

# Results from the LSIA

The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA) was designed to collect and disseminate information about recently arrived migrants, reflecting their settlement experiences in Australia over a period of time, from their pre-immigration arrangements through their initial years of settlement in Australia. The survey provides information used in the monitoring and evaluation of immigration and settlement policies and programs.

It is comprised of samples from two cohorts of migrants who arrived respectively between September 1993 and August 1995 (LSIA 1) and between September 1999 and August 2000 (LSIA 2). The cohorts were interviewed in 'waves' at set intervals of around six months (wave 1) and eighteen months (wave 2) after arrival. LSIA 1 was interviewed again at around forty-two months after arrival (wave 3). It covers migrants granted visas offshore and does not include migrants such as New Zealand citizens or persons granted visas while in Australia.

The LSIA has been the chief source of information on the migration experiences and outcomes of new Migration and Humanitarian Program migrants over the past decade.

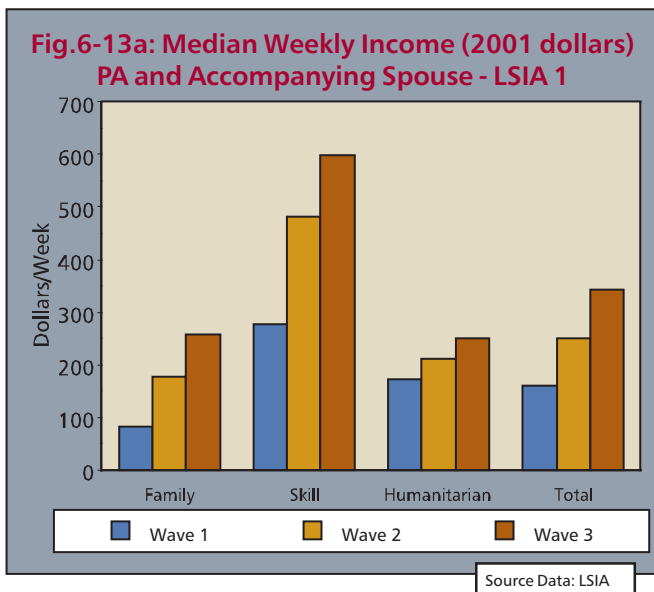
Many of the graphs show data for Primary Applicants (PAs) and their accompanying spouse.

## Income

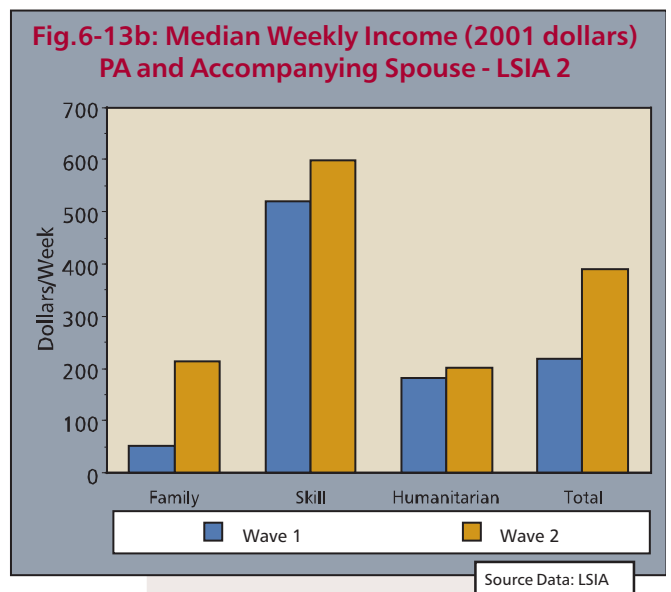
Average personal income for migrants increases rapidly with time in Australia, reflecting the greater likelihood of employment and more skilled employment.

Individual income gives only a partial picture of how well off a person is. It is quite possible to have small personal income but be in a household with high income.

