

Chapter 3

Temporary entry

- Almost 4.2 million Temporary entry visas (not including Bridging visas) were issued in 2007-08. Around 86 per cent of the Temporary Entry visas issued were offshore Visitor visas (including Business visas). Visitor visas issued for 2007-08 were down by 0.5 per cent on the previous year.
- During the program year 2006-07 visitors contributed more than \$22.4 billion in export earnings annually. (*Tourism industry facts and figures at a glance June 2008; published by the department of resources, energy and tourism*).
- A record number of student visas (278 184) were granted to overseas students in 2007-08.
- The continued growth of the International Education Industry is now estimated to contribute over \$12.5 billion to the Australian economy, making it Australia's third largest export.
- In 2007-08 the main source of overseas students were India followed by the Peoples Republic of China (PRC), the Republic of Korea, the United States of America (USA), Malaysia and Nepal.
- Over 154 148 people were granted Working Holiday visas to Australia in 2007-08. It is estimated that they would spend approximately \$2.4 billion over one year in Australia.
- At the end of June 2008, there were an estimated 809 628 people in Australia on Temporary Entry visas, excluding New Zealand citizens. These mainly consisted of students (39.3 per cent), visitors (22.0 per cent), Long Stay Business (16.6 percent) and Working Holiday Makers (10.7 percent)

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 normally 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 five 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 2007-08 the ETA accounted for 76.9 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) – young people holidaying in Australia with short term work and study rights. There are 19 reciprocal WHM arrangements currently in effect. These arrangements provide similar opportunities for Australians overseas. There are also four countries with which Australia has Work and Holiday arrangements.

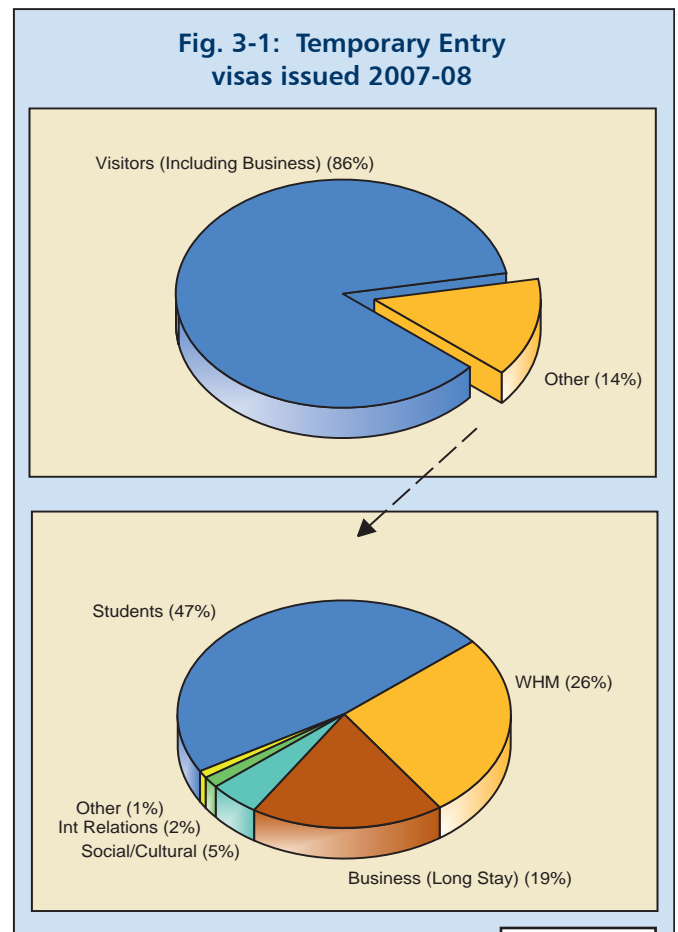
Overseas Students – people who wish to undertake full-time study in registered courses in Australia.

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 (short stay) visa. Those who are recruited by Australian companies as skilled personnel enter as temporary skilled migrants for periods of stay up to four years.

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

In 2007-08, a total of 4 197 358 Temporary Entry visas (excluding Bridging visas) were granted, of which the vast majority of 3 609 928 were offshore Visitor visas (including Business Visitors). Working Holiday Makers (154 148) and Overseas Students (278 184) accounted for 73.6 per cent of the remaining Temporary Entrants.

This total is up by 1.8 per cent from the 4 121 501 Temporary Entry visas granted in 2006-07.



Source Data: IMIRS

Visitors

In 2007-08, passport holders from the UK, Japan, the USA, the PRC and the Republic of Korea constituted 54.2 per cent of all Visitor visas granted.

During 2006-07, visitors to Australia generated tourism export earnings of \$22.4 billion. This amounted to 10.4 per cent of Australia's total export earnings.

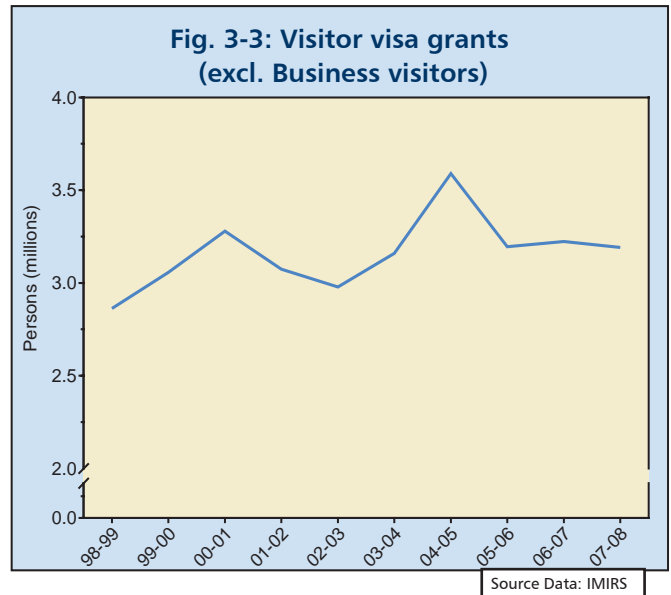
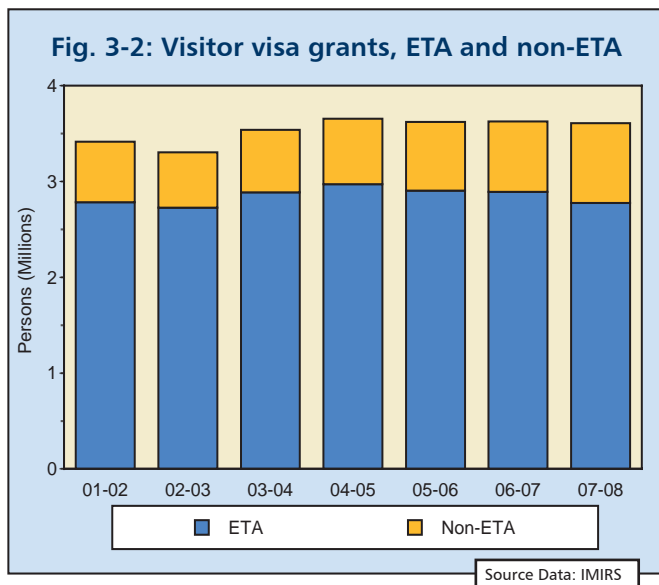
Major source countries

The top ten countries of passport holders for Visitor visa grants during 2007-08 were:

- UK 631 900
- Japan 464 878
- USA 400 906
- PRC* 261 016
- Republic of Korea 197 450
- Germany 144 852
- Malaysia 134 819
- Singapore 129 364
- Canada 114 457
- France 112 143

*non-ETA country

UK passport holders were granted 17.5 per cent of all Visitor visas granted (compared with 18.6 per cent in 2006-07). Japanese passport holders were granted 12.9 per cent of all Visitor visas granted (compared with 15.3 per cent in 2006-07).



Electronic lodgement

In 2007-08, the ETA accounted for 76.9 per cent of all tourist and short-term business visas issued worldwide.

The electronic Tourist visa product (known as e676) is also available for certain visitors to Australia. The main difference between e676 and ETA is that e676 allows tourists to apply for stays in Australia for up to 12 months.

Unlike ETAs, e676 is only available to tourists and not to business visitors. Nevertheless, e676 offers many of the same benefits of ETAs including greater convenience for applicants, faster processing times and visa label free travel, which means applicants do not need to send or deliver their passport to a visa office.

Some countries are also eligible for e676 'auto-grant' access. Where the e676 service determines, based on information provided in the application that further assessment is not required, auto-grant means their visa will be granted within a matter of minutes. During 2007-08, e676 'auto-grant' access was extended to Cyprus, the Slovakia, Bulgaria, Poland and Romania.

In 2007-08, 48.3 per cent of offshore granted Tourist visas were 'auto-granted' compared with 46.4 per cent in 2006-07. In coming years, the department plans to explore opportunities to improve electronic visa access for all visitors to Australia.

In 2007-08, 40 per cent of Tourist visa (Subclass 676) applications that could be lodged electronically were lodged that way. In 2007-08 the following passport holders had the highest electronic application rates:

- Malta 100.0 per cent
- Slovenia 98.9 per cent
- Estonia 97.3 per cent
- Switzerland 96.9 per cent
- Sweden 96.8 per cent
- Czech Republic 96.0 per cent
- Kuwait 95.0 per cent

The largest increases for 2007-08, compared to 2006-07 in Visitor visa grants, to non-ETA passport holders included (where there were more than 1000 grants in 2007-08) countries such as Vietnam and Poland (Fig. 3.5). However, the PRC (260 996), India (88 994), Indonesia (61 080), Thailand (49 400) and South Africa (43 562) were the top five countries that received non-ETA visitor visa grants during the 2007-08 year.

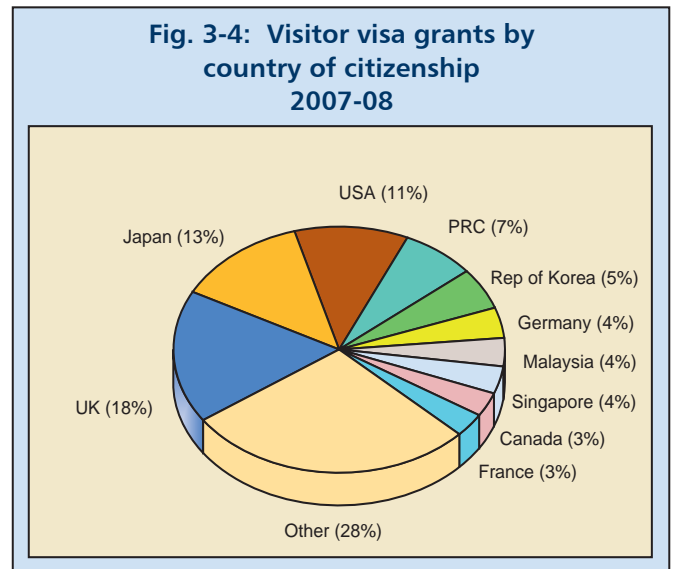
Fig. 3.6 shows the largest increases in grants for 2007-08, compared to 2006-07 among ETA passport holders.

