

MIGRATION FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO AUSTRALIA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	i
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
ABSTRACT	xiv
DECLARATION	xv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	xvi
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xvii
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Aims and objectives	2
1.3 Relations between Australia and South Africa	3
1.4 Australian migration context.....	6
1.5 South African migration context.....	9
1.6 Global migration context.....	12
1.7 The study of South African migration	13
1.8 The Rainbow Nation	17
1.9 Thesis outline	18
1.10 Conclusion	20
Chapter 2 Trends in migration between Australia and South Africa.....	21
2.1 Introduction: the pillars of Australian migration data.....	21
2.1.1 Migrant stock data	21
2.1.2 Migrant flow data	23
2.2 South African migration data	24
2.3 The South Africa-born in Australia.....	24
2.4 Permanent settlement from South Africa	28
2.4.1 Permanent migrants' stream of entry.....	30
2.5 Temporary migration	34
2.5.1 Long-stay business migrants (457 visas).....	36
2.5.2 Students	38
2.6 Onshore migration.....	39
2.7 Indirect migration.....	40

2.8	Movement from Australia to South Africa	42
2.9	Return migration	45
2.10	An established migration system	49
2.11	Conclusion	52
Chapter 3	Profile of South African migrants in Australia	54
3.1	Introduction	54
3.2	Age and sex of South African migrants	54
3.3	Patterns of settlement	57
3.4	Ethnicity	61
3.5	Eleven official languages	62
3.6	Ancestry	66
3.7	Religion	68
3.8	“The Good Citizens”	70
3.9	Education.....	71
3.10	Labour force status	73
3.11	Occupation	74
3.12	Industry	75
3.13	Income.....	77
3.14	Living arrangements and housing	77
3.15	Demographic characteristics of permanent departures	79
3.16	Conclusion	81
Chapter 4	Research design and methodology.....	83
4.1	Introduction	83
4.2	Theoretical framework.....	83
4.2.1	Mixed methods	85
4.3	Secondary data sources	87
4.4	Primary data sources	88
4.5	Surveys in migration research.....	88
4.5.1	Online survey instrumentation.....	88
4.5.2	Pilot study	89
4.5.3	Online survey sampling (participant recruitment).....	90
4.5.4	Survey distribution	92
4.5.5	Limitations of survey	95

4.6 RMS methodology	97
4.7 Semi-structured interviews.....	98
4.7.1 Semi-structured interview instrumentation	99
4.7.2 Interview sampling	99
4.7.3 Interview recruitment procedures	102
4.7.4 Limitations of interviews.....	102
4.8 Ethical considerations	103
4.9 Data processing and analysis	103
4.10 Conclusion	104
Chapter 5 Introducing the SSAM study population.....	105
5.1 Introduction.....	105
5.2 SSAM stream of entry and visa status	105
5.3 SSAM migrants' key characteristics.....	107
5.3.1 Year of arrival.....	107
5.3.2 Age and sex	109
5.3.3 Birthplace.....	112
5.4 Ethnicity	112
5.4.1 Ancestry.....	114
5.4.2 Language	116
5.5 Religion.....	117
5.6 Geographic distribution.....	118
5.7 Education.....	119
5.8 Employment	120
5.9 Housing	122
5.10 The RMS study population	123
5.11 Conclusion	124
Chapter 6 South African migrants' motivations for migration.....	126
6.1 Introduction.....	126
6.2 Theoretical considerations on why people migrate.....	126
6.3 Reasons for migrating from South Africa	130
6.4 Push versus pull factors.....	135
6.5 Migration from South Africa since the 1960s.....	140
6.6 Ethnic differentials	144

