MIGRATION FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO AUSTRALIA

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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
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the support of my esteemed supervisors.

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Of course, this submission would not have been possible without the unwavering care of Dr Dianne Rudd in the final stages of this project. Di’s academic and emotional support was fundamental to the completion of this thesis. I am incredibly grateful for her time, effort and rock-solid backing when I needed it most. Thanks Di.

Many thanks also to Margaret Young and Chris Crothers; Geography Department stalwarts. Without their data and maps, many a GEP PhD student would be reduced to a blithering mess in the corner.

May I also thank the migrants who so generously gave time to share their migration stories. It is only through these we can learn and expand our knowledge about this fascinating phenomenon.

On the subject of migrants, I would like to thank my parents who took the brave decision in their mid-twenties to move their young family to the other side of the world for a better life. Though this move was not without challenges; a better life you surely gave us.

Big cheers to the girls in Room G37a and all my other PhD colleagues. Despite the solitary nature of our individual projects, we are bonded together by a shared experience. What a massive pleasure it has been sharing this with you and I look forward to us maintaining life-long friendships.

Above all, I thank Wayne. This thesis simply would not have been possible without him.
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Affirmative Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<td>ACT</td>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
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<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
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<td>ANCYL</td>
<td>African National Congress Youth League</td>
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<td>Black Economic Empowerment</td>
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<td>Christian Reformed Church</td>
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<td>Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</td>
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<td>Department of Immigration and Citizenship</td>
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<td>DIBP</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Border Protection</td>
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<td>Estimated Resident Population</td>
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<td>First National Bank</td>
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