



**Australian Government**

**Department of Home Affairs**



# **The Administration of the Immigration and Citizenship Programs**

15<sup>th</sup> Edition (October 2025)

# Table of Contents

<b>List of Figures .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Acronyms .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Purpose.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Implementation of the Migration Strategy .....	4
<b>Administering the immigration program .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Broad visa trends.....	5
Visa Processing times .....	5
<b>Net Overseas Migration.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Addressing NOM through the Migration Strategy .....	9
<b>Temporary visas .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Visitor visa .....	11
Student Visa .....	12
Student visa holders .....	14
Student visa applications finalised.....	14
Temporary Graduate visa.....	15
Working Holiday Makers .....	15
Temporary Resident (Skilled).....	17
Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement .....	19
Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Scheme .....	19
Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme .....	21
Bridging visas .....	21
<b>Migration Program.....</b>	<b>22</b>
Skilled Migration Program .....	25
Employer Sponsorship .....	26
Regional Migration.....	27
Designated Area Migration Agreements.....	28
Industry Labour Agreements .....	29
Business Innovation and Investment Program .....	29
National Innovation Visa.....	30
Family Program .....	30
Family Migration: Capping and queuing and order of processing of applications .....	30
Partner visas.....	31
Parent visas.....	32
Sponsored Parent (Temporary) visa .....	33
Child visas .....	33
Processing times .....	33
Family Violence Provisions.....	33
Pacific Engagement visa .....	34
Pacific Engagement stream.....	34
Treaty stream .....	36

<b>Relationship between temporary and permanent migration.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Immigration outreach and engagement .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Humanitarian Program .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Humanitarian visas .....	38
Dedicated places for Afghan nationals .....	38
Protection visas .....	39
Unauthorised Maritime Arrivals (UMA) Legacy Caseload .....	40
<b>Adult Migrant English Program.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Australian Citizenship Program .....</b>	<b>41</b>
Citizenship by conferral .....	41
Citizenship by descent .....	42
Citizenship by adoption .....	43
Citizenship by resumption .....	43
Citizenship service delivery .....	43
Direct pathway to Australian citizenship for New Zealanders .....	43
<b>Managing risk and community protection .....</b>	<b>43</b>
Risk Environment .....	43
Reforms and Policy implementation .....	44
People smuggling .....	44
Maritime People Smuggling.....	44
Modern slavery and human trafficking .....	45
Ensuring immigration integrity and community protection.....	46
Migrant worker exploitation .....	46
Unlawful non-Citizens.....	48
Cancellations .....	49
The Character Program.....	49
The General Visa Cancellation Program .....	51
Status resolution .....	52
Entering the Status Resolution program.....	52
Bridging E (subclass 050) visas (BVE).....	53
Status Resolution Support Services .....	53
Leaving the Status Resolution program .....	54
Return and Reintegration Assistance Program (RRAP).....	54
Management of transitory persons .....	55

## List of Figures

Figure 1 Total non-humanitarian visa programs trends, 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	5
Figure 2 Net Overseas Migration, Australia, year ending 31 March – 2010 to 2025 .....	7
Figure 3 Net Overseas Migration, Australia, quarterly, by direction .....	8
Figure 4 Number of temporary visa holders in Australia, 31 December 2020 to 30 June 2025 .....	10
Figure 5 Visitor visa program trends, 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	12
Figure 6 Student visa program trends, 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	13
Figure 7 Working Holiday Maker visa trends, from 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	16
Figure 8 Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Scheme including Seasonal Worker Program and Pacific Labour Scheme from 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	20
Figure 9 Number of bridging visa holders in Australia, from 30 June 2015 to 30 June 2025 .....	22
Figure 10 Bridging A, B and C visa holders in Australia by visa category applied for as at 30 June 2022 to 30 June 2025 .....	22
Figure 11 Migration Program outcomes by stream, 1984–85 to 2024–25, with 2025–26 Planning Levels .....	23
Figure 12 Skilled Migration Program composition of the Skilled Migration Program outcomes, 2018–19 to 2025–26 planning levels .....	26
Figure 13 Partner (provisional/Temporary) visa program trends, 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	31
Figure 14 Partner Permanent visa program trends, 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	32
Figure 15 Offshore Humanitarian program trends, 2016–17 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	38
Figure 16 Permanent Protection finalisations, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	39
Figure 17 Permanent Protection visa grants, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	40
Figure 18 Citizenship by conferral lodgement trends, 2014–15 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	42
Figure 19 Citizenship by descent applications lodged and finalised, 2019–20 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	42
Figure 20 Number of Bridging E visa holders in Australia, 30 June 2018 to 30 June 2025 .....	53

## List of Tables

Table 1 Net Overseas Migration forecasts, financial years, 2024–25 to 2028–29.....	8
Table 2 Change in the number of temporary visa holders in Australia – comparison between 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2025 .....	10
Table 3 Change in the number of Student visa applications lodged by sector comparison between 2023–24 and 2024–25 .....	13
Table 4 Number of Student visa holders in Australia, from 30 June 2017 to 30 June 2025 .....	14
Table 5 Offshore Student visa grant rate by sector from 2019–20 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	15
Table 6 Number of registrations received in the WHM ballot, 2024–25 (as at 20 January 2025).....	17
Table 7 Number of Temporary Resident (Skilled) primary visa applications lodged – comparison between .....	18
Table 8 Temporary Skills Shortage visa applications: to 15 most frequently nominated occupations for Temporary Skills Shortage and Skills in Demand visas 2023–24 and 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	18
Table 9 Number of PALM scheme visa grants – comparison between 2023–24 and 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025).....	20
Table 10 Migration Program planning levels and program outcomes, 2021–22 to 2025–26.....	24
Table 11 Migration Program - Top 10 countries of citizenship, 2019–20 to 2024–25.....	25
Table 12 Number of applications lodged for Regional visas and State/Territory nominated visas, dates 2021–22 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	27
Table 13 Number of applications finalised for Regional visas, dates 2021–22 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	28
Table 14 Number of primary registrations received in the PEV ballot, 2024–25 (as at 31 December 2024).....	35
Table 15 Number of applications lodged, 2024–25 (as at 30 June 2025) .....	35
Table 16 Number of applications finalised, 2024–25 (as at 30 June 2025) .....	36
Table 17 Number of permanent primary visa applications lodged by client location, comparison 2022–23, 2023–24 and 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025).....	36
Table 18 Number of Australian citizenship by conferral applications finalised, by decision type and financial year, 2014–15 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025).....	41
Table 19 Returns and transfers, 2023–24 to 2024–25 .....	44
Table 20 Ventures and potential irregular immigrants (PII) disrupted, 2023–24 to 2024–25.....	44
Table 21 Migrant Worker Compliance activity and outcomes 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.....	47
Table 22 Adverse section 501 (character) decisions, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025).....	50
Table 23 Top five citizenships with adverse section 501 (character) outcomes, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	51
Table 24 General cancellation decisions, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	51
Table 25 People who entered the Status Resolution program, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) .....	52
Table 26 Status Resolution population as at 30 June 2025.....	53
Table 27 Status Resolution Support Services recipients, as at 30 June 2025 .....	54
Table 28 Departures from Australia of Status Resolution clients, as at 2020–21 to 2024–25 (30 June 2025).....	54
Table 29 RRAP returns, 2020–2021 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025).....	54

## Acronyms

ABF	Australian Border Force
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWOTE	Average weekly ordinary time earnings
BE	Bridging E (subclass 050) Visa
BIIP	Business Innovation and Investment Program
BNO	British National Overseas
BV	Bridging Visas
BV ABC	Bridging A, B and C Visa
CoE	Confirmation of Enrolment
DAMA	Designated Area Migration Agreement
ELICOS	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
ENS	Employer Nomination Scheme
FNQ	Far North Queensland
FVPs	Family Violence Provisions
FWO	Fair Work Ombudsman
HTVF	Human Trafficking Visa Framework
ILAs	Industry Labour Agreements
JSCFADT	Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
MATES	Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme
MD	Migration Direction
MMPA	Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement
NAP	National Action Plan
NIV	National Innovation visa
PALM	Pacific Australia Labour Mobility
PEV	Pacific Engagement Visa
PII	Potential irregular immigrants
PV	Protection visa
RoS	Resolution of Status
RRAP	Return and Reintegration Assistance Program
SCV	Special Category (Subclass 444) Visa
SHEV	Safe Haven Enterprise Visa
SID	Skills in Demand
SRSS	Status Resolution Support Services
TGV	Temporary Graduate Visas
TPV	Temporary Protection Visa
TRT	Temporary Residence Transition
TSMIT	Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold
TSS	Temporary Skills Shortage
UHM	Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors
UMA	Unauthorised Maritime Arrivals
VAC	Visa Application Charge
VEVO	Visa Entitlement Verification Online



## Purpose

1. The 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Administration of the Immigration and Citizenship Programs* paper (Admin paper 15) is prepared by the Department of Home Affairs (the Department) and provides information about the composition and management of Australia's immigration and citizenship programs. This paper provides an overview of the Department's visa, citizenship, border and compliance programs and related developments as well as complementing existing, publicly available resources.
2. The Admin paper 15 includes updated data to end of the 2024–25 program year (30 June 2025).

## Introduction

3. Immigration is central to Australia's national story and identity. Australia is a proudly multicultural society that is enriched by the diverse cultures and skills of people from across the world. Today, more than half of all Australians are either born overseas; or have a parent born overseas.
4. Immigration continues to help Australia tackle national challenges and build long-term prosperity.
5. The Department manages Australia's immigration program in a way that anticipates and responds to changes in both the domestic and international environment, to advance national interests and support migrants and their families.
6. The Department also supports the Government's reform agenda to deliver sustainable levels of migration, while attracting migrants that will help fill labour shortages, drive productivity growth in sectors of national importance that benefit Australia's future prosperity.

## Implementation of the Migration Strategy

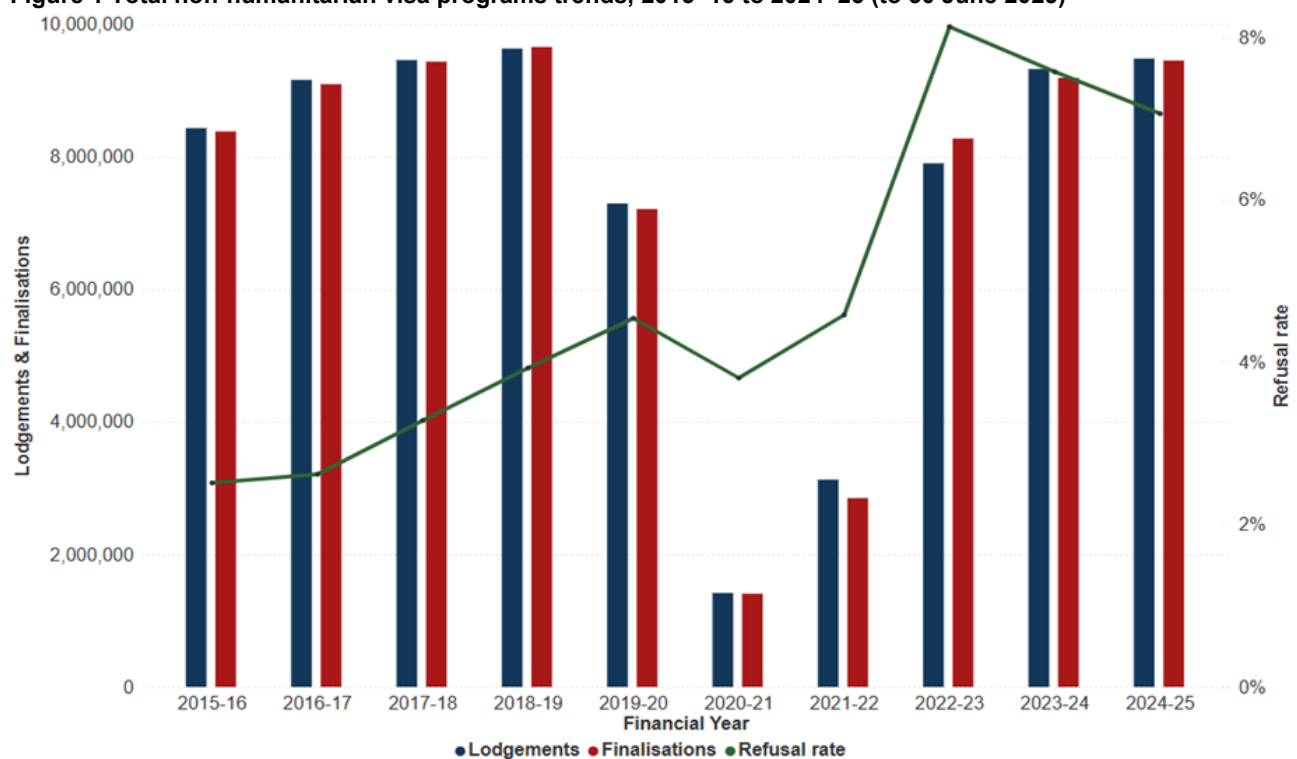
7. Since the release of the Migration Strategy on 11 December 2023, the Government has continued to deliver on commitments to build a migration system that matches the needs of the nation and delivers for Australia and for migrants.
8. The policy roadmap set out in the Migration Strategy will:
  - better connect migrants to Australia's skill needs
  - enhance the integrity and quality of our international education sector
  - improve long-term migration planning and,
  - protect migrants from exploitation.
9. The Department has implemented most of the actions set out in the Migration Strategy in 2024. The following key measures were implemented during 2024–25:
  - The Business Innovation and Investment Program was closed to new applicants on 31 July 2024.
  - The new National Innovation visa and new Skills in Demand visa were implemented on 7 December 2024.
  - A number of student integrity reforms were implemented in the Student and Temporary Graduate visa programs throughout 2024.
10. Looking ahead, the Department is focused on longer term reforms, including a review into regional migration settings and the essential skills pathway.

# Administering the immigration program

## Broad visa trends

11. Between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, the Department received over 9,482,100 temporary and permanent visa applications. This represents a 1.7 per cent increase in lodgements compared to the 9,324,100 applications lodged during 2023–24.
12. Between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, the Department finalised nearly 9,453,100 temporary and permanent visa applications.
13. The refusal rate for visa applications was around 7.3 per cent. This is attributed to the quality of visa applications received and the maturation of risk and integrity capability enabling visa decision makers to more efficiently identify visa applicants who are potentially intending to exploit visa programs.

**Figure 1 Total non-humanitarian visa programs trends, 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Visa Processing times

14. Global [visa processing times](#) are available on the Department of Home Affairs' website to assist visa applicants to understand how long individual applications usually take to process. Processing times can be influenced by the volume and quality of visa applications received, as the Department is able to process decision-ready applications more efficiently. Despite an increase in lodgements in 2024–25, visa applications in many programs are being processed as quickly, or more quickly, than in 2023–24.
15. At 30 June 2025, the Department had finalised 97.6 per cent of temporary visa applications lodged in 2024–25.
16. At 30 June 2025, the Department had finalised 53.4 per cent of permanent visa applications lodged in 2024–25.



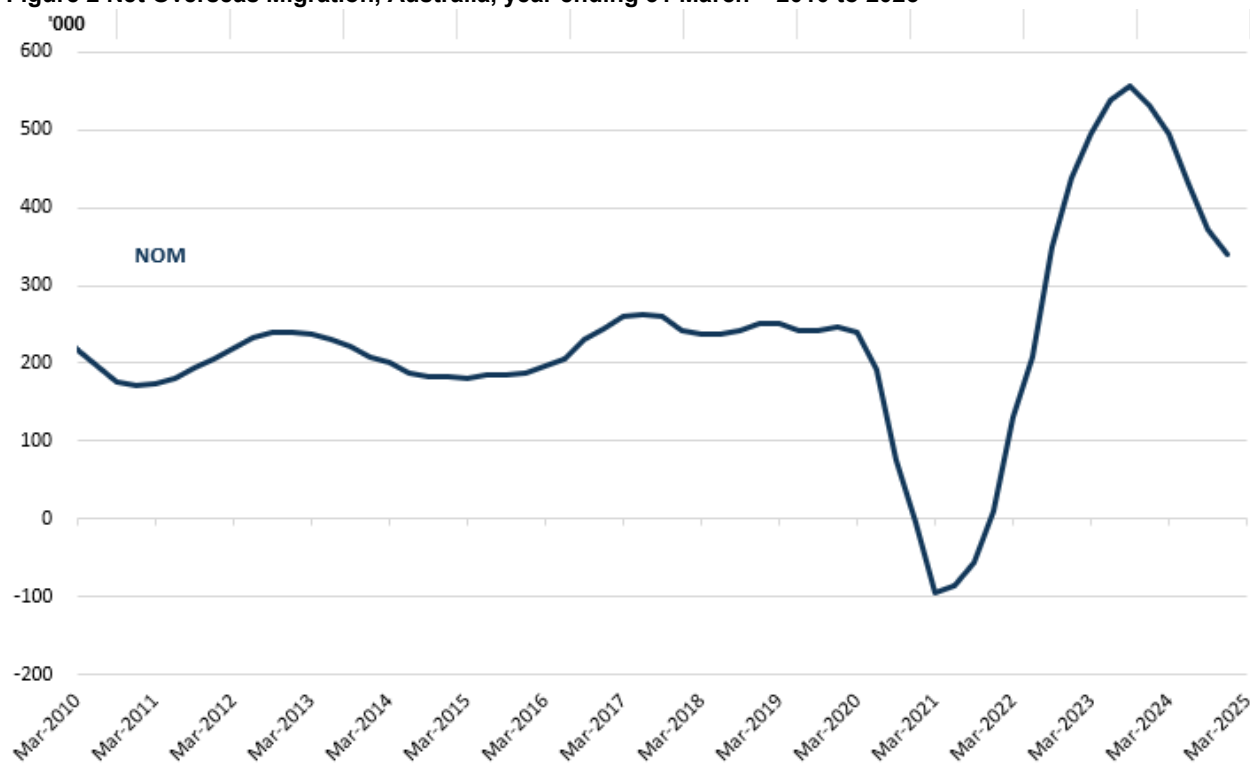
17. Median processing times were improved or maintained for visa applications in the following programs decided in 2024–25, in comparison to the same period in 2023–24:
- Second Stage Skilled (Permanent) visa processing reduced from 304 to 206 days.
  - Partner (Permanent) visa processing reduced from 279 to 271 days.
  - Visitor visas and Working Holiday Maker visas have remained steady, being processed in less than one (1) day.

## Net Overseas Migration

18. Net Overseas Migration (NOM) is a demographic concept and is the net gain or loss of population through immigration to Australia and emigration from Australia. It is not a legal or migration policy concept and can only be influenced indirectly by migration policy settings.
19. International statistical standards define a person as part of a country's population, if they are resident in a country for more than 12 months. To allow for brief departures, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) considers the previous 16 months when determining whether a person is part of the Australian population. This means that NOM is implicitly calculated based on international movements in or out of Australia for 12 months or more, over a 16-month period (referred to as the '12/16 month rule'). 'International movements' includes all arrivals and departures regardless of nationality, citizenship, or country of origin. As well as visa holders, NOM includes the arrivals and departures of Australian citizens and New Zealand citizens if they satisfy the 12/16 month rule.
20. The Department works closely with the Treasury and the ABS on NOM related matters. The Department provides relevant data, analysis and insights, and advice on policy and administrative arrangements related to the management of the immigration program to inform Treasury forecasts.
21. Treasury is responsible for forecasting NOM through the Centre for Population. Treasury uses the Department's data, including visa grants and border movements, to inform their NOM forecasts. In addition, when preparing the NOM forecasts, Treasury considers data from a range of other sources relating to economic, domestic, international and global factors. Treasury forecasts are forward-looking and are included in the Budget Papers and their annual *Population Statement*. The ABS reports preliminary estimates and final outcomes of NOM based on the Department's data.
22. Preliminary estimates of NOM are produced by the ABS less than six months after an international movement occurs. These are revised each quarter as more data on traveller history becomes available, and finalised when a full 16 months has elapsed. This allows for NOM to be published with better precision every three months as part of the ABS' quarterly report on *National, state and territory population*.
23. The latest NOM data, to the March quarter 2025, was published on 18 September 2025. The next release will be available on 18 December 2025.
24. Historically, around 3.0 to 4.0 per cent of people arriving in Australia and 1.0 to 2.0 per cent of departures contribute to NOM. Most travellers either come for short periods or leave for short periods. For example, most tourists and short-term business travellers arrive and then depart (or depart and then return) within a few weeks. This means they would not be counted in NOM because they would not meet the 12/16 month rule. Border crossings are captured in the ABS monthly report on *Overseas Arrivals and Departures Australia*. Overseas arrivals and departures (OAD) data, including permanent and long-term movements, are not measures of overseas migration.
25. The Department grants approximately 9 million temporary visas each year. Many of these visa holders depart within 12 months of their arrival and do not count towards NOM. Others do not count towards NOM because they are extending existing stays, including approximately 60.0 per cent of permanent visas which are granted to onshore applicants under the permanent Migration Program.
26. Some groups of temporary visa holders, such as Students, Working Holiday Makers and those on a Skills in Demand visa, tend to stay for multiple years to complete study and work commitments. While some of these migrants go on to apply for subsequent temporary visas (such as the Temporary Graduate visa) or apply for permanent residency, many leave Australia once their studies and work contracts are complete. This results in a churn of temporary migrants in the country which had been reasonably stable prior to the COVID–19 pandemic.

