

Locational choices of immigrants in Australia by visa types

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Background

The beginning of the 21st century has seen a substantial growth in the level of net overseas migration to Australia, a diversification of origin countries and an increasing share of temporary migrants in the overall annual intake. The aim of this study is to identify settlement patterns of immigrants and their drivers, and establish whether the role of ethnic networks and economic conditions vary depending on a visa class (skilled, skilled regional, temporary skilled, family or humanitarian).

Understanding locational choices of immigrants and their determinants is important at both the macro and micro level. At a population level, the initial settlement patterns of overseas-born migrants exert a significant effect on the growth, composition and geographic distribution of Australia's population (Bell and Hugo 2000, Raymer and Baffour 2018). At an individual level, spatial integration is an important component of the settlement process (Massey 1985) as place of residence can reinforce or mitigate socio-economically disadvantaged groups by constraining or facilitating access to services, social networks and employment.

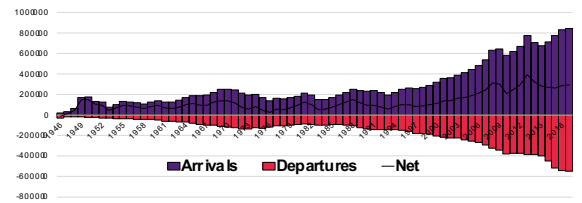


Fig 1. Permanent and long-term overseas arrivals and departures in Australia 1946-2019

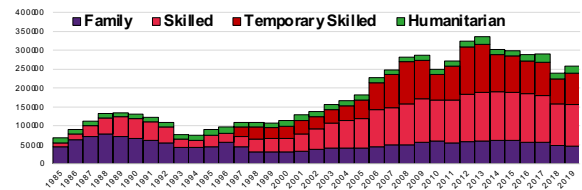


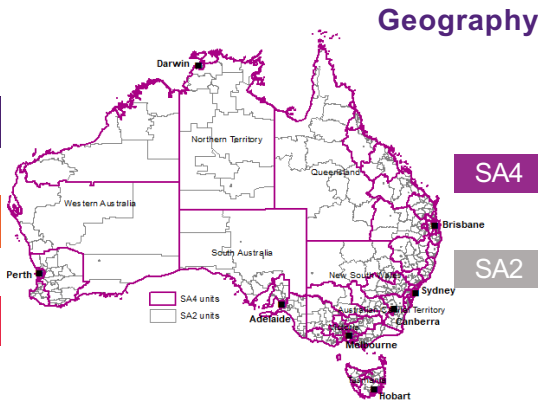
Fig 2. Visa granted in Australia 1985-2019

Data

Census 2011

ACMID 2016

ACTEID 2016



ACMID - Australian Census and Migrants Integrated Dataset; ACTEID - Australian Census and Temporary Entrants Integrated Dataset; SA4 - Statistical Area Level 4 = labour market or regional level (84 units); SA2 - Statistical Area Level 2 = suburban or local level (2112 units)

Methods

Index of Dissimilarity

$$I_D = 0.5 \sum_{i=1}^n |x_i - y_i|$$

n - number of spatial units
 x_i - proportion of migrants in region i
 y_i - proportion of Australian-born in region i .

OLS regression

$$PI_{rcvt} = \alpha_{rt} + \beta_1 X_{rcvt-5} + \beta_2 Z_{rt-5} + \varepsilon_{rt}$$

PI - % of immigrants from country c in region r by visa class v in time t
 X_{rcvt-5} - variables related to each region r and country of origin c (proportion of foreign-born)
 Z_{rt-5} - other variables related to regions

Results

Table 3: Determinants of settlement choices of natives and immigrants in Australia in 2016, regression estimates

VARIABLES	Australian-born		All permanent & Temporary Skilled migrants	
	SA4	SA2	SA4	SA2
Foreign-born	-1.056*** (0.025)	-0.388*** (0.032)	0.451*** (0.033)	0.411*** (0.019)
Population 2011	0.882** (0.396)	-0.136 (0.357)	-0.504 (0.412)	0.289*** (0.144)
Median age	0.066 (0.085)	0.001 (0.056)	-0.240** (0.089)	-0.196*** (0.040)
Higher educated	0.039 (0.024)	0.022 (0.019)	0.001 (0.021)	-0.009 (0.013)
Unemployment	0.478*** (0.165)	0.087 (0.208)	-0.298 (0.183)	-0.148** (0.058)
Homeowners	0.227*** (1.614)	0.128** (1.277)	0.031 (1.869)	-0.008 (0.863)
Household income	0.032 (0.032)	0.021 (0.032)	0.032 (0.032)	0.013 (0.013)
Public housing	3.227** (1.614)	0.776 (1.277)	-0.617 (1.869)	0.871 (0.863)
Constant	0.225*** (0.082)	0.082* (0.045)	0.035 (0.078)	0.028 (0.024)
Observations	86,104***	76,57***	11,509	-3,450
R-squared	(13.484)	(11.104)	(15.231)	(5.087)

Robust standard errors in parentheses $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$. Note: OLS, cluster by SA4 region robust error.

