

Chapter 2

Migration Program

- The outcome for the 2007-08 Migration Program was 158 630, the largest since the late 1980s. It represented a 7.0 per cent increase on the 2006-07 outcome of 148 200. The planning level for 2008-09 is 190 300.
- Over one-third of the Migration Program in 2007-08 was made up of persons granted permanent residence after initial entry to Australia on a temporary basis.
- In 2007-08, there were 108 540 people granted Skill Stream places, an increase of 10.8 per cent on 2006-07. The Skill Stream made up 68.4 per cent of the total Migration Program.
- Within the Skill Stream, the main source countries in 2007-08 were the United Kingdom (UK), India, the Peoples Republic of China (PRC), South Africa and the Republic of Korea.
- There were 49 870 people granted Family Stream visas in 2007-08.
- Within the Family Stream, the main source countries in 2007-08 were the UK, the PRC, India, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Migration Program

Annual immigration programs

The overall objectives of the Migration Program are to contribute to Australia's economic, demographic and social well being by facilitating the permanent and temporary entry or stay of people. The Migration Program has two main streams: a Skill Stream that targets skills which contribute to Australia's economy and a Family Stream which recognises the value and importance of family migration to Australia's social and economic goals. The smaller Special Eligibility Stream includes groups such as former Australian residents who have maintained ties with Australia and certain groups of people subject to resolution of status.

For 2008-09, the government announced that the Migration Program would be set at 190 300 places. This represents an increase of 20.0 per cent over the 2007-08 Program year.

The 2008-09 Migration Program will comprise:

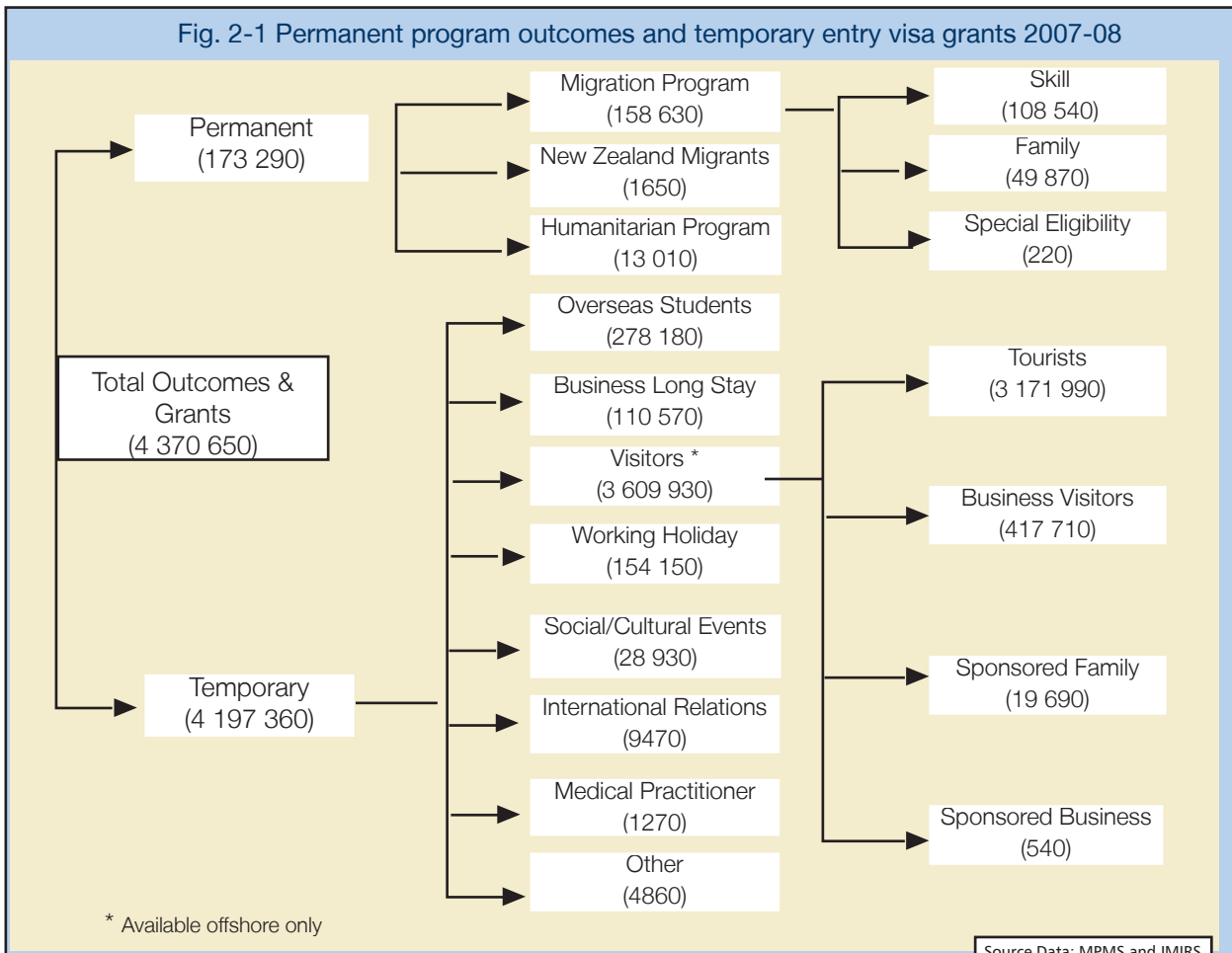
- 133 500 places for Skill Stream
- 56 500 places for Family Stream
- 300 places for Special Eligibility Stream

The Skill Stream has been maintained at around 70 per cent of the overall program. The Program will be delivered close to the planning level depending on:

- application rates in demand driven categories such as spouses, fiancés, children and employer nominated and business categories
- the take up of State-Specific and Regional Migration categories
- the extent of national skill needs and the ability to attract migrants with the necessary skills
- the availability of high standard applicants in the skilled categories.

The 2007-08 Migration Program planning levels were met with 158 630 people granted migration visas including 108 540 under the Skill Stream, 49 870 under the Family Stream and 220 under the Special Eligibility Stream. This outcome represented a variation of only 0.1 per cent from the revised planning level.

Fig. 2-1 Permanent program outcomes and temporary entry visa grants 2007-08



Migration Program management structure

The Migration and Humanitarian Programs operate with set planning levels. Within the Migration Program, components such as State-Specific and Regional Migration, Business Skills, Employer Nominated categories, Distinguished Talent, Spouses and Dependent Children are demand driven and not subject to capping. Increases in demand for

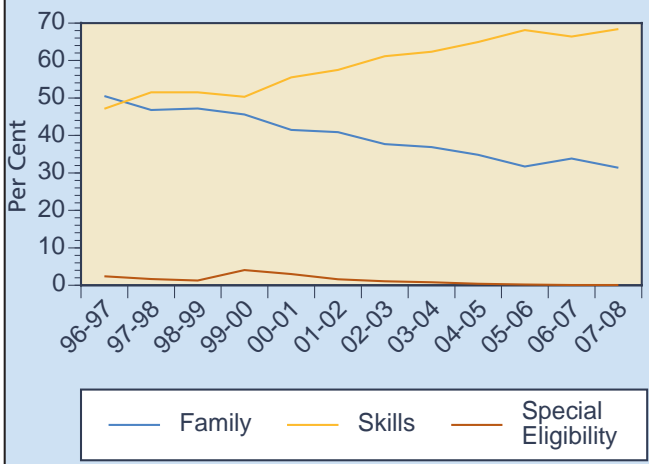
these visas beyond planned levels are offset by reductions in components such as Skilled Independent and Australian Sponsored and Preferential/Other Family categories.

The Contributory Parent category was capped at 3500 places in April 2008.

Fig. 2-2: Program management structure (2007–08)
Migration Program

Skill	Family	Special Eligibility
Business Skills, ENS & Distinguished Talent	Spouses & Dependent Children	Can be capped
Demand driven	Demand driven	
State-Specific and Regional Migration	Exempt from capping	
Demand Driven	Fiancés & Interdependents	
Skilled Independent & Skilled Australian Sponsored	Can be capped subject to demand for spouse and dependent child places	
Generally points tested	Parents & Preferential/Other Family	
Planning level adjusted subject to demand in Business Skills, ENS and State-Specific and Regional Migration categories	Can be capped subject to demand in all other Family categories	

Fig. 2-3: Migration Program outcomes by stream



Source Data: MPMS and IMIRS

2007-08 Migration Program outcome

The outcome for the 2007-08 program was 158 630, the largest since the late 1980s. It represented a 7.0 per cent increase on the 2006-07 outcome of 148 200 places. The 2007-08 Skill Stream outcome of 108 540 places accounted for 68.4 per cent of the total program. The Family Stream outcome of 49 870 places (including 39 931 partner places) was 31.4 per cent of the program. Special Eligibility places made up the remaining 0.2 per cent. The balance between Skill and Family Stream continues the substantial shift in the proportion of Skill Stream places as shown in Fig 2.3. Major factors contributing to this shift include establishment of the Australian Sponsored category in the Skill Stream, increased use of the suite of State-Specific and Regional Migration mechanisms, the ability of graduating overseas students to apply for migration while still in Australia and a significant increase in employer sponsorship.

The 2007-08 outcome under the State-Specific and Regional Migration initiatives reached 26 162. This is an increase of 1.2 per cent over 2006-07 and represents 24.1 per cent of the Skill Stream.

