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NEWS RELEASE

Immigrant skills wastage due to flawed selection

Study points to Australia as model of economic selection policy

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Montreal – Selecting economic immigrants who can make an immediate contribution to the economy will address Canada's current immigrant underemployment problem and promote growth in the knowledge economy, according to a new study from the Institute for Research on Public Policy.

In the study, "The Impact of Economic Selection Policy on Labour Market Outcomes for Degree-Qualified Migrants in Canada and Australia," author Lesleyanne Hawthorne finds that Australia's revised selection criteria have dramatically improved its employment outcomes relative to Canada's. Degree-qualified economic immigrants have performed far better in Australia than in Canada over the past decade, and a significantly greater proportion of newcomers in Australia secure stable and well-paid employment quickly, using their professional credentials on the job.

Hawthorne applauds the Canadian government's proposed changes to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, whereby the minister would have the authority to identify priority occupations and issue instructions to immigration officers to enable rapid acceptance of applicants with skills and experience that correspond to employers' needs.

"It is an attempt to modernize the immigration system and make it more responsive to Canada's labour market needs," says Hawthorne. "Given that newly arrived migrants are more than twice as likely as the Canadian-born to possess degrees, it seems essential to redress this skills wastage."

"The Impact of Economic Selection Policy on Labour Market Outcomes for Degree-Qualified Migrants in Canada and Australia," by the University of Melbourne's Lesleyanne Hawthorne, can be downloaded free of charge from www.irpp.org

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