Non-Return Rate of visitors

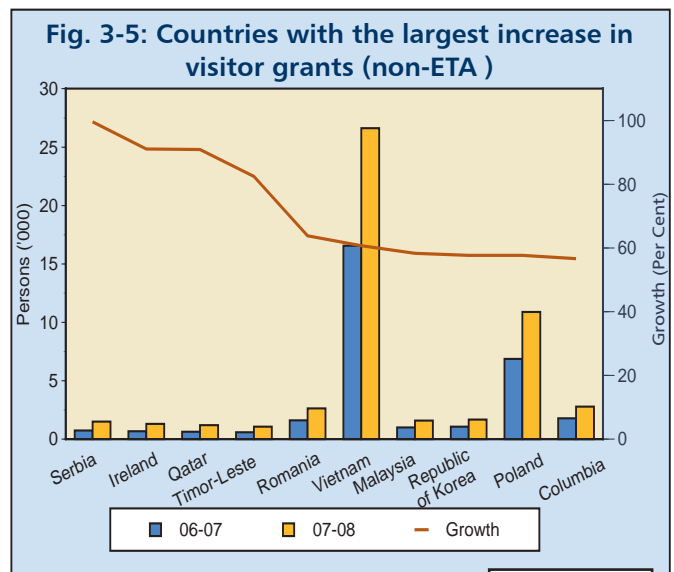
The Non-Return Rate (NRR) is a calculation of the visitors who arrived in Australia on a visa that has now ceased but who did not depart within the validity of that initial visa - as a percentage of all Visitor arrivals (whose visas have ceased) in the period. The NRR includes those who:

- remained in Australia unlawfully
- departed Australia on a ceased visa
- have applied for another type of visa while in Australia and have:
 - since departed Australia on that subsequent visa
 - remained in Australia on that subsequent visa or been granted a Bridging visa.

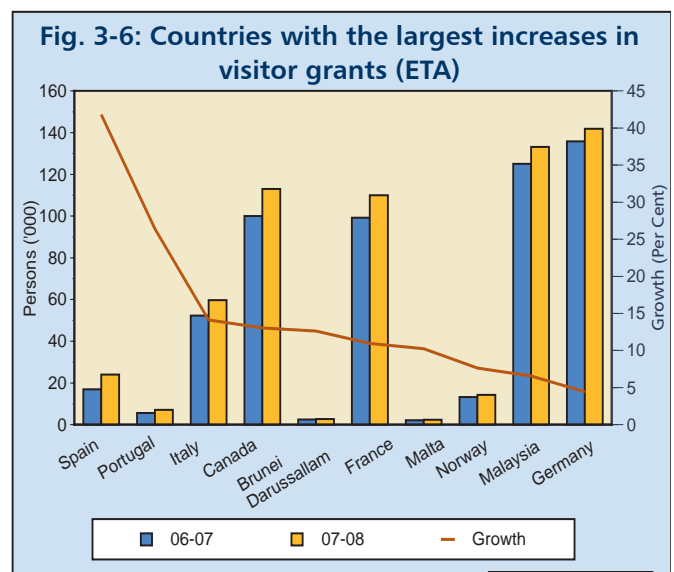
The extent to which different passport holders do actually depart within the validity of their Visitor visas is relevant feedback to overseas posts and state/territory offices to assist them in making decisions on future Visitor visa applications.



Source Data: IMIRS



Source Data: IMIRS



Source Data: IMIRS

The rising Visitor visa approval rate has not been at the expense of the integrity of the Visitor program as the Visitor NRR remains relatively low. There is a slight increase in this program year compared to the previous three program years. The NRR across all Visitor visa subclasses (including ETA) in 2007-08 was 1.3 per cent, compared with 1.2 per cent in 2006-07, 1.2 per cent in 2005-06, 1.2 per cent in 2004-05, 1.5 per cent in 2003-04, 1.6 per cent in 2002-03 and 1.8 per cent in 2001-02.

Passport holders with the lowest NRRs included:

- UAE 0.3 per cent of 6235 arrivals
- Japan 0.3 per cent of 505 236 arrivals
- Kuwait 0.6 per cent of 3051 arrivals
- Singapore 0.6 per cent of 144 718 arrivals
- PRC 0.6 per cent of 293 300 arrivals
- Taiwan 0.8 per cent of 76 314 arrivals
- Russia 0.9 per cent of 11 350 arrivals
- Denmark 1.0 per cent of 23 029 arrivals
- Cambodia 1.1 per cent of 3118 arrivals
- Argentina 1.1 per cent of 4322 arrivals.

The total non-ETA Visitor NRR for 2007-08 was 1.9 per cent (1.9 per cent in 2006-07). The NRR for non-ETA Visitor subclasses are as follows:

Subclass	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
	per cent		
Business Short Stay	0.8	0.9	1.0
Tourist – Short Stay	1.7	2.1	2.2
Sponsored Family	2.5	5.1	4.3
Tourist – Long Stay	5.8	3.6	2.1

The NRR for visitors travelling on ETAs for 2007-08 across the three ETA subclasses was 1.1 per cent up from 1.0 per cent in 2006-07, 1.1 per cent in 2005-06 and

1.1 per cent in 2004-05, but down from 1.3 per cent in 2003-04 and 1.3 per cent in 2002-03.

In 2007-08 the number of people applying for Protection visas after entering Australia on Visitor visas, was 2169, this is a 17.1 per cent decrease over 2006-07 (2617).

In 2007-08, the Protection visa rate (i.e. the number of protection visa applications as a percentage of Visitor arrivals) was 0.1 per cent, a decrease on 2006-07.

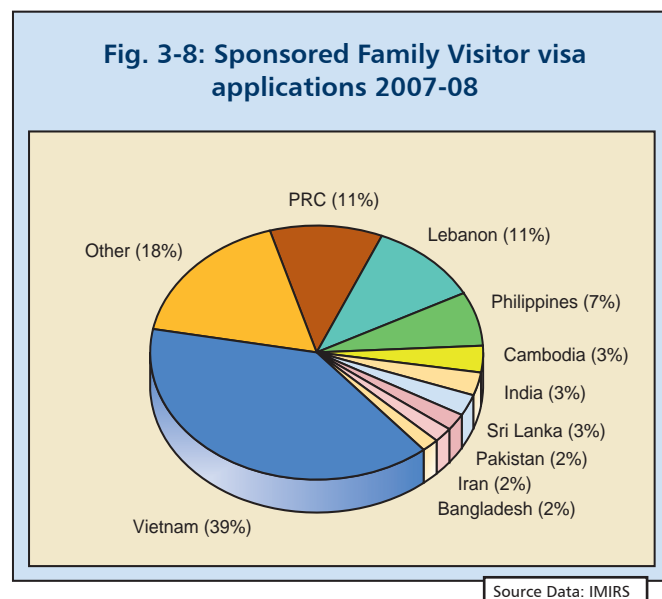
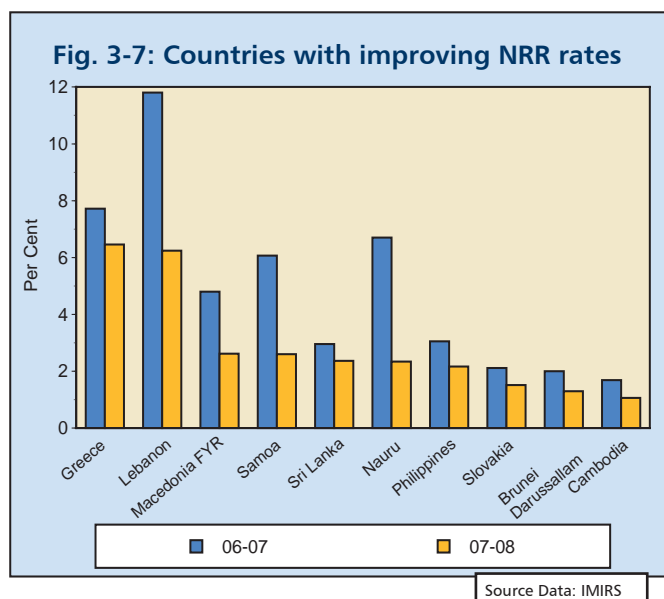
Sponsored Family Visitor visa

The Sponsored Family Visitor visa (Subclass 679) program allows Australian citizens and permanent residents to formally sponsor their relatives to visit Australia. This program has proven to be successful in allowing some applicants for whom there are some residual concerns regarding their intentions, to be granted a visa to visit family in Australia. In order to strengthen the integrity of the program, a security bond may be requested, which is refunded if the visa holder departs Australia lawfully.

There were 25 486 Sponsored Family Visitor visa applications lodged in 2007-08, compared with 18 737 applications in 2006-07.

The approval rate decreased to 81.1 per cent, compared with 84.5 per cent in 2006-07 and 89.4 per cent in 2005-06. The NRR for 2007-08 was 4.3 per cent, compared with 5.1 per cent in 2006-07 and 2.5 per cent in 2005-06.

The top 10 passport holders for Sponsored Family Visitor visas were Vietnam, the PRC, Lebanon, the Philippines, India, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iran.



Business Visitor visas

The Business Visitor visas (Subclass 456, 459, 956, 977) are for people who wish to enter Australia for business purposes (i.e: attending business meetings, events or conferences; pursuing business investment opportunities consistent with their overseas business operations). Some short-term work may also be permitted where it is highly specialised and non-ongoing, and appropriate workers have not been able to be sourced from the Australian job market.

418 250 Business Visitor visas were granted in 2007-08, a 3.3 per cent increase over the 404 795 grants in 2006-07.

The top 10 passport holders for Business Visitor visa grants overall in 2007-08 were the PRC*, the USA, the UK, India*, Japan, Singapore, Indonesia*, Malaysia, Thailand* and Germany.

There were 207 054 non-ETA Business Visitor grants in 2007-08, 3.8 per cent higher than in 2006-07. The approval rate was 95.2 per cent of applications, compared with 96.6 per cent in 2006-07. Significant increases in grants included countries such as Malaysia (from 554 to 1033 grants), Vietnam (from 4812 to 8252 grants) and the Republic of Korea (from 891 to 1485 grants).

The NRR for Business Visitors in 2007-08 was 1.03 per cent (a slight increase on 2006-07 and 2005-06).

The Protection visa application rate for Business Visitors in 2007-08 was 0.07 per cent, compared with 0.21 per cent in 2006-07.

Sponsored Business Visitor visa

In 2007-08, 541 Sponsored Business Visitor visa applications were received. This is a substantial decrease on 2006-07 where 2429 applications were received. Applications received in earlier years were 724 in 2005-06, 140 in 2004-05, 19 in 2003-04 and 30 in 2002-03. For 2007-08, passport holders from the PRC accounted for 26.2 per cent of applications received, followed by India (22.2 per cent), the Russian Federation (7.4 per cent), and South Africa (6.8 per cent).

International Events Coordinator Network

Australia continues to grow in popularity as a destination for events, conferences and meetings. This can be attributed to the country's strengthened reputation as a leading provider of high-quality event/conference facilities and attractions. In October 1999, DIAC established the International Event Coordinator Network (IECN) in recognition of the importance of hosting events to the Australian economy

(*non-ETA countries.)