Fig. 2-4: Migration Program outcomes: 2000-01 to 2008-09 (planned)

Migration Category	00-01 ^(e)	01-02 ^(e)	02-03 ^(e)	03-04 ^(e)	04-05 ^(e)	05-06 ^(e)	06-07 ^(e)	07-08 ^(e)	Planned 08-09 ^(e)
Family									
Spouses/Fiances/Interdependents	28 870 ^(f)	33 340 ^(f)	35 060 ^(f)	32 350 ^(f)	33 060 ^(f)	36 370 ^(f)	40 430 ^(f)	39 931 ^(f)	42 500 ^(f)
Parents	1070	560	510	4930	4500	4500	4500	4499	8500
Dependent Children	2120	2160	2680	2660	2490	2550	3010	3062	3000
Other Family ^(a)	1400	2020	2520	2280	1690	1870	2140	2378	2500
Total Family	33 470	38 090	40 790	42 230	41 740	45 290	50 080	49 870	56 500
% of total Program	41.5	40.9	37.7	36.9	34.8	31.7	33.8	31.4	29.7
Skill									
Employer Sponsored ^(b)	7420	9310	9740	10 400	13 020	15 230	16 580	23 762	28 000
Business Skills	7360	7590 ^(g)	6740 ^(g)	5670 ^(g)	4820 ^(g)	5060 ^(g)	5840 ^(g)	6565 ^(g)	7000 ^(g)
Distinguished Talents	230	210	180	230	190	100	230	211	200
Skilled Independent ^(c)	22 380	29 880	38 120	38 720	41 180	49 860	54 180	55 891	74 625
State/Territory Sponsored ^(h)	90	260	790	1630	4140	8020	6930	7530	9344
Skilled Australian Sponsored	7200	6250	10 470	14 590	14 530	19 060	14 170	14 579	14 331
1 November Onshore	60	20	20	10	—	10	—	2	
Total Skill	44 730	53 520	66 050	71 240	77 880	97 340	97 920	108 540	133 500
% of total Program	55.5	57.5	61.1	62.3	64.9	68.9	66.1	68.4	70.0
Special Eligibility	2420	1480	1230	890	450	310	200	220	300
Total Program^(d)	80 610	93 080	108 070	114 360	120 060	142 930	148 200	158 630	190 300

(a) Includes Aged Dependent Relative, Carer, Special Need Relative and Remaining Relative.

(b) Includes Employer Nomination Scheme, Labour Agreements and Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme.

(c) Named Independent prior to 1 July 1999. Includes Skilled Independent and Skilled Independent-Regional Study only.

(d) Please note that figures have been rounded and total may not be the exact sum of components.

(e) Program numbers do not include New Zealand citizens or holders of selected Humanitarian visas such as Secondary Movement Offshore Entry (Temporary), Secondary Movement Relocation (Temporary) and Temporary Protection visas.

(f) Net outcome. Places taken by provisional visa holders who do not subsequently obtain permanent visas due to refusal or withdrawal are returned to the program.

(g) Net outcome. Cancelled visas are returned to the program in the year in which they are cancelled.

(h) Includes State/Territory Nominated Independent, State/Territory Nominated Independent (Regional Study) and Skilled Independent Regional.

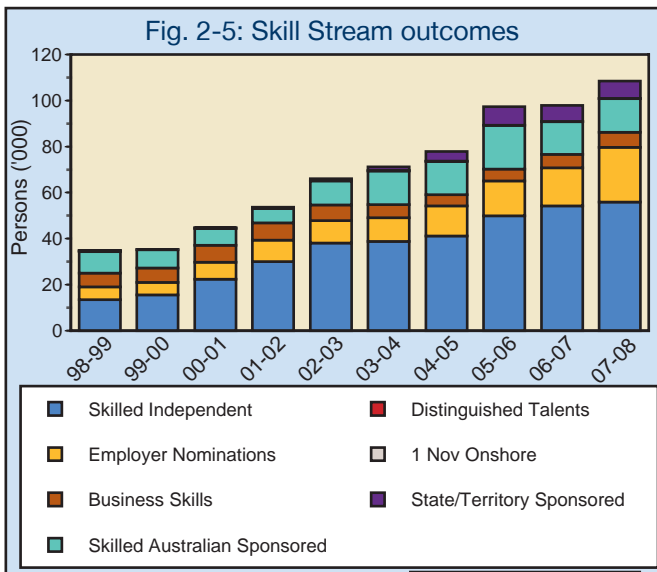
Source Data: MPMS and IMIRS

Data on visas granted

Data on grants of permanent visas are Migration Program outcomes. Outcomes are the number of visas granted net of Business Skills visas cancelled under s134 of the *Migration Act 1958* and net of places taken by provisional spouse/fiance and interdependent visa holders who do not subsequently obtain permanent visas due to refusal or withdrawal.

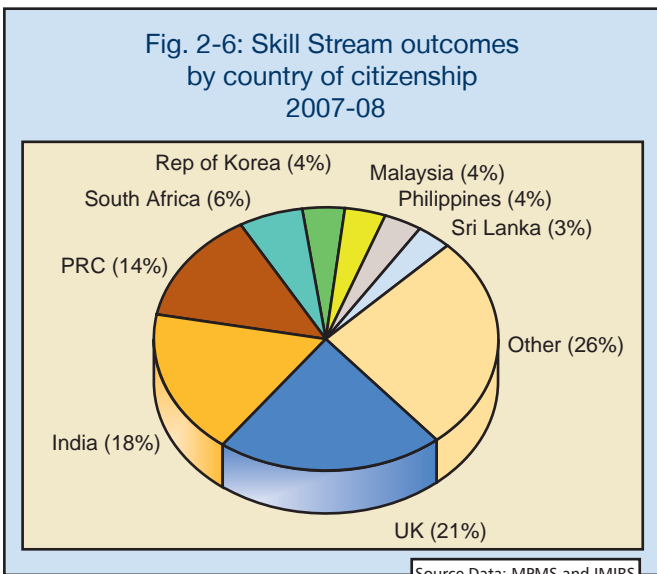
Skill migration

Fig. 2-5: Skill Stream outcomes



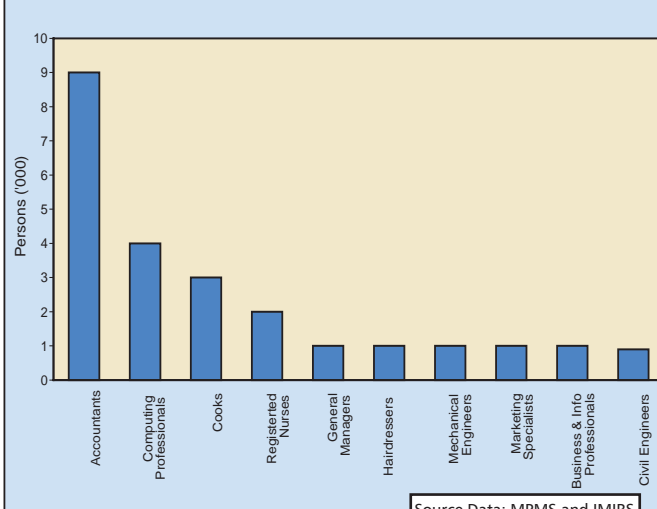
Source Data: MPMS and IMIRS

Fig. 2-6: Skill Stream outcomes by country of citizenship 2007-08



Source Data: MPMS and IMIRS

Fig. 2-7: Top 10 occupations for Skill Stream outcome 2007-08



Source Data: MPMS and IMIRS

Skill Stream outcomes

The Skill Stream of Australia's Migration Program is specifically designed to target migrants who have skills, proven entrepreneurial capability or outstanding abilities that will contribute to the Australian economy.

In 2007-08, there were 108 540 people granted Skill Stream places, an increase of 10 618 (10.8 per cent) on 2006-07. Of the total Skill Stream, 38.8 per cent (42 065 persons) were onshore applicants, an increase of 10.2 per cent on 2006-07.

Skill Stream visa categories

In 2007-08 the Skill Stream includes the following categories:

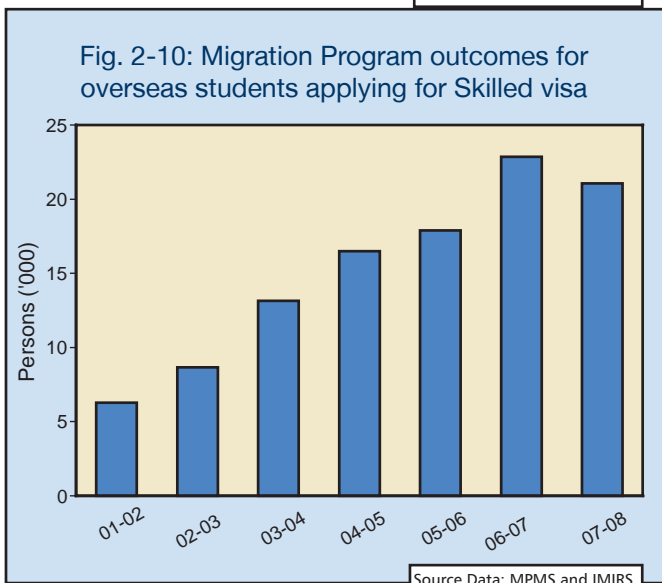
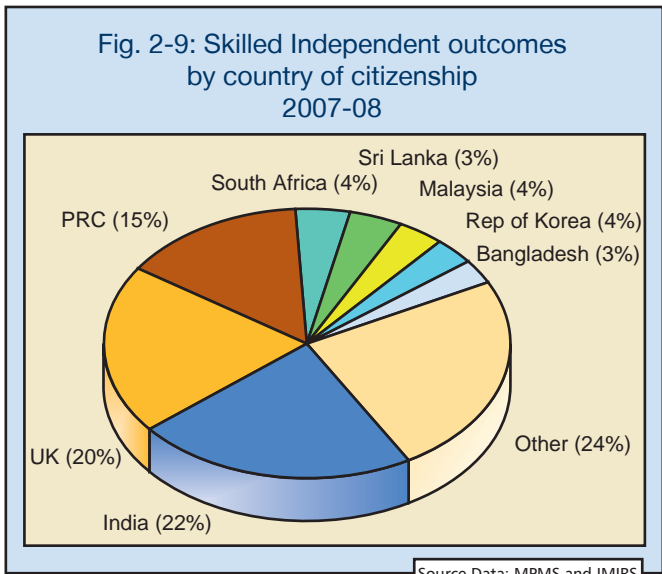
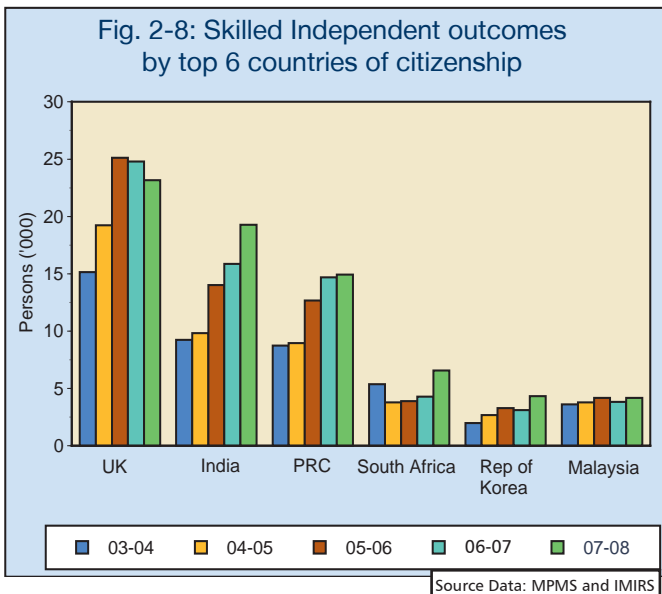
Skilled Independent – caters for applicants who do not have a family or employer sponsor or do not wish to be sponsored. Successful applicants are required to satisfy the basic General Skilled Migration requirements, including skills, age, work experience and English language ability and achieve the required pass mark on the General Skilled Migration points test (55 891 visas in 2007-08).

