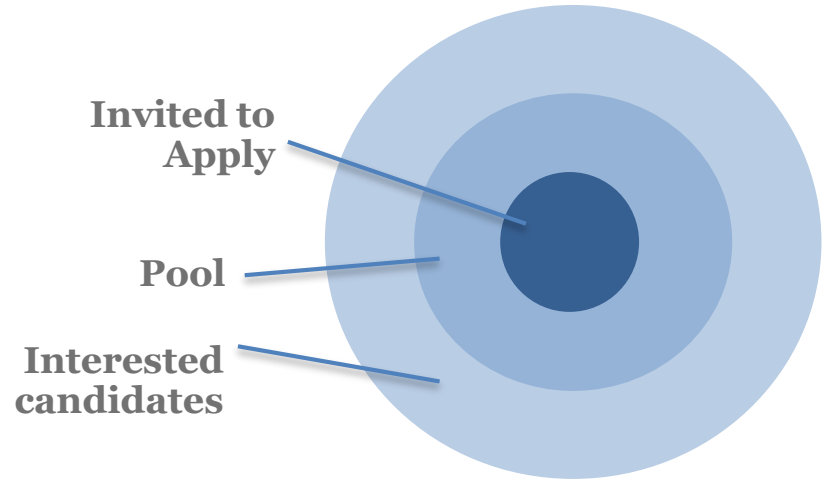




Innovative approaches to managing high skilled migration

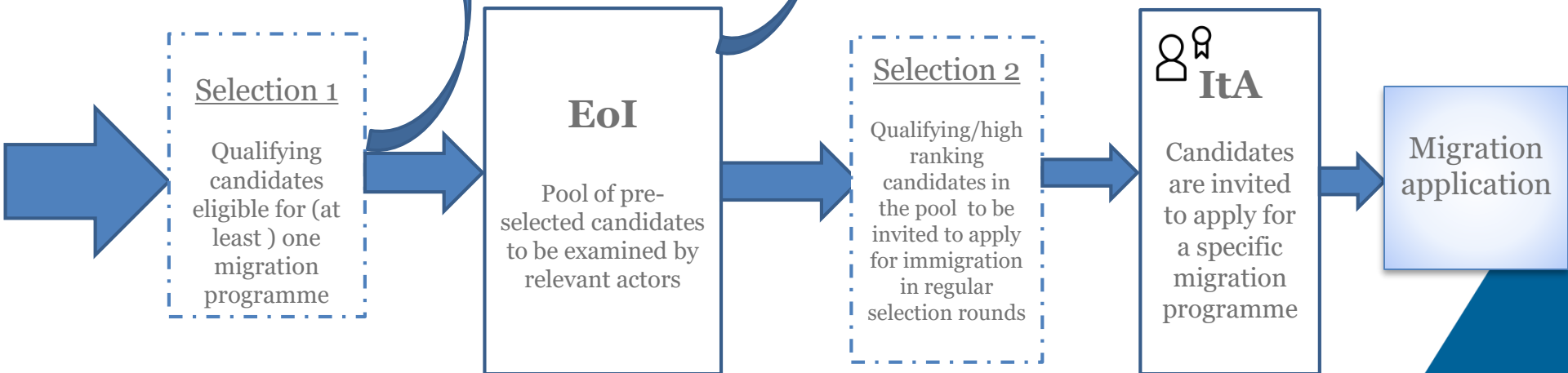
Expression of Interest:

New approaches to merit based systems in the OECD:



EoIs that *after a period of time* do not receive an invitation to apply are discarded

EoIs that do not meet the minimum requirements are excluded





Key features and impact of EOI systems

Key features

- Selection criteria are be used to enter the pool
- Fixed or variable duration of stay in the pool (expiration)
- Regular draws (weekly, monthly, by trimester...)
- Potentially open to various stakeholders
- Compatible with multiple (existing) programmes