Fig. 3-9: Non-ETA visitor visa grant rate vs NRR

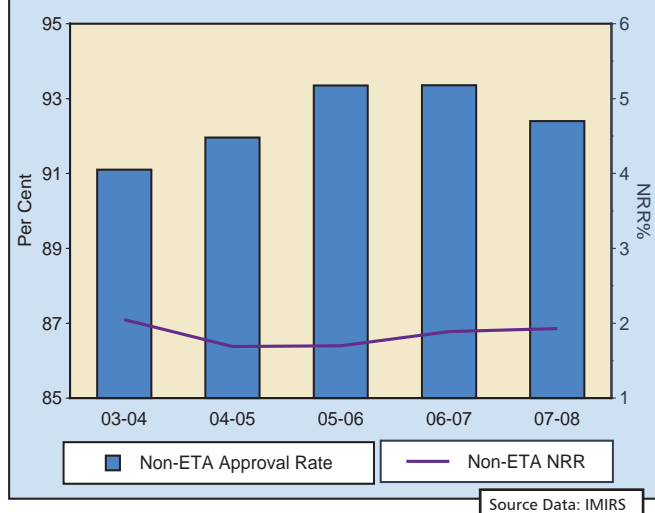


Fig. 3-10: Countries with large increases in non-ETA Business Visitor grants

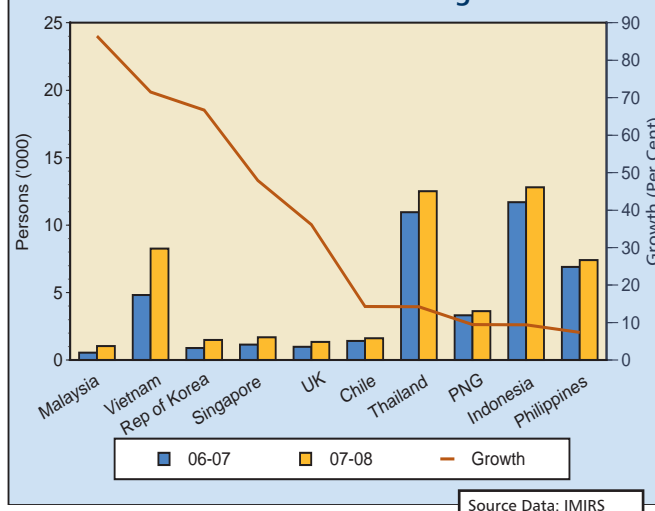
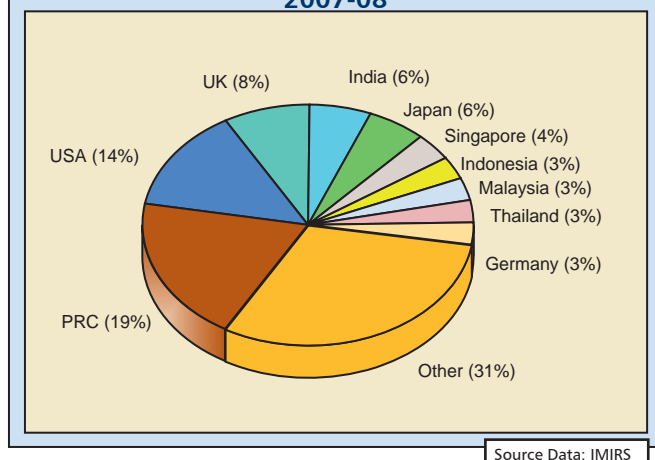


Fig. 3-11: Business Visitor grants by country of citizenship 2007-08



and to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to facilitating the entry of genuine visitors.

The IECN provides a free service to event organisers and participants. Its role is to assist organisers and participants of international events in Australia to prepare for the immigration related entry requirements. They also act as a conduit between event organisers and Australian immigration offices overseas by facilitating event participants' visa applications.

IECN assisted 1012 events in the 2007-08 program year, compared to 902 in 2006-07. Some of the major events the IECN have facilitated in the past year included the XII FINA World Master Championships, the 58th FIFA World Congress and the Beijing Olympics Torch Relay. IECN are currently working on the Homeless World Cup being held in Melbourne in December 2008.

Throughout 2007-08, the Department worked closely with World Youth Day organisers in Sydney and group leaders around the world to facilitate the entry of international pilgrims for the event. The usual application fee for Tourist visas was waived for pilgrims and those eligible for an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) could register to attend World Youth Day and apply for their visa at the same time.

During 2007-08, the Department granted 64 525 visas for World Youth Day. A large number of other pilgrims obtained their visas independently through the Department's other services.

Tourism and Visa Advisory Group

The Tourism and Visa Advisory Group (TVAG) was established by DIAC in July 2002 as a forum where the department and peak bodies in the tourism industry can discuss tourism and visa-related issues. The TVAG has been successful in ensuring that the key stakeholders in the tourism industry are included in the policy consultation process.

The TVAG consists of representatives from Tourism Australia, the Australian Tourism and Export Council, Tourism Taskforce Australia, Qantas, the Board of Airline Representatives Australia, the Australian Hotels Association, state and territory tourism authorities and the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism.

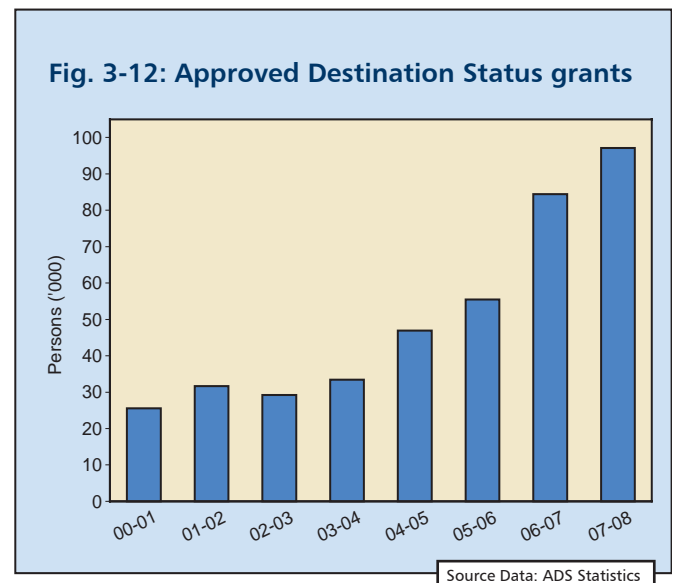
Approved Destination Status

The Approved Destination Status (ADS) scheme is an initiative of the Chinese government giving passport holders of the PRC access to streamlined group travel to other countries. Australia was the first western country to be approved as a destination under the scheme.

Under the ADS scheme, approved PRC and Australian travel agents arrange group tours for the PRC tourists to Australia, accompanied by a tour leader. A condition of their visas is that ADS tourists must adhere to an approved itinerary.

Since the inception of Approved Destination Status (ADS) in August 1999, almost 400 000 tourists have arrived on ADS visas. In 2007-08, 97 113 visas were granted under the ADS scheme, compared with 84 404 in 2006-07.

Since August 2006, tourists from all parts of the PRC have been able to travel to Australia via the ADS scheme. There are 89 approved ADS agents in the PRC and 54 Australian travel agencies now participating in the ADS.



Working Holiday Makers

The Working Holiday Maker (WHM) Program encourages cultural exchange and closer ties between arrangement countries by allowing young people to have an extended holiday supplemented by short term employment.

It also supports the Australian economy by providing supplementary labour for industries requiring short term casual workers, particularly the hospitality, tourism and rural industries.

Research carried out by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research in 2002 indicates that Australia benefits from the money WHMs spend and from the employment they create in the labour market. On average the WHMs surveyed stayed in Australia for nine months and spent \$16 000 during their stay, or an estimated \$2.4 billion for the 154 148 WHMs who were granted visas in 2007-08. In addition it is estimated that 154 148 WHMs take up the equivalent of about 79 000 full-year jobs, but about 94 000 full-year jobs are created through their expenditure, i.e. a net gain of 15 000 full-year jobs.

Australia has 19 reciprocal WHM arrangements in effect, Fig. 3-14 shows the current WHM arrangements and the year that they commenced.

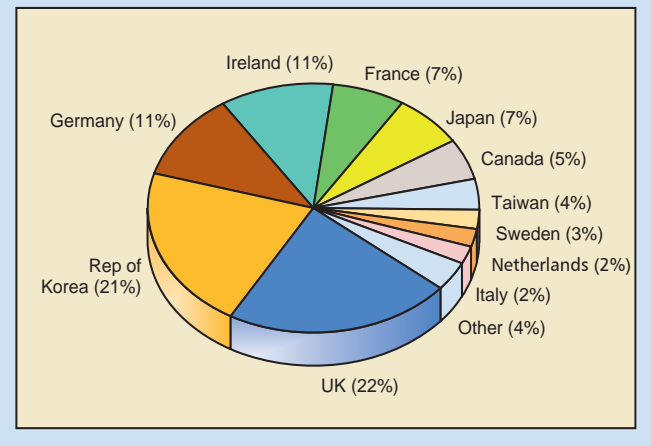
Criteria for visas

Working Holiday visa applicants need to be aged between 18 and 30 years, without dependent children, and from countries and locations which have a reciprocal WHM arrangement with Australia. Working holiday makers are permitted a stay of 12 months from the date of initial entry to Australia, regardless of whether or not they spend the whole period in Australia. Working Holiday visa holders who have undertaken seasonal work in regional Australia for a minimum of three months may be eligible to apply for a second Working Holiday visa. This initiative has been very well received by primary producers, the tourism industry and visa holders. In 2007-08, 11 816 second Working Holiday visas were granted.

Work conditions

Working Holiday visa holders may undertake any kind of work, but cannot work for any employer for more than six months. They can also study for up to four months. The wages and conditions of Working Holiday visa holders should be consistent with Australian standards.

Fig. 3-13: Total Working Holiday visa grants by country of citizenship 2007-08



Source Data: IMIRS

Fig 3-14: Current WHM arrangements and year commenced

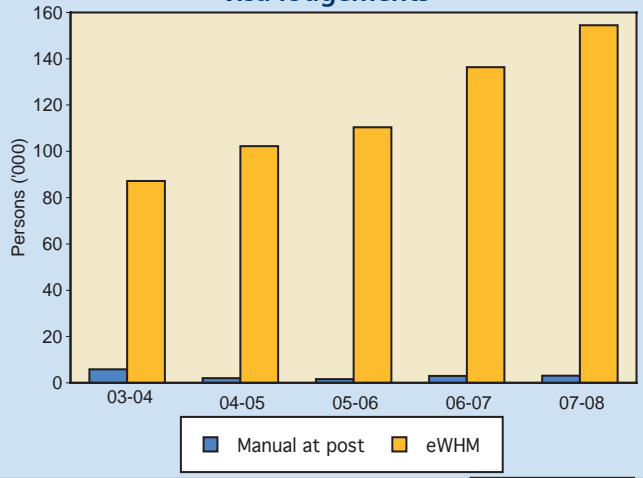
UK	1975	Norway	2001
Canada	1975	Hong Kong (SAR of China)	2001
The Netherlands	1980	Finland	2002
Japan	1980	Cyprus	2002
Ireland	1985	Italy	2004
Korea	1995	France	2004
Malta	1996	Taiwan	2004
Germany	2000	Belgium	2004
Denmark	2001	Estonia	2005
Sweden	2001		

WHM delivery

The WHM program continues to experience strong growth. Over the last 10 years, the number of Working Holiday visas has more than doubled. In 2007-08, 154 148 visas (first and second) were granted, which is an increase of 14.5 per cent over the previous program year.

Working holiday makers are a very web-savvy group. Of the total number of Working Holiday visas applied for in 2007-08, 154 446 (98.0 per cent) were lodged over the internet and 3081 (2.0 per cent) were lodged using the

Fig 3-15: Electronic and manual working holiday visa lodgements



Source Data: IMIRS

paper form. Of these, 89 568 visas were automatically granted through electronic procedures. The continuing high level of electronic lodgement reflects the success of this facility, providing better client service and a high level of operational efficiency.

Working holiday visa compliance

Despite the mobile nature and large numbers of working holiday makers, visa compliance remains high.

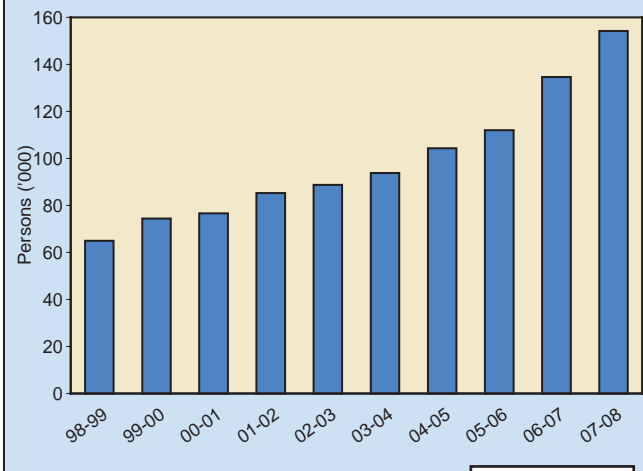
On 31 December 2007, there were only 966 people in Australia who had overstayed their Working Holiday visas, compared with 1237 on 31 December 2006.