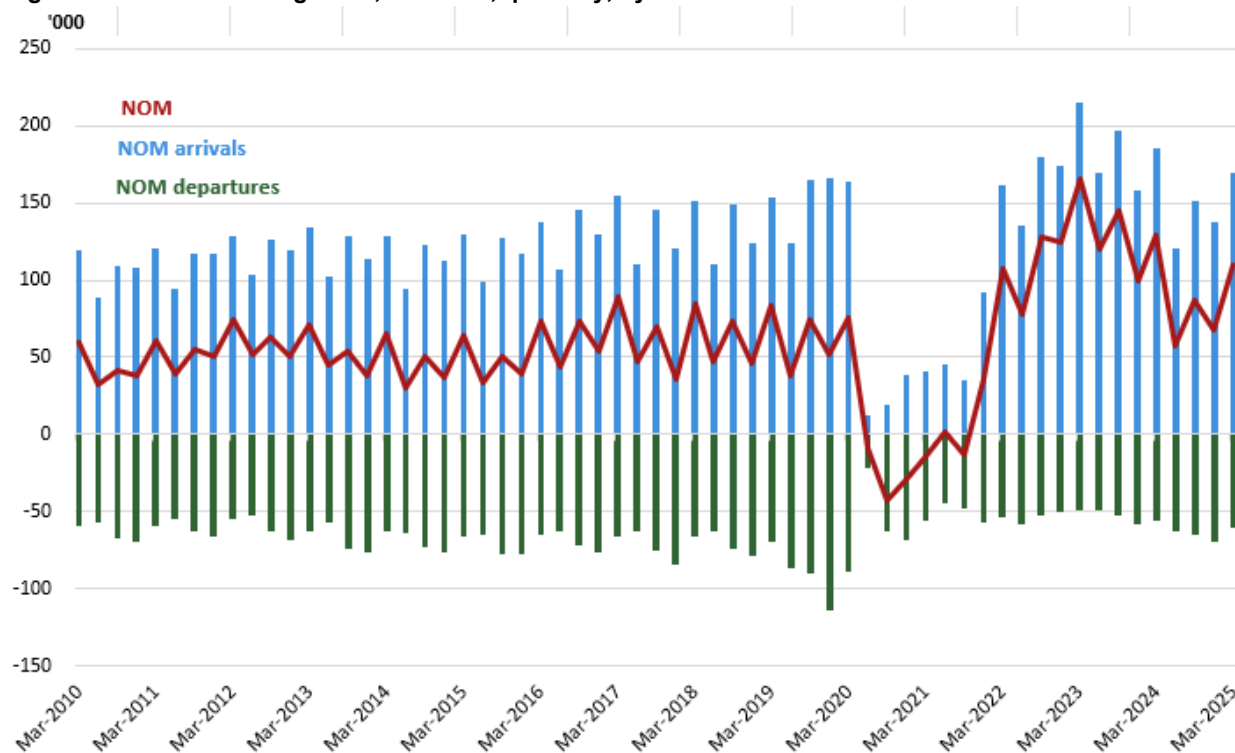
27. The pandemic border restrictions broke this cycle. During the pandemic, NOM levels were negative for the first time since the Second World War, with a NOM of minus 85,000 in 2020–21. Border restrictions led to a high degree of pent-up demand for travel and substantial domestic demand for skills, and in Australia's international education sector.
28. There has been a significant degree of global mobility after the pandemic which saw temporary and permanent migrants returning to Australia in large numbers. However, the temporary visa holders who would normally have departed Australia after two or more years had already left at the start of the pandemic.
29. Accordingly, when demand for travel to Australia returned, arrivals re-started; but the cycle of departures had yet to return. Annual NOM peaked at 556,000 in September 2023, before declining to 316,000 in the year to 31 March 2025 (Figure 2).
30. NOM was 110,000 in the March quarter 2025. This is the lowest March quarter since border restrictions were lifted in December 2021 and 55,000 fewer than the March quarter 2023 figure of 165,000.
31. Migrant departures increased by 22.0 per cent in 2024, reaching 254,000 compared to 208,000 in 2023. However, this remains below the pre-pandemic average of 282,000 departures per year during the five years prior to the COVID–19 pandemic.
32. Australia's experience is similar to our international partners, including the United Kingdom and Canada, which have also seen increased demand from migrants seeking to work and study.

**Figure 2 Net Overseas Migration, Australia, year ending 31 March – 2010 to 2025**



Source: National, state and territory population, March 2025 | Australian Bureau of Statistics

Figure 3 Net Overseas Migration, Australia, quarterly, by direction



Source: National, state and territory population, March 2025 | Australian Bureau of Statistics

Table 1 Net Overseas Migration forecasts, financial years, 2024–25 to 2028–29

	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29
NOM, Australia	335,000	260,000	225,000	225,000	225,000

Source: Budget 2025–26, Commonwealth of Australia, March 2025

33. As the migrants who arrived in 2021–22 and 2022–23 increasingly reach the expiry of their visas, the pre-pandemic arrivals and departures trends are forecast to return. This normalisation of migration, alongside actions taken to date to place downward pressure on NOM; is expected to drive migration towards longer term averages.
34. Placing downwards pressure on NOM requires ongoing effective management of the temporary and permanent Migration Programs. The Department has worked across Government to ensure Australia attracts the right migrants, in the right sectors and in the right places.

## Addressing NOM through the Migration Strategy

35. The Department continues to support the Government to deliver the Migration Strategy and place downward pressure on NOM, including:
- Closing COVID concessions, including through ending the Pandemic Event visa and uncapped working hours for international students.
  - Strengthening integrity and lifting the standards in international education, including introducing a new genuine student requirement. This will ensure student visa applicants are genuine in their intention to successfully complete a course of study in Australia and increasing minimum English language requirements for student and graduate visas.
  - On 19 December 2024 a new Ministerial Direction 111 – *Order for considering and disposing of offshore Subclass 500 (Student) visa applications*, commenced; replacing MD107. The new MD111 will continue to support the well-managed and orderly processing of visa applications that supports the education sector equitably, while achieving Government's wider international education objectives.
  - Ending settings that drive long-term temporary stays (known as 'permanent temporariness'), including through shortening graduate visas and ending settings, which allow graduates to prolong their stay in Australia when they have fewer prospects of becoming permanent residents.
  - Tackling exploitation of the visa system, including through investing in more immigration compliance officers and restoring integrity in the protection visa system to break the business model of unmeritorious protection visa claims.
  - Targeting skilled migration to genuine shortages, including through increasing and annually indexing the minimum salary threshold for temporary skilled migrants. Leveraging Jobs and Skills Australia's advice for where genuine shortages exist, a modernised skilled occupation list and a new Skills in Demand (SID) visa was commenced on 7 December 2024.
36. Ongoing work to improve management of migration and place downwards pressure on NOM includes working closely with the Department of Education and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and working with Jobs and Skills Australia in defining Australia's skills needs.

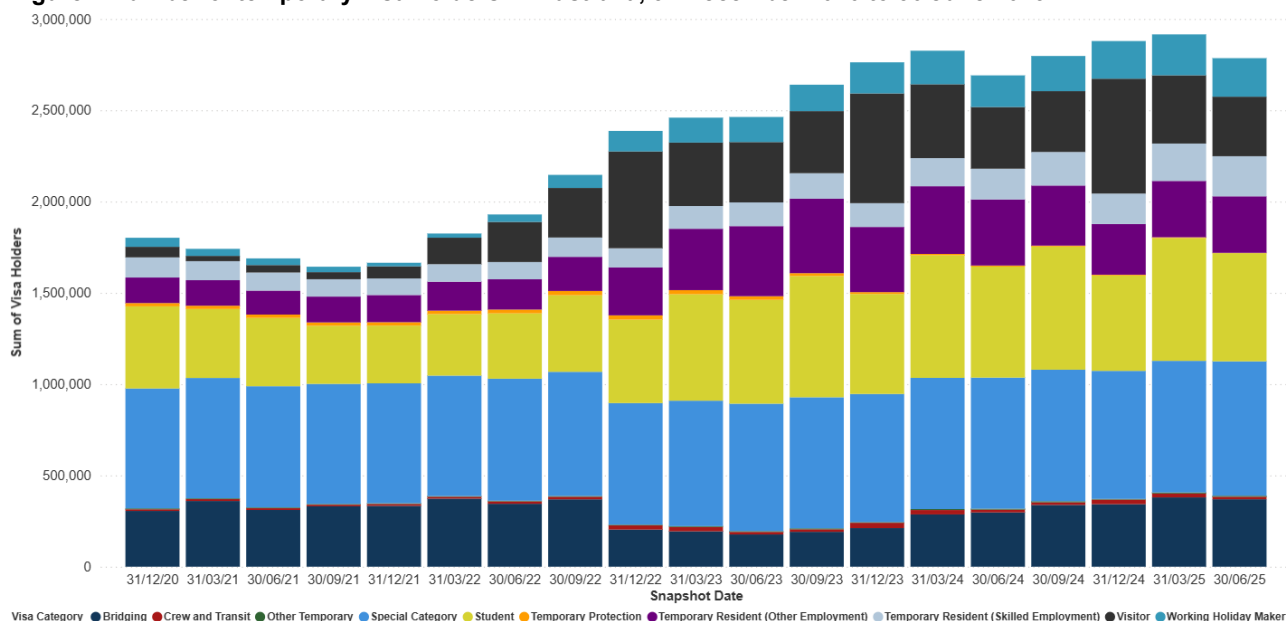
## Temporary visas

37. Australia's temporary visa programs allow people to come to Australia for specific purposes, including to visit, study and work. These temporary visa programs deliver substantial economic and cultural benefits for both migrants and Australians. In particular, the student and visitor visa programs are key enablers to Australia's international education and tourism sectors.
38. A portion of temporary visa holders apply for an extension of temporary stay, while others seek a permanent stay through the Migration Program. Bridging visas allow the visa holders to stay lawfully in Australia while awaiting the outcome of their visa application or review of a visa decision by the Department.

**Table 2 Change in the number of temporary visa holders in Australia – comparison between 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2025<sup>1</sup>**

Visa Category	30 June 2024	30 June 2025	Difference	% Change
Bridging	297,372	369,627	72,255	24.30%
Crew and Transit	15,347	13,782	-1,565	-10.20%
Other Temporary	5,161	5,345	184	3.57%
Special Category	717,765	736,231	18,466	2.57%
Student	608,262	592,342	-15,920	-2.62%
Temporary Protection	5,727	1,736	-3,991	-69.69%
Temporary Resident (Other Employment)	361,606	309,685	-51,921	-14.36%
Temporary Resident (Skilled Employment)	168,725	219,710	50,985	30.22%
Visitor	337,845	325,969	-11,876	-3.52%
Working Holiday Maker	173,216	210,971	37,755	21.80%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,691,026</b>	<b>2,785,398</b>	<b>94,372</b>	<b>3.51%</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

**Figure 4 Number of temporary visa holders in Australia, 31 December 2020 to 30 June 2025**

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

39. The number of Temporary visa holders in Australia increased in the past year:

- At 30 June 2024: 2,691,026 million
- At 30 June 2025: 2,785,398 million including New Zealand citizens on a Special Category visa. This is an increase of 3.5 per cent (see Table 2).

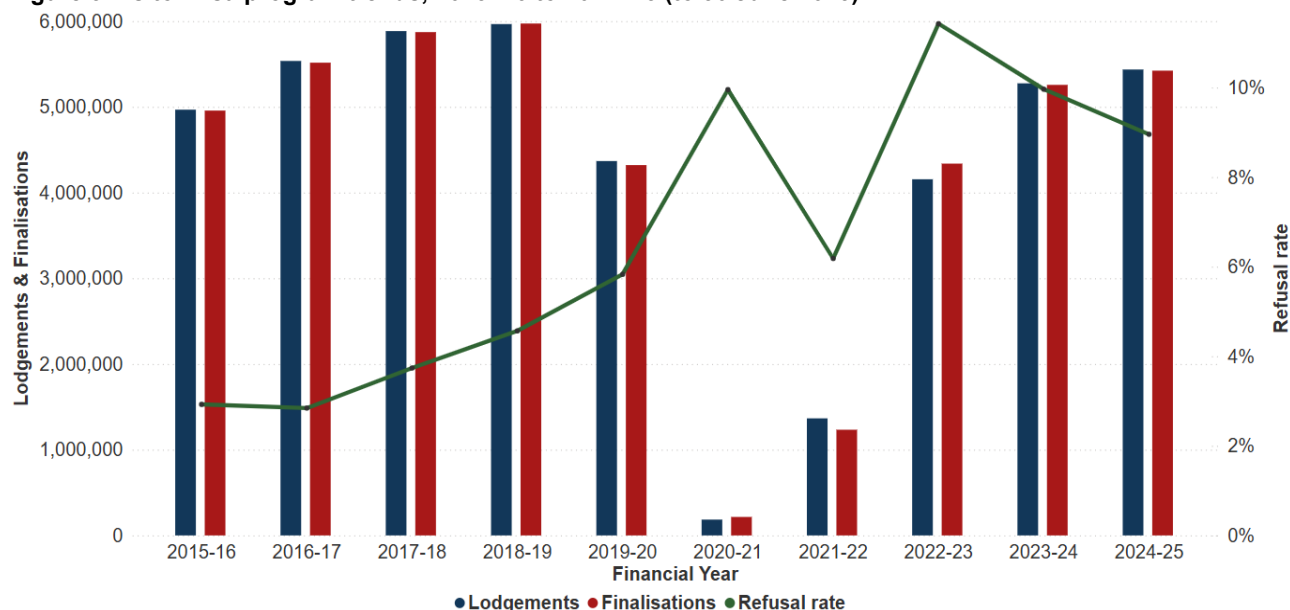
<sup>1</sup> Bridging visa subclass E not included in the Bridging visa category.

40. There have been decreases in international students in Australia compared with 2023–24. These decreases have been offset by increases in temporary skilled and working holiday visa holders, reflecting Australia's low unemployment and tight labour market conditions.

## Visitor visa

41. The international tourism industry provides substantial economic benefits and generates jobs, investment and growth in communities throughout Australia.
42. The number of Visitor visa holders in Australia decreased in 2024–25 by 3.5 per cent (Table 2):
- At 30 June 2024: 337,845
  - At 30 June 2025: 325,969
43. In 2024–25 to 30 June 2025, Visitor visa application lodgements increased by 3.1 per cent and finalisations increased by 3.2 per cent compared with the same period in 2023–24.
44. Growth in the Visitor visa program is attributed to a strong resurgence in global demand for international travel, family reunion and continued recovery of the tourism and business markets. However, global demand for Visitor visas to travel to Australia had not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels (Figure 5).
45. Visa access to Australia for Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), excluding Myanmar, and Timor Leste has been supported through the:
- Extended Business Visitor visa product (up to five years validity), introduced on 1 April 2024.
  - Rollout of the Visitor visa Frequent Traveller Stream to eligible passport-holders (up to 10 years validity) to travel to Australia for both business and leisure purposes.
46. These measures reaffirm Australia's commitment to the ASEAN region and complement the Migration Strategy by strengthening international mobility pathways, supporting regional relationships and enhancing community connection between ASEAN and Australia.
47. The refusal rate remains high compared to pre-pandemic levels but has been steadily decreasing since it peaked in 2022–23 (Figure 5).
- High refusal rates may reflect:
    - An increased level of risk in global caseloads due to geopolitical changes in some of Australia's largest source countries.
    - Improved integrity measures implemented by the Department to detect and prevent widespread fraud and prevent adverse outcomes, such as illegal work and visa non-compliance.
  - The gradual decrease over the last two years may reflect a greater proportion of genuine applicants applying for a Visitor visa to visit Australia for legitimate reasons.



**Figure 5 Visitor visa program trends, 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Student Visa

48. In the period immediately after the reopening of Australia's international borders in 2021, there were sharp increases in Student visa applications. Integrity concerns in the Student visa program and the international education sector more broadly were outlined in three key government reviews:

- Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (JSCFADT).
- Rapid Review into the Exploitation of Australia's visa System (Nixon Review).
- Review of the Migration System, which led to the release of the Migration Strategy.

49. The number of Student visa applications lodged decreased 26.4 per cent over the past year (see Table 3):

- 2023–24: 580,193
- 2024–25: 427,131

50. Of the 427,131 applications lodged in 2024–25, the breakdown by the largest sectors includes:

- 61.4 per cent to the Higher Education sector (262,146 applications)
  - This is a decrease of 15.7 per cent compared with 2023–24.
- 20.5 per cent to the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector (87,475 applications)
  - This a decrease of 46.8 per cent compared with 2023–24.
  - Of these, 18,343 (21.0 per cent) were lodged outside Australia.
- 7.1 per cent to the Independent English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) sector (30,347 applications)
  - This is a decrease of 45.2 per cent compared to 2023–24.
  - The remaining 10.9 per cent were to the Foreign Affairs of Defence sector, Non-Award sector, Postgraduate Research sector, and Schools sector.

51. The decrease in Student visa applications lodged may be attributable to policy changes that were introduced to address integrity concerns in the Student visa program:

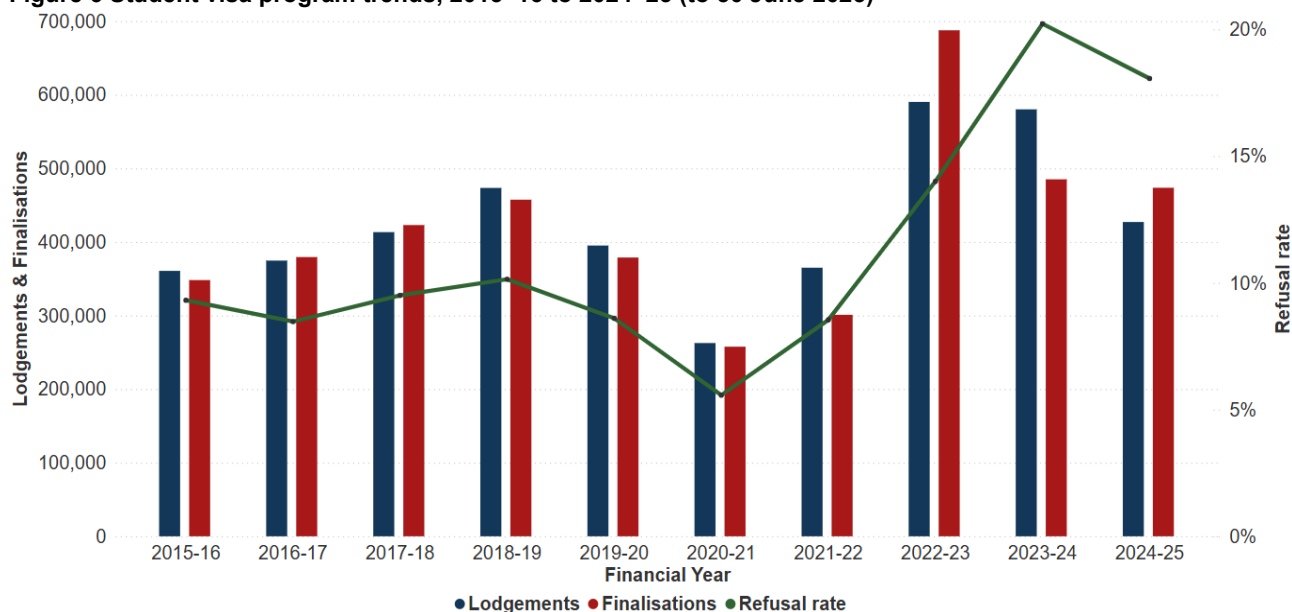
- Increases to, and change in methodology of, the financial capacity requirements
- Increased English language requirements
- Introduction of a Genuine Student requirement
- Restrictions to moving between visa types whilst onshore
- Increased visa Application Charge (since 1 July 2024)
- Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) requirement for student visa applications made in Australia (now consistent with the requirement for those applying from outside Australia).

