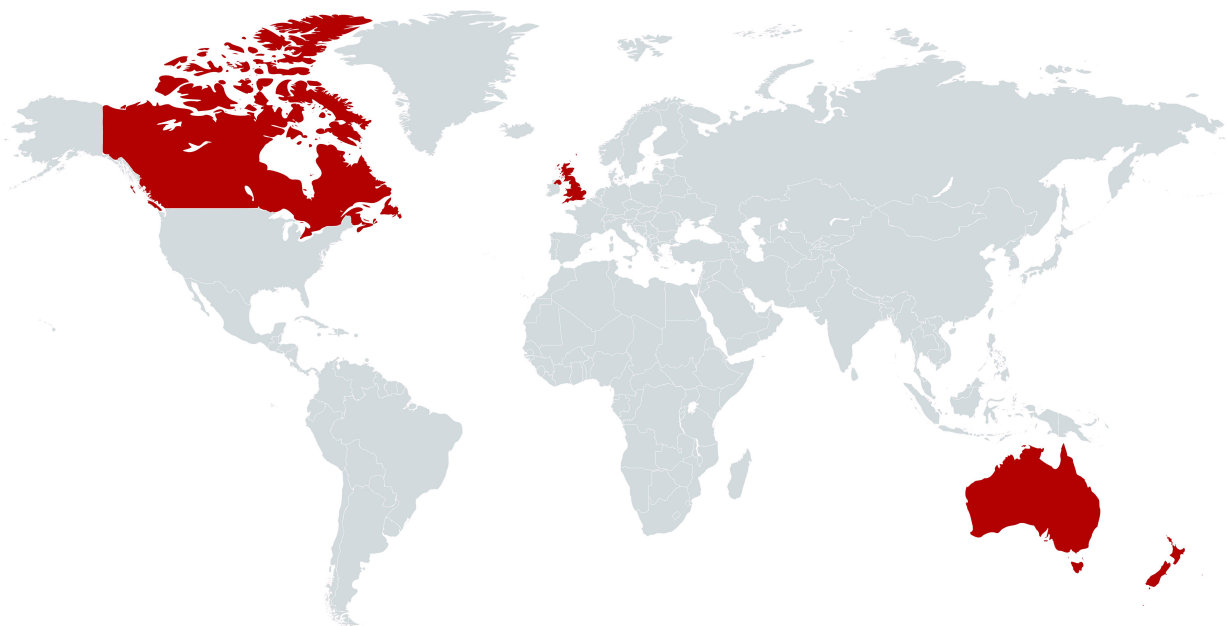




# CANZUK International

## ***“The Future Of The Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement”***

**Recommendations for the Australian Foreign Policy White Paper, 2017**



## ***Contents***

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Why expand the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement?</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Summary recommendations for CANZUK freedom of movement</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>About CANZUK International</b>	<b>10</b>



## *Introduction*

CANZUK International is a non-profit organisation committed to the introduction of free movement, free trade and coordinated foreign policy between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom; the “CANZUK” nations.

Freedom of movement between these four nations implies the ability of citizens to relocate and indefinitely remain without the requirement of visas or work permits, thereby allowing eligible citizens to live, work and study in a CANZUK nation of their choice.

Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom share common bonds which make a free movement initiative likely to succeed, including similar cultures, Commonwealth ancestry, the same Sovereign, sister parliamentary democracies and the same language. This is complimentary to economic similarities, including progressive economic growth rates, stable inflation and unemployment rates, and highly developed health and educational services.

CANZUK International is also committed to the introduction of CANZUK free movement based upon the current Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement (TTTA) that exists between Australia and New Zealand; an informal agreement that allows free movement for eligible citizens between the two nations.

Unlike freedom of movement within the European Union, the TTTA provides Australian and New Zealand citizens with the opportunity to move freely, providing they meet specific criteria with respect to criminal conduct and health requirements. Because it is an informal arrangement, this allows each nation to adapt specific terms of the agreement to current demands, but overall, free movement for individuals remains constant and unhindered. It also provides each of Australia's and New Zealand's governments a level of autonomy that is not seen in the European Union, as the TTTA is mutually recognised between the two nations as opposed to being enforced by a central, supranational authority.

It is not CANZUK International's aim to change current practices of the TTTA between Australia and New Zealand, but advocate for Canada and the United Kingdom to join the existing agreement. As such, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom would implement strategic policy for coordinated accession to the TTTA, thereby granting all citizens of the CANZUK nations residency, work and study rights in each others' countries.