Work and Holiday visa

This visa provides opportunities for tertiary qualified nationals to travel and work in Australia for up to 12 months. Under this program, Australia currently has Work and Holiday visa arrangements with four countries: Thailand, Turkey, Chile and the United States of America.

In 2007-08, 3426 visas were granted under this program to people from five countries: Thailand, Turkey, Chile, the United States of America and Iran (arrangements with Iran ceased on 30 June 2007).

Fig. 3-16: Total working holiday visa grants



Source Data: IMIRS

Student visa program

The department works with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), State and Territory government education authorities and education providers to uphold the integrity of the international education industry.

The Student visa program supports the industry through processing student visa applications and managing the entry of overseas students to Australia.

The structure of the Student visa program broadly reflects Australia's different education sectors. Student visas are issued across seven categories. A comparison of visa grants between 2006-07 and 2007-08 follows:

- Independent ELICOS increased from 30 115 to 30 545 grants, up 1.4 per cent
- Schools increased from 16 244 to 16 976 grants, up 4.5 per cent
- Vocational Education Training increased from 43 404 to 68 382 grants, up 57.6 per cent
- Higher Education increased from 110 821 to 130 127 grants, up 17.4 per cent
- Postgraduate Research increased from 5810 to 6935 grants, up 19.4 per cent
- Non-Award increased from 17 616 to 20 698 grants, up 17.5 per cent
- AusAID/Defence decreased from 4602 to 4521 grants, down 1.8 per cent

In the 2006-07 program year the total number of Student visa grants was 228 592. This has risen to 278 184 in the 2007-08 program year, which represents a 21.7 per cent increase overall.

In addition, Student Guardian visa grants have increased by 46.4 per cent between the 2006-07 and 2007-08 program years (from 1662 to 2434).

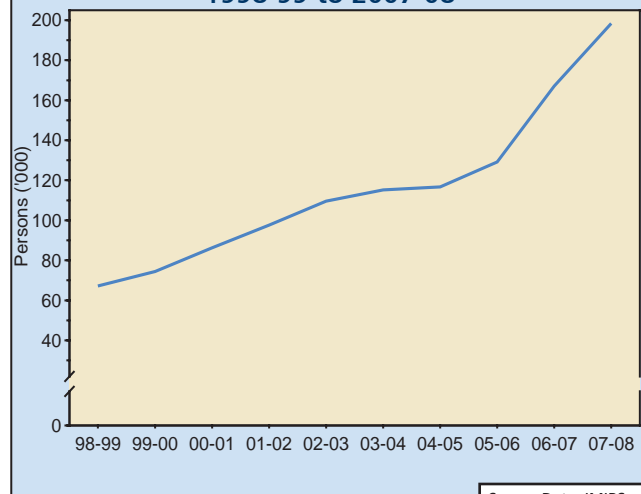
Growth in the overseas student visa program

As at 30 June 2008 there were 317 897 Student visa holders in Australia, which is a 27.8 per cent increase compared with the previous year.

Offshore

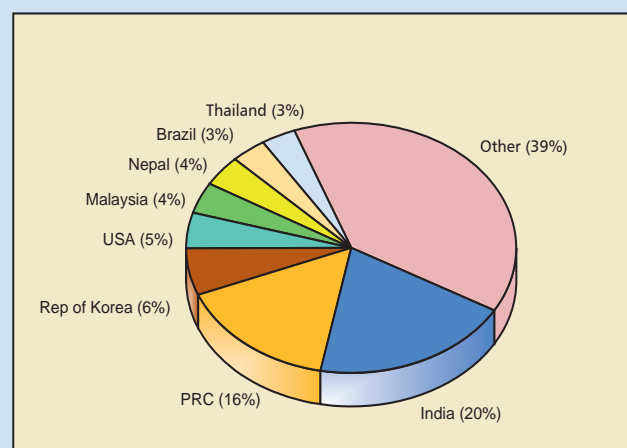
Student visa grant numbers have tripled since the mid-nineties. The program has seen growth from 63 073 visa grants in 1995-96 to 198 417 in 2007-08 (see Fig. 3-17). Offshore grants in 2007-08 increased by 18.7 per cent in comparison with 2006-07, from 167 129 to 198 417.

Fig. 3-17: Student visas granted offshore from 1998-99 to 2007-08



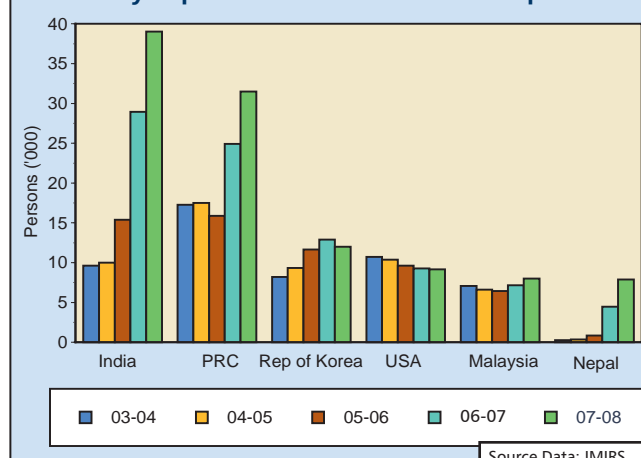
Source Data: IMIRS

Fig. 3-18: Student visas granted offshore by country of citizenship 2007-08



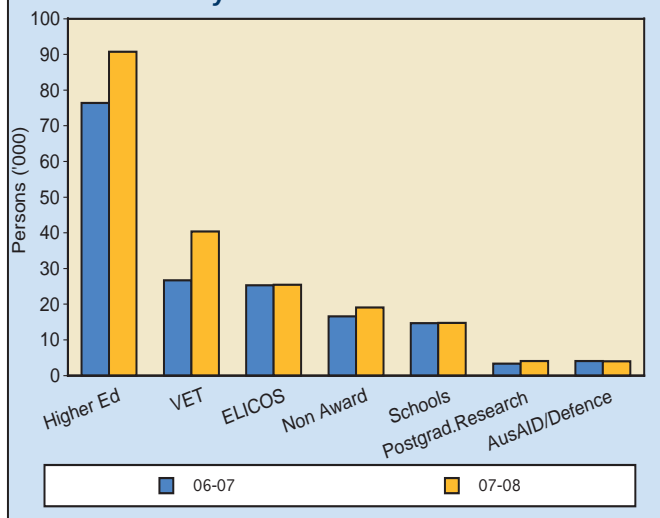
Source Data: IMIRS

Fig. 3-19: Student visas granted offshore by top six countries of citizenship



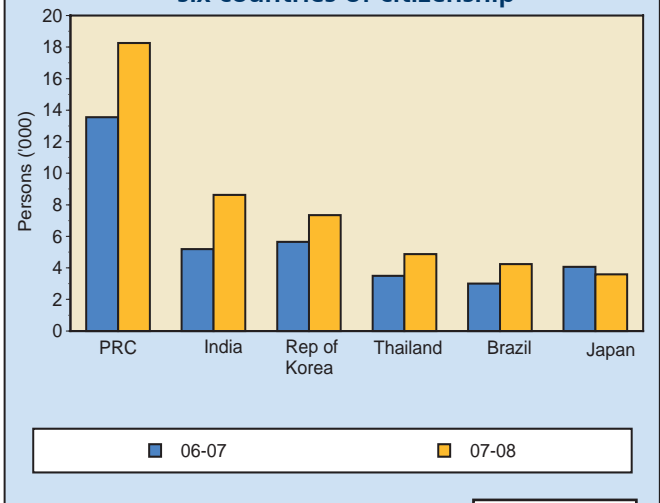
Source Data: IMIRS

Fig. 3-20: Student visas granted offshore by educational sector



Source Data: IMIRS

Fig. 3-21: Student visas granted onshore by top six countries of citizenship



Source Data: IMIRS

The major source countries for offshore grants were India with 39 015 (up 34.8 per cent), the PRC with 31 511 (up 26.5 per cent), the Republic of Korea with 12 013 (down 6.9 per cent), the USA with 9167 (down 1.3 per cent) and Malaysia with 8004 (up 11.5 per cent) (see Fig. 3-19). Strong growth was seen in other markets including Nepal with 7879 visas granted (up 76.2 per cent), Brazil with 6857 (up 31.3 per cent) and Saudi Arabia with 5107 (up 92.1 per cent).

Onshore

Onshore student visa grants increased significantly in 2007-08 with an increase of 29.8 per cent (from 61 463 to 79 767 grants). The top source country for onshore grants remained China with 18 252 grants (up 34.7 per cent). (see Fig. 3-21), followed by India with 8624 (up 65.9 per cent),

the Republic of Korea with 7337 (up 29.9 per cent), Thailand with 4867 (up 39.3 per cent) and Brazil with 4239 (up 41.4 per cent). Other countries that recorded strong growth in onshore grants included Nepal (2368 visa grants, up 365.2 per cent), Colombia (1985 grants, up 98.7 per cent) and Saudi Arabia (1076 grants, up 132.4 per cent).

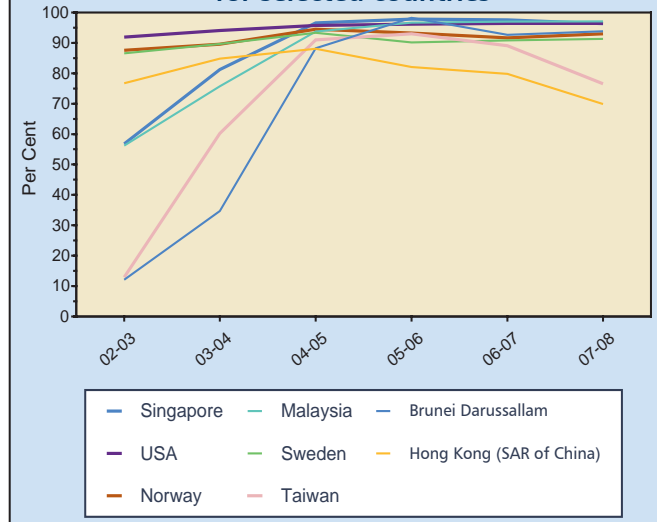
eVisa take-up rates

Australia's eVisa system allows applicants to lodge their applications on-line. All eVisa applications, lodged onshore and offshore, are processed in Australia. This option is available to any student visa holder wanting to extend their visa in Australia. This method of lodgement is also available to selected nationals if applying from offshore. Currently, visa applicants who are categorised as low risk (Assessment Level 1), can lodge applications online from overseas. In addition, under a trial being conducted at present, Chinese, Indian, Thai and Indonesian nationals which present a higher risk, can lodge eVisa applications via education agents with access to the eVisa lodgement system.

When examining low risk countries with access to eVisa, the take-up rate was very high among Malaysian nationals with 97.1 per cent of student visa applications out of over 7500 lodged online. In the same period 96.5 per cent of new student visa applications from the USA were lodged online (over 8800 applications), 96.4 per cent from Singapore (over 3000 applications) and 94.6 per cent from Mauritius (over 900 applications) (see Fig. 3-22).

The eVisa take-up rate in the trial countries of India, China, Thailand and Indonesia is collectively greater than 67.0 per cent. This is an increase from 54.8 per cent recorded in 2006-07 and indicates that the use of eVisa is growing in popularity.