**Table 3 Change in the number of Student visa applications lodged by sector comparison between 2023–24 and 2024–25**

Visa Type	2023–24	2024–25	Difference	% Change
Foreign Affairs or Defence	4,813	5,129	316	6.6%
Higher Education	310,840	262,146	-48,694	-15.7%
Independent ELICOS	55,417	30,347	-25,070	-45.2%
Non-Award	18,006	17,407	-599	-3.3%
Postgraduate Research	14,207	14,951	744	5.2%
Schools	12,528	9,676	-2,852	-22.8%
Vocational Education and Training	164,382	87,475	-76,907	-46.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>580,193</b>	<b>427,131</b>	<b>-153,062</b>	<b>-26.4%</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

**Figure 6 Student visa program trends, 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Student visa holders

52. On 30 June 2025, there were 592,330 student visa holders in Australia (Table 4).

- Table 4 represents student visa holders in Australia on the snapshot date and not a monthly aggregate or average.

53. The variation in these numbers may be impacted by:

- Course commencement and end dates, where many international students return home during semester breaks, or new students remain offshore prior to travelling to Australia to commence their studies.
- Student visa holders moving on to another visa type such as a bridging visa, or another substantive visa.

**Table 4 Number of Student visa holders in Australia, from 30 June 2017 to 30 June 2025<sup>2</sup>**

Sector (Visa Type)	30-Jun-17	30-Jun-18	30-Jun-19	30-Jun-20	30-Jun-21	30-Jun-22	30-Jun-23	30-Jun-24	30-Jun-25
Foreign Affairs or Defence	5,351	5,217	4,974	4,278	2,084	2,123	3,348	3,837	3,886
Higher Education	265,964	288,222	328,719	329,720	197,956	196,048	310,389	368,601	387,002
Independent ELICOS	23,988	23,630	25,216	15,756	3,084	12,065	40,069	26,613	15,886
Non-Award	6,178	6,463	5,632	2,799	173	993	4,174	3,934	3,757
Postgraduate Research	22,941	24,204	25,949	25,645	20,628	22,460	26,738	28,091	31,126
Schools	14,833	15,959	15,471	17,336	10,664	8,006	10,130	12,793	14,305
Vocational Education and Training	104,539	123,228	147,167	159,765	139,456	116,213	173,894	164,382	136,368
<b>Total</b>	<b>443,794</b>	<b>486,923</b>	<b>553,128</b>	<b>555,299</b>	<b>374,045</b>	<b>357,908</b>	<b>568,742</b>	<b>608,251</b>	<b>592,330</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Student visa applications finalised

54. The number of Student visa applications finalised decreased 2.4 per cent over the past year:

- 2023–24: 485,124
- 2024–25: 473,634
  - Of these, 87.7 per cent of applications lodged outside Australia were granted.

55. The refusal rate of all Student visa applications decreased by 2.2 per cent over the past year:

- 20.2 per cent in 2023–24
- 18.1 per cent in 2024–25

56. Improved Offshore Student visa application finalisation has been supported by the prioritisation process detailed in Ministerial Direction 111 (MD111) – Order for considering and disposing of offshore Subclass 500 (Student) visa applications. This was implemented on 19 December 2024, replacing the Government's Ministerial Direction 107.

<sup>2</sup> Results excluding Subclass 560 Student visas

57. Onshore, on-hand applications have reduced through the second half of 2024–25 by more than 30,000 applications, although with a higher refusal rate than seen historically. This refusal rate reflects increased scrutiny of the caseload. The Department is continuing to bring down the onshore Student visa caseload through 2025–26.

**Table 5 Offshore Student visa grant rate by sector from 2019–20 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Sector	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Foreign Affairs or Defence Sector	99.5%	96.3%	99.0%	99.2%	98.6%	99.4%
Higher Education Sector	89.6%	89.6%	94.4%	83.8%	80.9%	91.3%
Independent ELICOS Sector	91.7%	81.3%	85.0%	90.4%	79.5%	76.1%
Non-Award Sector	99.6%	78.7%	99.4%	99.4%	99.4%	99.6%
Postgraduate Research Sector	97.1%	96.7%	96.7%	96.3%	96.5%	97.7%
Schools Sector	91.4%	96.2%	96.6%	93.5%	89.6%	85.6%
Vocational Education and Training Sector	63.9%	54.9%	68.9%	53.4%	47.4%	53.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>87.6%</b>	<b>85.5%</b>	<b>89.5%</b>	<b>80.4%</b>	<b>78.3%</b>	<b>87.7%</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Temporary Graduate visa

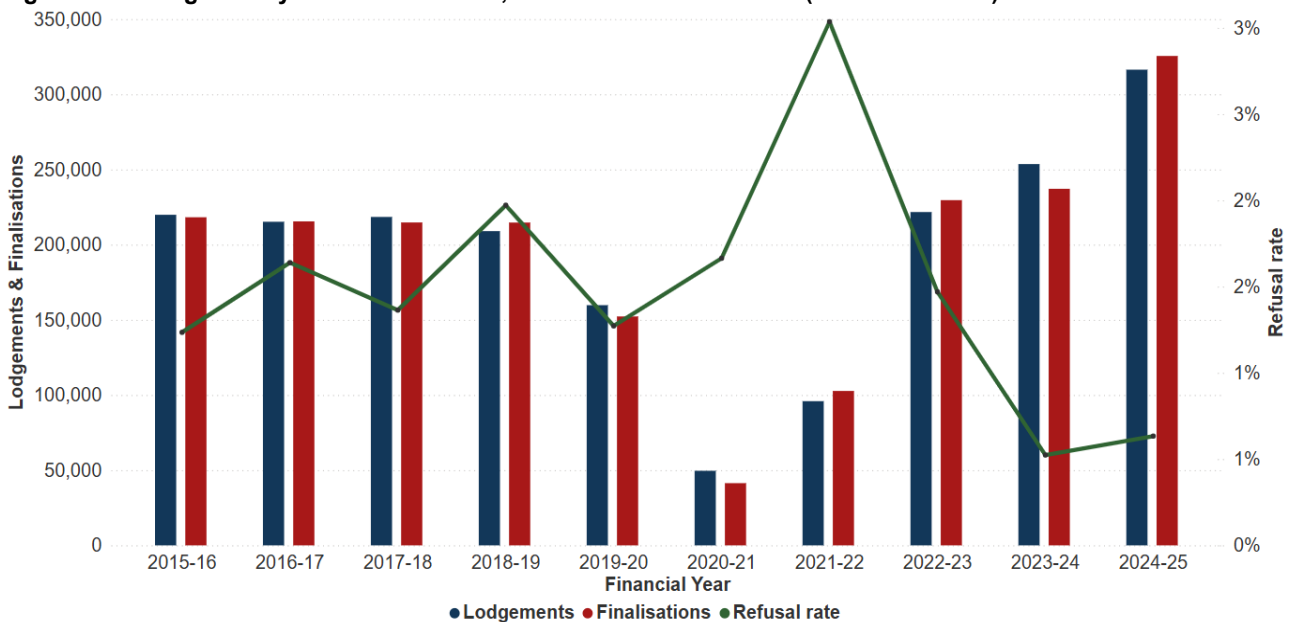
58. The Temporary Graduate visa enables early career professionals with relevant Australian qualifications to gain work experience in Australia, which can support their progression to a skilled visa or allow them to apply their education and skills in the global workforce.
59. The Migration Strategy repositioned the Temporary Graduate visa to support early career professionals develop the relevant work history they will need to progress to a skilled visa or use their education and skills in the global jobs market.
60. Australia's revised post study work rights provide graduates an opportunity to demonstrate their potential and ability to contribute to the Australian economy but provide clear boundaries, so former students do not become 'permanently temporary'.
61. As a result of program reforms and reduced post study work options, application lodgements decreased by 30.6 per cent in 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025) compared to the same period in 2023–24.

## Working Holiday Makers

62. The Working Holiday Maker (WHM) program promotes cultural exchange and boosts people-to-people connections between young adults from Australia and partner countries. WHMs are not required to work but may do so for the entire duration of their stay in Australia. This can be in any location, industry or role they choose, usually for up to 6 months with any one employer.
63. As of 30 June 2025, Australia has WHM program arrangements with 50 partner countries and regions. This includes 19 Working Holiday (subclass 417) arrangements and 31 Work and Holiday (subclass 462) arrangements. This provides opportunities for visa holders to travel and undertake short-term work during their holiday.
- The Work and Holiday (subclass 462) visa has additional visa criteria that must be satisfied by visa applicants compared to the Working Holiday (subclass 417) visa. This includes a minimum level of English language ability and educational qualifications. These additional criteria result in longer visa processing times for subclass 462 visa applicants.

64. WHM application and approval rates have increased since the end of the pandemic, including in the 2024–25 program year (Figure 7). This is likely a result of:
- The UK Free trade agreement – the removal of the specified work requirement for UK nationals resulted in an increase in the number of UK citizens, who had previously been on a first year WHM to Australia but not completed specified work, staying or returning for a second WHM visa.
  - Young people from partner countries choosing to take up the opportunity to have a working holiday in Australia, which was not available during the COVID-19 pandemic.
65. The number of WHM visas granted in the 2024–25 program year increased 36.9 per cent compared to the previous year:
- 2023–24: 234,556
  - 2024–25: 321,116
66. The number of WHM visa holders in Australia in June 2025 increased 21.8 per cent compared to June 2024:
- At 30 June 2024: 173,216
  - At 30 June 2025: 210,971
67. The median processing time for visas in the 2024–25 program year to 30 June 2025 was:
- Working Holiday (subclass 417) visa: less than one day.
  - Work and Holiday (Subclass 462) visas: 27 days.

**Figure 7 Working Holiday Maker visa trends, from 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

68. The Australian Government introduced a pre-application process (a ballot) for the Work and Holiday (subclass 462) visa on 1 October 2024 for applicants from China, India and Vietnam.

- The introduction of the ballot system for these countries aims to provide an equitable, streamlined and transparent method for selecting applicants in cases where the demand is higher than the available visa places for a participating country.
- The ballot closed for registrations in October and November 2024. A total of 139,633 valid registrations were received across the three countries. This exceeded the total number of places available in each of the respective countries. (Table 6 below).
- The Department conducted random selections from the pool of registered participants until 30 April 2025. Selected registrants were notified to make an online application for a first Work and Holiday visa.
- Selected ballot registrants will still need to meet standard Subclass 462 requirements to be granted a visa.

**Table 6 Number of registrations received in the WHM ballot, 2024–25 (as at 20 January 2025)**

Country	Registration received	Total visas available
India	98,019	1000
China	34,161	5000
Vietnam	7,453	1500
<b>Total</b>	<b>139,633</b>	<b>7500</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Temporary Resident (Skilled)

69. Temporary Resident (Skilled) visas comprise:

- Skills in Demand (SID) visa
- Temporary Skill Shortage (TSS) visa (which closed to new applications on 7 December 2024, to be replaced by the SID visa)
- Temporary Work (subclass 457) visas (which closed to new applications on 18 March 2018)

70. The SID visa program is the primary mechanism to bring temporary skilled workers to Australia. It provides a streamlined pathway for skilled migrants, promoting worker mobility while offering a simple process for employers to access skilled workers to help their businesses to grow. SID visa holders have a clear pathway to permanent residence, providing certainty to both migrants and employers.

71. The SID visa has three streams:

- Specialist Skills stream for highly skilled migrants who will bring significant economic benefits to Australia and help drive innovation and job creation.
- Core Skills stream to meet targeted workforce needs, including filling workforce gaps and providing vital services to the community. Most temporary skilled visa holders will come through this stream.
- Labour Agreement stream for skilled workers nominated by employers who have a Labour Agreement with the Australian Government.

72. The number of lodgements by primary visa applicants in the 2024–25 program year increased by 34.5 per cent compared to the previous year (Table 7). This demonstrates a continued high level of demand for skilled overseas workers to fill vacancies where no Australian worker is available.

- 2023–24: 64,099
- 2024–25: 86,235



**Table 7 Number of Temporary Resident (Skilled) primary visa applications lodged – comparison between 2023–24 and 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Visa Category	2023–24	2024–25	Difference	% Change
Temporary Resident (Skilled Employment)	64,099	86,235	22,136	34.5%

Source: **Department of Home Affairs, 2025**

73. The Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL) was announced on 3 December 2024. It replaces previously complex, out of date and inflexible occupation lists. It also provides access to temporary skilled migration for 456 occupations, informed by labour market analysis and stakeholder consultation by Jobs and Skills Australia.

**Table 8 Temporary Skills Shortage visa applications: to 15 most frequently nominated occupations for Temporary Skills Shortage and Skills in Demand visas 2023–24 and 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)<sup>3</sup>**

Nominated Occupation		2023–24	2024–25	% change from 2023–24	2024–25 as % of Total
1	3513 Chefs	2,279	6,361	179.11%	9.33%
2	2531 General Practitioners and Resident Medical Officers	2,906	3,417	17.58%	5.01%
3	3212 Motor Mechanics	2,819	3,387	20.15%	4.97%
4	2613 Software and Applications Programmers	3,014	3,125	3.68%	4.58%
5	2544 Registered Nurses	1,490	2,151	44.36%	3.15%
6	1411 Cafe and Restaurant Managers	938	1,683	79.42%	2.47%
7	3223 Structural Steel and Welding Trades Workers	1,608	1,671	3.92%	2.45%
8	3514 Cooks	670	1,554	131.94%	2.28%
9	2611 ICT Business and Systems Analysts	1,304	1,532	17.48%	2.25%
10	2251 Advertising and Marketing Professionals	1,048	1,421	35.59%	2.08%
11	2211 Accountants	1,101	1,364	23.89%	2.00%
12	2632 ICT Support and Test Engineers	753	1,353	79.68%	1.98%
13	4233 Nursing Support and Personal Care Workers	457	1,339	193.00%	1.96%
14	3232 Metal Fitters and Machinists	1,300	1,161	-10.69%	1.70%
15	3125 Mechanical Engineering Draftspersons and Technicians	1,064	1,130	6.20%	1.66%
16	Other occupation	29,347	35,545	21.12%	52.12%
<b>Total</b>		<b>52,098</b>	<b>68,194</b>	<b>30.90%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: **Department of Home Affairs, 2025**

74. The Government has committed to median processing times for decision-ready applications for SID visas of:

- Specialist Skills stream: 7 business days
- Core Skills stream: 21 business days

75. Decision-ready applications include all supporting documents, up-to-date health checks and character checks. Lodging nomination and visa applications together also assists with streamlined processing.

<sup>3</sup> Table 8 data excludes visa subclass 457. Note, Skills in Demand visa included from 7 December.

## Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement

76. On 5 May 2023, the Government announced the establishment of the Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement to help streamline the recruitment of overseas workers in the aged care sector where appropriately qualified Australian workers cannot be found and standard work visa programs are not available.
77. The Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement has been designed featuring concessions and flexibility to standard visa requirements to help support the aged care sector and improve the attraction and retention of skilled overseas workers.
78. The uptake of the Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement continues to increase among providers and overseas direct care workers.
79. As at 30 June 2025, there were 132 Aged Care Industry Labour Agreements in effect, which can provide for more than 30,000 direct care workers, depending on the demand from business.
80. As at 30 June 2025, the Department granted 2,305 visas under the Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement.

## Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Scheme

81. The Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme is a temporary migration program which allows eligible Australian businesses to hire workers from nine Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste. The scheme allows eligible workers from these countries to work in Australia on a seasonal (up to nine months) and longer term (up to four years) work placement.
82. The employer must be approved by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to participate in the PALM scheme. The role of the Department is to assess applications from Australian employers for a Temporary Activities Sponsorship and visa applications from workers.
83. The PALM scheme is demand driven and open to eligible employers in all sectors in rural and regional Australia. It primarily addresses workforce needs in key sectors in rural and regional Australia. Growing opportunities exist in the agriculture, hospitality, tourism, and the care sectors.
84. The PALM Family Accompaniment Pilot commenced on 25 March 2024. The pilot will permit eligible PALM scheme workers on long-term placements of between one and four years to bring their immediate family to Australia, subject to agreement of their employer sponsor.
85. The pilot has commenced with a staged rollout that will test policy and program settings with 200 families nominated by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It aims to:
  - Address the social impacts of long periods of family separation
  - Build deeper connections with Pacific and Timor- Leste countries.
86. The number of PALM (subclass 403) visa grants in Australia decreased 2.9 per cent in the 2024–25 program year (Table 9):
  - 2023–24: 26,114
  - 2024–25: 25,350

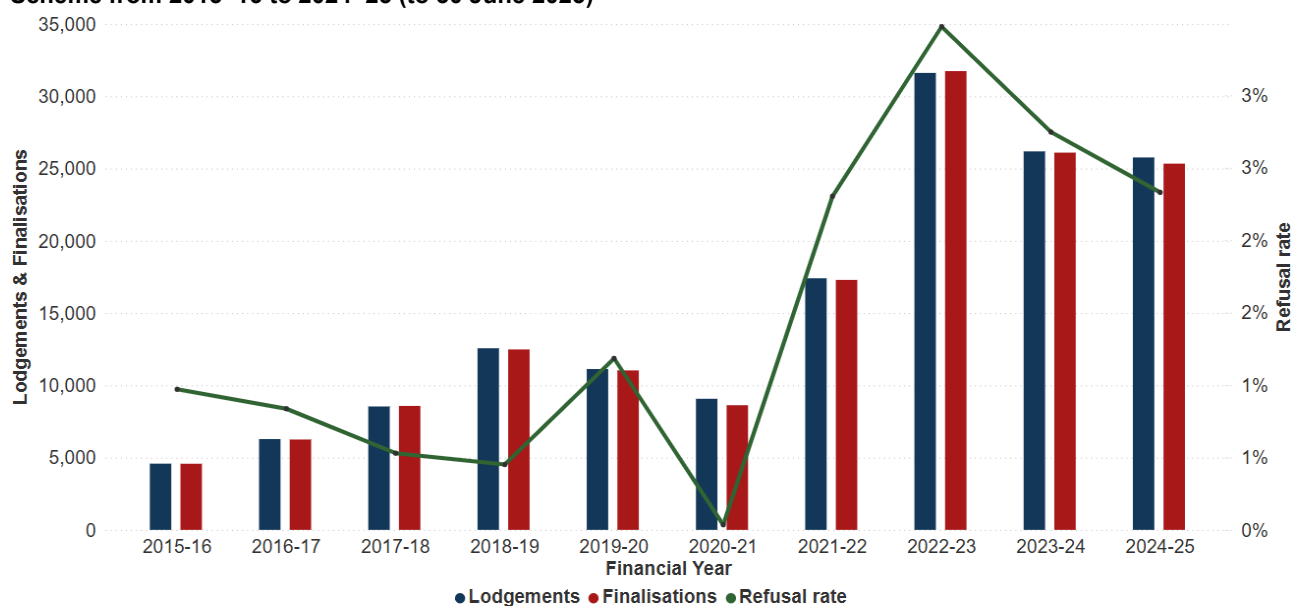
**Table 9 Number of PALM scheme visa grants<sup>4</sup> – comparison between 2023–24 and 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Citizenship Country	2023–24	2024–25	Difference	% Change
Fiji	2,608	2,174	-434	-16.6%
Kiribati	1,027	741	-286	-27.8%
Nauru	35	29	-6	-17.1%
Papua New Guinea	1,149	1,134	-15	-1.3%
Samoa	2,069	2,114	45	2.2%
Solomon Islands	2,483	3,009	526	21.2%
Timor-Leste	3,955	3,725	-230	-5.8%
Tonga	3,642	3,683	41	1.1%
Tuvalu	241	89	-152	-63.1%
Vanuatu	8,897	8,644	-253	-2.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,114</b>	<b>25,350</b>	<b>-764</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

87. The combined number of Seasonal Worker Program, Pacific Labour Scheme and PALM (subclass 403) visa holders in Australia decreased 0.3 per cent in the 2024–25 program year (Figure 8):

- At 30 June 2024: 31,450
- At 30 June 2025: 31,343

**Figure 8 Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Scheme including Seasonal Worker Program and Pacific Labour Scheme from 2015–16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