Impact

- Reduces backlogs
- Allows to select more diverse profiles
- Could improve matching but in practice employers are not using it
- Contribute to improve outcomes
- Most of the people in the pool are abroad, but most of those selected are already in the country



Adapting the EOI to the EU

An EU “Merit-Based” system

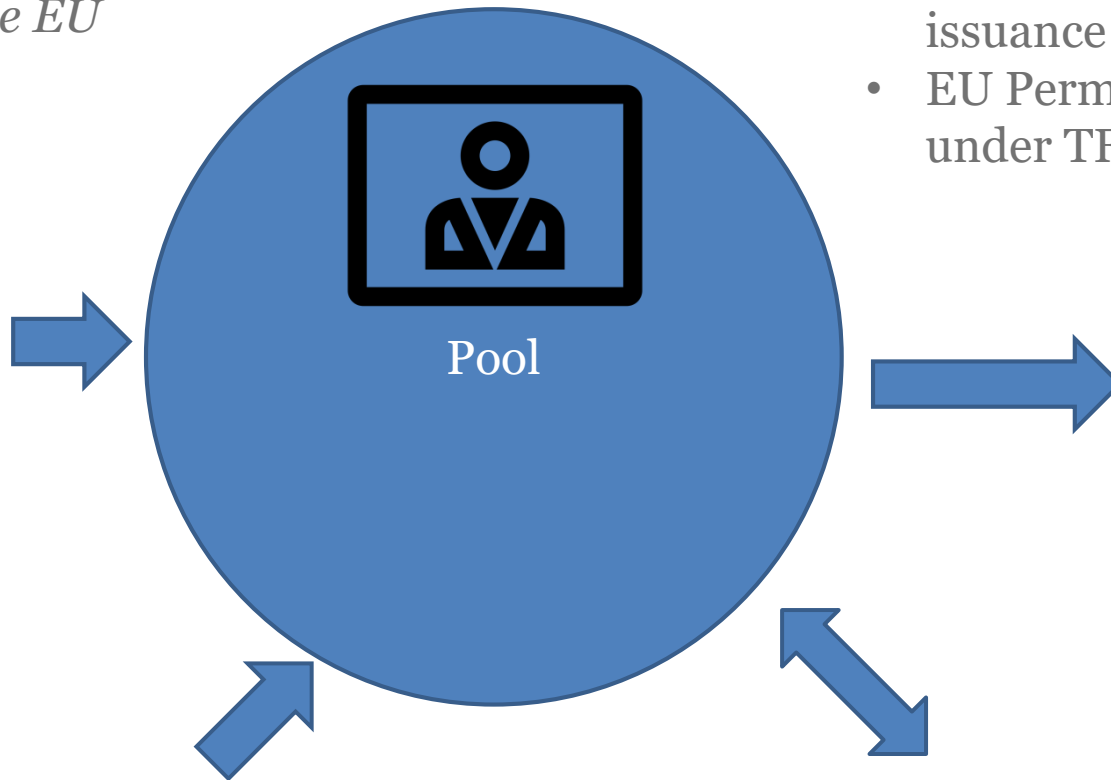


One of three scenarios developed by the OECD (2019) for the EU

Meet criteria for EU Blue Card (education) and language skills.



Member States, employers, recruiters can inspect and sponsor profiles in the pool



Two options:

- Short Stay Visa (job-search) – in-country issuance of next permit
- EU Permit (not possible under TFEU)



Points-based system for selection under quota. Selected candidates receive visas or permits with EU-wide validity.



Possible bridge to employment platforms (public databases)



A merit based system for the US (1/2)

Lessons learnt from other OECD countries

- Point based systems do not work in all contexts
- Wage-based criteria have limitations
- Need to think carefully about temporary admissions and transitions
- Identify economy/employers' (long term) needs to set the parameters accurately
- Adopt a flexible/adaptable framework for any merit-based system
- Invest in evaluation and create a feedback loop in policy implementation
- Invest in management infrastructure and enforcement mechanisms
- Identify and address policy trade-offs (e.g. students, family)
- Are numerical limits the best tool to protect resident workers ?