Fig 3-22: eVisa take-up rates for selected countries



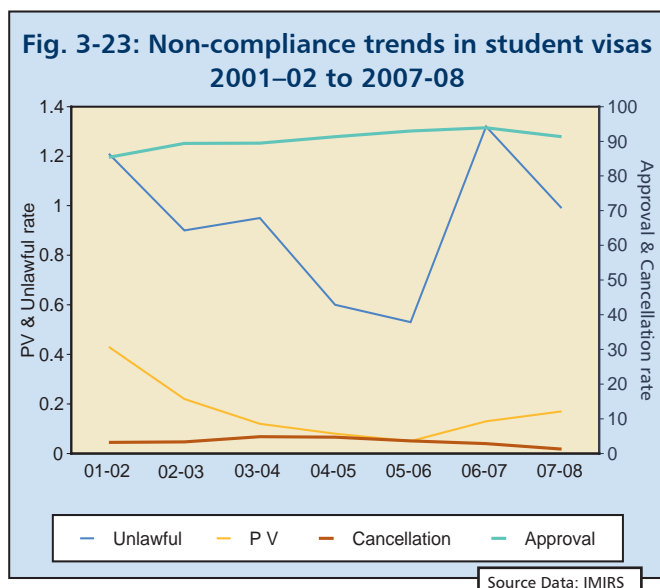
Source Data: IMIRS

Student visa compliance activity

One of the goals of the Student visa program is to support the growth of Australia's international education sector, while minimising the number of students not complying with their visa conditions. These levels of non-compliance are measured by:

- Protection visa (PV) applications by student visa holders
- number of student visa holders who become unlawful
- visa cancellation rates.

Rates of unlawful students have decreased in the 2007-08 program year from 1.3 per cent in 2006-07 to 1.0 per cent in 2007-08. Rates of Protection Visa applicants have remained low, increasing slightly from 0.1 per cent in 2006-07 to 0.2 per cent in 2007-08. The proportion of cancellations compared to grants decreased from 2.8 to 2.4 per cent from 2006-07 to 2007-08. The visa approval rates for students have decreased slightly from 93.9 per cent to 91.3 per cent.



Assessment level review

Assessment levels are an important tool in managing the Student visa program. They streamline the delivery of services to a diverse range of students while supporting the integrity of Australia's immigration program. Assessment levels achieve this by aligning visa requirements for a Student visa to the immigration risk posed by different cohorts of students, identified by country of passport and sector of intended study.

The higher the assessed risk of the country or sector, the greater the visa requirements which must be met for a Student visa to be granted. High risk applicants attract higher

assessment levels and therefore greater visa requirements. These requirements apply to areas such as proof of financial requirements and academic qualifications.

Where students from particular nationalities or regions have shown an improvement in compliance with student visa conditions over a period, assessment levels are eased. Conversely, should there be a decline in the compliance rate, assessment levels may be increased. In September 2008 assessment levels were eased for a record 43 countries.

Students from Argentina, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Mauritius, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the Seychelles, South Africa, the Philippines, Hong Kong and Macau (SARs of China), New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea, Botswana and Thailand will all benefit from the changes, which allows some applicants from these countries to lodge applications online, depending on their education sector.

International education is one of Australia's largest export industries and these changes will continue to strengthen Australia's market competitiveness.

While these changes will potentially open up new markets for the Australian international education industry, the department remains committed to ensuring the integrity of the Student visa program through increasing compliance with visa conditions.

Applications for permanent residence by overseas students

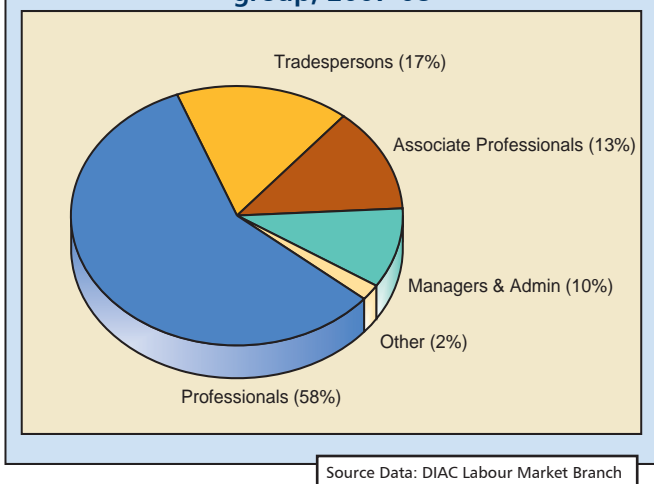
In September 2007, a review of Australia's General Skilled Migration (GSM) visa program was undertaken and the existing visa pathways removed. In their place a new range of onshore General Skilled Migration (GSM) visa categories are available which enable international students to apply for and be granted permanent residence following the completion of their studies without the need to leave Australia.

In the 2007-08 program year, of the 21 421 visa grants to former overseas students (including dependants) across several GSM visa categories, 17 851 were in the Skilled Independent category and 3570 were in the Skilled Australian Sponsored category.

Skilled temporary residents

Employer-Sponsored Temporary Business visas allow employers to fill skill shortages from overseas and to access new ideas, skills and technology. These visa holders are generally highly skilled and have relatively high income levels, and contribute to economic growth through improved productivity and increased demand for goods and services. The entry of managers and skilled specialists under these categories also enhance Australia's ability to compete in international markets, including the markets from which the temporary residents have come.

Fig. 3-24: Long stay temporary business onshore approved nominations by major occupation group, 2007-08



Temporary skilled migration (Subclass 457)

Australia has modern, flexible and streamlined temporary entry arrangements to assist business people and skilled personnel seeking to stay in Australia for up to four years.

The arrangements are designed to cater for the entry of:

- skilled overseas employees for businesses operating in Australia
- personnel from offshore businesses seeking to establish a branch in Australia, participate in joint ventures, transfer personnel between their branches, or fulfil a contract awarded to an offshore company.

The key aim of the Business (Long Stay) visa is to enable business to enhance international competitiveness through the quick and smooth transfer of key skills, while safeguarding employment and training opportunities for Australian workers. This is achieved by ensuring a high skill focus.

The key benefits for Australia under this category include:

- expanding trade
- improving links with international markets
- increasing local industry global competitiveness
- maintaining or increasing local training and employment opportunities.

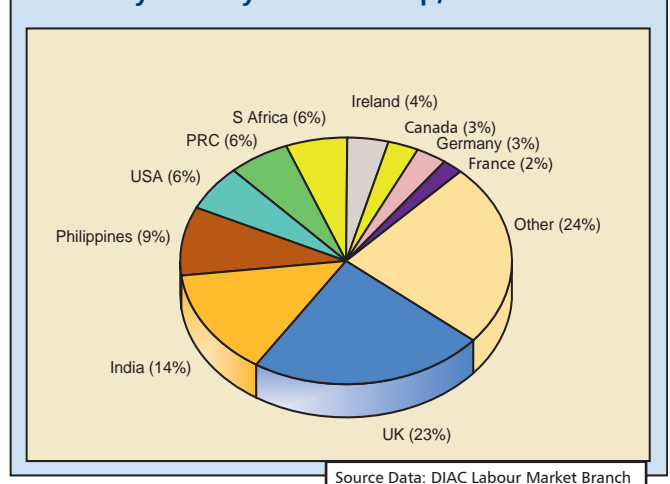
There are minimum skill and salary levels for personnel sponsored under the Business (Long Stay) Visa program. They must be paid in line with Australian workplace laws or a set immigration minimum salary level (whichever is the higher). The minimum salary level was set on 3 May 2006 at \$41 850 (\$57 300 for those in the IT professions), excluding allowances and salary packaging. Salary levels are reviewed and adjusted from time to time in line with general wage movements. The occupations visa holders can fill must also be skilled (broadly equivalent to manager, professional, associate professional or skilled trade roles). A broader range of skilled occupations and a lower minimum salary level can be accessed in defined regional and low-population growth areas of Australia.

Skilled temporary residents are generally not able to access Medicare or social security benefits. They must pay to access health and higher education services and must pay Australian taxes (income tax and GST), superannuation and the Medicare levy. Given that they have salary rates generally above the Australian average, they make a disproportionately high positive contribution to Commonwealth, state and territory budgets.

In 2007-08, a total of 110 570 Business (Long Stay) visas were granted (excluding Independent Executives who were establishing businesses in Australia), a rise of 26.6 per cent compared with the previous financial year. Of the total grants, 52.5 per cent were primary applicants.

In the 2007-08 financial year, computing professional continued to be the occupation most in demand. The top five occupations nominated by employers in 2006-07 were computing professionals (8.1 per cent), registered nurses (5.6 per cent), business and information professionals (4.0 per cent), general medical practitioners (3.4 per cent) and chefs (2.3 per cent).

Fig. 3-25: Long stay temporary business grants by country of citizenship, 2007-08

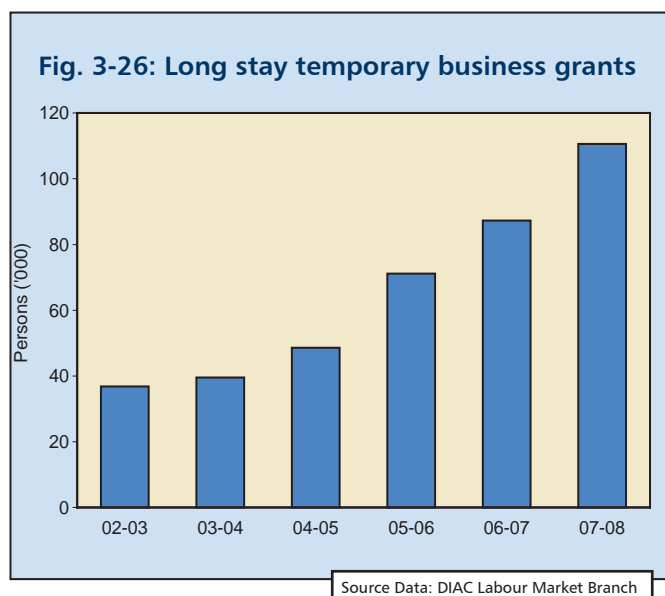


In 2007-08, 24 960 people who last held a Business (Long Stay) visa were granted a permanent residence visa. The majority of these (88 per cent) were granted a permanent residence visa under the Employer Nomination Scheme, the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme, a Labour Agreement or under the Skilled Independent visa program.

The Business (Long Stay) Visa program assists Australian employers to fill skilled vacancies that they have been unable to fill through local employment and training measures, providing a rapid and simple process for the recruitment of overseas personnel. Australian businesses and skilled overseas workers continue to enthusiastically utilise the department's internet electronic lodgement facility. The take up-rate for the 2007-08 year remained high with the majority of sponsorship, nomination and visa applications lodged on-line.

Sponsors of Business (Long Stay) visa holders are monitored on their compliance with the undertakings they make to the Department with respect to sponsored personnel and their family. In 2007-08, some 5293 sponsors were monitored. There were 1759 sponsors who received at least one site visit, based on targeted risk profiles or in cases where further checking was warranted.

Where a sponsor is found to have breached their undertaking, the Department may seek to impose a sanction. Sanctions include sponsorship cancellation and/or barring the employer from sponsoring overseas personnel for up to five years. Separate action may be taken by Commonwealth or State government agencies for identified breaches of other Australian laws. During 2007-08, 1353 sponsors were formally warned and 192 were sanctioned.



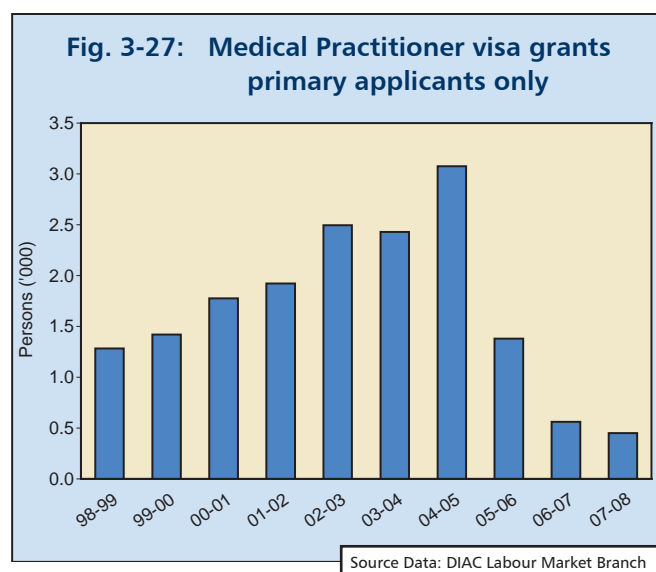
Educational visa

This visa is for qualified people to join educational and research institutions or organisations to fill academic, teaching and research positions that cannot be filled from within the Australian labour market. The Review of the Temporary Residence Program recommended that the needs met by this visa class could equally well be met through the Business (Long Stay) visa. Numbers therefore are diminishing as applicants and sponsors are referred to the Business (Long Stay) visa. In 2007-08, 69 visas were granted, down considerably from 90 in the previous year.

