



# 2023-24 Migration Program FAQ

## What is the overall size and composition of the 2023-24 permanent Migration Program?

- The 2023-24 permanent Migration Program has a planning level at 190,000 with an emphasis on skilled migrants
- The Program has an approximately 70:30 split between skilled and family visas.
  - The Skill stream allocation is **137,100** places, 72% of the program.
  - The Family stream estimated allocation is **52,500** places, or 28% of the program, noting Partner and Child visa categories are demand driven and not subject to a ceiling.

## What are the key policy settings for the 2023-24 permanent Migration Program?

- The size and composition of the 2023-24 permanent Migration Program helps to address persistent and emerging skill deficits across our economy.
  - While we are building the domestic pipeline of highly skilled workers, the permanent Migration Program will help build resilience, boost productivity and support our economy as it transitions to net-zero emissions.
- The permanent Migration Program will help address the challenges of an ageing population.
  - As migrants are, on average, younger than the existing Australian population, migration reduces the average age of the population and slows the rate of population ageing.
  - A well-targeted, skills-focused Migration Program supplements the stock of working-age people, boosting participation rates and the size of the labour force.
- The permanent Migration Program provides migrants with the certainty of permanency and will help to ensure that no migrant is permanently temporary.
  - This will help to boost Australia's attractiveness to migrants within an intensely competitive global talent market.
  - Greater certainty of permanent residence will encourage migrants to integrate into the Australian community immediately from arrival, including by making personal investments into skills, human capital and social connections.
- The size of the family stream has been maintained. The Government is committed to family reunification and recognises the strong contribution all migrants make to social cohesion by strengthening family and community bonds in Australia.

## Why has the planning level been set at 190,000 places?

- The 2023-24 permanent Migration Program has been set at a pre-COVID planning level of 190,000.
  - This is a slight reduction of 5,000 places (2.56%) compared with the 2022-23 permanent Migration Program planning level of 195,000 places.

- There was strong stakeholder support across business, industry and union groups for maintaining or increasing the permanent Migration Program planning level.
- The planning level of the 2023-24 permanent Migration Program is designed to achieve optimal budget outcomes in a complex and evolving economic context and will continue to ensure that Australia has access to skilled migrants at a time of increasing global competition for talent.
- The composition of the program maintains a significant focus on permanent skilled places, supporting Australian industry and business and continues to deliver a key commitment made by the Government to ensure no migrant is 'permanently temporary'.

### **Why has the number of Skilled Independent visas been set at 30,375 places?**

- The 2023-24 permanent Migration Program has allocated 30,375 places for Skilled Independent visas. This is broadly comparable to the 2022-23 program allocation of 32,100 places.
- The smaller planning level for this category in 2023-24 reflects the closure of the New Zealand stream of the subclass 189 (Skilled – Independent) visa from 1 July 2023, due to a new direct pathway to citizenship for Special Category Visa holders who meet citizenship eligibility requirements.
  - The allocation for the points-tested component of the Skilled Independent visa category has increased from 25,600 places in 2022-23 to 30,175 places in 2023-24.
  - The allocation for the remaining Hong Kong pathway remains at 200 places.
- The Skilled Independent visa is granted to migrants who have high human capital as well as the qualifications and skills that can help us address longer-term structural shifts and skill shortages in our workforce.

### **Why has the 2023-24 Business Innovation and Investment Program (BIIP) allocation decreased?**

- The planning level for the BIIP has been reduced from 5,000 visas in 2022-23 to 1,900 visas for the 2023-24 Migration Program. This is a reduction of 62%.
- Reducing the planning level for BIIP will ensure the 2023-24 permanent Migration Program has a greater focus on addressing immediate workforce shortages, while still providing visa places to
  - those business and investor migrants who can best contribute to Australia's economic growth; and,
  - entrepreneur migrants whose innovations can increase the productivity of Australian businesses.

### **Why hasn't there been a reduction in the Global Talent Visa Program?**

- The 2023-24 permanent Migration Program has maintained 5,000 places for the Global Talent Visa (GTV) Program.
- The GTV program delivers high-calibre skills for Australia through the targeted recruitment of exceptionally talented individuals in key sectors. Retaining the planning level ensures that while the permanent Migration Program is focused on addressing persistent skill shortages, we maintain our status as a competitive and preferred destination to internationally mobile exceptional talent.

- The planning level of the GTV makes sure that we are still attracting the best and brightest whose skills and experience support long-term growth and productivity benefits through innovation and entrepreneurialism.

### **How do the permanent Migration Program planning levels differ from Net Overseas Migration figures also announced in the Federal Budget?**

- The permanent Migration Program is only one component of net overseas migration (NOM). NOM includes temporary migration, such as Working Holiday Makers and Students, as well as Australian citizens, New Zealanders and also Humanitarian migrants.
  - NOM is forecast to be 400,000 in 2022–23 and 315,000 in 2023–24. This increase over previous years reflects a one-off catch up from the pandemic as temporary migrants return to Australia. The increase in migration and population growth is expected to be temporary, with migration forecast to largely return to normal patterns from 2024–25.
- The size of the permanent Migration Program has not increased since 2022-23 and it is not driving the forecasted increase in NOM.
  - The Migration Program has only a partial impact on NOM in the near-term. Around 60% of visas under the program are granted to migrants already onshore and in the community, residing in established households at the time of visa grant. This minimises the permanent Migration Program's near-term impact on housing, infrastructure and services.

### **How can Australia deliver the Migration Program to its planning level as the Department is managing growing numbers of visa applications as global travel fully resumes?**

- The Government will continue efforts to manage the number of visas on-hand by extending funding for 380 visa processing officers, providing an additional \$48.1 million over 12 months. The efforts of a large number of additional trained visa processing staff that commenced in 2022 and early 2023 have significantly increased visa processing capacity.
  - On-hand temporary and permanent applications are now almost 40 per cent lower overall than in June 2022, and there has been a nearly 70 per cent reduction in the temporary visa program.
  - Between 1 July 2022 and 31 March 2023, the Department finalised nearly 6.15 million temporary and permanent visa applications.
- The Government is also investing \$27.8 million over two years, commencing in 2023-24, to upgrade existing visa ICT systems to improve visa service delivery efficiency and increase Australia's attractiveness in the global race for talent, students and tourists.
- The 2022-23 Migration Program is tracking well to meet the 195,000 new permanent visa grants for 2022-23, with a strong focus on the Skill stream.