**Fig.6-13a: Median Weekly Income (2001 dollars)  
PA and Accompanying Spouse - LSIA 1**



**Fig.6-13b: Median Weekly Income (2001 dollars)  
PA and Accompanying Spouse - LSIA 2**



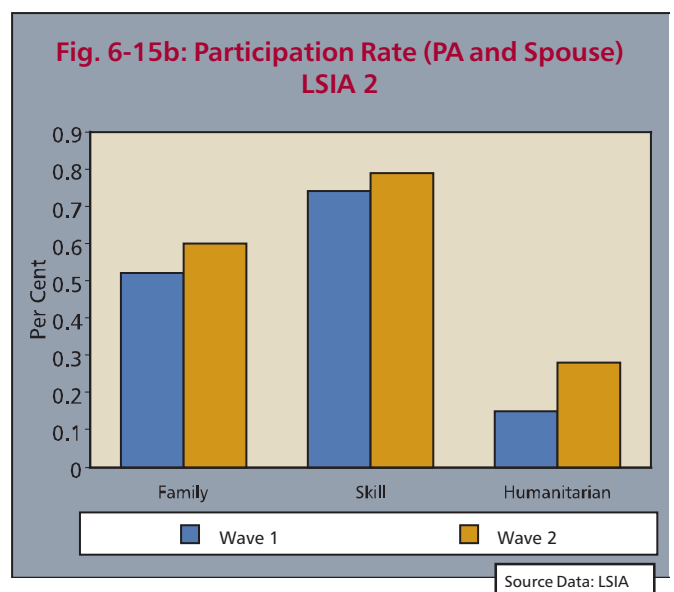
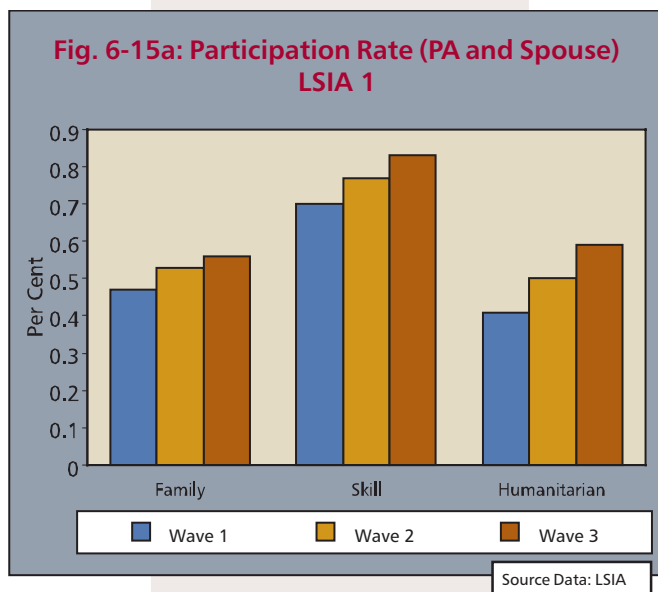
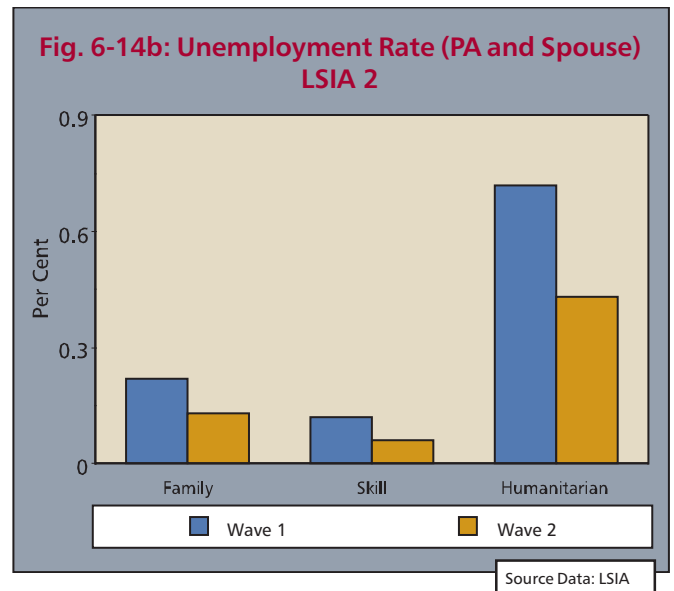
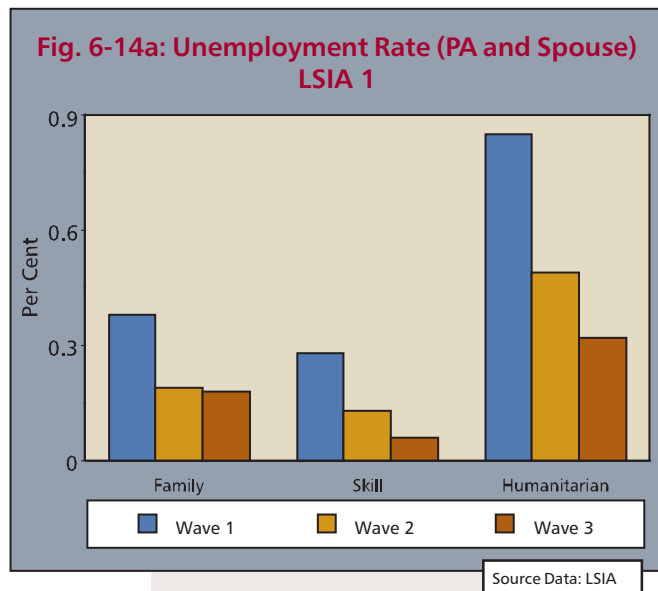
## Labour Market Outcomes

