



SBS Radio App

Download the FREE SBS Radio App for a better listening experience



[2018 FIFA World Cup](#)  
[French Open](#)  
[Indigenous](#)  
[Life](#)  
[Features](#)

0

SBS

sbs.com.au

22 MAY 2018 - 5:09PM

## 'Frequent' changes in migration rules sour migrants' Australian dream



Many migrants on temporary visas are staring at an uncertain future, despite having spent years chasing their Australian dream, due to “frequently changing” migration rules.

Language  
English

By  
[Manpreet K Singh \[ /yourlanguage/author/manpreet-k-singh-0 \]](#) , Shamsher Kainth

22 May 2018 - 10:12 AM UPDATED 22 May 2018 - 5:09 PM

Tweet

Recommend 455

Indian migrant Sahil Sharma was 21 when he came to Australia in 2008 as an international student. He says his life at that time felt like a train that was chugging on smoothly.

But a decade of grappling with visa issues and still no certainty about whether he can become an Australian permanent resident, he says his life is now like a “burning train”.

Mr Sharma, currently living in Queensland's Sunshine Coast, is one of the many migrants staring at an uncertain future with their fate hanging in balance because of changes in the migration rules which they say are “frequent” and are often announced without prior notice.

When he finished his two-year commercial cookery course in 2010, Mr Sharma was told that the occupation was no longer available for permanent residency.

“I went to a lawyer to apply for my PR. I was told this course had been removed from the list [Skilled Occupation List].”

"I was then advised to study business management. By the time I finished that, it had been four years since I arrived in Australia. I then applied for a 457 visa," Mr Sharma tells SBS Punjabi.

He worked for two years as a manager at a restaurant while holding a 457 visa. When he became eligible to apply for permanent residency, the English language proficiency requirement was changed.

"I had five bands in each module of IELTS and the requirement was lifted to 6 bands. It took me four-five months to get that score. But by that time, my employer shut down his business".

[ /yourlanguage/punjabi/en/article/2017/06/21/i-feel-they-are-harassing-me-says-woman-who-took-ielts-21-times?cid=inbody:frequent-changes-in-migration-rules-sour-migrants'-australian-dream ]



'I feel they are harassing me', says woman who took IELTS 21 times

Neha, a student from India has taken the IELTS test over 20 times, failing to get the desired 7 bands in writing each time even while she scored a near perfect score in the remaining modules.

Mr Sharma found another employer and applied for an employer-sponsored visa in November 2016 and has been awaiting a decision on his application ever since.

"When I made the application, the waiting period was 9 months, then it was increased to 11 months. The rules keep changing frequently. And the last time I checked the Home Affairs' [Department of Home Affairs] just a couple of days ago, they have updated the standard processing time for this visa to 21 months," he says.

After his 457 visa expired in December 2016, he was granted a bridging visa in Australia.

Mr Sharma says while his visa application is under process, his and his family's lives are hanging in balance.

"We can't travel to India since I am on a bridging visa. My daughter was born in India and she was just six months old when we brought her here and we haven't been back since then.

"We can't get a house of our own, I can't change my job, even though I am happy where I am working right now, but one would like to have more opportunities," he says.

"We don't get any rebates in childcare payments. My daughter goes to kindy and the weekly payment there is \$400, which comes out of my pocket.

[ /yourlanguage/punjabi/en/article/2018/05/08/budget-2018-migrants-decry-longer-wait-welfare-payments?cid=inbody:frequent-changes-in-migration-rules-sour-migrants'-australian-dream ]



Budget 2018: Migrants decry longer wait for welfare payments

The government has increased the waiting period for newly-arrived migrants to four years before they can access some welfare payments.

"I was 22 when I came to Australia and now I am 32 and I am still grappling with issues to get my PR. We are just waiting and waiting and waiting. We just can't make any future plans."

"Why doesn't the government realise that if we grow, our contribution to the country will also grow. We are already contributing, we paid our fees, we are working and we are paying taxes."

**Follow SBS Punjabi on Facebook [ <http://www.facebook.com/sbspunjabi> ] and Twitter [ <http://www.twitter.com/sbspunjabi> ] .**

Also read

[ /yourlanguage/punjabi/en/article/2018/05/16/most-common-reasons-australian-citizenship-refusals?cid=inbody:frequent-changes-in-migration-rules-sour-migrants'-australian-dream ]



The most common reasons for Australian citizenship refusals

Over 4,000 migrants were refused Australian citizenship last year. Here are some of the most common reasons that can have your citizenship application knocked back.

[ /yourlanguage/punjabi/en/article/2018/05/10/indian-man-refused-australian-citizenship-after-four-year-wait?cid=inbody:frequent-changes-in-migration-rules-sour-migrants'-australian-dream ]



Indian man refused Australian citizenship after four year wait

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection said Sagar Shah met all the requirements for Australian citizenship, except one.

[ /yourlanguage/punjabi/en/article/2018/05/09/welfare-payment-migrants-investment-not-handout?cid=inbody:frequent-changes-in-migration-rules-sour-migrants'-australian-dream ]



Welfare payment to migrants is 'investment not handout'  
Migrants and ethnic groups are voicing concerns over restricting newly-arrived migrants from Australia's welfare support.

Recommend 455

Tweet

[x](#)