6.7 Why Australia?.....	145
6.8 Networks in and prior travel to Australia.....	147
6.8.1 Pre-migration visits.....	149
6.9 Temporary migrants' reasons for migrating	151
6.10 Emotional language.....	154
6.11 Further theoretical consideration of why people migrate	155
6.12 Conclusion	157
Chapter 7 South African migrants' settlement experiences.....	160
7.1 Introduction.....	160
7.2 What is 'successful settlement'?	161
7.3 South African migrants' settlement experiences.....	162
7.4 Settlement challenges.....	164
7.4.1 Employment issues: downward mobility and skills recognition	165
7.5 Support for South African migrants	171
7.5.1 Support from religious organisations	172
7.5.2 Support from expatriate organisations.....	173
7.6 The satisfaction of immigrants.....	175
7.7 Social participation.....	177
7.8 Citizenship	180
7.8.1 Dual citizenship	182
7.9 Identity	183
7.9.1 Identity and accents	187
7.10 Conclusion	189
Chapter 8 South African migrants' linkages with origin country.....	191
8.1 Introduction	191
8.2 Transnational conceptualisations of migration	192
8.3 Linkages with South Africa	194
8.3.1 Communication with South Africa.....	195
8.3.2 Travel back to South Africa.....	197
8.3.3 Transnational families	199
8.3.4 Other linkages with South Africa	200
8.4 Critical mass.....	201
8.5 Connecting without leaving	203

10.3.2 Transnational conceptualisations of migration.....	268
10.3.3 Reflections on migration theory in the South Africa-Australia context.....	270
10.4 Policy implications.....	271
10.5 Recommendations for future research	273
10.6 Conclusion	274
Appendices	276
Appendix 1: Survey of South African Migrants	276
Appendix 2: Eligibility criteria on survey introduction.....	292
Appendix 3: Email to prospective survey participants	293
Appendix 4: Articles with survey link	294
Appendix 5: Return Migrant Survey.....	296
Appendix 6: Email (example) to prospective interview participant	308
Appendix 7: Interview schedules	309
Appendix 8: Participant information sheet	313
Appendix 9: Consent form.....	314
Appendix 10: Complaints procedure form.....	315
Bibliography	316

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Visa stream outcome against planning levels, 2012-13 and 2013-14	7
Table 1.2 Australian temporary resident programme categories	8
Table 2.1: South Africa-born stocks in Australia since Federation, 1901 to 2011.....	25
Table 2.2: Top ten countries of birth in Australia, 2006 and 2011	26
Table 2.3: Top ten stocks of Sub-Saharan Africa-born in Australia, 2006 and 2011.....	26
Table 2.4: South Africa-born estimated resident population in Australia, 1996-2014.....	28
Table 2.5: South Africa-born permanent additions to Australia, onshore and offshore, 2000-01 to 2013-14.....	30
Table 2.6: South Africa-born settlers by visa sub-class, 2000-2014	33
Table 2.7: South Africa-born main occupations for General Skilled Migration programme entrants, 2011-12 to 2013-14	34
Table 2.8: South Africa-born visitors and temporary resident arrivals,	35
2002-03 to 2010-11*.....	35
Table 2.9: South Africa-born 457 visa grants, 2007-08 to 2013-14.....	36
Table 2.10: South Africa-born, main occupations for 457 visa grants,	37
2011-12 to 2013-14.....	37
Table 2.11: Student grants by South African citizenship, 2002-03 to 2014-15.....	38
Table 2.12: Student grants, top ten source countries, 2012-13 to 2014-15	39
Table 2.13: Category of traveller from Australia to South Africa,.....	43
1991-92 to 2014-15.....	43
Table 2.14: Permanent departures from Australia to South Africa by birthplace, 1991-92 to 2013-14	45
Table 2.15: South Africa-born permanent departures by destination country of more than 100 persons, 1991-92 to 2013-14	48
Table 3.1: Comparison of South Africa-born, Overseas-born and Australia-born populations, distribution between Australian States and Territories, 2011	58
Table 3.2: Indices of dissimilarity for South Africa and Overseas-born by Australian States and Territories compared to total Australian population, 2011	59
Table 3.3: South Africa-born, top ten languages spoken at home and other official languages, 2006 and 2011	63
Table 3.4: South Africa-born English-only speakers as a proportion of the total South Africa-born population, 2001, 2006 and 2011	64

