

Flinders University
Australian Industrial
Transformation
Institute

The Australia experience.

Perceptions of Australia's Working Holiday Maker (WHM) program, 2019-2020



Ann-Louise Hordacre, Cecilia Moretti, Hamish Gamble and
Sarah Crossman

Australian Industrial Transformation Institute

July 2021



The Australia experience.

**Perceptions of Australia's Working Holiday
Maker (WHM) program, 2019-2020**

Australian Industrial Transformation Institute

College of Business, Government and Law
Flinders University of South Australia

1284 South Road
Clovelly Park
South Australia 5042

www.flinders.edu.au/aiti

ISBN: 978-0-6488941-3-1

URL:<http://www.flinders.edu.au/aiti/>

CAT: AITI202104

Suggested citation:

Hordacre, A.L, Moretti, C., Gamble, H., & Crossman, S. 2021. *The Australia experience. Perceptions of Australia's Working Holiday Maker (WHM) program, 2019-2020*. Adelaide: Australian Industrial Transformation Institute, Flinders University of South Australia.

The Australian Industrial Transformation Institute (AITI) has taken care to ensure the material presented in this report is accurate and correct. However, AITI does not guarantee and accepts no legal liability or responsibility connected to the use or interpretation of data or material contained in this report.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Department of Home Affairs or the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade).

The authors wish to acknowledge the support of Austrade in preparing this report. In particular, we would like to thank Jesse Adih, Nathan Davis, Lucy O'Connor and David Smith for the extensive advice they provided throughout this project.

Contents

| | |
|---|------------|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | VII |
| 1 INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 2 OVERVIEW OF THE WHM PROGRAM | 2 |
| 2.1.1 <i>Working Holiday visa (subclass 417)</i> | 2 |
| 2.1.2 <i>Work and Holiday visa (subclass 462)</i> | 3 |
| 2.2 POLICY CONTEXT | 4 |
| 2.3 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WHM PROGRAM | 7 |
| 2.3.1 <i>Increases in partner countries and caps</i> | 7 |
| 2.3.2 <i>Options for extending WHM visas into a second and third visa</i> | 7 |
| 2.3.3 <i>Extended time working for a single employer</i> | 8 |
| 2.3.4 <i>New taxation arrangements for WHMs</i> | 8 |
| 2.4 RECENT TRENDS IN THE NUMBER OF WHM VISAS GRANTED | 9 |
| 2.5 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON WHM MOVEMENTS INTO AND OUT OF AUSTRALIA | 10 |
| 2.6 TEMPORARY CHANGES DUE TO THE 2019/2020 BUSHFIRES AND COVID-19 | 11 |
| 3 STUDY METHODOLOGY | 12 |
| 4 WHM: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS | 13 |
| 4.1 REASONS FOR VISIT | 13 |
| 4.2 ORIGIN NATIONS | 14 |
| 4.3 AGE AND SEX | 15 |
| 4.4 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT | 16 |
| 4.5 DURATION OF STAY IN AUSTRALIA | 17 |
| 5 WHM: EMPLOYMENT, WAGES AND SPENDING | 19 |
| 5.1 EMPLOYMENT IN AUSTRALIA | 19 |
| 5.1.1 <i>Jobs and industries of employment in Australia</i> | 20 |
| 5.1.2 <i>Methods used to find jobs</i> | 23 |
| 5.2 WAGES | 23 |
| 5.2.1 <i>Hourly rate of pay</i> | 23 |
| 5.2.2 <i>Hours per week</i> | 28 |
| 5.2.3 <i>Duration of work</i> | 32 |
| 5.2.4 <i>Total pay</i> | 34 |
| 5.3 SPENDING | 38 |
| 5.3.1 <i>Structure of expenditure</i> | 38 |
| 5.3.2 <i>Total expenditure</i> | 41 |
| 5.3.3 <i>Expenditure and employment</i> | 41 |
| 6 WHM: DOMESTIC TRAVEL | 43 |
| 6.1 MOBILITY BETWEEN STATES AND TERRITORIES | 43 |
| 6.2 REASONS FOR VISITING DESTINATIONS | 45 |
| 6.3 ACCOMMODATION TYPES IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS | 48 |
| 7 WHM: TRAINING AND EDUCATION | 53 |
| 7.1 ON-THE-JOB TRAINING | 53 |
| 7.2 FORMAL STUDY | 54 |
| 7.2.1 <i>Study expenditure</i> | 56 |
| 8 WHM: MOTIVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES | 58 |
| 8.1 JOB SATISFACTION | 58 |

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| 8.2 | WHM PERSPECTIVE | 60 |
| 8.2.1 | <i>Finding out about the WHM program</i> | 60 |
| 8.2.2 | <i>Decisions about applying for subsequent WHM visa</i> | 61 |
| 8.2.3 | <i>Recommending the WHM program</i> | 63 |
| 8.3 | TRAVEL TO AND IN AUSTRALIA..... | 65 |
| 8.4 | DESTINATION DECISIONS | 69 |
| 9 | EMPLOYERS: PERSPECTIVES ON THE WHM PROGRAM | 71 |
| 9.1 | IMPORTANCE OF WHMS TO AUSTRALIAN BUSINESSES | 71 |
| 9.1.1 | <i>Critical support in peak season</i> | 73 |
| 9.1.2 | <i>Filling a local void in regions</i> | 74 |
| 9.1.3 | <i>Nature of the work</i> | 75 |
| 9.1.4 | <i>A flexible mobile workforce</i> | 75 |
| 9.1.5 | <i>A motivated workforce</i> | 76 |
| 9.1.6 | <i>Managing transience</i> | 77 |
| 9.2 | EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS OF THE WHM PROGRAM | 77 |
| 9.2.1 | <i>Benefits of the WHM program</i> | 77 |
| 9.2.2 | <i>Program restrictions</i> | 79 |
| 9.2.3 | <i>Complex arrangements</i> | 80 |
| 9.2.4 | <i>Increased support for employers</i> | 81 |
| 10 | EMPLOYERS: IMPACT OF COVID-19 | 83 |
| 10.1 | CHANGE IN BUSINESS SIZE, 2019-2020 | 83 |
| 10.2 | ACCESS TO SEASONAL WORKERS..... | 83 |
| 10.2.1 | <i>Seasonal workers required, 2019-2020</i> | 83 |
| 10.2.2 | <i>Seasonal positions filled, 2019-2020</i> | 84 |
| 10.3 | BUSINESS CHALLENGES IN THE WAKE OF COVID-19..... | 86 |
| 10.3.1 | <i>Workforce recruitment, by industry and location</i> | 86 |
| 10.3.2 | <i>The agriculture industry experience</i> | 87 |
| 10.3.3 | <i>The tourism and hospitality industry experience</i> | 88 |
| 10.3.4 | <i>Perceptions of future business prospects</i> | 90 |
| 11 | CONCLUSION..... | 91 |
| | REFERENCES..... | 92 |
| | APPENDIX A. LABOUR MARKET CONTRIBUTION OF WHMS TO THE AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY: MODELLING EMPLOYMENT, HOURS, WAGES, AND JOB SATISFACTION | 94 |
| | EMPLOYMENT..... | 94 |
| | HOURS PER DAY, WAGES, JOB SATISFACTION | 95 |
| | <i>Hours per week</i> | 95 |
| | <i>Hourly rate of pay</i> | 96 |
| | <i>Job satisfaction</i> | 97 |

List of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| FIGURE 2-1: NUMBER OF WHM GRANTED BY VISA TYPE, SINCE 2017-18 | 9 |
| FIGURE 4-1: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF WHM SURVEY RESPONDENTS & POPULATION, BY SEX | 15 |
| FIGURE 4-2: AGE CHARACTERISTICS OF WHMS, BY TOP 10 COUNTIES | 16 |
| FIGURE 4-3: HIGHEST COMPLETED EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF WHMS, BY TOP 10 COUNTIES | 17 |



| | |
|---|----|
| FIGURE 4-4: AVERAGE (MEAN AND MEDIAN) DURATION (MONTHS) OF STAY IN AUSTRALIA, BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES..... | 18 |
| FIGURE 4-5: DURATION (MONTHS) OF STAY IN AUSTRALIA, BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 18 |
| FIGURE 5-1: NUMBER OF WHMS WORKED IN AUSTRALIA BY NUMBER OF JOBS | 19 |
| FIGURE 5-2: NUMBER OF JOBS BY STATE..... | 20 |
| FIGURE 5-3: HOURLY RATE OF PAY, BY STATE | 24 |
| FIGURE 5-4: AVERAGE HOURLY RATE OF PAY, BY STATE..... | 25 |
| FIGURE 5-5: HOURLY RATE OF PAY FOR WHMS, BY SEX | 25 |
| FIGURE 5-6: HOURLY RATE OF PAY FOR WHMS, BY AGE GROUP | 26 |
| FIGURE 5-7: HOURLY RATE OF PAY FOR TOP 10 WHM JOBS | 27 |
| FIGURE 5-8: HOURLY RATE OF PAY FOR TOP 10 WHM COUNTRIES | 28 |
| FIGURE 5-9: HOURS WORKED PER WEEK, BY STATE | 29 |
| FIGURE 5-10: HOURS WORKED PER WEEK, BY SEX..... | 30 |
| FIGURE 5-11: HOURS WORKED PER WEEK, BY AGE GROUP | 30 |
| FIGURE 5-12: HOURS WORKED PER WEEK IN TOP 10 JOBS | 31 |
| FIGURE 5-13: AVERAGE HOURS WORKED PER WEEK FOR TOP 10 COUNTRIES..... | 32 |
| FIGURE 5-14: WEEKS WORKED PER JOB..... | 32 |
| FIGURE 5-15: AVERAGE WEEKS WORKED PER JOB, BY STATE | 33 |
| FIGURE 5-16: JOB DURATION BY INDUSTRY GROUP | 33 |
| FIGURE 5-17: TOTAL PAY PER JOB, BY STATE | 35 |
| FIGURE 5-18: TOTAL PAY PER JOB, BY SEX..... | 35 |
| FIGURE 5-19: TOTAL PAY PER JOB, BY AGE GROUP | 36 |
| FIGURE 5-20: TOTAL PAY PER JOB IN TOP 10 WHMS JOBS..... | 37 |
| FIGURE 5-21: AVERAGE PAY PER JOB FOR TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 37 |
| FIGURE 5-22: PAY PER JOB FOR TOP 10 COUNTRIES..... | 38 |
| FIGURE 5-23: EXPENDITURE CATEGORY, BY SEX | 39 |
| FIGURE 5-24: EXPENDITURE CATEGORY, BY AGE GROUP..... | 40 |
| FIGURE 5-25: EXPENDITURE CATEGORY, BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 40 |
| FIGURE 5-26: EXPENDITURE BY CATEGORY BY INDUSTRY GROUP | 42 |
| FIGURE 6-1: PROPORTION OF WHM VISITING STATES AND TERRITORIES | 43 |
| FIGURE 6-2: MAJOR LOCALITIES (SA3) VISITED BY WHMS | 44 |
| FIGURE 6-3: MAIN REASON FOR VISIT TO LOCATION (SA2)..... | 45 |
| FIGURE 6-4: VISITED LOCATION (SA2) FOR WORK REASONS | 46 |
| FIGURE 6-5: VISITED LOCATION (SA2) FOR TOURISM REASONS..... | 47 |
| FIGURE 6-6: VISITED LOCATION (SA2) FOR STUDY REASONS | 48 |
| FIGURE 6-7: VISITED LOCATION (SA2) TO SEE FAMILY AND FRIENDS..... | 48 |
| FIGURE 6-8: ACCOMMODATION TYPE, BY STATE AND TERRITORY | 49 |
| FIGURE 6-9: ACCOMMODATION TYPE USED BY WHMS, BY REGION..... | 50 |
| FIGURE 6-10: ACCOMMODATION TYPE BY INDUSTRY GROUP | 51 |
| FIGURE 6-11: ACCOMMODATION ARRANGED BY EMPLOYER BY ACCOMMODATION TYPE | 52 |
| FIGURE 7-1: TYPES OF ON-THE-JOB TRAINING UNDERTAKEN SPECIFIC TO JOB | 53 |
| FIGURE 7-2: FIELDS OF STUDY OF AUSTRALIAN WHMS..... | 55 |
| FIGURE 7-3: AVERAGE WHM EXPENDITURE ON STUDY WHILE IN AUSTRALIA..... | 56 |
| FIGURE 7-4: QUALIFICATIONS RECEIVED FROM COURSES IN AUSTRALIA..... | 57 |
| FIGURE 7-5: EXPECTATIONS THAT QUALIFICATIONS RECEIVED IN AUSTRALIA WOULD BE RECOGNISED AT HOME | 57 |
| FIGURE 8-1: JOB SATISFACTION BY STATE | 58 |
| FIGURE 8-2: JOB SATISFACTION BY INDUSTRY..... | 59 |

| | |
|---|----|
| FIGURE 8-3: JOB SATISFACTION BY COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP, BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 60 |
| FIGURE 8-4: METHODS USED FOR FINDING OUT ABOUT THE WHM PROGRAM..... | 61 |
| FIGURE 8-5: INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A SUBSEQUENT WHM VISA BY SEX | 62 |
| FIGURE 8-6: INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A SUBSEQUENT WHM VISA BY AGE GROUP..... | 63 |
| FIGURE 8-7: INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A SUBSEQUENT WHM VISA BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 63 |
| FIGURE 8-8: WOULD RECOMMEND THE WHM PROGRAM, BY AGE..... | 64 |
| FIGURE 8-9: WOULD RECOMMEND THE WHM PROGRAM, BY CITIZENSHIP | 64 |
| FIGURE 8-10: FACTORS MAKING WHM TRAVEL TO AND WITHIN AUSTRALIA EASY | 65 |
| FIGURE 8-11: EASY TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT COMING TO AUSTRALIA, BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 66 |
| FIGURE 8-12: EASY TO OBTAIN A WHM VISA, BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES..... | 66 |
| FIGURE 8-13: EASY TO PAY FOR TRAVEL TO AUSTRALIA, BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES..... | 67 |
| FIGURE 8-14: EASY TO <i>BRING</i> ENOUGH MONEY IN AUSTRALIA FOR SUPPORT, BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 68 |
| FIGURE 8-15: EASY TO <i>MAKE</i> ENOUGH MONEY IN AUSTRALIA FOR SUPPORT, BY TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 68 |
| FIGURE 8-16: PROPORTION (%) CONSIDERED FOR A WORKING HOLIDAY IN ALTERNATE COUNTRY | 69 |
| FIGURE 8-17: TOP 5 CONSIDERED WH DESTINATIONS FOR TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 70 |
| FIGURE 9-1: EMPLOYER RESPONDENTS, BY INDUSTRY | 71 |
| FIGURE 9-2: IMPORTANCE OF WHMS TO EMPLOYERS | 72 |
| FIGURE 9-3: REASONS WHMS ARE IMPORTANT TO EMPLOYERS | 73 |
| FIGURE 9-4: FEATURES OF WHM PROGRAM THAT BUSINESSES LIKE | 78 |
| FIGURE 9-5: FEATURES OF WHM PROGRAM THAT BUSINESSES DISLIKE | 79 |
| FIGURE 10-1: BUSINESS SIZE BY YEAR..... | 83 |
| FIGURE 10-2: NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL HIGH DEMAND POSITIONS REQUIRED, BY BUSINESS SIZE | 84 |
| FIGURE 10-3: NUMBER OF CORE AND ADDITIONAL POSITIONS FILLED, BY INDUSTRY | 85 |
| FIGURE 10-4: FILLING OF ADDITIONAL POSITIONS, BY SEASONAL WORKER TYPE..... | 85 |
| FIGURE 10-5: ABILITY TO RECRUIT WORKFORCE IN 2020..... | 86 |
| FIGURE 10-6: REASONS FOR DIFFICULTIES RECRUITING WORKERS IN 2020, BY LOCATION | 87 |

