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**TEMPORARY SKILLED MIGRANTS IN AUSTRALIA:
EMPLOYMENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND MIGRATION OUTCOMES**

By

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research objectives

The objectives of this study are to examine the reasons for migration, employment circumstances and migration outcomes of temporary skilled migrants who are holders of the 457 temporary business entry visa. The study also investigates the social and economic circumstances of these temporary entrants, their future residential and migration intentions and the likelihood of shifts to permanent settlement.

Data and method

A survey of temporary business entrants (457 visa subclass) was conducted between November 2003 and May 2004. Completed questionnaires were received from 1175 people. One-in three questionnaires were submitted online; the rest were returned by mail.

Nearly half of all respondents lived in Sydney and 15 per cent lived outside the capital cities. The survey respondents appeared to be representative of recent 457 visa arrivals and onshore grants according to DIMIA's statistics.

Characteristics of the survey respondents

Most 457 visa holders were young single adults or partnered without children. Female respondents were younger than male respondents and less likely to be partnered. Partnered migrants were likely to bring their partners to Australia with them.

While most were renting during their stay in Australia, those from Asia were more likely to be living in a home that they owned, an indication perhaps that they intended to apply to become permanent residents.

The majority of 457 visa holders had been to Australia prior to their current period of residence. This is particularly the case among Europeans who are likely to have come as tourists and those from countries that have working holiday agreements with Australia or are the main sources of overseas students. That the majority of 457 visa holders have made previous visits to Australia should help in their settling in and starting work immediately after arrival. Forty per cent of the 457 visa holders had other overseas work experience before coming to work in Australia.

The characteristics of 457 visa holders suggest that temporary skilled migration brings many economic benefits to Australia. The age, qualification and occupation profiles of the 457 visa holders indicate that the temporary business entry visa has been well targeted at young, well qualified and highly skilled people. These highly skilled migrants make a positive fiscal contribution to the economy because they contribute more in taxes than they consume in government expenditure. The sources of 457 visa holders are also more likely to be higher income countries (Europe, North America and Japan) than those of permanent migration. Thus the current temporary skilled migration program links the Australian economy to other advanced economies.

Reasons for migration and locational choice

Pull factors and employment-related reasons were more important than push factors to 457 visa holders in their decision to come to work in Australia. The largest percentage of respondents (84 per cent) indicated that they had come because of a liking for Australia's lifestyle and climate. The next four reasons in order of popularity were to gain international experience (identified by 76 per cent of respondents), promotion or career development (64 per cent), better employment opportunities (62 per cent) and intention to apply for permanent residence (60 per cent).

A liking for Australia's lifestyle was also the reason given by the largest percentage of permanent skilled migrants interviewed in both cohorts of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia. That lifestyle reasons are more important than economic reasons for attracting skilled migrants to Australia is a highly significant finding. It suggests that Australia has unique features that make it competitive with other countries in attracting skilled migrants.

Nine per cent of the respondents were already residing outside the major cities of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. Of those residing in these cities, just over half (52 per cent) said that they would have accepted the job if it was located outside these cities. 457 visa holders from Asian countries were more likely than others to say that they would have accepted their job if it meant having to live outside the major cities.

A relatively large percentage (61 per cent) of 457 visa holders with trades occupations would be willing to live outside the major cities. They also have the highest percentage (16 per cent) already living outside the major cities. Managers and administrators were the least willing to live in regional areas.

That most 457 visa holders are now located in the major cities is not because of a lack of their willingness to accept employment elsewhere but because most employers and sponsors are located in the major cities where there is a global perspective to the labour market. However, as our earlier survey of employer sponsors indicate, employers of 457 visa holders are very diverse and include some in regional areas who are also beginning to look overseas when they need skilled workers that they cannot find locally.

The finding in this study that many skilled migrants are willing to locate to wherever the jobs are points to employment generation as the key issue in any regional migration strategy.

Migration and employment

457 visa holders in the survey reported a wide range of occupations in their current employment in Australia. The most numerous were computing professionals (133), followed by sales and marketing managers (91), general managers (73), registered nurses (69), chefs (63), accountants (42) and IT managers (37). There were also many engineers, graphic designers, teachers and architects. Other less common occupations in the survey included balloon pilot, parachute rigger, geophysicist and ski instructor.

Most 457 visa holders have some years of work experience in their occupation before coming to Australia. Some were company transfers, particularly those in managerial occupations. Comparisons of their occupation before and after arrival in Australia show that most of them either continue in the same occupation or were working in a higher level occupation in Australia, suggesting that there was some degree of career advancement in this overseas work experience for them.

About half of managers and administrators reported incomes of more than \$100,000 per year. The median income of professional workers was about \$63,000. Equivalent figures for the other occupational groups were \$45,300 for associate professionals, \$41,100 for trade persons and \$44,000 for the 'Other' occupational category. Less than 50 per cent of the survey respondents reported receiving benefits such as airfares, housing and medical insurance from their employers although 85 per cent received superannuation payments. Most have their salary paid in Australia and therefore paid Australian taxes. One in four (26 per cent) reported that they were subject to tax in Australia as well as overseas.

Managers and administrators were different from other 457 visa holders in a number of ways. Since one-third were company transfers, they had longer work experience with their current employer. Their salaries were much higher than that of other 457 visa holders and they were also more likely to receive a range of benefits from their employers. They worked longer hours and travelled overseas more often. Few reported having any disputes with their employers and they had the highest level of job satisfaction.

457 visa holders have made good use of the provision of full work rights for spouses. Most male spouses and half of female spouses were employed, many in skilled occupations. Spouses from non-English-speaking countries were less likely to be employed than those from English-speaking countries. Most 457 visa holders who are partnered bring their spouse with them so the spouses' contribution to the work force is also important.

Most 457 visa holders liked their jobs and enjoyed working in Australia. There were few complaints about salaries or working conditions. A small group did report being taken advantage of or made redundant by their employers and did not have a very good experience as a result.

Future plans

It was clear that a large majority of 457 visa holders would like to become permanent residents in Australia because they liked the lifestyle and they liked their jobs here. Only a small minority planned to return home at the end of their contracts. The main reasons indicated by 457 visa holders for wanting to become permanent residents were that they considered Australia a wonderful place to live and to bring up children.

Over one-third (36 per cent) had already applied for or granted permanent residence, and another 48 per cent stated that they intended to apply. Permanent residence intention varied by country or region of origin, with higher percentages of 457 visa holders from the less developed regions intending to apply and lower percentages from North America having such intention.

For those who planned to return home, the reasons most often indicated were employment related: that promotion, career development, salaries and employment opportunities were better elsewhere. Family reasons, such as having no relatives in Australia or that it was better for the children elsewhere, were next in importance.

Views about the temporary migration experience and visa application process

Most 457 visa holders were very positive about their temporary residence and work experience in Australia: 63 per cent were very satisfied and 33 per cent were satisfied. Three out of four survey respondents thought their Australian work experience would increase goodwill and two out of three thought it would increase business connections between their home country and Australia.

The general view is that the 457 visa process is efficient and there was a high level of satisfaction with it. However, the 457 visa holders were less happy with the permanent residence application process, which they thought was long and difficult by comparison with temporary entry. Both those who had applied for permanent residence and those who had decided not to apply suggested that their employment and temporary residence in Australia should receive some recognition when they applied for permanent residence. Recent changes to the Employer Nomination Scheme visa category for permanent residence have gone some way to providing this recognition to 457 visa holders applying for permanent residence in this visa category.

Conclusions

The survey shows that 457 visa holders are generally highly skilled people, whether as managers, professionals or tradespeople. Most are in their prime working age and relatively well educated compared with the Australian work force. Many are from developed countries and speak English or another language which they use in their job. They are comparable to the top knowledge workers (top 10 per cent of occupations and skills gained in the last 10 years) in Australia. They have enjoyed their time here and many of them would like to stay permanently.

That many 457 visa holders would like to become permanent residents is an important finding that needs to be considered further by policy makers in the current context of attracting skilled immigrants to Australia. This is a group of skilled people who already live and work here. They have paid taxes and contributed to the economy. On most criteria they would have qualified as successful migrants.

The 457 visa has been a significant development in Australia's migration policy, with its new focus on temporary entry when the emphasis has always been on settler migration. It would appear from the findings of this study that with so many temporary residents eager and well-qualified to become permanent residents that the 457 visa subclass can also be considered as complementary to the settler migration program in providing a pathway to permanent residence.

1. INTRODUCTION

There has been a paradigmatic shift in global international migration which has strongly influenced Australia (Hugo 1999). One of the crucial elements in this shift is a continually increasing number of people moving to and from Australia on a non-permanent basis. For most of the postwar period, Australia eschewed acceptance of temporary migrant workers in favour of placing its emphasis on permanent settlement in Australia. However, since the mid-1990s, the number of overseas visitors entering Australia on a temporary long-term basis (staying for at least one year) has exceeded the number of people arriving for permanent settlement, and since 1998/99 net long-term arrivals of overseas visitors has exceeded net permanent migration to Australia (McDonald et al. 2003).

In 1996, in response to the new global economy and business groups wanting more flexible arrangements for bringing in skilled workers from overseas on a temporary basis, the government introduced a new temporary business entry visa that allowed employers to sponsor skilled workers from overseas for up to a stay of four years (Business Advisory Panel 1999). Under the new sponsorship arrangements, there was no need for labour market testing and no requirement for employers to demonstrate a training benefit to Australian workers. The introduction of the temporary business entry long-stay visa (457 visa subclass) has contributed significantly to the increase in temporary migration and the number of temporary residents in Australia.

Because temporary migration has not been a significant issue in Australia until recent years, there has been relatively little research on it compared to permanent migration. The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs has commissioned two studies of the impact of temporary skilled migration on government budgets and Australians' living standards (Access Economics 2002a; 2002b). These have demonstrated the positive impacts that temporary skilled migration has on these aspects of the Australian economy. A study of temporary professional and skilled workers in the United States on the H-1B visa has also concluded that foreign temporary workers have been beneficial to the US economy, although there is some concern about their displacement of US workers (Martin 1999). There is scope for examining other aspects of temporary skilled migration in Australia, particularly as Australia is now in competition with other advanced countries in Europe, North America and Asia for skilled migrants. This study of temporary skilled migrants - their reasons for coming to work in Australia, their social and economic circumstances, their views about their work experience in Australia and their future migration and residential intentions - will be helpful in the development of policies and programs that will keep Australia competitive in attracting skilled migrants to its work force (see the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Migration 2004).

Research objectives

The objectives of this study are to examine the reasons for migration, employment circumstances and migration outcomes of temporary skilled migrants who are holders of the 457 temporary business entry visa. This will provide an insight into the factors motivating temporary skilled migration to Australia that can be useful in understanding its recent rise to significance and the expectations of and consequences

for individual migrants. The study also aims to provide information about the social and economic circumstances of temporary migrants that will be useful in assessing their socioeconomic impacts. Information about their future residential and migration intentions will be useful in providing a clearer picture of the implications of temporary residence and the likelihood of shifts to permanent settlement.

The survey of 457 visa holders

To address the aims of the research project, a sample survey of temporary migrants who were holders of the 457 temporary business entry visa was conducted between November 2003 and May 2004 by the research team with the cooperation of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA). Approach letters were mailed by DIMIA to 6000 people for whom contact addresses were available from DIMIA's administrative list of current 457 visa holders as of September 2003. A copy of the survey questionnaire and a reply paid envelope were enclosed with the letter. The recipient of the letter was invited to participate in the survey by completing the questionnaire and mailing it to the research team in the reply paid envelope. Alternatively they could log onto the survey website on the internet and complete the same questionnaire online and submit it electronically to the research team. A reminder letter was sent one month after the initial approach letter.

The survey questionnaire included questions on demographic characteristics, reasons for coming to work in Australia, employment situation, family situation, housing arrangements and future migration plans. The survey also asked about the respondent's experience with the 457 visa application process.

Altogether 1175 respondents submitted completed questionnaires back to the research team¹. The objective was to obtain a sample size of about 1000 respondents. 383 questionnaires (33 per cent) were submitted online; the rest were returned by mail. DIMIA reported that 1,101 letters were returned because the addressee was no longer at the mailing address. A few returned letters indicated that the addressees had returned overseas and one was returned with a note that the addressee had passed away. It was likely that the number of people who did not receive a survey questionnaire because they had already left Australia was greater than the number of returned letters and that the number of letters that were returned was an underestimate of the number of people who did not receive a questionnaire because they had changed address or returned overseas. 457 visa holders are likely to be a mobile group of people. Being only temporary residents staying in Australia between 3 months and 4 years (although they can apply for another 457 visa or a permanent resident visa if they want to stay longer) they are also likely to leave the country any time. Even though the survey sample was drawn from DIMIA's list of current 457 visa holders, it was not surprising that a significant proportion was no longer located at the address on DIMIA's administrative list. The 1175 completed questionnaires yielded an estimated response rate of about 25 per cent. It was possible that the response rate was higher than this (possibly about one-third) if, as was very likely, a number of people did not receive the initial approach letter and questionnaire but those letters were never returned.

¹ 1176 completed questionnaires were received; however one person submitted the same questionnaire twice - online as well as a hard copy. The hard copy questionnaire, which was more complete, was entered into the data file.

Data on the postcode of residence and industry of employment were available for the 457 visa holders on DIMIA's administrative list from which the survey sample was drawn. These data were used to compare the survey respondents with all 457 visa holders on DIMIA's administrative list to see if there were any biases in the sample in relation to location and industry of employment. Table 1 compares the survey respondents with all 457 visa holders on DIMIA's list on these two characteristics.

Nearly half of all respondents lived in Sydney. This is a slight under-representation as just over half of all 457 visa holders on DIMIA's list were in Sydney. There was a slight over-representation of 457 visa holders residing in Melbourne, Perth, regional Victoria, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. The percentage residing outside the capital cities was 15 per cent compared with 14 per cent for the population of 457 visa holders on DIMIA's list. Thus, the sample was not at all biased toward temporary migrants in the capital cities. Overall the survey respondents were fairly representative of all 457 visa holders by location of residence.

Comparison by industry of employment shows that there was much less representation in the survey of 457 visa holders working in Personal Services, Property and Business Services and Cultural and Recreation Services compared with the 457 visa holders on DIMIA's administrative list. 457 visa holders working in Health and Community Services, Construction and the Accommodation, Café and Restaurant industry were slightly over-represented in the survey. Representation of the other industries was good and the number of respondents in most industries was also quite large enough for a useful analysis by industry sector.

Since the survey questionnaire was in English, this might have resulted in a low rate of response from 457 visa holders whose English was not good enough to enable them to participate in the survey. However, in terms of the distribution by country of citizenship as shown later, the survey respondents appeared to be fairly well distributed across the various countries known to be major sources of 457 visa holders (see DIMIA 2004; Khoo et al. 2003).

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS

DIMIA's administrative data already provide information on country of citizenship, age and sex and occupation skills of the people who are holders of the 457 visa. One of the main objectives of the research project therefore was to obtain more detailed information about 457 visa holders that are not available from DIMIA's records such as their qualifications, family situation, income and housing. First we compare the survey respondents in terms of their demographic characteristics with similar information available from DIMIA. Then information collected in the survey about their family situation and other relevant aspects of their background is examined.

Country of citizenship

The top five citizenship countries of respondents in the survey were United Kingdom, United States of America, Japan, India and Ireland (Table 2). According to DIMIA's stock data, the five top citizenship groups at June 2004 were UK, Japan, India, USA, and South Africa, with UK citizens making up 30 per cent of all long stay business entrants (DIMIA 2005: 75). This is much more heavily representative of advanced (OECD) countries than is the case for permanent settler arrivals. In the survey, UK citizens were 33 per cent of all respondents.

There would appear to be some over-representation of US citizens in the survey and some under-representation of Indian and Japanese citizens. However, all the major source countries (see Khoo et al. 2003; DIMIA 2005: 67) were well represented in the survey.

Age and sex

Two-thirds of the survey respondents were male. By comparison, DIMIA's statistics on 457 visa arrivals for the years 1997-2001 show that just over 70 per cent of primary migrants were male (Khoo et al. 2003). The survey respondents were all primary respondents and included people who were granted the 457 visa onshore as well as offshore.

The percentage of males was higher for some country groups than others. Respondents from India were almost all men while about half of Malaysian and other Southeast Asian respondents were female (Table 2).

The average age of the respondents was 35 years and the median age was 33 years. DIMIA's stock data showed that the median age of 457 visa holders at June 2004 was 31 years (DIMIA 2005: 75), so the survey respondents were a little older. Close to three-quarters (73 per cent) of all respondents were in the prime skilled working ages (25-39 years). Female respondents were younger on average. Their median age was 31 years compared with 34 years for male respondents. A higher percentage of female respondents were aged 25-29 compared with male respondents (Table 3).

Family situation

More than two-thirds of male respondents were married or had a partner, compared with just half of female respondents. Of those respondents with a partner, over 90 per

cent had brought their partner with them to Australia (Table 3). One respondent whose wife remained in the UK wrote that the reason was the children's education.

Two-thirds of all 457 visa holders were either single or partnered without children. Only one in three 457 visa holders in the survey had children and only one in four had brought their children with them. A greater percentage of male respondents than female respondents had children. This was likely to be a reflection of the older age structure of male respondents.

Of those who had children with them in Australia, most had only one or two children. Only about 10 per cent of survey respondents had children who were of primary or secondary school age. Therefore only a small percentage of temporary migrants would have any contact with the educational system in Australia in relation to their children's education. Some of those who did expressed dissatisfaction that they had to pay full fees for their children's education (whether at school or university) when they also paid the full range of taxes in Australia.

About two-thirds (65 per cent) of survey respondents did not have any relatives in Australia. Of those with relatives in Australia, the relatives were extended rather than immediate family members (Table 3). A larger percentage of female respondents than male respondents had extended relatives such as uncles, aunts and cousins in Australia. Only 11 per cent of all respondents had a brother or sister in Australia while 25 per cent had a cousin. 457 visa holders from Ireland, South Africa, Other Africa, Lebanon and Malaysia were more likely to have relatives in Australia. These countries have been among the major sources of settler migration to Australia over a period of time. Most respondents from US, Japan, France and Germany did not have any relatives in Australia.