This category has provided benefits to Australia by allowing educational and research institutions to appoint internationally regarded academics and researchers who are able to contribute new ideas and knowledge as well as enhancing international cooperation.

Medical Practitioner visa

This visa allows for qualified general and specialist medical practitioners to work in Australia for up to four years. In 2007-08, there has been a further decrease in the number of temporary resident doctors entering and working in Australia through the Medical Practitioner visa. In 2007-08, 450 visas were granted to doctors and a further 820 visas to their dependants. This is a decrease of 20.0 per cent from 560 visa grants to doctors in 2006-07.



To support the Strengthening Medicare initiatives, doctors were added to the list of approved occupations for Business (Long Stay) visa on 2 April 2005. This provides doctors and their employers with access to more streamlined processing arrangements, as well as the ability to lodge applications over the internet. In 2007-08, 3860 visas were granted to doctors under this visa.

Other temporary entrants

Social/Cultural visas

The Social/Cultural Stream under the temporary visa category allows for the entry of people taking part in a range of sporting, entertainment, academic and cultural activities.

Social/Cultural visas comprise the following:

Sport – for amateur or professional sports people to engage in competition with Australian residents. The Sports visa holder is to improve the quality of a sport in Australia through participation in high-level competition and training with Australian residents (2743 visas granted in 2007-08).

Entertainment – for people seeking to perform or take part in a film or television production (14 867 visas granted in 2007-08).

Religious worker – for religious workers, including ministers, priests and spiritual leaders to serve the spiritual needs of people of their faiths in Australia (1861 visas granted in 2007-08).

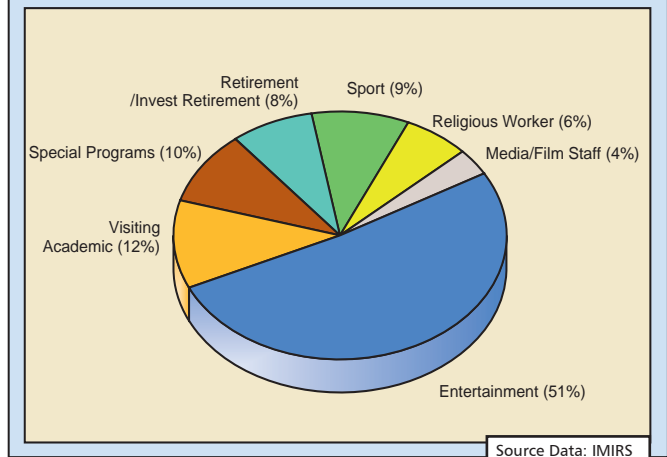
Visiting academic – allows the entry of academics whose primary purpose of stay is to observe or participate in research projects at the invitation of an Australian tertiary institution or research organisation. Applicants must provide a letter of invitation from the institution. No remuneration (other than an allowance towards living expenses) must be paid to the visa holder (3328 visas granted in 2007-08).

Media and film staff – for professional staff members of overseas news organisations or television/film crew producing documentary programs or commercials for use outside Australia. There were 1013 visas granted in 2007-08. Media staff who do not represent an overseas news organisation should apply under the Temporary Business (Long or Short stay) visa.

Special Program – for persons to participate in youth exchange schemes, approved community-based non-commercial programs or to visit Australia as Churchill Fellowship holders (2787 visas granted in 2007-08).

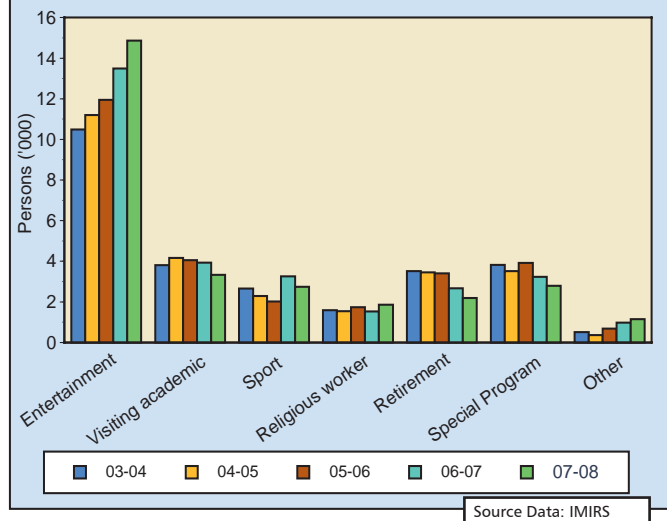
Retirement (Retirement visa and Investor Retirement visa) – allows for the temporary entry of people who may not be eligible for permanent residence but who are self-sufficient and unlikely to impose a burden on Australia’s health and welfare budget. Continuing temporary status ensures that access to Medicare, citizenship and sponsorship provisions is precluded, while minimised ongoing visa requirements give greater certainty to long term stay (2331 visas granted in 2007-08, which includes grants for existing visa holders extending their stay in Australia).

Fig. 3-28: Social/Cultural visa grants 2007-08



Source Data: IMIRS

Fig. 3-29: Social/Cultural visa grants



Source Data: IMIRS

A total of 28 930 Social/Cultural Temporary visas were granted in 2007-08, a decrease of 0.6 per cent compared with 29 100 in 2006-07.

International Relations visas

The International Relations Stream under the temporary visa category aims to promote Australia’s relations with other countries and foster goodwill, for example by allowing for the entry of persons working for foreign governments, organisations funded by foreign governments and international organisations, as well as persons entering under exchange or bilateral agreements.

Fig. 3-30: International Relations visa grants 2007-08

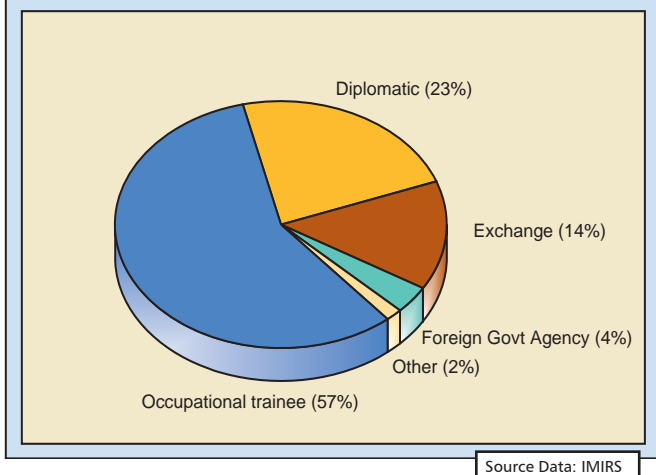
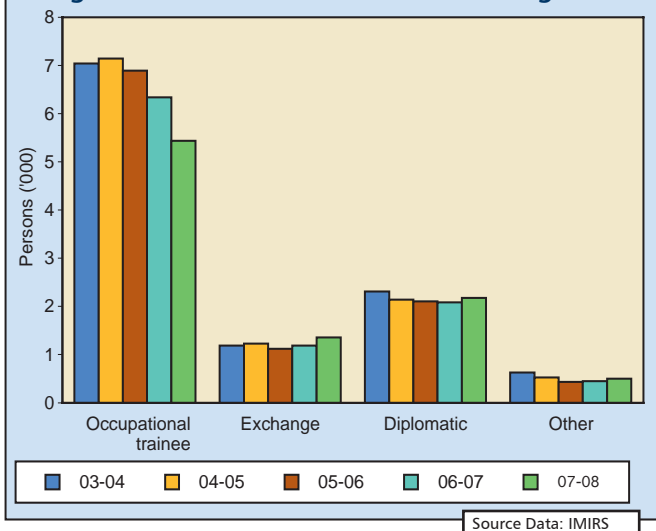


Fig. 3-31: International Relations visa grants



A total of 9470 international relations visas were granted in 2007-08, down by 5.8 per cent from the 10 054 granted in 2006-07.

Categories are as follows:

Foreign government agency – to enable foreign government officials to conduct official business on behalf of their government; where the officials do not have diplomatic or official status in Australia; and certain foreign language teachers who are to be employed in Australia by their home government. A stay of more than three months requires sponsorship by a foreign government agency (345 visas granted in 2007-08).

Domestic Worker (diplomatic) – intended for adult domestic workers employed in a private capacity by diplomatic

and consular representatives posted to Australia. An endorsement is required from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (125 visas granted in 2007-08).

Domestic Worker (Executive) – provides for the entry of persons to be employed as domestic workers by certain holders of Temporary Business Entry visa 457 in order to assist executives with their representational and entertainment responsibilities (28 visas granted in 2007-08).

Exchange – for skilled persons entering under exchange arrangements giving Australian residents reciprocal opportunities to work with overseas organisations. (1330 visas granted in 2007-08).

Diplomatic – for diplomats, consular staff and other officials, accredited by DFAT (2178 visas granted in 2007-08).

Training visas

These visas provide opportunities for occupational training and professional development. Categories include:

Occupational Trainee – allows foreign nationals overseas to undertake a supervised training program in Australia that is workplace-based rather than classroom-based. It is designed specifically to add to, or enhance, a person's level of skill in their present occupation or area of expertise. A nomination from the Australian organisation providing the training program must be approved before a visa application may be granted (5437 visas granted in 2007-08).

Professional Development – allows for the temporary entry of groups of professionals, managers and government officials from overseas who are seeking to enhance their professional/managerial skills by taking part in tailored training programs designed by an Australian sponsoring organisation. (604 visas granted in 2007-08).

Trade Skills Training – was established in November 2005 as a pilot program to allow people from overseas to undertake apprenticeships on a full-fee paying basis in trades that had a skills shortage. This visa was repealed on 10 September 2007, although people granted visas before that date are able to remain in Australia to complete their apprenticeships. (6 visas granted in 2007-08).

Bridging visas

The Migration Act requires that unlawful non-citizens be detained. Bridging visas are temporary visas that provide non-citizens with lawful status and prevent them from being detained while they have business with DIAC or the courts regarding a DIAC matter

For example, a bridging visa may be in effect while a non-citizen awaits a decision on an application for a substantive visa. An individual may hold multiple bridging visas although only one will be in effect at any given time.

In 2007-08, 318 703 bridging visas were granted. This is compared with 291 252 in 2006-07. Bridging visa A (BVA) at 79.6 per cent, is the most common bridging visa granted while the next most significant visa granted is Bridging visa E (Subclass 050) at 12.7 per cent in 2007-08.

In general, the non-citizens covered by bridging visas are those who:

- have made (or plan to make) an application in Australia for a substantive visa which can be granted while they are in Australia, and the application has not been decided
- have applied for revocation of an automatic student visa cancellation
- are seeking review through an administrative review body (such as the Migration Review Tribunal, the Refugee Review Tribunal or the Administrative Appeals Tribunal) of a decision in relation to their substantive visa application
- have made an application for review to the courts;
- are seeking intervention from the Minister to substitute a more favourable decision to that of the Tribunal;
- are in criminal detention
- are making, or are the subject of, arrangements to leave Australia.

Bridging visa classes

There are seven separate classes of bridging visa.