List of Tables

| | |
|--|----|
| TABLE 2-1: INCREASES IN SUB-CLASS 462 VISA CAPS, JULY 2013 TO DECEMBER 2019..... | 7 |
| TABLE 2-2: NUMBER OF WHM VISA GRANTED BY CITIZENSHIP, SINCE 2013-14..... | 10 |
| TABLE 4-1: DISTRIBUTION BY WHM VISA SUBCLASSES..... | 13 |
| TABLE 4-2: PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR WHMS COMING TO AUSTRALIA | 13 |
| TABLE 4-3: CITIZENSHIP AND SEX OF WHMS SURVEYED AND TOTAL WHM POPULATION | 14 |
| TABLE 5-1: JOBS OF WHMS IN AUSTRALIA | 21 |
| TABLE 5-2: OCCUPATIONS BY STATE, TOP 10 OCCUPATIONS | 22 |
| TABLE 5-3: INDUSTRY GROUP BY STATE | 22 |
| TABLE 5-4: JOB-SEEKING METHODS AND THEIR SUCCESS | 23 |
| TABLE 5-5: HOURLY RATE OF PAY..... | 24 |
| TABLE 5-6: HOURS WORKED PER WEEK..... | 29 |
| TABLE 5-7: TOTAL PAY PER JOB..... | 34 |



| | |
|---|----|
| TABLE 5-8: AVERAGE EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES BY SEX, AGE GROUP, AND TOP 10 COUNTRIES | 39 |
| TABLE 5-9: TOTAL EXPENDITURE BY SEX, AGE GROUP, AND TOP 10 COUNTRIES. | 41 |
| TABLE 6-1: DURATION OF ACCOMMODATION STAY, BY STATE OR TERRITORY | 50 |
| TABLE 7-1: ON-THE-JOB TRAINING BY INDUSTRY GROUP | 54 |
| TABLE 7-2: COURSES WHMS ENROLLED, BY STATE/TERRITORY AND SEX..... | 54 |
| TABLE 7-3: AVERAGE WEEKS OF COURSES, BY SEX, AGE GROUP, AND COUNTRY | 55 |

Executive Summary

The Working Holiday Maker (WHM) program is a reciprocal program that allows young adults from selected countries to visit Australia for an initial 12-month holiday during which time they are permitted to undertake short-term work and study. The program commenced in 1975 for a small number of countries and now includes 44 partner countries from around the world.

The Australian Industrial Transformation Institute (AITI) was engaged by the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) to examine WHMs perceptions of Australia as a destination to travel, work and study; provide information on the locations and occupations of WHMs; and provide insights into employer expectations of WHM visa holders with regard to their skills and experience in the agriculture, tourism and hospitality sectors. The current examination of WHM and employer perceptions undertaken for the 2019-2020 period revisits the scope and impact of the WHM program examined in an evaluation undertaken for the 2007-2008 period (Tan, Richardson, Lester, Bai, & Sun, 2009). It utilises a survey of WHMs, a survey of WHM employers and a series of interviews with WHM employers. The report also updates developments in policy and program settings in the intervening period, with special reference to the impact of COVID-19 which struck towards the end of the current study.

Australia has strong appeal for WHMs as a safe place to visit with valuable work opportunities

A total of 21,315 WHMs from 41 countries participated in the 2019-2020 WHM survey, nine in ten of whom were on the 417 visa and three quarters of whom were on their first visa. Interestingly, the proportion of WHMs holding university degrees or higher has increased by more than 10 percentage points compared with the 2007-08 evaluation findings. WHMs predominantly came to Australia for travel, although the opportunity to work was also a strong motivator. Participants also viewed Australia as a good place to improve English language competency and perceived it as a safe place to visit. WHMs stayed an average of 9.4 months in Australia.

WHMs gravitate to Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria for work, mainly for agriculture jobs, but hospitality and tourism jobs also figure strongly

WHMs who provided information about employment in Australia, worked an average of two jobs. The majority of jobs were undertaken in Queensland (26.8%), NSW (27.3%) and Victoria (22.2%), with fewer jobs in South Australia (4.0%), Tasmania (3.9%), Northern Territory (3.1%) and the Australian Capital Territory (0.8%).

Two in five (39.9%) WHM jobs were in agriculture and transport, which accounted for the highest proportion of jobs in Tasmania, South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia and Victoria. Three in ten (29.6%) WHM jobs were in hospitality and tourism (notably comprising 46.6% of jobs in the Northern Territory). The remainder of jobs were spread across other sectors such as construction and mining, sales and marketing and others. The most common jobs reported were crop farm worker (21.8%), waiter (8.5%) and bar attendant/barista (6.3%).

The average hourly rate for WHM jobs in Australia in 2019-2020 was \$22.15 per hour. On average WHMs worked 15 weeks per job and were paid \$13,053 per job in Australia.

On 1 July 2020, the national minimum wage was \$19.84 per hour (\$753.80 per week for 38 hours). The average hourly rate for WHM jobs in Australia in 2019-2020 was \$22.15 per hour, rising to \$22.66 when excluding those who reported receiving \$0 per hour.

Most WHMs were paid between \$15 and \$30 per hour. Two in five (43.5%) WHM jobs paid between \$20 and \$25 per hour; 19.8% of jobs paid between \$15 and \$20 per hour; 16.7% of jobs paid between \$25 and \$30 per hour.

Nationally, 14% of jobs paid less than \$15 per hour; with females twice as likely as males to receive this hourly pay rate. However, this rate is likely to account for jobs such as nannies and au pairs where food and board are generally offset against wages. Similar arrangements also apply in remote and isolated settings, for example pastoral agribusiness and wilderness holiday resorts.

Most WHMs with a job worked the equivalent of full-time, indicating the value of this workforce to Australian employers. One in five (20.1%) jobs exceeded 40 hours per week, with this most often the case in the Northern Territory and Western Australia. At industry level, WHMs in tourism and hospitality (e.g. waiters, bar attendants/baristas, kitchen hands) worked fewer hours on average than WHMs in agriculture and transport. Building labourer WHMs worked the longest hours, 39.8 hours per week on average.

WHMs worked around three months on average per job. Meat, chicken and fish process workers worked the longest duration (19.6 weeks) and earned the highest average pay per job (\$17,700)

WHMs worked 15 weeks per job on average. A third (34.4%) of jobs were held for between three and six months (13 to 26 weeks). In terms of work intensity, WHMs in agriculture worked higher average weekly hours for fewer weeks compared with WHMs in tourism and hospitality who worked fewer average weekly hours for more weeks in total.

On average WHMs were paid \$13,000 per Australian job. In New South Wales, Western Australia and Victoria WHMs earned around \$14,000 per job, noting that the amount earned per job is related to length of time spent in the job and WHMs tended to spend more time in jobs in these states. Male WHMs were paid almost \$2,000 more per job than females (\$14,100 and \$12,400 respectively). Meat, chicken and fish process workers worked the longest duration (19.6 weeks) and earned the highest average pay per job (\$17,700). Crop farm workers earned \$9,600 per job for 11.8 weeks work.

WHMs spent on average \$658 per week, for an average total of \$26,787 per stay

The average weekly expenditure of a WHM was estimated to be \$658. Given an average duration of 9.4 months, the average total expenditure of a WHM (aggregated over the duration of their stay) was estimated to be \$26,800. Accommodation was identified as the largest expenditure category for WHMs with average total expenditure of \$8,000. The next largest categories were food and drink (\$4,600) followed by entertainment (\$3,300).

WHMs working in the construction and mining industry spent the most (\$31,700 on average). Those in education spent the least (\$21,600 on average). WHMs who reported education as their industry were most likely to be au pairs, explaining the low expenditure. Where data was available, respondents indicated they spent more than they received in income during their stay.

New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria were the preferred destinations to visit and backpackers/hostels were the most typical type of accommodation used

WHMs were most likely to visit New South Wales (69.8%), Queensland (64.2%) and Victoria (60.7%), with fewer visiting Western Australia (27.6%), South Australia (24.2%), the Northern Territory (19.3%), Tasmania (17.2%) and the Australian Capital Territory (16.0%). More than half (55.7%) of WHMs visited both New South Wales and Queensland. WHMs selected urban areas,



specifically capital cities, as their main visitation location in the state or territory. Greater Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth topped the list of primary locations

The most common types of accommodation for WHMs were backpackers/hostels (27.8%) and rental properties (20.5%). Compared with the evaluation undertaken by Tan et al. (2009), the proportion of WHMs staying in hostels has decreased by about ten percentage points. This is likely to be due to the increased prevalence of short-term 'Airbnb' style accommodation options as reported in 9.5% of stays. In outer regional and remote areas more than one quarter of WHM stays were at backpackers and hostels, while 25.9% of stays in very remote Australia were in caravan parks or camping grounds, closely followed by backpacker and hostel stays (24.2%)

WHMs were mostly satisfied with their jobs, although dissatisfaction was registered with one quarter of crop farming jobs

WHMs tended to be satisfied in their jobs. More than seven in ten jobs were reported as satisfying to some extent (31.8% very satisfied; and 40% satisfied). Satisfaction was highest in health and aged care jobs and lowest in agriculture and transport, where one in five jobs (20.3%) were reported as dissatisfying to some extent. Within this industry group, one quarter (25.1%) of crop farming jobs were considered dissatisfying.

About two in five surveyed WHMs reported receiving at least one type of on-the-job training in their main reported job in each state or territory worked. Most on-the-job training was reported in two industry groups – hospitality, tourism and sport (34.0%) and agriculture and transport (28.8%).

Five percent of survey respondents provided information about formal courses of study undertaken during their working holiday in Australia. More than half were English language courses, with business or management courses, and food and hospitality courses accounting for just 10% of courses undertaken respectively. The low number of responses for this question, as well as the preponderance of English courses indicate that formal study options are likely not a significant pull factor for WHMs coming to Australia. Business and management courses were the most expensive of the specified course types, averaging \$9,800.

WHMs generally found the WHM program easy to navigate and around a third report an intention to apply for a subsequent visa – slightly more males than females

Most WHMs (59.1%) learned about the program from friends or family, signalling the importance of positive experiences and word of mouth in spruiking the program. Social media (11.8%) and the Department of Home Affairs website (10.1%) were the next most common sources of information. In a strong endorsement of the program, 94.2% of WHM survey respondents would recommend the program to their friends.

Around one in five WHMs want to apply for a subsequent visa but don't meet the requirements. Slightly more males than females intend to apply (14.9%, 12.5%), or have applied (3.4%, 2.9%) or have been granted a subsequent WHM visa (18.4%, 17.1%). Japanese and Taiwanese WHMs were most active in applying for a subsequent visa (42.3% and 41.3% respectively).

Most employers see the WHM program as critical for the ongoing viability of their business

Four in five employers from the agriculture, and tourism and hospitality industries reported WHMs were very important to their business. More than nine in ten employers in agricultural businesses and fewer from tourism and hospitality businesses reported it was difficult to get local workers to do the jobs WHMs had been traditionally engaged in. They also reported WHMs were

valued as they were willing to work in short-term and seasonal work. Interview feedback from WHM employers strongly reinforced the message that WHMs fill a critical niche in the Australian job market, and without them business operations and viability would be compromised.

Businesses that rely on WHMs are typically seasonal in nature. All have core staff who work year-round but rely on additional workers to manage the volume of demand generated in peak season. Short-term work is not viewed as attracting interest within the local labour market, and young people and students do not offer a consistent, reliable solution to cyclical workforce shortages. A further perceived barrier to recruiting local labour is the physically demanding, repetitive nature of the work in WHM-employing businesses.

Foremost among the reasons WHMs are valued is their mobility and amenability to seasonal work. Employers see WHMs as singularly motivated to work in order to save money to continue with their travels, thereby maximising their working holiday experience. WHMs are generally perceived to have a strong work ethic, the ability to be flexible, a preparedness to try new things and a willingness to learn and adapt. However, while WHM mobility is a bonus for seasonal work, it is also viewed as a liability because WHMs can pack up and leave a job early with minimal notice (high level of transience).

Employers would like to see some tweaking of the WHM program to make it more responsive to employer and WHM needs

Nine in ten employers reported the WHM program provided an essential workforce, with three quarters indicating it provided an economic boost to the local area: “backpackers are very important to our small town - they earn good money and they spend a fair portion of that here.” The second and third-year visa extension option was well liked.

Program dislikes were related to visa restrictions. The six-month limitation on work with a single employer was regularly raised by employers - a key issue for this is realising return on the time and investment involved in training workers. Changes to the taxation system (removal of the tax-free threshold) was considered an unfair impost on already low-paid WHMs impacting their motivation level. Participating employers also questioned the merits of WHMs being required to contribute to superannuation when these funds could be used on their travels.

In reflecting on the WHM program, employers argued strongly to extend the six-month working with a single employer provision to twelve months, in recognition of the extensive training and investment required. Participants suggested a number of practical measures to help employers access the program, including: a centralised employment register or job board hosted on a government website; clearer information and point of contact to assist new (and existing) employers to better understand the program’s complexities; improved regulation (rather than placing the onus on growers); and greater consistency in labour hire arrangements across the industry to help address any exploitative practices.