As expected, most temporary migrants were living in rented housing (Table 3). However, 10 per cent had bought a house while 8 per cent were living in accommodation provided by their employers. Female respondents were less likely than male respondents to be living in employer-provided housing. A higher than average percentage of migrants from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore were living in their own home while migrants from Japan, India and European countries were more likely than average to be living in employer-provided accommodation.

Qualification, occupation and income

The 457 visa holders were in general highly qualified with 29 per cent having attained a post-graduate degree and over two thirds having a Bachelor degree or higher. The percentage with trade qualifications was slightly higher among males than females; otherwise there was not much difference between men and women in qualification attainment (Table 4). Ten per cent of the survey respondents and 15 per cent of those with post-graduate degrees received their highest qualification in Australia. A rather high percentage of respondents from Asian countries, particularly those from Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong Taiwan and Singapore, had received their qualifications in Australia.

457 visa holders within each occupational group were much better qualified than their counterparts in the employed labour force in Australia (Table 5). This was particularly

so among managers and administrators. Seventy per cent of 457 visa holders in managerial and administrative occupations had university degrees or higher compared with just 32 per cent of all Australian residents in managerial or administrative occupations in 2004. While only 3 per cent of 457 visa holders in managerial or administrative occupations had no post-school qualifications, 32 per cent of all managers and administrators in Australia had no post-school qualifications. In each of the three other occupational groups, the percentage with higher qualifications was considerably higher for 457 visa holders and the percentage with no qualifications was much lower than for all employed persons in Australia. Some of the difference is probably due to the younger age structure of 457 visa holders, but it is clear that 457 visa holders are much better qualified than Australian residents in the same occupational group.

A great variety of occupations were represented in the survey. The largest occupational group was professionals, followed by managers and administrators. (Table 4), as expected from DIMIA's statistics (DIMIA 2004: 63). For men, the most often mentioned professional occupation was computing professionals and for women, the most often mentioned professional occupation was registered nurse. (110 male computing professionals and 62 female nurses responded to the survey.) Managers and administrators were the next largest occupational category. The most often mentioned sub-group within this category was sales and marketing manager followed by general manager; 8 per cent of both men and women were sales and marketing managers. Three per cent (N=37) were IT managers. Chefs were the largest group among associate professionals and they were more likely to be male than female; 7 per cent of male respondents were chefs compared with just 2 per cent of female respondents (55 male chefs and 8 female chefs responded to the survey). Accountants accounted for about 4 per cent of all respondents. Other professional or associate professional occupations with a number of respondents include engineers, architects, designers and illustrators, marketing and advertising professionals, human resource professionals, business and organisation analysts. Trades occupations include metal fitters and machinists, motor mechanics, roof tilers and slaters, structural steel and welding tradespersons and electricians.

Although the 457 visas were targeted at skilled people in the first four occupational groups, 7 per cent of all respondents (and 11 per cent of female respondents) were not in these highly skilled occupational groups. Their occupations fell into the clerical, sales, service or other lower skilled categories. Occupations in these categories with more than 5 respondents included travel and tourist agents, hairdressers, sales representatives and sales assistants, transport and dispatch clerks, cooks, bakers and pastry cooks and performing arts support workers.

Although the salary threshold for 457 visa holders at the time of the survey was at least \$37,000, more than 6 per cent of respondents indicated that they were paid less than \$35,000. Male respondents were more likely to be in higher paid managerial occupations and this was reflected in their greater percentage in the higher income groups (24 per cent with incomes of \$100,000+ per year)

Previous visits to Australia

The majority of 457 visa holders (60 per cent) had visited or lived in Australia before arriving as a temporary business entrant. Those who were from Germany (87 per cent), Fiji (80 per cent), Malaysia (76 per cent), Middle East (75 per cent), South Korea (73 per cent) and USA (71 per cent) were more likely to have visited before. Less than 50 per cent of those from India (34 per cent), Ireland (41 per cent) and Canada (46 per cent) had visited before arriving on the 457 visa.

Of those who had visited before their current residence, 49 per cent had visited just once before and 22 per cent had visited twice. Of those who had visited previously, nearly half (46 per cent) came on tourist visas the last time, while 21 per cent had a previous 457 visa. Other visa types mentioned were student (10 per cent), working holiday maker (10 per cent) and the 456 sub-class (6 per cent)².

Figure 1 shows the type of visa used in the most recent visit prior to the current period of residence by the 457 visa holders' country of origin. The Europeans were the most likely to come on tourist visas previously while few 457 visa holders from India or China came as tourists previously. The Indians and Chinese were more likely to have held a previous 457 visa or had come on the 456 visa subclass. Workers from the Middle East came either on tourist or 456 visas. About one-third of Canadians and South Africans who had visited previously had come on a 457 visa while about one third of 457 visa holders from Asian countries such as Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and China who had visited before had come on student visas. 457 visa holders from Ireland who had visited before were the most likely to have come on working holiday visas.

Conclusion

The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the survey respondents indicate that they appeared to be representative of recent 457 visa arrivals and onshore grants according to DIMIA's statistics. They were well distributed in terms of country of origin and their gender balance and age distribution were similar to those of 457 visa holders who were primary migrants. A wide variety of occupations were represented in the survey. In accordance with DIMIA's data showing that the top five occupations nominated by employers in 2002-03 were computing professionals, registered nurses, managers, chefs and accountants (DIMIA 2004: 64), these were also the top five occupations in terms of the number of respondents to the survey.

The survey provided some important information about the family situation of 457 visa holders. Most 457 visa holders were young single adults or partnered without children. Female respondents were younger than male respondents and less likely to be partnered. Partnered migrants were likely to bring their partners to Australia with them, probably because their partners have full work rights. Only one in four respondents had children with them in Australia and most of them have only one or two children. While most were renting during their stay in Australia, those from Asia were more likely to be living in a home that they owned, an indication perhaps that they intended to apply to become permanent residents.

² The 456 visa subclass is the temporary business entry (business visitor) short-stay visa, allowing holders to stay for up to three months for business purposes including carrying out business transactions, attending business meetings and pursuing investment opportunities. More than 200,000 visas are issued annually.

The majority of 475 visa holders had been to Australia prior to their current period of residence. This is particularly the case among Europeans who are likely to have come as tourists and those from countries that have working holiday agreements with Australia or are the main sources of overseas students. 457 visa holders from India were the least likely to have visited before their present stay; this is not surprising as very few tourists and (until very recently) students to Australia have come from India. That the majority of 457 visa holders have made previous visits to Australia should help in their settling in and starting work immediately after arrival.

The characteristics of 457 visa holders suggest that temporary skilled migration brings many economic benefits to Australia. The age, qualification and occupation profiles of the 457 visa holders indicate that the temporary business entry visa has been well targeted at young, well-qualified and highly skilled people. Highly skilled migrants make a positive fiscal contribution to the economy because they contribute more in taxes than they consume in government expenditure (Coleman and Rowthorn 2004). The sources of 457 visa holders are also more likely to be higher income countries (Europe, North America and Japan) than those of permanent migration. Thus the current temporary skilled migration program links the Australian economy to other advanced economies.

3. REASONS FOR MIGRATION AND LOCATIONAL CHOICE

One of the main objectives of this research project was to examine the factors motivating the temporary migration of skilled workers to Australia. An earlier survey of employers of 457 visa holders had examined employers' reasons for bringing skilled migrants on a temporary basis (Khoo et al. 2003). We now examine the reasons indicated by the migrants themselves for coming to work in Australia.

Reasons for coming to work in Australia

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the importance to them of a number of reasons for deciding to work in Australia. Table 6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that the reason was important or very important in their decision to come to work in Australia. The reasons in the first five columns of the table can be regarded as "pull factors" that may attract migrants to Australia. The reasons in the next four columns relate to the person's employment and career. And the reasons in the last four columns represent some "push factors" that are associated with negative aspects of the country of origin that may contribute to the person's decision to leave and work in another country.

Pull factors and employment-related reasons were more important than push factors to 457 visa holders in their decision to come to work in Australia. The largest percentage (84 per cent) of respondents indicated that a liking for Australia's lifestyle and climate was an important reason for their coming to work in Australia. The next four reasons in order of popularity were to gain international experience (important to 76 per cent of all respondents), promotion or career development (64 per cent), better employment opportunities (62 per cent) and to apply for permanent residence (60 per cent). A higher salary was indicated by just 41 per cent of respondents and company transfer was indicated by 33 per cent of respondents. "Push factors" were indicated less often compared with "pull factors" or career related factors. Less than 20 per cent of respondents indicated lack of employment opportunities in their country of origin and 24 per cent indicate a dislike of social or economic conditions as important in their decision to work in Australia.

As expected, certain factors are more important to some 457 visa holders than others. Women were more likely than men to indicate that having friends and gaining international experience were important reasons while men were more likely than women to report company transfer as an important reason.

Figure 2 compares the temporary migrants with skilled permanent migrants interviewed in the second Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA2). While a liking for Australia's lifestyle and climate was also the most popular reason indicated by skilled permanent migrants, the percentage of 457 visa holders indicating this reason was higher than that of permanent migrants. Considering that temporary and permanent skilled migrants differ in terms of source countries and occupational skills (see Khoo et al. 2003), it is significant that a large percentage of both groups are motivated to come to Australia because they like the lifestyle here. That lifestyle reasons are more important than economic reasons for attracting skilled migrants to Australia is a highly significant finding. It suggests that Australia has unique features that make it competitive with other countries in attracting skilled migrants. This

finding also has theoretical implications in that most current migration theories are based on the importance of economic factors such as better employment opportunities and higher wages in people's decision to migrate.

457 visa holders from different countries and regions also indicate different reasons for coming to work in Australia. A liking for Australia's lifestyle was important to most temporary workers from UK and Ireland while respondents from Malaysia, Singapore and other Southeast Asian countries were more likely to indicate better employment opportunities and higher salary as important reasons for coming to work in Australia. For many Japanese respondents, gaining international experience and a liking for Australia's lifestyle were important. It is notable that many Singaporean, Korean and South African workers came with the intention of applying for permanent residence. Three-quarters of the Canadians came to gain international experience while two-thirds came for the lifestyle. Push factors were more likely to be mentioned by migrant workers from South Africa, Other Africa, and Other South Asia.

There was little difference by occupational group in the proportion liking Australia's lifestyle. Managers were the most likely to indicate company transfer as an important reason while 85 per cent of associate professionals identified gaining international experience as an important reason for them.

Table 6 also examines reasons for coming to work in Australia by industry to see if any one reason was especially important to temporary skilled migrants working in a particular industry. More than 70 per cent of 457 visa holders in the health and community industry indicated an intention to apply for permanent residency as an important reason while gaining international experience was important to over 90 per cent of those working in the restaurant industry. The two most popular reasons for workers in the IT and communications sector were a liking for Australia's lifestyle and to gain international experience.

Locational choice

The survey asked respondents whether they would have accepted their current job if they had to live outside of a major city such as Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide or Perth. They were also asked about the importance to them of various factors in choosing where to live in Australia. These questions were included to provide some information about the propensity of temporary skilled migrants to locate to regional areas that might be helpful in the development of policies to distribute skilled migrants to regional areas. Some changes were already introduced in November 2003 to support regional employers to bring in skilled overseas workers on the 457 visa (DIMIA 2004: 40).

Nine per cent of the respondents were already residing outside the major cities of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. Of those residing in these cities, just over half (52 per cent) said that they would have accepted the job if it was located outside these cities. A larger percentage of men than women said that they would be willing to work and live outside these cities, and respondents under age 25 were more likely to do so (Table 7). There were also differences by country of citizenship. One-quarter of all Japanese respondents were already living outside the major cities; most were in places such as Cairns and other tourist areas in Queensland. More than 12 per

cent of French, German and South African respondents were also located outside the major cities.

457 visa holders from Asian countries were more likely than others to say that they would have accepted their job if it meant having to live outside the major cities. Respondents from India and other South Asia, China, South Africa and Other Africa were more willing to live in regional areas. Irish respondents were the least willing to live outside the major cities, followed by Middle Eastern respondents.

It was encouraging that a relatively large percentage (61 per cent) of 457 visa holders with trades occupations would be willing to live outside the major cities. They also have the higher percentage (16 per cent) already living outside the major cities. Managers and administrators were the least willing to live in regional areas.

Of those who chose not to live outside of the major cities, 92 per cent indicated that it was for lifestyle reasons. Over 60 per cent noted distance from an international airport as a factor and the same percentage cited concerns about employment opportunities for their partner. Just over 55 per cent were concerned about education and health facilities. One respondent who was living outside the major cities wrote that it was difficult for his teenage children who missed the social life they had in their home country.

Participants in the survey were also asked how important were employer's location, job opportunities, relatives, friends, climate and lifestyle reasons in their decision on where to live. Employment opportunities and employer's location were the most commonly noted factors in 457 visa holders' location decisions, not unexpected considering that the migration of this group of people was tied to their employment. Lifestyle reasons were also important, but the presence of relatives and friends were seen as not important by the majority of 457 visa holders (Figure 3). This contrasted with the reasons given by skilled permanent migrants, 25 per cent of whom mentioned the location of family members as the main reason for their choice of residential location, followed by lifestyle (15 per cent) and location of employer (13 per cent); only 4 per cent indicated job opportunities as the main reason for their location decision (Richardson et al. 2002: 20)³.

In relation to current efforts to divert more migrants away from the major cities, it is encouraging that more than half of temporary skilled migrants would be willing to live and work in locations away from the major cities and that tradespersons and associate professionals were particularly amenable to being located away from the big cities. That most 457 visa holders are now located in the major cities is not because of a lack of their willingness to accept employment elsewhere but because most employers and sponsors are located in the major cities where there is a global perspective to the labour market. However, as our earlier survey of employer sponsors indicated, employers of 457 visa holders are very diverse and include some in regional areas who are also beginning to look overseas when they need skilled workers that they cannot find locally (Khoo et al. 2004).

³ The LSIA asked for only the main reason and no multiple responses were allowed, unlike the survey of 457 visa holders where respondents were asked to indicate how important each reason was to them.

4. MIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT

This section examines the process of migration and the context of employment of 457 visa holders. As noted previously, the majority of them had visited Australia before and 13 per cent had come on the 457 visa. For this group, the current period of residence is not their first as a temporary migrant in Australia. Many 457 visa holders also arrived on another type of visa initially and then applied for the 457 visa onshore. The extent and reasons for onshore conversion to the 457 visa was canvassed in the survey.

Initial arrival and onshore application for the 457 visa

About 45 per cent of the survey respondents had arrived in 2001 or 2002 for the current period of stay. The survey would be more likely to pick up 457 visa holders who were staying for longer periods and less likely to pick up those who were staying for shorter periods. DIMIA (2005:75) has reported that the median duration of stay of 457 visa holders at June 2004 was less than 6 months. DIMIA statistics on intended duration of stay have shown that the largest proportion (about 35 per cent) planned to stay between two and four years while another 30 per cent planned to stay up to one year only.

With many 457 visa grants being made onshore, it is not unexpected that only 56 per cent of the respondents indicated that they had arrived as a temporary business entrant on the 457 visa. Figure 4 shows that this percentage varies by sex, occupation and industry. A smaller percentage of men than women arrived on the 457 visa. Among the four main occupational groups shown, managers and administrators were the least likely, and tradespersons the most likely, to arrive on the 457 visa. The percentage arriving on the 457 visa was higher for employees in the small business sector (personal services and accommodation, cafes and restaurants) but lower for employees in big business (finance and banking).

Respondents who arrived initially on another visa other than the 457 visa were asked to indicate whether a number of specific reasons applied in their situation to apply onshore for the 457 visa. The reasons and the percentage of 457 visa holders who indicated a 'yes' response are shown in Figure 5. The two most often indicated reasons are that the respondent wanted to stay and work in Australia for a longer period and that it was the employer's suggestion. There was a high correlation between these two responses, with 73 per cent of respondents who wanted to stay and work for a longer period saying that their employer had suggested the 457 visa to them. In our in-depth interviews with employers, they had indicated that if they decided to employ a person who was already in Australia on a working holiday maker or tourist visa, they would sponsor the person for a 457 visa.

More than 60 per cent indicated personal reasons for wanting to stay in Australia, which presumably led them to look for employment and change to the 457 visa. More than 50 per cent of respondents thought that it was easier to apply for the 457 visa onshore. Respondents from Asian countries with the exception of Japan were more likely to be of the opinion that it was easier to apply for the 457 visa onshore, with at least two-thirds indicating that view. Less than 20 per cent indicated that it was DIMIA's suggestion that they apply onshore for the 457 visa.

Just 51 per cent of all respondents indicated that it was their first 457 visa; for 47 per cent, their current 457 visa was a renewal of a previous 457 visa. Considering the distribution of respondents by year of arrival indicated earlier and that each 457 visa allows the visa holder a stay of up to four years, the percentage of respondents claiming that they had been on their second 457 visa seemed rather high. There is some possibility that respondents might have misunderstood the question. There was no difference by sex, age or occupational group in the percentage claiming it was their first 457 visa. Irish, Korean and Middle Eastern respondents were more likely to be on their first 457 visa; French, Canadian and Other African respondents were more likely to have renewed a previous 457 visa.

Previous overseas employment

The survey has shown that 457 visa holders are an internationally mobile group of workers, with 40 per cent of respondents having worked in another country other than their country of origin for at least three months prior to coming to Australia. A slightly higher percentage of men than women have previously worked abroad. There was an expected positive correlation with age; just over half of all 457 visa holders aged 50 and above had worked in another country before their current employment in Australia (Figure 6). There were also differences by country of origin. Respondents from Ireland had the highest percentage who had worked overseas. Most of the Irish had worked in the UK; some had worked in the US. UK respondents were likely to have worked in the US, France and other European countries. More than 50 per cent of the French, Germans and other Europeans had also worked in another country, mostly in Europe. The Asian respondents were less likely to have previous overseas work experience, with just 20-30 having worked in another country. The Japanese had worked in Southeast Asian countries and the US while the Koreans had worked in Japan or the US. The Americans had worked in the UK, Europe and Japan while the South Africans had worked in the UK.