State-Specific and Regional Sponsored – includes the permanent State/Territory Nominated Independent (STNI) and Skill Matching visas, the Skilled Independent Regional (SIR) (Provisional) and the Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visas (7530 in 2007-08).

STNI enabled state and territory governments to sponsor Skilled Independent category applicants willing to permanently settle in states and territories where their skills are in demand. State and territory governments participating in the scheme established which skills were in short supply and where skill needs were occurring. Based on this information states and territories aimed to select applicants with a sound chance of gaining employment in their state or territory within a short time of their arrival.

Since changes to the General Skilled Migration program which came into effect 1 September 2007, state and territory governments nominate independent applicants for permanent migration under the Skilled Australian Sponsored category. For applications received up till 31 August 2007, grants under STNI decreased by 1.5 per cent from 3474 in 2006-07 to 3422 in 2007-08.

The SIR (Provisional) visa catered for skilled people unable to meet the pass mark for a permanent visa and wishing to live and work in a regional or low population growth metropolitan area in Australia. Applicants are assessed against the points test and were required to meet the SIR (Provisional) visa pass mark which is lower than



for the permanent Skilled Independent visa category. Applicants were also required to be sponsored by an authorised state or territory government agency. Once SIR (Provisional) visa holders have complied with the visa's conditions and have lived for at least two years and worked for a minimum of 12 months in a regional or low-population-growth metropolitan area in Australia, they are eligible to apply for a permanent visa. Since the reforms of 1 September 2007 to the General Skilled Migration Program, the SIR (Provisional) visa has been replaced with the Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa. In addition, the Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa also allows relatives in a designated area of Australia to sponsor skilled applicants. There were 4059 SIR (Provisional) and 49 Skilled Regional Sponsored visas granted in 2007-08.

Skilled Australian Sponsored – caters for skilled people either sponsored by an eligible family member who is an Australian citizen or permanent resident or nominated by a state or territory government. Applicants are required to satisfy the basic requirements of skills, age, work experience and English language ability. Applicants are assessed against the General Skilled Migration points test, although the pass mark is lower than for the Skilled Independent category. Applicants also receive additional points for nomination by a state or territory government. The migration outcome of this category was 14 579 visas in 2007-08, an increase of 2.9 per cent on 2006-07.

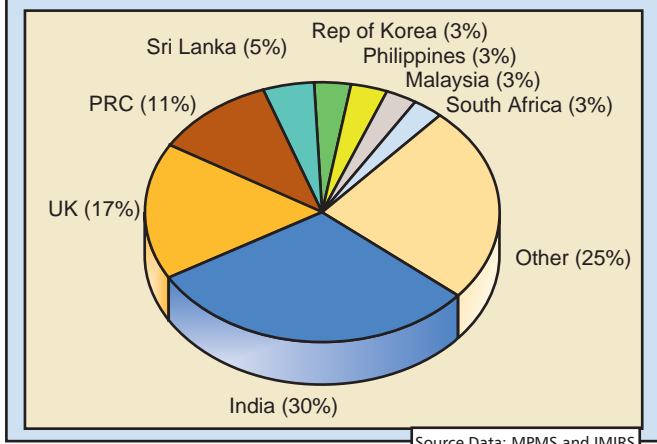
Employer Sponsored – employers may nominate ('sponsor') overseas workers for permanent residence through the Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS), Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) and Labour Agreements. These visas allow Australian employers to recruit overseas workers to fill skilled vacancies in their business. The 2007-08 Migration Program outcome for these three visa categories was 23 762 visas.

Business Skills – encourages successful business people to settle permanently in Australia and develop new business opportunities. The 2007-08 Migration Program outcome for this visa category was 6565 visas.

Distinguished Talent – distinguished individuals with an internationally recognised record of exceptional and outstanding achievements can apply for permanent residence through this visa. The 2007-08 Migration Program outcome for this visa category was 211 visas.

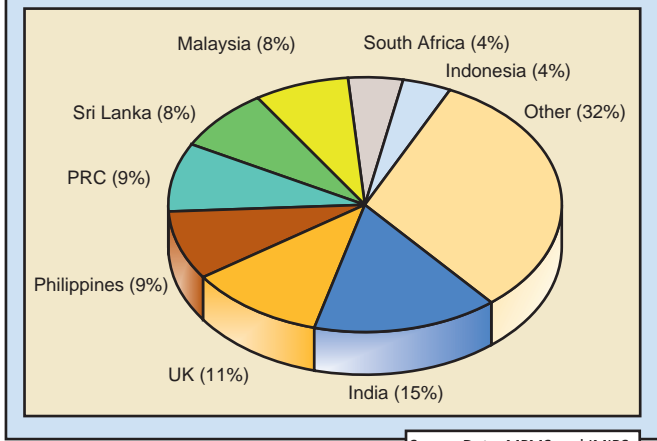
All visa applications for the ENS, Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) and Labour Agreements must be lodged with the same departmental Business Centre in Australia where the corresponding employer nomination has been lodged.

Fig. 2-11: State/Territory sponsored outcomes by country of citizenship 2007-08



Source Data: MPMS and IMIRS

Fig. 2-12: Skilled Australian Sponsored outcomes by country of citizenship 2007-08



Source Data: MPMS and IMIRS

Overview of general skilled migration

Australia's General Skilled Migration Program is designed to attract people who have skills in particular occupations that are required in Australia. These occupations are listed on Australia's Skilled Occupations List (SOL).

Major changes to the General Skilled Migration arrangements came into effect on 1 September 2007 and affected the composition and dynamics of GSM outcomes from 2007-08 onwards. A portion of the 2007-08 visa grants relate to applications made during 2006-07 and up to 31 August 2007. This particular case load was not affected by the changes to General Skilled Migration legislative framework which came into effect on 1 September 2007.

General Skilled Migration includes the Skilled Independent, Skilled Australian Sponsored, Skilled Designated Area Sponsored (SDAS), STNI, SIR (Provisional) and Skill Matching visa categories. Visa grants in the Skilled Australian Linked and Skilled Regional Linked categories are also counted towards the General Skilled Migration Program, though these visa categories were closed for new applications on 1 July 1999. Depending on their circumstances, applicants can apply for a General Skilled Migration visa while they are in Australia or outside Australia. Applicants who can be granted their visa while they are in Australia are referred to as onshore applicants while those who must be outside Australia are called offshore applicants.

Through the onshore General Skilled Migration visa categories, overseas students in Australia can apply for and be granted permanent residence following the successful completion of their studies without the need to leave Australia.

Overseas students applying for one of these categories must apply within six months of completing an Australian qualification (degree, diploma or trade qualification). The qualification must have been obtained after a minimum two years of full time (or equivalent) study within Australia at an Australian educational institution. They must also hold a positive skills assessment for an occupation on the Skilled Occupations List (SOL). Prior to 1 September 2007 applicants had to hold a positive skills assessment for an occupation on the SOL that attracted 60 points on the General Skilled Migration points test, unless they had completed an Australian doctorate. Australian doctorate students were able to hold a positive skills assessment for a 50 point occupation.

Prior to 1 September 2007, overseas students who had completed their award at a regional campus were also able to nominate a 50 point occupation if applying for the SIR (Provisional) visa.

To be successful, applicants in all the General Skilled Migration visa categories must meet threshold criteria for skill, work experience, age and English language ability. Applicants with Australian qualifications who apply within six months of course completion are exempt from the recent work experience requirement. All applicants, other than those applying for Skilled Regional (Residence), Skilled Recognised Graduate (temporary) and Skilled Graduate (temporary) visas, are then assessed against the General Skilled Migration points test.

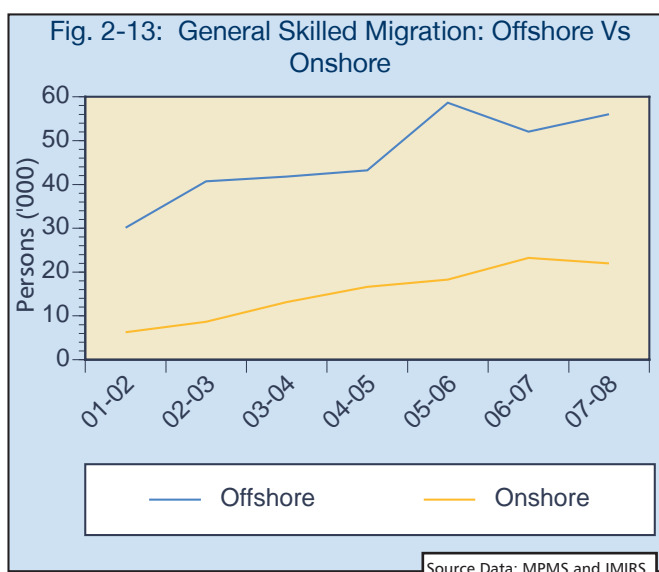
General Skilled Migration points test

A points test is used to assess applicants against a range of skill-related factors. The number of points prescribed for each factor reflects their relative importance in the context of an applicant's potential contribution to Australia. The skill, age, English language, work experience and Migration Occupation in Demand List (MODL) components therefore earn the highest points. Other recognised factors include Australian qualifications, partner skills, work experience obtained in Australia, regional study, nomination by a state or territory, skills in an occupation in demand, job offer for an occupation in demand and fluency in a community language other than English.

In 2007-08, 41.7 per cent of successful General Skilled Migration (points-tested) applicants claimed points for an Australian qualification, the large majority of whom also took advantage of the work experience waiver.