COVID-19 has been a huge shock to the system; employers plead for the WHM program to reboot as soon as safely possible to ensure a sufficient workforce

COVID-19 related border closures preceded a 28.6% decline in all visas granted in 2019-2020, most notably in first 417 visas which dropped by 64.6%. Second visas granted during this period were slightly down in numbers, with third visas trending up. The greater resilience in second and third visa numbers was possibly due to Australia being perceived as a safer option in the midst of the international COVID-19 crisis. COVID-19 had a significant impact on tourism and hospitality businesses, which experienced a 14.5% decline in core staff and 20.5% in high demand staff (i.e. additional to core staff to help manage peak season operations). Agriculture businesses



reported a somewhat lesser 7.4% decline in core staff and a 12.9% decline in high demand staff compared with 2019.

One fifth of surveyed businesses reported a decline in their ability to recruit WHMs to fill necessary additional positions during periods of high demand. Recruitment of farm hands and fruit or vegetable packers and graders proved the most successful whereas hospitality staff proved the most difficult to recruit. Businesses in locations outside the greater capital cities reported the greatest difficulties with workforce availability.

Some employers responded by developing new approaches to worker recruitment such as developing a cooperative worker-sharing arrangement within the local supply chain and turning to grey nomads and travelling families to fill the gap left by WHMs. Some absorbed the overflow of work into the existing core workforce, becoming overwhelmed and exhausted in the process, or by closing/cancelling services. While some employers indicated they would seek greater self-sufficiency and to reduce their reliance on WHMs post-COVID-19, most reinforced the need to reboot the WHM program. Employers consistently reported that strong growth trajectories were interrupted by COVID-19 and it was essential to revitalise the WHM program in order to help with recovery. A consistent message was to open the borders as soon as feasibly and safely possible, and to fast track the entry of WHMs not just for agriculture but across all industries experiencing acute workforce shortages.

1 Introduction

The Working Holiday Maker (WHM) program is a reciprocal initiative designed to encourage young people from partner countries to visit and work in Australia for an initial one-year period, with young Australians able to do likewise in partner countries. The program gives young people rich travel experiences, provides opportunities for cultural exchange, fosters new connections, strengthens bilateral relationships and promotes Australia as a destination of choice for international markets (Australian Government Austrade, 2020).

The Australian Industrial Transformation Institute (AITI) was engaged by the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) to examine WHMs perceptions of Australia as a destination to travel, work and study; provide information on the locations and occupations of WHMs; and provide insights into employer expectations of WHM visa holders with regard to their skills and experience, with an emphasis on the tourism and hospitality industry. The current study covering the 2019-2020 period revisits the scope and impact of a WHM program evaluation undertaken for the 2007-08 period (Tan et al., 2009). It also updates developments in policy and program settings in the intervening period, with special reference to the impact of COVID-19 which struck towards the end of the current study.

The current examination of WHM and employer perceptions is based on a survey of WHMs, a survey of WHM employers and a series of interviews with WHM employers. The WHM survey was distributed in quarterly tranches to over 180,000 WHM visa holders whose entry visa expiry date occurred between 1 March 2019 and 29 February 2020. The WHM Employers Survey gathered information about employer experience of WHMs and the WHM program. The survey was targeted to the agriculture, forestry and fishing ('agriculture') industry along with tourism and hospitality businesses. Telephone interviews of employers from these sectors were subsequently conducted to gather contextual information. Further information about the methodology is provided in Section 3.

The study findings present demographic features of WHMs, employment, wages and spending patterns and WHM domestic travel habits, including mobility between states and territories, reasons for visiting destinations and types of accommodation used. WHM motivations and experiences were also explored, including job satisfaction, on-the-job training received, and formal study undertaken. The survey explored how WHMs found out about the program, their approach to applying for subsequent visas, whether they would recommend the program to others, the ease of applying for a WHM visa and travelling to Australia, and what other countries they considered travelling to.

Employer perspectives include the importance of WHMs to Australian businesses and their experience of the program. Insights are provided into perceived strengths and limitations of the program and potential improvements into the future. With the interviews coinciding with the fall-out of COVID-19, employers discuss the impact in terms of workforce size and composition, their access to necessary workers and what they needed to aid in their COVID-19 recovery.

This report is a timely assessment of employer and participant perceptions of the program, as well as how it has fared under the exceptional circumstances of COVID-19. The information provided in this report is designed to support government and industry stakeholders to market Australia as a WHM destination to partner countries and promote careers and influence training pathways in the tourism and hospitality industry.

2 Overview of the WHM program

The WHM program is a reciprocal program that allows young adults from selected countries to visit Australia for an initial 12-month holiday during which time they are permitted to undertake short-term work and study. The program commenced in 1975 for young people from the United Kingdom (UK), Ireland and Canada visiting Australia and has since expanded to include many other partner countries. There are currently 44 partner countries from various regions across the world (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020c).

There are two sub-classes of Working Holiday Visa, the *Working Holiday visa (subclass 417)* and the *Work and Holiday visa (subclass 462)*.

2.1.1 Working Holiday visa (subclass 417)

First introduced in 1975, the *Working Holiday visa (subclass 417)* is open to people who hold a passport from Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Taiwan and the United Kingdom (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020a).

As of the time of reporting, Working Holiday 417 visas allow people aged 18 to 30 years (except for Canadian, French and Irish citizens where the upper limit is 35 years) to have an extended working holiday in Australia. Visas are applicable for stays of up to 12 months during which time people may do up to four months of study and any amount of work in a full-time, part-time, casual, paid or voluntary work. Applicants may do any kind of work however they are restricted to a maximum six months working for the same employer, except where the work is:

- in different locations and work in any one location does not exceed 6 months
- in plant and animal cultivation anywhere in Australia
- in certain industries in northern Australia only
- assisting bushfire recovery efforts
- in critical sectors during the COVID-19 pandemic including agriculture, food processing, health, aged and disability care and childcare
- or where permission is requested and granted in writing by the Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs.

People who hold or have held a first Working Holiday visa, and who remain in the eligible age range, are able to apply for a second and a third Working Holiday visa, provided certain conditions are met. Second and third Working Holiday visas are applicable for stays up to 12 months respectively. Notable distinctions include:

- first Working Holiday visas allow people to do *any kind of work* during the 12-month period
- second Working Holiday visa holders can do any kind of work but must have completed *3 months of specified work in regional areas* while holding their *first* Working Holiday visa
- third Working Holiday visa applicants can do any kind of work but must have completed *6 months of specified work in regional areas* while holding their *second* Working Holiday visa.

Approved industries for specified work (as required for second and third visas) include:



- plant and animal cultivation in regional Australia¹
- fishing and pearling in regional Australia
- tree farming and felling in regional Australia
- mining in regional Australia
- construction in regional Australia
- bushfire recovery work in declared bushfire affected areas only, after 31 July 2019.

2.1.2 Work and Holiday visa (subclass 462)

The *Work and Holiday visa (subclass 462)* was introduced in 2003. From 2007 onwards, all signed agreements with new partner countries have fallen under this category (the last 417 visa-based partner country was signed on 1 July 2006). The 462 visa is open to people aged 18 to 30 years who hold a passport from Argentina, Austria, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Israel, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Peru, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, the United States, Uruguay or Vietnam. A new partnership agreement had been signed with Papua New Guinea but was not yet in effect at the time of reporting (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020b).

Additional requirements apply to visitors on a 462 visa which, depending on source country, may include functional English, successful completion of at least two years of undergraduate university study (all except Israel and the USA), and holding a letter of home country/government support in association with their visa application (all except Argentina, Austria, Chile, China, Israel, Portugal, Spain, Singapore and USA).

Work and Holiday 462 visas are applicable for stays of up to 12 months and allow people to do up to four months study in addition to working as much or as little as desired. In line with 417 visas, 462 visas can be renewed a second and third time provided certain conditions are met:

- first Work and Holiday visas allow people to do *any kind of work* during the 12-month period
- second Work and Holiday visa applicants can do any kind of work but must have completed *3 months of specified subclass 462 work in regional areas* while holding their first Work and Holiday visa
- third Work and Holiday visa applicants can do any kind of work but must have completed *6 months of specified subclass 462 work in regional areas* while holding their second Working Holiday visa (or bridging visa in certain circumstances).

Approved industries for specified work (as required for second and third 462 visas) include:

- plant and animal cultivation in northern Australia and other specified areas of regional Australia
- fishing and pearling in northern Australia only
- tree farming and felling in northern Australia only
- tourism and hospitality in northern Australia only
- construction in northern Australia and other specified areas of regional Australia
- bushfire recovery work in declared bushfire affected areas only, after 31 July 2019.

¹ Regional Australia is defined as all of Australia excluding Sydney, Newcastle, the Central Coast and Wollongong; the Greater Brisbane area and the Gold Coast; the Melbourne metropolitan area; and Perth and surrounding areas.

2.2 Policy context

The WHM program has served a vital and evolving role in Australia, from a combined tourism, cultural and workforce perspective. The program has provided young people with deeply enriched travel experiences and opportunities for cultural exchange, fostered new connections and strengthened key bilateral relationships. It has built cross-cultural awareness, encouraged a positive regard for Australia, enhanced commercial ties and economic integration between partner countries, increased Australian brand recognition and heightened community-level support and understanding of broader foreign policy objectives (Australian Government Austrade, 2020).

The Australian tourism industry has benefitted greatly from the WHM program, both in terms of visitor numbers (WHM arrivals) and overall trip spend, which in 2019 amounted to \$3.2 billion (of which \$726 million spent in regional areas). WHMs are identified as high-return tourists: 'they tend to spend more, stay longer, and disperse more widely throughout the country than most other visitor types' (ibid., 3). International Visitor Survey (IVS) data for 2019 shows that WHMs:

- stay an average of 148 nights;
- spend 34 per cent of their time in regional areas; and
- over 50 per cent were on a repeat visit to Australia.

The WHM program has also been recognised more broadly for its significant economic contribution. The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) highlighted the economic benefits of the program to Australia in terms of WHM expenditure on accommodation, transport and education (Education and Employment References Committee, 2016). The WHM program evaluation undertaken by Tan et al. (2009) estimated gross contribution to expenditure in the Australian economy in 2007-08 by WHMs to be \$1.8 billion. The Joint Standing Committee on Migration reported that WHMs currently contribute around \$3 billion a year to the Australian economy (Parliament of Australia, 2020). A Productivity Commission inquiry into migrant intake into Australia identified that WHMs spend an average of around \$15,000 each year while in Australia, amounting to an annual contribution of more than \$3.5 billion (Productivity Commission, 2016). Moreover, WHMs contribute to economic activity at minimal cost to government, by contributing to GST revenue and income tax revenue while excluded from free or subsidised access to most government support services (e.g., health and welfare).

Over the years the WHM program has played an increasing role in addressing labour shortages in rural and regional Australia and in certain industries that rely on ready access to a flexible, casual workforce. The agriculture and tourism industries have highlighted the importance of WHMs to their business operations in addressing workforce shortages and contributing to productivity and industry performance. The agriculture sector in particular was identified as critically dependent on the WHM program as a source of labour (Education and Employment References Committee, 2016). Horticulture-based research identified that WHMs form a ready supply of short-term, casual workers to complement longer-term seasonal workers, thereby enabling primary producers to manage the peaks and troughs of the production cycle (Zhao, Bink, Kruger, Xia, & Stenekes, 2018). Northern Territory employers rely heavily on WHMs in peak season, to the extent that WHMs often account for more than 50% of employers' workforces in the hospitality, primary producer and construction sectors (Education and Employment References Committee, 2016).

Policy-driven program changes have successfully grown the program and channelled WHMs into regional areas and industries with unmet labour demand. These include measures to expand the program (signing new partnership agreements and increasing caps on individual country visas) and measures to leverage the program for economic and labour force



benefits (providing the option to apply for a second and third WHM visa, contingent upon working in regional locations and in specified industries of unmet labour demand; extended periods of time working for a single employer; and changes to WHM tax, superannuation and fee arrangements). These measures are described in greater detail in Section 2.3.

In June 2020, the Joint Standing Committee (JSC) on Migration was tasked by government to conduct an inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker program to examine the value of the program to Australia's economy, the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the program and the adequacy of existing visa criteria and conditions for supporting the purpose of the program, including cultural exchange and creating job opportunities for Australians. The JSC Interim and Final Reports (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2020a, 2020b) underlined the value and importance of the program and provided a range of recommendations to guide future program directions.

The Interim Report of the Inquiry recommendations focused on ways to address key areas of workforce shortage in the post-COVID-19 era, targeting young Australians in the first instance and WHMs and other visa holders as crucial supplementary labour. Recommended amendments to the WHM program included, among others, allowing work in key industries in all peri-urban, regional, rural or remote areas, to count towards qualifying for a second and/or third year visa; extending the Northern Australia provision to allow work in hospitality, tourism and other industries to apply in all regional, rural and remote areas; enabling WHMs to work for more than six months with the same employer, if they are in peri-urban, regional, rural and remote parts of Australia and providing further incentives for WHMs to remain engaged in agricultural work.

In the context of COVID-19, Interim Report recommendations focused on rebooting the WHM program, maintaining the reputation of the program overseas; encouraging WHMs to return to Australia and introducing measures to counteract the dampening effect of COVID-19. For example, establishing sponsor quarantine arrangements and/or reimbursing the costs of quarantine incurred by WHMs after a certain period working in jobs where shortages exist.

The Final Report of the JSC Inquiry recommended allowing WHMs to work in tourism and hospitality in all hard-to-staff rural and remote areas of Australia as part of their 88 days or 6 months to qualify for their second- or third- year WHM visa, and providing a new tiered definition of 'regional' for the purposes of migration that recognises differences in experiences and opportunities inherent to each, with particular reference to understanding the similarity between peri-urban areas and near-by regional areas. Further recommendations included considering increasing the upper age limit to 35 where bilateral arrangements can be achieved for Australians and addressing misconceptions about what constitutes a 'day' for the purposes of counting toward working 88 days or 6 months to qualify for a visa extension.