Respondents who had worked in another country were asked to compare that country with Australia. The conclusion is that Australia compared very favourably with other countries, as both a place to work and as a place to live. Close to half of the respondents who had worked elsewhere said that that country was not as good as Australia as a place to work; more than one-third said it was about the same as Australia (Figure 7). Australia rated very well especially as a place to live. Seventy per cent said that the other country was not as good as Australia as a place to live; 26 per cent said that it was about the same; only 4 per cent said that it was better than Australia.

Employment prior to arrival in Australia

Most (94 per cent) 457 visa holders were employed in their previous country of residence prior to coming to Australia. The percentage was slightly higher for men (95 per cent) than women (93 per cent).

Table 7 shows the respondents' occupation before coming to Australia. A higher percentage of men than women were managers or administrators. However, the

percentage of professionals was much higher for women than men. Four per cent of men and 7 per cent of women were not in the labour force.

The most numerous occupations were computing professionals (112), registered nurses (64), general managers (60), sales and marketing managers (57), chefs (53), IT managers (26), accountants (42), engineers (36) and human resource professionals (24). These were also the most common occupations according to DIMIA's statistics on the occupations of recent 457 visa grants.

Just 1 per cent of the respondents said that they had worked in the job overseas for less than one year before coming to Australia. Nine per cent had worked in their occupation from 1-2 years, 38 per cent had worked for 2-5 years and 35 per cent had worked for 5-10 years. The median number of years worked overseas before coming to Australia was 5; the mean was 6.5 years. Managers and administrators had worked in their previous country of residence an average of 6.8 years, professionals 6.3 years, associate professionals 6.9 years and people in trades 9.7 years. These people were clearly not recent labour market entrants; half had been working for at least 5 years before coming to work in Australia.

Current employment

457 visa holders in the survey reported a wide range of occupations in their current employment in Australia. The most numerous were computing professionals (133), followed by sales and marketing managers (91), general managers (73), registered nurses (69), chefs (63), accountants (42) and IT managers (37). There were also graphic designers, teachers and architects. Other less common occupations in the survey included balloon pilot, parachute rigger, geophysicist and ski instructor.

Professionals were the largest occupational group (46 per cent), followed by managers and administrators (26 per cent) (Table 8). Nearly 60 per cent of female 457 visa holders were in professional occupations while 30 per cent of males were managers or administrators. Occupations in the 'Other' category (6 per cent of respondents) included travel and tourism agents, sales representatives, sales assistants, transport and despatching clerks, stock and purchasing clerks and hotel service supervisors. 457 visa holders in the 'Other' occupation category were predominantly UK and Japanese citizens.

While most people reported having the same occupation before and after arrival in Australia, some people's occupational grouping after coming to Australia was different from that before arrival in Australia. Of people reporting their occupation as managers or administrators before coming to Australia, about 80 per cent were still managers or administrators in their current employment; 12 per cent were working as professionals and the rest were in other occupations. 85 per cent of professionals before the survey were still working as professionals in Australia while 10 per cent had become managers or administrators. Seventy per cent of associate professionals were working as associate professionals after coming to Australia; 26 per cent were working as managers, administrators or professionals, suggesting that their occupational status had improved as a 457 visa holder. Similarly, only 72 per cent of trades persons and 60 per cent of people in other occupations were in the same occupational group after coming to Australia. Eleven per cent of trades persons and

26 per cent of people in the 'Other' category were managers, administrators or professionals after coming to Australia, and another 10 per cent were working as associate professionals. Of the people who were not in the labour force in their previous country of residence, 61 per cent were working as professionals in Australia and 14 per cent as associate professionals. It was apparent from Table 9 that most people either stayed within the same occupational group or moved into a higher level occupational group in coming to work in Australia. These changes in occupational category were consistent with some of the respondents indicating that their temporary migration to work in Australia was a promotion or improvement in their career for them (as shown in Table 6 on the reasons for migration).

The most common method used by 457 visa holders to find their current employment was a direct approach to the employer (Table 10). This was the case for all the main occupational groups except managers and administrators. For 30 per cent of managers and administrators, their current employment was obtained through the overseas office of their company; that is, their current employment was an overseas posting. Managers and administrators were also more likely to be approached by their employer (headhunted for the current job). Personnel recruitment agencies were more likely to be used by professional workers, particularly IT workers. One in four computing professionals stated that they found their current employment through a personnel recruitment agency. Family and friends were helpful to a significant proportion of associate professional and trades workers. Workers in the 'Other' occupational group (mainly intermediate clerical and sales workers) were more likely than other workers to find their current job through advertisements in the newspaper or internet.

Respondents in the survey were asked how long they had worked with the current employer, including overseas if applicable. Because they are more likely to be on transfer from their overseas office, managers and administrators have a different profile from other occupational group in terms of their duration of employment with their current employer. They have the lowest percentage with less than one or two years and the highest proportion with five or more years with their employer. Nearly one-quarter of all managers and administrators had been with their employer for more than 10 years, not unexpected for people in management positions. In contrast, two-thirds or more of 457 visa holders in the other occupational groups had worked for less than 2 years with their current employer (Table 10).

About half of managers and administrators reported incomes of more than \$100,000 per year. Less than 20 per cent of professional workers and less than 10 per cent of other workers reported this level of annual income (Table 10). The median income of professional workers was about \$63,000. Equivalent figures for the other occupational groups were \$45,300 for associate professionals, \$41,100 for trade persons and \$44,000 for the 'Other' occupational category. It would appear that many 457 visa holders in occupations other than managerial or professional occupations were paid a salary that was rather close to the minimum required by DIMIA for the 457 visa subclass.

Box 1. 457 visa holders in IT occupations

A special analysis was undertaken of the 176 respondents working in IT occupations because of the considerable interest in the use of the 457 visa to bring in overseas workers in the IT industry. 457 visa holders in IT occupations fall mainly into three groups: IT managers (N=37), computing professionals (N=133) and computing support technicians (N=6). 457 visa holders in the three IT occupations had different profiles from one another. As a group the IT workers also differed in some ways from the total sample.

Over 80 per cent of 457 visa holders working in IT occupations were men. Generally their age profile did not differ significantly from that of all 457 visa holders in the survey: their median age was 32 years compared with 33 years for the total sample. However, IT managers had an older age profile; only 54 per cent were less than 35 years of age compared with 64 per cent of computing professionals and 83 per cent of computing support technicians.

Thirty per cent of IT managers and computing professionals had postgraduate qualifications and over 40 per cent had bachelor degrees. The majority of computing support technicians had technical qualifications.

About one-quarter had found their job in Australia through a personnel recruitment agency, but 20 per cent were company transfers. These included 32 per cent of IT managers and 17 per cent of computing professionals. Computing support technicians were more likely to have found their job through personnel recruitment agencies.

The average number of years they had worked in their occupation before coming to Australia was 5.5 years. IT managers had an average of 5.3 years of overseas work experience, computing professionals an average of 5.6 years and computing support technicians an average of 2 years.

The survey showed that 20 per cent of the IT workers were paid less than \$50,000 a year, 51 per cent were paid between \$50,000 and \$100,000 a year and the rest (29 per cent) were earning more than \$100,000 a year. There were considerable differences between managers, professionals and technicians. Sixty per cent of IT managers were paid at least \$100,000 a year. In contrast, most computing support professionals were paid less than \$50,000 a year.

Table B1. Distribution of 457 visa holders in IT occupations by annual salary.

Annual salary	IT managers	Computing professionals	Computing support technicians	Total
	%	%	%	%
<\$50,000	3	22	83	20
\$50-75,000	14	36	17	31
\$75-100,000	24	20	0	20
\$100-150,000	27	17	0	19
\$150-200,000	22	3	0	7
\$200,000+	11	2	0	3

The survey also asked about hours worked in the current job. Half of all 457 visa holders worked standard hours of 35-40 per week (Table 10). Professionals were most likely to work a 35-40 hour week. As expected, managers and administrators were more likely to work longer hours and one-quarter of them reported working more than 50 hours a week.

Twenty-seven percent of the 457 visa holders said that they used a language other than English at work, with 13 per cent reporting using at least two languages other than English. Nearly half of all associate professionals and workers in the 'Other' occupational category (sales and marketing assistants, tourism and travel assistants) used other languages besides English in their work. Professional workers were the least likely to use a language other than English in their work. The languages most often mentioned were Japanese (mentioned by 87 respondents), French (45), Korean (39), Mandarin (30), other Chinese languages (30) and German (30).

DIMIA's data on 457 visa holder arrivals for each year have shown that these people are a highly mobile group internationally, likely to make a number of trips overseas or to return home for holidays. Their total number of arrivals is more than five times the number of first arrivals (McDonald et al. 2003). Thirty per cent of the 457 visa holders in the survey indicated that they were required to travel outside of Australia for work and as expected, the percentage was highest among managers and administrators 58 per cent of whom said that they travelled overseas for work. They also made the most number of trips, with 25 per cent of those travelling saying they made 5-9 overseas trips each year. Their average was four trips per year. Workers in the trades occupation were the least likely to travel for work, with just 7 per cent saying they did. Of those who travelled, the average number of trips was just one a year. Professionals averaged about two trips a year.

The three most common destinations were United States, United Kingdom and New Zealand, which were also the three most popular destinations for managers and administrators. A number of professionals travelled to Singapore while Japan was among the top three destinations indicated by associate professionals.

Conditions of current employment

Almost all 457 visa holders were paid on a salary rather than a contract lump sum basis. There was not much difference by occupational group (Table 11). Most migrants also had their salary paid to them in Australia. Managers and administrators were more likely than other groups of workers to be paid overseas or both in Australia and overseas, because a significant percentage of them were on transfer from their overseas office.

One-quarter (26 per cent) of the 457 visa holders stated that they were subject to taxation both in Australia and overseas. The proportion was highest for managerial workers (36 per cent) and lowest for people working in trades occupations (13 per cent). There were also differences by country of citizenship. The Americans were the most likely to be subject to taxation in both Australia and overseas; more than two-thirds said they were subject to double taxation. A large percentage of Singaporeans

also indicated that they were subject to double taxation. The Japanese were the least likely to be taxed in Australia and overseas, followed by the Irish and the French (Figure 8).

Most (82 per cent) of the survey respondents said that they had to sign a contract with their employer. Those in professional occupations were the most likely to do so (90 per cent) and those in trades occupations were the least likely (74 per cent).

Information collected on conditions of employment shows that only one-third of all respondents said their employers paid their airfares and medical insurance and provided housing on arrival. Twenty per cent said their employer provided assistance with housing costs during their stay in Australia and a motor vehicle for private use. Most workers (85 per cent) received superannuation payments. Among 457 visa holders whose partner was also in Australia, only 25 per cent said that their employer had provided airfares for their dependents. Of those with children in Australia, 38 per cent said that their employer had provided airfares for their dependents and 17 per cent indicated that their employer had provided financial assistance with the children's education.

As expected, managers and administrators generally have better conditions than other workers (Table 11). Many were expatriate executives on overseas posting and therefore well provided for by their employers. Nearly 60 per cent of managers and administrators had their airfares paid by their employer compared with just 10 per cent of trades persons. Half had housing on arrival provided by their employer and 40 per cent had assistance with housing costs for the duration of their stay. Their employers were also the most likely to pay their medical insurance and their dependents' airfares and provide financial assistance with their children's education and a car for their private use. However, they had a lower proportion receiving superannuation than associate professionals or trades persons.

About one-third of the 457 visa holders had received training in Australia to meet the requirements of their position. Those in the 'Other' occupation category were more likely and those in the trades occupation were the least likely to have received training. Of those who had received training in Australia, two-thirds reported that their employer paid for the training and another 10 per cent said that they and their employer both contributed to the costs. Managers and administrators were the most likely to have their employers pay for their training. Employers of workers in the 'Other' occupation category were the least likely to pay for training. Among this group of 457 visa holders, one-third paid for the training themselves.

Assessment of current employment

457 visa holders were asked what they thought about their job and whether they had any disputes with their employers. Eighty per cent of the 457 visa holders in the survey said they did not have any disputes with their employers. Managers and administrators were less likely to report a dispute with their employer while trades persons were the most likely to have a dispute with their employer, with 30 per cent reporting ever having a dispute with their employer. Eleven per cent indicated having a dispute about salary and level of payment. Less than 10 per cent had a dispute about working hours, type of work or holidays and only 5 per cent had ever had a dispute

with their employer about the quality of their work. Associate professionals, trades workers and employees in the 'Other' occupation group were more likely than professional or managerial employees to have had disputes with their employers on all these issues (Table 12).

A few people wrote that their employers had exploited them by violating their contract in relation to salary and holiday leave or had taken advantage of their situation as temporary residents dependent on the employer's sponsorship. They had suggested that DIMIA scrutinise and monitor employers more carefully. Three respondents reported that they were made redundant by their employers only a few months after their arrival. Their employers did not offer any assistance or support for their situation. One was grateful for the help he received from DIMIA's Melbourne office but another thought that the one month he had to find another job in order to remain in Australia was too short, although he considered himself fortunate to find one through personal contacts. Another reported that after four months her employer advised that he could not pay the salary level stated in the contract that was supposedly guaranteed for three years. She was offered no protection or compensation and her 457 visa was cancelled. Considering the diversity of employers, the negative comments are not surprising. One respondent pointed out that he had three different employers in Australia and each had been very different.

Most 457 visa holders felt that they were obtaining skills and work experience in Australia that would be useful in their future work, although a lower proportion of workers in the 'Other' occupational category felt this way. Most respondents also thought that they were passing on their skills to Australian workers, although again those in the 'Other' occupation category were less likely to think this way (Table 12).

In response to a question about job satisfaction, nearly three-quarters of all respondents considered their job was a really good one or the best they had ever had. One-quarter of respondents thought it was 'OK' and just over 3 per cent either did not care or disliked it. Managers and administrators had the highest job satisfaction rating: over 80 per cent really liked or loved their job. In contrast, just 62 per cent of employees in the 'Other' occupation category really liked or loved their job and 7 per cent did not care or disliked their job.

The job satisfaction question in the survey was the same as that asked in LSIA1 and LSIA2 so that a comparison between temporary and permanent skilled migrants is possible. Figure 9 compares the responses of 457 visa holders with migrants in the Independent Skilled and Business and Employer Nomination visa categories in wave 2 (15-18 months after arrival) of LSIA1 and LSIA2. 457 visa holders had similar responses to permanent migrants in the Business and Employer Nomination visa categories, indicating that the difference in their migration and residence status made no difference in terms of their job satisfaction. Independent skilled migrants were less enthusiastic about their jobs compared with 457 visa holders and Business and Employer Nomination migrants.

The employers

457 visa holders in the survey were also asked about their employers. Just 10 per cent of respondents worked for small employers with fewer than five employees and over

one-quarter of all respondents in the survey worked for large employers with 300 or more employees. Trades workers were more likely to work for small businesses while managerial and professional workers were more likely to work for large employers. Very few migrants in trades occupations worked for large employers (Table 13).

Close to 60 per cent of all respondents reported that their employer had other temporary workers from overseas who were also 457 visa holders like themselves. As expected from information about the size of their employers, professional workers were more likely to have employers that also employed a number of 457 visa holders while trades workers were the least likely to work for such employers. Two thirds of professionals with employers that have other 457 visa holders indicated that the other overseas migrants mainly did the same type of work as themselves. These were nurses and other health professionals, teachers, human resource professionals, architects, engineers and auditors. Managers were less likely to have employers with other 457 visa holders who were doing the same managerial job as they did.

There were differences by industry of employment (Figure 10). 457 visa holders working in the mining industry and in finance and insurance were more likely to have other 457 visa holders also working for their employer. Employers in these two industry sectors were likely to be large multinational companies. 457 visa holders working in agriculture, retail and wholesale trade, education and personal services were less likely to have employers with other 457 visa holders.

The average number of other 457 visa holders employed by respondents' employers was 14 and the median was 5. The relatively high average was due to a small number of respondents working for very large employers that had more than 100 employees on 457 visas. The employers were in mostly in the finance, banking and insurance; IT and communication; and health industries. People in professional occupations were more likely to work with such employers; those in trades least likely.

Partner's employment

As indicated earlier, over 60 per cent of 457 visa holders in the survey were partnered, and most of those with a partner had brought their spouse/partner to Australia. In our survey of employers, some employers had noted that the 457 visa provided full work rights for the spouse of the visa holder and that this was a great advantage in comparison with temporary skilled migration visas offered by other countries. It is therefore of interest to find out to what extent the spouses of 457 visa holders make use of these work rights and the type of jobs in which they were employed.

While over 90 per cent of all 457 visa holders with a spouse or partner stated that their spouse/partner was also in Australia with them, respondents from China, India and Other Southeast Asia were less likely to bring their spouse with them. About 15-20 per cent of married 457 visa holders from these places did not bring their spouse with them.

62 per cent of spouses were employed. There was no difference in the employment rate of spouses of 457 visa holders who were living outside the major cities and those living in the large cities. However, only 51 per cent of spouses of male 457 visa holders were employed compared with 92 per cent of spouses of female 457 visa

holders. There were also differences by 457 visa holders' occupational group and country of origin. As shown in Figure 11, spouses of 457 visa holders who were in managerial occupations had the lowest employment rate of just 44 per cent. The highest employment rate was recorded for spouses of migrants in the 'Other' occupational category. Spouses of 457 visa holders from China had the lowest employment rate, followed by spouses of 457 visa holders from Korea. It was likely that their English language skills might not be proficient enough for them to find suitable employment. Spouses from Singapore, India, France and Germany also had relatively low employment rates, again possibly because of language reasons. Spouses of 457 visa holders from Ireland had the highest employment rate at 95 per cent.

Figure 12 compares the industry of employment of 457 visa holders and their employed spouses. The largest percentage of spouses was employed in the health and community services industry. The percentage of spouses employed in the IT and communication industry was also relatively high although not as high as for the 457 visa holders themselves. A larger percentage of spouses than 457 visa holders were employed in education, personal services and retail trade.

There were fewer spouses in managerial occupations and more in clerical, sales and services occupations compared with 457 visa holders themselves. Nonetheless, many spouses were also highly skilled. There were 25 respondents with spouses who were computing professionals, 16 with spouses who were accountants, 10 with spouses who were teachers and 24 with spouses who were personal assistants or sales assistants.