Within the General Skilled Migration categories in 2007-08 compared to 2006-07, there was a 5.5 per cent decrease in onshore grants (21 966 total grants) and a 7.7 per cent increase in offshore grants (56 034 total grants). This included an increase of 1712 (3.2 per cent) from 2006-07 in the Skilled Independent visa categories and an increase of 1014 (4.8 per cent) from 2006-07 in the Sponsored visa categories resulting in an overall 3.6 per cent increase of visas granted in the General Skilled Migration categories (78 000) from 2006-07. Of these grants, 71.7 per cent were in the Skilled Independent and Skilled Independent Overseas Student category, an increase of 3.2 per cent from 2006-07.

Of successful applicants assessed against the points test, 56 per cent were aged less than 30 years, 81.2 per cent scored maximum points for skill and approximately 59.2 per cent scored over 20 points for English language proficiency. Approximately 58.1 per cent had an occupation that was listed on MODL at the time their visa was granted.



Changes to General Skilled Migration Program

In recent years, changes to General Skilled Migration selection criteria and the points test have been introduced to ensure that Australia's skilled migrant intake targets identified demands in the Australian labour market, particularly in regional Australia.

The Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa is available to potential migrants outside Australia as well as to overseas students in Australia who are looking for a pathway to permanent residence. Since 1 July 2005, Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa applicants are eligible for 10 points when nominated by an authorised state or territory government, further enhancing the attractiveness of this visa.

To further encourage overseas students to consider settling permanently in regional Australia, students are able to apply for and be granted a Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa while in Australia.

From 1 November 2005, Working Holiday and Occupational Trainee visa holders were eligible to apply for and obtain a SIR (Provisional) visa without leaving Australia. As with other SIR (Provisional) visa applicants, they were required to be sponsored by an authorised state or territory government agency or regional certifying body and meet the pass mark for the visa. This measure significantly expanded the pool of people available for sponsorship by state governments and regional authorities under the SIR (Provisional) visa and had the additional advantage of attracting people who already have work experience in Australia. Working Holiday and Occupational Trainee visa holders continue to be eligible to apply under the new Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa which came into effect on 1 September 2007.

In 2007-08, 106 occupations were listed in the MODL. Applicants whose nominated occupation is on the MODL receive priority processing and are awarded additional points under the General Skilled Migration points test. The MODL is reviewed by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations every six months to better reflect emerging labour needs and further improve targeting.

There remains continued focus on the MODL as a way of ensuring the General Skilled Migration Program delivers migrants with skills that are in demand by Australian employers.

Business and Information Professionals (eg Accountants, Auditors and Corporate Treasurers) continued as the main occupational grouping (9465, 23.1 per cent) for General Skilled Migration outcomes in 2007-08,

followed by Computing Professionals (5787, 14.1 per cent) and Science, Building and Engineering Professionals (4820, 11.8 per cent).

On 1 September 2007 significant changes were made to the General Skilled Migration program. These changes affected all applications lodged from 1 September 2007.

The changes consisted of major structural reforms, in which the 11 skilled migration visa categories were collapsed into just four, creating a more efficient visa system in which visa applications are able to be lodged through the internet. Under the changes, the English language threshold for applicants with skills in professional, technical or managerial occupations was raised from an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 5 (vocational) to 6 (competent).

Overseas students who are unable to meet the new requirements for a permanent skilled visa at the time they complete their studies can apply for the new 18 month Skilled Graduate visa to build on their English, skills and work experience.

Bonus points are awarded to applicants who score IELTS 7 and above. Additional points are also awarded to applicants who have completed skilled work experience or a recognised Professional Year in Australia. In addition, the points for nominating on occupations on the MODL are only awarded to applicants who have at least 12 months skilled work experience in that occupation. Students with qualifications in 50 points occupations are also able to apply for a General Skilled Migration visa.

Employer Sponsored

Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS)

The ENS is a program that allows Australian employers to recruit highly skilled migrants to fill vacancies in their business. Under the ENS, an employer must lodge a

nomination for a position and the intended nominee for the position must lodge a visa application.

Positions nominated under the ENS must relate to a skilled occupation that is specified on the ENS Occupation List, and provide full-time employment for at least three years. Employers must also provide a salary that satisfies the legislated level for the ENS, as well as provide working conditions in accordance with Australian laws and awards.

Visa applicants must be able to satisfy the skill requirement by providing a satisfactory skills assessment from the relevant assessing authority, as well as provide evidence of at least three years of post-qualification work experience. The skill requirement can also be satisfied if the visa applicant will be paid a salary of at least \$165 000 or if they have worked, whilst holding an eligible temporary visa, in the occupation for at the least two years immediately prior to lodging the ENS visa application and employed with their ENS sponsor for the last 12 months.

The salary requirements for the ENS are consistent with those under the Temporary Business (Long Stay) (Subclass 457) visa.

The 2007-08 Migration Program outcome included 15 482 visas granted under the ENS (onshore and offshore), which represents an increase of 53.9 percent on the outcome for the 2006-07 program year.

Labour Agreements

Labour Agreements are formal arrangements negotiated between the Commonwealth Government (represented by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations) and an employer.

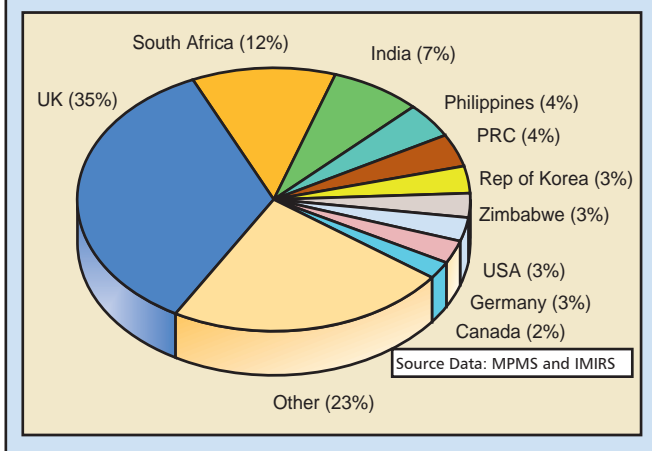
Labour Agreements enable Australian employers to recruit skilled overseas workers on a temporary or permanent basis in response to demonstrated existing or emerging skill shortages. Employers who have a labour agreement must demonstrate how they will, over time, reduce their reliance on skilled overseas workers and enhance the employment prospects of Australians.

Labour Agreements provide for flexible arrangements to be put in place where the standard visa arrangements do not meet employer needs and a significant economic benefit or public interest case can be established for allowing the entry of overseas skilled workers.

Criteria under Labour Agreements are generally based on the minimum skill levels, salary and English language requirements for the visa subclasses that are permitted under the agreement.

The 2007-08 Migration Program outcome included 3218 permanent visas granted through Labour Agreements (onshore and offshore), which represents an increase of

Fig. 2-14: Employer Sponsored outcomes by country of citizenship 2007-08



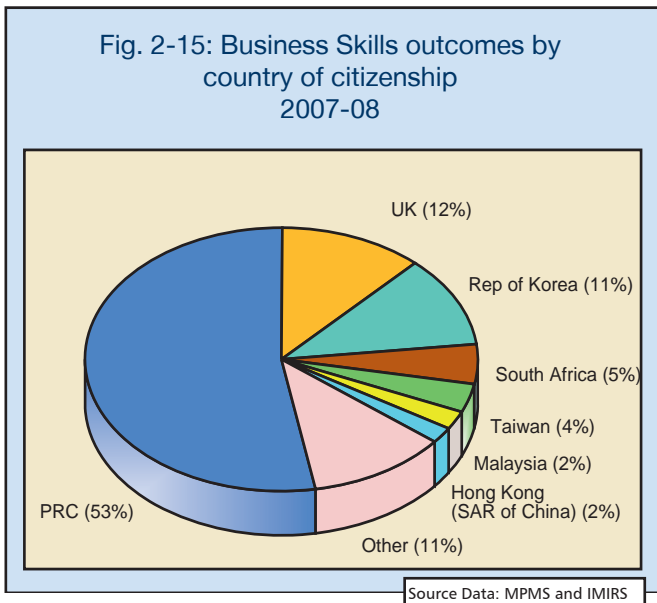
17.3 per cent on the outcome for the 2006-07 program year. There were also 3898 Temporary Business (Long Stay) Subclass 457 visas granted through the Labour Agreement framework which represents an increase of 13.6 per cent on the visas granted during the 2006-07 program year.

Business Skills program

Successive governments have reaffirmed a commitment to selecting high quality business migrants, in recognition of the benefits they contribute to Australia's increasingly global economy. They bring with them knowledge of overseas markets, business networks, cultural practices and often languages other than English, as well as their specific business skills and experience.

The majority of Business Skills entrants enter Australia initially on a provisional (temporary) visa for four years and, after satisfactory evidence of a specified level of business or investment activity, may apply for permanent residence. High calibre business migrants may apply for a Business Talent visa to obtain direct permanent residence if they have high level business attributes and are sponsored by a state or territory government agency.

Fig. 2-15: Business Skills outcomes by country of citizenship 2007-08



In 2007-08, over 94 per cent of all Business Skills provisional visas granted were state/territory government sponsored. Each state/territory manages and varies its sponsorship regime to match regional economic development needs.

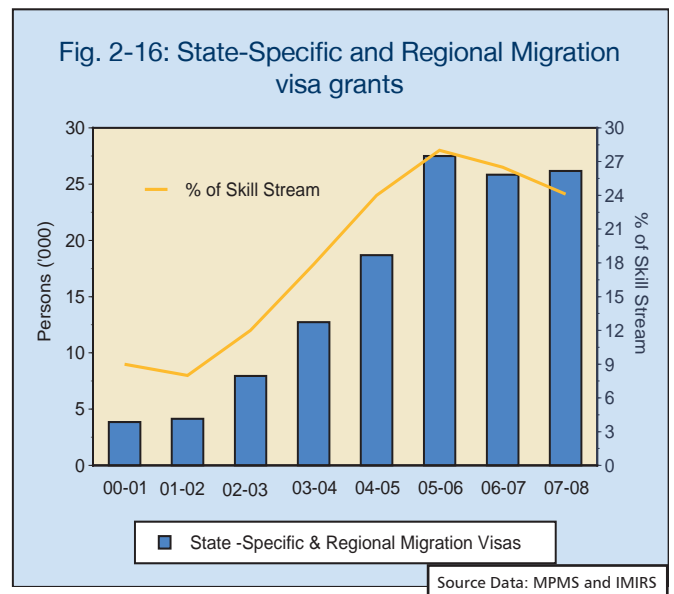
Concessional level visa criteria apply where applicants have attained sponsorship from a state or territory government, at both the provisional and permanent residence stages. For example, sponsored business owners can attract age and English language concessions.