Table 3.5: Proficiency in English for South Africa-born who speak a language other than English at home, 2001, 2006 and 2011	65
Table 3.6: Top ten languages and African languages spoken at home by year of arrival, 2011	65
Table 3.7: South Africa-born, top 16 ancestries (multiple response), 2006 and 2011	67
Table 3.8: South Africa-born ancestry (first response) by year of arrival, 2011	68
Table 3.9: Most frequently stated religion (1 digit level), South Africa-born and total Australian population, 2011	69
Table 3.10: South Africa-born religion by year of arrival, 2011	69
Table 3.11: Australian citizenship by birthplace, 2011	70
Table 3.12: Top ten countries of previous citizenship of people conferred Australian citizenship, 2010-2011, 2012-13 and 2013-2014	71
Table 3.13: Post-school qualifications for top ten countries of birth, 2011	72
Table 3.14: Labour force status for South Africa-born, Overseas-born and Australia-born, 2011	73
Table 3.15: Labour force participation rate and unemployment rate for South Africa-born, Overseas-born and total Australia, 2011	74
Table 3.16: Occupations of employed males and females (1 digit level) by South Africa-born, Overseas-born and total Australian population, 2011	74
Table 3.17: South Africa-born, top ten industries of employment, 2006 and 2011	76
Table 3.18: Employment in public and private sectors for South Africa-born, Overseas-born and Australia-born populations, 2011	76
Table 3.19: Personal weekly income of South Africa-born, Overseas-born and total Australia, 2011	77
Table 3.20: Tenure type for South Africa-born, Overseas-born and Australia-born populations, 2011	78
Table 3.21: South Africa-born, period of residence in Australia before permanent departure 2005-06 to 2010-11*	80
Table 4.1: Name and type of organisation through which the SSAM was distributed, including membership base and distribution method	93
Table 4.2: SSAM respondent eligibility, PA or spouse/partner	96
Table 4.3: Online website and forum used to distribute the RMS	97
Table 4.4: Participants in semi-structured interviews, migrants (including stakeholders and key informants)	100

Table 4.5: Participants in semi-structured interviews, stakeholders and key informants (non-migrants)	101
Table 5.1: Entry visa, SSAM permanent and temporary respondents.....	106
Table 5.2: Year of arrival, SSAM permanent and temporary respondents.....	108
Table 5.3: Household structure, SSAM permanent and temporary respondents and total South Africa-born population at 2011 Census.....	111
Table 5.4: Country of birth, SSAM respondents	112
Table 5.5: Ancestry (multiple response), listed to reflect census data, SSAM respondents	114
Table 5.6: First language, SSAM respondents	116
Table 5.7: Religious affiliation, SSAM respondents and total South Africa-born population at 2011 Census	117
Table 5.8: State/Territory of residence, SSAM respondents and total South Africa-born population at 2011 Census.....	118
Table 5.9: Labour force participation and unemployment rates for SSAM respondents, South Africa-born, Overseas-born and total Australian population at 2011 Census.....	120
Table 6.1: Major theories of migration	128
Table 6.2: Most common themes in open-end responses from SSAM migrants' on reasons for their migration.....	132
Table 6.3: Influences on SSAM migrants' decision to migrate (% yes to listed reasons) (multiple response)	135
Table 6.4: Influences on pre and post-1991 SSAM migrants' decision to migrate (% yes for pre-1991 respondents to listed reasons) (multiple response).....	143
Table 6.5: Influences on non-White SSAM migrants' decision to migrate (% yes to listed reasons) (multiple response)	145
Table 6.6: SSAM respondents, reasons for choosing Australia as their migration destination (multi response).....	146
Table 6.7: SSAM respondents, ways in which friends/family influenced their decision to migrate	148
Table 6.8: SSAM migrants' pre-migration trips to Australia by selected cohorts	150
Table 6.9: Influences on temporary migrants' decision to migrate (% yes to listed reasons) (multiple response)	151
Table 6.10: SSAM respondents, migration status on arrival and at the time of the survey	152