Spouses of 457 visa holders were not subject to the minimum salary conditions of the 457 visa subclass. Some spouses might also be working part-time. Therefore, it was not unexpected that the majority of them had an income of less than \$50,000 per year and that over 25 per cent earned less than \$35,000 (Figure 13). There were 9 per cent of 457 visa holders with employed spouses who stated that their spouse's annual income before tax was at least \$100,000.

Conclusions

Most 457 visa holders have some years of work experience in their occupation before coming to Australia. Some were company transfers, particularly those in managerial occupations. Comparisons of their occupation before and after arrival in Australia show that most of them either continue in the same occupation or were working in a higher level occupation in Australia, suggesting that there is some degree of career advancement in this overseas work experience for them.

With the exception of managers and administrators, most 457 visa holders were paid just over the minimum or threshold salary stipulated by the 457 visa and a small percentage reported being paid less than \$35,000 a year. Only a minority received assistance such as airfares, housing and medical insurance from their employers although over 80 per cent received superannuation payments. Most have their salary paid in Australia and therefore paid Australian taxes. This was a basis for many complaints by respondents who wrote comments at the end of the survey. They felt that since they paid the full array of taxes including the Medicare levy, it was unfair that they were not entitled to Medicare coverage or Australian resident fees for their

children enrolled in school or university. Many also complained about Australia's tax rate being higher than in their home country and in addition to paying a high rate of tax they also had to pay for private medical insurance and international student fees for their children's education.

Managers and administrators were different from other 457 visa holders in a number of ways. Since one-third were company transfers, they had longer work experience with their current employer. Their salaries were much higher than that of other 457 visa holders and they were also more likely to receive a range of benefits from their employers. They worked longer hours and travelled overseas more often. Few reported having any disputes with their employers and they had the highest level of job satisfaction.

457 visa holders have made good use of the provision of full work rights for spouses. Most male spouses and half of female spouses were employed, many in skilled occupations. Spouses from non-English-speaking countries were less likely to be employed than those from English-speaking countries. Most 457 visa holders who are partnered bring their spouse with them so the spouses' contribution to the work force is also important.

Most 457 visa holders liked their jobs and enjoyed working in Australia. There were few complaints about salaries or working conditions. A small group did report being taken advantage of or made redundant by their employers and did not have a very good experience as a result.

5. FUTURE PLANS

One of the main aims of this research project on temporary skilled migration was to investigate the intentions of the temporary migrants in relation to future migration and residence. How likely are the temporary migrants to want to live permanently in Australia? Will most of them return home after their work contract ends? DIMIA reported that 9,788 people holding the 457 visa applied for permanent residence in Australia in 2003-04, an increase from 6,953 in 2002-03 (DIMIA 2004; 2005). Our preliminary estimates based on onshore grants data for 1996-2001 indicate that about 40 per cent of 457 visa holders convert to permanent residence status (separate paper forthcoming by Khoo and Kippen). The present survey sought more detailed information about who among the temporary skilled migrants were more, or less, likely to want to become permanent residents and the reasons for their respective decisions.

Employment plans

A number of questions were asked of the 457 visa holders in the survey about their plans for future employment, migration and residence. Table 14 shows the responses to these questions. One third of all respondents planned to stay permanently with their employer but about half were not sure how long they would stay. Managers and administrators were more likely to say that they planned to stay permanently with their employer while employees in the 'Other' occupational group were the least certain about their future employment plans.

One-third of 457 visa holders planned to extend or apply for another 457 visa. The most common reasons given were that (1) the job was not finished yet; (2) they liked their job and wanted to continue working here; (3) they liked Australia and wanted to stay here longer; and (4) they wanted their children to finish their schooling or education. A couple of respondents were extending their visa so that they could stay to establish their company's presence or expand the business. A few others indicated that it was easier to extend/apply for another 457 visa than to apply for permanent residence.

The most common reason given by those who did not plan to extend or apply for another 457 visa was that they planned to apply for permanent residence instead. The majority of these people had either married or entered into a relationship with an Australian resident and planned to apply or had already applied for a spouse or de facto partner visa. Others indicated that their employer had sponsored them for permanent residence under the Employer Nomination or Regional Sponsored Migration Schemes. A number of 457 visa holders from Japan, US and Europe did not want to extend or apply for another 457 visa because they missed their home country and planned to return home.

A larger percentage (70 per cent) of managers and professionals did not plan to apply for another 457 visa compared with other 457 visa holders (50-60 per cent) (Table 14). There was no difference in the percentage planning to extend or apply for another 457 visa between those 457 visa holders who said they would stay with their employer and those who were not sure how long they planned to stay with their current employer (data not shown). Most (85 per cent) of those who were more

definite about the number of months or years they planned to stay with their employer (of whom 60 per cent planned to stay for 2 years or less) were not planning to apply for another 457 visa.

Over 40 per cent said that they would return to work in Australia in future, although about 40 per cent did not respond to the question or were not sure. Just 9 per cent stated that they would not return. There was not much difference by occupation in the percentage saying they would not return to work in Australia.

Future migration and residence

457 visa holders' responses to questions about future migration and residence intentions reveal that many of them would like to remain in Australia as permanent residents. It is difficult to say if people who chose to respond to the survey were those who had a strong preference to become permanent residents, but it was obvious that most respondents had a very positive experience in Australia and would prefer to live here permanently.

Fifty per cent of the 457 visa holders indicated that they planned to stay in Australia 'indefinitely', presumably permanently, and 43 per cent were not sure or did not answer the question. Of the 7 per cent who mentioned a specific duration, 40 per cent indicated one year or less, 30 per cent indicated two more years and 20 per cent indicated three more years.

457 visa holders in the 'Other' occupational group were less sure than the others about how much longer they planned to stay in Australia (Table 14). Associate professionals had the highest percentage indicating an indefinite stay. There were also differences by country of origin in the response to the question on further duration of stay (Figure 14). Respondents from African countries were the most likely to want to stay indefinitely, followed by those from Singapore. The Japanese had the lowest percentage indicating that they planned to stay indefinitely and they and the Koreans had the highest percentage indicating that they were not sure how much longer they expected to stay. 457 visa holders from USA, France and other European countries, particularly those in managerial occupations, were more likely to specify a definite time of expected stay in Australia and therefore definite plans to leave and return home. A manager from Europe working in telecommunications wrote: "I have had a good time and increased my experience working 3 years in Australia. I will miss this place when my contract is coming to an end and will leave middle Jan 2004."

Four out of five respondents indicated that they would prefer to live permanently in Australia; only 12 per cent stated that they would prefer to live in their home country. The number of respondents indicating a preference for another country other than Australia or their home country was very small. Two countries that were indicated by three or more respondents were New Zealand and United States. There were some differences by occupational group in the percentage preferring to live permanently in Australia, with the highest at 92 per cent for people in the trades and the lowest at 76 per cent for those in managerial occupations (Table 14).

There were also some differences by country of citizenship. More than 90 per cent of 457 visa holders from African, Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian countries would

prefer to live permanently in Australia. So would 80-85 per cent of respondents from Northeast Asia, South Asia, UK and France. Americans and Canadians were more likely to want to return home and less likely to want to live in Australia permanently (Figure 15).

As expected, most people who said that they planned to stay in Australia indefinitely were those who also said they would prefer to live in Australia permanently. But even among 457 visa holders who were not sure how much longer they planned to stay in Australia, 75 per cent would prefer to live permanently in Australia.

More than one-third of the 457 visa holders had already applied for permanent residence and another half intended to apply (Table 14). The percentage who had applied was lowest among workers in the 'Other' occupational category, with many of them saying that they intended to apply. Only 40 per cent of those respondents who said they preferred to live permanently in Australia had actually applied, but 54 per cent said they intended to apply.

All respondents from Middle Eastern and African countries and Singapore either had applied or intended to apply for permanent residence (Figure 16). About half of all 457 visa holders from these places had already applied and the rest intended to do so. The Japanese had the lowest percentage who had applied although more than 50 per cent intended to apply. Citizens of Korea, the European countries, USA and Canada were also less likely to have applied, although the percentage of Koreans and Japanese who intended to apply was greater than that of Americans and Europeans. It is not surprising that 457 visa holders from the less developed countries and regions are more likely to want to become permanent residents than those from the more developed countries and regions, as the standard of living is higher in Australia compared with their home country, although this is not the case for Singapore where incomes for skilled workers are higher than for Australia. Some might have come to work in Australia with the view of becoming permanent residents, as indicated in Table 5 on reasons for migration. Over 85 per cent of Singaporean respondents indicated that becoming permanent residents was one of the reasons for their coming to work in Australia, as did 75 per cent of Middle Eastern respondents and 83 per cent of Koreans, compared with less than 60 per cent of respondents from Europe and about 40 per cent of respondents from North America (see Table 6).

Some people were not sure of their future residence plans. One respondent wrote: "regarding the future, it is impossible to say if we want to stay in Australia. So many things (to consider)...Our 17-year old will go back to (home country) for university studies. Our 11-year old really likes it here and wouldn't mind staying. Work opportunities, what will they be here or elsewhere? We really enjoy our stay and don't worry about the future right now." Another person wrote: "I have no definite future plans. It depends on how my personal circumstances change while I am here. I may apply for permanent residency or a 457 extension based on my circumstances in 3 years time."

Reasons for permanent residence in Australia

A liking for Australia's lifestyle was the reason given by 90 per cent of 457 visa holders for wanting to become permanent residents, with 50 per cent of respondents

indicating it was a very important reason for their wanting to apply for permanent residency (Figure 17). Lifestyle reasons were most often stated by respondents from other advanced economies. The next most often mentioned reason was that becoming permanent residents was good for their children. This reason was more likely to be stated by respondents from the less developed countries. This was followed by two employment related reasons: better employment opportunities and promotion/career development. Higher salary was a reason for less than 50 per cent of the respondents. Employment related reasons were also more often stated by respondents from the less developed countries. Push factors were indicated by less than 25 per cent of respondents, although they were considered important for a larger percentage of respondents from Africa. While few people considered having relatives in Australia to be important, it was indicated by 46 per cent of respondents from China. Forming a relationship with an Australian was mentioned by a number of people for wanting to apply for permanent residence. Many of them indicated that they had already applied for or been granted a de facto partner or spouse visa.

The reasons considered important for permanent residence were not very different from those considered important for coming to work in Australia in the first place (Table 6). Pull factors were more important than push factors such as a lack of employment opportunities or dislike of social and economic conditions in the home country, although push factors were important for a higher percentage of respondents from African countries and South Asian countries other than India. Most skilled workers do not lack employment opportunities in their home country but are attracted by Australia's lifestyle in wanting to settle here.

Reasons for not wanting to live in Australia permanently

The 457 visa holders who stated that they did not intend to apply for permanent residence in Australia were asked to indicate which reasons were important in their decision to return home. The results are shown in Figure 18. The reasons most often indicated were all employment related: that promotion, career development, employment opportunities and salaries were better elsewhere. One person wrote: "While my experiences in Australia have been very favourable, the current economic conditions (and taxation) make it hard to continue living (here). Other countries offer better salaries and more beneficial tax conditions."

Family reasons – having no relatives in Australia or it was better for the children elsewhere – were next in importance. A number of people also wrote that they loved their home country and that was where they wanted to live permanently. The Japanese, Europeans and Americans were more likely to want to return home because they simply preferred to live in their home country. Very few people indicated any dislike of Australia for not wanting to apply for permanent residency. One person wrote that the taxes were too high and another, a UK citizen, said that as an Englishman he was "made to feel unwelcomed by a significant portion of the population and the media."

Thirty percent of respondents indicated that the permanent residence application process was too difficult. Respondents from Northeast and Southeast Asian countries were more likely than others to indicate this. A number of respondents over age 50 pointed out that they were over the age limit for an independent skilled migration visa

and they were disappointed with this restriction on their eligibility to become permanent residents. A few people said that the permanent application process was "too expensive". As mentioned in the next chapter, some people who had applied for permanent residency also thought that the permanent residency application process was difficult and expensive.

A few people wrote that they did not want to apply for permanent residence because they did not want to lose their living away from home allowance. As was indicated by some employers of 457 visa holders in our earlier survey of employers, the living away from home allowance was an important factor in the decision of some 457 visa holders to come to work here when the salary might be lower than in the home country.

And a UK citizen wrote that he did not want to apply for permanent residence because he preferred the beer and football back at home.

Conclusions

It is clear that a very large majority of 457 visa holders would like to become permanent residents in Australia because they liked the lifestyle and they liked their jobs here. Only a small minority planned to return home at the end of their contracts. Although there was some dissatisfaction with the level of tax they had to pay, they considered Australia a wonderful place to live and to bring up children. This is a very flattering assessment of Australia. It also suggests that these people have settled in well. A study of people on the H-1B visa in the US that found that 40 per cent had changed status to permanent residence considered this to be a sign of successful adjustment rather than a problem for US immigration as the impact on total immigration was very small (North 1999). That most 457 visa holders would like to become permanent residents is an important finding that needs to be considered further by policy makers in the current context of trying to attract more skilled immigrants to Australia.

6. VIEWS ABOUT THE TEMPORARY MIGRATION EXPERIENCE AND VISA APPLICATION PROCESS

Since the temporary business entry visa is a relatively new initiative and temporary migration is a new development in Australia's migration policy, it is useful to find out what the migrants think about their temporary residence experience in Australia. The previous chapter on the future plans of these people has indicated that many of them are positive enough about their stay in Australia to want to live here permanently. This chapter examines more specifically their views about their work experience and their time in Australia. It also discusses their views about the 457 and permanent residence visa application process.

Views about their work and overall experience in Australia

The survey asked 457 visa holders whether their Australian work experience, together with the experience of others from their home country, would increase good will and business connections between their home country and Australia. Most were quite positive in their responses. Three-quarters of all the 457 visa holders in the survey stated that they thought their experience and that of their compatriots would increase goodwill between their country and Australia and half said that it would increase goodwill a lot (Figure 19). Two-thirds thought their experience would increase business connections between their home country and Australia, with over 40 per cent saying it would do so a lot.

A lower percentage of people in professional occupations than those in other occupations were of the view that their work experience would increase goodwill between their country and Australia while managers and administrators were more likely than other 457 visa holders to say that their work experience in Australia and that of their compatriots would increase business connections between their country and Australia (Figures 20a and 20b); 55 per cent of managers said that it would increase business connections a lot. Managers are likely to be in positions to foster business connections and that a very high percentage thinks this would happen indicates the positive impact of the 457 visa experience. Employees in the "Other" occupational category would be less likely to be able to foster business connections and they had the lowest proportion who thought their work experience would increase business connections; only 27 per cent said it would do so a lot.

There were also differences by country of citizenship in these views about the impacts of the 457 work experience. The Chinese, Japanese, Koreans and Americans were more likely to be of the view that their work experience and that of their compatriots would increase goodwill and business connections between their countries and Australia. The Canadians and Irish were a bit more hesitant, many of them saying that they thought the 457 work experience would increase goodwill and business connections "somewhat" rather than a lot. A significant percentage of respondents from Other Europe, Other Africa and Other America were of the view that their work experience would not lead to any increase in goodwill or business connections between their countries and Australia.

When asked how they felt about their overall experience of Australia, 97 per cent of the respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied. Just 3 per cent were 'neither satisfied not dissatisfied' and less than 1 per cent were dissatisfied. This level of satisfaction was slightly higher than expressed by skilled settler arrivals who were interviewed in the second cohort of LSIA (Figure 21). The percentage who were very satisfied was a lot higher among 457 visa holders than skilled migrants in the Business or Employer Nomination or Independent Skilled visa categories.

There was little difference in level of satisfaction by occupation (Table 15), although workers in the 'Other' occupational group had a slightly lower percentage who were very satisfied. Small differences were observed by country of origin. 457 visa holders from most Northeast Asian countries had a lower percentage who were satisfied. Almost all the Europeans were very happy with their experience in Australia (Table 15).

Views of the 457 visa and temporary residency

While overall satisfaction with their Australian work experience was high, 457 visa holders were less positive about their status as temporary residents and some of the restrictions associated with the visa. Written comments were received from many respondents who felt unhappy about their lack of entitlements as temporary residents. They felt that since they were paying the same taxes as Australians they should have the same entitlements as Australian residents in relation to Medicare coverage and school and university fees for their children. This caused one to complain that "Foreigners are treated as second class citizens levied the same taxes, yet completely unable to receive the benefits derived from the taxes". There was a misconception on this issue, however, as Australian residents paid a Medicare levy for access to Medicare and it was not clear from respondents' comments that they paid this levy. If they did, they would be entitled to a rebate if they did not access Medicare. While temporary residents in New South Wales had to pay school fees for their children, other states did not require this.

As temporary residents 457 visa holders also found that many banks refused to provide them with credit cards so that they had to continue using their credit cards issued in their home country. They were unable to take out a loan and it was difficult for them to buy or invest in property, although a few apparently brought or earned enough money to own their home in Australia.

There were also a few complaints that the visa made them very dependent on their employers - "a bit trapped in their contract" as one of them put it. They thought it was difficult for them to change employers and some employers had taken advantage of the situation by threatening to withdraw their sponsorship if the employee made any complaints.

The 457 visa application process

The survey asked 457 visa holders how satisfied they were with various aspects of the 457 visa application process: processing time, clarity of the forms, cost and assistance received from government officials. The respondents' views are shown in Table 16.

Most people were quite satisfied with the application processing time. Since this survey was conducted in late 2003 and early 2004, these people would not have experienced the new electronic submission and faster processing time that was implemented in November 2003. It is likely that the 11 per cent who were dissatisfied then would have been less so now.

Most people were also satisfied with the application forms and the assistance they received from Australian government officials. A lower percentage (68 per cent) said they were satisfied with the costs involved, including the costs of arranging health tests and other documents. More than 20 per cent were dissatisfied and 8 per cent were very dissatisfied with the application costs. A number of respondents were unhappy that they had to have a medical examination and x-rays each time they renew their 457 visa even though they had not been out of the country in the interim period.

