

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

Statistical information to inform the settlement outcomes of migrants

This paper outlines the statistical information that is currently available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics to inform and support Australia's immigration policy, migration programme and the settlement outcomes of migrants.

Migrants' wellbeing and financial independence is strongly tied to their employment, education, and English language proficiency. Migration circumstances, culture and community expectations also play a significant role. Statistics informing permanent migrant settlement outcomes are available from a variety of ABS household surveys, from administrative data integration initiatives and the Australian Census of Population and Housing. The ABS also has a dedicated National Migrant Statistics Unit (NMSU) which is jointly funded by the ABS, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) to provide statistical leadership and increase and enhance the available pool of migrant information. This unit can be contacted directly by email at migrant.statistics.unit@abs.gov.au to provide advice on the most relevant migrant data sources and how migrant data can be best accessed.

The Australian Census of Population and Housing

The Australian Census of Population and Housing is a rich source of detailed migrant data available at fine levels of geography (e.g. Statistical Area Level 1 (SA1), LGA, postcode) depending on the population of interest. 2011 Census data for small areas and communities is available in the form of Community Profiles, through the Census QuickStats and QuickStats Country of Birth products, Census TableBuilder and TableBuilder Pro, DataPacks and Customised Data Services. Information regarding the release of data from the 2016 Census can be found in [Census of Population and Housing - Products and Services, 2016](#).

Integrated Data Sources

The ABS has linked the Census data to administrative data on migrants to provide new insights on the settlement outcomes of migrants by their visa entry conditions. The [2011 Australian Census and Migrants Integrated Dataset \(ACMID\)](#) provides migrant related data from the Census (e.g. ancestry, country of birth of parents, religion) with the added benefit of the permanent migrants' entry conditions (i.e. visa subclass, main or secondary applicant, onshore or offshore location). In addition, longitudinal migrant data from the 2006 and 2011 Censuses is available from the [Australian Census Longitudinal Dataset \(ACLD\)](#) which (for a specific subset of the migrant population) includes new information on migrants receiving Australian Government income support. The ABS is also currently developing a new dataset of temporary entrants linked to the 2011 Census as well as new data sources to provide information on migrants' visa pathways (as visitor, student, temporary entrant and permanent migrant) and how these pathways relate to settlement outcomes.

The Personal Income Tax and Migrants Integrated Dataset (PITMID) can provide detail on the personal income of migrants via linked Australian Taxation Office (ATO) records and migrant settlement records. The dataset contains annual information for 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 on personal and business incomes and enables analyses of migrant income by visa stream as well as comparison with the general taxpayer population. The data is published in the [Personal Income of Migrants](#) publication and PITMID [microdata](#) is available in the ABS DataLab for 2009-10 and 2010-11.

ABS Survey Data

The Labour Force survey provides statistics on migrants' labour force participation and employment status by country of birth and year of arrival. Other household surveys includes information on employment, education, income, housing, health, families, disabilities, access to support services, proficiency in English and language spoken, however only a few include visa type. The ABS National Health Survey provides information on migrants health and wellbeing, especially more vulnerable migrants who may have poorer health outcomes due to social isolation and disadvantage. There is the potential for future data integration of administrative data (e.g. from Department of Health, Department of Human Services and Department of Social Services) to improve the depth and range of health data for migrant sub-populations. The [Migrant Data Matrices](#) is a compendium product which serves as a repository for migrant data from numerous ABS household surveys, the Census and linked datasets.

Those surveys that collect visa type data include the [Characteristics of Recent Migrants](#) Survey (CORMS), the [General Social Survey](#) (GSS) and [Qualifications and Work](#) Survey. The General Social Survey (GSS) is one of the few surveys which provide information on migrants' socio-economic disadvantage, civic and social participation, community networks, usage of government services and perceptions of discrimination. The GSS also includes migrant related data items such as main language spoken at home, English language proficiency. The CORMS presents data on the labour force outcomes of recent migrants and temporary residents cross classified by data items such as their occupation, education and employment before and after arrival, skill recognition, difficulties experienced finding work, whether temporary resident before becoming a permanent resident and proficiency in English. The Qualifications and Work Survey includes data on the level and field of each qualification, year of completion and whether the qualification was attained in Australia, incomplete qualifications, labour force participation, cultural background and citizenship status.

Migration Statistics

In terms of migration statistics, the ABS Demography area provides regular updates on migration stock and flow data which are compiled using data from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. Releases include Migration Australia, Australian Demographic Statistics (estimates for Net Overseas Migration) and Overseas Arrivals and Departures (OAD).

Data Access

The ABS releases information via the ABS website in publications, datacubes, other products (e.g. [ABS.Stat](#), [Data by Region](#)) and papers. Users may apply for access to detailed microdata to facilitate in-depth analysis and statistical research. Microdata is available via the [Microdata entry page](#). Products for accessing microdata include [TableBuilder](#), [Confidentialised Unit Record Files](#) (CURFs), the [Remote Access Data Laboratory](#) (RADL) and the ABS [DataLab](#). The DataLab is the data analysis solution for high-end data users who want to extract full value from ABS microdata. The DataLab provides an interactive (real time) environment, enabling the analysis of detailed microdata files, and expanded Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs). There are no limitations on what unit record or summary information a user can view within the DataLab, and users are allowed to produce graphical outputs. All outputs produced by users in the DataLab are manually cleared for release after the session. Another option for greater access to unit record data for in depth statistical analysis is via a secondment or inposting arrangement. The NMSU (migrant.statistics.unit@abs.gov.au) can provide advice on the best way off accessing ABS data sources and can assist in gaining access to microdata in the ABS DataLab or help facilitate an inposting arrangement.

For more detailed information on the future directions for migrant statistics see the [Summary of Australia's Statistical Information for Migrants ...2015 and beyond: Directions for Migrant Statistics](#) on the NSS Website.