Policy changes have also stimulated contemporary public debates about the benefits and drawbacks of the WHM program. One area is the risk of WHMs displacing young Australian workers in low-skilled occupations, particularly during periods of high youth unemployment (Wright, Clibborn, Piper, & Cini, 2016). An evaluation of the WHM program conducted by Tan et al. (2009) concluded that:

- WHMs contribute more to total expenditure than they do to earnings, and thus on balance make a small contribution to increasing the demand for Australian workers
- the supply of WHM labour is of particular value to employers in the regions, especially agricultural enterprises who employ them to pick produce and to supply general farm labour
- with the main exception of regional agricultural work, WHMs do not contribute much to the reduction of labour or skill shortages. The majority of work done is low skill and in the

cities. In these jobs, they compete with the local low skill labour force and with local students who seek similar sorts of jobs while they study.

Further research evidence based on CEDA modelling and independent modelling by the Productivity Commission, found no support for the contention that temporary migrants, including WHMs, had a negative effect on the labour market outcomes of local Australian workers (Committee for Economic Development of Australia, 2019).

Another area of concern involves WHM working conditions and potential for the exploitation of WHMs linked with WHM program reforms. WHMs have been identified as especially vulnerable to wage underpayment due to difficulties understanding and exercising workplace entitlements under Australian law, compounded by age and language barriers (Fair Work Ombudsman, 2016). They are also vulnerable to inducement to unpaid work due to a perception that this forms a gateway to paid work, which in turn forms a pathway from a temporary to a permanent visa (Education and Employment References Committee, 2016). The Fair Work Ombudsman has found the 88-day work requirement to qualify for a second year visa heightens WHM vulnerability due to the remoteness of working locations and WHM dependence on employers for sign off to obtain eligibility (Fair Work Ombudsman, 2016). In response to identified vulnerabilities in the WHM program, the Joint Standing Committee Inquiry (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2020a) recommended establishing a single point of contact hotline for WHMs to source information and advice about work rights, workplace exploitation concerns, accommodation and employment options.

In March 2016, the Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment References released its final report from its inquiry into the impact of Australia's temporary work visa programs on the Australian labour market and on the temporary work visa holders.² The report found that WHM visa holders in the harvesting sector were considerably vulnerable, particularly those whose employment was mediated by unscrupulous labour hire companies. These findings were supported by the FWO Inquiry into the wages and working conditions of people under the 417 WHM visa program report released in October 2016 and then again by the FWO Harvest Trail Inquiry Report (2018) which identified widespread breaches of workplace laws by more than 50 per cent of the 638 firms investigated (Fels & Cousins, 2019). The Fair Work Ombudsman (2018) found that factors contributing to the exploitation of migrant workers in the horticultural sector included widespread non-compliance among employers investigated, misuse of piece rates, a negative impact where labour hire agreements were used illegally, low consumer awareness of related issues and an unwillingness to pay more for 'domestic fair trade' produce.

In October 2016, the Australian Government established the Migrant Workers' Taskforce, tasked to identify further proposals for improvements in law, law enforcement, or other practical measures to more quickly identify and rectify any cases of migrant worker exploitation. The government has accepted in principle all 22 recommendations extending from the Taskforce report, released in March 2019. Measures were announced in the 2019-20 Budget to provide additional funding to the FWO to bolster enforcement action against employers who exploit vulnerable workers, with additional funding pledged to enhance resources to ensure vulnerable workers are aware of their workplace rights. A National Labour Hire Registration Scheme is being developed to 'offer a balanced approach to protect vulnerable workers, target rogue operators and level the playing field for businesses that do the right thing, while leaving the labour hire industry as a whole, intact' (Attorney General's Department (Clth)).

² *A National Disgrace: The Exploitation of Temporary Work Visa Holders*



2.3 Developments in the WHM program

2.3.1 Increases in partner countries and caps

The WHM program was originally conceived to facilitate cultural exchange among young travellers to and from Australia, offering them opportunities for deep cultural experiences supplemented by limited opportunities to work and study (Swoboda & Dosser, 2016). While the program initially targeted young travellers from the UK, Ireland and Canada, growing interest in the scheme resulted in the number of partner countries increasing to nineteen between 1975 and 2006 (based on 417 visa agreements) with a further 25 partner countries added between 2003 and 2019 (based on 462 visa agreements).

Accordingly, the number of WHM program visa grants grew substantially throughout the 1980s, increasing from fewer than 6000 WHMs in 1983-84 to around 45,000 in 1988-89 (Rivzi, 2020). The 1990s Australian recession led to pressure from some quarters to restrain the program in favour of local labour, resulting in the introduction of visa caps for individual countries. After a period of tightened migration policy in general in the latter half of the 1990s, concerns about the impact of decreasing fertility, population ageing and increasing skill shortages, particularly in regional areas, prompted the government to increase the migration program from 1999 onward. The WHM program featured strongly in this refocusing of policy, mainly as a mechanism for addressing labour shortages in particular industries in regional areas. This was evident in the increases progressively applied to individual countries' caps under the subclass 462 visa, as shown in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Increases in sub-class 462 visa caps, July 2013 to December 2019

| Commencement Date | Country | Cap increase |
|--|-----------|----------------|
| July 2013 | Indonesia | 100 to 1000 |
| December 2018 | Israel | 500 to 2,500 |
| | Spain | 1,500 to 3,400 |
| January 2019 | Peru | 100 to 1,500 |
| July 2019 | Argentina | 1,500 to 2,450 |
| | Malaysia | 100 to 1100 |
| | Portugal | 200 to 500 |
| | Singapore | 500 to 2,500 |
| September 2019 | Vietnam | 200 to 1,500 |
| October 2019 | Poland | 500 to 1500 |
| | Thailand | 200 to 1,500 |
| 2020 (commencement date not reported) | Indonesia | 1000 to 4,100 |
| | Argentina | 2,450 to 3,400 |
| | Thailand | 1,500 to 2,000 |

Source: WHM visa program reports, Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2013-2020

2.3.2 Options for extending WHM visas into a second and third visa

In November 2005 Australia introduced the option for subclass 417 visa holders to apply for a second visa, provided they worked in seasonal agricultural work for three months (88 days) while on their first visa. In the following year the second-year visa option was extended to people working in any regional primary industry and in 2008 this was further extended to include WHMs working in the construction industry in regional areas.

The Australian Government's 2015 White Paper on Developing Northern Australia included announcements to further expand the WHM visa program (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015). Eligibility to apply for a second visa was extended to subclass 462 visa holders working in designated, high demand areas in northern Australia (Zhao et al., 2018). From 19 November

2016, subclass 462 visa holders who undertook three months (88 days) work in agriculture, tourism or hospitality industries within northern Australia (including parts of Western Australia and Queensland above the Tropic of Capricorn) were eligible to apply for a second Work and Holiday visa. Two years later the regional areas were expanded to all designated regional postcodes in Australia for Work and Holiday subclass 462 visa holders working in the agriculture (plant and animal cultivation) industry to qualify for a second year of stay in Australia.

The impetus behind these changes was to provide Australian farmers with immediate access to workers in key parts of regional Australia, particularly for seasonal work needs. A growing priority for government was concentrating on jobs in regional Australia that were not being sufficiently filled by local workers. As noted by the former Immigration Minister, the Hon David Coleman MP:

We know there are jobs in regional Australia that aren't being filled by Australian workers, and we are giving regional businesses the immigration settings to help them fill those roles (AAP General News Wire, 2019).

On 1 July 2019, the Australian Government introduced a third WHM visa option for both visa types (subclass 417 and 462) for WHMs who carried out 6 months (179 days) of specified work in regional areas while on their second working holiday, where the six months work was performed on or after 1 July 2019.

2.3.3 Extended time working for a single employer

In 2006 the WHM program restriction on the length of time WHMs could work for a single employer was extended from three to six months. Nearly ten years later, on 21 July 2015, WHM program requirements were simplified to make it easier for families to employ au pairs. The changes enabled subclass 417 and 462 visa holders working as au pairs to seek an extension to work for a family for up to the full twelve-month term of the visa, rather than the existing limit of six months per family.

With the commencement on 21 November 2015 of the Northern Australia employment extensions initiative, WHMs on both visa types were permitted to work for twelve months with the same employer in specified industries in *Northern Australia*. Eligible industries included aged and disability care, agriculture, forestry and fishing, construction, mining, and tourism and hospitality (Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015). From 5 November 2018 WHMs working in plant and animal cultivation *anywhere in Australia* were permitted to remain with the same employer for twelve months.

From 17 February 2020 WHMs on both visa types assisting with bushfire recovery efforts were able to do paid or unpaid work for up to 12 months (instead of six months) with the same employer or organisation without requesting permission from the Department of Home Affairs (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020d).

2.3.4 New taxation arrangements for WHMs

In the 2015-16 Federal Budget, the Australian Government announced a 'backpacker tax' to change the tax status of temporary WHMs from that of resident to that of non-resident, such that they were taxed at significantly higher rates of 32.5% from the first dollar earned from 1 July 2016. This triggered concern among employers (notably primary producers and in the tourism sector) that the new tax rate would disincentivise WHMs and contribute to a labour shortage (Phillips, 2016). On review, the 'backpacker tax' was reduced to 19% and then again to 15%, applicable to taxable income on amounts up to \$37,000, with ordinary tax rates for taxable income applying thereafter. The new tax rate came into effect from 1 January 2017, together with a \$50 reduction in the WHM visa application charge to \$390. Further to this, from 1

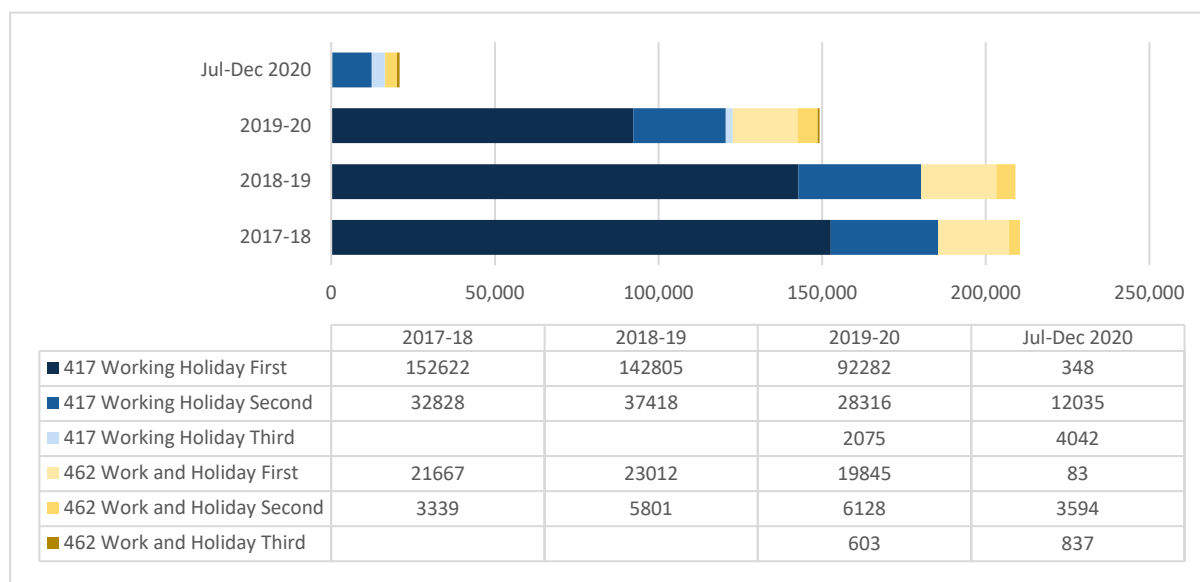


July 2017 the rate of tax applied to the Departing Australia Superannuation Payment (DASP) was increased to 95% and the Passenger Movement Charge (PMC) increased by \$5 (Income Tax Rates Amendment (Working Holiday Maker Reform) Bill 2016 [and related Bills], 2016).

2.4 Recent trends in the number of WHM visas granted

Just over 210,000 foreign nationals were granted a visa to travel and work in Australia in the 2017-18 period, most of these related to first (72.5%) or second (15.6%) subclass 417 visas (see Figure 2-1).³ Approximately one thousand fewer visas were granted in 2018-19, representing a decrease in 417 visas but in the context of an increase in 462 visas (13.8% in total). Mid-2019 saw the introduction of third visas for both visa classes. However, the closure of Australia’s international borders due to COVID-19 saw a marked 28.6% decline in all visas granted in 2019-20, most notably in first 417 visas which dropped by 64.6%. The subsequent six-month period from July to December 2020 saw only 20,000 visas granted. This included only 431 first time visas granted to new applicants – a fraction (0.26%) of those granted in 2018-19 (albeit for a six-month period). Second visas granted during this period were slightly down in numbers, with third visas trending up.

Figure 2-1: Number of WHM granted by visa type, since 2017-18



Source: Department of Home Affairs (2021)

For a number of years, citizens of the United Kingdom have been the largest cohort of WHMs with well in excess of 35,000 visas granted per year to 2018-19. The number of WHMs from France, Germany, South Korea and Taiwan also exceeded 20,000 each year between 2013-14 and 2017-18 (see Table 2-2). It is notable that the overall annual number of visa recipients has declined over the period, plateauing at around 210,000 from 2016-17 to 2018-19. This preceded the marked 28.6% decline due to COVID-19 in 2019-20.

³ Section 2 provides an overview of the WHM program.