Respondents were asked to describe the overall administrative process of obtaining a 457 visa in terms of one of the following responses: (a) efficient, easy, straightforward; (b) some problems and frustrations, but OK overall; and (c) inefficient, cumbersome, complicated. 46 per cent chose (a), 47 per cent chose (b) and 6 per cent chose (c). The Indians were the most likely to say that the process was easy and straightforward while the Germans, Koreans and Middle East migrants were more likely to experience some frustration.

Write-in comments about the 457 visa process were generally positive. One respondent was pleased with assistance from DIMIA in making the transfer from tourist to 457 visa an easy process. Another wrote: "I think the Long-Stay Temporary Business Entry (sub-class 457) is an excellent and well-administered program."

Use of migration agents in the visa application process

Just over half (52 per cent) of the survey respondents said that they had used a migration agent to obtain their 457 visa. The Koreans (83 per cent) were the most likely to use migration agents. A high percentage of Chinese (77 per cent) and Japanese (64 per cent) also used migration agents. The Germans (23 per cent) were the least likely to use migration agents. A comparison by occupational groups showed that 66 per cent of 457 visa holders in managerial and administrative occupations used migration agents while only 41 per cent of professional workers did.

Most (95 per cent) people who used migration agents indicated that they did so because the agents knew the application procedures. Over 80 per cent reported that they used an agent because it was recommended to them. Two out of three people who used an agent indicated that one of the reasons was because the agent obtained faster decisions. Many Japanese, Malaysians and Singaporeans indicated this reason. Just over half (54 per cent) used migration agents because they thought the agents had a high rate of approval. Asian migrants were more likely to use agents for this reason: 87 per cent of Chinese, 80 per cent of Singaporeans and 75 per cent of Malaysians and other Southeast Asians indicated this was one of the reasons they used migration agents.

The permanent residence application process

The 457 visa holders who intended to apply for permanent residence were asked whether they were aware of what they would have to do. Seventy-two per cent answered yes. Awareness of how to apply for permanent residence tended to be high among 457 visa holders from Asia, Middle East, America and Africa (about 80 per cent or higher). The Europeans, particularly the Irish (65 per cent), Germans (60 per cent) and Other Europeans (66 per cent) were less likely to be aware of what they would have to do to apply for permanent residence.

457 visa holders were less happy with the permanent residence application process compared with the 457 visa application process. Dissatisfaction centred on four issues: no recognition of temporary residence and employment status; the age limit; processing time and costs; and dealings with DIMIA.

Comments about the permanent residence application process conveyed a sense of dissatisfaction that the selection criteria for a permanent resident visa in the skilled migration category did not recognise an applicant's employment experience and duration of stay as a 457 visa holder⁴. Many respondents wrote that the fact that they had been successfully employed in a skilled job in this country for some years should be taken into account in a permanent residence application.

One respondent wrote:

"I've been in Australia for over 6 years now yet if I was to apply for residency I would have to start as a beginner? The residency application is expensive, complex and time consuming. Surely working full time over this period and paying my taxes should count for something?"

Another respondent wrote:

"If an overseas company is willing to bankroll someone to spend 5 years at their expense in Australia, that should prove more about the value of their skills than government assessments. Also, after 5 years in the country, Australia should already be sufficiently assured that someone does not pose a criminal or health risk to the country. In short, I think Australia should exploit better the information already at its disposal and actively seek to encourage sponsored 457 visa holders to stay permanently by changing their status to permanent after, say, 4 years if they have paid their taxes here, committed no offences and not drained the medical system etc."

As noted earlier there was also dissatisfaction with the current age limit of 45 years for the independent skilled migration visa. There were respondents in their 50s who

⁴ Since the survey, there have been some changes to the Employer Nomination Scheme that have addressed this issue. After 2 April 2005, applicants for permanent residence visas in the ENS can demonstrate that they have met the skills criteria by having worked in the occupation in Australia for two years, including at least the last one year with the nominating employer. While DIMIA's data show that many 457 visa holders convert to permanent residence in the ENS category (DIMIA 2005), some 457 visa holders in the survey appeared reluctant to be sponsored by their employer for permanent residence because they preferred to have more independence in the labour market.

would like to make their home in Australia and felt that they had many more years to contribute to the labour force, but were unable to become permanent residents. One respondent wrote that "age alone should not dictate success or failure," and another, who had just missed the age cut-off, suggested that the age limit should be raised to 49 years as in Canada.

The survey respondents also included 457 visa holders who had already become permanent residents. The views of these people about their experience in applying for permanent residence were also informative. A number of them wrote that the application process for permanent residency was difficult and expensive. One respondent wrote:

"...the process of attaining a permanent visa was arduous and longwinded, to put it mildly, and took over 13 months, even without any major hitches. In contrast to temporary business skilled visas I believe the permanent visa process only lends itself to those of strong will and requires major review if Australia wants to continue to attract the right quality and calibre of migrant."

A few people wrote to say they had received confusing or conflicting information from various DIMIA staff and were frustrated with the red tape. One wrote that the telephone lines were always busy and it was difficult to get through.

Many people wrote that the requirement that they had to leave the country "to pick up" their permanent residence visa that was applied for and granted onshore was "silly, expensive and a big hassle." They wanted to know why they could not "pick it up in Australia?"

Dissatisfaction with the permanent residence application process had led to some 457 visa holders to give up and return home, feeling that Australia had not appreciated their skills and contribution to the economy as a temporary resident. One wrote that "the expense/complexity of applying for permanent residence has put me off."

Another wrote: "

"We probably would have persevered with applying for residency should the process have been easier. It seemed that there was too much red tape involved making it difficult for genuine people like ourselves to become residents of Australia; hence we are back in the UK."

One respondent, perhaps mindful of the US green card lottery system, suggested: "I wish a survey would be picked out at random and granted a permanent residency."

Conclusion

Most 457 visa holders were happy with their work experience and their stay in Australia. A large majority thought that their Australian work experience would increase goodwill and business connections between their country and Australia. This is a very positive outcome for the temporary business entry program.

The general view is that the 457 visa process is efficient and there was a high level of satisfaction with it. However, the 457 visa holders who had applied for permanent

residence were less satisfied with the permanent residence application process, indicating that it was long and difficult. Both those 457 visa holders who had applied for permanent residence and those who had decided not to apply suggested that their Australian work experience and temporary residence should receive some recognition in an application for permanent residence. Since the survey, changes to the Employment Nomination Scheme visa category for permanent residence have gone some way to providing this recognition to 457 visa holders applying for permanent residence in this visa category.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report of findings from a survey of temporary skilled migrants on the 457 visa has provided information for the first time about the employment circumstances, reasons for migration and future residence plans of this important group of temporary residents. This information is particularly useful in the current context of debate on a skills shortage and increasing skilled migration to Australia.

The survey shows that 457 visa holders are generally highly skilled people, whether as managers, professionals or tradespeople. Most are in their prime working age and relatively well educated compared with the Australian work force. Many are from developed countries and speak English or another language which they use in their job. They are comparable to the top knowledge workers (top 10 per cent of occupations and skilled gained in the last 10 years) in Australia. About 40 per cent were company transfers and this reflects today's global business environment and Australia's place in it. But many also came because they wanted the international experience, it was a promotion or a career development opportunity or an improvement in salary. Many came because they also wanted to experience Australia's lifestyle and they were not disappointed. They have enjoyed their time here and many of them would like to stay permanently.

Nearly 60 per cent said that they came as temporary entrants in order to apply for permanent residence. A large majority of 457 visa holders from Southeast Asia, Korea and the Middle East came with this intention and at least half of all the others also did.

However, when it came to applying for permanent residence, many respondents were disappointed with the fact that their employment experience and duration of stay in Australia received no recognition in the application process and they were assessed in the same way as any offshore applicant who had never lived or held a skilled job in Australia. Recent changes to the Employer Nomination Scheme permanent residence visa category have addressed this issue. Some were also disappointed because they were just over the 45-year-old age limit for a skilled migration visa. Nonetheless, many had persevered with the application process and were pleased to announce that they had become permanent residents.

About half of the survey respondents indicated that they would have accepted their current job even if it was outside the major capital cities. This finding is important in view of current efforts by some states to attract skilled migrants to regional areas. The fact that most temporary residents on the 457 visa are located in the major capital cities, and particularly in Sydney, is mainly due to their employers being located there. The number of employers in regional areas that sponsor 457 visa holders is still small. The finding in this study that many skilled migrants are willing to locate to wherever the jobs are points to employment generation as the key issue in any regional migration strategy.

The 457 visa has been a significant development in Australia's migration policy, with its new focus on temporary entry when the emphasis has always been on settler migration. It would appear from the findings of this study that with so many temporary residents eager and well-qualified to become permanent residents that the

457 visa subclass can be considered to be quite complementary to the settler migration program in providing a pathway to permanent residence. Considering that the other main group of temporary residents – overseas students – now receive points for their Australian qualification and residence when they apply for permanent residence in the points-tested Independent skill category, it seems asymmetrical that there is no similar recognition of the Australian work experience and residence of 457 visa holders when they apply for permanent residence in this visa category, although recent changes to the Employer Nomination Scheme permanent visa category have provided this recognition. The skills profile of these temporary residents and the enthusiasm about working and living in Australia expressed by many in the survey make them an attractive group of potential immigrants that government policy should be targeting.

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Table 1. Comparison of survey respondents with population of 457 visa holders in 2001-03

	Survey respondents (N=1175)		457s 2001-03 (N=12591)
<i>Location</i>	Number	%	%
ACT	18	1.5	0.8
Sydney	552	47.0	51.0
Melbourne	261	22.2	20.7
Brisbane	52	4.4	5.0
Adelaide	32	2.7	2.6
Perth	78	6.6	4.3
Tasmania	6	0.5	0.6
NT	2	0.2	0.8
Rest of NSW	39	3.3	3.1
Rest of Vic	36	3.1	1.7
Rest of Qld	68	5.8	6.0
Rest of SA	9	0.8	0.3
Rest of WA	11	0.9	0.8
Other	11	0.9	2.3
<i>Industry group</i>			
Agriculture	37	3.1	1.6
Mining	40	3.4	2.0
Manufacturing	123	10.5	10.3
Construction	74	6.3	3.7
Electricity etc	15	1.3	0.9
Transport and storage	26	2.2	1.8
Health and community services	152	12.9	9.8
Accommodation, café and restaurant	91	7.7	4.7
Cultural and recreation	28	2.4	4.6
IT and Communication	222	18.9	18.5
Property and business services	49	4.2	8.5
Finance and insurance	96	8.2	6.7
Education	43	3.7	2.3
Personal services	51	4.3	16.5
Retail trade	40	3.4	4.1
Wholesale trade	39	3.3	2.2
Gov administration	19	1.6	0.5
Not classified	30	2.6	1.3
Total	1175	100.0	100.0

Sources: Survey of 457 visa holders; DIMIA unpublished statistics, 2001-03.

Table 2. Survey respondents by gender and country of citizenship

	Men	Women	Total	% male
<i>Country of citizenship</i>	%	%	%	
UK	30.9	37.5	33.0	63
USA	9.1	5.2	7.8	78
Other Europe	8.8	5.4	7.7	77
Japan	7.1	7.8	7.3	65
India	8.2	1.6	6.0	92
Ireland	4.3	7.8	5.5	53
Other NE and SE Asia	3.8	8.8	5.5	49
South Africa	4.6	4.1	4.4	69
South Korea	4.1	2.8	3.7	74
Canada	3.3	3.9	3.5	63
China	2.3	3.4	2.6	58
France	3.3	1.0	2.6	87
Germany	2.3	3.1	2.6	60
Malaysia	1.4	2.6	1.8	52
Other Africa	1.4	1.3	1.4	69
Singapore	1.0	1.6	1.2	57
Other S Asia	1.0	1.3	1.1	62
Middle East	1.3	0.5	1.0	83
Other America	1.3	0.3	0.9	91
Fiji	0.5	0.3	0.4	80
Total	100.0	100.0	100.1	67
Number	787	388	1175	

Table 3. Demographic characteristics and family situation of the survey respondents

	Men	Women	Total
<i>Age group*</i>	%	%	%
<25	4	8	5
25-29	20	33	24
30-34	29	30	29
35-39	18	15	17
40-49	13	9	11
50+	8	3	6
Not stated	9	3	8
Marital status: partnered*	69	51	63
Partner lives in Australia (if partnered)	92	93	93
% who have children*	39	18	32
% with children in Australia*	31	13	25
<i>Number of children in Australia*</i>			
0	69	87	75
1	12	8	11
2	14	4	11
3	4	1	3
4+	1	0	1
<i>Age of children*</i>			
<5 years	16	7	13
5-9 years	14	3	11
10-14 years	14	5	11
15-19 years	10	4	8
20+ years	4	2	3
<i>Relatives in Australia</i>			
Parent(s)	3	4	3
Parent(s)-in-law	6	9	7
Brother, sister	10	14	11
Brother-in-law, sister-in-law	13	17	14
Uncle, aunt*	15	21	17
Cousin*	23	30	25
<i>Housing situation*</i>			
Living in owned home	11	10	10
Renting privately	74	78	75
Paying board	2	5	3
Living with relatives	2	3	2
Employer provided housing	7	3	5
Employer provided rent-free housing	4	1	3

* Difference between men and women is statistically significant (chi square test $p < 0.05$)

Table 4. Socioeconomic characteristics of the survey respondents

	Men	Women	Total
<i>Highest qualification</i>	%	%	%
Higher degree	30	26	29
Bachelor degree	34	37	35
Diploma/certificate	26	31	27
Trade	5	2	4
No post-school education	5	4	5
<i>Occupation before coming to Australia</i>			
Managers and Administrators	25	12	21
Professionals	37	48	40
Associate Professionals	13	11	12
Trade persons	8	3	6
Other	10	16	12
Not stated	4	3	4
Not in the labour force	4	7	5
<i>Current occupation</i>			
Managers and Administrators	30	17	26
Professionals	40	57	46
Associate Professionals	15	12	14
Trade persons	8	3	6
Other	6	11	7
Not stated	1	1	1
Not in the labour force	0	0	0
<i>Current annual income before tax</i>			
<\$35,000	6	8	7
\$35-50,000	30	41	33
\$50-75,000	20	32	24
\$75-100,000	16	8	13
\$100-150,000	17	8	14
\$150-200,000	6	2	5
\$200,000 or more	6	1	5
Total	100	100	100

Table 5. Highest qualification of 457 visa holders compared with employed persons aged 15-64 in Australia 2004, by occupational group.

Highest qualification	Managers, administrators	Professionals	Associate professionals	Trades
	%	%	%	%
457 visa holders				
Post-graduate degree	33.2	34.8	15.0	10.0
Bachelor degree	36.9	40.6	24.4	8.6
Technical cert./diploma	26.2	22.0	50.0	72.8
None	3.3	2.6	10.6	8.6
Employed persons aged 15-64				
Post-graduate degree	10.2	22.3	5.4	0.4
Bachelor degree	21.7	46.0	15.5	2.5
Technical cert./diploma	35.2	20.6	43.5	64.6
None	32.0	10.5	34.7	31.3

Sources: 457s Survey; ABS 2004.

Table 6. Percentage of 457 visa holders for whom the reason was important for coming to work in Australia.

	Like Aust.'s lifestyle, etc.	Relatives in Aust.	Friends in Aust.	Apply for perm. res.	Better job opportunities	Higher salary	Promotion/ career dev.	Gain int'l. experience	Company transfer	Lack suitable employment	Dislike ec. condtions	Dislike soc. condtions	Escape political sit.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All respondents	84	19	32	60	62	41	64	76	33	18	24	24	10
Sex													
Male	84	18	27	59	62	41	65	74	37	19	24	26	10
Female	83	20	41	61	62	40	61	81	25	15	25	20	10
<i>Country of citizenship</i>													
UK	89	16	32	57	50	18	54	65	30	6	16	21	3
Ireland	91	16	37	50	55	33	64	69	15	9	14	14	5
France	83	13	24	59	57	43	59	76	31	17	24	21	3
Germany	72	4	31	51	34	14	53	79	41	17	7	3	3
Other Europe	77	17	26	75	50	41	52	73	32	24	30	18	4
Middle East	100	50	25	75	83	82	64	82	27	33	46	18	25
Malaysia	81	38	38	71	95	91	76	85	29	38	43	25	11
Singapore	86	21	29	86	93	93	77	93	31	36	39	31	23
Other SE Asia	78	31	43	72	98	88	80	92	37	42	48	37	25
China	72	21	41	66	71	72	90	93	52	14	18	29	7
Japan	90	22	49	68	70	42	70	90	38	22	26	31	7
Korea	81	42	27	83	83	67	85	81	55	24	24	40	3
Other NE Asia	54	25	46	62	77	69	85	92	25	50	54	31	8
India	73	16	21	61	87	78	81	87	39	20	17	10	10
Other S. Asia	69	46	54	69	92	92	100	100	39	50	62	23	46
Canada	67	8	23	42	60	35	66	76	28	20	10	5	0
USA	84	7	24	39	49	25	61	76	48	4	7	12	6
South Africa	88	18	20	83	67	44	63	78	11	42	65	71	57
Other Africa	81	31	13	81	75	56	63	81	7	27	75	56	75
<i>Occupational group</i>													
Managers	80	14	26	52	57	35	69	71	51	11	18	20	9
Professionals	85	15	28	57	60	37	59	75	26	15	22	22	8
Assoc. professionals	86	29	38	71	71	55	75	85	30	27	32	28	13
Trades	83	37	41	78	75	54	65	75	18	39	49	45	19
Other	82	22	52	64	68	41	59	80	32	21	50	25	9

Table 6 (contd.)