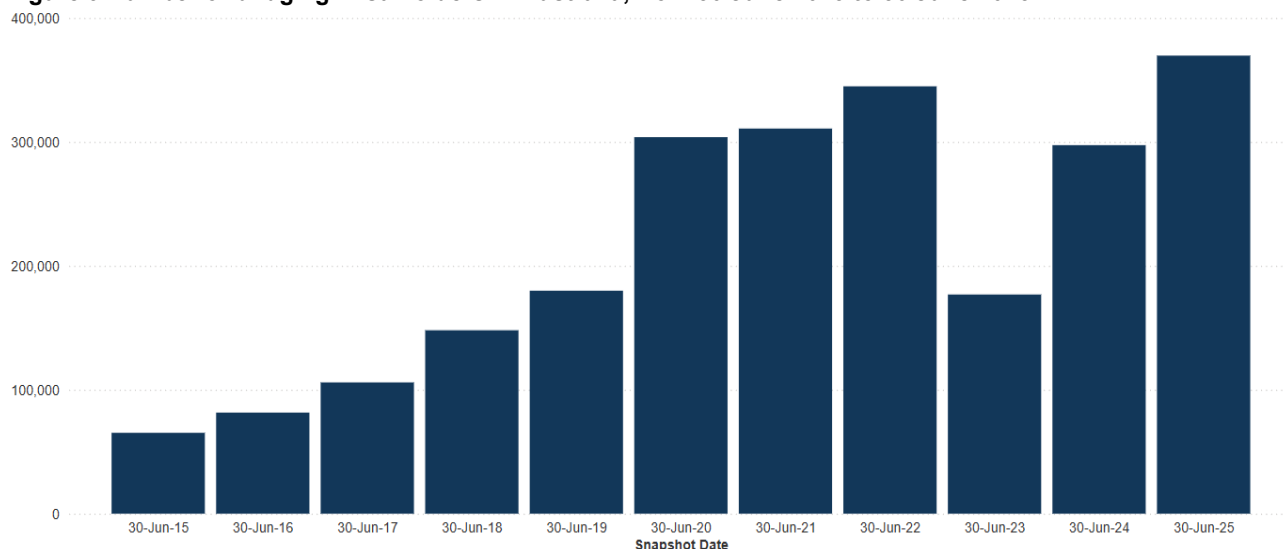
<sup>4</sup> including Seasonal Worker Program and Pacific Labour Scheme

## Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme

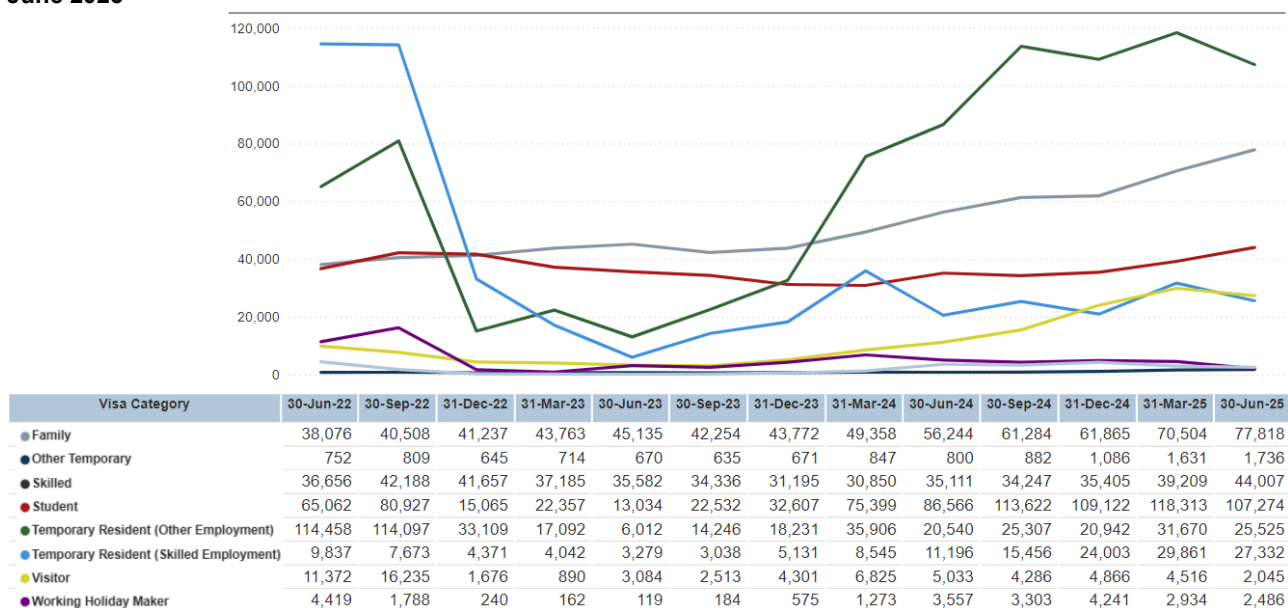
88. The Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) is a new, temporary mobility pathway for Indian graduates and early career professionals with knowledge and skills in targeted fields of study. It enables young Indian professionals with targeted qualifications to expand their skills and experience by living and working in Australia for up to two years. This presents an opportunity for the mutually beneficial skills and knowledge transfer between Australia and India in the sectors of identified demand.
89. Targeted fields of study include:
- Renewable energy
  - Mining
  - Engineering
  - Information and communications technology
  - Artificial intelligence
  - Financial technology
  - Agricultural technology
90. MATES was established under the Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA), a bilateral framework entered into between the governments of Australia and India on 23 May 2023. The MMPA will see both countries benefit from enhanced cooperation on migration issues.
91. Up to 3,000 temporary visa places are available for primary applicants per program year which will be allocated through a visa pre-application (ballot) process. Primary applicants will be able to bring dependents who will not be counted towards the 3,000 places.
92. The first MATES ballot opened on 9 December 2024 and closed on 7 January 2025, with 6,656 valid registrations received.
93. Ballot selections took place on 8 January 2025 and 11 February 2025. Successful ballot candidates are eligible to apply for a Temporary Work (International Relations) (subclass 403) visa in the MATES stream and had 30 days from the date of ballot selection to lodge a visa application.
- 2087 primary applicants applied for a MATES stream visa
  - 621 primary applicants have been granted a MATES stream visa as of 30 June 2025.

## Bridging visas

94. The combined number of people in Australia holding an in-effect Bridging A, B and C visa (BV ABC) increased 24.3 per cent compared to the same time in 2024 (Figure 9):
- At 30 June 2024: 297,040
  - At 30 June 2025: 369,142
95. The number of people holding an in-effect BV ABC in Australia varies throughout the year with annual seasonal peaks and troughs, in line with variances in other visa programs. Increases can be attributed to growth in application volumes for Student visas, Skills in Demand visas, Partner visas and Employer Nomination Scheme visas.
96. The majority of BV ABC visas granted are associated with a substantive visa application, with most applicants having applied for a new visa while they were holding a substantive visa.

**Figure 9 Number of bridging<sup>5</sup> visa holders in Australia, from 30 June 2015 to 30 June 2025**

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

**Figure 10 Bridging A, B and C visa holders in Australia by visa category applied for as at 30 June 2022 to 30 June 2025<sup>6</sup>**

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Migration Program

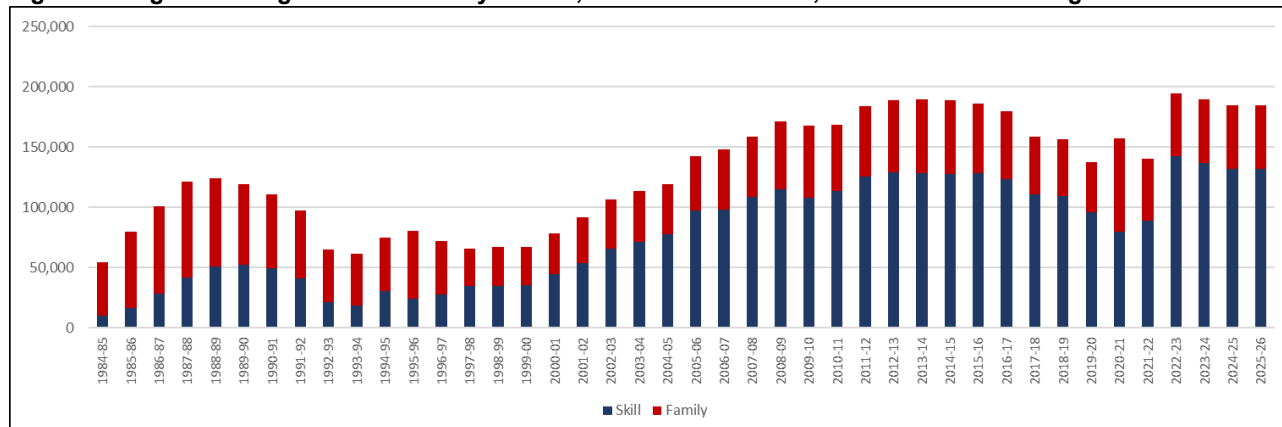
97. Australia's permanent Migration Program (Migration Program) is designed to meet Australia's ongoing economic, demographic and community needs. It focuses on attracting people that will address current and emerging skills shortages and reuniting families, while also recognising migrants' contribution to social cohesion and community bonds.

<sup>5</sup> Excludes Bridging visa E (subclass 050 and 051) holders, includes applicants for permanent and temporary visas where bridging visa has been granted

<sup>6</sup> Note: Temporary Resident (Other Employment) includes Temporary Graduate (subclass 485) visas and Temporary Activity (subclass 408) COVID-19 Pandemic Event visas

98. Around 60.0 per cent of visas under the Migration Program are granted to migrants already onshore and in the community, residing in established households at the time of visa grant.

**Figure 11 Migration Program outcomes by stream, 1984–85 to 2024–25, with 2025–26 Planning Levels**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

99. The Migration Program is composed of three streams: Skilled, Family and Special Eligibility.

100. The 2025–26 Migration Program has been set at 185,000 places, with the following composition:

- Skilled stream (132,200 places, approximately 71.0 per cent of the program) – We have designed this stream to improve the productive capacity of the economy and fill skill shortages in the labour market, particularly those in regional Australia.
- Family stream (52,500 places, approximately 28.0 per cent of the program) – This stream is predominantly made up of Partner visas. It enables Australians to reunite with family members from overseas and provide them with pathways to citizenship.
- Special Eligibility stream (300 places) – This stream covers visas for those in special circumstances. This includes permanent residents returning to Australia after a period overseas.



**Table 10 Migration Program planning levels and program outcomes, 2021–22 to 2025–26**

Category	2022–23 Planning Levels	2022–23 Program Outcomes	2023–24 Planning levels	2023–24 Program Outcomes	2024–25 Planning levels	2024–25 Program Outcomes	2025–26 Planning levels
Employer Sponsored	35,000	35,000	36,825	36,825	44,000	44,000	44,000
Skilled Independent	32,100	32,100	30,375	30,375	16,900	16,900	16,900
Skilled Regional	34,000	33,944	32,300	32,300	33,000	32,948	33,000
State/Territory Nominated	31,000	31,000	30,400	30,400	33,000	33,000	33,000
Business Innovation and Investment Program	5,000	5,000	1,900	1,900	1,000	1,000	1,000
Talent and Innovation <sup>7</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,300
Global Talent <sup>7</sup>	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	4,000	4,000	0
Distinguished Talent <sup>7</sup>	300	300	300	300	300	300	0
<b>Skill total</b>	<b>142,400</b>	<b>142,344</b>	<b>137,100</b>	<b>137,100</b>	<b>132,200</b>	<b>132,148</b>	<b>132,200</b>
Partner <sup>8</sup>	40,500	40,500	40,500	40,720	40,500	40,500	40,500
Parent	8,500	8,500	8,500	8,500	8,500	8,500	8,500
Other Family	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Child <sup>9,10</sup>	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
<b>Family total</b>	<b>52,500</b>	<b>52,500</b>	<b>52,500</b>	<b>52,720</b>	<b>52,500</b>	<b>52,500</b>	<b>52,500</b>
Special Eligibility	100	160	400	180	300	353	300
<b>Total Migration Program</b>	<b>195,000</b>	<b>195,004</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>185,000</b>	<b>185,001</b>	<b>185,000</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

101. The Department fully delivered the 2024–25 Migration Program against the overall planning level of 185,000 places. The breakdown for each of the streams within the Migration Program are:

- 132,148 places were delivered in the Skilled stream
- 52,500 places were delivered in the Family stream
- 353 places were delivered in the Special Eligibility stream

<sup>7</sup> This category includes on-hand applications for the Global Talent and Distinguished Talent visas, which are closed to new applications, and the new National Innovation visa.

<sup>8</sup> Delivery of the Partner category is demand driven, with indicative planning levels only. In 2023–24, the Partner category delivered an extra 220 places which were left over from the planning level allocation for the Special Eligibility category, as agreed by the Minister.

<sup>9</sup> Delivery of the Child category is demand driven, with indicative planning levels only.

<sup>10</sup> From 2022–23, the Child category became part of the Family stream.

**Table 11 Migration Program - Top 10 countries of citizenship, 2019–20 to 2024–25**

Outcome <sup>11,12</sup>	Program Year					
Citizenship Country	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
India	25,698	21,791	24,324	41,145	49,848	48,326
China, Peoples Republic of (excl SARs)	18,587	22,207	18,240	23,936	21,806	20,405
Philippines	8,965	11,058	8,591	13,085	11,942	10,972
United Kingdom	10,681	12,703	9,584	11,439	9,916	10,205
Pakistan	4,136	4,121	3,734	4,927	6,877	9,557
Sri Lanka	2,609	2,237	2,801	4,482	5,672	9,444
Nepal	5,048	4,714	6,628	12,041	11,506	8,319
Vietnam	5,398	8,120	6,492	6,571	6,698	5,665
South Africa	3,743	3,523	3,305	5,434	4,620	4,137
Afghanistan	2,279	1,412	1,773	2,543	5,556	3,474
Other	53,222	68,166	58,084	69,401	55,559	54,497
<b>Total</b>	<b>140,366</b>	<b>160,052</b>	<b>143,556</b>	<b>195,004</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>185,001</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Skilled Migration Program

102. The Skilled stream of the Migration Program is designed to select migrants who make a significant contribution to the Australian economy and fill positions where no Australian workers are available.

103. The Skilled stream also plays an important role in regional development through providing skills and labour which can't be sourced locally, as well as encouraging investment and promoting local spending in regional areas.

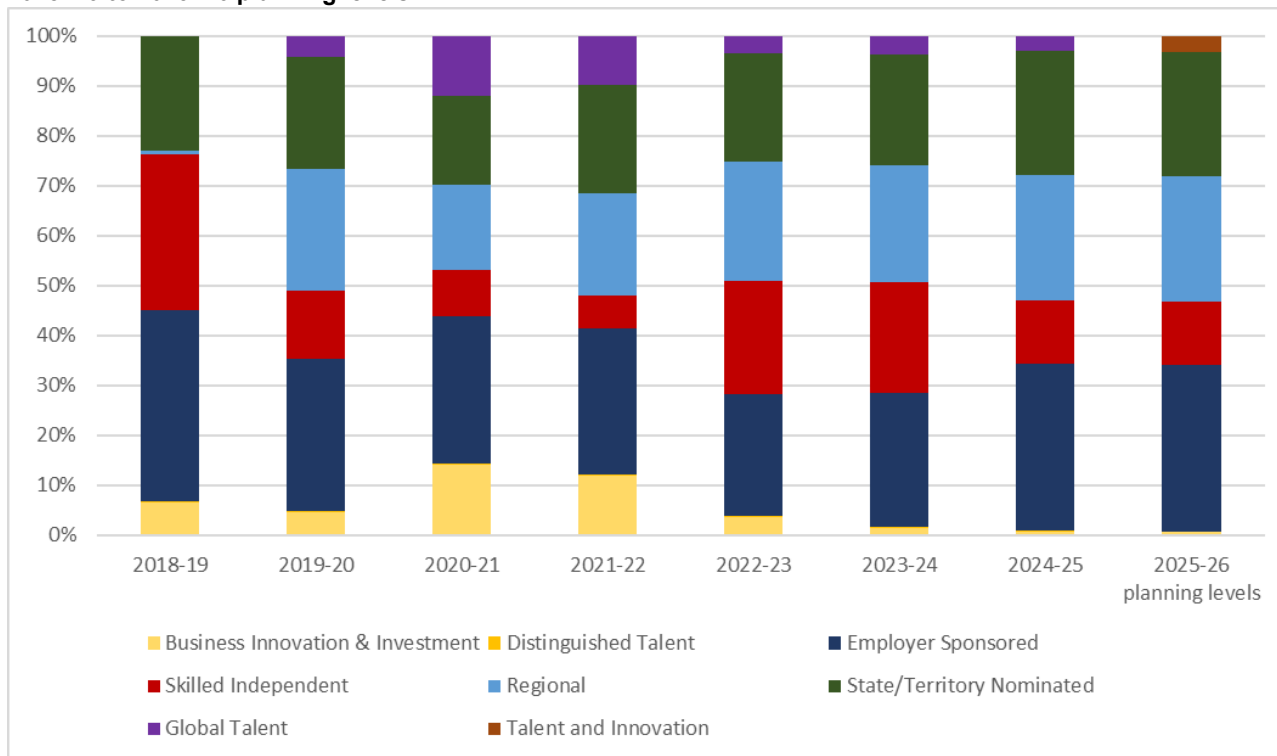
104. The Skilled stream includes the following visa categories:

- **General skilled migration** – for skilled workers who do not have an employer sponsoring them but possess desirable skills, attributes and human capital, and who are able to pass the points test. This category includes the skilled independent and state and territory nominated visas and applied for through an EOI process using the Department's SkillSelect system.
- **Employer sponsored migration** – where applicants are sponsored by an employer. This category includes regional employer sponsored visas and visas granted under a Labour Agreement.
- **Innovation visas** – these are aimed at exceptionally talented migrants who are ready to make a significant contribution to a range of nationally important sectors.
- **Business and investment migration** – encourages successful entrepreneurs and businesspeople to settle in Australia, develop new business opportunities and support the innovation ecosystem. This category has closed to new applications.

<sup>11</sup> Top 10 based on 2023–24 outcomes.

<sup>12</sup> Includes primary and secondary applicants.

**Figure 12 Skilled Migration Program composition of the Skilled Migration Program outcomes, 2018–19 to 2025–26 planning levels**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

105. The 2024–25 Skilled stream outcome was 132,148 places, which accounted for 71.4 per cent of the total 2024–25 Migration Program outcome. The Government has set the 2025–26 planning level for the skilled stream at 132,200 places.

106. Skilled visa applications are processed according to Government policy priorities. The current ministerial direction (Ministerial Direction 105), which came into effect on 15 December 2023, recognises the need to support regional Australia. The Ministerial Direction elevates applications for employer sponsored visas in relation to occupations to be carried out in regional Australia to the highest priority. For the Migration Program, this applies to:

- Employer Sponsored Temporary Skills Shortage (subclass 482)
- Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186)
- Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional) (subclass 494) visas

107. Ministerial Direction 105 also prioritises applications for occupations in the healthcare and teaching sectors.

## Employer Sponsorship

108. The Employer sponsored migration category is designed to address skill gaps within the Australian labour market by allowing businesses to sponsor overseas workers with specialised skills. This category includes:

- Temporary Resident (Skilled) visas
- Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional) visas
- Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS) visas
- Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme visas
- Visas granted under a Labour Agreement

109. On 7 December 2024, changes were made to the Temporary Residence Transition (TRT) of the ENS visa. These changes deliver on the Government's commitment to offer clearer pathways to permanent residence for all temporary skilled visa holders, as outlined in the Migration Strategy. Key reforms include:

- Reduced work experience requirements in the TRT stream.
- Greater worker mobility by allowing all eligible sponsored, full-time employment to be counted towards the work experience requirement, regardless of occupation.

110. Income thresholds in both the temporary and permanent employer sponsored visa programs are indexed annually on 1 July in line with Average Weekly Ordinary Times Earnings (AWOTE). This ensures migrant wages keep pace with wage increases of Australians and that migrant wages do not undercut wages of Australian workers.

111. As of 1 July 2025, the Income Thresholds of the SID streams are set at:

- Core Skills stream: \$76,515
- Specialist Skills stream: \$141,210

## Regional Migration

112. Migration to regional Australia assists in building stronger communities, meeting critical workforce and skills needs and supports economic prosperity in regional Australia:

- The Regional visa category of the 2024–25 Migration Program Skilled stream increased from 2023–24 levels from 32,300 to 33,000 places.
- In 2024–25, more than 72,600 visa applications were lodged across regional visas and state and territory nominated visas, with the regional and state and territory nominated programs delivering 65,948 outcomes.

