

**HOME AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS**

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 26

Subject: Support services for temporary visa holders

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

What support services does the Department of Home Affairs provide, or fund, for temporary visa holders? Provide a breakdown of the services provided or funded by year and temporary visa category over the previous five years.

Answer:

The Department Home Affairs does not provide or fund any support services to temporary visa holders.

Emergency support for temporary visa holders is administered by the Department of Social Services (DSS). The question should be addressed to DSS.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 27

Subject: Additional COVID-19 support services for temporary visa holders

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

What additional support services has the Department of Home Affairs provided, or funded, for temporary visa holders since the commencement of the COVID-19 pandemic (March 2020)?

Answer:

The Department Home Affairs does not provide or fund any support services to temporary visa holders.

Emergency support for temporary visa holders is administered by the Department of Social Services (DSS). The question should be addressed to DSS.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 28

Subject: Measures to address COVID-19 health concerns for temporary visa holders

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

Has the Department put in place any specific measures to address COVID-19 pandemic health concerns regarding temporary visa holders—such as testing or vaccination initiatives?

Answer:

All health-related aspects of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic are the responsibility of the Department of Health, including for temporary visa holders.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 29

Subject: Evaluation of support services

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

How does the Department of Home Affairs evaluate the effectiveness of the support services it provides, or funds, to temporary visa holders?

Answer:

The Department Home Affairs does not provide or fund any support services to temporary visa holders.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 30

Subject: Temporary visa application processing targets

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

Does the Department of Home Affairs have targets for the processing of temporary visa applications and are these publicly available?

Answer:

The Department of Home Affairs does not have targets for the number of temporary visas granted. For most temporary visas, the number granted will be dependent on the number of applications lodged and the number that meet relevant legislative criteria for grant. The Working Holiday visa program is capped annually. Details regarding the caps for each country are available on the Department's website.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 31

Subject: Average processing time for each temporary visa category

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

Provide the average processing time for temporary visa applications for each temporary visa category over the previous five years.

Answer:

Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the global immigration network is operating at a reduced capacity. All processing locations have been impacted by the COVID-19 situation (e.g. due to lockdowns). Staff have also been diverted to travel exemption processing. Combined with applicants' inability in some locations to access third party services in order to meet visa criteria, this has led to an increase in processing times in many visa categories.

Temporary Visa Category	Financial Year	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
Crew and Transit	2015-16	1 Day	4 Days
	2016-17	2 Days	6 Days
	2017-18	2 Days	5 Days
	2018-19	5 Days	12 Days
	2019-20	3 Days	8 Days
	2020-21 as at 30 April 2021	2 Days	8 Days
Other Temporary	2015-16	9 Days	44 Days
	2016-17	13 Days	47 Days
	2017-18	14 Days	45 Days
	2018-19	17 Days	50 Days
	2019-20	23 Days	60 Days
	2020-21 as at 30 April 2021	68 Days	4 Months
Student	2015-16	34 Days	65 Days
	2016-17	35 Days	60 Days
	2017-18	37 Days	61 Days
	2018-19	34 Days	58 Days
	2019-20	45 Days	76 Days
	2020-21 as at 30 April 2021	3 Months	5 Months
Temporary Resident (Other Employment)	2015-16	44 Days	84 Days
	2016-17	45 Days	73 Days
	2017-18	31 Days	60 Days
	2018-19	50 Days	80 Days
	2019-20	58 Days	3 Months
	2020-21 as at 30 April 2021	4 Months	6 Months

Temporary Resident (Skilled Employment)	2015-16	63 Days	4 Months
	2016-17	81 Days	5 Months
	2017-18	5 Months	10 Months
	2018-19	85 Days	10 Months
	2019-20	34 Days	59 Days
	2020-21 as at 30 April 2021	5 Months	8 Months
Visitor ⁱ	2015-16	7 Days	18 Days
	2016-17	8 Days	22 Days
	2017-18	12 Days	24 Days
	2018-19	13 Days	24 Days
	2019-20	14 Days	23 Days
	2020-21 as at 30 April 2021	4 Months	7 Months
Working Holiday Maker	2015-16	11 Days	26 Days
	2016-17	12 Days	31 Days
	2017-18	16 Days	37 Days
	2018-19	21 Days	42 Days
	2019-20	18 Days	37 Days
	2020-21 as at 30 April 2021	72 Days	3 Months

ⁱ excludes 601 Electronic Travel Authority

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 32

Subject: Staffing levels dedicated to temporary visa applications

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

What staffing and resourcing levels of the Department of Home Affairs are dedicated to assessing temporary visa applications?