Respondents' characteristics	Like Aust.'s lifestyle, etc.	Relatives in Aust.	Friends in Aust.	Apply for perm. res.	Better job opportunities	Higher salary	Promotion/ career dev.	Gain int'l. experience	Company transfer	Lack suit. employment	Dislike ec. condtions	Dislike soc. condtions	Escape political sit.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Industry of employment</i>													
Agriculture	87	17	22	68	69	47	69	69	17	37	43	31	29
Mining	80	5	15	39	65	35	73	68	69	13	8	10	8
Manufacturing	83	18	20	58	58	39	64	75	48	16	22	23	11
Construction	85	21	34	66	61	37	63	71	13	23	30	25	16
Electricit, etc	80	0	13	40	27	14	33	47	53	13	7	27	7
Transport and storage	72	16	32	58	60	44	85	65	44	8	20	16	12
Health and com. service	85	22	40	73	62	39	55	74	13	20	31	22	8
Restaurants	80	35	44	72	79	66	82	92	29	37	37	33	15
Recreation services	82	15	37	67	59	14	57	64	14	11	18	18	7
IT and communication	84	12	24	54	65	45	67	79	39	13	20	22	9
Property and business	94	21	36	53	57	26	71	78	30	0	13	21	4
Finance and insurance	89	10	26	43	53	33	55	78	44	13	20	21	6
Education	79	19	41	55	55	31	67	81	19	7	12	12	7
Personal services	82	21	50	63	71	48	58	79	28	25	30	40	7
Retail trade	90	28	34	74	65	45	65	84	22	16	31	32	11
Wholesale trade	73	22	32	58	45	29	56	63	41	13	24	37	3
Government	83	21	21	53	53	37	58	74	47	11	16	26	5

Table 7. Whether 457 visa holder would have accepted current job if it was outside a major city.

Characteristic of 457 visa holder	Yes	No	Already living outside major cities
	%	%	%
<i>Sex</i>			
Male	50	42	8
Female	41	49	10
<i>Partnered</i>	48	43	9
Not partnered	44	47	9
<i>Age (years)</i>			
<25	61	32	7
25-29	39	49	12
30-34	46	48	6
35-39	44	47	10
40-49	54	35	11
50+	60	34	6
<i>Country of citizenship</i>			
UK	37	56	7
Ireland	22	73	5
France	43	40	17
Germany	40	47	13
Other Europe	47	42	11
Middle East	36	64	0
Malaysia	47	43	10
Singapore	57	43	0
Other SE Asia	63	29	8
China	65	35	0
Japan	48	27	26
Korea	56	40	5
Other NE Asia	62	38	0
India	75	21	4
Other S. Asia	62	23	15
Canada	45	45	10
USA	47	49	4
South Africa	64	23	14
Other Africa	63	12	25
<i>Occupation</i>			
Managers and administrators	41	53	6
Professionals	45	46	9
Associate professionals	57	33	10
Trades	61	23	16
Total	47	44	9

Table 8. Major occupational groups of 457 visa holders before and after arrival in Australia

	Previous country of residence			Australia		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Managers and administrators	24.9	12.1	20.7	29.9	17.0	25.7
Professionals	36.5	48.2	40.4	40.5	57.0	45.9
Associate professionals	12.8	11.3	12.3	14.8	11.9	13.9
Trade persons	7.6	3.1	6.1	7.9	2.6	6.1
Others	5.6	10.1	7.1	4.9	9.0	6.2
Inadequately described	4.4	5.7	4.8	0.9	1.8	1.2
Not stated	4.1	2.6	3.6	1.0	0.5	0.8
Not in the labour force	4.1	7.0	5.0	0.1	0.3	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 9. 457 visa holders' occupation before and after arrival in Australia

Occupation before arrival	Occupation after arrival					
	Managers	Professionals	Assoc.Prof.	Trades	Other	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Managers and administrators	79.4	12.3	4.1	1.6	2.5	100.0
Professionals	10.5	85.3	2.3	0.6	0.4	100.0
Associate professionals	15.2	11.0	69.7	2.1	2.1	100.0
Trade persons	5.6	5.6	9.7	72.2	7.0	100.0
Other	12.0	14.5	10.8	2.4	60.2	100.0
Not in the labour force	8.5	61.0	13.6	6.8	10.2	100.0

Table 10. 457 visa holders' by occupational group and selected characteristics of their current employment

	Occupational group					Total
	Managers Administrators	Professionals	Associate professionals	Trades	Other	
<i>Mode of recruitment</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Overseas office of company	29	16	6	1	7	16
Direct approach to employer	24	28	32	36	36	29
Direct approach by employer	23	15	22	17	12	18
Personnel recruitment agency	8	20	9	4	9	14
Family or friends	10	7	25	26	17	12
Newspaper/internet advertisement	5	13	6	15	19	11
Migration agent	0	1	1	0	0	1
<i>Years worked with current employer</i>						
<1	20	36	34	38	29	31
1-2	23	33	35	38	39	32
3-5	17	14	18	9	14	15
5-9	15	11	8	0	14	11
10+	24	7	5	11	4	11
<i>Annual income</i>						
Less than \$35,000	2	3	13	25	20	7
\$35-50,000	17	30	54	61	51	33
\$50-75,000	17	33	18	10	14	24
\$75-100,000	15	16	7	3	10	13
\$100-150,000	25	13	5	1	4	14
\$150-200,000	10	4	3	0	1	5
\$200,000 or more	14	2	1	0	0	5
<i>Hours worked</i>						
<35	2	3	1	3	9	3
35-40	34	57	50	45	53	49
41-50	41	33	35	44	26	35
>50	24	8	14	9	12	13
Use language(s) other than English	32	15	45	31	48	27
3 most common languages	Japanese French Korean	Japanese Chinese French	Japanese Thai Hindi	Korean Japanese Arabic	Japanese French Mandarin	Japanese Korean French
Travel overseas for work	58	25	15	7	21	31
<i>No. of trips per year</i>						
1-2	43	69	71	80	60	56
3-4	23	16	8	0	40	19
5-9	25	10	17	20	0	18
10 or more	8	6	4	0	0	7
3 most common destinations	US UK New Zealand	US Singapore New Zealand	UK US Japan	- - -	US Thailand H.Kong	US UK NZ

Table 11. 457 visa holders by occupational group and conditions of their current employment

	Occupational group					Total
	Managers Administrators	Professionals	Associate professionals	Trades	Other	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Method of payment</i>						
Salary basis	97	93	93	94	93	94
Contract lump sum basis	3	7	8	6	7	6
<i>Salary paid in:</i>						
Australia	82	94	98	99	99	92
Overseas	9	3	2	1	0	4
Australia & overseas	9	3	1	0	1	4
<i>Subject to tax in Australia & overseas</i>						
Yes	36	26	21	13	16	26
No	60	69	72	78	75	68
Don't know	4	5	7	9	10	5
Required to sign contract with employer	80	90	75	74	76	82
<i>Benefits provided by employer</i>						
Air fares for self	58	30	23	10	16	34
Air fares for dependents	39	13	9	6	8	18
Housing on arrival	50	28	22	17	16	31
Assistance with housing costs	40	12	20	13	9	20
Medical insurance	48	23	28	22	37	31
Superannuation	82	85	89	90	86	85
Financial assistance with English study	11	4	8	6	13	7
Financial assist. with children's education	17	3	3	3	0	6
Motor vehicle for private use	38	10	14	21	11	18
Assistance with registration,etc.	43	29	31	36	29	34
Received training to meet requirements of position	34	38	38	26	41	37
<i>Training paid by: (of those who received training)</i>						
Employer	79	63	66	82	54	68
Self	13	25	28	18	32	23
Both employer and self	8	12	6	0	14	10

Table 12. 457 visa holders' perceptions of their employment, by occupational category

	Occupational group					Total
	Managers Administrators	Professionals	Associate professionals	Trades	Other	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Had any dispute with employer	86.9	83.0	81.6	70.0	75.0	80.4
<i>Disputes with employer about:</i>						
Salary/payment level	9.7	9.5	11.3	21.1	13.9	11.1
Working hours	4.4	6.0	8.2	12.7	13.7	6.9
Type of work	5.8	5.6	7.0	12.7	8.3	6.4
Quality of work	4.8	4.5	5.7	5.6	8.3	4.9
Holidays/leave	4.7	6.3	13.2	12.9	16.7	8.0
Obtaining skills and experience useful in future work	92.7	93.3	94.4	90.1	87.5	92.7
Passing on skills and experience to Australian workers	95.7	94.4	94.4	93.0	85.9	94.0
<i>Job satisfaction</i>						
Love it- best job ever had	27.3	19.4	21.7	23.6	24.7	22.4
Like it	54.3	51.7	47.8	52.8	37.0	50.9
Job is OK	16.3	26.1	25.5	18.1	31.5	23.4
Don't really care	0.3	0.9	1.9	5.6	4.1	1.5
Dislike it	1.7	1.9	3.1	0	2.7	1.9

Table 13. 457 visa holders according to their employer's profile

Employers' characteristics	Occupational group					Total
	Managers Administrators	Professionals	Associate professionals	Trades	Other	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Number of employees						
<5	14	6	16	18	11	11
5-24	24	19	40	47	32	26
25-99	22	21	19	25	26	21
100-299	12	17	11	7	13	14
300+	28	28	14	1	18	27
Not stated	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2
Employer has other 457 visa holders	55	69	48	39	60	58
Other 457 employees do the same work	33	66	59	72	54	56
Average no. of other 457 visa holders	13	18	7	3	14	14

Table 14. 457 visa holders' future plans on employment, migration and residence, by occupational group.

	Managers	Professionals	Assoc. prof.	Trades	Other	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Plan to stay with employer</i>						
Time specified	5	9	3	10	3	7
Permanently	43	29	36	33	26	34
Not sure	40	53	50	47	62	49
Not stated	11	9	12	10	10	10
<i>Plan to extend/apply for another 457 visa</i>						
Yes	30	29	46	39	49	33
No	70	72	54	61	51	67
<i>Plan to stay in Australia</i>						
Time specified	9	8	3	4	3	7
Indefinitely	45	53	56	53	41	50
Not sure/not stated	45	39	41	43	56	43
<i>Return to work in Australia in future</i>						
Yes	37	48	40	39	37	42
No	10	9	7	11	6	9
Not sure	17	14	9	6	16	13
Not stated	35	30	44	44	41	36
<i>Prefer to live in:</i>						
Australia	76	78	88	92	86	80
Home country	17	13	6	4	4	12
Another country	2	4	1	0	4	3
Don't know/not stated	5	3	6	4	6	5
<i>Permanent residence intention</i>						
Yes, have applied	32	39	38	43	18	36
Yes, intend to apply	45	47	52	49	63	48
No	23	15	11	8	19	16

Table 15. 457 visa holder's satisfaction with their experience in Australia

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Total
	%	%	%
Total	63	33	97
<i>Occupational group</i>			
Managers, administrators	62	36	98
Professionals	64	32	96
Associate professionals	67	31	98
Trades	63	35	99
Other	56	36	92
<i>Country of citizenship</i>			
UK	73	24	97
Ireland	72	27	99
France	80	20	100
Germany	33	67	100
Other Europe	56	42	98
Middle East	83	17	100
Malaysia	67	33	100
Singapore	62	31	92
Other SE Asia	54	46	100
China	39	61	100
Japan	49	42	91
Korea	41	52	93
Other NE Asia	36	46	82
India	58	39	97
Other S Asia	46	54	100
Canada	66	32	98
USA	74	21	95
Other America	46	55	100
South Africa	62	33	94
Other Africa	38	63	100

Table 16. Respondents' satisfaction with aspects of the 457 visa application process

	V. satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	V. dissatisfied
	%	%	%	%
Application processing time	41	47	8	3
Clarity of forms	26	63	8	2
Costs	11	58	22	8
Assistance received from government officials	20	60	11	5

Figure 1. Visa type of previous visit, by country of origin of 457 visa holders

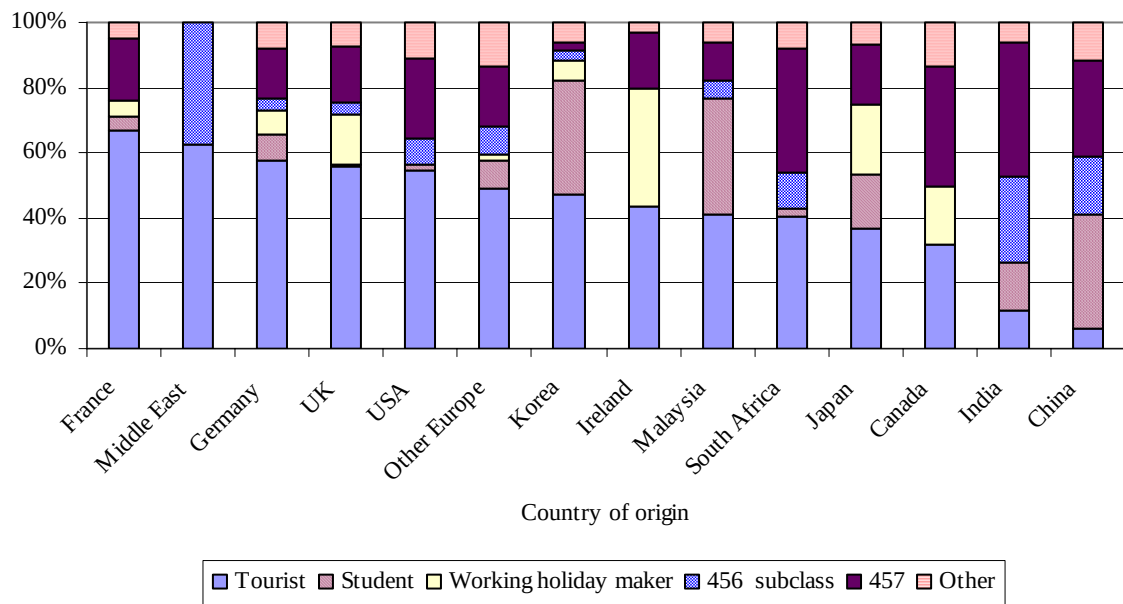


Figure 2. Comparison of skilled temporary and permanent migrants' reasons for migration to Australia

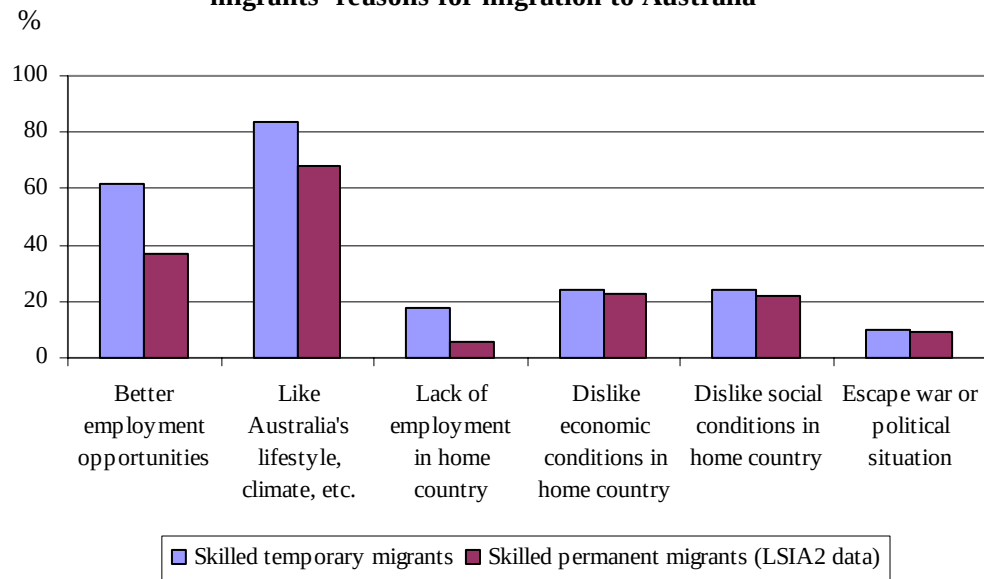


Figure 3. 457 visa holders' reasons for choosing where to live in Australia

% of respondents

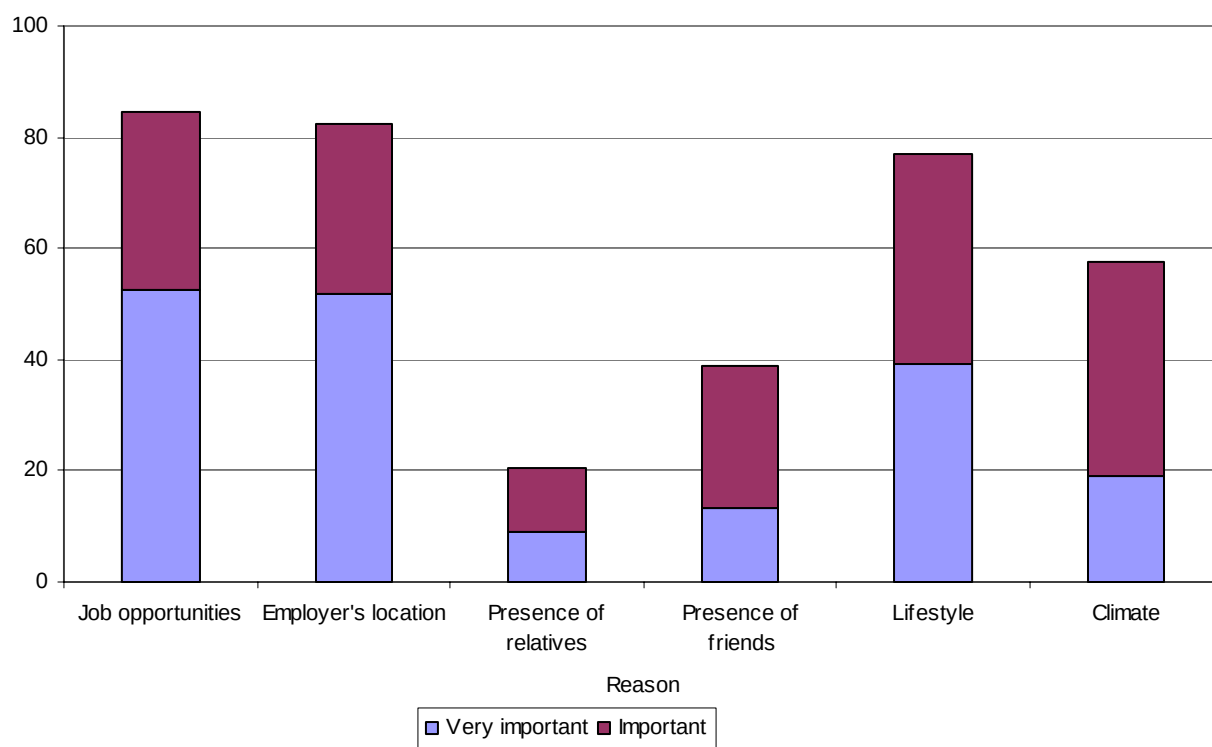


Figure 4. Percentage of survey respondents who arrived on the 457 visa, by industry of employment, occupational group and sex

