

10 Additions to the workforce from migration

10.1 Australian Medical Council approvals

A significant source of permanent additions to the Australian medical workforce is overseas-trained medical practitioners who have permanent resident status and who have gained full or conditional eligibility to practise by meeting examination and other requirements of the Australian Medical Council.

A total of 222 permanent-resident overseas-trained medical practitioners passed the Medical Council's clinical examination and were ratified for registration in 1997. A further 43 overseas-trained specialists qualified for registration after recognition of their qualifications by a specialist college and the AMC.

10.2 Migration by medical practitioners

The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs provides medical practitioner international migration data. The features of these data included the following.

Visas issued

- 312 visas were issued in 1996–97 to persons holding medical qualifications who were permanently migrating to Australia – a decrease of 42.8% on the number issued in 1995–96. The majority of these visas (78.2%) were issued under the 'preferential family' category.
- 26.6% of these visas were issued to residents of the People's Republic of China and a further 13.8% were issued to residents of the United Kingdom or Ireland.

Permanent migration

- 369 medical practitioners who were citizens of foreign countries permanently migrated to Australia in 1996–97. Of these 40.7% had previously resided in Asia, 17.3% in the United Kingdom or Ireland, and 16.8% in New Zealand. A further 735 medical practitioners who were Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia returned after a long-term (12 months or more) overseas stay. Of these, 37.7% had been staying in the United Kingdom or Ireland, 26.0% in Asia and 19.7% in the United States of America or Canada.
- During the same year, 159 medical practitioners permanently migrated from Australia, of whom 32.1% went to New Zealand. A further 631 foreign medical practitioners who had been residing in Australia for 12 months or more departed from Australia, of whom 40.4% went to the United Kingdom or Ireland.

Temporary migration for employment

- 1,597 medical practitioners who were citizens of foreign countries arrived in Australia temporarily in 1996–97 to take up employment – 513 for a long-term stay and 1,084 for a short-term stay. Of these, 69.1% had previously resided in the United Kingdom or Ireland and 7.7% in New Zealand.

- This arrival of temporary resident doctors represented a considerable increase on the 980 in 1995–96 and 1,171 in 1994–95, despite changes in access by TRDs to rendering of Medicare services introduced in late 1996.
- 437 Australian citizen or permanent resident medical practitioners left Australia during 1996–97 to take up employment overseas on a long-term basis. Of these, 33.6% were intending to work in the United Kingdom or Ireland, 29.2% in Asia, 20.4% in the United States of America or Canada and 5.3% in New Zealand.

Table 31: Australian Medical Council examination results: 1992–97

| | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|---|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Overseas-trained doctors entering through the general registration pathway | | | | | | |
| MCQ examination | | | | | | |
| Number of candidates presenting | 921 | 812 | 619 | 688 | 858 | 1,081 |
| Number passing/eligible to proceed to clinical examination | 298 | 217 | 218 | 220 | 392 | 363 |
| Clinical examination | | | | | | |
| Number of exams conducted | 570 | 439 | 380 | 482 | 512 | 475 |
| Number passing AMC exam and eligible for registration | 238 | 194 | 212 | 262 | 226 | 222 |
| Overseas-trained specialists entering through the AMC/specialist college pathway^(a) | | | | | | |
| Number of applications received | 264 ^(b) | 147 | 139 | 174 | 175 | 175 |
| Number rejected | 67 ^(b) | 3 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| Total qualified for registration | 50 ^(b) | 10 | 23 | 55 | 63 | 43 |
| Total overseas-trained doctors entering the workforce | 295^(c) | 203 | 234 | 277 | 289 | 265 |

(a) 1997 figures are pro-rata estimates of data to July 1998.

(b) Data for the period 1990–92.

(c) Includes AMC/specialist college pathway data for the period 1990–92.

Notes

1. The total number of examinations conducted is a factor of the number of clinical examination places that the AMC is able to arrange in any one year. In 1993 the number of places was reduced from a target of 600 per year to 400 per year as a result of constraints on the clinical resources used for AMC clinical examinations.
2. A three-year limit for AMC clinical examination came into force on 1 January 1995 for those who passed the MCQ examination.
3. From 1996 the AMC ceased to conduct the MCQ examination overseas.

Source: Australian Medical Council.

Table 32: Permanent migration of medical practitioners to and from Australia, 1992–93 to 1996–97