Table 4, 5: Determinants of settlement choices of immigrants in Australia in 2016 by visa class at SA4 and SA2 level, regression estimates

VARIABLES/SA4	Skilled	Skilled Regional	Temporary Skilled	Family	Humanitarian	VARIABLES/SA2	Skilled	Skilled Regional	Temporary Skilled	Family	Humanitarian
	Foreign-born	0.205*** (0.036)	0.022* (0.012)	0.022*** (0.004)	0.139*** (0.014)		0.063*** (0.019)	0.190*** (0.021)	0.018*** (0.005)	0.012*** (0.002)	0.125*** (0.009)
Population 2011	-0.363 (0.346)	-0.000 (0.167)	-0.125** (0.058)	-0.065 (0.150)	0.049 (0.154)	0.400*** (0.111)	-0.093 (0.062)	0.104*** (0.038)	0.255*** (0.043)	0.019 (0.054)	0.019 (0.054)
Median age	-0.028 (0.053)	0.009 (0.027)	0.026** (0.012)	-0.068** (0.029)	-0.180*** (0.046)	-0.081*** (0.025)	-0.036*** (0.010)	0.011** (0.005)	-0.036** (0.014)	-0.061*** (0.018)	-0.061*** (0.018)
Higher educated	0.033* (0.018)	-0.025** (0.011)	0.016** (0.004)	-0.008 (0.008)	-0.009 (0.009)	0.023 (0.017)	-0.008 (0.005)	0.006*** (0.002)	-0.012** (0.005)	-0.018** (0.008)	-0.018** (0.008)
Unemployment	0.005 (0.127)	-0.271*** (0.068)	-0.105*** (0.023)	0.005 (0.061)	0.008 (0.064)	-0.075 (0.048)	-0.078*** (0.022)	-0.032*** (0.010)	-0.011 (0.028)	0.047 (0.041)	0.047 (0.041)
Homeowners	0.041* (0.021)	-0.023 (0.015)	-0.044*** (0.006)	0.018** (0.009)	0.041*** (0.011)	0.008 (0.011)	-0.008 (0.006)	-0.025*** (0.004)	0.004 (0.003)	0.013*** (0.004)	0.013*** (0.004)
Household income	2.479*** (0.968)	-0.126 (0.666)	-0.043 (0.221)	-0.384 (0.827)	-2.543*** (0.446)	1.848* (0.562)	0.217 (0.238)	0.245** (0.110)	0.040 (0.329)	-0.774* (0.425)	-0.774* (0.425)
Public housing	-0.033 (0.061)	0.028 (0.038)	-0.048*** (0.012)	0.027 (0.030)	0.053* (0.031)	-0.018 (0.026)	0.005 (0.009)	-0.016*** (0.004)	0.028** (0.010)	0.039* (0.016)	0.039* (0.016)
Constant	-16.227* (9.345)	4.540 (4.756)	4.381** (2.108)	4.181 (5.178)	20.711*** (4.446)	-9.131* (4.980)	2.241 (1.354)	-1.118 (0.691)	-1.510 (2.886)	6.110 (3.831)	6.110 (3.831)
Observations	87	87	87	87	87	2,112	2,112	2,112	2,112	2,112	2,112
R-squared	0.877	0.271	0.834	0.891	0.669	0.645	0.165	0.424	0.745	0.326	0.326

Robust standard errors in parentheses $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$. Note: OLS, cluster by SA4 region robust error

Results

Table 1: Index of Dissimilarity by visa type at SA4 and SA2 level, 2016

	Level	Id
All migrants	SA4	32.2
	SA2	39.0
Skilled	SA4	36.2
	SA2	43.2
Skilled Regional	SA4	33.7
	SA2	43.8
Temporary Skilled	SA4	31.1
	SA2	36.7
Family	SA4	49.0
	SA2	63.7

Table 2: Index of Dissimilarity by visa type and year of arrival, SA4 level

Migrants	Year of arrival	Id
All migrants	2012-2016	35.0
	2006-2011	28.6
Skilled	2000-2005	25.6
	2012-2016	40.3
Skilled (regional)	2006-2011	34.8
	2000-2005	29.5
Family	2012-2016	29.2
	2006-2011	24.2
Humanitarian	2000-2005	24.2
	2012-2016	50.3
Temporary Skilled	2006-2011	47.9
	2000-2005	44.9
Temporary Skilled	2012-2016	38.9

Conclusion

- Settlement patterns of immigrants broadly mirror the Australia's population (heavily concentrated on the south-eastern seaboard and even more concentrated in major cities, with particular visa classes such as the humanitarian more so than others).
- Going down the spatial scale segregation levels increase (higher Dissimilarity index on SA2 level)
- Over time, the dissimilarity index decreases which indicates spatial de-concentration as the settlement patterns of the migrants begin to resemble the ones of non-migrants.
- The role of ethnic networks proved to be important for economic migrants as well as family and humanitarian on both geographical levels.

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