**Table 12 Number of applications lodged for Regional and State/Territory nominated visas, 2021–22 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)<sup>13</sup>**

Visa Subclass	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
187 Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme	1,634	514	172	136
191 Permanent Residence (Skilled Regional)	131	1,168	10,594	16,462
190 Skilled - Nominated	25,578	61,186	20,097	29,118
489 Skilled - Regional (Provisional)	372	333	174	75
491 Skilled Work Regional (Provisional)	26,314	47,814	17,685	19,598
494 Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional)	3,165	3,752	4,357	5,240
887 Skilled – Regional	10,886	2,076	2,755	2,033
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>68,080</b>	<b>116,843</b>	<b>55,834</b>	<b>72,662</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

113. The Permanent Residence (Skilled Regional) subclass 191 visa in the Regional Provisional Stream commenced on 16 November 2022. This visa provides an independent permanent residence pathway for subclass 491 and subclass 494 holders.

114. The number of lodgements for subclass 191 visas increased 55.4 per cent in the 2024–25 program year compared to 2023–24 (Table 12). This reflects a greater number of eligible subclass 491 and 494 visa holders meeting the three-year regional residence and other requirements, to apply for permanent residence.

<sup>13</sup> Table 12 data includes first and second stage visas.

**Table 13 Number of applications finalised for Regional visas, dates 2021–22 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Visa Subclass	Outcome	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
187 Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme	Granted	1,797	3,275	979	217
	Refused and withdrawn	240	391	103	38
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,037</b>	<b>3,666</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>255</b>
489 Skilled - Regional (Provisional)	Granted	1,156	3,487	1,067	203
	Refused and withdrawn	112	423	209	24
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,268</b>	<b>3,910</b>	<b>1,276</b>	<b>277</b>
491 Skilled Work Regional (Provisional)	Granted	13,898	23,129	26,312	28,177
	Refused and withdrawn	912	5,061	1,447	1,646
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14,810</b>	<b>28,190</b>	<b>27,759</b>	<b>29,823</b>
494 Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional)	Granted	1,348	3,793	3,683	4,265
	Refused and withdrawn	177	578	485	430
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,525</b>	<b>4,371</b>	<b>4,168</b>	<b>4,695</b>
887 Skilled – Regional	Granted	2,070	19,655	2,320	1,656
	Refused and withdrawn	118	219	89	53
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,188</b>	<b>19,874</b>	<b>2,409</b>	<b>1,709</b>
191 Permanent Residence (Skilled Regional)	Granted	<50	<235	6,024	6,500
	Refused and withdrawn	<5	<5	25	57
	<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>6,049</b>	<b>6,557</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>21,875</b>	<b>60,246</b>	<b>42,743</b>	<b>43,266</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Designated Area Migration Agreements

115. Designated Area Migration Agreements (DAMAs) provide employers with access to skilled and semi-skilled workers in occupations not available in the standard skilled migration program. They contain a range of concessions to the standard program, which incentivise overseas workers to seek employment in regional areas.
116. As at 30 June 2025, there were thirteen DAMAs in effect across Australia including:
- Four state and territory-led DAMAs (two in SA, one in WA and one in the NT)
    - The NT DAMA was renewed on 19 March 2025. It is the third NT DAMA and is in effect until 30 June 2030.
  - Nine DAMAs administered by regional authorities: Far North Queensland (FNQ), Townsville (North Qld), Pilbara (WA), Kimberley (WA), The South West (WA), Goldfields (WA), Great South Coast (Vic), Goulburn Valley (Vic) and Orana (NSW) regions.
117. DAMAs continue to make up the highest percentage of labour agreements, with over 50.0 per cent of labour agreements being governed by a DAMA head agreement.
118. In December 2024, the Government reaffirmed its support for a state-led approach to DAMAs. Exploring an improved DAMA framework (including a state-led approach to DAMAs) in parallel with broader regional reform is aligned with the relevant findings of the Migration Review and the commitments of the Migration Strategy. It gives states and territories a greater role in determining their migration needs, especially in the regions.
119. State and territory-led DAMAs will better align overseas migration with other jurisdictional levers that are vital to the attraction of overseas migrants to, and their long-term retention in, regional Australia. These levers include the planning for and provision of adequate infrastructure, housing, services, settlement and integration support, as well as education and training opportunities.

120. Adequate transition arrangements for regional DAMAs are vital to providing certainty and continuity for both regional employers and overseas workers while state and territories explore a shift towards state-led DAMAs.

### **Industry Labour Agreements**

121. Industry Labour Agreements (ILAs) are formal agreements negotiated between the Government and a specific industry that have fixed terms and conditions with in-built concessions specific to an industry sector.
122. ILAs help to ensure a level playing field across an industry by establishing a set of unique terms, conditions and concessions for certain occupations that will apply to all future labour agreements in that sector.
123. As at 30 June 2025, there were 10 ILAs in place, including:
- Advertising, Aged Care, Dairy, Fishing, Horticulture, Meat, Minister of Religion, On-hire, Pork and Restaurant (premium dining)
124. The number of individual labour agreements in effect under ILAs has increased 43.5 per cent in the 2024–25 program year since 2023–24:
- At 30 June 2024: 990
  - At 30 June 2025: 1,420
125. The Government has committed to a review of ILAs in consultation with relevant unions, peak bodies and government stakeholders.
126. As foreshadowed in the Migration Strategy, the Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement (Aged Care ILA) will provide strong lessons for any future design of more regulated pathways for lower paid workers with essential skills, ensuring a more efficient process.
127. The uptake of the Aged Care ILA continues to increase among providers and overseas direct care workers. As at 30 June 2025, there were:
- 132 Aged Care ILAs in effect, which can provide for more than 30,000 direct care workers, depending on the demand from business
  - 2,305 primary visas granted under the Aged Care ILA
  - 1,835 primary temporary visa holders in Australia under the Aged Care ILA

### **Business Innovation and Investment Program**

128. The Business Innovation and Investment Program (BIIP) closed to new applications on 31 July 2024.
129. Refunds of the Visa Application Charge (VAC) are available for subclass 188 visa applicants who withdraw their application on or after 31 July 2024.
130. Ministerial Direction 114 came into effect on 12 February 2025. This Ministerial Direction sets the order for processing on-hand Subclass 188 and Subclass 132 applications. It also ensures Migration Planning level places filled under the BIIP category meet current government priorities.
131. The order of consideration for subclass 188 and subclass 132 visa applications is as follows:
- Subclass 188 visa applications in the Entrepreneur stream.
  - Subclass 188 visa applications in the Business Innovation stream or subclass 132 visa applications in the Significant Business History stream.
  - Subclass 188 visa applications in the Investor stream.
  - Subclass 132 visa applications in the Venture Capital Entrepreneur stream.
  - Subclass 188 visa applications in the Significant Investor stream.



## National Innovation Visa

132. The National Innovation (subclass 858) visa was introduced in December 2024 and replaced the former Global Talent (subclass 858) visa. The National Innovation visa is a small, exclusive visa for highly talented migrants who can make significant contributions in sectors of national importance.
133. The National Innovation visa is supported by a priority processing framework that sets the order for the Department to consider visa applications. Invitations and applications are processed in the following order:
- Priority one: exceptional candidates from any sector who are global experts and recipients of international 'top of field' level awards
  - Priority two: exceptional candidates from any sector nominated by an expert Australian, State or Territory Government agency
  - Priority three: exceptional candidates in Critical Technologies, Renewables and Low Emission Technologies and Health Industries
  - Priority four: exceptional candidates in Agri-food and AgTech, Defence Capabilities and Space, Education, Financial Services and FinTech, Infrastructure and Transport and Resources.

## Family Program

134. Australia's Family Migration Program facilitates the reunification of family members of settled Australian citizens, permanent residents and eligible New Zealand citizens (Australian sponsors). Family migration plays an important role in delivering social outcomes for Australia and contributes to social cohesion by strengthening family and community bonds in Australia.
135. The permanent Family Migration Program is comprised of four categories, including:
- The Partner category, which allows Australian sponsors to sponsor their spouse, de facto partner or prospective partner to live in Australia.
  - The Parent category, which is comprised of Non-Contributory and Contributory Parent visas; allowing for parents to stay in Australia with their Australian sponsor children.
  - The Other Family category, which allows family members to sponsor carers, remaining relatives and aged dependent relatives to live with them in Australia; and,
  - The Child category which includes Child, Adoption and Orphan Relative visas, enabling children to be sponsored by a parent (or an eligible relative in the case of orphaned relatives).

## Family Migration: Capping and queuing and order of processing of applications

136. Parent and Other Family programs are capped by a legislative instrument. Section 85 of the *Migration Act 1958* (the Migration Act) allows the Minister to determine the maximum number of visas which may be granted in each program year. If a visa class has been 'capped', this means that if the number of visas granted within that year reaches the maximum number determined by the Minister, no more visas of that class may be granted in that year. Those visa applications will be 'queued' for further processing in the next program year.
137. The 'cap and queue' power allows the annual Migration Program to be managed by:
- Limiting the number of visas that may be granted under a specific class, while queueing additional applications which meet the core criteria for possible visa grant in a later year.
  - Ensuring that applications which do not meet the core criteria for a visa can be refused and do not remain in the queue for years before a decision is made on their application.
138. Section 87 of the Migration Act prevents capping of the Partner or Child visa categories. There is, however, scope in administering the program to consider planning levels and prioritise processing accordingly.

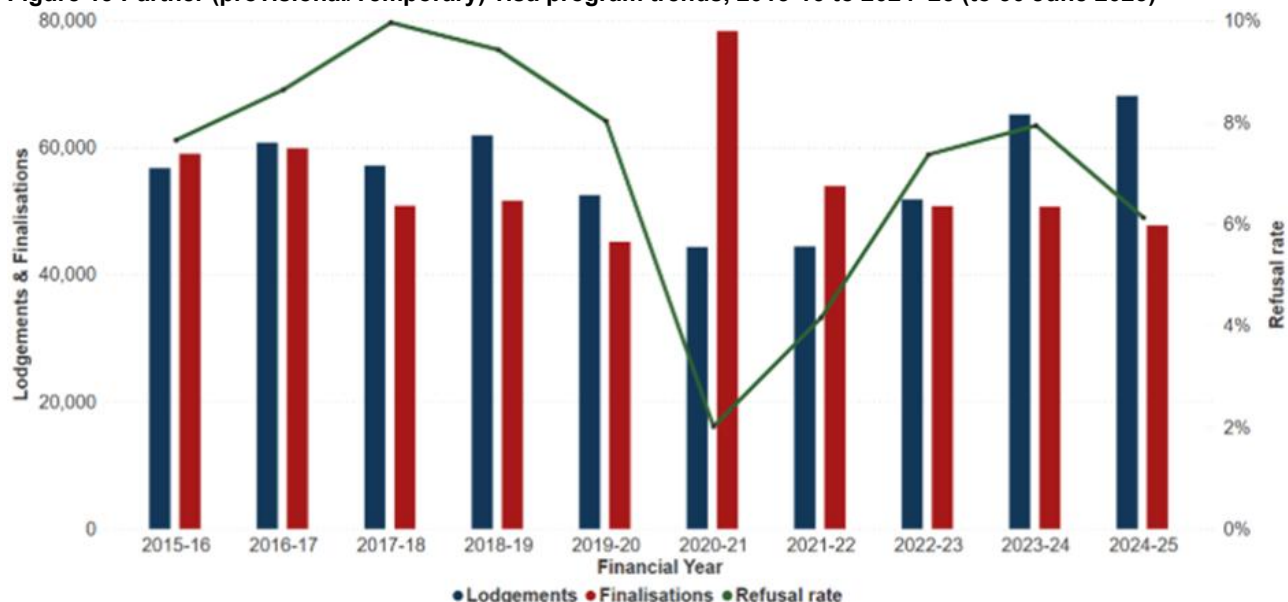
139. Ministerial Direction 102 provides the order for considering and disposing of family visa applications. It reflects the Government's policy intentions in relation to the size, composition and integrity of the Migration Program, and the management of Australia's borders.

140. The Direction sets out the family program processing priorities from highest to lowest as follows:

- Applications where the Minister has exercised powers of intervention under sections 351 and 417 of the Migration Act.
- Partner, Prospective Marriage and Child visa applications.
- Orphan Relative visa applicants.
- Contributory Parent and Contributory Aged Parent visa applications.
- Carer visa applications.
- Parent, Aged Parent, Remaining Relative and Aged Dependent Relative visa applications.

## Partner visas

**Figure 13 Partner (provisional/Temporary) visa program trends, 2015-16 to 2024-25 (to 30 June 2025)**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

141. The Partner visa category continues to make up the majority of Australia's Family Migration Program.

142. In the 2024-25 program year, 43,386 Partner<sup>14</sup> (Temporary/Provisional) visas were granted, down 3.6 per cent on the 45,028 visas granted in 2023-24. Finalisation numbers overall were down 5.8 per cent compared to the 2023-24 program year, with application refusals down 27.1 per cent and application withdrawals down 14.0 per cent.

143. The Department has continued to prioritise the finalisation of aged and complex Partner visa applications in 2024-25, which resulted in lower numbers of finalisations. However, there was a continued reduction in the number of on-hand applications aged 24 months or older. As at 30 June 2025, 4,699 (4.9 per cent) of the temporary/provisional Partner visa applications on hand were older than 24 months, compared to 4,838 (6.4 per cent) on 30 June 2024, 12,289 (21.0 per cent) on 30 June 2023 and 19,905 (30.8 per cent) on 30 June 2021.

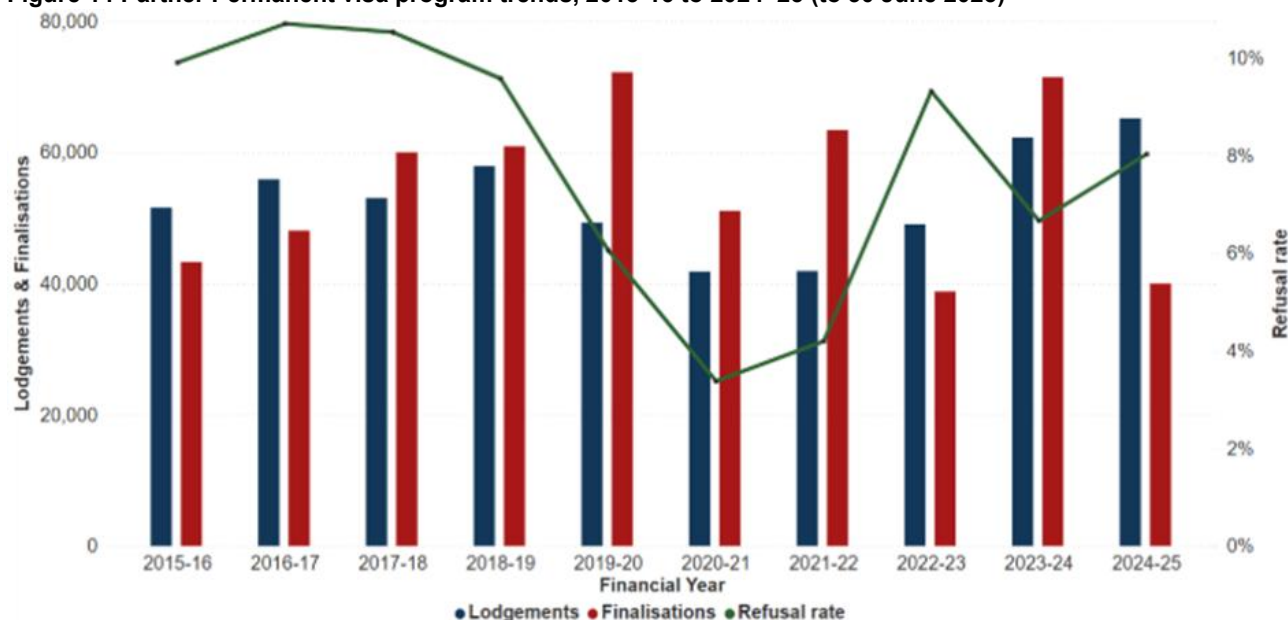
144. Partner visa lodgements continued to increase this program year, with 68,105 applications lodged in 2024-25. This is a 4.5 per cent increase compared to 2023-24.

<sup>14</sup> Some visas granted in a program year may not count towards the migration program outcome.

145. The increase in lodgements contributed to increased numbers of Partner visa applications on-hand. There were 96,839 temporary/provisional Partner visa applications on hand as at 30 June 2025, up from 75,060 at the same time last year.

146. The Partner (Temporary/Provisional) visa processing time at the 75th percentile in 2024–25 was 16 months, down from 18 months in 2023–24.

**Figure 14 Partner Permanent visa program trends, 2015-16 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

147. The Partner visa program includes a two-stage processing arrangement, with applicants lodging an application for both a temporary (provisional) and a permanent Partner visa on the same form at the same time. The two-stage model ensures that only applicants in genuine and ongoing relationships are eligible for the benefits of permanent residence.

148. As part of the two-stage process, most applicants become eligible to be considered for the permanent visa two years after lodgement of the applications.

149. In 2024–25, 35,204 permanent Partner visas were granted. This was a 45.8 per cent reduction on 2023–24, when the reduction of permanent Partner visa applications on-hand was an area of particular focus in the post-COVID regularisation of the processing of the caseload.

150. The number of eligible permanent Partner visa applications on-hand was reduced from 47,638 at 30 June 2023 to 19,900 on 30 June 2024. As at 30 June 2025 there were 26,535 applications on-hand.

151. The permanent Partner visa processing time at the 75th percentile in 2024–25 was 14 months, the same as for program year 2023–24.

## Parent visas

152. The planning level for Parent visas was increased to 8,500 places in 2022–23, from 4,500 in 2021–22. In 2024–25 and 2025-26, the planning level for Parent visas was maintained at 8,500 places.

153. The Parent program is subject to capping and queueing arrangements. Parent visa applications progress to a queue assessment in the order they are received. However, where an existing applicant for a Parent or Aged Parent visa applies for a Contributory Parent or Contributory Aged Parent visa, the date of lodgement will be considered to be the date of lodgement of the new visa application.

154. The Parent queue is ongoing and establishes an order of precedence that can stretch many years into the future. When a visa place becomes available under the Migration Program, applications are released for final processing in order of the queue date allocated to an application.

155. The Department releases more applications from the queue than there are places available under the Migration Program to account for the fact that some applicants may not be able to satisfy the outstanding visa requirements and will no longer be eligible to be granted a visa. Consequently, there is no guarantee that the visa will be granted within the same program year that an application is released from the queue.

### **Sponsored Parent (Temporary) visa**

156. The Sponsored Parent (Temporary) visa is a temporary family visa that allows parents of Australian citizens, permanent residents or eligible New Zealand citizens to reunite with their adult children in Australia for periods of up to three or five years at time, for a maximum cumulative stay of ten years.

### **Child visas**

157. The Child category in the Migration Program allows children to be sponsored to live permanently in Australia. Generally, children are sponsored by their biological or adoptive parents. Some orphaned children are sponsored by other relatives, and a small cohort are also processed under provisions for vulnerable children.

### **Processing times**

158. Processing times for the Family Stream are impacted by a range of factors, including the number of places the Government allocates to a program each year and the level of demand for each visa category.

### **Family Violence Provisions**

159. The Family Violence Provisions (FVPs), enable certain visa applicants to remain eligible for the grant of a permanent visa even if their relationship with the sponsoring partner or the primary applicant ends due to family violence. They aim to ensure that visa applicants do not feel compelled to stay in a violent relationship in order to be granted a permanent visa.

160. In 2024–25:

- 1097 primary Partner visa applicants sought access to the FVPs and 480 permanent Partner visas were granted based on claims of family violence.
- 20 secondary Skilled visa applicants sought access to the FVPs and <5 permanent Skilled visas were granted based on claims of family violence.

161. As part of the 2023–24 Budget, the Government allocated \$8.9 million to expand the FVPs to secondary applicants for most permanent visas and additional cohorts of Partner visa applicants.

162. Work on the expansion of the FVPs is being implemented in stages, as it involves significant amendments to the Migration Regulations 1994 and complex changes to departmental ICT systems.

163. As of 17 December 2024, the FVPs have been expanded in 20 visa subclasses, across Skilled, Family and Business visas, this includes expanding the FVPs to additional cohorts in two Partner visa subclasses (Prospective Marriage (subclass 300) and Partner (subclass 309).