The 2007-08 Migration Program outcome included 6565 visas granted through the Business Skills categories, which represents an increase of 12.5 per cent on the outcome for the 2006-07 program year.

State-Specific and Regional Migration

All spheres of government are focused on the development, acquisition and retention of skills. The Australian Government recognises that a balanced Migration Program plays an important role in contributing to the economic, demographic and social development of regional Australia and low population growth areas.

Fig. 2-16: State-Specific and Regional Migration visa grants



Since 1996-97, the Australian Government, in consultation with state and territory governments, has operated a number of initiatives designed to assist state and territory governments and regional authorities to:

- encourage a more balanced settlement of Australia's skilled migrant intake
- address skill needs that may exist in specific regions of Australia
- attract overseas business people to establish new or joint ventures.

Research into patterns of population distribution and the reasons why migrants decide to settle in certain areas of Australia shows that there are four factors which are of primary importance in determining where migrants settle: location of family members; the availability of employment; business opportunities; and prior experience of an area, for example, as an overseas student. The State-Specific and Regional Migration (SSRM) initiatives are based on these factors.

Key milestones in State-Specific and Regional Migration initiatives

- October 1995 - Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)
- November 1996 - Skilled Regional Linked category
- November 1996 - Skill Matching Database (SMD)
- July 1997 - State/Territory Sponsored Regional Established Business in Australia (REBA) category
- November 1997 - State/Territory Nominated Independent (STNI) category
- July 1998 - Enhancement to Regional Linked category
- July 1999 - Skill Matching visa (SMV) class
- July 1999 - Skilled Australian Sponsored
- July 1999 - Skilled Regional Sponsored (SRS) category
- July 1999 - English Language Concession for SRS category
- July 2001 - Skilled Regional Sponsored (SRS) became the Skilled Designated Area Sponsored category (SDAS)
- May to July 2002 - Enhancements to the Skill Matching Database/Skill Matching visa implemented (early registration and trial removal of initial fee)
- November 2002 - English Language Concession for Skill Matching visa
- November 2002 - Applicants on Skill Matching Database eligible for nomination under Labour Agreements without lodging a new application
- November 2002 - Concessions for regional sponsorship of Temporary Business entrants
- March 2003 - Business Skills two- stage process
- July 2003 - Changes to the points test for General Skilled Migration allows for the award of 5 additional points for overseas students who study and reside in regional Australia or a low population growth metropolitan area for at least 2 years
- July 2004 - Two-stage Skilled Independent Regional (SIR) (Provisional) visa
- July 2004 - Creation of network of Regional Outreach Officers (ROOs)
- April 2005 - Skill Matching Database upgrade from Access to Oracle web based product
- May 2005 - Expansion of the Migration Occupations in Demand (MODL) list with additional trade, engineering and other occupations
- July 2005 - Changes to the points test for General Skilled Migration allows (SIR) (Provisional) visa applicants to be awarded 10 additional points when sponsored by an authorised state or territory agency.
- August 2005 - Industry Outreach Officer (IOO) network introduced
- November 2005 - Trade Skills Training visa
- April 2006 - Further enhancements made to the Skill Matching Database including: improved navigation and ease of use indication of the intended State/Territory residence of applicants, a portfolio option and enhanced search and filter options.
- July 2006 - Expansion of the Skill Matching Database to include visa applicants in the Skilled Independent Overseas Student (subclass 880), Skilled Australian Sponsored Overseas Student (subclass 881) and Skilled Australian Sponsored (subclass 138)
- July 2006 - The SDAS visa was modified to improve its focus on regional areas of Australia. SDAS visa holders now enter on a three year temporary visa. To be eligible to apply for permanent residence, applicants will need to demonstrate that they have lived in the same designated area as their sponsor for a minimum of two years and have worked in that area for at least one year.
- August 2006 - State/Territory Nominated Independent scheme expanded to now include all jurisdictions. Qld only sponsor applicants who first hold a SIR visa.
- September 2007 - Restructure and simplification of the General Skilled Migration (GSM) categories from an 11 class 15 subclass structure, to a 4 class 9 subclass structure.
- September 2007 - Skilled Independent Regional (SIR) and Skilled Designated Area Sponsored (SDAS) visa categories replaced with the provisional Skilled Sponsored and Skilled Regional Sponsored (onshore and offshore) visa categories, which includes option for either state/territory nomination or sponsorship by an eligible relative or pathway to permanent residency with the Skilled Regional (Residence) visa (subclass 887).

Fig. 2-17: Distribution of State-Specific and Regional Migration visa grants

State/Territory	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
New South Wales	1632	1900	2132
Victoria	10 496	9178	9220
Queensland	3103	3084	2612
South Australia	8182	7158	7041
Western Australia	2401	3025	3167
Tasmania	503	512	553
Northern Territory	303	290	393
Australian Capital Territory	682	650	859
Total (a)	27 488	25 845	26 162

(a) Total includes Other territories.

Source Data: MPMS and IMIRS

SSRM initiatives enable state/territory governments, regional employers and development bodies to pursue regional development objectives and employment and business outcomes through the use of more flexible program provisions and threshold criteria for skilled migrants. SSRM initiatives also provide an incentive for skilled migrants to locate to areas of Australia that are seeking more migrants through recognition of family linkages. These concessions have been carefully designed so that they do not undermine the overall integrity of the Migration Program. Applicants must be skilled and meet mandatory health and character requirements.

For 2007-08, 26 162 visas were granted under these initiatives, the second highest since the introduction of the initiatives in 1996-97. This is a slight increase of 1.2 per cent on the 2006-07 outcome of 25 845 visas. This outcome represents 24.0 per cent of the total Skill Stream in 2007-08.

The distribution of these visas across states and territories for the last three years is provided in Figure 2-17. Over 135 854 visas have been granted since the introduction of SSRM initiatives in 1996-97.

The SSRM initiatives are designed to deliver skilled and business migrants in line with the needs of each state and territory. A two-stage process for offshore Skilled Designated Area Sponsored (SDAS) visa applications was introduced in July 2006, which was designed to ensure that migrants entering under this category live and work in the specified designated area before becoming eligible for permanent residence. The changes to the SDAS application process were aimed at achieving a better dispersal of skilled migrants to designated areas, which would benefit regional communities and provide a higher level of integrity to offset significant selection concessions.

The proportion of skilled migrants opting to settle in regional Australia over the last five years is assisting

economic development in regional areas. State and territory governments and regional authorities determine the extent of their involvement in SSRM initiatives depending on their own individual development priorities. This partnership approach is essential to the long-term success of these policies. State-Specific and Regional Migration initiatives include permanent skilled migration categories as well as specific temporary residence programs that can be used to fill skill needs. These regional initiatives can be used to the advantage of regions experiencing skill shortages.

Details of these initiatives follow in this chapter and further information is on the department's website at www.immi.gov.au/skilled/regional-employment/index.htm.

In addition to the State-Specific and Regional Migration initiatives there are a range of other migration categories (both permanent and temporary) that impact on regional Australia. Examples include:

- State/ Territory Sponsorship through State/Territory Nomination: the pass mark is set lower than for Skilled Independent
- Skilled migrants who do not migrate under regional initiatives may still elect to reside in regional centres or low population growth metropolitan cities
- Temporary resident doctors
- The Working Holiday Maker Program, which allows young people to tour Australia and engage in short-term work during their stay which can be in regional areas. Since November 2005 the program has been expanded to allow Working Holiday Makers to apply for a second Working Holiday Maker visa if they have spent three months doing seasonal harvest work.

Introduced in 2004, DIAC's Regional Outreach Officer network continues to play an integral role in promoting and supporting regional migration initiatives. Working closely with state and territory governments and regional authorities, this network engages directly with regional employers to provide information on the department's programs. Additionally, the department's industry based officers provide expert immigration advice and support to their host groups and their members, including those in regional Australia. Having a local contact point and the opportunity to meet personally with a departmental officer is a service highly valued by regional stakeholders.

In 1998 the Commonwealth state/territory working party on skilled migration was established in order to bring together Commonwealth Government agencies and state/territory government jurisdictions for consultation. This working party meets twice per year to investigate the development of long-term skilled migration options and strategies to increase the number of skilled migrants to state/territories and regional areas. There is a particular emphasis on the impact of growth rates generated by such migration on infrastructure, employment and sustainable economic development.

Particular State-Specific and Regional Migration initiatives

Skill Matching

The Skill Matching scheme was introduced on 1 November 1996 to help state/territory governments and employers to meet their skill needs. Skill matching is made possible by the Skill Matching Database (SMD). The database is a free web-based tool that helps match potential skilled migrants with skilled vacancies or skill shortages in Australia. It contains the occupational, educational and work experience details of more than 11 000 potential skilled migrants representing over 300 trades and professions.

To be eligible for inclusion on the SMD, applicants must apply for the Skill Matching visa (abolished from September 2007) or a Skilled Independent or Sponsored category visa. Applicants remain on the database for up to two years, or until they migrate to Australia. Many of these applicants are interested in settling in regional Australia and have occupations that are in demand or in short supply in these areas. The database provides the opportunity for applicants to secure employment in Australia before they migrate.

The database can be accessed by State and Territory governments and employers who may then nominate an applicant listed on the SMD for migration. State and Territory governments can nominate applicants from the database for state-Specific and Regional Sponsored visas and employers can nominate applicants from the database under RSMS, Labour Agreements or the Employer Nomination Scheme.

Applicants on the SMD are at various stages of the visa process. Many applicants listed on the SMD require formal sponsorship by an employer or state/territory government for their visas to be granted. Employers can contact these applicants directly and negotiate an offer of employment without involving DIAC. Employers also have the option

to offer sponsorship to all applicants on the database that have not had their visa granted or been sponsored by a state/territory government. Employer sponsorship expedites the processing of the visa application.

The database is available on the internet through DIAC's website at www.immi.gov.au/skills/.

State/Territory Nominated Independent (STNI) Scheme

The STNI Scheme enables states and territories to sponsor Skilled Independent category and Skill Matching visa applicants who are interested in settling permanently in states and territories where their skills are in demand and who have a sound chance of gaining employment in that state or territory soon after their arrival. They are identified through the Skill Matching Database or directly by state and territory governments.

Applicants for this visa are given priority processing and are not required to meet the pass mark for general skilled migration.