Table 7.1: SSAM respondents, experience of migration by networks in Australia prior to migration.....	163
Table 7.2: SSAM respondents, most difficult aspects of migration by sex.....	163
(multiple response)	163
Table 7.3: SSAM respondents, most enjoyable aspects of living in Australia (multiple response).....	176
Table 7.4: SSAM respondents, satisfaction with life in Australia by year of arrival	177
Table 7.5: SSAM respondents, membership in South African and other groups (social, charitable, religious, sporting etc.) by year of arrival.....	178
Table 7.6: SSAM respondents, permanent and temporary, intention to become Australian citizen.....	180
Table 7.7: SSAM respondents, top reasons for conferral of Australian citizenship.....	181
Table 7.8: SSAM respondents, top reasons for keeping South African citizenship.....	183
Table 7.9: SSAM respondents, permanent and temporary, by identity	185
Table 7.10: SSAM respondents, identity by year of arrival, percentages	185
Table 7.11: SSAM respondents, thoughts on selected statements about belonging.....	187
Table 8.1: SSAM respondents, frequency of travel to South Africa by sex.....	198
Table 8.2: SSAM respondents, other forms of contact with South Africa (multiple response)	201
Table 8.3: SSAM respondents, type and frequency of charitable work in South Africa...	204
Table 8.4: SSAM respondents, financial investments in South Africa	205
Table 8.5: SSAM respondents, permanent and temporary, ownership of property in South Africa	205
Table 8.6: SSAM permanent respondents, property ownership in South Africa by year of arrival.....	206
Table 8.7: Remittance estimates, top ten countries receiving remittances flowing from Australia, 2015.....	207
Table 8.8: SSAM respondents, temporary and permanent, who send remittances	207
Table 8.9: SSAM respondents, remitters (multiple responses)	208
Table 8.10: SSAM respondents, remitters by ethnicity	211
Table 8.11: SSAM respondents, remitters by first language	212
Table 8.12: South African diaspora engagement networks	221
Table 9.1: Return migration classifications	229
Table 9.2: RMS respondents, key data on migration and return	235
Table 9.3: RMS respondents, age at survey, initial migration and return	236

Table 9.4: RMS respondents' individual reasons for returning to South Africa	238
Table 9.5: SSAM migrants, most common themes in the reasons why people they knew returned to South Africa	241
Table 9.6: RMS respondents, influences on their decision to leave South Africa (multiple response)	243

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: International distribution of South Africa-born migrant stocks, 2013	11
Figure 2.1: Settler arrivals in Australia from South Africa, 1959-60 to 2013-14.....	29
Figure 2.2: Australian Migration Programme outcome by stream, Humanitarian Programme and New Zealand settlers, 1983–84 to 2013-14.....	31
Figure 2.3: South African settlers by migration stream, 1996-97 to 2013-14	32
Figure 2.4: South Africa-born short-term visitor arrivals reasons for travel of 2004-05 to 2012-13	35
Figure 2.5: New Zealand citizens in Australia by country of birth, 2003-2011	40
Figure 2.6: South Africa-born, short-term resident departures (less than 12 months), reasons for travel, 2004-05 to 2012-13	44
Figure 2.7: South Africa-born permanent departures and settler arrivals, 1991-92 to 2013-14	45
Figure 2.8: South Africa-born permanent departures from Australia to South Africa, 1990-91 to 2013-14.....	46
Figure 2.9: South Africa-born permanent departures to country of birth and other countries, 1991-92 to 2013-14.....	47
Figure 2.10: South Africa-born permanent departures, settler arrivals and departures as a proportion of arrivals, 1991-92 to 2013-14	49
Figure 2.11: A model of the Australia-South Africa migration system.....	50
Figure 3.1: Age and sex distribution, South Africa-born, 2006 (shaded) and 2011	55
Figure 3.2: Age and sex distribution, Overseas-born and Australia-born, 2011	56
Figure 3.3: Year of arrival, South Africa-born and Overseas-born in Australia, 2011	57
Figure 3.4: South Africa–born, year of arrival by State/Territory of residence, 2011	59
Figure 3.5: Comparison of South Africa-born, Overseas-born and Australia-born living in Greater Capital City Statistical Areas (GCCSA), 2011	60
Figure 3.6: Comparison in educational qualifications of South Africa-born, Overseas-born and Australia-born populations, 2011	72
Figure 3.7: South Africa-born working in professional occupations (2 digit level) in Australia, 2011	75
Figure 3.8: Comparison of household family composition, South Africa-born, Overseas-born and Australia-born populations, 2011	78
Figure 3.9: Weekly mortgage repayments for South Africa-born, Overseas-born and Australia-born, 2011	79