164. Primary applicants on the following visas may be eligible to access the FVPs:

- Partner (Provisional) (subclass 309)
- Partner (Migrant) (subclass 100)
- Partner (Temporary) (subclass 820)
- Partner (Permanent) (subclass 801)
- Prospective Marriage (subclass 300)
- Dependent Child (subclass 445) - if they are the dependant of a Partner visa-holding parent who applied for the FVPs, and applied for a subclass 445

165. Secondary applicants on the following visas may be eligible to access the FVPs:

- Partner (Provisional) (subclass 309)
- Business Talent (subclass 132)
- Business Innovation and Investment (Permanent) (subclass 888)
- Carer (subclass 116)
- Carer (subclass 836)
- Parent (subclass 103)
- Contributory Parent (subclass 143)
- Aged Parent (subclass 804) visa)
- Contributory Aged Parent (subclass 864)
- Remaining Relative (subclass 115)
- Remaining Relative (subclass 835)
- Pacific Engagement Visa (subclass 192)
- Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186)
- Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (subclass 187)
- Skilled Independent (subclass 189)
- Skilled Nominated (subclass 190)
- Permanent Residence (subclass 191)
- Global Talent / National Innovation Visa (subclass 858)
- Skilled Regional (subclass 887)

## **Pacific Engagement visa**

166. The Pacific Engagement Visa (PEV) is a new permanent visa that commenced in mid-2024 for eligible nationals of Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste.

167. On 1 May 2025, the PEV became two streams:

- Pacific Engagement stream – encompasses the original PEV criteria
- Treaty stream – only for Tuvalu residents from 2025–26

## **Pacific Engagement stream**

168. The Pacific Engagement stream provides new opportunities for nationals from eligible countries to live, work and study in Australia. Countries participating in the first year of the program include Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

169. There are up to 3,000 visa places available each year through a ballot process. Country participation and visa allocations will be reviewed annually and in consultation with partner governments.

170. The Pacific Engagement stream aims to:

- Boost permanent migration from the Pacific.
- Grow Australia's Pacific and Timor-Leste diaspora.
- Encourage greater cultural, business, investment, and educational exchange between Pacific Island countries, Timor-Leste and Australia.

171. The inaugural PEV ballot closed for online registrations on 16 August 2024. There was a high level of interest in the ballot, with 56,133 valid primary registrations submitted across all 10 participating countries (Table 14).

**Table 14 Number of primary registrations received in the PEV ballot, 2024–25 (as at 31 December 2024)**

Country	Total PEV Ballots Received to 31/12/2024
Fiji	30,513
Federated States of Micronesia	8
Nauru	429
Palau	6
Papua New Guinea	8,097
Solomon Islands	2,570
Timor-Leste	7,019
Tonga	5,611
Tuvalu	926
Vanuatu	954
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,133</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2024

172. PEV ballot selections for 2024–25 were completed in August 2024, January 2025 and February 2025.

173. As at 30 June 2025, 1,197 visa applications were lodged with a total of 3,000 visa applicants inclusive of primary and secondary applicants (Table 15)

**Table 15 Number of applications lodged, 2024–25 (as at 30 June 2025)**

PEV participating country	Number of visa applications lodged	Number of visa applicants (inclusive of primary and secondary applicants)
Federated States of Micronesia	<5	<10
Fiji	134	298
Nauru	37	164
Palau	<5	<5
Papua New Guinea	590	1,456
Solomon Islands	71	149
Timor-Leste	163	328
Tonga	110	299
Tuvalu	33	110
Vanuatu	52	136
Other citizenships <sup>15</sup>	N/A	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,197</b>	<b>3,000</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

<sup>15</sup> As at 30 June 2025, 1,006 visas have been granted to primary applicants and their family member secondary applicants.

**Table 16 Number of applications finalised, 2024–25 (as at 30 June 2025)**

Outcome	Number of visa applications	Number of visa applicants (inclusive of primary and secondary applicants)
Granted	437	1006
Refused	0	0
Withdrawn	<5	13
<b>Total PEV finalisations</b>	<b>&lt;450</b>	<b>1,019</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

**Treaty stream**

174. The Treaty stream implements Australia's commitment under the Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union treaty to provide Tuvalu with a special visa pathway. 280 places (including partners and dependent children) are allocated to the Treaty stream in the 2025–26 program year.

175. The Treaty stream ballot for Tuvalu nationals opened on 16 June 2025 and closed on 18 July 2025.

176. There has been a high level of interest in the ballot from Tuvalu nationals. As at 23 July 2025, a total of 2,474 primary registrations (8,750 including family members) have been submitted and are available for selection.

## Relationship between temporary and permanent migration

177. Temporary migrants are a major source of permanent Skilled stream visa applications, with a number of visas providing a pathway from temporary to permanent residence for those who have demonstrated their ability to contribute to the Australian economy.

**Table 17 Number of permanent primary visa applications lodged by client location, comparison 2022–23, 2023–24 and 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Financial Year	2022–23			2023–24			2024–25		
Visa category	In Australia	Outside Australia	Total	In Australia	Outside Australia	Total	In Australia	Outside Australia	Total
Family	67,838	45,115	112,953	77,872	49,303	127,175	90,112	45,991	136,103
Other Permanent	5	134	139	<5	92	95	351	940	1,291
Resident Return/ADV	179,639	48,517	228,156	163,483	50,217	213,700	140,897	47,852	188,749
Skilled	83,577	29,180	112,757	42,496	13,475	55,971	65,372	12,842	78,214
Special Eligibility	64	8	72	<110	5	106	164	9	173
<b>Total</b>	<b>331,123</b>	<b>122,954</b>	<b>454,077</b>	<b>283,955</b>	<b>113,092</b>	<b>397,047</b>	<b>296,896</b>	<b>107,634</b>	<b>404,530</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

178. The number of lodgements under the permanent skilled program for applicants residing outside of Australia was 26.1 per cent of total lodgements between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025 compared to 35.6 per cent of total lodgements between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024.



## Immigration outreach and engagement

179. The Department delivers a range of communication and engagement activities to support immigration programs through outreach, marketing campaigns and the development of information products.
180. The Department's Business, Industry and Regional Outreach (BIRO) network assists stakeholders of all levels with information and support on the migration program. In 2024–25, the BIRO network facilitated and participated in more than 4,650 engagements with stakeholders.
181. The BIRO network has stood up a dedicated construction sector outreach team to increase engagement and support for the construction and housing sector. The team has undertaken numerous engagements with local and national peak bodies as well as with member organisations supporting the housing, construction and infrastructure sector.
182. The Department continues to deliver a range of targeted communication products and engagement activities to help strengthen the integrity of the Protection visa (PV) program, including:
  - Raising awareness of the misuse of the PV program
  - Correcting misinformation about the PV system to influence the behaviour of non-genuine PV applicants.
183. The Department has achieved high levels of engagement and outreach. As at 30 June 2025:
  - PV reform webpage had received 100,800 page views
  - Social media posts on Department channels were viewed by 360,000 people and shared around 500 times
  - Articles highlighting PV reform were published in onshore Indian, Chinese, Filipino and Pasifika media, reaching around 500,000 people
  - Two webinars were held in June for approximately 1000 stakeholders in the education sector to raise awareness of the misuse of the PV to Student visa holders.

## Humanitarian Program

184. Since the end of World War II, Australia has successfully settled more than 985,000 refugees and others in humanitarian need, recognising the valuable contribution that refugees have provided, and continue to provide, to Australian society, culture and prosperity.
185. Australia continues to be a world leader in settling refugees and others in humanitarian need, even as global resettlement places decrease. Australia 2024–25 Humanitarian Program was maintained at 20,000 places, representing the highest intake over two consecutive years since 1982.
186. There are two components within Australia's Humanitarian Program:
  - The offshore component (Humanitarian visas) provide permanent resettlement in Australia to refugees and people in humanitarian need overseas; and
  - The onshore component (Protection visas) provide protection to people who arrive lawfully in Australia and engage Australia's *non-refoulement* (non-return) obligations.



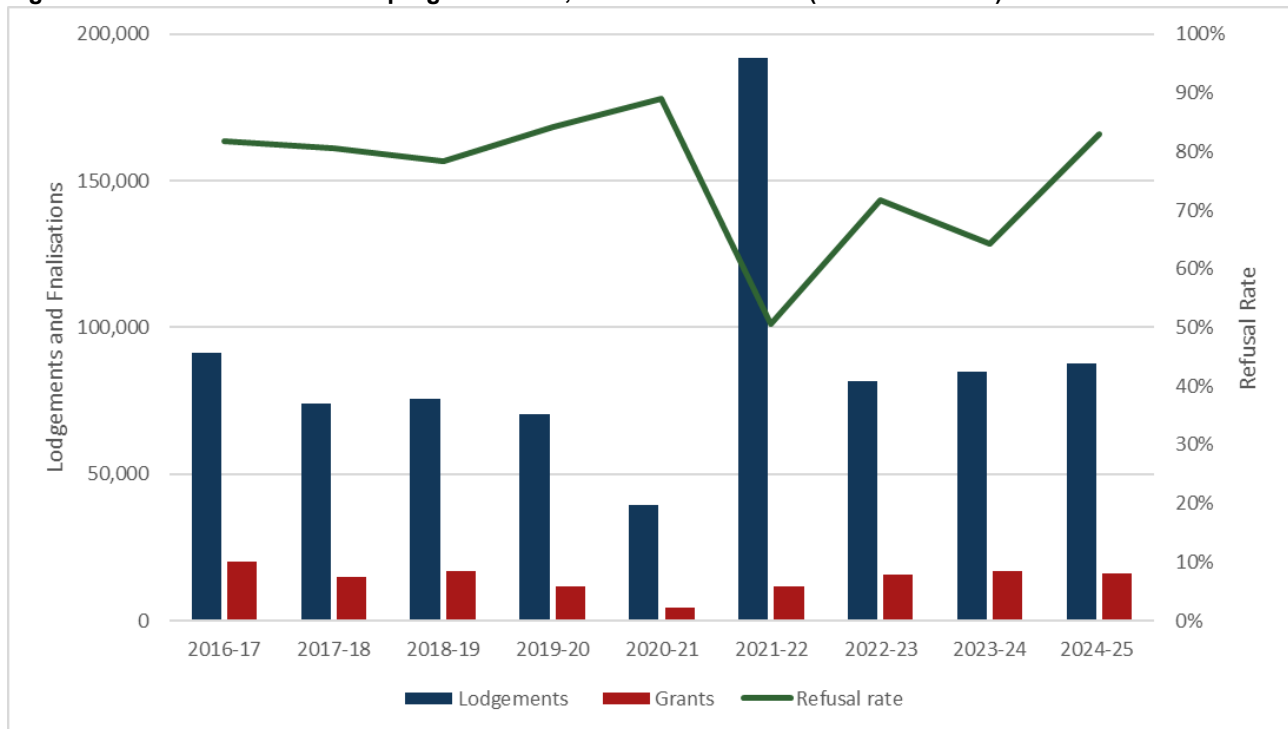
## Humanitarian visas

187. Notwithstanding Australia's generous resettlement intake, global demand for resettlement is unprecedented, and the Department receives more applications for humanitarian visas than there are available places under the Humanitarian Program. As such, the Australian Government has established policy to guide decisions on which humanitarian visa applicants should be given priority. This policy includes those who are outside their home country and are:

- Assessed as refugees by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and referred to Australia for resettlement; or
- Proposed by immediate (for example, spouses and minor aged children) or close family (for example, siblings, adult children, parents) who has a Refugee category visa (subclasses 200, 201, 203 or 204); or
- Members of identified minority groups (such as women and girls, ethnic minorities and LGBTQI+) who are referred by the UNHCR or proposed by a family member in Australia.

188. Applicants who do not fall within Program priorities are likely to be refused, and even priority applicants may wait several years for a visa outcome.

**Figure 15 Offshore Humanitarian program trends, 2016–17 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Dedicated places for Afghan nationals

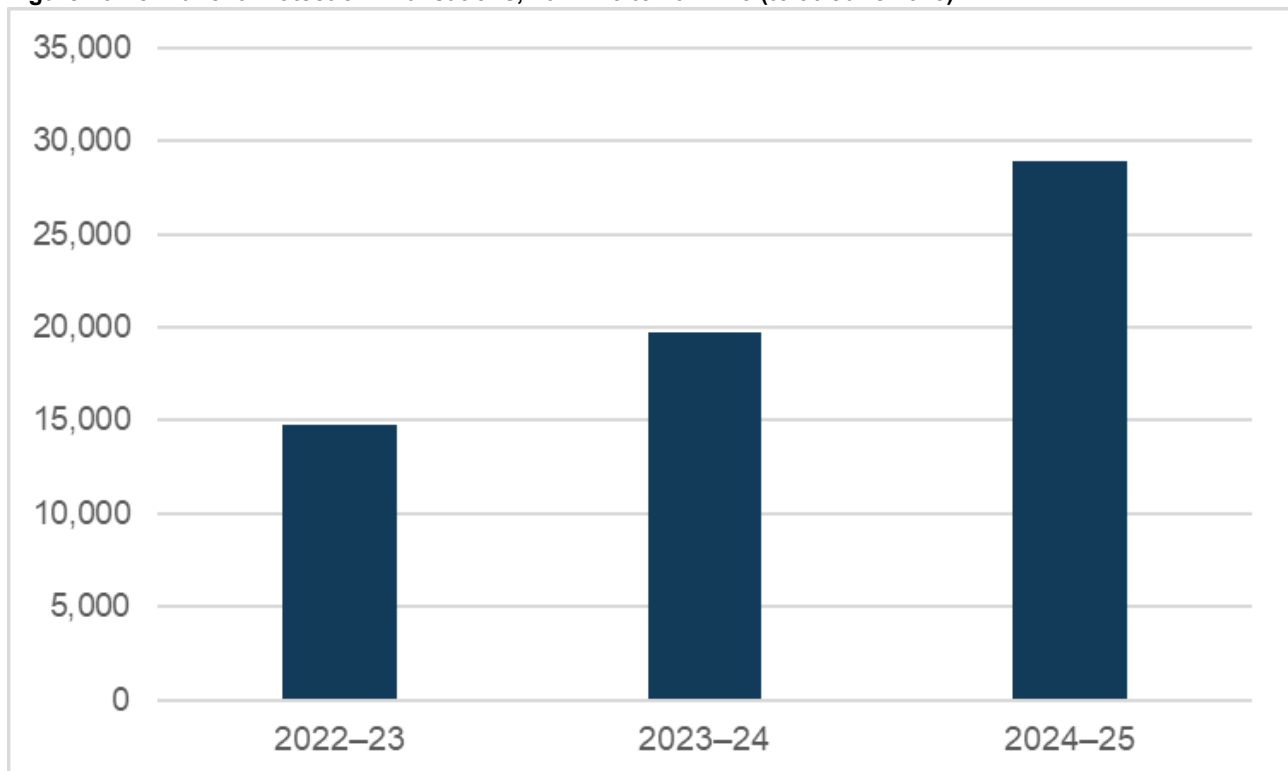
189. The Australian Government allocated 26,500 dedicated visa places for Afghans to migrate to Australia under the offshore Humanitarian Program, through to 2025–26.

190. The Afghan commitment of 6,125 places for 2023–24 was delivered in full. Grants to Afghans represented almost 42.0 per cent of the total offshore humanitarian visa program grants in 2023–24.

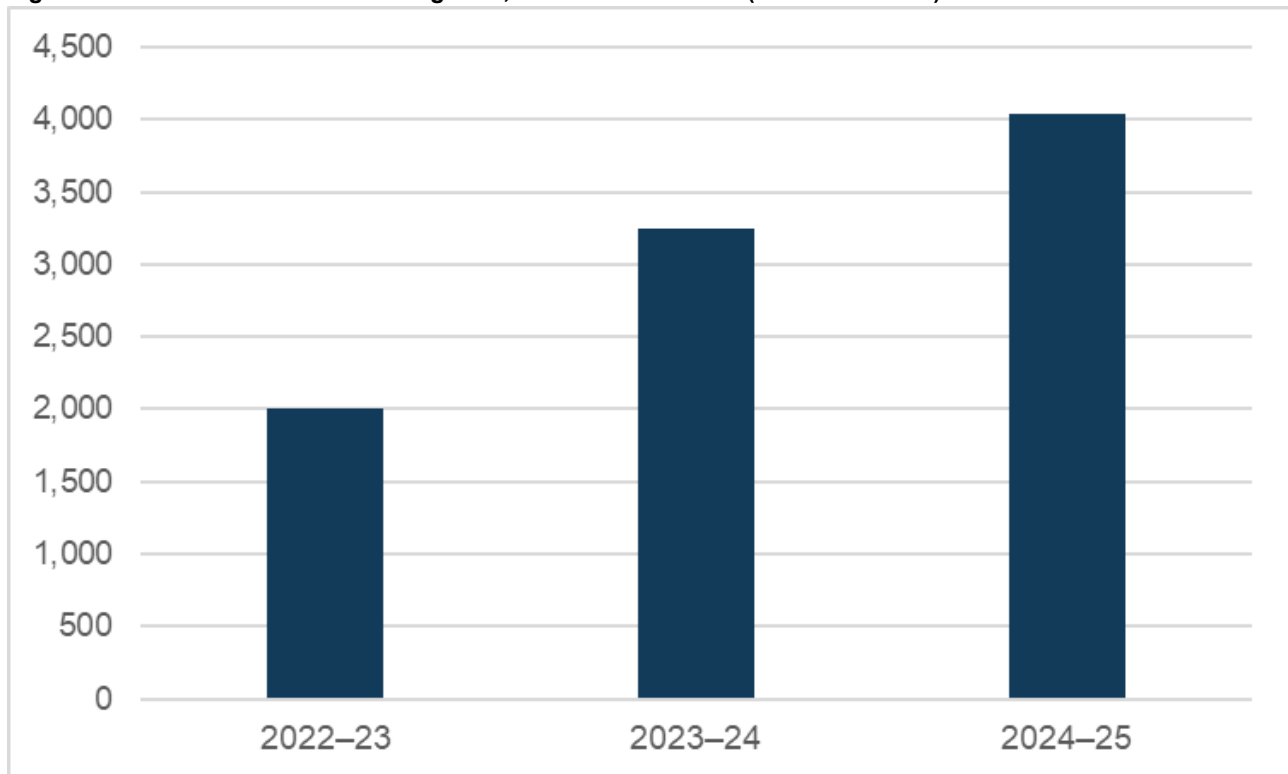
## Protection visas

191. In line with Australia's international *non-refoulement* (non-return) obligations, non-citizens who enter Australia lawfully may seek Australia's protection by lodging a Protection visa (subclass 866) application. While a proportion of applicants claim protection because they genuinely fear they will face serious or significant harm if returned to their home country, the Protection visa system faces exploitation by individuals seeking to prolong their stay in Australia for labour market or other opportunities. The vast majority of applications (around 85.0 per cent in 2024–25) are refused.
192. Reforms to Australia's Protection visa system announced by the Australian Government on 5 October 2023 to remove incentives for non-genuine applicants to apply for protection, and reduce legacy backlogs, have significantly reduced the time taken to finalise a permanent Protection visa application.
- While processing times are subject to fluctuations over time, most new permanent Protection visa applications are finalised 8 times faster than prior to the reforms. The on-hand caseload has also stabilised and begun reducing following consistent prior growth.
  - Protection visa finalisations are at an all-time high, consistently outstripping lodgements, with 28,960 decisions in Program Year 2024–25, the highest number made in a single program year over the past decade.
  - If you include grants, refusals and withdrawals a total of 30,465 Protection visa finalisations exceeded Performance Target 33 – to deliver at least 30,000 Protection (subclass 866) visa finalisations during the 2024–25 program year.

**Figure 16 Permanent Protection finalisations, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

**Figure 17 Permanent Protection visa grants, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Source: **Department of Home Affairs, 2025**

193. In 2024–25, the grant rate for permanent Protection visa applications is 15.0 per cent.

### **Unauthorised Maritime Arrivals (UMA) Legacy Caseload**

194. In February 2023, the Australian Government provided a permanent visa pathway to existing Temporary Protection visa (TPV) and Safe Haven Enterprise visa (SHEV) holders through the permanent Resolution of Status (RoS) visa

195. This policy provides the opportunity for those people who have been found to engage Australia's protection obligations an opportunity for permanent residency.

- Persons who do not engage protection obligations, who are not awaiting a merits or judicial review outcome, and who have exhausted all avenues to remain in Australia, are expected to depart Australia voluntarily and may be provided assistance to depart.

196. As of 30 June 2025:

- 20,419 permanent RoS visas have been granted.
- 1,944 initial TPV, SHEV and RoS applications remain on hand for processing.