Since the reforms of September 2007 to General Skilled Migration, States and Territories nominate skilled applicants for permanent migration under the Skilled Australian Sponsored category.

Grants under the recent STNI scheme were 3422 in 2007-08 a decrease of 1.5 percent from 2006-07 (3474). Victoria is the leading state with 37.0 per cent of the grants followed by Western Australia at 32.5 per cent.

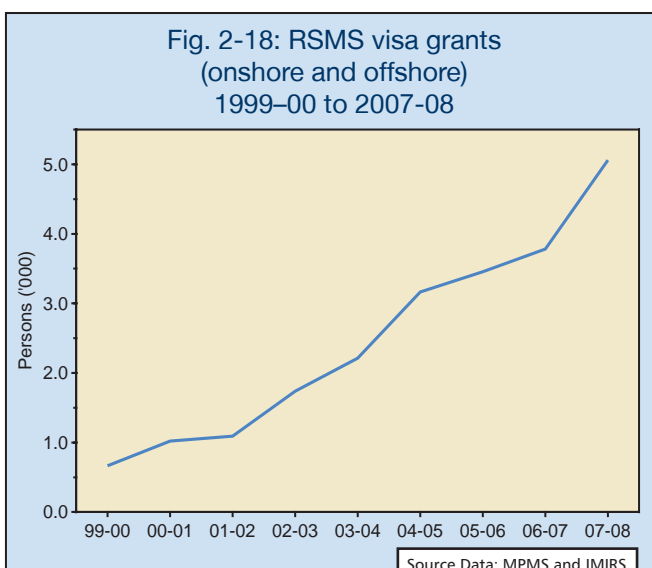
Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)

The Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme was introduced in 1995-96 to assist employers in regional Australia fill skilled vacancies in their business. Employers in all areas of Australia except Perth, Melbourne, Wollongong, Sydney, Newcastle, Brisbane and the Gold Coast can access the RSMS.

Employers may nominate workers who are overseas, or working in Australia on a temporary basis. For a position to be approved under the RSMS, there must be a genuine vacancy for the position in a business within regional Australia and the position must be certified by a Regional Certifying Body (RCB). The position must also require a person with an Australian equivalent diploma or higher qualification to perform the work, and provide at least two years of full-time employment.

The nominee is expected to have a relevant Australian equivalent diploma or higher qualification, be less than 45 years old and satisfy the English language requirement unless the nominee can demonstrate that exceptional circumstances apply to their case.

Fig. 2-18: RSMS visa grants (onshore and offshore) 1999-00 to 2007-08



DIAC actively promotes the RSMS, as well as other temporary and permanent employer nominated visa programs, through a network of Industry Outreach Officers, Regional Outreach Officers, and officers from DIAC Business Centres. These officers seek to increase awareness of these programs to assist employers with overcoming skill shortages. There is a special focus on developing closer links with government agencies such as state and regional development authorities to assist regional areas.

The 2007-08 Migration Program outcome included 5062 visas granted through the RSMS (onshore and offshore), which represents an increase of 33.8 per cent on the outcome for the 2006-07 program year. The states with the largest number of RSMS visa grants were South Australia (34.6 per cent), Queensland (20.6 per cent) and Western Australia (11.4 per cent).

A current list of RCBs can be found on the DIAC website at: www.immi.gov.au/skills/regional-certifying-bodies.htm

Skill Matching visa

The Skill Matching visa was abolished in September 2007. The following details relate to applications made up till 31 August 2007. The Skill Matching visa provides the opportunity for skilled people who do not meet the current pass mark under the Skilled Independent category to attract sponsorship or nomination for permanent migration to Australia. Their details are included on the Skill Matching Database to assist them to secure a possible nomination by an employer or a State or Territory government.

The Skill Matching visa is not points tested and there is no initial charge to lodge an application. The applicant pays the visa application charge if they are successfully nominated by either an employer or state or territory government. Applicants are required to meet key threshold criteria for General Skilled Migration relating to skill, age, English language ability and work experience. However, as the Skill Matching visa is a concessional visa, applicants are able to qualify with a slightly lower level of English and less recent work experience than applicants for some other General Skilled Migration visas.

The English language concession allows participating states and territories to make provision for applicants with functional English to upgrade to vocational English level at the applicant's cost. South Australia, Tasmania, the ACT and the NT are gazetted for this purpose.

Applicants remain on the SMD for up to two years from the date of assessment. If after two years the applicant has not received a nomination by an employer or state/territory government their details are removed from the database.

There were 703 Skill Matching visas granted in 2007-08 a 21.0 percent increase on 2006-07 (581).

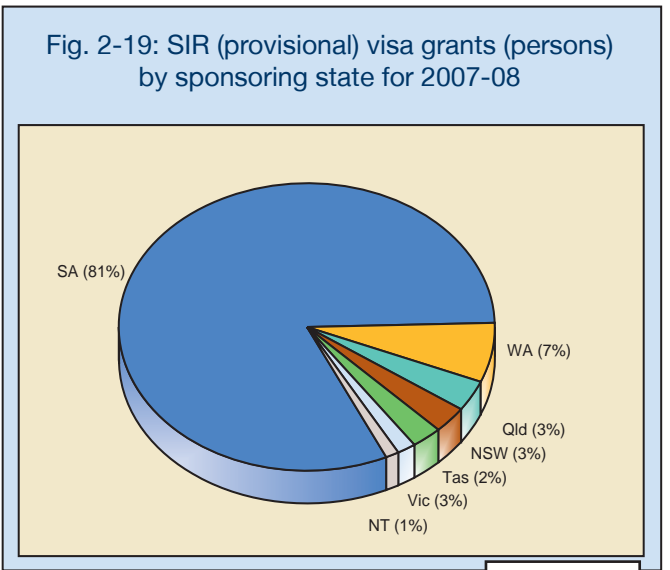
Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional)

Between 1 July 2004 and 31 August 2007, skilled people who wish to live in regional Australia have been able to apply for a SIR (Provisional) visa. The SIR (Provisional) visa was developed in consultation with state and territory governments and designed to attract skilled migrants wishing to live in a regional or low population growth area in Australia but who are not able to meet the criteria to be granted a permanent visa. Since the reforms of 1 September 2007 to General Skilled Migration, the SIR (Provisional) was replaced with the Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa.

Applicants for the Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa are still required to meet the threshold criteria for General Skilled Migration and be assessed against the General Skilled Migration points test. However, the passmark for the Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa is slightly lower than that applied to Skilled Independent visas. In addition, since 1 July 2005, applicants for this visa are eligible for 10 points when nominated by an authorised State or Territory government.

If approved, Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa applicants are granted a visa valid for three years. After they have resided in a regional or low population growth area for at least two years, and been employed for a total of 12 months in the area, they are then eligible to apply for a permanent visa. A range of concessions are available to Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa holders applying for permanent residency under the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS), the recent State/Territory Nominated Independent (STNI) or the State/Territory Sponsored Business Owner (STSBO) visa categories. An integral part of the Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa initiative is that an authorised State or Territory government agency or regional certifying body must nominate a prospective applicant. Nomination enables

Fig. 2-19: SIR (provisional) visa grants (persons) by sponsoring state for 2007-08



Source Data: ORS

states, territories and regions to promote themselves to prospective migrants, target particular skills in short supply and give potential migrants information about living in their jurisdiction to help them settle.

A survey of SIR visa holders granted their visa between 1 July 2004 and 30 June 2006, showed that 18 months after arrival 98 per cent had a job. This was a significant improvement on the situation 12 months earlier when only 85 per cent were working.

The likelihood of jobs being skilled varied according to particular demographics. For instance, 18 months after arrival those born in a Main English Speaking (MES) country were much more likely to be working in a skilled occupation than the non-MES country-born, 95 per cent compared to 67 per cent respectively. The likelihood of skilled employment also increased with age, with only 61 per cent of the 20-24 year age group in a skilled job after 18 months compared with 92 per cent of those aged 40 and over.

The vast majority of visa holders were positive about their job, with only 1 per cent reporting their job as bad or really bad. Those working in a job that was the same or similar to their nominated occupation were more likely to like their job than those working in another field.

After 18 months, the median income of those surveyed was \$42 100, an increase of \$4000 from the situation 12 months earlier.

Rewarding study in regional Australia

Overseas students who have studied and lived in regional Australia or a low population growth metropolitan area for at least two years can be awarded five points under the General Skilled Migration points test. This is in addition to the five points already available to applicants who have an Australian qualification. These points are designed to encourage overseas students to live and study in regional Australia. They also aim to encourage these overseas students to remain and contribute their skills to the benefit of these areas after they complete their studies.

In addition, any SIR (Provisional) visa applicant who has studied at a regional campus is eligible to apply for, and be granted, their SIR (Provisional) visa while they are in Australia even if their nominated occupation only attracts 50 points on the General Skilled Migration points test.

Skilled Designated Area Sponsored (SDAS) category

This visa allowed Australian citizens and permanent residents to sponsor skilled relatives (including first cousins, nieces, nephews and grandchildren) to join them in designated areas identified by state and territory governments. In 2006-07 all of Australia apart from Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong, Perth and Brisbane was designated for this purpose. Applicants were required to meet threshold criteria for skill, age, English language and work experience. There are flexible threshold requirements for work experience and English language ability. Under these concessional arrangements, the English language requirement can be met where:

- the applicant has been assessed as having only functional rather than vocational level English
- the applicant's sponsor lives in a state/territory which has appropriate upgrading arrangements in place, gazetted by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship for this purpose
- the applicant pays the required fee for English tuition to the designated English tuition provider before the visa is granted.

On 1 July 2006, the SDAS visa was modified from a permanent to a provisional visa regime. Skilled migrants sponsored by relatives living in a designated area of Australia now enter on a three year temporary visa. To be eligible to apply for permanent residence, applicants need to demonstrate that they have lived in the same designated area as their sponsor for a minimum of two years and have worked in that area for at least one year.

As of 1 September 2007 the SDAS was replaced by the Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa. Applicants for this visa are eligible for 25 sponsorship points when sponsored by an eligible relative living in a designated area of Australia. The two-stage Regional Sponsored (Provisional) visa arrangement gives states and territories greater assurance that people sponsored under these arrangements settle in the same area as their sponsor.