Table 2-2: Number of WHM visa granted by citizenship, since 2013-14

| | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 1 Jul - 31 Dec 2020 |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| UK | 45,208 | 44,730 | 42,175 | 40,382 | 37,752 | 35,948 | 24,754 | 3,714 |
| France | 25,734 | 23,375 | 21,527 | 22,361 | 23,217 | 24,413 | 17,665 | 1,894 |
| Germany | 26,819 | 26,327 | 25,980 | 25,704 | 23,867 | 21,152 | 13,934 | 925 |
| South Korea | 26,893 | 25,589 | 22,025 | 22,412 | 22,137 | 21,380 | 12,862 | 1,402 |
| Taiwan | 29,366 | 26,648 | 22,157 | 21,639 | 21,357 | 18,239 | 11,058 | 2,495 |
| Ireland | 11,996 | 7,793 | 6,743 | 8,182 | 9,104 | 11,077 | 8,878 | 1,888 |
| Italy | 16,045 | 14,138 | 11,591 | 11,111 | 10,500 | 10,797 | 8,219 | 1,334 |
| Japan | 10,579 | 11,481 | 12,304 | 11,061 | 10,987 | 11,933 | 8,089 | 907 |
| USA | 7,499 | 8,347 | 8,669 | 7,792 | 7,837 | 7,861 | 5,335 | 414 |
| China | | | 5,000 | 5,189 | 6,156 | 7,021 | 5,057 | 1,022 |
| Canada | 7,174 | 7,705 | 7,632 | 7,399 | 7,117 | 7,477 | 4,950 | 470 |
| Netherlands | 4,293 | 4,518 | 4,907 | 5,632 | 5,459 | 5,251 | 3,418 | 312 |
| Argentina | 500 | 500 | 700 | 716 | 1,582 | 1,969 | 3,257 | 646 |
| Chile | 1,004 | 1,388 | 1,500 | 1,563 | 2,450 | 3,052 | 2,486 | 508 |
| Spain | | 419 | 504 | 608 | 1,630 | 2,286 | 2,450 | 406 |
| Sweden | 5,464 | 4,995 | 4,628 | 3,889 | 3,332 | 2,808 | 1,909 | 113 |
| Indonesia | 437 | 288 | 776 | 1,051 | 1,562 | 1,585 | 1,766 | 601 |
| Belgium | 2,012 | 2,188 | 2,260 | 2,470 | 2,456 | 2,536 | 1,676 | 199 |
| Hong Kong | 11,667 | 9,720 | 6,309 | 4,201 | 2,617 | 2,167 | 1,522 | 249 |
| Estonia | 2,206 | 1,736 | 1,569 | 1,640 | 1,833 | 1,689 | 1,207 | 308 |
| Israel | | | 401 | 500 | 568 | 1,047 | 1,159 | 86 |
| Denmark | 1,672 | 1,576 | 1,664 | 1,609 | 1,518 | 1,410 | 1,015 | 44 |
| Vietnam | | | | 126 | 233 | 343 | 922 | 203 |
| Finland | 1,510 | 1,624 | 1,535 | 1,549 | 1,402 | 1,190 | 771 | 56 |
| Thailand | 471 | 466 | 500 | 454 | 593 | 679 | 745 | 148 |
| Portugal | | 82 | 200 | 207 | 225 | 246 | 500 | 51 |
| Other | 1,043 | 1,179 | 1,327 | 1,564 | 2,965 | 3,480 | 3,645 | 544 |
| Total | 239,592 | 226,812 | 214,583 | 211,011 | 210,456 | 209,036 | 149,249 | 20,939 |

Source: Department of Home Affairs (2021)

2.5 Impact of COVID-19 on WHM movements into and out of Australia

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared a pandemic in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).⁴ This followed a range of public health information, alerts and advice leading from the identification of cases of viral pneumonia of an unknown cause in Wuhan, China in late 2019.

A few days later on 18 March 2020, the advice level for Australians was raised for all destinations to 'Do not travel', and from 25 March in order to reduce the risk of returning travellers spreading the virus, Australian citizens and permanent residents were banned from leaving the country.⁵ This coincided with Australia closing its borders to foreign travellers. Australia commenced its nation-wide lock down from 23 March 2020. From 29 March Australians were asked to stay home for all but essential activities.

In April 2020 the Australian Government strongly advised all temporary visa holders who lost their jobs due to COVID-19 and who were unable to support themselves while in Australia to return home as quickly as possible (The Hon David Coleman MP, 2020). The subsequent decline in total number of WHMs was in the order of 78%, down from 149,249 in 2019-20 to 33,027 in 2020-21 (up to March 31, 2021) (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2021b).

⁴ <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/interactive-timeline#>

⁵ <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/news-and-updates/covid-19-travel-advice-level-changes>



Changes to the WHM program because of COVID-19 are summarised in Section 2.3.2. Much of this related to changes for visa holders already in Australia⁶.

2.6 Temporary changes due to the 2019/2020 bushfires and COVID-19

On 17 February 2020 further changes to the WHM program were implemented to assist communities to recover from recent bushfires. Paid or volunteer bushfire recovery work in a declared disaster area, carried out after 31 July 2019 was designated as 'specified work' towards eligibility for a second or third WHM visa (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020d).

In response to the unfolding COVID-19 crisis, the Australian Government announced that WHMs would be able to count critical COVID-19 work in the healthcare and medical sectors, undertaken anywhere in Australia after 31 January 2020, as specified work qualifying them to apply for a second or third WHM visa. The government also announced that former WHMs who transitioned to a COVID-19 Pandemic Event Visa to continue undertaking critical COVID-19 work in the healthcare and medical sectors would be allowed to resume the WHM pathway and to count their critical COVID-19 work as specified work towards a second or third WHM visa (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020d).

Recognising wider pressures exerted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government moved to provide the tourism and hospitality sector greater flexibility to meet workforce needs. In May 2021, it was announced that tourism and hospitality would be added to the list of COVID-19 critical sectors, whereby all WHMs employed in the sector would be allowed to stay for up to 12 months and to work longer than six months for one employer without requesting permission (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2021a; The Hon Alex Hawke MP, 2021). Further changes announced in June 2021 included WHM visa holders working in the tourism and hospitality sectors in Northern, remote and very remote areas of Australia able to count this as specified work, making them eligible for a second or third WHM visa (ibid.).

⁶ We note that current national data about unemployment rates, workforce shortages, skills deficits and job vacancies have been impacted by business and other closures resulting from the nation-wide lockdown and subsequent rolling lockdowns in the states and territories. Data about how WHMs are fitting into the broader Australian job market is therefore unavailable.

3 Study methodology

The Australian Industrial Transformation Institute (AITI) was engaged by the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) to examine WHMs perceptions of Australia as a destination to travel, work and study; provide information on the locations and occupations of WHMs; and provide insights into employer expectations of WHM visa holders with regard to their skills and experience, with an emphasis on the tourism and hospitality industry.

An online survey of WHMs was designed in collaboration with Austrade. It was designed to maximise response rates and minimise respondent burden with a focus on WHMs':

- Demographic profile
- Reasons for visit, length of stay
- Employment characteristics
- Labour market contribution of WHMs
- Geographic mobility
- Study
- Engagement with the WHM program.

The WHM survey was distributed in quarterly tranches to over 180,000 WHM visa holders whose entry visa expiry date occurred between 1 March 2019 and 29 February 2020.⁷

The WHM Employers Survey gathered information about employer experiences of WHMs and the WHM program. The survey was targeted to the agriculture, forestry and fishing ('agriculture') industry and the tourism and hospitality industry. Interviews of employers from the agriculture, and tourism and hospitality industries were subsequently conducted to gather contextual information. These were conducted to provide information about:

- Employer perceptions of the labour landscape
- Employer experiences with WHMs
- Future needs of employers.

The employer survey was undertaken between December 2020 and January 2021 and was completed by 169 employers, most of whom (93.3%) came from the target sectors of tourism and hospitality and agriculture, forestry and fishing. Twenty-one follow-up interviews were subsequently conducted in early 2021, with WHM employers stratified by sector and state and territory. This provided the opportunity to drill into and contextualise the experience of employers and to understand the impact of COVID-19 restrictions across 2020.

After each quantitative data collection period was closed, a complete electronic dataset was generated and downloaded to statistical software. On completion of all surveys, data was subject to thorough checking and a cleaning process, to assess and resolve potential data quality issues such as completeness of responses, validity of responses and consistency of responses. The results of these surveys and interview findings are presented in the following sections.

⁷ We note that surveyed WHMs visas had effectively expired before the Australian Government implemented strict COVID-19 border control measures. However, employers were interviewed early 2021, with their experience reflecting the impact of these closures.



4 WHM: Profile of respondents

A total of 21,315 WHMs participated in the 2020 survey, this represented 11.7% of WHM visa holders (the 'population') whose entry visa expired between March 2019 and February 2020. Nine in ten (89.1%) participants were on the 417 visa, compared with 90.0% of the population (see Table 4-1). In total, three quarters (75.1%) of participants were on their first visa, with this less likely for those on the 462 visa, where first visas accounted for 56.4% of the total.

Table 4-1: Distribution by WHM visa subclasses

| Visa Subclass | Respondents | | Population | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | N | % | N | % |
| 417 (Working Holiday) | 18,983 | 89.1% | 164,248 | 90.0% |
| First | 14,698 | 69.0% | 132,553 | 72.6% |
| Second | 4,285 | 20.1% | 31,695 | 7.7% |
| 462 (Work and Holiday) | 2,332 | 10.9% | 18,329 | 10.0% |
| First | 1,315 | 6.2% | 14,021 | 7.7% |
| Second | 1,017 | 4.8% | 4,308 | 2.4% |
| TOTAL | 21,315 | 100% | 182,5277 | 100.0% |

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

4.1 Reasons for visit

Respondents provided information about their principal reasons for coming to Australia. More than two-thirds (67.4%) indicated they wanted to travel around Australia, and almost three in five (58.8%) wanted to work in Australia (see Table 4-2). Australia was also viewed by more than one-third as a desirable place to come to improve English (40.7%) and as a safe place to visit (33.9%). One in twenty (4.8%) respondents reported a range of 'other' reasons, many of these mentioned a desire to experience Australian culture and to see the country and its flora and fauna, while others had chosen to undertake an internship in Australia.

Table 4-2: Principal reasons for WHMS coming to Australia

| Reasons | No. of responses | % |
|--|------------------|-------|
| I wanted to travel around Australia | 14,363 | 67.4% |
| I wanted to work in Australia | 12,527 | 58.8% |
| I wanted to improve my English | 8,667 | 40.7% |
| I felt that Australia is a safe place to visit | 7,223 | 33.9% |
| The beach and surf lifestyle appealed to me | 6,650 | 31.2% |
| It was recommended by friends or family | 5,605 | 26.3% |
| I wanted to visit friends or family | 3,494 | 16.4% |
| I was visiting other countries in the region | 2,286 | 10.7% |
| I wanted to study in Australia | 1,744 | 8.2% |
| I was influenced by advertisements for holidays or work in Australia | 1,323 | 6.2% |
| Other | 1,022 | 4.8% |
| Total | 21,315 | |

Note, percentages in the table were calculated by using the 'No. of respondents' divided by the total number (21,315) of WHMs surveyed. Because multiple responses were allowed, these figures sum to more than 100%. Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

4.2 Origin nations

The demographic makeup of the survey participants was broadly consistent with the ‘population’ of WHMs⁸ eligible for the survey. Where population data shows that WHMs were citizens from a total of 44 countries, the survey identified participants as citizens of 41 countries. Just over half (51.6%) of both survey respondents and the total WHM population were citizens of either the United Kingdom, Taiwan, Germany or France (see Table 4-3). Citizens of the Top 10 countries make up 84.5% of survey respondents and 84.6% of the total WHM population.⁹ Nineteen countries contributed fewer than 0.5% of respondents, these have been aggregated into the ‘Other’ category. Females make up 52.3% of the WHM population but just over three in five (61.5%) survey respondents. Five countries had more than 70% female respondents; Finland had the highest proportion (78.2%) of females, followed by Sweden, China and Japan, females from these countries also contributed more than three in five of their total WHM population. Italy provided the highest proportion of male respondents (52.4%), compared with 60.4% of their WHM population – the only country to contribute majority male respondents.

Table 4-3: Citizenship and sex of WHMs surveyed and total WHM population

| | Survey | | | | | | Population | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| | Male | | Female | | Total | % from country | Male | Female | % from country |
| | n | % | n | % | n | | % | % | % |
| United Kingdom | 1,360 | 39.0% | 2,124 | 61.0% | 3,484 | 16.4% | 52.2% | 47.8% | 17.9% |
| Taiwan | 983 | 37.9% | 1,608 | 62.1% | 2,591 | 12.2% | 42.4% | 57.6% | 10.0% |
| Germany | 909 | 36.9% | 1,555 | 63.1% | 2,464 | 11.6% | 44.9% | 55.1% | 11.4% |
| France | 1,041 | 43.1% | 1,377 | 56.9% | 2,418 | 11.4% | 55.0% | 45.0% | 12.3% |
| Italy | 870 | 52.4% | 791 | 47.6% | 1,661 | 7.8% | 60.4% | 39.6% | 5.3% |
| South Korea | 623 | 45.0% | 761 | 55.0% | 1,384 | 6.5% | 50.7% | 49.3% | 10.1% |
| Japan | 305 | 29.8% | 718 | 70.2% | 1,023 | 4.8% | 38.5% | 61.5% | 5.3% |
| USA | 303 | 29.7% | 716 | 70.3% | 1,019 | 4.8% | 40.0% | 60.0% | 3.8% |
| Canada | 316 | 31.0% | 702 | 69.0% | 1,018 | 4.8% | 41.0% | 59.0% | 3.6% |
| Ireland | 304 | 34.1% | 587 | 65.9% | 891 | 4.2% | 50.9% | 49.1% | 4.9% |
| Netherlands | 240 | 36.6% | 416 | 63.4% | 656 | 3.1% | 44.1% | 55.9% | 2.7% |
| Hong Kong | 126 | 33.3% | 252 | 66.7% | 378 | 1.8% | 41.5% | 58.5% | 1.2% |
| China | 86 | 27.7% | 225 | 72.3% | 311 | 1.5% | 27.1% | 72.9% | 2.1% |
| Belgium | 119 | 43.8% | 153 | 56.3% | 272 | 1.3% | 53.5% | 46.5% | 1.2% |
| Spain | 94 | 36.0% | 167 | 64.0% | 261 | 1.2% | 41.4% | 58.6% | 0.7% |
| Argentina | 83 | 34.7% | 156 | 65.3% | 239 | 1.1% | 39.7% | 60.3% | 0.6% |
| Sweden | 59 | 26.3% | 165 | 73.7% | 224 | 1.1% | 37.4% | 62.6% | 1.5% |
| Estonia | 88 | 46.1% | 103 | 53.9% | 191 | 0.9% | 58.0% | 42.0% | 0.8% |
| Chile | 61 | 42.4% | 83 | 57.6% | 144 | 0.7% | 47.4% | 52.6% | 0.8% |
| Indonesia | 62 | 45.6% | 74 | 54.4% | 136 | 0.6% | 48.9% | 51.1% | 0.6% |
| Denmark | 41 | 33.1% | 83 | 66.9% | 124 | 0.6% | 49.5% | 50.5% | 0.7% |
| Finland | 26 | 21.8% | 93 | 78.2% | 119 | 0.6% | 25.9% | 74.1% | 0.6% |
| Other | 92 | 31.7% | 198 | 68.3% | 290 | 1.4% | 39.0% | 60.9% | 1.8% |
| Total | 8,191 | 38.5% | 13,107 | 61.5% | 21,298 | 100.0% | 47.7% | 52.3% | 100.0% |

Note, Data from 41 countries is presented in table. Nineteen countries representing less than 0.5% are aggregated in the ‘Other’ category. Citizenship data was not available for 17 respondents.