Answer:

Temporary visa processing is conducted both within Australia and at offshore posts around the world.

The Department allocates resources flexibly to manage demand and on-hand levels for all visa types processed, as well as non-processing activities for which a business unit may be responsible. In addition, processing staff may work across a range of temporary visas and may not be allocated to processing a single visa subclass.

Noting this, in March 2021, the Department estimates that around 29 per cent of staff in the global immigration (non-humanitarian) service delivery network were focused primarily on delivering the temporary visa program. This proportion will change with demand and in line with Government priorities.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 33

Subject: Staffing level changes

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

How have these staffing or resourcing levels changed over the previous five years? Please provide a numerical breakdown based on full-time equivalent staff assigned to the processing of temporary visa applications and allocated funding and other resourcing for this activity.

Answer:

Given that the Department allocates resources flexibly to manage demand and on-hand levels for all visa types processed, it is not possible to provide historical data on the FTE levels focused on temporary visa program delivery.

Due to a reduction in temporary visa activity following reduced international travel and associated COVID-19 border measures, some resources previously focused on delivering the temporary visa program have been diverted to support travel exemptions processing and other Government priorities. This includes delivery of the partner visa program and assisting with the repatriation of Australian citizens.

As such, the Department estimates the proportion of staff in the global immigration (non-humanitarian) service delivery network focused on delivering the temporary visa program was about 29 per cent in March 2021. This proportion will change with demand and in line with Government priorities.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 34

Subject: Information provided to temporary visa applicants and holders

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

Over the past five years, what information has been provided by the Department of Home Affairs to temporary visa applicants and temporary visa holders regarding their rights and obligations in Australia?

Answer:

All temporary visa holders are provided with a visa grant letter that includes information on their rights and obligations in Australia.

The Department of Home Affairs (the Department) provides visa related information, including rights and obligations in Australia, to temporary visa applicants on its website (www.homeaffairs.gov.au).

Information on workers' rights and visa protections includes:

- all people working in Australia have the same basic workplace rights and protections, regardless of citizenship or visa status;
- the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) protects and enforces the rights of visa holders;
- an employer can't cancel your visa, even if you've breached your visa conditions. Only the Department can grant, refuse or cancel visas; and
- the Assurance Protocol which is an arrangement between the Department and the FWO to support visa holders who approach them for help.

The Department also provides information on the requirement to maintain lawful status in Australia as well as information on visa conditions and Australian laws through online forms. Online forms can be accessed when visa applicants log into their ImmiAccount.

All applicants must sign and accept the Australian Values Statement when applying for an Australian visa. This is an undertaking from the applicant that they will conduct

themselves in accordance with Australian values and will obey Australian laws during their stay in Australia.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 35

Subject: Temporary visa holders currently in Australia

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

How many temporary visa holders are there currently in Australia? Provide a breakdown for each temporary visa category for the previous two years.

Answer:

As of 30 April 2021 there were 1,720,957 temporary visa holders in Australia, a reduction of 17 per cent compared to 30 April 2020. A breakdown of the number of visa holders in each temporary visa category for the last two years is below, including the percentage change from year to year.