A merit based system for the US (2/2)

Reforming the H-1B programme

- US system is already merit based...
- ...but the doorway to permanent residency is small...
- ...forcing people into a long queue...
- ...from which most are selected on waiting time rather than merit
- Most EB Green Cards are granted to people in the country in temporary (non-immigrant) visa programs...
- ...and these are not very selective
- So reforming the permanent system also requires to think about temporary admission



Recent OECD comparative work on “merit based” systems

Recruiting Immigrant Workers AUSTRALIA

OECD

Recruiting Immigrant Workers EUROPE

OECD

Recruiting Immigrant Workers NEW ZEALAND

OECD

Recruiting for success Challenges for Canada's Labour Migration System

November 2016

OECD

Building an EU Talent Pool A NEW APPROACH TO MIGRATION MANAGEMENT FOR EUROPE

OECD

Migration Policy Debates

OECD

The Expression of Interest Model: What Lessons for Migration Management in the EU and elsewhere?

Key findings:

- The Expression of Interest Model (EIM) is a tool to manage selection under specific immigration programmes. It can select migration candidates for multiple programmes, at different skill levels, for temporary or permanent stay.
- EIM involves a two-step selection mechanism, with pre-selection into a pool and final selection from the pool. Selection at both steps uses a changing set of parameters, weights and ranking to address economic and policy priorities. Since only selected candidates are "invited" to apply, it reduces backlog and allows flexible prioritisation of best candidates in cases of oversupply.
- EIM infrastructure requirements include a framework for standardised assessment of pool admission candidates (e.g. educational qualifications, language, and other human capital criteria), a governing body, and an automated system for pool management and issuance of invitations to apply.
- EIM allows different capabilities to play an active role in the selection process: employers, applicants and – where applicable – local authorities.
- EIM works only when immigration authorities monitor results and adjust parameters accordingly.
- EIM is versatile and applicable to very different national contexts. Current systems in New Zealand, Australia and Canada differ in complexity, in the number and types of supported programmes, the role of employers and local authorities in the selection process and the functioning of the pool.
- EIM's prioritisation mechanism could replace lotteries and first-come, first-served selection in capped and oversubscribed immigration programmes – such as those in use in the United States.
- EIM's platform approach saving multiple stakeholders and programmes could be adapted in different forms at the EU level, a recent study for the European Commission found various possible scenarios.
- An EU-wide pool of pre-screened highly skilled candidates could serve existing national or EU schemes. This could improve efficiency in international recruitment across the EU by expanding the talent pool and reducing labour market information barriers.
- A more advanced adaptation could involve sector-specific pooling and matching, with training and pronunciation of candidates according to needs, to create the wide pools of migrants with specific in-demand skills.
- An EU-wide supply-driven migration stream for very highly qualified candidates to be offered a residence permit or job offers.
- The EU as implemented elsewhere could not be directly transposed to the EU, nonetheless, specific elements of the EIM (e.g. the pre-screening and pooling) could be adopted in the EU context and help improve the quality of international employment matching and facilitate access to foreign skills by the full range of European employers.
- Other OECD countries considering use of EIM as an advanced management system for merit-based migration will see how recent experience infrastructure investments as well as their capacity to adjust parameters quickly and frequently.

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Who should be admitted as a labour migrant?

Every OECD country has some form of labour migration to meet skill needs – from high-level to low-level skills – and to support economic growth. Even so, there is often public concern over its impact on the domestic workforce and on incentives for firms to invest in native workers' education and training. Countries seek to meet these concerns through safeguard mechanisms, but getting these right is not always easy. One complication is that labour migration policies may have to respond to objectives that go well beyond labour markets. There is no perfect recipe for managing labour migration. Yet there are some clear lessons to draw from recent experience and from the evolution of policy in OECD countries.