Temporary skilled workers

The Temporary Skilled Migration (subclass 457) visa, which is discussed in detail in chapter 3, allows Australian businesses to nominate skilled overseas workers for up to four years. The position must meet minimum skill and salary thresholds. In November 2002, concessions arrangements were introduced to reflect the special skill needs of regional Australia. These provisions allow for lower minimum skill and salary levels to be approved. Unskilled occupations are not included. State or territory regional certifying bodies must endorse requests for the lower threshold criteria, confirm that the position is necessary and that the position could not be filled locally.

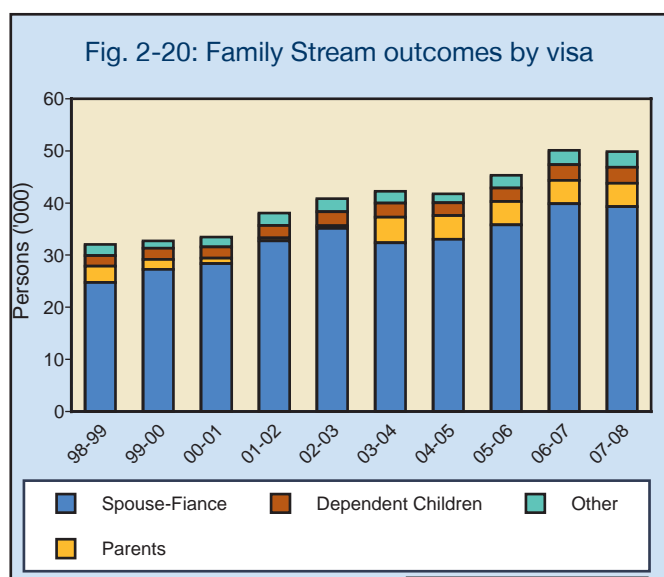
Business Skills category State-Specific and Regional Migration Initiatives

The interests of state/territory governments have been given greater priority in the two-stage processing arrangements for this visa. Applicants may apply for sponsorship from a state or territory government and be eligible to meet concessional criteria, enabling sponsors to attract the kinds of business people they are seeking to assist in the economic development of their specific areas. This linkage also encourages applicants who are more committed to succeeding in business in Australia.

In 2007-08 state and territory governments continued to sponsor business entrants to establish new or joint ventures or to continue a business they had established in a regional area. There were 6718 visas granted under state Sponsored Business Skills (SSBS) and Regional Established Business in Australia (REBA) categories in 2007-08. Victoria sponsored the highest percentage of these entrants (45.4 per cent), followed by NSW and Western Australia (15.6 and 13.9 per cent respectively).

Australia continues to actively encourage Business Skills entrants to set up business in regional, rural or low growth areas of Australia.

Family migration

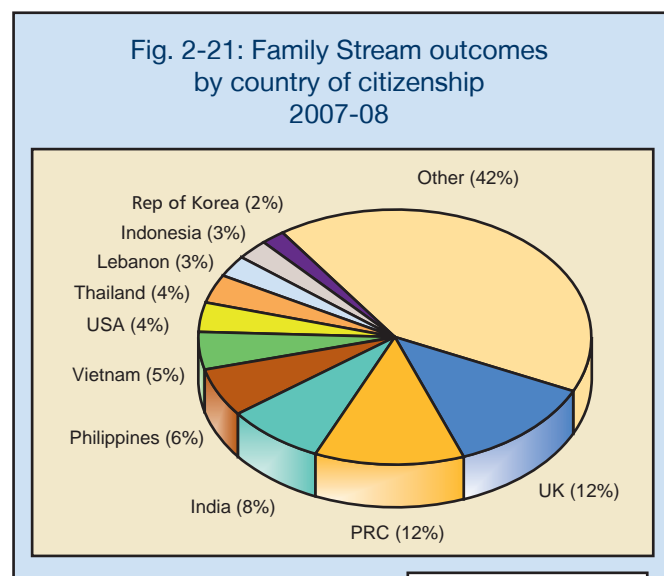


The Family Stream of Australia's Migration Program enables the migration of immediate family members such as spouses, children, parents and certain other members of extended families. Migrants in the Family Stream are selected on the basis of their family relationship with their sponsor in Australia. There is no test for skills or language ability as there is for Skill Stream migrants.

The Family Stream has grown from 32 040 places in 1998-99 to 49 870 places in 2007-08. This reflects the continuing strong commitment to family migration. Over the same period, the Family Stream's share of the Migration Program decreased from 47.2 to 31.4 per cent, however the Skill Stream grew at a much faster rate (Fig. 2-3). The shift in the balance of the Migration Program reflects a growing focus on skilled migration and its contribution towards Australia's social and economic welfare.

In 2007-08, the largest number of Family Stream visas were granted to citizens of the UK (12.4 per cent), followed by the PRC (12.3 per cent), India (8.1 per cent) and Philippines (6.2 per cent).

The planned level for the Family Stream in 2008-09 is 56 500 places, which represents 29.7 per cent of the total Migration Program (at the top of the range of planned outcomes).



Partner

Partner visas include the Spouse, Prospective Marriage (fiancé) and Interdependency visa subclasses. In 2007-08, partners accounted for 80.1 per cent (39 931) of Family Stream places. Most of the partner places were spouse (32 740), with 6541 prospective marriage and 650 interdependency (generally same sex partner).

In 2007-08, the largest number of partner places was for people who held citizenship in the UK (11.6 per cent), followed by the PRC (10.7 per cent), India (8.7 per cent), Philippines (6.5 per cent) and Vietnam (4.6 per cent).

Women outnumbered men as primary applicants in the grant of Spouse and Prospective Marriage visas in 2007-08; females accounted for 68.3 per cent of places. However, men outnumbered women as the primary applicants in the grant of Interdependency visas, accounting for 63.2 per cent of these places.

Although persons granted partner visas in 2007-08 included 260 applicants aged 65 years or over, most were much younger. While Prospective Marriage visa recipients were generally younger than Spouse and Interdependency visa recipients, almost 82.8 per cent of primary applicants in all three visa categories were aged between 20 and 39



years. In 2007-08, partner visa holders also brought with them 4371 dependants, mainly children, (mostly under 19) who migrated as secondary applicants on partner visas.

Child

The child category includes visas for dependent children, orphan relatives and adopted children. In 2007-08, a total of 3062 visas were granted which represented 6.1 per cent of grants in the Family Stream (an 1.8 per cent increase on the 2006-07 total of 3008).

In 2007-08, the largest number of visas in the child category was granted to citizens of the PRC (16.9 per cent), followed by Philippines (9.1 per cent), the UK (8.3 per cent), Thailand (7.4 per cent) and India (6.1 per cent).

Other family

The Other Family category includes visas for aged dependent relatives, remaining relatives and carers. In 2007-08, a total of 2378 visas were granted in the Other Family category, representing 4.8 per cent of the Family Stream outcome grants. Of these grants, around 61.2 per cent were remaining relatives, 33.3 per cent were carers and 6.5 per cent were aged dependent relatives. This compares with a total of 2136 visas granted in the Other Family category in 2006-07, representing 4.3 per cent of Family Stream places.

In 2007-08, the largest number of visas in the Preferential/Other Family category was granted to citizens of the PRC (13.5 per cent), followed by Vietnam (10.3 per cent), the UK (9.0 per cent) and Philippines (8.1 per cent).

Parent Categories

Since 1999-2000, the Australian government has limited the number of available parent places each year. This measure was based on research indicating that migrants in the parent category pose a relatively high ongoing cost to the Australian community. In 2003, the contributory parent category was introduced, thus creating two distinct parent categories of parent and contributory parent.

All applications for parent and contributory parent visas lodged at overseas visa offices are processed at the Perth Onshore Processing Centre (POPC). From 1 October 2008, POPC will process all visa applications lodged at visa offices in Australia. Economies of scale and specialisation have enabled POPC to develop more efficient and effective processing procedures.

Applicants who lodge a valid application for a parent or contributory parent visa will have their file allocated to a case officer. If the applicants are then determined to satisfy the prescribed criteria for the grant of the visa, which may include meeting the health and character requirements, they are then allocated a 'queue date' and placed in a queue. The number of queued applicants granted visas

Fig. 2-23: Child outcomes by country of citizenship 2007-08

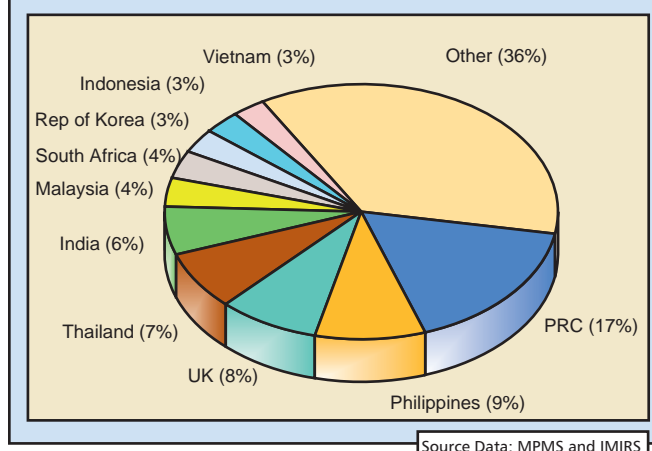


Fig. 2-24: Parent outcomes by country of citizenship 2007-08

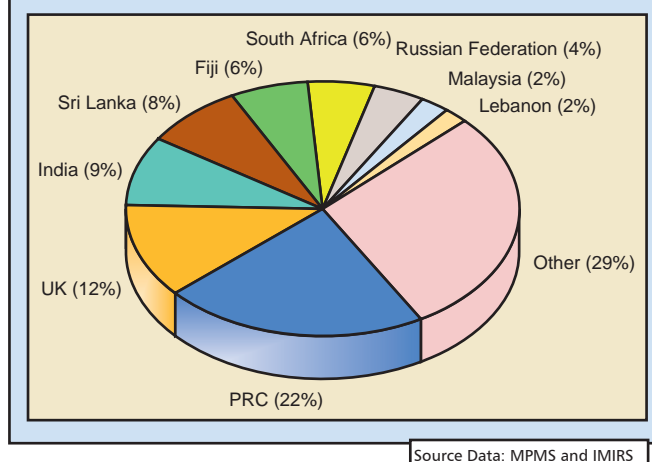
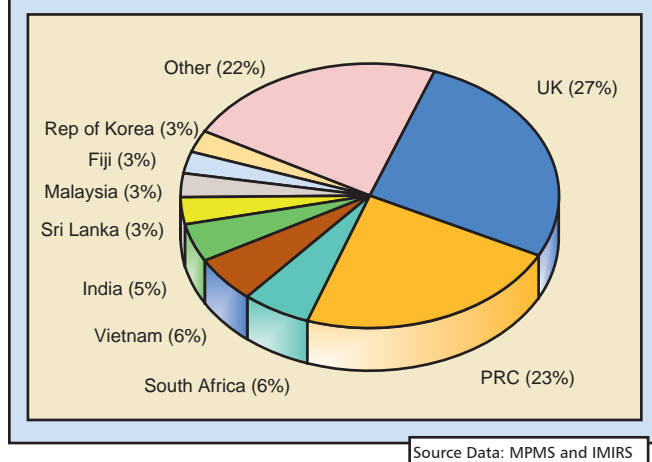


Fig. 2-25: Contributory Parent outcomes by country of citizenship 2007-08



each year corresponds to the fixed allocation for each parent visa category in that program year.