Labour market outcomes for new migrants overall, as measured by labour force participation and unemployment, have improved for more recent migrants.

Results from both LSIA1 and LSIA2 indicate that qualification level, English proficiency and length of time in Australia are all strongly correlated with labour market outcomes.

Labour force participation increases, and unemployment rapidly decreases, with length of time in Australia. For skilled migrants surveyed in LSIA2, the unemployment rate at around 18 months after arriving in Australia was less than the average for Australia as a whole. Not only are migrants more likely to be employed the more time is spent in Australia, but they are more likely to be in skilled employment.

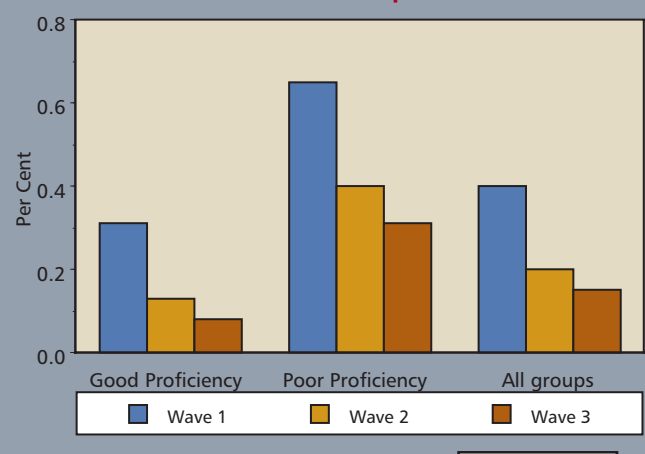
The fall in unemployment rates between LSIA1 and LSIA2, from 38 per cent to 17 per cent at 6 months in Australia and 17 per cent to 10 per cent at 18 months in Australia, is greater than the overall fall in unemployment rates for Australia as a whole over the relevant period.



Research suggests that it was not so much the change in the state of the labour market, as the change in the attributes of migrants (ie the increased emphasis on skilled immigrants and good English) that improved the employment outcomes for LSIA2.

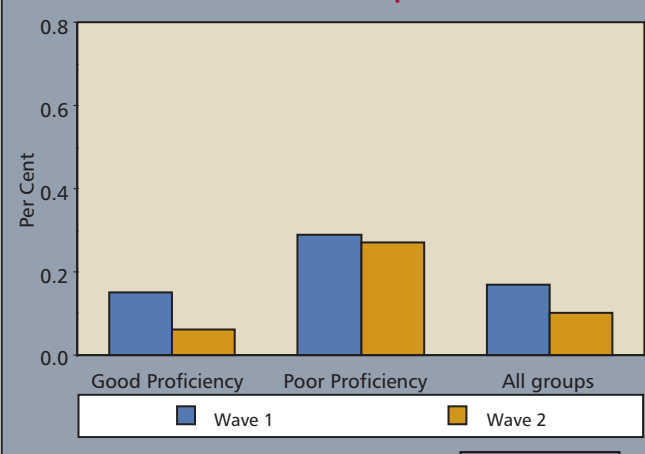
While overall, more recent migrants are doing better in the labour market, the reverse is true for Humanitarian migrants.