Source: Austrade; WHM Survey, 2020.

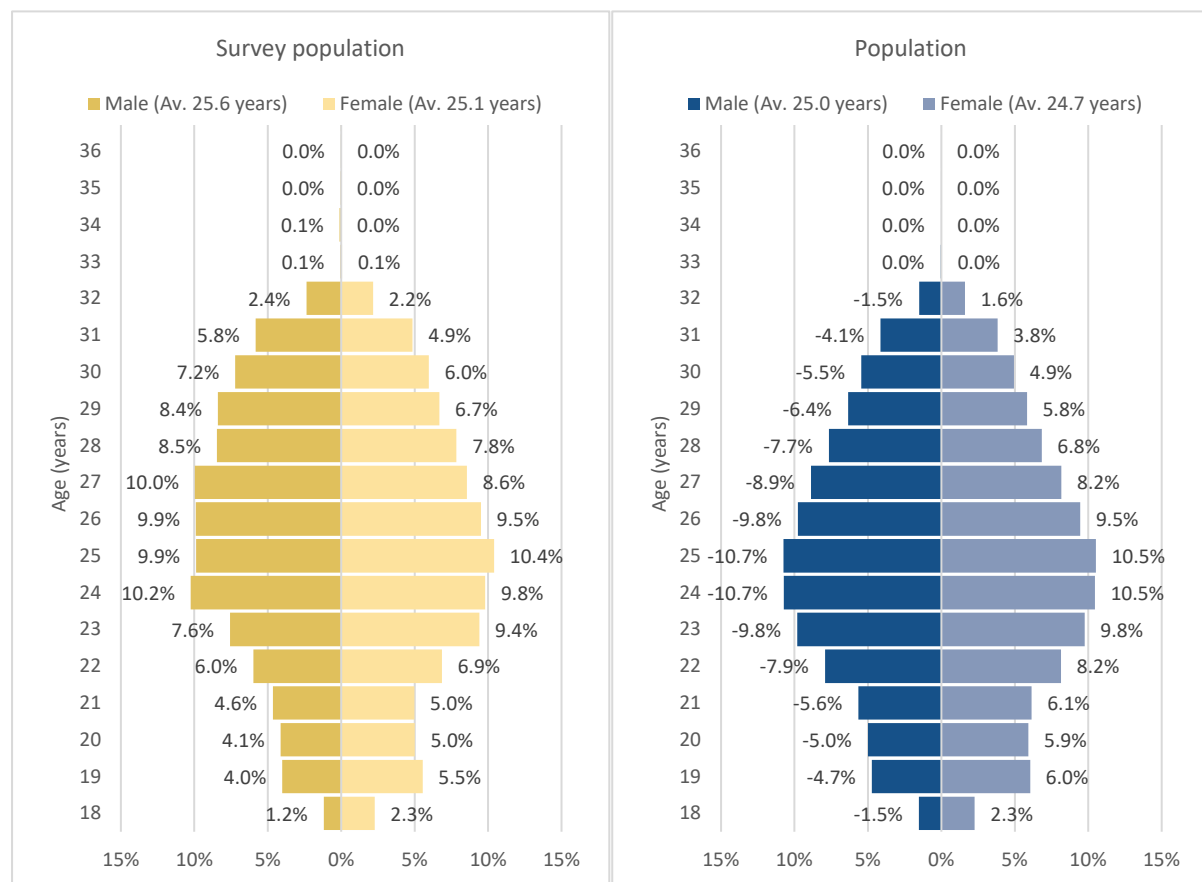
⁸ Austrade provided details of all eligible WHMs (‘population’) whose entry visa expiry date occurred between 1 March 2019 and 29 February 2020.



4.3 Age and sex

At entry to Australia, all WHMs were aged between 18 and 37 years. Male WHMs made up 38.5% of the total survey respondent cohort, which is under-representative of the 47.7% of the WHM population. Survey respondents were slightly younger than the WHM population. Male survey respondents were on average half a year older (25.6 years) than female survey respondents (25.1 years) which is a larger difference than observed in the WHM population between males (25.0) and females (24.7). The most populous age for male survey respondents (10.2%) was 24 years with most females (10.4%) aged 25 years, this was consistent for the WHM total population. For the distribution of sex by age for both survey respondents and the total population, see Figure 4-1.

Figure 4-1: Age distribution of WHM survey respondents & population, by sex

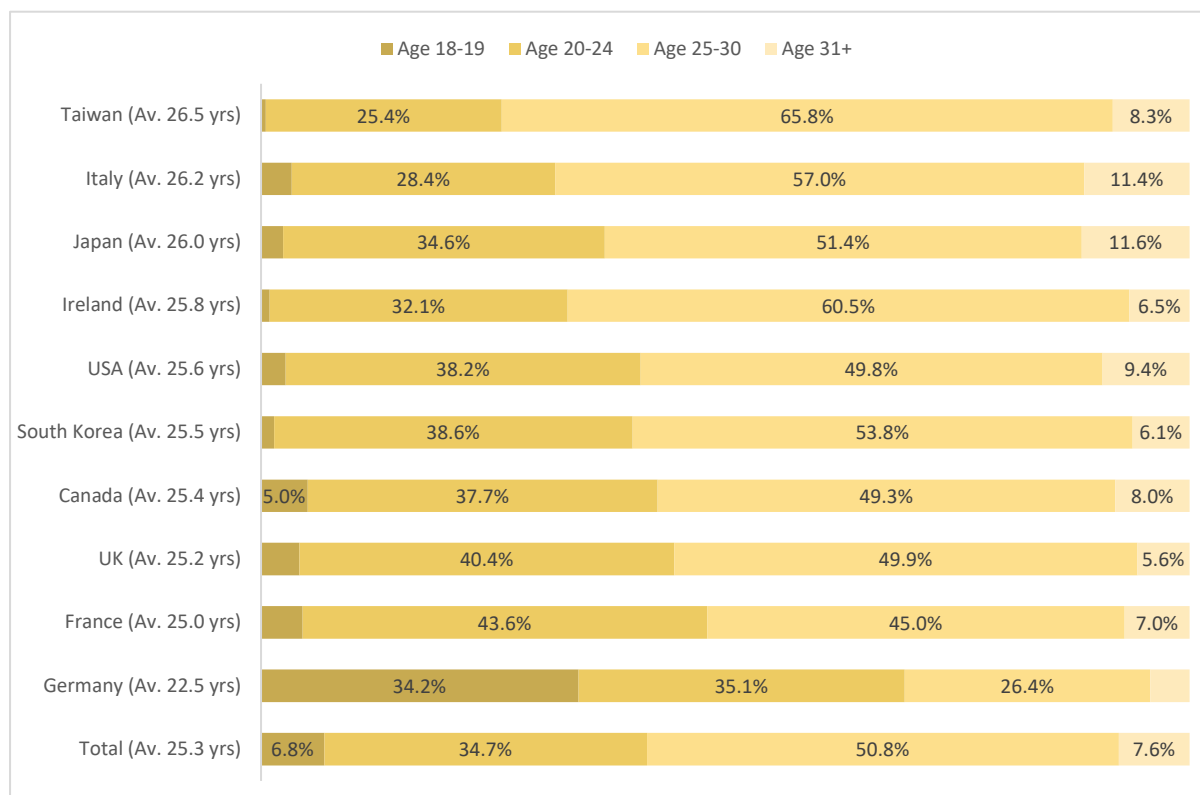


Source: Austrade; WHM Survey, 2020.

Just over half (50.8%) of all WHMs were aged 25 to 30 years, while approximately one in 14 were aged 18 to 19 years (6.8%) or 31 years or older (7.6%; see Figure 4-2). Taiwan had the oldest cohort of WHMs with three quarters (74.1%) aged 25 or over. This is in contrast to German WHMs where more than one-third (34.2%) were aged 18 or 19 years (with a total of 69.3% aged 24 or younger) and French WHMs, almost half of whom (48.0%) were 24 or younger.

⁹ Top 10 countries discussed in this report present the countries with the most respondents to the particular question. These usually, but not always reflect those presented in Table 4-3.

Figure 4-2: Age characteristics of WHMs, by Top 10 counties



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the highest number of WHMs. Data from other countries and missing responses are not presented. 'Total' includes responses from all countries. 'Av' is average. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

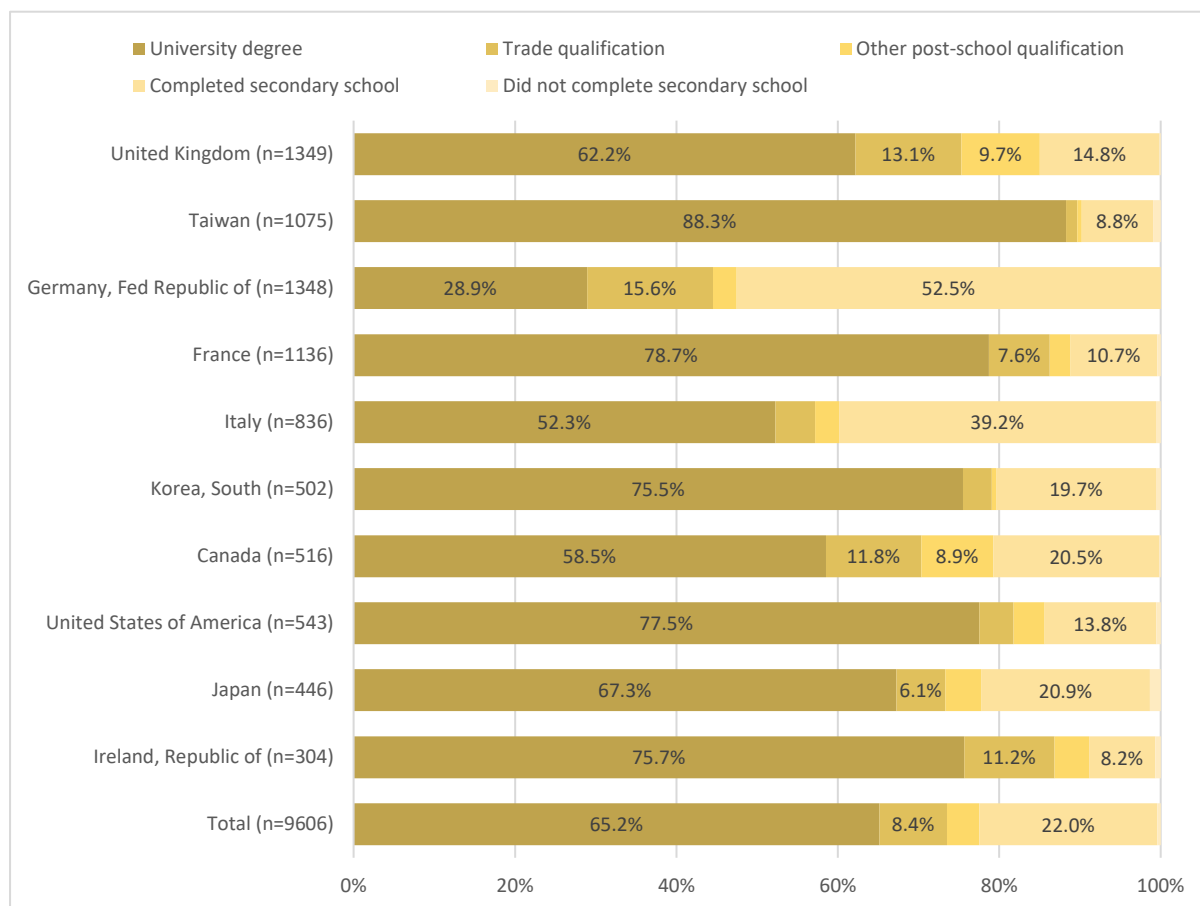
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

4.4 Educational attainment

Educational attainment of WHM by country of citizenship is presented in Figure 4-3. A small proportion (1.7%) chose not to disclose their level of education, with this most common for those from Taiwan (4.4%) and Japan (3.3%). The proportion of WHMs holding university degrees or higher has increased by more than ten percentage points from just over one half (54%) reported in Tan et al. (2009) to almost two-thirds (65.2%) here. Of the Top 10 countries, more than three quarters of respondents from Taiwan (88.3%), France (78.7%), the United States (77.5%), Ireland (75.7%) and South Korea (75.5%) held University degrees. German WHMs were the most youthful cohort, and had the highest proportion (52.5%) of respondents with only a secondary school qualification.