Visa Category	As at 30/04/2019	As at 30/04/2020	% change 2020 to 2019	As at 30/04/2021	% change 2021 to 2020
Bridging¹	193,062	269,267	39%	346,016	29%
Crew and Transit	13,884	9,739	-30%	10,646	9%
Other Temporary	5,798	5,463	-6%	4,134	-24%
Special Category	674,716	671,001	-1%	656,402	-2%
Student	618,855	559,755	-10%	374,574	-33%
Temporary Protection	15,030	17,397	16%	18,224	5%
Temporary Resident (Other Employment)	125,662	138,240	10%	136,191	-1%
Temporary Resident (Skilled Employment)	150,160	136,192	-9%	102,722	-25%
Visitor	316,189	163,108	-48%	33,559	-79%
Working Holiday Maker	144,669	98,830	-32%	38,489	-61%
Grand Total	2,258,025	2,068,992	-8%	1,720,957	-17%

Note: Data provided is point-in-time as at 30 April each program year.

¹ Excludes Bridging Visa E (subclass 050 and 051) holders

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 36

Subject: Targets to grow Australia's temporary migration programme

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

Has the Department, or the Government, set any targets for growing Australia's temporary migration programme in the future?

Answer:

The Government has not set any targets for temporary migration.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 37

Subject: Relocation Programs

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

What relocation programs does the Department of Home Affairs provide, or fund, to temporary visa holders and Australians looking to relocate to areas where there are labour market shortages?

- a) Provide a breakdown of the services provided or funded over the previous five years.
- b) How does the Department of Home Affairs evaluate the effectiveness of the relocation programs it provides, or funds, to temporary visa holders and Australians?

Answer:

The Department of Home Affairs does not provide any relocation assistance to temporary visa holders or Australians.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, administers AgMove – which is a reimbursement of costs for eligible people who relocate to take up short-term agricultural work, including harvest work.

Questions related to the breakdown of the services provided or funded, or the effectiveness of the relocation programs, should be directed to the Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration

QoN Number: 38

Subject: Settlement Services

Asked by: The Committee

Question:

What settlement services does the Department of Home Affairs provide, or fund, to temporary visa holders to strengthen community participation and support independence through education and employment?

- a) Provide a breakdown, by year, of the settlement services provided or funded over the previous five years.
- b) How does the Department of Home Affairs evaluate the effectiveness of the settlement services it provides, or funds, to temporary visa holders?

Answer:

Temporary Protection Visa holders can access the National Community Hubs Program (also known as Community Hubs). Community Hubs assist migrants and their families with learning English, developing new skills, finding employment and to access Government support services. A proportion of attendees would be expected to be temporary visa holders.

- a) Commonwealth funding for Community Hubs for last five years

2020-21 (\$m)	2019-20 (\$m)	2018-19 (\$m)	2017-18 (\$m)	2016-17 (\$m)
\$6.547	\$5.460	\$4.844	\$2.786	\$2.816

Total Commonwealth funding for Community Hubs. Funding is not allocated for specific visa types. The Scanlon Foundation and State and Local Government also provide additional funding and in kind support for the program.

- b) Community Hubs are not required to collect specific data on services by visa type. The Department is therefore not able to assess effectiveness of services to temporary visa holders.

Temporary Protection Visa holders can also access the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). The AMEP assists migrants and humanitarian entrants to learn English, understand Australian systems and build confidence and skills to successfully settle in Australia. The AMEP also supports digital literacy, which is increasingly essential to access Government services, obtain information and perform everyday transactions. The Government has recently made major reform to the AMEP that means more migrants can now access the program for longer until they reach a higher level of English proficiency.

a) Commonwealth funding for the AMEP

2020-21 (to 30 April 2021) (\$m)	2019-20 (\$m)	2018-19 (\$m)	2017-18 (\$m)	2016-17 (\$m)
\$200,417	\$217,745	\$225, 698	\$210,612	\$274,524

Total Commonwealth funding for AMEP. Funding is not allocated for specific visa types.

b) The AMEP evaluates English language progression against the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF). More than 80% of attendees achieve progression against the ACSF every 200 hours.

Temporary Protection Visa holders with complex settlement needs are eligible to be referred for the Specialised and Intensive Services component of the Humanitarian Settlement Program. This program provides short-term, intensive case management support to link clients to appropriate mainstream services which may enhance community participation.