

## **Developing a Competitive Skills Immigration Policy for South Africa**

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**KEYWORDS** Emigration. Immigration. Migration. Globalization

**ABSTRACT** Since skills shortages is a global phenomenon, there is fierce competition amongst countries to attract skilled labour so as to improve their competitive footing in the global economy. One major way that these countries strive to achieve their goal, is through promoting targeted skills immigration programmes to attract skilled workers. South Africa takes lessons from these countries in its attempt to alleviate its skills shortages and be part of this global economy. A literature review of South Africa's immigration policy was undertaken with a view to evaluate its approach for skills immigration.. A survey-based research design was adopted using a closed questionnaire to determine the respondents view on enlisting skilled labour for the purpose of reducing skills shortages in the country. The sample consisted of 800 organisations/businesses that seek to employ skilled foreign labour in South Africa. The outcome of this paper pointed to a general consensus that South Africa's policy on skills immigration is in need of radical review. It is highly restrictive, bureaucratic, user-unfriendly and costly to administer. Moreover, it serves as an impediment for business and industry to recruit skilled foreign labour into the country as a result of excessive, and often, unnecessary regulations and procedures.