Our objective is for significant visa and immigration reform to be implemented between these countries by 2020, and we feel the implementation of these reforms within the next Foreign Policy White Paper will allow Australia to develop the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement for greater prosperity and opportunity with Canada and the United Kingdom.

## ***The Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement***

The Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement was implemented on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1973, and grants permission for Australians and New Zealanders to work and indefinitely reside in either country, providing the individual is:

- *a citizen of Australia or New Zealand (or permanent resident holder of Australia), with valid travel documentation; and*
- *meets specific character and health requirements as set by each of Australia's and New Zealand's immigration regulations.*

Since September 1st 1994, Australia has upheld a universal visa requirement to specifically cater for the continued free movement of New Zealanders to Australia, labelled as the “*Special Category Visa*”. Under these regulations, New Zealand citizens entering Australia are given a temporary entry visa which is automatically granted (subject to health and character considerations) and recorded electronically.

Likewise, New Zealand reflects Australia's visa system, providing the automatic grant of an electronic visa to Australian citizens (and additionally, Australian permanent residency holders). Upon arrival in New Zealand, the individual is granted entry without any additional administrative requirements, such as completing visa application forms.

Both Australia and New Zealand place respective limitations on each others' citizens/permanent residents, generally denying individuals resident visas and entry into each others' countries if they have been:

- *convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for 5 years or more (this applies even if any of the offences have been removed from criminal records at a later date);*
- *convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for 12 months or more in the last 10 years;*
- *removed or deported from any country;*
- *deemed a significant health concern to public safety;*
- *a member of a terrorist entity designated under national terrorism laws; or*
- *the Minister of Immigration has reason to believe the person is likely:*
  - *to commit an offence that is punishable by imprisonment; or*
  - *a threat or risk to security; or*
  - *a threat or risk to public order; or*

- *a threat or risk to public interest.*

Therefore, limitations and specific requirements are enforced upon Australians and New Zealanders while exercising rights under the TTTA, and such policies can be applied to a future free movement agreement between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

The TTTA offers a more controlled operation of free movement compared to free movement existing within the European Union. At present, citizens of the European Union are free to travel within the 28 member bloc with very few limitations (especially those within the Schengen area). As economists and migration experts have indicated, this poses numerous problems with respect to excessive migration (especially from less developed member states to more prosperous member states), cross-border criminal and terrorist activities, and “health tourism” (EU citizens from less developed nations obtaining state-funded medical services in more developed EU countries).

It is important to note that these particular concerns would be non-existent within a CANZUK free movement arrangement, as all four nations are highly economically developed, share intelligence information through the Five Eyes Intelligence Alliance, and have highly developed healthcare services. Nevertheless, it would be advantageous for restrictions regarding social security payments, health criteria and character requirements to continue under TTTA protocols if Canada and the United Kingdom were to join the agreement.

In coordinating reciprocal free movement with Canada and the United Kingdom, the Australian government may adopt similar policies from the TTTA to limit social security payments for new migrants. It is reasonable to expect new arrivals from Canada and the United Kingdom to contribute to the Australian economy for a period of time, through taxation and employment, before claiming state benefits.

Likewise, it would also be reasonable for the Australian government to protect its citizens from migrants who do not meet health and character requirements. Therefore, should free movement be extended to Canada and the United Kingdom, the Australian government should have full disclosure, as exercised through the TTTA, to screen migrants for infectious diseases that may pose a health risk to the Australian population, and further screen migrants for character requirements, denying entry to Australia for those who do not meet standards established by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

In essence, similar security protocols and policies could exist for Canadian and British citizens exercising free movement to Australia as currently exist for New Zealand citizens migrating to Australia. The Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement grants the freedom for citizens to relocate and travel at will, while also implementing necessary procedures for the benefit of Australian society. As such, free movement could be extended to Canadian and British nationals providing they meet necessary requirements expected of New Zealand citizens under current protocols.

Therefore, the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement is the ideal model to formulate a future free movement policy with Canada and the United Kingdom, and ensure freedoms to travel, work and reside are granted to Canadian, Australian, New Zealand and British citizens while also protecting Australian policy concerns and national security interests.

## ***Why expand the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement?***

It has been noted by a number of economists and migration policy experts that freedom of movement has been economically (and socially) beneficial for Australia and New Zealand. It has allowed for a more efficient distribution of skills and labour between the two countries and provided a safety net in times where one country or the other has experienced slow economic growth.