- Bridging visa A (BVA) – granted to non-citizens who are the holders of a substantive visa and who make a valid application for a further substantive visa that is of a kind that can be granted if the applicant is within Australia. Many BVA visas are granted automatically, as part of the further visa application process. In 2006-07, 230 529 were granted with 253 744 granted in 2007-08.

- Bridging visa B (BVB) – available to Bridging visa A holders and enables the non-citizen to depart, return and then remain in Australia until the substantive visa application has been decided or judicial review is complete provided they have substantial reasons for wanting to travel. In 2006-07, 13 363 were granted with 18 593 granted in 2007-08.

- Bridging visa C (BVC) – available to applicants who do not hold a substantive visa when they apply for another substantive visa while in Australia. In 2006-07, 4580 were granted with 5487 granted in 2007-08.

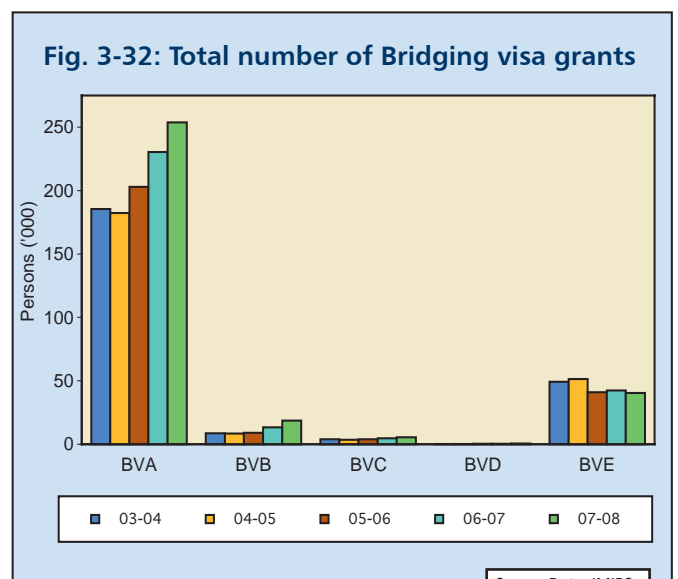
- Bridging visa D (BVD) Prospective Applicant – a short term Bridging visa available to persons who want to, but are temporarily unable to make a valid application (subclass 040); or, who do not want to apply for a visa but a compliance officer is not available to interview them (subclass 041). In 2006-07, 397 visas were granted with 487 granted in 2007-08.

- Bridging visa E (BVE) – available to certain unlawful non citizens in a variety of circumstances of compliance interest. Usually clients are applying for a visa, seeking review of a decision not to grant or to cancel, or making arrangements to depart Australia. In 2006-07, 42 383 BVEs (subclass 050 and 051), were granted compared with 40 350 in 2007-08.

- Bridging visa F (BVF) – under the provisions of this visa, unlawful non-citizens who are of interest in relation to a people trafficking matter may be able to remain in Australia for up to either 30 days or a date specified by the Minister, depending on the circumstances of the unlawful non-citizen. The visa period allows the AFP, or state or territory police to assess whether they wish to seek a Criminal Justice Stay Certificate (CJSC) for that person. The issue of a CJSC is a criterion for the grant of a Criminal Justice Stay visa. In 2006-07, 14 BVF visas were granted, compared to 37 in 2007-08.

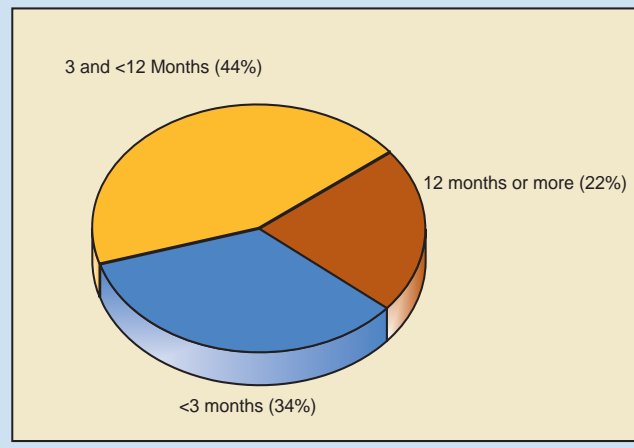
- The Removal Pending Bridging visa (RPBV) – enables the release, pending removal, of people in immigration detention who have been cooperating with efforts to remove them from Australia, but whose removal is not reasonably practicable at that time. A RPBV may be granted using the Minister’s non delegable, non compellable public interest power, under section 195A of the Migration Act 1958, to grant a visa to a person in immigration detention. In 2006-07, 7 RPBVs were granted compared to 5 in 2007-08.

The conditions attached to a bridging visa may vary according to any substantive visa applied for, as well as the applicant’s immigration status and personal circumstances at time of application.



Temporary entrants present in Australia

Fig. 3-33: Temporary entrants present in Australia by duration of stay 30 June 2008

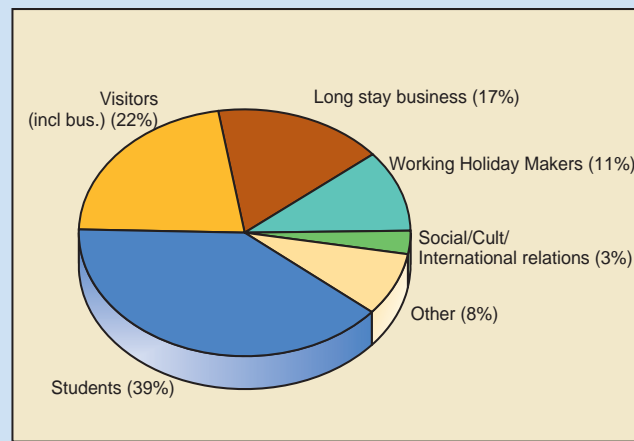


Source Data: Stock of Temporary Entrants, DIAC

At 30 June 2008, there were an estimated 809 628 people (who arrived in the last 10 years) in Australia on Temporary Entry visas excluding New Zealand citizens. This estimate has increased by 17.8 per cent compared to the number at 30 June 2007. Of these people, 276 831 had been in Australia for less than three months; 357 162 had been here for between three and up to 12 months; and 175 635 had been here for 12 months and less than 10 years. This includes temporary entrants who have recently arrived and have an actual stay of only a few days or weeks but intend to legally stay much longer.

Temporary entrants include tourists, students, Working Holiday Makers (WHM), business people and executives, and entrants for social, cultural, international relations and other purposes. They also include people holding bridging visas who have applied for a permanent visa eg. asylum seekers who have applied for Protection visas.

Fig. 3-34: Temporary entrants present in Australia by entry category 30 June 2008

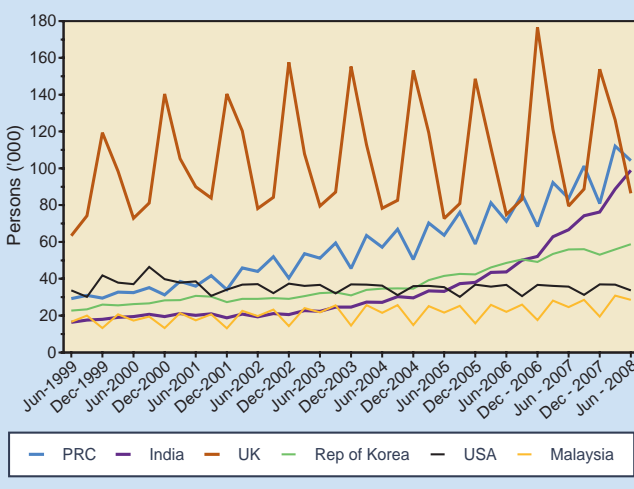


Source Data: Stock of Temporary Entrants, DIAC

While the temporary entrant demographic is in a constant state of flux, and subject to seasonal fluctuations the number of temporary entrants to Australia has increased consistently over the last five years. As is evident from Fig. 3-36 and Fig. 3-38, seasonal fluctuations are most prevalent for individuals arriving in Australia on Student and Visitor visas. Student numbers increase in the March and September quarters each year reflecting the attendance requirements of the academic year. Visitor numbers are highest during the Australian summer, and are lowest in the middle of the calendar year.

Of those persons in Australia temporarily at 30 June 2008, the largest group were citizens of the PRC (104 231 persons), followed by India (98 908 persons), the UK (86 468 persons), the Republic of Korea (58 814 persons) and the USA (33 659 persons). Compared with June 2007, the stock for India, the PRC, and the Republic of Korea has increased significantly. The stock of India citizens has increased by 48.4 per cent, the PRC by 24.5 per cent and Malaysia by 16.0 per cent.

Fig. 3-35: Temporary entrants present in Australia by major citizenship 30 June 2008



Source Data: Stock of Temporary Entrants, DIAC

The median age of total temporary entrants was 26 years at 30 June 2008.

The total number of temporary entrants comprised 317 897 students, 162 812 visitors (excluding business visitors), 60 232 bridging visa holders, 134 238 Long Stay Business entrants, 86 558 Working Holiday Makers, 24 683 who entered for social, cultural or international relations purposes, 15 162 business visitors, and 6953 who came for other purposes.

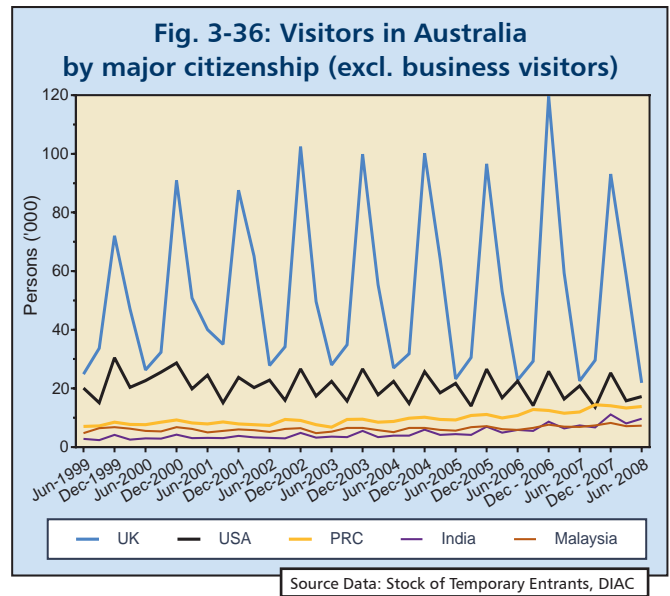
Visitors present in Australia

The number of visitors in Australia fluctuates throughout the year depending on the season. At 30 June, the number of visitors in Australia is at the lowest point for the year. 162 812 visitors (excluding business visitors) were in Australia at 30 June 2008. This was 2.5 per cent higher than the previous year, which was 2.8 per cent higher than the number in Australia at 30 June 2006.

Individuals on Visitor visas (excluding business visitors) do not stay in Australia for as long as other temporary entrants, with the median length of current stay at 30 June 2008 being 18 days.

The number of visitors present in Australia at 30 June 2008 represented 4.5 per cent of all Visitor visas issued in 2007-08. The median age of visitors is a little higher than for other visa categories, at 41 years for June 2008.

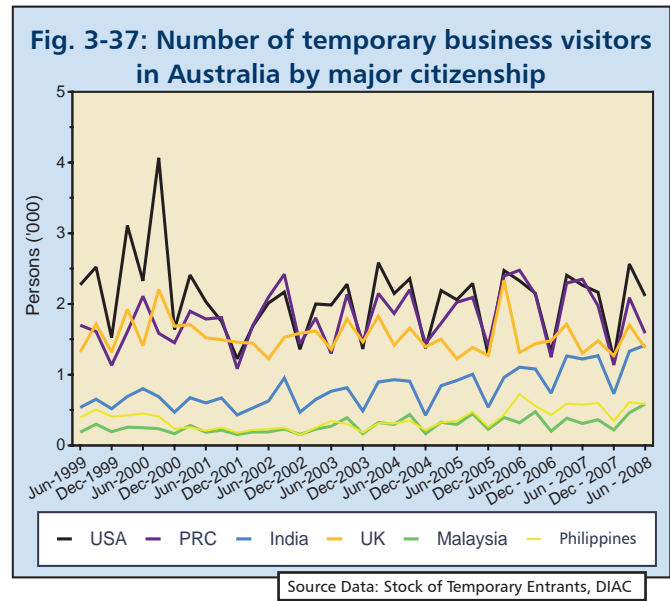
Fig. 3-36 shows the number of visitors (excluding business visitors) in the five largest countries of citizenship from June 1999 to June 2008. Of the current top citizenship groups, citizens from the UK have the strongest seasonal trend.