## **Adult Migrant English Program**

197. The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is a free service to help eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants with low English levels to improve their English language skills and settle into Australia.

198. The AMEP is delivered by 13 service providers at around 300 locations across Australia in major cities as well as regional and remote areas. The department also contracts a quality assurance provider.

199. The AMEP offers face-to-face and online classes, a volunteer tutor scheme and distance learning. Full-time, part-time, evening and weekend classes are available.

200. Free childcare is available to clients with children under school age while they participate in a face-to-face AMEP class.

201. AMEPOne (<https://ameponline.homeaffairs.gov.au>) is a freely available departmental resource for anyone wanting to study English. It offers a range of engaging, interactive, audio and video activities across five English levels.
202. The AMEP recorded approximately 70,300 enrolments in the 2024–25 year. This was the highest level of participation since 1986–87.
203. The 2024–25 enrolment figure represents a 1.8 per cent increase over 2023–24.
204. Further information about the AMEP is available on the department's website at: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/amep>

## Australian Citizenship Program

205. Migrants who become Australian citizens make an ongoing commitment to Australia and its values. Citizenship entails additional responsibilities to the Australian community as well as individual privileges.
206. Applications for Australian citizenship generally fall within four categories: conferral (the most common way of acquiring citizenship through application, (representing 91.0 per cent of all applications in 2024–25 as at 30 June 2025), descent, adoption and resumption.
- In the 2024–25 program year, 162,461 people acquired Australian citizenship by conferral compared with 192,242 in 2023–24.

### Citizenship by conferral

207. Australian citizenship by conferral is available to permanent residents (including permanent visa holders and New Zealand citizens holding a Special Category (subclass 444) visa (SCV), who meet relevant eligibility requirements, including residency, knowledge of Australia, English language, identity, character and an intention to reside in Australia.
208. In the 2024–25 program year to 30 June 2025, 179,799 citizenship by conferral applications were finalised, representing a decrease of 7.0 per cent in comparison to the same period in the 2023–24 program year.

**Table 18 Number of Australian citizenship by conferral applications finalised, by decision type and financial year, 2014–15 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Program year	Approved	Refused	Invalid	Other <sup>16</sup>	Total
2014–15	148,862	5,197	34,987	795	189,841
2015–16	129,515	4,749	32,612	792	167,668
2016–17	127,013	4,089	22,035	742	153,879
2017–18	80,776	4,956	14,998	692	101,422
2018–19	145,587	7,590	5,713	1,227	160,117
2019–20	215,394	8,762	2,179	1,988	228,323
2020–21	170,645	7,957	1,782	2,831	183,215
2021–22	149,514	6,798	3,246	1,789	161,347
2022–23	185,419	8,705	3,629	1,055	198,808
2023–24	174,880	11,781	5,116	1,217	192,994
2024–25	165,338	8,398	4,884	1,179	179,799

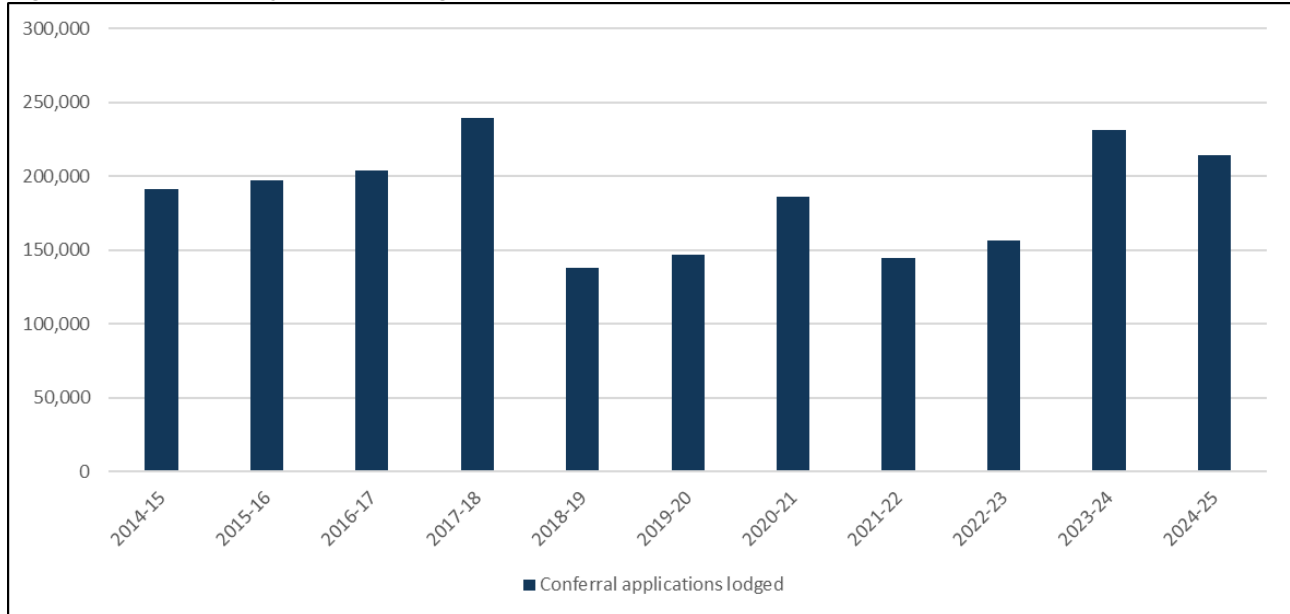
Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

209. Once citizenship is conferred, it can be revoked only in extremely limited circumstances. From July 2014 to 30 June 2025, 53 individuals had their Australian citizenship revoked for criminal conduct, including for citizenship or migration fraud.

<sup>16</sup> Other includes applications withdrawn by the client and minor numbers of administrative finalisations.

210. There continues to be strong interest from migrants applying to become Australian citizens. In 2024–25, 214,356 applications for citizenship by conferral were lodged.

**Figure 18 Citizenship by conferral lodgement trends, 2014–15 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**



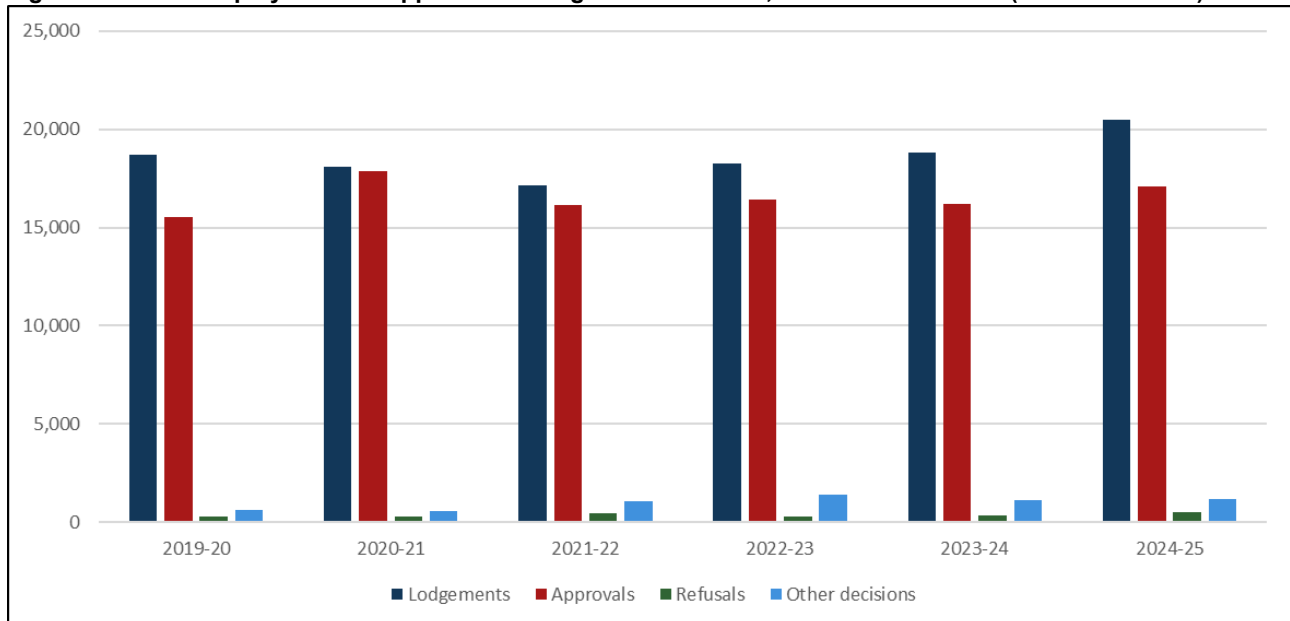
Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Citizenship by descent

211. People born outside of Australia, who at the time of their birth had a parent who was an Australian citizen (or the parent later became an Australian citizen on 26 January 1949), can apply for Australian citizenship by descent; regardless of their age.

212. In 2024–25, 17,065 people acquired Australian citizenship by descent (see figure 19). This represents a 5.0 per cent increase compared to the 2023–24 program year.

**Figure 19 Citizenship by descent applications lodged and finalised, 2019–20 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)<sup>17</sup>**



Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

<sup>17</sup> Other decisions include invalidated applications, applications withdrawn by the client and administrative finalisations.

213. In 2024–25, 369 children born through surrogacy arrangements acquired Australian citizenship by descent. The 5 main countries of birth of these children were, in numerical order, United States of America, Georgia, Colombia, Mexico, and Argentina.

## Citizenship by adoption

214. Children adopted outside of Australia by an Australian citizen under the Hague Convention or a bilateral arrangement, can apply for Australian citizenship. In 2024–25, 17 children acquired Australian citizenship by adoption, a decrease from 21 in the previous program year.

## Citizenship by resumption

215. People who previously renounced their Australian citizenship, or who lost it automatically under historical provisions, may apply to resume Australian citizenship if they are of good character. In 2024–25, 158 people resumed Australian citizenship, compared to 121 in the previous program year.

## Citizenship service delivery

216. The department is committed to ensuring the efficient processing of citizenship applications and reducing processing times.

217. As at 30 June 2025, the number of on-hand conferral applications was 152,859, a 30.0 per cent increase from 30 June 2024 (117,789 on-hand).

- This increase is primarily due to the increase in citizenship by conferral applications from New Zealand citizens (please refer to *Direct pathway to Australian citizenship for New Zealanders* below).

218. The average processing time from lodgement to decision for applications decided in June 2025 increased by 29.0 per cent from June 2024 (from 7 months (211 days) to 9 months (273 days)).

219. In 2024–25, 159,191 people acquired citizenship at a ceremony (158,692 in-person and 499 online).

## Direct pathway to Australian citizenship for New Zealanders

220. On 1 July 2023, the department implemented the Government's priority of providing a direct pathway to Australian citizenship for New Zealand citizens.

221. In the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2025, 92,244 citizenship by conferral applications were received from New Zealand citizens holding an SCV. These represent 21.0 per cent of all citizenship by conferral applications received in this period.

222. As at 30 June 2025, of the 92,244 Australian citizenship by conferral applications received since 1 July 2023 from New Zealand citizens holding an SCV 65,013 applications had been approved.

# Managing risk and community protection

## Risk Environment

223. The majority of non-citizens entering Australia are genuine entrants who comply with their visa conditions. However, there are individuals and groups that seek to exploit visa and citizenship programs.

224. Migrants will continue to seek opportunities in prosperous countries, such as Australia. Heightened awareness will be required for aspiring migrants who cannot meet visa criteria and may turn to fraud to achieve migration goals.

225. Some non-citizens who are strongly motivated to work in Australia may be manipulated and exploited by unscrupulous employers and labour hire intermediaries.

226. Political and economic instability and ongoing conflict will continue to impact refugee flows, increasing the number of people who seek to relocate both legally and illegally to safe countries, such as Australia. Individuals may have little to no reliable documentation, making it difficult to verify their identity.

227. In response, the Department has bolstered its ability to accurately identify both non-genuine visa applicants and facilitators who exploit them, thereby supporting faster processing for the majority of genuine visa applicants. This has been made possible by investing in specialist teams, innovative use of data and technology as well as improved cooperation and information flows.
228. Since 2020, the Department's risk and integrity capability has expanded through a multi-layered approach to risk across the immigration continuum, and improved partnerships between visa and citizenship program delivery teams and risk and integrity teams. This cooperation has extended to the Immigration Compliance Group, which was established on 27 February 2024 and will further strengthen this end-to-end approach in managing risk at all stages of a traveller's journey.
229. In addition, data holdings and system analysis enables the Department to identify, assess and mitigate risk in visa applications and border-related transactions. This also allows the Department to better monitor a visa holder's compliance with visa conditions.
230. Risk identification and mitigation is enhanced by collaboration with partner agencies in Australia and overseas. This cooperation provides a deeper understanding of immigration fraud and non-compliance, which informs the management of risk in Australia's visa and citizenship programs.

## Reforms and Policy implementation

### People smuggling

231. The Australian Government remains committed to Operation Sovereign Borders and working with its regional partners to, countering maritime people smuggling and preventing avoidable deaths at sea. The Department will continue to detect and intercept anyone who attempts an irregular boat voyage to Australia and return them to their country of departure or origin, where it is safe to do so. People who cannot be safely returned will be transferred to Nauru for regional processing. People who travel to Australia irregularly by boat will not settle in Australia.

### Maritime People Smuggling

232. As at 30 June 2025, there were 41 UMAs initially transferred to Nauru for 2024–25 financial year.
233. The following table 19 highlights returns and transfers across 2023 – 2025 financial years.

**Table 19 Returns and transfers, 2023–24 to 2024–25**

Financial Year	Returned to Country of origin or departure		Transferred to a regional processing country	
	People	Ventures <sup>18</sup>	People	Ventures <sup>7</sup>
2023–24	30	7	109	6
2024–25	165	9	41	9

Source: **Department of Home Affairs, 2025**

234. Close cooperation with regional partners has resulted in the below disruption of maritime people smuggling ventures targeting Australia by foreign law enforcement agencies<sup>19</sup>.

**Table 20 Ventures and potential irregular immigrants (PII) disrupted, 2023–24 to 2024–25**

Financial Year	Ventures disrupted	PII disrupted
2023–24	8	55
2024–25	10	158

<sup>18</sup> Ventures may be resolved by any combination of a return to country of origin or departure and a transfer to regional processing and may therefore be counted across both columns.

<sup>19</sup> Statistics are provided by AFP posts, based on advice received by foreign law enforcement, and are indicative only as they are subject to a range of factors that may affect accuracy and quality. Post experience is that results are typically under-reported because arrests in regional locations are occasionally not reported.

Source: **Department of Home Affairs, 2025**

235. It has been over 11 years since the last known death at sea from maritime people smuggling ventures en-route to Australia, and almost 11 years since the arrival of the last successful<sup>20</sup> people smuggling venture to Australia.

## Modern slavery and human trafficking

236. In Australia, human trafficking and other forms of modern slavery are criminalised under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth) Divisions 270 and 271. Australia's human trafficking offences cover trafficking in all its forms, including trafficking for harvesting human organs and trafficking in children. Offences of slavery-like practices include forced marriage, servitude, forced labour, debt bondage and deceptive recruitment for labour or services.

237. The Australian Government developed the National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25, which provides the strategic framework for Australia's response to modern slavery and articulates Australia's vision where *no one is subjected to modern slavery and the human rights of all people are valued equally*. This action plan supports a coordinated, whole of government approach led by the Attorney General's Department.

238. The ABF employs specialist Human Trafficking Contact Officers in each state and territory. Their role is to refer all suspected cases of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like-practices to the Australian Federal Police (AFP) in accordance with a joint agency Human Trafficking, Slavery, and Slavery-like Practices Referral Protocol (Referral Protocol).

- Between 1 January 2025 and 30 June 2025, the Department, including the ABF, referred 52 suspected cases of human trafficking and modern slavery to the AFP for investigation under the established Referral Protocol.

239. The Department supports unlawful non-citizen victims of human trafficking by regularising their immigration status under the Human Trafficking Visa Framework (HTVF). The HTVF includes both temporary and permanent visas:

- A Bridging F visa (WF060), which is used to regularise a person's stay for:
  - An initial 45-day period for recovery and reflection.
  - An additional 45-day period for further recovery and reflection.
  - Longer-term stay to assist in a human trafficking investigation (supported by an assistance notice issued by the AFP).
  - Re-entry to Australia (for offshore trafficking victims) to support a human trafficking investigation.
  - Lawful status to support a victim's departure from Australia (for onshore trafficking victims).

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<sup>20</sup> 'Successful' maritime people smuggling ventures are defined in this context as those not disrupted, turned back, returned, or transferred to a regional processing country.



- A Referred Stay (Permanent) visa (Subclass 852) (RSV), which allows a victim survivor to stay in Australia if they have contributed to, and closely cooperated with, a police investigation into human trafficking or a slavery-like offence, and they would be in danger if they return to their home country. It is important to note:
  - The Attorney General's Department must identify the victim survivor as having made a contribution to, and cooperated closely with, an investigation in relation to another person who was alleged to have engaged in human trafficking, slavery or slavery-like practices.
  - Following an assessment of claims and eligibility, the victim survivor may be invited to apply for the RSV.
  - The Referred Stay visa is **not** the same as a protection visa. It is designed specifically to support victims of human trafficking who have contributed to a criminal justice process and who have well founded fears of returning home as a result of that contribution.

240. Under the HTVF, a victim's immediate family members may also be eligible for a visa to support family reunion and foster social cohesion. In some circumstances, witnesses to trafficking offences may qualify for a permanent visa, even if they are not themselves a victim of human trafficking, slavery or slavery-like practices.

## Ensuring immigration integrity and community protection

241. In the 2023–24 Budget, the Australian Government provided \$50 million over four years to support an uplift in immigration compliance and the implementation of reforms to support the integrity of Australia's migration system.

242. This funding has supported the development of a dedicated Immigration Compliance Group within the Department, bringing together immigration compliance policy, intelligence and enforcement. The Department and ABF also work collaboratively with Commonwealth, state and territory partners to strengthen Australia's border against serious organised crime networks seeking to exploit Australia's migration system. Where exploitation is identified outside of its legislative remit, the Department and ABF work closely with partner agencies to facilitate suitable treatment options and investigations under appropriate and relevant legislation.

## Migrant worker exploitation

243. Exploitation, as defined in Divisions 270 and 271 of the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth), involves slavery and slavery-like practices and human trafficking. However, a range of other behaviours can also be considered exploitative, including the underpayment of wages and entitlements, working conditions that are unsafe, unfair dismissal, threats and coercion. For the purpose of this section, exploitation is not confined by the definitions outlined in the Criminal Code.

244. The Government has zero tolerance for the exploitation of workers, regardless of their visa status.

245. The national workplace relations system has been established for workers in Australia, and it applies regardless of a person's immigration status. It includes:

- The Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) (Fair Work Act) and the Fair Work Regulations 2009, which establish a safety net of minimum entitlements and conditions of employment;
- The Fair Work Commission, which is the independent agency responsible for setting minimum standards under modern awards; and
- The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO), which is the lead agency for advice, education, compliance and enforcement activities under the Fair Work Act.

246. Workplace laws and minimum standards apply to all employers, including third party providers (such as labour hire intermediaries).

247. While the national workplace relations system provides temporary visa holders working in Australia the same basic workplace rights and protections as Australian citizens and permanent residents, the Government recognises that migrant workers can be more vulnerable to workplace exploitation. This may be due to limited English language skills; a lack of awareness of Australian workplace laws; an acceptance of lower wages and conditions; and fear of visa cancellation, detention and/or removal from Australia.
248. The Government takes a whole-of-government approach to addressing migrant worker exploitation. This involves collaboration between a range of agencies including the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, the Attorney-General's Department, the FWO, the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Taxation Office and the AFP.
249. The Department is committed to ensuring that Australia's visa programs are not misused to exploit migrant workers. Informed by the findings of the Migrant Workers' Taskforce (2019), the Rapid Review into the Exploitation of Australia's Visa System (2023) and the Migration Strategy (2023), sustained efforts to address migrant worker exploitation include the proactive provision of information about migration-related workplace rights and obligations, and the administration of three legislative frameworks:
- The 'Employer' framework seeks to ensure employers only employ visa holders with appropriate work rights, recognising that visa programs are designed for specific purposes. This scheme is supported by the Department's Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) system which enables migrant workers and potential employers to verify a visa holder's immigration status, and the conditions attached to their visa. Since 1 July 2024, this framework also includes criminal offences for using a person's visa status to exploit them in the workplace.
  - 'Paying for Visa Sponsorship' legislation outlines offences for asking for, or receiving a benefit in return for a sponsorship related event. The offences seek to protect migrant workers from exploitation or extortion, encourage fair recruitment practices and protect employment opportunities for Australian workers.
  - The 'Sponsorship Obligations' framework seeks to ensure sponsored visa holders are not exploited by their sponsors. A breach may involve a sponsor not providing their sponsored worker the same terms and conditions of employment that are offered to other workers, not ensuring the visa holder is working in the occupation for which they were nominated (the gap they were sponsored to address) or unlawfully recovering costs from the visa holder.
250. Under these legislative frameworks, enforcement officers are supported by a range of tools to respond proportionately to cases of visa non-compliance. This includes education activities and warnings, compliance notices, enforceable undertakings, infringements, civil penalties, an ability to cancel or bar employer sponsors from using the program, a power to prohibit employers from allowing any additional non-citizens (other than permanent residents) to work for a period of time, and criminal offences.