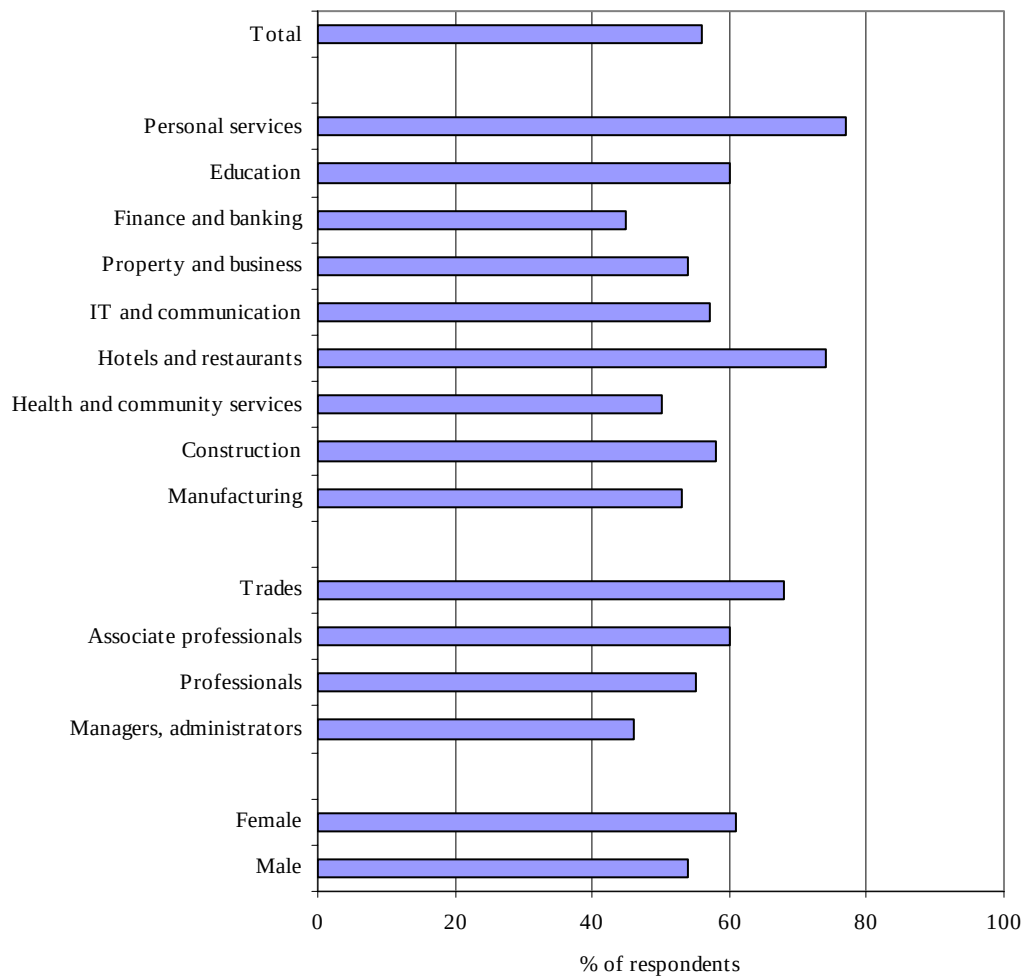


Figure 5. Reasons for applying for 457 visa after arrival

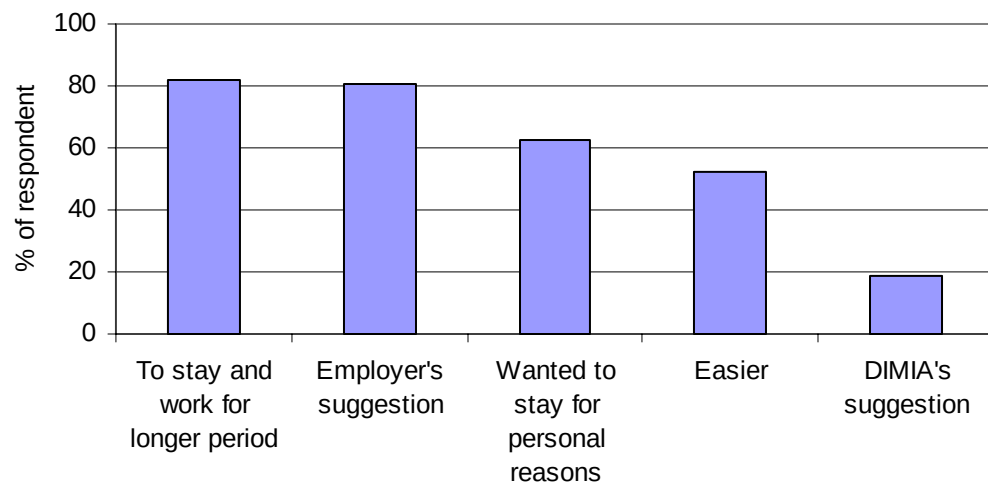


Figure 6. Percentage of 457 visa holders who have worked in another country for at least 3 months before coming to Australia, by sex, age and country of citizenship

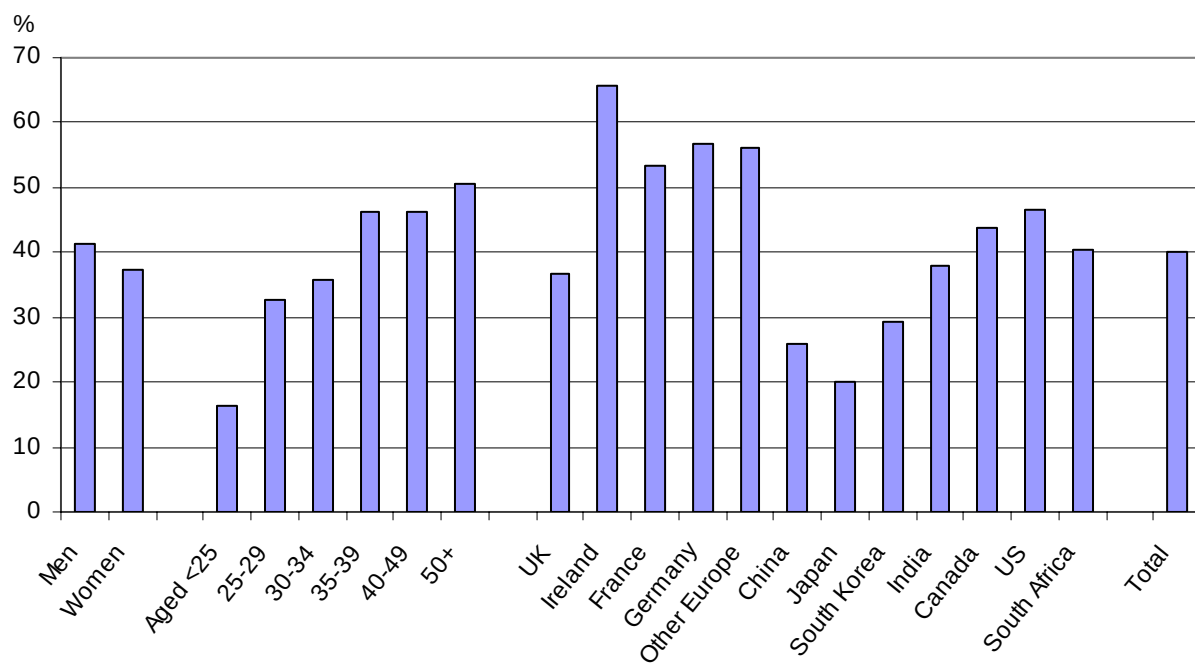
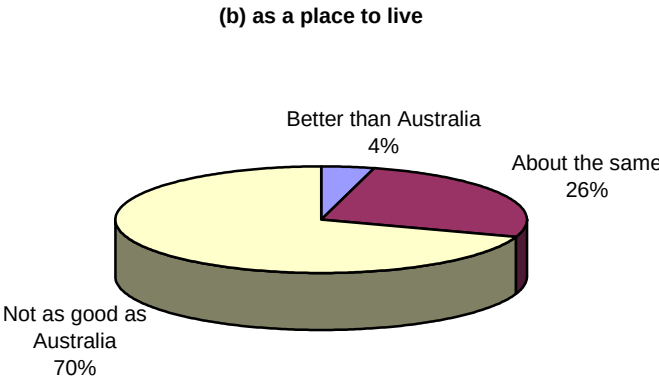
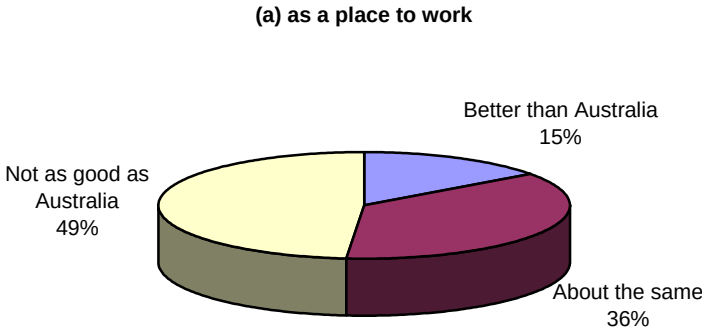
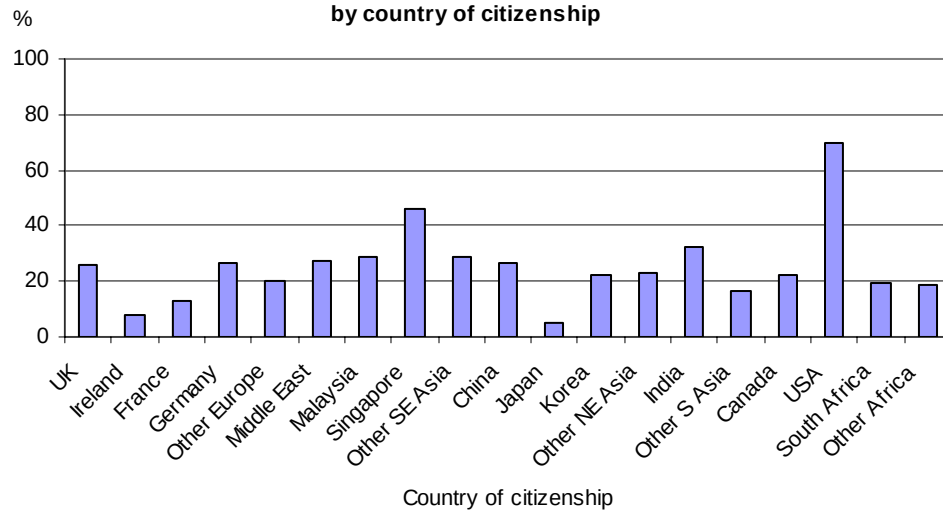


Figure 7. Country of previous overseas work experience compared with Australia
(Percentage of respondents who have worked overseas)



**Figure 8. Percentage of 457 visa holders who stated that they were
subject to taxation in Australia and another country,
by country of citizenship**



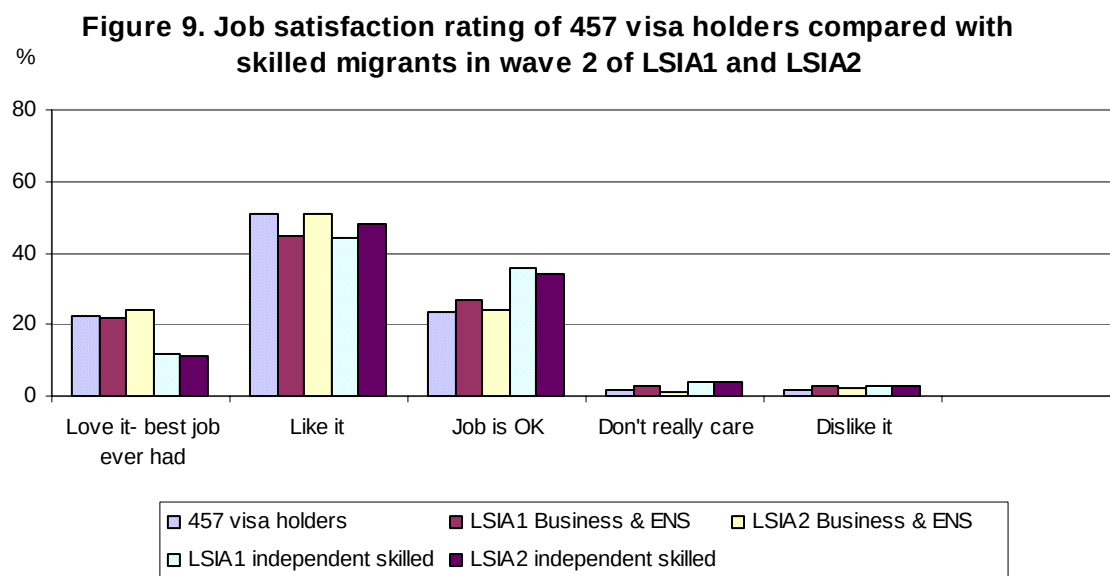


Figure 10. Percentage of respondents with employers that have other 457 visa holders, by industry of employment

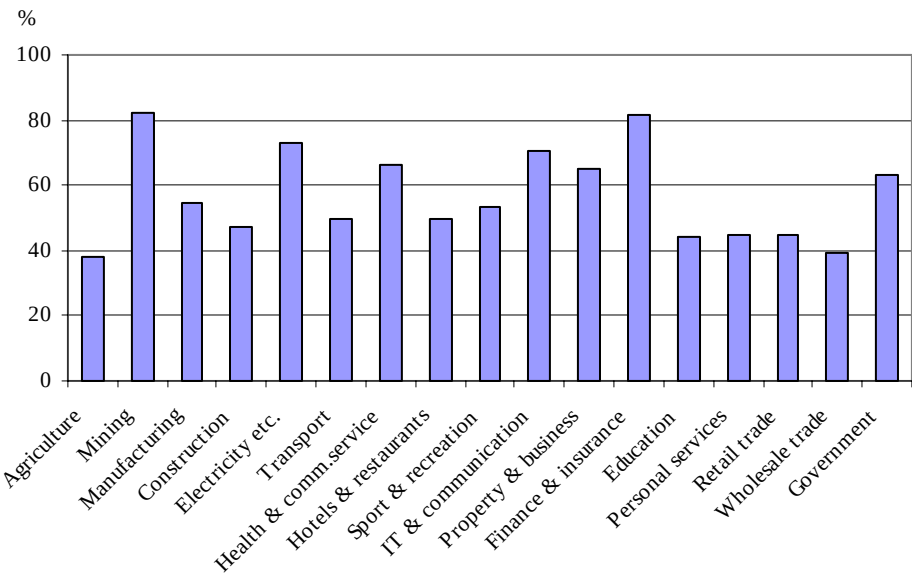


Figure 11. 457 visa holders with partner in Australia, whose partner was employed, by 457 visa holder's occupational group and country of citizenship