| | 1992–93 | 1993–94 | 1994–95 | 1995–96 | 1996–97 | % 1996–97 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Permanent migration to Australia of overseas residents | | | | | | |
| Country of previous residence | | | | | | |
| New Zealand ^(a) | 39 | 49 | 74 | 71 | 59 | 16.0 |
| Other Oceania | 7 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 0.8 |
| UK/Ireland | 105 | 85 | 119 | 87 | 64 | 17.3 |
| Other Europe | 103 | 55 | 81 | 63 | 38 | 10.3 |
| Middle East | 11 | 15 | 22 | 24 | 11 | 3.0 |
| Africa | 33 | 38 | 40 | 35 | 34 | 9.2 |
| Hong Kong | 46 | 28 | 31 | 30 | 24 | 6.5 |
| China | 25 | 42 | 58 | 186 | 83 | 22.5 |
| Other Asia | 96 | 100 | 110 | 93 | 43 | 11.7 |
| USA/Canada | 13 | 19 | 13 | 25 | 10 | 2.7 |
| Other countries | 2 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>480</i> | <i>445</i> | <i>558</i> | <i>626</i> | <i>369</i> | <i>100.0</i> |
| Migration to Australia of Australian residents returning after a long-term overseas stay | | | | | | |
| Country of long-term stay | | | | | | |
| New Zealand | 14 | 17 | 13 | 18 | 23 | 3.1 |
| Other Oceania | 15 | 13 | 24 | 12 | 17 | 2.3 |
| UK/Ireland | 312 | 324 | 289 | 311 | 277 | 37.7 |
| Other Europe | 38 | 49 | 38 | 43 | 33 | 4.5 |
| Middle East | 28 | 34 | 38 | 44 | 21 | 2.9 |
| Africa | 26 | 26 | 29 | 24 | 28 | 3.8 |
| Hong Kong | 95 | 98 | 120 | 106 | 111 | 15.1 |
| Singapore | 13 | 15 | 14 | 10 | 15 | 2.0 |
| Malaysia | 20 | 16 | 10 | 14 | 17 | 2.3 |
| Other Asia | 35 | 39 | 50 | 65 | 41 | 5.6 |
| USA/Canada | 137 | 164 | 179 | 166 | 145 | 19.7 |
| Other countries | 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 1.0 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>734</i> | <i>798</i> | <i>806</i> | <i>819</i> | <i>735</i> | <i>100.0</i> |
| Permanent migration from Australia of Australian residents | | | | | | |
| Country of future residence | | | | | | |
| New Zealand | 29 | 34 | 52 | 49 | 51 | 32.1 |
| Other Oceania | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1.3 |
| UK/Ireland | 37 | 31 | 41 | 32 | 37 | 23.3 |
| Other Europe | 6 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 2.5 |
| Middle East | 6 | 10 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 5.0 |
| Asia | 29 | 37 | 36 | 29 | 38 | 23.9 |
| USA/Canada | 22 | 25 | 13 | 27 | 15 | 9.4 |
| Other countries | 3 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2.5 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>133</i> | <i>151</i> | <i>154</i> | <i>153</i> | <i>159</i> | <i>100.0</i> |
| Migration from Australia of temporary visitors after a long-term stay | | | | | | |
| Country of future residence | | | | | | |
| New Zealand | 18 | 32 | 20 | 22 | 28 | 4.4 |
| Other Oceania | 14 | 9 | 17 | 17 | 18 | 2.9 |
| UK/Ireland | 187 | 161 | 192 | 269 | 255 | 40.4 |
| Other Europe | 18 | 31 | 35 | 41 | 44 | 7.0 |
| Malaysia | 32 | 26 | 35 | 31 | 31 | 4.9 |
| China | 38 | 31 | 39 | 39 | 38 | 6.0 |
| Japan | 15 | 31 | 25 | 19 | 23 | 3.6 |
| Other Asia | 83 | 76 | 82 | 124 | 129 | 20.4 |
| USA/Canada | 10 | 21 | 17 | 16 | 29 | 4.6 |
| Other countries | 16 | 17 | 18 | 27 | 36 | 5.7 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>431</i> | <i>435</i> | <i>480</i> | <i>605</i> | <i>631</i> | <i>100.0</i> |

(a) Includes New Zealand citizens.

Source: AIHW from Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs data.

Table 33: Temporary migration of medical practitioners to and from Australia for employment: 1992-93 to 1996-97

| | 1992-93 | 1993-94 | 1994-95 | 1995-96 | 1996-97 | % 1996-97 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Migration to Australia for long-term stay | | | | | | |
| Country of previous residence | | | | | | |
| New Zealand | 50 | 48 | 63 | 41 | 65 | 12.7 |
| UK/Ireland | 148 | 193 | 241 | 278 | 317 | 61.8 |
| Asia | 25 | 32 | 37 | 37 | 52 | 10.1 |
| Other countries | 18 | 25 | 35 | 56 | 79 | 15.4 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>241</i> | <i>298</i> | <i>376</i> | <i>412</i> | <i>513</i> | <i>100.0</i> |
| Migration to Australia for short-term stay | | | | | | |
| Country of previous residence | | | | | | |
| New Zealand | 52 | 57 | 49 | 56 | 58 | 5.4 |
| UK/Ireland | 334 | 444 | 641 | 277 | 786 | 72.5 |
| Asia | 25 | 38 | 46 | 37 | 57 | 5.3 |
| USA/Canada | 8 | 25 | 36 | 164 | 110 | 10.1 |
| Other countries | 7 | 31 | 23 | 34 | 73 | 6.7 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>426</i> | <i>595</i> | <i>795</i> | <i>568</i> | <i>1,084</i> | <i>100.0</i> |
| Migration from Australia of Australian residents for a long-term overseas stay | | | | | | |
| Country of long-term stay | | | | | | |
| New Zealand | 9 | 13 | 12 | 17 | 23 | 5.3 |
| Other Oceania | 26 | 21 | 18 | 24 | 17 | 3.9 |
| UK/Ireland | 163 | 140 | 161 | 147 | 147 | 33.6 |
| Other Europe | 11 | 13 | 12 | 17 | 11 | 2.5 |
| Middle East | 23 | 21 | 23 | 22 | 13 | 3.0 |
| Hong Kong | 54 | 56 | 67 | 50 | 71 | 16.2 |
| Other Asia | 39 | 31 | 36 | 45 | 57 | 13.0 |
| USA/Canada | 101 | 69 | 93 | 87 | 89 | 20.4 |
| Other countries | 13 | 15 | 12 | 15 | 9 | 2.1 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>439</i> | <i>379</i> | <i>434</i> | <i>424</i> | <i>437</i> | <i>100.0</i> |

Source: AIHW from Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs data.