Key policy principles for managing labour migration:

Develop a clear framework for labour migration

- Migration serves multiple goals, not just ensuring a supply of workers. Meeting these goals involves choice and trade-offs. Policymakers should communicate this clearly to the public. They should also:
- Take into account the effect of labour migration on domestic labour market, education and training.
- Review and anticipate the impact of the main ways that migrants can transition from temporary migration to permanent stay.
- Review labour migration objectives are based on the reality of changing labour demand. Also, build flexibility into tools.

Assess a policy toolbox with a range of instruments for different objectives

- Design labour market tests and safeguards that reflect the reality of how vacancies are filled.
- Allow job-search visas, but with the knowledge that not all would-be immigrants will find work and those who do not must return.
- Introduce matching tools to complement the market (e.g. regions, occupations and employers).
- Work with potential high countries to promote relevant language and vocational training.
- Clarify legal migration to complying legal recruitment channels – including bilateral agreements and post-entry follow-up for employment after legal employment is a problem.

Improve management of admission criteria and adopt a dynamic approach to immigration management

- Use skill thresholds to pre-qualify migrants based on recognised international or national standards.
- Use salary thresholds to pre-qualify migrants where other means of qualification are inadequate.
- Coordinate admission criteria based on real evidence of skill and contribution to the migrant's success.
- Evaluate programmes to inform public debate and design better policies.

Monitor and review effectiveness

- Formulate a procedure, based on evidence on the customer, assess training and migrant information.
- Allow employers to request a pre-employment test and a pre-employment interview.
- Deploy efficient online technologies in remote border on migration and administrative staff.
- Improve government service to employers and migrants for client services and use services to improve capability for arriving and decision making.
- Ensure alignment mechanisms are in place especially for entities dealing with vulnerable workers.

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How do OECD countries compare in their attractiveness for talented migrants?

The OECD indicators of Talent Attractiveness is a new tool to capture, in a multidimensional framework, strengths and weaknesses of OECD countries in terms of their capacity to attract and retain three specific categories of talented migrants: highly qualified workers, highly skilled students and doctoral engineers, university students and foreign entrepreneurs.

The OECD indicators of Talent Attractiveness cover seven dimensions: quality of opportunities, income, future prospects, family environment, social services, and quality of life. The indicators also take into account how difficult it is for prospective migrants to obtain a visa or residence permit.

The most attractive OECD countries for highly skilled workers are Australia, Sweden, Canada, Switzerland and the United States, which offer the most favourable conditions and an excellent skills environment for highly skilled workers in general. Australia, Sweden, Canada and the United States also offer the most attractive conditions of several OECD countries, including Israel, Japan and Turkey.

The most attractive OECD countries for foreign entrepreneurs are Canada, New Zealand, Switzerland, Sweden and Germany. The also offer the most favourable conditions in terms of digital investments and job creation in these countries.

For more information on the indicators, the top five countries are Switzerland, the United States, Germany, Norway and Finland. These countries also have many international students, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States, which offer the most favourable conditions and an excellent skills environment for highly skilled workers in general. Australia, Sweden, Canada and the United States also offer the most attractive conditions of several OECD countries, including Israel, Japan and Turkey.

By using the indicators for migration, analysing the full impact of public policies on talent attractiveness. It appears that adopting a comprehensive policy package would enable most OECD countries to close most of their gap to the most attractive countries. This is particularly so for international students but also applies to entrepreneurs and to a lesser extent to talented workers.

OECD countries can improve their attractiveness in the global competition for talent. Each one has strengths and weaknesses. Factors to improve or enhance. The OECD indicators of Talent Attractiveness show policy makers how much better OECD countries have to make their country the chosen destination for potential talented migrants.

The global competition for talents generates legitimate concerns regarding the impact on countries of origin, notably less developed countries. A close monitoring of global movements of highly skilled migrants is therefore essential to identify the winners and losers and, where necessary, relevant international instruments to better share the costs and benefits associated to international mobility of talents.

Special thanks go to Programme team for sharing their data, without which it would not have been possible to complete these indicators.

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