

# Population flows

Immigration aspects

2008–2009 edition

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*Population flows: Immigration aspects 2008–09* was prepared by:

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The department's website at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) contains this publication including data relating to the publication's tables and figures as well as a wide variety of additional information on departmental activities.

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## Foreword



Australia is a nation built on migration. In less than a lifetime migration has turned us from an insular, predominantly Anglo-Saxon country of just 7 million to a nation of 22 million people originating from almost 200 different countries.

The impact of migration

has been all-pervasive; it has enriched our society, contributed strongly to economic growth and productivity and has led to the situation where almost half of the people living in Australia today are either migrants or children of migrants.

Migration continues to play an important role in our national development. It currently accounts for almost two-thirds of our population growth, and is therefore helping to address the issues of an ageing workforce. To put this issue in perspective, it is predicted that without migration the number of workers in Australia would begin to shrink from the middle of this decade. Such a situation would be damaging to our economy and society, as there would be greater demand for publicly funded social services and a reduced capacity to pay for these services.

As well as ensuring the sustainability of our workforce, migration also plays an important part in reuniting families and loved ones and in helping Australia fulfil its international humanitarian obligations.

Well managed permanent and temporary migration programs therefore need to address a range of different needs and respond to emerging situations. A good example of this is the significant changes to skilled migration implemented in 2008–09.

This involved introducing priority processing arrangements that favoured applicants with a job offer or with skills in critical need, thereby ensuring that skilled migration was better meeting the needs of employers and industry. As a response to the global financial crisis the Government also took the unusual step of reducing the size of the skilled migration program.

In 2008–09 there were also important changes to the subclass 457 visa program to help ensure that temporary skilled overseas workers are not employed ahead of local workers or used to undermine Australian wages. At a broader level reforms to the citizenship test were introduced to make the test fairer and to assist people with limited literacy or visual difficulties.

Population flows: Immigration aspects is a unique information resource that provides an extensive overview of these and other issues. Included in this publication is information on population ageing and Australia's future population prospects, data on the size and composition of the Migration, Temporary residence and Humanitarian Programs, and reports on the flow of migrants and temporary residents to each State and Territory. There is also analysis of the economic basis for migration, the fiscal benefits migrants bring and the longer term economic benefits that the children of migrants contribute.

Population flows also reports on the settlement programs that my Department delivers to new arrivals in most need of assistance, as well as the cultural diversity programs that help us to grow as an inclusive and cohesive society.

By covering all these issues in a single publication, Population flows adds considerably to our understanding of complex population and migration issues.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Evans', written in a cursive style.

Chris Evans  
Minister for Immigration and Citizenship  
May 2010

## Key Statistics: 2008–09

### Population

Estimated Resident Population (ERP) of Australia (as at 30 June 2009)	21 874 900
ERP Australia-born population (as at 30 June 2008)	15 945 917
ERP overseas-born population (as at 30 June 2008)	5 449 311
Natural increase (2008–09)	157 792
Net Overseas Migration (2008–09)	285 347

### Migration

Permanent migrants	186 421
Migration Program	171 318
Skill Stream	114 777
Family Stream	56 366
Special Eligibility	175
New Zealand citizens	1 596
Humanitarian Program	13 507
Temporary entrants	3 996 414
Visitors (offshore)	3 328 112
Overseas Students	320 368
Working Holiday Program	194 103
Temporary Business (Long Stay)	101 280
Other	52 551

### Emigration

Number of people who left Australia permanently	81 018
Australia-born departed	41 249
Overseas-born departed	39 769

### Citizenship

No. of people conferred Australian citizenship at ceremonies	86 981
No. of people approved as citizens by conferral, descent and resumption	101 966

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