Parent

The parent category includes Parent (Subclass 103) visas and Aged Parent (Subclass 804) visas. In 2007-08, there were 1000 available places for parent category visas and 1000 visas were granted.

At 30 June 2008, approximately 24 660 persons had outstanding Parent and Aged Parent visa applications, including 5986 persons in Australia and 18 674 located overseas. A total of 19 490 persons had been allocated a queue date and had been queued.

In 2007-08, the largest number of parent category visas was granted to citizens of the PRC (21.8 per cent), followed by the UK (12.0 per cent), India (8.8 per cent), Sri Lanka (8.1 per cent) and Fiji (6.4 per cent).

Contributory Parent

Legislation creating the contributory parent visa category was passed by Parliament in March 2003 and commenced on 27 June 2003 for applicants outside of Australia and on 1 July 2003 for applicants in Australia.

The contributory parent visa category includes temporary Contributory Aged Parent (Subclass 884) visas and permanent Contributory Aged Parent (Subclass 864) visas for applicants in Australia. It also includes temporary Contributory Parent (Subclass 173) visas and permanent Contributory Parent (Subclass 143) visas for applicants outside of Australia.

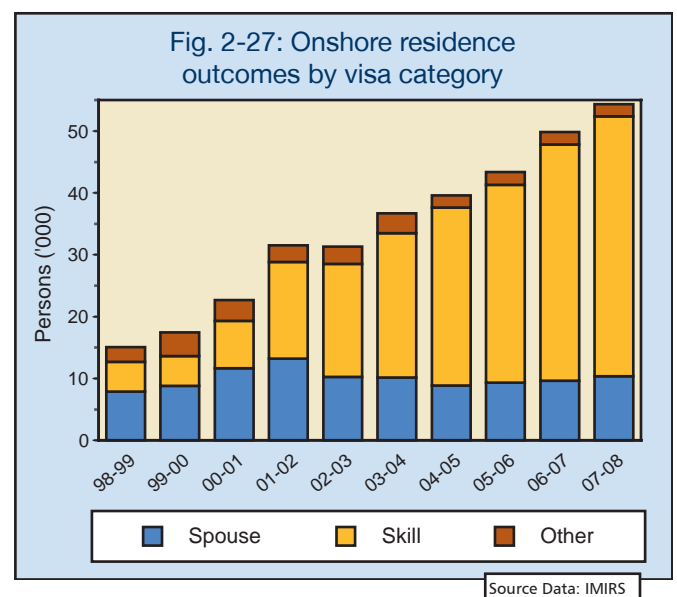
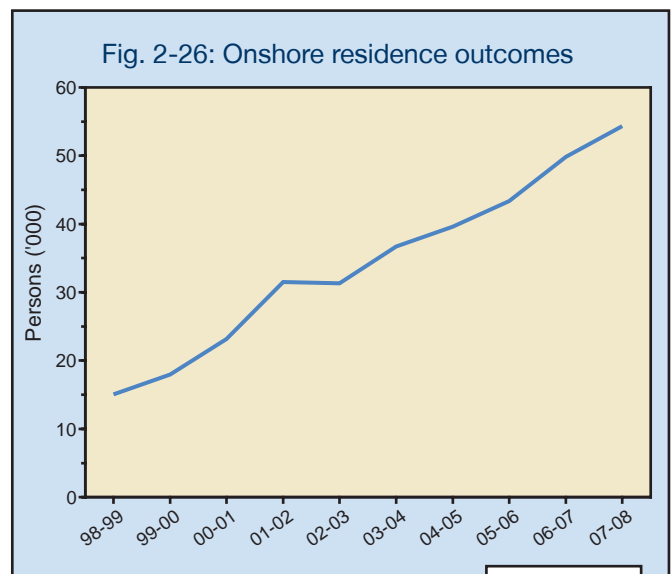
This category substantially increases the number of places available for parents to migrate each year on the basis that they or their sponsor make a fairer contribution to their health and welfare costs. In the contributory parent category, visa applicants are required to pay a substantial second visa application charge and provide a ten-year \$10 000 Assurance of Support (AoS) bond. The AoS for adult secondary visa applicants is \$4000.

In 2007-08, there were 3500 available contributory parent places and 3499 visas were granted. Of these, the largest number of visas were granted to citizens of the UK (26.9 per cent), followed by the PRC (22.9 per cent), South Africa (5.9 per cent), Vietnam (5.7 per cent) and India (4.7 per cent).

Contributory parent visa applicants were subject to queuing for the first time in the 2007-08 program year.

Onshore residence outcomes

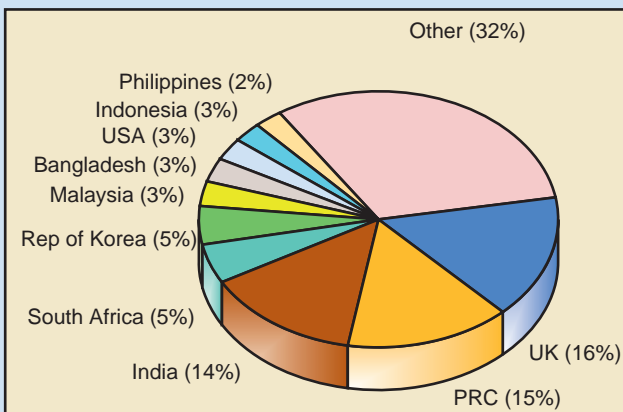
Most people apply for migration while they are overseas, but an increasing number of people already in Australia on a temporary visa are applying for a permanent visa while onshore. People granted residence on a skill, family or special eligibility basis after arrival in Australia are included in the Migration Program (except for New Zealand citizens). Permanent visas may be granted onshore to applicants for most Family Stream categories, except fiancés, and to some Skill Stream categories, including the Employer Nomination Scheme, the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme, and the Business Skills category. Overseas students completing their courses in Australia can also apply onshore for permanent residence in the Skill Stream.



In 2007-08, the Migration Program included 54 353 persons granted residence after applying in Australia for a permanent visa, representing 34.3 per cent of the outcome of the Migration Program. The main countries of citizenship for people granted onshore residence visas were the UK, the PRC, India, South Africa, the Republic of Korea and Malaysia.

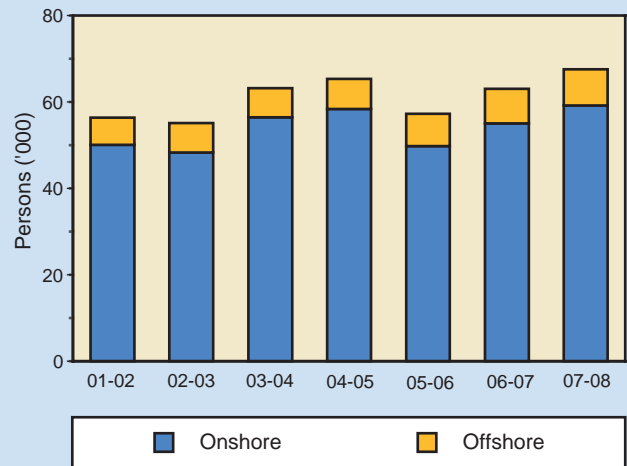
There has been a 43.3 per cent increase in the number of Employer Sponsored visas granted in 2007-08 (23 762) compared to 2006-07 (16 585). This increase reflects the rise in the number of skilled workers coming to Australia on temporary visas who are then later sponsored for permanent residence by their Australian employer.

Fig. 2-28: Onshore residence outcomes by country of citizenship 2007-08



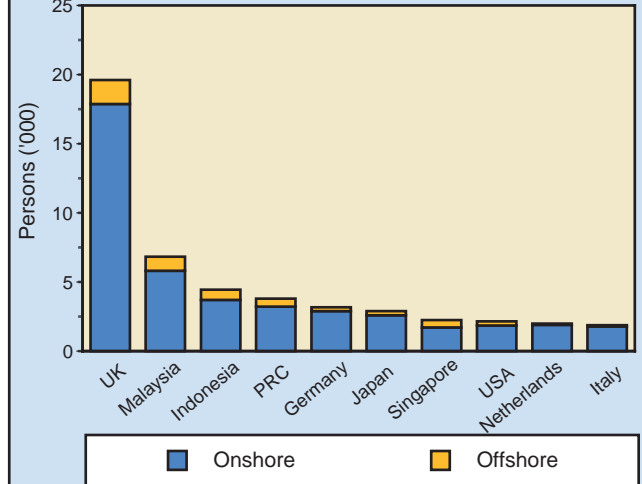
Source Data: IMIRS

Fig. 2-29: Resident Return visas granted (includes electronic visa grants)



Source Data: IMIRS

Fig. 2-30: Resident Return visas by country of citizenship 2007-08



Source Data: IMIRS

Resident Return Visas

The purpose of Resident Return visas (RRVs) is to facilitate the re-entry of Australian permanent residents and ensure that only those people with a genuine commitment to residing in Australia, or who are contributing to Australia's well-being, retain the right to return and remain permanently in Australia.

An RRV enables the holder to depart Australia and return as a permanent resident for up to five years from the date of grant.

In 2007-08, the total number of RRV applications lodged was 67 977, resulting in 67 565 grants. Of these 59 215 RRVs were granted in Australia and 8350 were granted overseas. There were 818 RRV applications refused. The number of electronic RRV applications lodged during 2007-08 was 6042 (up 3.87 per cent on 2006-07). A total of 5814 RRVs were granted as a result of this process.