Figure 3.10: Permanent departures of South Africa-born and Australia-born from Australia by age, 2010-11*	80
Figure 3.11: South Africa-born permanent departures by occupation, 2010-11 to 2012-13	81
Figure 4.1: Theoretical foundations informing the research presented here (based on work by Crotty 1998)	84
Figure 5.1: Year of arrival, SSAM respondents and total South Africa-born population at 2011 Census	108
Figure 5.2: Age when migrated to Australia, SSAM respondents	109
Figure 5.3: Age and sex, SSAM respondents' age at survey (shaded) and total South Africa-born population at 2011 Census	110
Figure 5.4: Age at time of survey and sex, SSAM respondents	111
Figure 5.5: Ancestry (first response), SSAM respondents and total South Africa-born population at 2011 Census	115
Figure 5.6: Christian religions, SSAM respondents	118
Figure 5.7: Educational qualifications*, SSAM respondents and total South Africa-born population at 2011	119
Figure 5.8: Occupation*, SSAM respondents and South Africa-born population at 2011 Census	121
Figure 5.9: Professional occupations* (two digit level), SSAM respondents and South Africa-born population at 2011 Census	121
Figure 6.1: Settler arrivals in Australia from South Africa, 1959-60 to 2013-14	141
Figure 7.1: Income by year of arrival of SSAM respondents	170
Figure 7.2: SSAM respondents, persons most often socialised, selected cohorts	179
Figure 7.3: Identity map included in Survey of South African Migrants	186
Figure 7.4: SSAM respondents, identity scale responses	186
Figure 8.1: SSAM respondents, mode and frequency of communication with South Africa	196
Figure 8.2: South Africa-born short-term resident departures from Australia, reasons for travel, 2004-05 to 2012-13	199

ABSTRACT

This study is about migration between Australia and South Africa. It examines mobility between these countries and the linkages created through this movement, particularly focussing on the largest flow from South Africa to Australia. There has been consistent growth in the number of South Africans living in Australia in recent decades as they have responded to conditions in their origin country and sought out new countries to call home. Despite being among the top ten source countries for the Overseas-born in Australia, and forming a conspicuous group in the Australian community, there has been little research on the migration and experiences of these migrants. This study employs a transnational lens to address this gap in the literature and provide a topical and comprehensive overview of migration between South Africa and Australia.

A mixed methods approach is used here to maximise the benefits of quantitative and qualitative data. Secondary administrative data provide crucial information on the scale and composition of movement between these countries and identifies patterns, trends and key migrant characteristics. This provides a useful framework within which primary data from two online surveys and a series of semi-structured interviews are contextualised.

These data show that migration from South Africa to Australia is primarily permanent movement driven by push factors in South Africa, chiefly the security situation. Unlike some skilled migrant groups, economic factors were present among the reasons South Africans emigrate but were by no means dominant. While this movement continues to be dominated by White, English-speaking South Africans this study found evidence of increasing ethnic diversity among this group. However, it also highlights difficulties recruiting migrants from less well represented ethnic backgrounds and identifies this as an area for future research. This study reveals South Africans in Australia to be highly educated: a clear benefit for Australia. At the same time, primary data shows that South Africans maintain significant social and emotional ties with their origin country as well as some financial and political linkages. Hybrid identities are common and a number of migrants hold dual citizenship. Although return migration is rare, in some cases it does not necessarily signify the end of migration.

DECLARATION

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will in the future, be used in a submission in my name for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide.

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Romy Gail Wasserman

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AA	Affirmative Action
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
CRC	Christian Reformed Church
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
DIBP	Department of Immigration and Border Protection
DIEA	Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs
DIMA	Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
FNB	First National Bank
GCCSA	Greater Capital City Statistical Area
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
LSIA	Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia
MESB	Mainly English Speaking Background
NESB	Non English Speaking Background
NSW	New South Wales
NOM	Net Overseas Migration
NT	Northern Territory
OAD	Overseas Arrivals and Departures
PA	Primary Applicant

QLD	Queensland
RMS	Return Migrant Survey
RSMS	Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme
SA	South Australia
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAMP	Southern African Migration Project
SLA	Statistical Local Area
SSA	Statistics South Africa
SSAM	Survey of South African Migrants
TAS	Tasmania
UER	Unemployment Rate
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
VIC	Victoria
WA	Western Australia