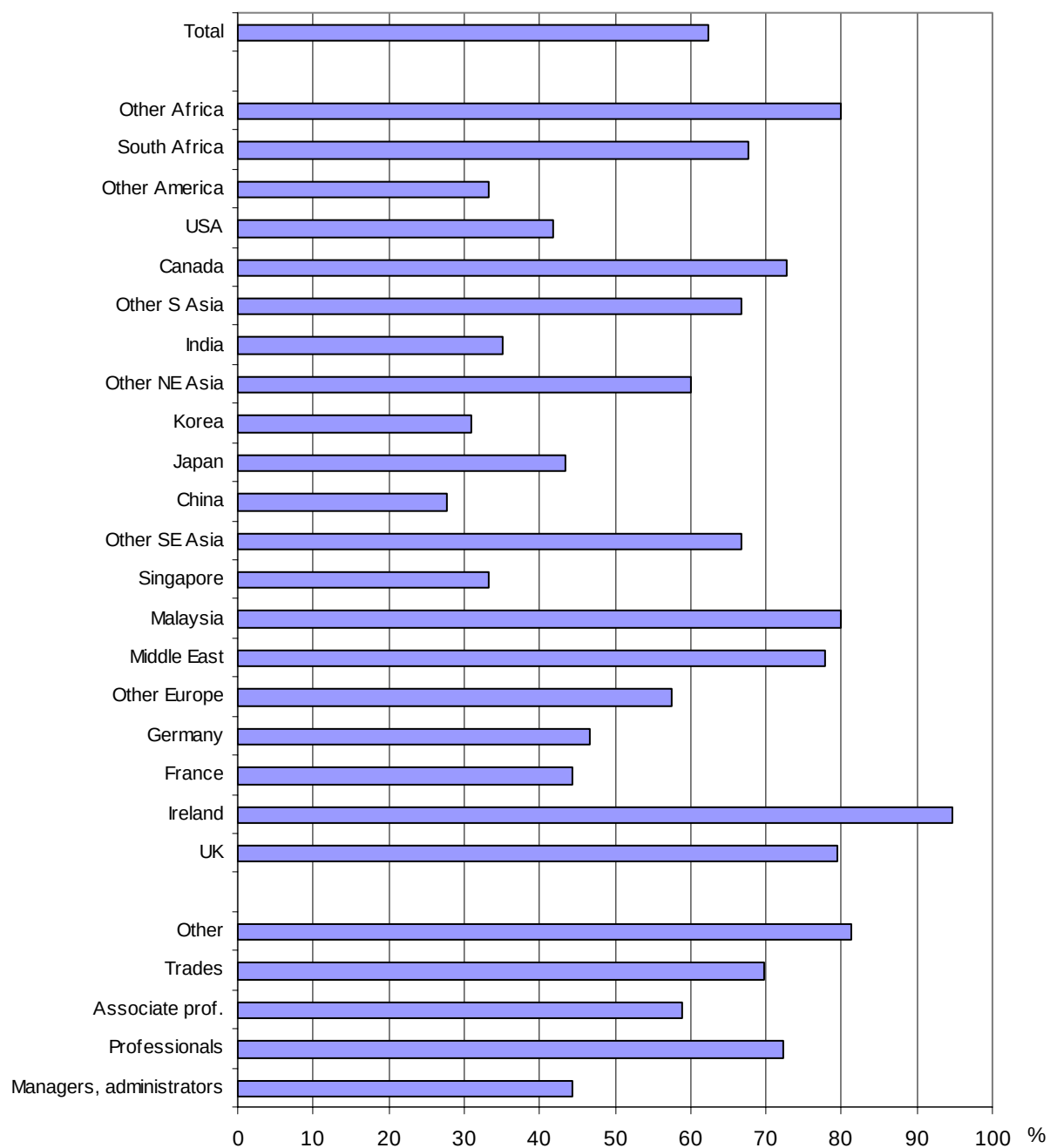


Figure 12: Industry of employment of 457 visa holders and spouses



Figure 13. Salary range of 457 visa holder and employed spouse

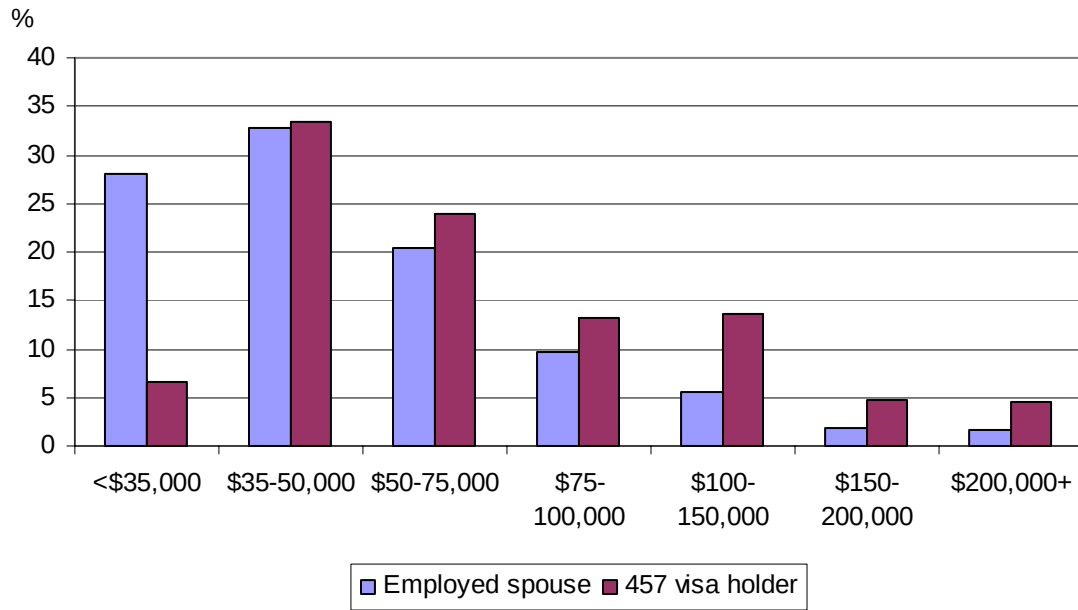


Figure 14. 457 visa holders' plans to stay in Australia, by country of citizenship

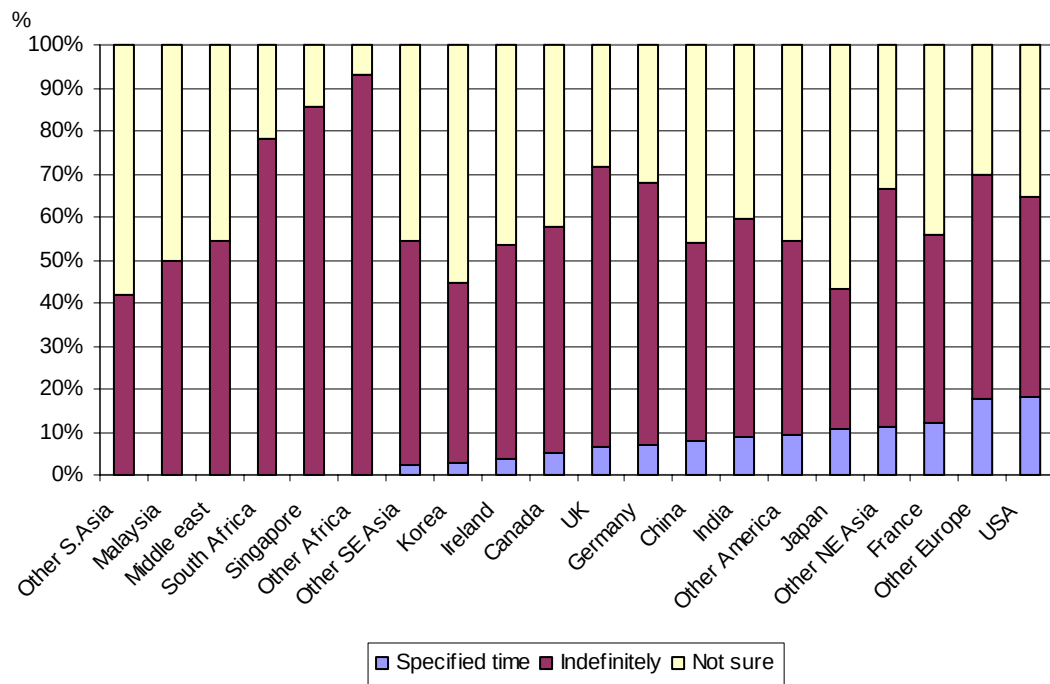


Figure 15. Percentage of 457 visa holders who prefer to live in Australia, home country or another country, by country of citizenship.

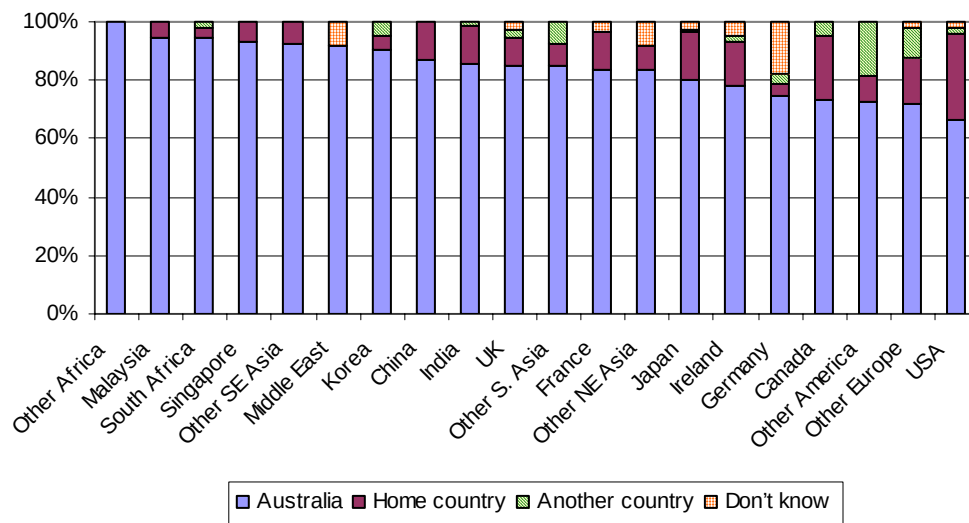


Figure 16. Percentage of 457 visa holders who had applied or intended to apply for permanent residence in Australia, by country of citizenship

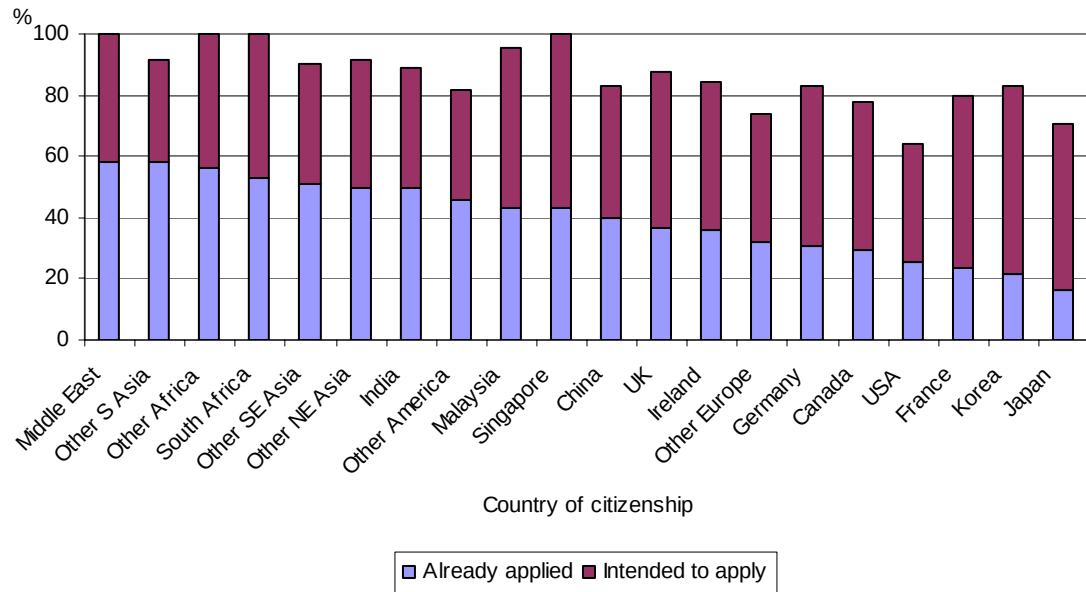


Figure 17. Percentage of 457 visa holders indicating that reason was important or very important for wanting to apply for permanent residence in Australia

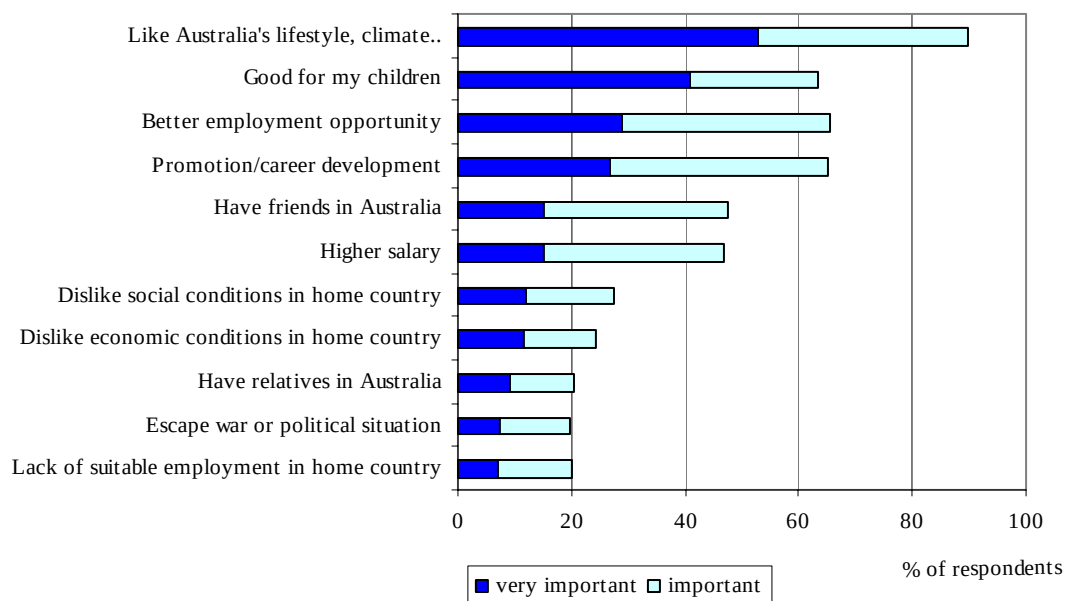


Figure 18. Percentage of respondents indicating reason was important or very important in not wanting to live in Australia permanently.

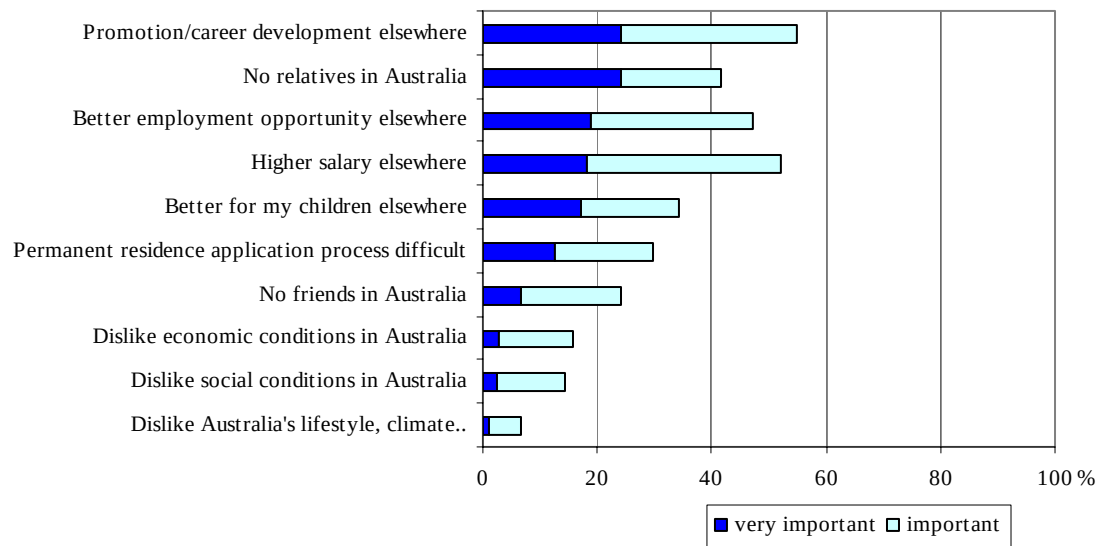


Figure 19. 457 visa holders' views about their Australian work experience

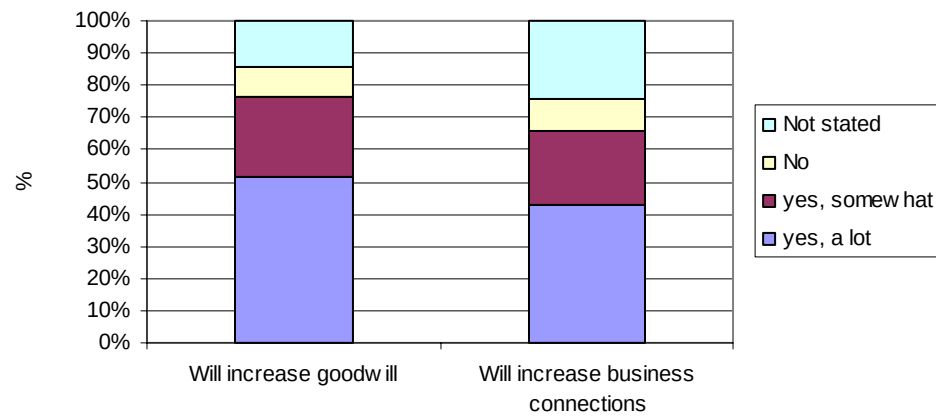


Figure 20a. Percentage of 457 visa holders who thought their work experience and that of their compatriots would increase good will between their country and Australia, by occupational group.

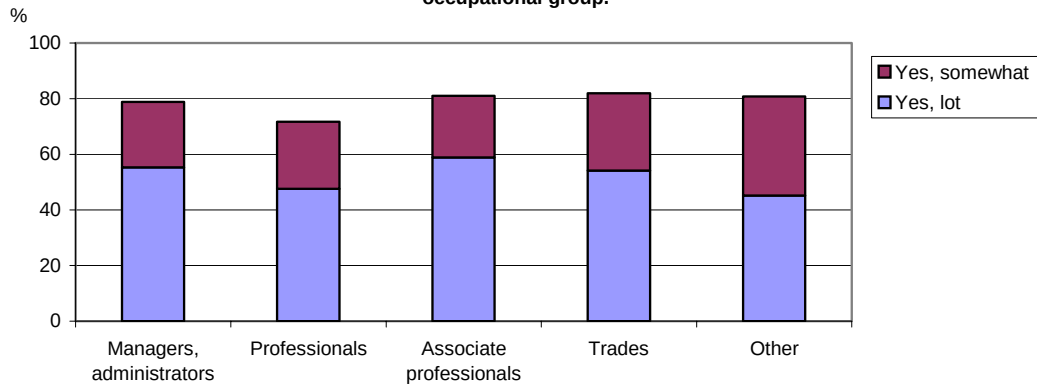


Figure 20b. Percentage of 457 visa holders who thought their work experience and that of their compatriots would increase business connections between their country and Australia, by occupational group

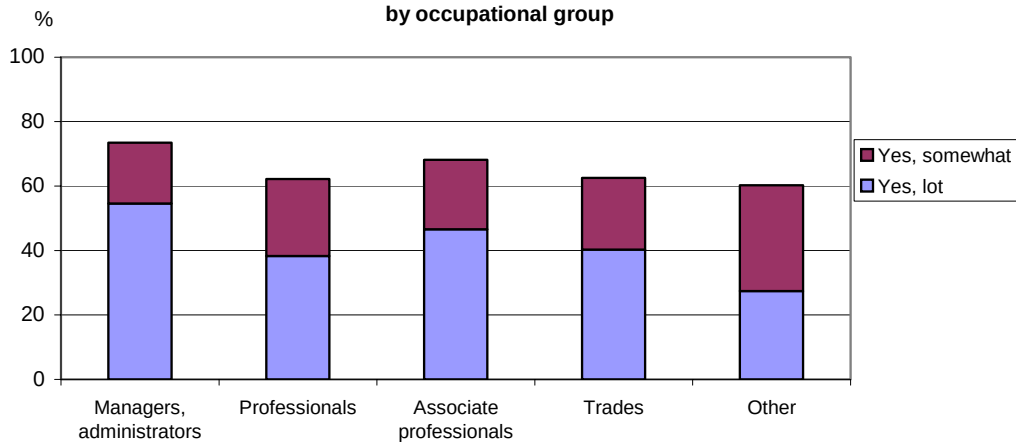


Figure 21. Satisfaction with life/experience in Australia: 457 visa holders compared with Business/Employer Nomination and Independent skilled immigrants in LSIA2, wave 2