While some have questioned the benefits of free movement as opposed to selective skill-based migration programmes, others have reasoned that given their shared culture and language, even low skilled Trans-Tasman migrants have brought greater economic benefits than highly skilled migrants from other countries. Given that migrants are generally younger and more ambitious than the general population, it is not surprising that Trans-Tasman migrants have a higher workforce participation rate than the general population (in Australia, 78% of the New Zealand-born population are in the workforce, compared to 68% of the Australian-born population).

This would undoubtedly apply to Canadian and British nationals also. According to research conducted by CANZUK International, a vast majority of citizens within these countries who support freedom of movement are aged between 21-35; they are young, (mostly) university educated, ambitious, and eager to travel. They also share a culture and language with Australia that allows them to integrate within Australian society as easily as New Zealanders have for decades.

As such, free movement with Canada and the United Kingdom would provide Australia with a diversity of skills and experience to grow the economy and generate business development. The ease of movement through the TTTA would also facilitate economic integration and harmonisation in a number of areas, for example, in relation to recognition of professional qualifications and licences. This has provided greater skills transferability for New Zealanders, especially those working in trades or manual employment, without the need to re-take educational courses or skills assessments.

Furthermore, due to their common culture and language, New Zealanders also blend seamlessly into Australian life; they do not form distinct New Zealander communities, but instead, fully integrate into Australian society as if it were their own. As such, ease of assimilation would also apply to Canadian and British citizens. Each country shares multiple ties with Australian culture and society, just like New Zealand. With the same language, respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law, similar cultures and close ancestral ties, Canadian and British citizens would integrate and assimilate into Australian society seamlessly, with no complications respective of finding employment, housing or learning the national language.

A large number of New Zealanders exercising their rights under the TTTA also act as permanent migrants, and in doing so, make a substantial financial and personal commitment to the Australian economy. Through finding employment and purchasing property, this has positive repercussions for Australia, stimulating growth, employment opportunities, and access to labour for many businesses without the arduous requirements of visa applications, foreign sponsorship and immigration fees. Adopting the same policy for Canadian and British nationals would also generate growth for the

Australian economy, as similarly to New Zealanders, many Canadians and Britons would migrate permanently to Australia, thereby providing labour for Australian businesses, or even developing their own businesses and investing in local communities. This would undoubtedly be a significant source of greater tax revenue for the Australian government and a valuable source of investment within the Australian economy.

By creating free mobility and free trade agreements with Canada and the United Kingdom (similar to those developed with New Zealand), Australia would also elevate its political and economic stature within the international community. Working closely together, the CANZUK countries would have the fourth largest market in the world, after the United States of America, the European Union and China.

Furthermore, with combined global trade at USD\$3.5 trillion and a combined GDP of USD\$6.5 trillion, the CANZUK countries would have substantial influence in global affairs and international markets, and with freedom of movement, could generate economic growth and prosperity for future generations. Working together for free trade and free movement with Canada and the United Kingdom, in addition to New Zealand, would also elevate the Australian economy into becoming one of the most prosperous in the world, and grant Australian citizens greater opportunities for business, travel and quality of life that could not be achieved by acting alone.

With overwhelming support among the Australian general public (70% according to international polling), freedom of movement with Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom is the next step for Australian foreign policy. A vast majority of citizens within the CANZUK nations also favour reciprocal mobility rights, as do many senior government officials and diplomats. The Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Alexander Downer, has already expressed interest in greater visa liberalisation between Australia and the United Kingdom, as has the Honourable Julie Bishop MP, with the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Secretary, Boris Johnson. Former Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, has also declared free movement between the countries as “*economic common sense*”, and support is publicly reciprocated among Members of Parliament throughout the CANZUK nations, including Andrew Rosindell (UK), David Seymour (New Zealand) and Erin O’Toole (Canada).

Expanding the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement for inclusivity with Canadian and British citizens would not only provide greater business and travel opportunities for Australian citizens, but would also provide greater growth, innovation and investment opportunities for the Australian economy, thereby elevating Australia’s political and economic stature within the international community, and offering partnership to our closest allies and Commonwealth partners around the world.

## ***Summary recommendations for CANZUK freedom of movement***

Through understanding the current free movement arrangements within the European Union and the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement, a CANZUK freedom of movement initiative can implement policies which have succeeded and avoid those which have been economically or socially detrimental.

It is CANZUK International's aim to advise and provide guidance to Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom respectively to utilise autonomous decision making and implement strategic policies for a functioning free mobility area, based on the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement.

