



Population flows at a glance

Migration plays an important role in our national development, helping to ensure the sustainability of our workforce, boosting our economic growth, reuniting families and loved ones and helping Australia fulfil its international humanitarian obligations.

To ensure that Australia continues to get the optimum benefit from migration, well-managed permanent and temporary migration programs are needed to respond to different needs and emerging situations. *Population flows: Immigration aspects* is a unique information resource providing a clear perspective on migration and population matters.

The full version of *Population flows* is available at www.immi.gov.au

Recent developments

The reference period for *Population flows* is the 2008-09 financial year. Since then, significant initiatives have been introduced that improve the integrity of various programs, enable better targeting of skilled migrants and enhance the economic benefits of migration. These include:

- The revoking of the migration occupations in demand list to reduce distortions in the general skilled migration program.
- The introduction of a new Skilled Occupation List to target occupations of longer-term economic value. This will deliver highly skilled migrants and crack down on people seeking permanent residency through low-value education courses.
- The announcement of a review of the general skilled migration points test to better target skilled migrants.

- Implementation of student visa integrity reform measures such as improved checks on applicants' financial status, streamlining postgraduate research sector applications and increased integrity checks for applicants from high-risk countries and education sectors.
- The implementation of reforms to the 457 program to enhance the program's integrity and ensure that temporary overseas workers complement and not compete with Australian workers.
- In 2009-10, the department estimates that NOM will fall by 20 per cent (about 56 000) in response to changes in migration policies and economic conditions.
- Analysis of recent visa applications and grants trends suggest that by the end of 2009-10, NOM will most likely fall to between 230 000 and 250 000.
- Offshore grants to international students in the nine months ending March 2010 are down 25 per cent on a year earlier due to the introduction of student visa integrity reforms and an increase in the Australian dollar.
- Reform of the temporary skilled 457 visa program in 2009, plus a softening of labour demand brought about by the global financial crisis (GFC) has seen offshore grants of 457 visas in the nine months ending March 2010 down 45 per cent on one year earlier.
- The net intake of New Zealand citizens for June 2009 to March 2010 is nearly 50 per cent lower than for the equivalent period in 2008-09. This may also be attributed to the GFC.

Economic benefits of skilled migration

Economic growth is driven by the '3 Ps' - population, productivity and participation. Migration contributes to all 3 Ps by bringing people into Australia that are concentrated in the prime working ages of 25 to 44 years, have a high propensity to work and are highly skilled.

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Australia's migrants enjoy much better labour market outcomes than migrants to most other countries, with the lowest unemployment rates in both absolute terms and relative to the general population.

Migrants also make an important contribution to the Budget bottom line. The Access Economics Migrant Fiscal Impact model estimates that over a 20-year period, the total fiscal benefit of the 2008-09 migration program will be \$23 billion. This long-term benefit overshadows the short-term costs of higher unemployment and greater government spending brought about by the GFC.

According to another recent OECD study, Australia is one of the few countries where the children of migrants have labour market outcomes that are as good as, if not better than, the children of native-born parents. Factors contributing to this positive outcome are the quality of our settlement services and Australia's wider acceptance of different cultures. These better outcomes extend to children of humanitarian migrants as well.

Emigration

In 2008-09, 81 018 people emigrated from Australia – this was Australia's highest level of emigration yet and is a reflection of increased global mobility. Australia does, however, gain more skilled workers from migration than it loses through emigration – with the net loss of 27 368 skilled Australians offset by a net gain of 128 860 skilled people arriving from overseas.

Benefits are also gained through those who eventually come back to Australia.

These residents bring with them the experience and skills they have gained overseas, plus a valuable network of business and professional contacts.

Australia's diverse population

Almost one in four Australians were born overseas and people from more than 200 countries now call Australia home. The United Kingdom remains the largest source of Australia's migrant population followed by New Zealand, China, India and Italy.

Table 1: Main birthplaces of Australia's migrant population

Birthplace	Estimated resident population at 30 June 08
United Kingdom	1 166 515
New Zealand	494 579
People's Republic of China	313 572
India	239 295
Italy	221 721

Where are migrants coming from?

In 2008-09, the UK provided 31 882 permanent migrants to Australia. The UK was also the main provider of new migrants to Western Australia (8513 migrants), Tasmania (263 migrants) and South Australia (2734 migrants). For the larger states of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, the main source countries were China (9479 migrants), India (9004 migrants) and New Zealand (11 712 migrants) respectively.

Table 3: Permanent additions to Australia's population 2008-09

Birthplace	Persons
United Kingdom	31 882
New Zealand	25 608
India	25 123
People's Republic of China	23 692
South Africa	11 966
Philippines	9 173
Malaysia	5 396
Sri Lanka	5 304
Korea	5 202
Iraq	4 433
Other	76 840

Source: Permanent additions, DIAC

The migration program

Australia's permanent migration program has two main streams – the family stream which enables the migration of immediate family members and the skill stream, which is designed to target migrants who have skills, entrepreneurial ability or outstanding capabilities that will contribute to the Australian economy.