Business visitors present in Australia

Business visitors comprised just over 10 per cent of all Temporary Business entrants in Australia at 30 June 2008. The median age of Short Stay Temporary Business residents was higher at 39 years than for Long Term Business entrants.

Fig. 3-37 shows the number of business visitors by country of citizenship in Australia at quarterly intervals since June 1999. At 30 June 2008 there were a total of 15 162 business visitors, an increase of 3.2 per cent compared to the previous year.



Although 418 250 business visitor visas were granted in 2007-08, the number in Australia at any time during the year was low. This is consistent with the purpose of the Business Visitor visa, which is typically for pursuing business interests over a few days or weeks. The median duration of stay of business visitors in Australia at 30 June 2008 was 10 days.

Students present in Australia

The number of students in Australia is highest in the March quarter and lowest in the December quarter, consistent with the requirements for the academic year. Numbers are a little lower for the June quarter but pick up slightly for the September quarter of each year. At 30 June 2008 the stock of 317 897 students in Australia had increased by 27.9 per cent compared with the number at 30 June 2007. The median duration of stay at 30 June 2008 of this stock was around 5 months. The median age of students was 23 years.

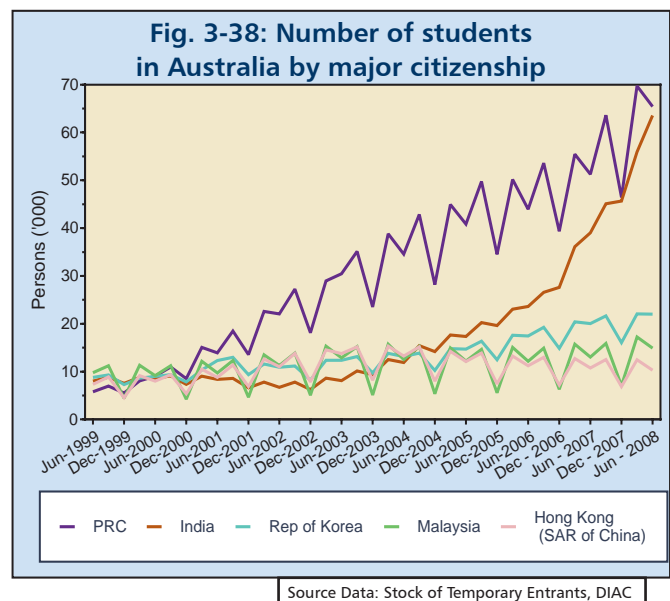
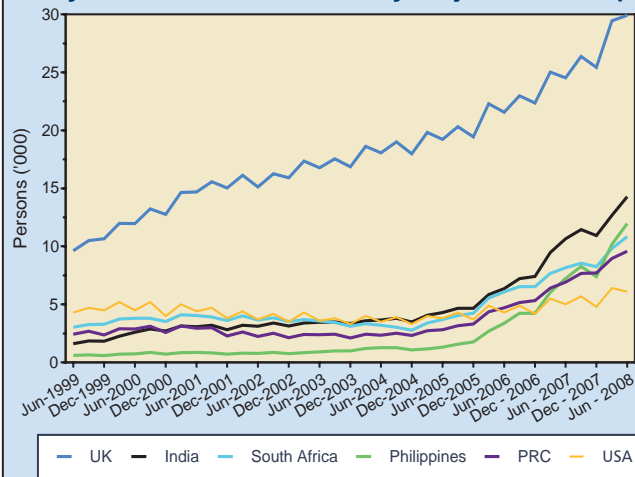


Fig. 3-39: Number of Temporary Business (Long Stay) residents in Australia by major citizenship



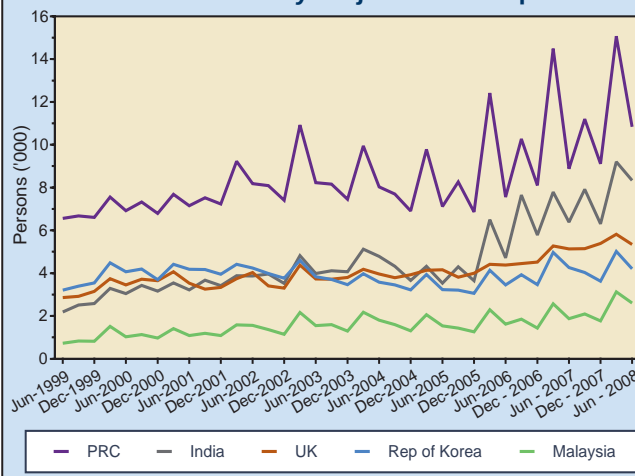
Source Data: Stock of Temporary Entrants, DIAC

Number of Temporary Business (Long Stay) Residents present

There were 134 238 Long Stay Business people in Australia as at 30 June 2008, 29.0 per cent higher than at the same time last year. This visa is for specialist workers in Australia for up to 4 years, but many on this visa travel in and out of Australia. As with many visas, this visa can be issued onshore. The median duration of Long Stay Business entrants at June 2008 was around five and a half months.

Fig. 3-39 shows the top five citizenship groups of those currently visaed as Long Stay Business entrants in Australia since June 1999. The stock of the UK citizens continues to dominate Long Stay Business visa holders, 22.3 per cent of this group at 30 June 2008. The median age of the Long Stay Business visa group at June 2008 was 31 years.

Fig. 3-40: Number of Bridging visas in Australia by major citizenship



Source Data: Stock of Temporary Entrants, DIAC

Entrants on Bridging visas in Australia

The stock of people in Australia on bridging visas at 30 June 2008 was 60 232, up by 11.8 per cent compared to June 2007. The median age of bridging visa holders was 28 years.

Fig. 3-40 highlights the stock of bridging visa holders in Australia by country of citizenship. Citizens from the PRC and India, followed by the UK, the Republic of Korea and Malaysia, hold larger numbers of bridging visas than entrants from other countries.

Working Holiday Makers present in Australia

The number of Working Holiday Makers has increased from 74 450 at June 2007 to 86 558 at June 2008. The Republic of Korea is the largest source of WHM, replacing the UK. At 30 June 2008 Korean Working Holiday Makers were 11.8 per cent higher than at 30 June 2007. The median age of the stock of Working Holiday Makers at June 2008 was 24 years, and their median duration of stay was around four months.

Overstayers

Who are overstayers?

“Overstayers” are people who are suspected of remaining in the Australian community unlawfully after their temporary visa expires. They are mainly people who arrived in Australia with valid temporary visas, such as tourists, working holiday makers, students and temporary residents.

Overstayers by visa category

The number of visa overstayers in the Australian community at 30 June 2008 was estimated to be around 48 500. This is a slight increase on previous estimates of 46 500 at 30 June 2007, 46 400 at 30 June 2006, 47 800 at 30 June 2005, and just under 51 000 at 30 June 2004.

The slight increase in the estimated number of overstayers may be attributed to the new error rate applied to the 30 June 2008 Overstayers Estimate. As a result of numerous data cleansing projects to improve the integrity of the data, the error rate applied to the 30 June 2008 Overstayers Estimate was lower than the error rate applied to the 30 June 2007 Overstayers Estimate. It is unlikely that the increase in overstay numbers for June 2008 reflect a major environmental shift such as lower adherence to conditions of entry to Australia.

At 30 June 2008, Visitor visa holders comprised the greatest number of overstayers (around 40 800), followed by Student visa overstayers (around 3500) and Temporary Resident visa overstayers (around 2400), with other visa categories making up around 1800 overstayers.

Nationality of overstayers

At 30 June 2008, the largest number of overstayers were from the USA (approximately 4900), the PRC (approximately 4900) the UK (approximately 4200), Malaysia (approximately 3200) and the Philippines (approximately 2700). For further information please refer to Appendix C. This ranking reflects, to a certain extent, that many of these countries are also the source of the biggest number of visitors. While visitors from the USA and the UK are two of the top three highest overstayers in absolute terms, as a percentage of the number of Visitor and Temporary visas issued to people from those countries, they are a low overstay risk.

Total overstayers from the PRC increased from 4100 on 30 June 2007 to 4900 on the 30 June 2008 Overstayers Estimates, now making up 10 per cent of the overstay population. 79 per cent of these were Visitors, 17 per cent Students and 2 per cent from other visa categories.

Fig. 3-41: Composition of overstayers by citizenship at 30 June 2008

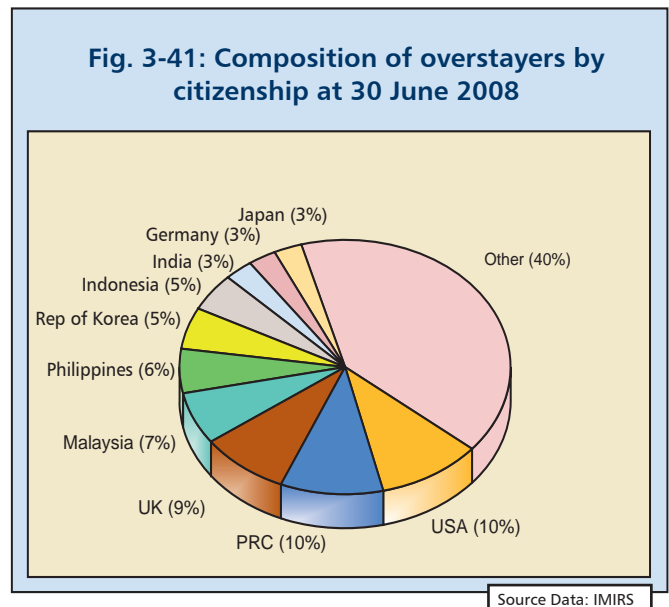
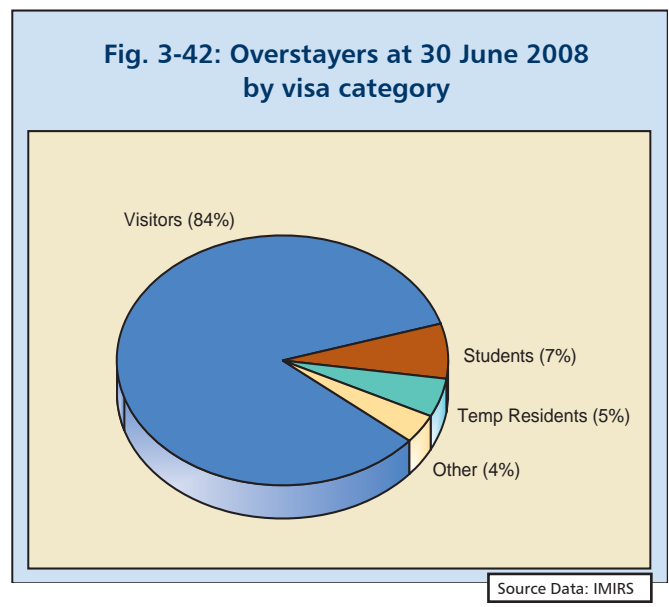


Fig. 3-42: Overstayers at 30 June 2008 by visa category



Age and sex of overstayers

At 30 June 2008, approximately 62.0 per cent of overstayers were male and 38.0 per cent were female. The largest age group of overstayers is 41-50 years of age, followed by 31-40 years of age.