Figure 4-3: Highest completed educational attainment of WHMs, by Top 10 countries



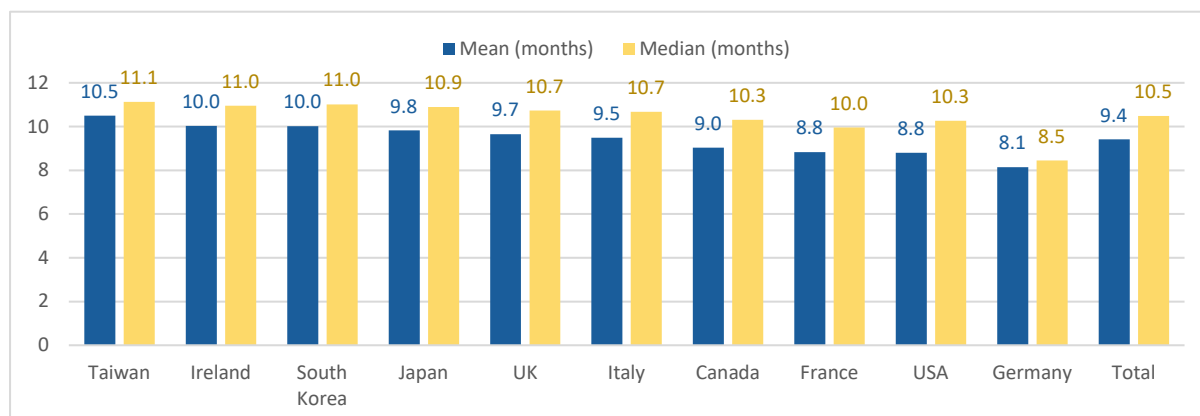
Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the highest number of WHMs. Data from other countries and missing responses are not presented. 'Total' includes valid responses from all respondents (n=9,606). Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

4.5 Duration of stay in Australia

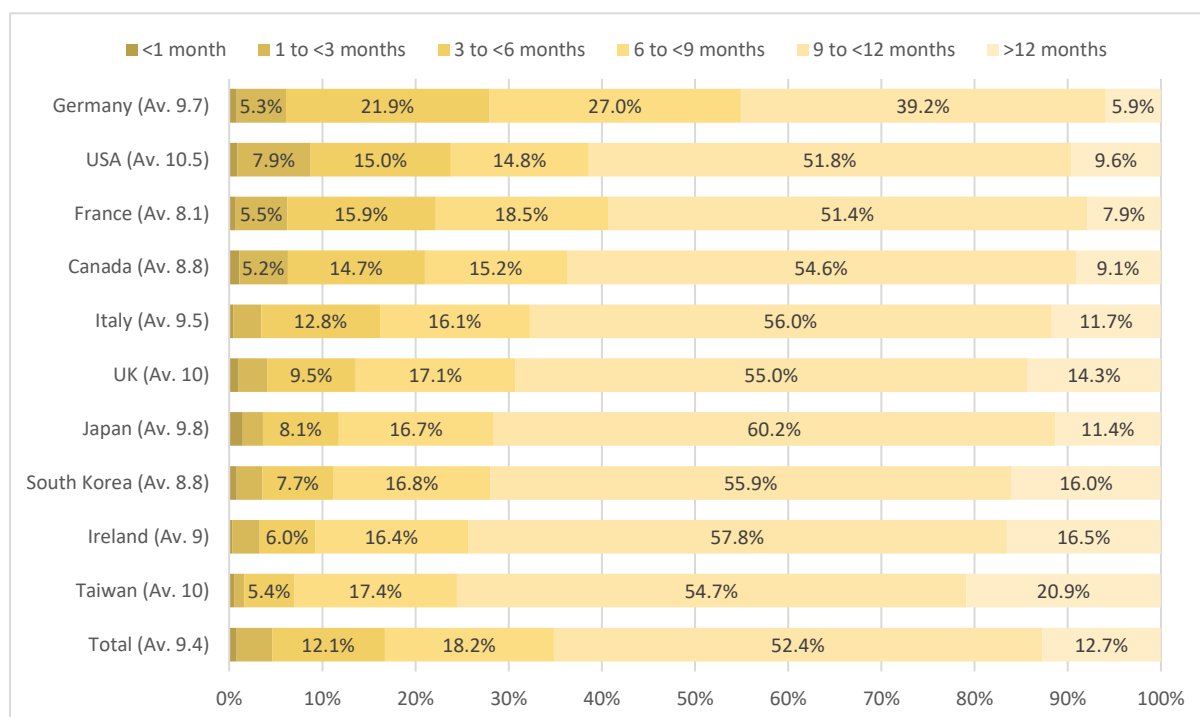
WHMs stayed an average of 9.4 months in Australia; with the median stay slightly longer (see Figure 4-4). Of the Top 10 countries, WHMs from Taiwan stayed the longest (average 10.5 months) with one fifth on a subsequent visa and extending their stay beyond 12 months (see Figure 4-5). The young German cohort spent the fewest months on average in Australia (8.1 months) and were the only citizen group with more than half staying for fewer than nine months.

Figure 4-4: Average (mean and median) duration (months) of stay in Australia, by Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the highest number of WHMs. Data from other countries and missing responses are not presented. 'Total' includes valid responses from all respondents. Data was provided by 21,296 respondents. Labels are not shown when less than 5%. Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 4-5: Duration (months) of stay in Australia, by Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the highest number of WHMs. Data from other countries and missing responses are not presented. Data was provided by 21,296 respondents. Labels are not shown when less than 5%. Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

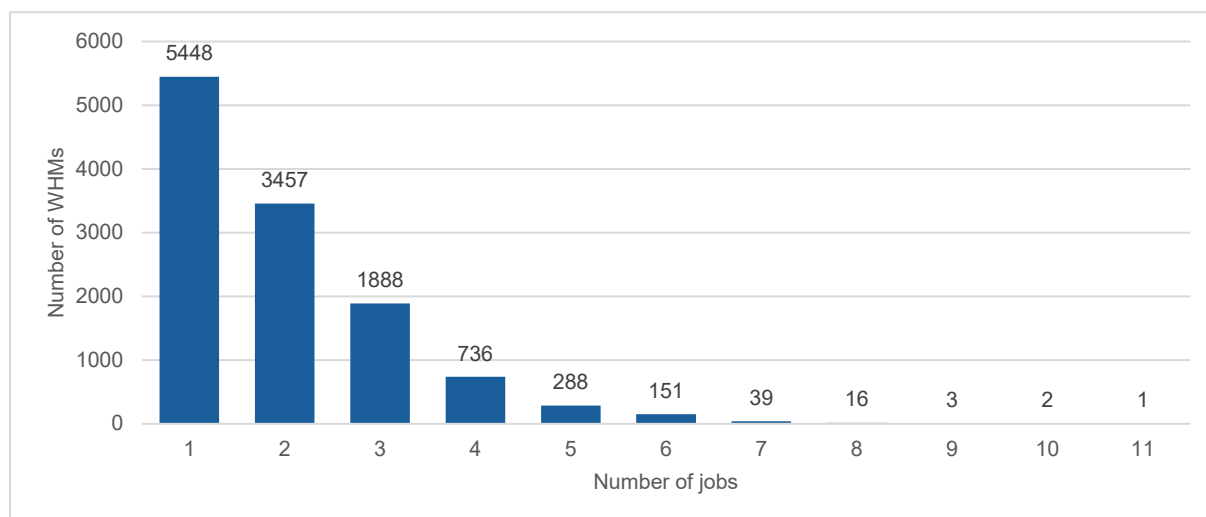


5 WHM: Employment, wages and spending

5.1 Employment in Australia

Almost three in five (n=12,029, 58.6%)¹⁰ WHMs reported spending time working in Australia.¹¹ They worked an average of two jobs each. Of those who worked, 45.3% worked in one job, 28.7% in two jobs and 15.7% in three jobs (see Figure 5-1). Very few (n=22) WHMs reported working in eight or more jobs.

Figure 5-1: Number of WHMs worked in Australia by number of jobs



Note, 12,029 respondents reported working in one or more jobs during their stay.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

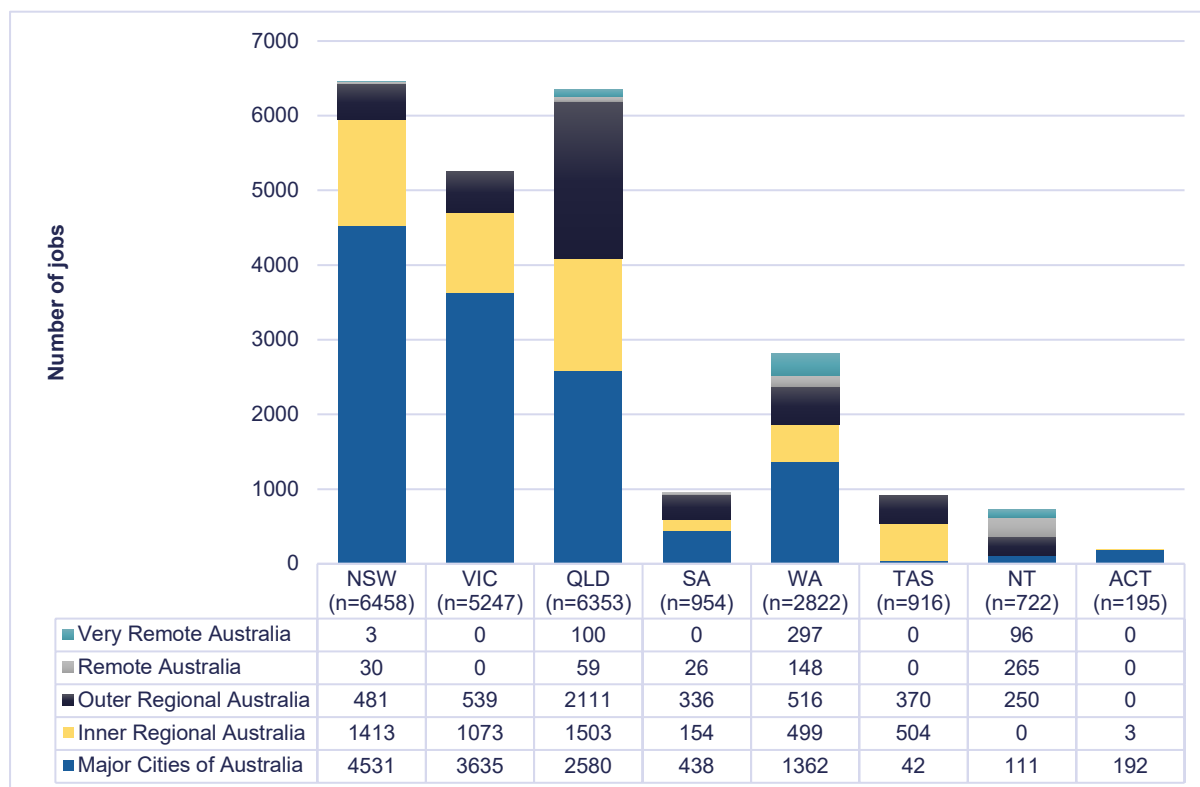
The majority of jobs were undertaken in Queensland (26.8%) and New South Wales (27.3%), with fewer in Victoria (22.2%, see Figure 5-2). One-eighth were undertaken in Western Australia (11.9%), 4.0% in South Australia, 3.9% in Tasmania, 3.1% in the Northern Territory and 0.8% in the Australian Capital Territory and other Territories.¹²

¹⁰ This figure should not be interpreted as the employment rate of WHMs. It is the proportion of all survey participants who responded that they spent time working in Australia. An individual who did not answer this question cannot be differentiated from an individual who did not work while in Australia. In this case, valid data was received from 12,029 WHMs and was included in this analysis. Data may be missing for a number of reasons (i.e. non-working, did not recall, skipped question, partial response, did not complete survey, etc)

¹¹ Additional modelling of the decision to take employment whilst in Australia is shown in Appendix A.

¹² 'Australian Capital Territory and other Territories' will be referred as Australian Capital Territory or ACT for brevity as there were very few responses related to Other Territories.

Figure 5-2: Number of jobs by state



Note, data was available for 23,667 jobs by location.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

5.1.1 Jobs and industries of employment in Australia

Sixty-six ANZSCO¹³ (ABS, 2019) occupations were identified by WHMs working in Australian jobs. Table 5-1 presents the 34 occupations reported by more than 100 WHMs. The most common occupation was *Crop farm worker (e.g. fruit, vegetable, nut picker, farm hand)* a job undertaken by more than one in five (21.8%) WHMs. *Waiter* (8.5%) and then *Bar attendant or barista* (6.3%) were the second and third most common jobs. *Other farm, forestry and garden workers* (5.7%) was the fourth most common occupation, increasing general agricultural workers to more than one quarter of total jobs (27.5%). These results align closely with those reported by Tan et al. (2009).

¹³ Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations.



Table 5-1: Jobs of WHMs in Australia

| Occupation | Total | % |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Total | 23,395 | 100.0% |
| Crop farm worker (e.g. fruit, vegetable, nut picker, farm hand) | 5,091 | 21.8% |
| Waiter | 1,995 | 8.5% |
| Bar attendant or barista | 1,481 | 6.3% |
| Other farm, forestry and garden workers | 1,332 | 5.7% |
| Other hospitality, tourism & sport | 1,214 | 5.2% |
| Hand packer | 1,080 | 4.6% |
| Nanny or au pair | 938 | 4.0% |
| Meat, chicken and fish process worker | 804 | 3.4% |
| Building labourer | 725 | 3.1% |
| Kitchen hand | 577 | 2.5% |
| Other professional | 547 | 2.3% |
| Accommodation & hospitality manager (café, restaurant, hotel motel, camping) | 521 | 2.2% |
| Chef | 472 | 2.0% |
| Other sales and marketing | 453 | 1.9% |
| Other agriculture & transport | 447 | 1.9% |
| Sales assistant | 420 | 1.8% |
| Construction and mining labourers | 413 | 1.8% |
| Other admin & office | 382 | 1.6% |
| Cleaner - commercial | 328 | 1.4% |
| Cleaner - home, domestic | 294 | 1.3% |
| Plant and machinery operator | 274 | 1.2% |
| Food trades cook (e.g. restaurant, café) | 230 | 1.0% |
| Sales representative | 226 | 1.0% |
| Gardener | 194 | 0.8% |
| Other cleaning and gardening | 190 | 0.8% |
| Clerical and administration - other | 179 | 0.8% |
| Other health and aged care | 176 | 0.8% |
| Fast food cook | 143 | 0.6% |
| Advertising and marketing (market research) | 143 | 0.6% |
| Registered Nurse - Other | 142 | 0.6% |
| Other education | 141 | 0.6% |
| Tourism or travel adviser | 138 | 0.6% |
| Receptionist | 124 | 0.5% |
| Forestry and logging workers | 117 | 0.5% |
| Other | 1464 | 6.3% |

Note, Data from 34 ANZSCO (ABS, 2019) occupations is presented in the table. Thirty-two occupations are aggregated in the 'Other' category. Data was provided by 12,029 respondents for 23,395 jobs.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

The proportion of people engaged in different jobs varied substantially by state and territory (see Table 5-2). For example, 59.4% of Tasmania jobs were for *Crop farm workers*, compared with a third (32.8%) of Queensland jobs and three in ten (29.2%) from South Australia. A total of three in ten (30.1%) Northern Territory jobs were in the hospitality jobs of *bar attendants or baristas, other hospitality, tourism and sport* or *waiters* – compared with 22.8% in Victoria and 21.8% in New South Wales. One in five (20.7%) WHM jobs in the Australian Capital Territory were as a *nanny or au pair* – more than four times higher than any other state or territory.