In 2008-09, the permanent migration program delivered more than 171 000 places with almost 115 000 of these places went to skill stream migrants. For 2009-10, the migration program will comprise 108 100 skill stream places and 60 300 family stream places.

Temporary migration

Australia's temporary residents program allows people to come to Australia on a temporary basis for specific purposes that benefit Australia. As can be seen from table 2, there are four broad groups of temporary residents:

- Working holiday makers – young people holidaying in Australia with work and study rights.
- Overseas students – people studying registered courses full-time.
- Skilled temporary residents – mostly people recruited by Australian companies

who enter as temporary skilled migrants for up to four years.

- Other temporary residents – a range of temporary visas allowing people to come to Australia for social, cultural, economic, international relations and training purposes.

Table 2: Visas issued to temporary resident categories

Category	Visas issued in 08-09
Working holiday makers	194 103
Overseas students	320 368
Skilled temporary residents	117 247
Other temporary residence	36 584

The humanitarian program

Australia has a long history of helping refugees and others in humanitarian need. Since 1945, more than 735 000 people from about 100 countries have started new lives here under the humanitarian program.

In 2008-09, Australia granted 13 507 humanitarian visas. More than 80 per cent of these visas were granted under the offshore resettlement component of the program with migrants from Iraq (2874 grants), Burma (2412 grants) and Afghanistan (847 grants) the main recipients of these visas. The other major component of the program is the granting of permanent protection visas to applicants already in Australia.

The main recipients of these visas were citizens of China (426 grants), Sri Lanka (364 grants) and Afghanistan (223 grants).

Citizenship

Acquiring citizenship is an important way for a person to show pride in being part of Australian society and allows full participation in the community. The year 2009 marked the 60th anniversary of Australian citizenship – with more than four million people becoming Australian citizens over this period.

In 2008-09, 86 981 people were conferred with Australian citizenship at ceremonies.

New Zealanders in Australia

The movement of New Zealanders to and from Australia is facilitated by the Trans-Tasman travel arrangement which allows Australian and New Zealand citizens to enter each other's country to visit, live and work without the need to formally apply.

At the end of June 2009, there were 548 256 New Zealand citizens in Australia, up more than 5 per cent on June 2008.

New Zealanders are active participants in the Australian labour market. At June 2009, the labour force participation rate of the New Zealand born was 79 per cent – 14 points above the Australian average. One reason for such high participation is their age profile. According to the 2006 Census, 82 per cent of the New Zealand born living in Australia were aged 15 to 64 compared with just 67 per cent of the general population.

Settlement services

DIAC offers a range of settlement services to those most in need of assistance. In 2008-09, 12 035 people were helped under the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy. Services provided included on arrival reception and assistance, accommodation services and torture and trauma counselling.

The Adult Migrant English Program provided English language tuition to almost 53 000 clients from 192 countries in 2008-09. The main languages spoken by these clients were Mandarin, Arabic and Vietnamese.

The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) caters for people who do not speak English and for the English speakers who need to communicate with them. TIS National has access to more than 1500 interpreters covering more than 160 languages and dialects. In 2008-09, TIS national received a record number of more than one million calls to its contact centre.

Where are permanent migrants settling?

In 2008-09, New South Wales attracted 28 per cent of skill stream migrants. This was followed by Victoria (26 per cent) and Western Australia (19 per cent).

Within the family stream, New South Wales was also the most prominent attracting 39 per cent of migrants. Victoria (26 per cent) was next then Queensland with 15 per cent.

Under the humanitarian program, migrants were mostly going to New South Wales (40 per cent), Victoria (25 per cent) and Western Australia (14 per cent).

Where are temporary residents staying?

Among international students, the most popular study destination was New South Wales with 132 036 international students at the end of June 2009. This was followed by Victoria with 117 711 students and Queensland with 52 347 students. Queensland did, however, record the greatest increase with student numbers up 29 per cent on June 2008.

At June 2009, New South Wales had 42 701 temporary business (long stay) visa holders, followed by Western Australia (28 124 visa holders) and Queensland (26 683 visa holders). The greatest increase was in Western Australia, which grew at a rate of 16 per cent.

Table 4: Distribution of temporary entrants

State of intended residence	Overseas Students at 30 June 09	Temporary Business Long Stay at 30 June 09
NSW	132 036	42 701
Vic	117 711	25 837
Qld	52 347	26 683
SA	20 790	5 152
WA	23 985	28 124
Tas	2 865	817
NT	578	2133
ACT	5 544	1551

Source: Overseas Arrival and Departure DIAC and Stock of Temporary Entrants, DIAC