

Temporary entry

Temporary Entry Program

The Temporary Entry Program allows people from overseas to come to Australia on a temporary basis for specific purposes which result in some benefit to Australia.

Temporary entrants are generally required to pay taxes on any income earned in Australia and do not generally have access to social welfare benefits or Medicare. They must meet Australia's health and character requirements as well as any specific visa criteria.

Temporary entrants form a significant and increasing proportion of the total number of people in Australia at any one time, as is the growing trend world-wide. Long-term Temporary Entrants (those here for 12 months or more) are counted as part of Australia's resident population and included in estimates of net overseas migration.

Types of temporary entrant

There are six broad groups of temporary entrants.

Visitors – mostly tourists either here for a holiday or visiting friends and relatives, while some come for short-term business purposes. A small number of people come to Australia for pre-arranged medical treatment. Many visitors come on an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA). In 2006-07 the ETA accounted for 79.7 per cent of all tourist and short-term Business visas issued worldwide. The ETA replaces the visa label or stamp in a passport and is available to passport holders of 34 countries and locations. The majority of ETAs are issued through travel agents and airlines or directly over the Internet.

Working Holiday Makers (WHM) – there are 19 reciprocal WHM arrangements currently in effect. These arrangements ensure that young Australians are also offered similar opportunities for cultural understanding through working holidays overseas. There are also four countries with which Australia has Work and Holiday arrangements.

Overseas Students – people who wish to undertake full-time study in registered courses in Australia.

Professional Development – professionals, managers and government officials from overseas who wish to undertake tailored training programs that are relevant to their further professional development.

Business – there are two types of Temporary Business entrants. People whose primary purpose for making a short trip to Australia is business related enter on a Business Visitor visa (short stay). Those who are recruited by Australian companies as skilled personnel enter as Temporary Business residents for periods of stay up to four years.

Other Temporary visas – there is also a range of other Temporary Residence visas designed to allow overseas people to come to Australia for a variety of social and cultural, economic and international relations purposes.

In 2006-07 a total of 4 121 501 Temporary Entry visas (excluding Bridging visas) were granted of which the vast majority of 3 627 803 were offshore Visitor visas (including business visitors). Working Holiday Makers (134 612) and overseas students (228 592) accounted for 73.5 per cent of the remaining Temporary Entrants.

This total is up 3.6 per cent from the 3 978 420 Temporary Entry visas granted in 2005-06.