Therefore, the following requirements may be considered for (but not limited to) a future CANZUK free movement initiative:

- *Each person eligible to travel or migrate under any free movement arrangement must be a citizen of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and/or the United Kingdom, and be in possession of a valid Canadian, Australian New Zealand or British passport;*
- *The governments of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom will remain independent and sovereign with respect to all agreements, negotiations and conditions regarding free movement between these four countries, but will aim for mutual recognition of conditions for migrants to adhere to;*
- *New migrants must intend to work legally in the host country of their choice (with the correct authorisation as required by the host country's laws), or be self-sufficient/self-funded for the duration of their stay;*
- *Upon entry, each new arrival must apply for and obtain a tax-file number/social security number for the purposes of obtaining work legally, and/or paying applicable taxes as required by the host country;*
- *Migrants will not be eligible for any state funded social-welfare payments (including unemployment benefit, disability benefit, child tax credit, e.t.c) until 4 years from the date of their arrival in the host country;*
- *All migrants must prove sufficient financial funds at their disposal for themselves and any dependents before entering the host country. This can include bank statements, authorised bank declarations, e.t.c, presented upon arrival;*
- *Migrants will only be eligible to apply for citizenship in their respective host country after 5 years from the date of arrival in said country, providing they have lived permanently and continuously in said country during this time;*
- *All migrants must not owe any outstanding debts to the governments of Canada, Australia, New Zealand or the United Kingdom before they travel or relocate under any free movement*



*agreement;*

- *All migrants must comply, absolutely, with all immigration protocols and laws of their host country, and will be subject to deportation protocols, as standard, within said country;*
- *Migrants will be responsible for all health costs incurred for 4 years from the date of arrival in their host country, unless said health costs are provided for through employer funded arrangements or reciprocal agreements between respective countries (such as the Reciprocal Health Care Agreements between Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom);*
- *Dependent on each migrant's travel history before arrival in their host country, each migrant may be required to prove they are not subject to infectious diseases that could pose a risk to the health and well-being of citizens within said host country. This may involve producing a general medical health certificate or chest x-ray certificate from a government approved physician before arrival in said host country;*
- *Migrants must not have any serious criminal convictions or be denied the right to travel outside their native country. This also includes deportation orders.*

Although summary and applicable for expansion, the aforementioned criteria provide a basis for a CANZUK free movement policy, and outline which restrictions may apply for individuals wishing to travel and relocate between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Through adoption of such criteria, a CANZUK free movement initiative can grant mobility for citizens while preventing negative economic consequences as seen within free movement throughout the European Union. Citizens of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom will be able to travel and indefinitely reside within a CANZUK mobility area, without the requirement of visas or work permits, while also adhering to regulations regarding welfare payments, social services, character requirements and health conditions, essential for protecting policy concerns and national security interests.

With mutually agreed upon requirements, and shared socio-economic characteristics, a CANZUK free movement area would provide positive economic and social benefits for Australia, just as free movement through the TTTA has brought such benefits between Australia and New Zealand.

It is therefore our recommendation for the government of Australia to begin strategic policy negotiations for the accession of Canada and the United Kingdom to the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement, and thereafter adopt free movement between the CANZUK countries as a progressive and developmental issue as part of its upcoming Foreign Policy White Paper.

## ***About CANZUK International***

CANZUK International is a non-profit organisation advocating closer ties between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom (the CANZUK group).

Founded in January 2015, we have campaigned for greater economic and diplomatic cooperation between the CANZUK countries with significant public, organisational and political support. Today, we comprise of staff in all four CANZUK countries dedicated to advancing free movement, free trade and coordinated foreign policy for the benefit of travel, business and employment opportunities for CANZUK citizens.

Our work has been featured in mainstream media across the world, and our online petition advocating freedom of movement between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom has received nearly 180,000 signatures.

Furthermore, we engage with international policy institutes, think tanks and non-governmental organisations to develop our proposals regarding free trade and free movement, and frequently host senior members of parliament and diplomats for discussion regarding the CANZUK initiative.

For comment or interview regarding our proposals and the upcoming Australian Foreign Policy White Paper, please contact:

**James Skinner**

***Chief Executive of CANZUK International - Vancouver, Canada***

[Redacted contact information]

**Dr. Nigel Greenwood**

***CANZUK International Adviser - Brisbane, Australia***

[Redacted contact information]

For further information, please visit our website at [www.canzukinternational.com](http://www.canzukinternational.com)



# CANZUK International

Copyright © CANZUK International, 2017. All rights reserved.

[www.canzukinternational.com](http://www.canzukinternational.com)