**Fig. 6-16a: Labour Force Status: Unemployment Rate by English Speaking Proficiency % of Combined PA and Spouse - LSIA 1**



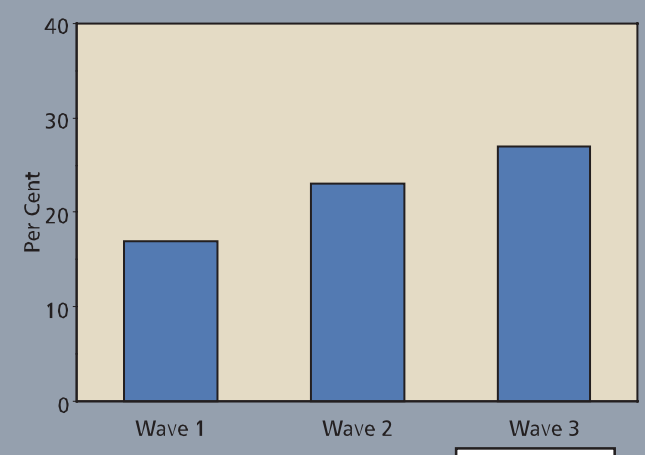
Source Data: LSIA

**Fig. 6-16b: Labour Force Status: Unemployment Rate by English Speaking Proficiency % of Combined PA and Spouse - LSIA 2**



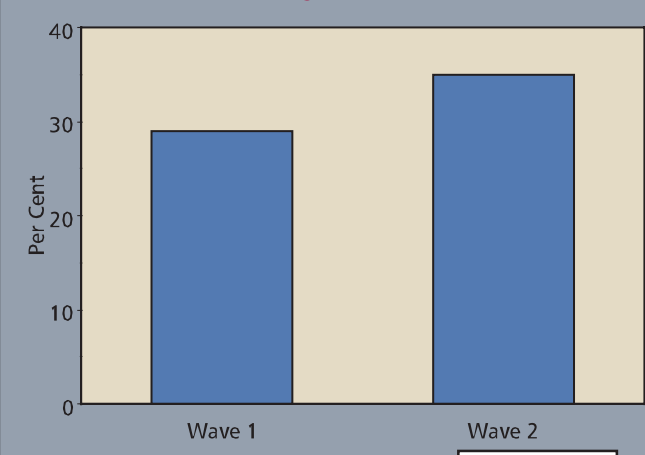
Source Data: LSIA

**Fig. 6-17a: Proportion of Migrants in Skilled Occupations (PA and Spouse) LSIA 1**



Source Data: LSIA

**Fig. 6-17b: Proportion of Migrants in Skilled Occupations (PA and Spouse) LSIA 2**



Source Data: LSIA

## Housing

The vast majority of migrants surveyed in the LSIA reported that they stayed with Australian residents immediately upon arrival. Within six months, the private rental market became the most significant form of housing tenure, but by eighteen months, some of those who had been renting were paying off or owned a home. Overall, Cohort 2 arrivals had significantly higher levels of home ownership than Cohort 1. Migrants under the Business Skills and Employer Nomination Scheme category in Cohort 2 had the highest rate of home ownership, with around 63 per cent owning or paying off a home eighteen months after arrival.

Public rental appears not to be a significant tenure for new arrivals generally. Less than 5 per cent of new arrivals in both cohorts were living in public housing at six months after arrival. However, humanitarian entrants were substantially more reliant on public housing than any other visa category, and this increased from 8 per cent at eighteen months for Cohort 1 to 13 per cent at eighteen months for Cohort 2. The vast majority of humanitarian entrants not in public housing were concentrated in the private rental market.

The level of housing stress, or the proportion of family income spent on accommodation, is also an important indicator of economic wellbeing. Housing stress is generally measured in terms of having to pay more than 40 per cent of gross income in rent or mortgage payments. At wave 1, around 18 per cent of Cohort 2 families reported housing payments that indicated housing stress, with this figure rising to 29 per cent for humanitarian entrants.