**Table 21 Migrant Worker Compliance activity and outcomes 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025**

Outcome	Migrant Worker Exploitation
Site visits conducted	716
Education	356
IWWN (Warning letters)	<5
Employer Sponsorship Cancellation	48
Employer Sponsor Bar	30
Compliance Notice	26
Infringements	18
Infringement value	\$3,036,749

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

251. The implementation of these frameworks, has been reinforced by recent investments in an integrated immigration compliance capability, including immigration compliance policy, intelligence and operations, which also supports centralised engagement with regulatory and law enforcement authorities.
252. Recent reforms also include a range of safeguards to help address fears that may have deterred temporary visa holders from asserting their workplace rights. These include:
- Repeal of section 235 of the Migration Act, under which it was a criminal offence to work in breach of a visa condition, or to work as an unlawful non-citizen, and which deterred some temporary migrants from reporting workplace issues (repealed on 1 July 2024).
  - Enhanced mobility provisions for temporary migrants under certain 'employer sponsored' programs (subclass 482, 494, and 457 visas), which make it easier for sponsored workers to leave an exploitative employer (the change commenced 1 July 2024).
  - A Strengthening Reporting Protections pilot, which provides protection from visa cancellation in prescribed circumstances. This pilot responds to feedback that dishonest employers threaten temporary visa holders with visa cancellation if they seek to assert their workplace rights. The prescribed circumstance balances the Government's commitment to address migrant worker exploitation alongside its commitment to uphold the integrity of the migration program (the pilot commenced 24 July 2024).
  - A Workplace Justice visa pilot, to enable migrant workers who have been exploited while working in Australia to extend their stay for a short period to effectively pursue workplace claims (the pilot commenced 24 July 2024).
    - The two pilots rely on effective cooperation with experts in workplace relations to certify the workplace exploitation matter and appropriately support the visa holder to pursue an outcome. The pilots are scheduled to run for two-years, and they will be subject to ongoing monitoring and an evaluation.
253. Communication and engagement activities about migration related workplace rights and obligations include:
- Web content, social media posts and a comic strip translated in key languages.
  - Engagement supported by the Business Industry Regional Outreach and Community Liaison Officer networks.
  - Education site visits by compliance officers to help employers understand their obligations under the Migration Act.
254. These activities will be enhanced by recently commissioned behavioural insights research, providing an analysis of current attitudes towards reporting exploitation among temporary migrant workers and the broader community. This research will identify the most effective communication approaches, key messages, preferred channels and delivery methods to educate migrant workers, employers/labour hire intermediaries and the community about workplace rights and obligations.
255. The activities will also be supported by a dedicated grants program to enable selected non-government entities to proactively educate temporary visa holders and their employers about migration-related workplace rights and obligations (commenced in July 2025).

## Unlawful non-Citizens

256. An Unlawful Non-Citizen (UNC) is defined in the Migration Act as a non-citizen who is in the migration zone who is not a lawful non-citizen, meaning that they do not hold a visa that is in effect.
257. As at 30 June 2025, there were an estimated 77,700 UNCs in Australia. This estimate excludes persons in held and community detention, and is derived by matching visa grants, arrivals and departures across many departmental systems and Fact of Death data collated by individual state and territory jurisdictions, to ascertain those that may have arrived in Australia and not departed before their visa expired or was cancelled.

258. Matching traveller data across different systems is inherently difficult and prone to error as people can arrive and leave on different travel documents and under different names. There is also a significant amount of change within the cohort of UNCs in Australia at any one time as most non-citizens are only unlawful for a short period and either engage with the Department's Status Resolution Service to resolve their immigration status or depart voluntarily.
259. The ABF's operational activity is focused towards UNCs who pose a significant risk to the Australian community (for example those involved in organised and criminal exploitation of Australia's visa program, and foreign worker exploitation).

## **Cancellations<sup>21</sup>**

260. All non-citizens who apply for, and are granted a visa, are expected to obey Australian laws and meet and continue to meet, character, health, identity, security and other eligibility requirements set out in Migration legislation. These requirements ensure the health, safety and security of the Australian community.
261. The character test in section 501 of the Migration Act, together with the general visa cancellation provisions in the Migration Act, ensures that non-citizens who are of character concern, commit crimes in Australia, pose a risk to the Australian community or represent an integrity concern are appropriately considered for visa refusal or cancellation. These two programs directly support the Department's core objective of protecting the Australian community and the integrity of Australia's borders and visa programs.

### **The Character Program**

262. A person may fail the 'character test' under section 501 of the Act for a number of reasons, including if they have a substantial criminal record or have been convicted of certain offences, such as those involving sexual offences against children. The test also considers whether a person's past or present conduct indicates they would be a danger to the Australian community; this includes engaging in criminal conduct, harassment, intimidation, or inciting discord. A person who is assessed as presenting a security risk will also fail the character test.
263. When making character-related decisions, departmental delegates are guided by a Ministerial Direction that provides the framework within which decisions makers should approach their task. The current Ministerial Direction 110 came into effect on 21 June 2024 and reflects the government's commitment to protecting the Australian community.
264. Portfolio ministers may also personally consider cancelling or refusing the visa of a non-citizen who does not meet the character test. Additionally, the Minister has personal, non-compellable powers under the Migration Act to set-aside decisions made by a departmental delegate or the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART) and cancel or refuse a person's visa if they are satisfied that the person does not pass the character test and that it is in the 'national interest' to cancel or refuse the visa.

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<sup>21</sup> All data in the 'Cancellations' section has been drawn from a live systems environment, the figures provided may differ slightly in previous or future reporting.

**Table 22 Adverse section 501 (character) decisions<sup>22</sup>, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)<sup>23</sup>**

Character Decisions	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
<b>Minister Decisions</b>			
Cancelled by Minister	6	7	12
Refused by Minister	<5	5	10
AAT or Delegate decision set aside by the Minister	0	76	69
<b>Delegate Decisions</b>			
Mandatory Cancellation	615	501	833
Discretionary Cancellation by Delegate	<5	28	34
Refused by Delegate	140	188	836
Mandatory Cancellations not revoked	356	331	422
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,122</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>2,216</b>

Source: **Department of Home Affairs, 2025**

265. In May 2024, the former Minister for Home Affairs and Cyber Security and former Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs directed the Department to urgently review a number of character related decisions, including all section 501 character decisions set aside by the review tribunal, and prepare submissions for consideration of their personal, non-delegable powers to cancel or refuse the visa in the national interest. The increase in submissions for the Ministers' consideration led to an increase in cancellation and refusal decisions made under the Ministers' personal powers in 2024–25.

<sup>22</sup> Does not include s501F decisions, these are counted in the General Cancellations table.

<sup>23</sup> A visa may be recorded as cancelled more than once. For example, when a visa is cancelled, the cancellation is subsequently revoked or set aside, and then the visa is cancelled again. A cancellation may be revoked or set aside for a number of reasons, including further legal proceedings, and administrative or jurisdictional errors. Duplicates may exist. As data has been drawn from a live systems environment, the figures provided may differ slightly in previous or future reporting.

**Table 23 Top five citizenships with adverse section 501 (character) outcomes, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)<sup>24</sup>**

Character cancellation	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
New Zealand	277	243	400
United Kingdom	36	37	77
Vietnam	35	27	19
China	20	28	38
India	15	22	35
All Other	242	245	379
<b>Total</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>948</b>
Character refusal	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
United Kingdom	23	52	322
New Zealand	20	39	115
United States of America	7	7	123
Vietnam	<10	<10	12
Ireland	<5	<10	17
All Other	81	90	257
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>846</b>
Character revocations (not revoked)	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
New Zealand	139	122	170
United Kingdom	18	26	32
Sudan	18	15	13
Vietnam	13	17	15
China	5	15	18
All Other	175	140	178
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>426</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

266. The character test is country agnostic. The number of New Zealand and United Kingdom citizens whose visas have been cancelled or refused under the character provisions should be viewed in the context of the size of their populations in Australia.

## The General Visa Cancellation Program

267. A person's visa may be cancelled on one of the general visa cancellation grounds in the Migration Act. General cancellation grounds include non-compliance with visa conditions, provision of false or misleading information, or changes in circumstances that mean the visa criteria are no longer met. Additionally, a non-citizen's visa may be cancelled if their presence in Australia is a risk to the health, safety or good order of the Australian community or an individual.

**Table 24 General cancellation decisions, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)<sup>25</sup>**

General cancellation decisions	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Incorrect Information (s109)	144	129	258
General Power (s116)	1,884	3,186	4,474
Holder Overseas (s128)	10,934	22,834	28,784
All Other Powers <sup>26</sup>	2,126	2,120	3,517
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,088</b>	<b>28,269</b>	<b>37,033</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

<sup>24</sup> All data in the 'Cancellations' section has been drawn from a live systems environment, the figures provided may differ slightly in previous or future reporting.

<sup>25</sup> A visa may be recorded as cancelled more than once. For example, when a visa is cancelled, the cancellation is subsequently revoked or set aside, and then the visa is cancelled again. A cancellation may be revoked or set aside for a number of reasons, including further legal proceedings, and administrative or jurisdictional errors. Duplicates may exist. As data has been drawn from a live systems environment, the figures provided may differ slightly in previous or future reporting.

<sup>26</sup> Does not include any s501 character statistics, only s501F decision are included.

268. The increased number of general visa cancellations in 2024–25 is the result of a number of initiatives in the Department including the introduction of a dedicated Student Visa Cancellation Section established in January 2024. This reflects the Government's focus on integrity in the Student visa program, and complements a suite of measures introduced in 2024 to strengthen integrity within the international education sector.
269. This has resulted in a higher number of cancellations of Student visa holders who have provided fraudulent, false or misleading information in their application, or who did not genuinely come to Australia for the purpose of their visa, or who have not complied with the conditions of their visa.
270. Other focus areas in 2024–25 included streamlining efforts relating to offshore general visa cancellations. This included focused effort on integrity cancellations and targeted cancellation activity in the subclass 400 series caseload (including the Temporary Skill Shortage (Short-term) visa (subclass 482) and the Temporary Work (International Relations) visa (subclass 403) caseload, for example where the worker has ceased employment with a sponsor or has withdrawn from the program.
271. The Department has also undertaken a number of high-profile cancellations, including the cancellation of visas held by unlawful providers of immigration assistance, controversial social media content creators, visitors and public figures. The Department has also cancelled visas in support of initiatives targeting individuals who exploit our visa programs and/or who exploit temporary visa holders.

## Status resolution

272. The Department's Status Resolution program assists non-citizens who require assistance to resolve their immigration status. Officers working in the Status Resolution program engage with non-citizens to promote self-agency, assisting individuals to self-resolve their immigration status in a timely and appropriate manner.

### Entering the Status Resolution program

273. Individuals may enter the Status Resolution program by voluntarily approaching the Department seeking assistance to resolve their immigration status or through location and enforcement activities conducted by the ABF and/or police. The Status Resolution Program also conducts regional outreach visits to engage with individuals whose immigration status may need to be resolved.

**Table 25 People who entered the Status Resolution program, 2022–23 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)<sup>27</sup>**

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Persons who voluntarily approached the Department	10,027	10,359	5,042
Persons located by the Australian Border Force or police	1,751	1,971	2,288
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,778</b>	<b>12,330</b>	<b>7,330</b>

Source: **Department of Home Affairs, 2025**

274. The reduction in the number of persons who voluntarily approached the Department in 2024–25 can be attributed to changed data collection and reporting procedures within the Status Resolution program. Future reports will provide a breakdown of the number of Bridging E visa applications lodged to reflect voluntary approaches by non-citizens.
275. The Status Resolution population consists of non-citizens who reside:
- In the community as the holder of a Bridging E (subclass 050) visa (BVE).
  - In either held immigration detention or in the community subject to a residence determination (also known as community detention).

<sup>27</sup> Note: As data has been drawn from a dynamic system environment, the information is correct at the time of publication and figures may differ slightly from previous or future reporting.



**Table 26 Status Resolution population as at 30 June 2025**

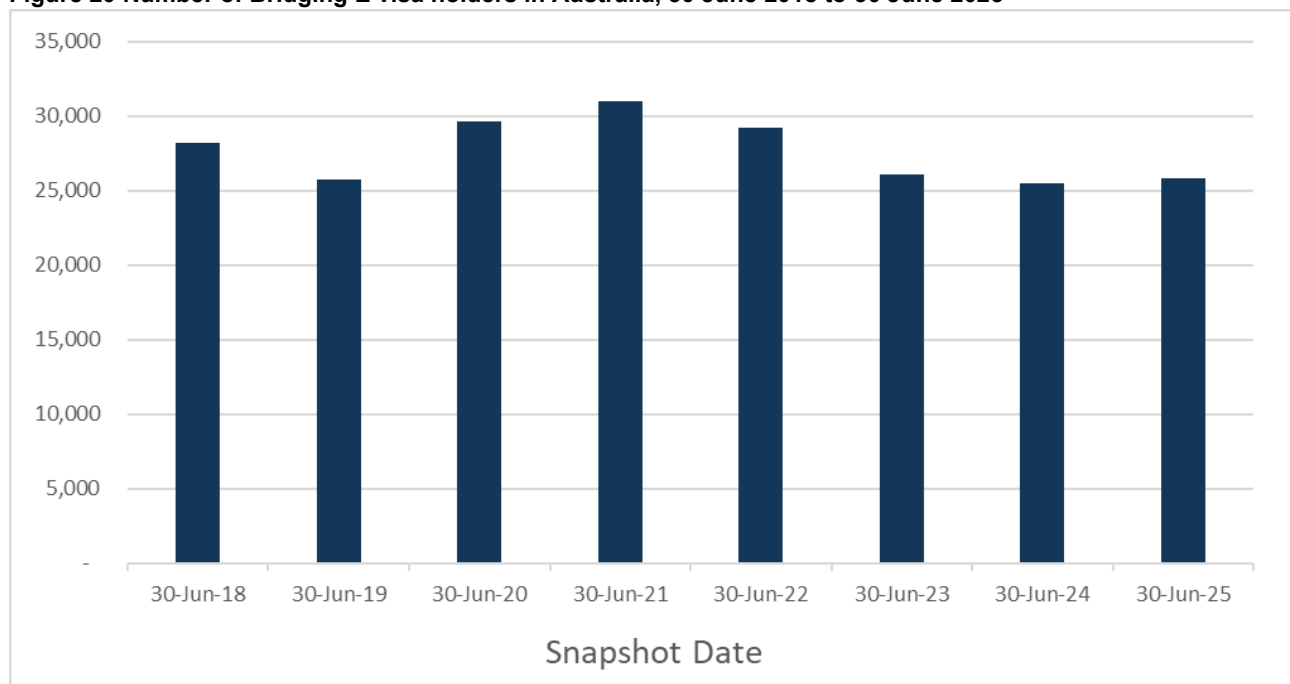
Status Resolution population	Bridging E visa in effect	Residence Determination	Held Detention	Total
Unauthorised Maritime Arrivals (UMA)	6,999	96	118	7,213
Non-UMA	18,822	13	878	19,713
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,821</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>26,926</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

**Bridging E (subclass 050) visas (BVE)**

276. A BVE is a short-term bridging visa that allows eligible individuals to stay in Australia lawfully while they progress to a status resolution outcome. A BVE may be granted while the non-citizen:

- Has a substantive visa application with the Department.
- Seeks merits or judicial review of a visa refusal or cancellation decision.
- Makes arrangements for their departure from Australia.
- Seeks Ministerial Intervention to substitute a decision of a review tribunal.

**Figure 20 Number of Bridging E visa holders in Australia, 30 June 2018 to 30 June 2025<sup>28</sup>**

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

**Status Resolution Support Services**

277. The Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program provides targeted, needs based support to eligible non-citizens while they engage with the Department to resolve their immigration status, either through the grant of a substantive visa or departure from Australia. Types of support services provided depend on an individual's circumstances and may include financial, short-term accommodation, access to health care, caseworker support, and access to education for school-aged children.

<sup>28</sup> Includes Bridging E visa (subclasses 050 and 051). As data has been drawn from a dynamic system environment, the information is correct at the time of publication and figures may differ slightly from previous or future reporting.



**Table 27 Status Resolution Support Services recipients, as at 30 June 2025**

	30 June 2022	30 June 2023	30 June 2024	30 June 2025
Unauthorised Maritime Arrivals (UMAs)	895	803	632	492
Non-UMAs	711	738	1,063	1,424
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,606</b>	<b>1,541</b>	<b>1,695</b>	<b>1,916</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

## Leaving the Status Resolution program

278. Non-citizens exit the Status Resolution program after they have resolved their immigration status. A non-citizen's status is resolved through departure from Australia, grant of a substantive visa, or acquisition of Australian citizenship.

**Table 28 Departures from Australia of Status Resolution clients, as at 2020–21 to 2024–25 (30 June 2025)<sup>29</sup>**

Departures from Australia	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25 <sup>30</sup>
Returns from community	9,797	7,221	6,265	5,494	3,189
Removals from immigration detention	1,042	1,271	2,344	2,817	3,457
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,839</b>	<b>8,492</b>	<b>8,609</b>	<b>8,311</b>	<b>6,646</b>

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

279. The reduction in the number of returns from the community in 2024–25 can be attributed to changed data collection and reporting procedures within the Status Resolution program. Future reports will provide a breakdown of departures by non-citizens holding a BVE and unlawful non-citizens. Increased removals from immigration detention can be attributed to enhanced eligibility criteria for and use of the Return and Reintegration Assistance Program.

## Return and Reintegration Assistance Program (RRAP)

280. The RRAP assists eligible non-citizens to voluntarily leave Australia or a regional processing country, but who require assistance to do so. By facilitating voluntary departure, the RRAP assists individuals finalise their immigration status.

281. The RRAP provides two streams of support:

- Returns assistance facilitates the departure process for eligible non-citizens. Returns Assistance includes (but is not limited to) returns counselling, purchasing air tickets, assistance to obtain travel documents, accommodation assistance, small cash allowances during transit and reception assistance in the country of return.
- Reintegration assistance delivers support enabling eligible non-citizens to rebuild their lives in the return country and aims to reduce the risk of further irregular migration.

**Table 29 RRAP returns, 2020–2021 to 2024–25 (to 30 June 2025)**

Returns and Reintegration Assistance	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Removals	542 <sup>31</sup>	309	317	340	467

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2025

<sup>29</sup> Note: As data has been drawn from a dynamic system environment, the information is correct at the time of publication and figures may differ slightly from previous or future reporting.

<sup>30</sup> Since November 2024, Returns figures represent only those departures where individuals were intensively managed through the Status Resolution program.

<sup>31</sup> Note 2020–21 returns figure corrected following data verification.

## Management of transitory persons

282. As at 30 June 2025, there were 830 transitory persons in the regional processing cohort residing temporarily in Australia.
283. The Migration Act provides for the bringing of transitory persons (defined in section 5 of the Migration Act as a person who was taken to a regional processing country) to Australia from a regional processing country for a temporary purpose (generally medical treatment, as accompanying family or to support more effective engagement with third country migration options). Transitory persons are administratively detained on arrival in Australia under section 189 of the Migration Act as unlawful non-citizens.
284. Transitory persons remain in detention until they are released under residence determination or on a bridging visa through ministerial intervention, or otherwise depart Australia.
285. Transitory persons do not have a settlement pathway in Australia. They are encouraged to remain engaged in third country migration options (including resettlement in the United States or New Zealand) or voluntary return home or another country to which they have right of entry.
286. As at 30 June 2025, 1,531 resettlement outcomes have been achieved for transitory persons, including 1,115 to the United States and 309 to New Zealand<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> Note: United States resettlement figure includes family members whom are not part of the regional processing caseload and individuals who departed PNG from 1 January 2022 under the US resettlement arrangement.