

MIGRATION PATHWAYS

Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC)

Overview

Since 2005, the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) has enrolled more than 18,000 students in courses on automotive repair, manufacturing, construction and electrical services, tourism and hospitality, and health and community services. In 2021, a new labor mobility track was added to the program to ensure that graduates are prepared for and linked to job opportunities.

Why was it started?

The APTC was created to improve the supply of labor and the alignment of skills with jobs among Pacific Island countries and to increase labor mobility between the Pacific and Australia. It was designed to ensure that students are able to access improved employment opportunities, recognizing that access to foreign labor markets is critical for long-term regional development.

How does it work?

In 2005, Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) established the APTC, a major investment in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Pacific Island countries. The program funded the establishment of five training schools in different Pacific Island countries. The schools are managed by TAFE Queensland, one of Australia's largest and most experienced providers of TVET.

Countries all around the world utilize migration pathways to train and bring over workers with needed skills. The CGD Migration Pathways database documents these pathways to promote innovation in this space. To explore the database, visit GSP.cgdev.org.



Country of Destination
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Country of Origin
FIJI, KIRIBATI, NAURU, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SAMOA, THE SOLOMON ISLANDS, TONGA, TUVALU, AND VANUATU

Skill
AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR, MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ELECTRICAL SERVICES, TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY, HEALTH, ELDER CARE, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Skill Level
MID-LEVEL

Timeline
2007–ONGOING

Beneficiaries
18,000

The schools admit students from 14 Pacific Island countries, who take courses accredited in Australia, from the certificate to the diploma level. The Australian government subsidizes the training, and eligible students have access to APTC funds to cover the unsubsidized portion.

What impact has it had?

The APTC has had a positive effect on skill creation. More than 18,000 students have been enrolled, 16,000 of whom have finished their programs. Among employers who hired APTC graduates, 98 percent were satisfied with them, with 91 percent reporting that the employees had a positive impact on their firm's productivity and business performance. The training participants receive is more expensive than that provided by other providers, but employers feel it is of higher quality.

These positive results notwithstanding, the program is still to meet its aspirations for improved labor mobility, which has been further affected by the recent impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on labor mobility.

The labor mobility track gives students additional support in preparing for work abroad, including language, financial, and digital literacy training and cultural preparation. The program works closely with the Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS), which identifies potential employers in Australia.

Further readings

Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. 2017. *Australia-Pacific Training Coalition stage 3 (APTC3) investment design document*. September 28. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/aptc3-design-document.pdf>

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Clemens, M., C. Graham, and S. Howes. 2014. "Skill development and regional mobility: Lessons from the Australia-Pacific Technical College." CGD Working Paper 370, Center for Global Development, Washington, DC. <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/skill-development-and-regional-mobility-lessons-australia-pacific-technical-college>

Johnson, R., R. Curtain, P. Moock, and V. Simmons. 2014 *Independent review of the Australia-Pacific Technical College*. Education Resource Facility, November 28. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/aptc-independent-review.pdf>



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