

1. BACKGROUND

The policies of the Australian Government encompass a commitment to the promotion of the goals of access and equity for all Australian residents.

Apart from the duties which citizenship entails, citizens have concrete rights, privileges and benefits, unavailable to others, which include:

- . Eligibility for an Australian passport;
- . Unrestricted entry into Australia and (subject to any restrictions imposed through the operation of Australian laws) unrestricted exit from Australia;
- . The protection afforded by Australian diplomatic missions overseas;
- . The rights (and indeed the obligation) to vote at Federal, State and Territory elections as well as most Local Government elections;
- . Access to permanent employment and statutory appointments in the service of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments and to enlistment in the Australian defence forces;
- . The right to stand for elected office in Federal, State, Territory or Local Government jurisdictions;
- . Immunity from deportation for offences committed in Australia;
- . Bonus selection points when sponsoring relatives for entry to Australia under the Family Migration Program.

1986 Census figures indicated that there are at least one million migrants in Australia, or about 43% of those who are residentially qualified, who have not taken Australian citizenship. In certain migrant groups, over half of those eligible for citizenship do not have it. There has been a substantial fall in the numbers of people applying for citizenship in the past two financial years.

The present study was aimed at providing D.I.L.G.E.A. with an information base from which effective promotional strategies could be developed.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of the study was to obtain information to assist the department to develop improved strategies to promote the acquisition of Australian citizenship by eligible migrants.

More specifically, some of the important areas to be assessed were:

- . factors which motivate people to become Australian citizens
- . reasons which may be responsible for people not applying for citizenship by respondent categories
- . the proportion of people who have not applied for Australian citizenship as a result of conscious decision-making
- . the proportion of citizens who have regretted taking out Australian citizenship and the main reason for regret
- . values attributed to citizenship by citizens and non citizens
- . the extent to which people are aware of rights, privileges and benefits which are available to citizens
- . awareness and understanding of prerequisites for citizenship application
- . reaction of Australians to the granting of citizenship to migrants

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 SAMPLE DESIGN

A national, multi-stage sample design was used to maximise the cost-efficiency of fieldwork and to maximise the representation of ethnic groups.

Information from the 1981 census on the number, origin and distribution of overseas born people in Australia was used as a basis for sample construction. The procedures employed were

1. The proportion of overseas born people within each Australian Local Government Area (LGA) was identified.
2. The proportional distribution of overseas born people across States was identified. The proportional distribution of urban/rural overseas born people within each State was also determined.
3. The sample size of overseas born residents (1800) was then allocated to States and, within States, to urban/rural components consistent with the proportional distribution.
4. Within each State (except Queensland) the LGA's with at least 20% overseas born residents were identified. Since in Queensland there were insufficient rural LGA's with at least 20% overseas born residents those LGA's with at least 15% overseas born people were listed.
5. Sample sizes were then allocated across LGA's using a systematic random sampling process. Allocation was proportional to the numbers of overseas born persons within each eligible LGA.
6. Cluster sizes of 10 overseas born persons and 3 or 4 Australian born residents were allocated to each selected LGA.
7. Within selected LGA's, collectors districts (C.D.'s) were randomly selected; within selected C.D.'s, interviewer start blocks were randomly selected; within selected start blocks, random start points were then selected.

3.2 CITIZENSHIP STRATIFICATIONS

A number of screening questions were developed to ensure that the age, residency, citizenship, ethnic origin and parentage criteria were met. For the overseas born component, quotas were set so that approximately equal numbers of citizens and non citizens were sampled.

The sample was stratified by:

- (i) migrants who had taken out Australian citizenship - broken down by UK/Ireland and other;
- (ii) migrants who had not taken out Australian citizenship - broken down by UK/Ireland and other; and
- (iii) a small control group (n=200) of Australian born persons, with both parents also Australian born.

Both (i) and (ii) comprised migrants from a Non-English Speaking (NES) and English-Speaking (ES) background, with persons born in UK/Ireland identified as a special group within the ES sub-sample. Migrants identified as coming from a NES background were representative of the Australian population generally and not any specific NES group.

Persons born in UK/Ireland formed a substantial part of the total sample (44 per cent). These included both citizens and non-citizens, with 49% of those who were not Australian citizens.

The unit of interview was any household member in scope, randomly selected. Information was obtained through face-to-face interviews.

3.3 BILINGUAL INTERVIEWERS

Once precise collector's districts were identified, ABS data was used to identify the origin of overseas born residents within these areas. This determined the language(s) needed to interview in that area. Experienced bi-lingual interviewers were used where necessary. Given the eligibility criteria for interviewers (i.e. minimum of 2 years residency), very few language difficulties could not easily be overcome with the assistance of other household members (sometimes requiring an additional call back).

3.4 INTERVIEW TIMES

The fieldwork was conducted between 18 August and 20 September 1987. The interviews were conducted at times (evenings and weekends) when the probability of locating eligible respondents was high. However, three call backs were allowed to minimise attrition.

3.5 PILOT TESTING

The questionnaire was pilot tested on 20 households in Sydney. All Pilot test interviews were with persons born overseas and in scope for the survey. Interviewers conducting the pilot test were debriefed. The pilot test confirmed that the information sought was readily obtained. Minor modifications to the questionnaire (all relating to recording/coding of information) were adopted following the pilot test.

The pilot test also confirmed that the use of coloured questionnaire sheets to assist the interviewer in selection of the appropriate set of questions for each subgroup worked successfully.

3.6 EVALUATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Following conduct of the pilot test some changes were made to the questionnaires.

Two additional response columns ('no' and 'don't know') were added to the question on whether Australian citizenship is necessary for a specified list of situations. This procedure ensured that a response was recorded for all situations.

A showcard was included to assist respondents to answer the question on optimum length of residency before being eligible for citizenship.

The use of an overall screening sheet and then colour-coded questionnaires to segment the target audience worked well in both the pilot and main studies. These procedures reduced non sampling error and resulted in 99% of usable complete interviews.

4. THE ACHIEVED SAMPLE

4.1 ACHIEVED SAMPLE

A total of 2002 usable interviews were processed.

People aged 18 years and over living in both urban and rural areas of Australia were included in the sample, which covered the 5 mainland States and the ACT. Only migrants who had arrived in Australia as permanent residents before June 1985 were included.

4.2 CITIZENSHIP STATUS

	No	% (of sample)
Australian Born	209	10
Overseas born Australian citizen	912	46
Non-citizen of Australia	881	44

4.3 PLACE OF BIRTH BY REGION

	No	% (of sample)
Australia	209	10
UK/Ireland	893	45
Northern Europe	226	11
Southern Europe	282	14
Middle East	72	4
Asia	130	6
Central/South America	19	1
Oceania	114	6
Africa	22	1
North America	35	2

4.4 CITIZENSHIP BY REGION

	No	% (of sample)
Australia only	901	45
Australia and other	110	5
UK/Ireland	561	28
Northern Europe	89	4
Southern Europe	104	5
Middle East	28	1
Asia	63	3
Central/South America	8	0
Oceania	101	5
Africa	5	0
North America	32	2