Table 5-2: Occupations by state, Top 10 occupations

| | NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | ACT | Total |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Crop farm worker | 12.1% | 14.1% | 32.8% | 29.2% | 21.8% | 59.4% | 11.5% | 3.2% | 21.8% |
| Waiter | 10.1% | 10.2% | 7.7% | 3.9% | 7.7% | 2.8% | 8.1% | 6.3% | 8.5% |
| Bar attendant or barista | 6.1% | 7.8% | 5.7% | 3.2% | 6.8% | 2.0% | 11.6% | 3.6% | 6.3% |
| Other farm, forestry, garden worker | 4.8% | 5.3% | 5.9% | 9.6% | 6.5% | 6.7% | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.7% |
| Other hospitality, tourism & sport | 5.6% | 4.9% | 5.5% | 3.9% | 4.2% | 2.3% | 10.4% | 6.3% | 5.2% |
| Hand packer | 3.2% | 4.9% | 6.1% | 6.2% | 3.6% | 6.8% | 1.8% | 0.9% | 4.6% |
| Nanny or aupair | 4.7% | 4.1% | 3.0% | 3.5% | 4.8% | 0.9% | 2.5% | 20.7% | 4.0% |
| Meat, chicken, fish process worker | 4.1% | 3.7% | 3.1% | 3.7% | 3.8% | 1.7% | 0.8% | 1.8% | 3.4% |
| Building labourer | 3.9% | 3.3% | 1.9% | 4.4% | 3.4% | 1.1% | 4.4% | 4.1% | 3.1% |
| Kitchen hand | 2.1% | 2.3% | 2.7% | 1.3% | 3.5% | 1.0% | 4.4% | 0.9% | 2.5% |
| Total (n) | 6,266 | 5,107 | 6,325 | 941 | 2,861 | 916 | 757 | 222 | 23,395 |

Note, Data from 10 ANZSCO (ABS, 2019) occupations representing 15,237 (65.1%) jobs is presented in the table.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Two in five (39.9%) WHM jobs in Australia were in the industry group¹⁴ agriculture and transport category, with this industry making up more than half of WHM jobs in Tasmania (79.7%), South Australia (60.0%) and Queensland (50.9%; see Table 5-3). Three in ten jobs (29.6%) were in the hospitality, tourism and sport industry, peaking with nearly half of Northern Territory (46.6%) WHMs, and almost one third of New South Wales and Victorian WHM jobs. More than one in ten jobs in the Australian Capital Territory (12.4%), Northern Territory (11.0%), New South Wales (10.3%) and Western Australia (10.2%) were in construction and mining. Approaching one in ten jobs in New South Wales (9.6%) were office, admin or IT jobs.

Table 5-3: Industry group by state

| | NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | ACT | Total |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Agriculture & transport | 27.4% | 32.6% | 50.9% | 60.0% | 41.9% | 79.7% | 27.2% | 14.2% | 39.9% |
| Hospitality, tourism & sport | 31.5% | 31.5% | 29.1% | 17.1% | 28.8% | 11.1% | 46.6% | 25.8% | 29.6% |
| Construction and mining | 10.3% | 7.7% | 4.5% | 8.7% | 10.2% | 2.9% | 11.0% | 12.4% | 7.9% |
| Sales and marketing | 8.8% | 7.3% | 3.4% | 4.0% | 3.4% | 1.5% | 2.7% | 10.2% | 5.7% |
| Office, admin & IT | 9.6% | 8.4% | 2.3% | 2.1% | 2.6% | 0.2% | 2.1% | 4.9% | 5.6% |
| Education | 6.3% | 6.4% | 3.8% | 4.4% | 5.9% | 1.0% | 3.0% | 22.2% | 5.4% |
| Cleaning and gardening | 3.9% | 3.8% | 5.0% | 2.5% | 5.1% | 3.3% | 6.0% | 8.0% | 4.3% |
| Health and aged care | 2.2% | 2.3% | 1.1% | 1.1% | 2.1% | 0.3% | 1.4% | 2.2% | 1.8% |

Industry groups are presented for 23,395 jobs.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

¹⁴ Respondents were asked to identify their ANZSCO occupation from a modified industry grouping. The ANZSCO was not used due to difficulties in apportioning jobs (e.g. tourism) to a specific sector.



5.1.2 Methods used to find jobs

Respondents regularly reported multiple approaches for job seeking. Almost one half (48.6%) indicated they personally approached employers to find work (see Table 5-4). Almost two in five (38.9%) reported looking for work through online or newspaper advertisements and/or social media¹⁵ (37.2%) with just over half of these indicating they had sought jobs using both methods. Approximately one-third (36.2%) were assisted by other travellers with slightly fewer receiving input from family and friends (29.4%). Approximately half of those receiving help from family and friends had also received help from other travellers. Most of those who reported 'other' indicated that they had not sought work in Australia.

Respondents reported their job-seeking methods were successful more than half the time. The most successful approach involved a previous employer helping the WHM to find their next position, when used this was successful for nine in ten persons (89.3%) – however only a small proportion of all WHMs used this approach (9.2%). While the number using the methods varied, help from family and friends, a personal approach to employers and labour hire agencies were successful around two-thirds of the time. Two in five WHMs reported looking for work through online or newspaper advertisements, with a similar number using social media to find a job – approximately half of these approaches led to work. Almost all WHM jobs were sourced after arriving in Australia. While personal connections and introductions tended to have a higher success rate, it is fair to say WHM job prospects were good even without these.

Table 5-4: Job-seeking methods and their success

| | How looked for work | | This led to a job | |
|--|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | n | % of total | n | % of method |
| WHM approached the employer | 10,367 | 48.6% | 6,849 | 66.1% |
| Advertisement (online/ newspaper) | 8,290 | 38.9% | 4,492 | 54.2% |
| Social media | 7,936 | 37.2% | 3,997 | 50.4% |
| Other travellers helped or made suggestions | 7,707 | 36.2% | 4,311 | 55.9% |
| Family or friends helped | 6,277 | 29.4% | 4,335 | 69.1% |
| Used an employment/ labour hire agency | 6,244 | 29.3% | 4,037 | 64.7% |
| It was arranged before coming to Australia | 2,839 | 13.3% | 2,265 | 79.8% |
| A previous employer helped WHM find next job | 1,966 | 9.2% | 1,756 | 89.3% |
| Total | 21,315 | 100.0% | | |

Note, multiple responses were allowed, these figures sum to more than 100%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

5.2 Wages

5.2.1 Hourly rate of pay

Fewer than one in ten (8.6%) jobs paid up to \$15 per hour; with a further 19.8% of jobs paying between \$15 and \$20 per hour (see Table 5-5). Two in five (43.5%) jobs paid between \$20 and \$25 per hour. Only 1.4% of jobs paid more than \$40 per hour. A small proportion (2.2%) of jobs were reportedly undertaken for no pay. Sales representatives, market research and nanny or au pairs were the jobs most likely to fall into these categories, although responses indicating \$0 hourly rates of pay were present across almost all jobs. We note that some jobs (e.g. nannies, hospitality, etc) may involve a salary package that includes accommodation, meals and travel. It

¹⁵ It is noteworthy that social media was in its relative infancy when Tan et al. (2009) conducted their WHM program evaluation and was not identified as a job-finding method

is not known how many jobs fall into this category, but it is expected that this accounts for some jobs with a low hourly rate.

Table 5-5: Hourly rate of pay

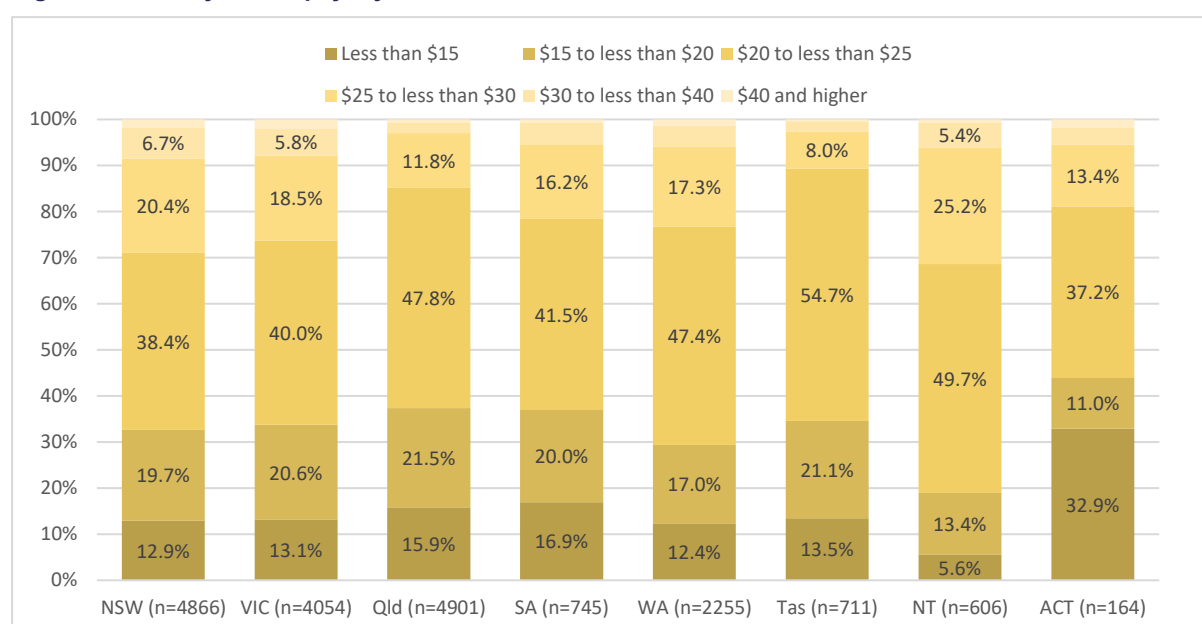
| | No. of jobs | % of jobs |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| \$0 | 410 | 2.2% |
| More than \$0 and less than \$5 | 191 | 1.0% |
| \$5 to less than \$10 | 970 | 5.3% |
| \$10 to less than \$15 | 956 | 5.2% |
| \$15 to less than \$20 | 3,630 | 19.8% |
| \$20 to less than \$25 | 7,961 | 43.5% |
| \$25 to less than \$30 | 3,065 | 16.7% |
| \$30 to less than \$35 | 562 | 3.1% |
| \$35 to less than \$40 | 304 | 1.7% |
| \$40 to less than \$45 | 181 | 1.0% |
| \$50 and higher | 72 | 0.4% |
| Total | 18,302 | 100.0% |

Note, valid data was provided for a total of 18,302 jobs, data was missing for 1,296 jobs.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Three in five (60.2%) Australian WHM jobs paid between \$20 and \$30 per hour (see Figure 5-3). Payment in this range peaked in Northern Territory, where 74.9% were paid in this range. At the other end of the spectrum, only 50.6% of jobs in the Australian Capital Territory were paid at this level. We note that one in three (32.9%) WHMs working in the Australian Capital Territory reported receiving less than \$15 per hour (including 4.9% who reported \$0 per hour), with this likely to be related to the high number of nannies and au pairs in this territory and the difficulty of identifying an hourly pay rate for this type of work.

Figure 5-3: Hourly rate of pay, by state



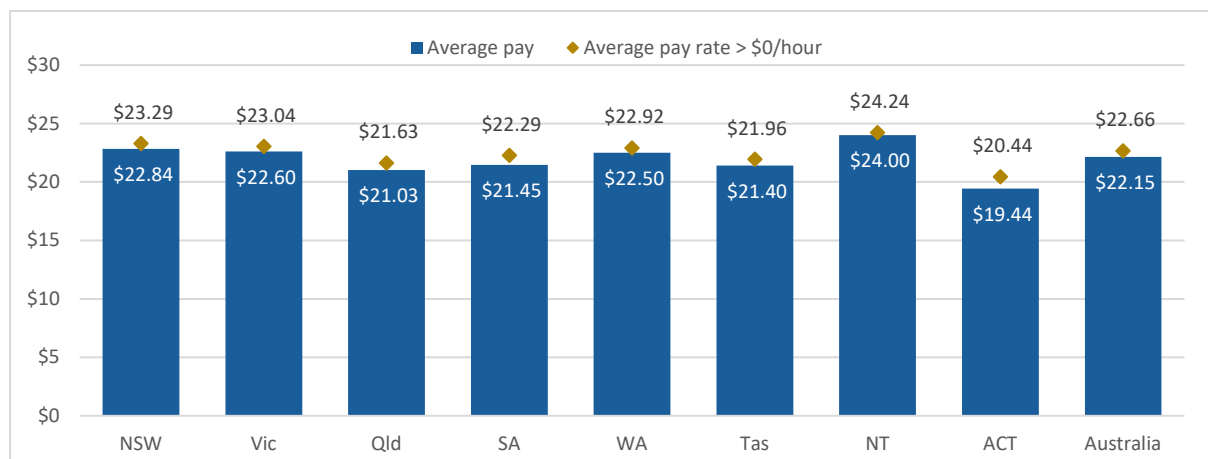
Note, valid data was provided for a total of 18,302 jobs, data was missing for 1,296 jobs. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.



The Australian Fair Work Commission determines both the minimum wages associated with industry groups and occupations, and the national minimum wage (which applies to those not covered by another award). These are updated annually. At 1 July 2020, the national minimum wage was \$19.84 per hour (\$753.80 per week for 38 hours).¹⁶ The average hourly rate for WHM jobs in Australia in 2019-2020 was \$22.15 per hour, rising to \$22.66 when excluding those who reported receiving \$0 per hour (see Figure 5-4). Hourly rates of pay were highest in the Northern Territory, and lowest in the Australian Capital Territory.

Figure 5-4: Average hourly rate of pay, by state.

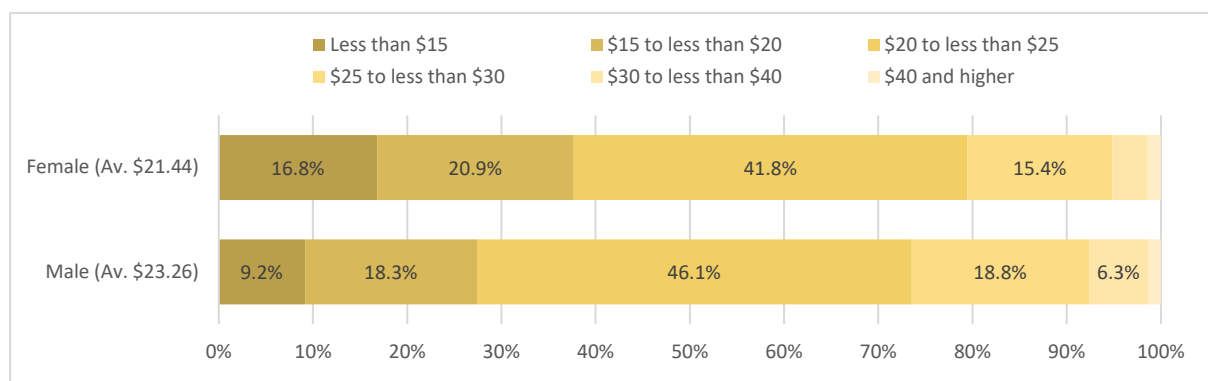


Note, 'Average pay' data accounts for 19,598 jobs. 'Average pay rate > \$0/hour' data excludes persons reporting \$0/hour pay rates and accounts for 19,188 jobs.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Females were almost twice as likely as males to receive an hourly pay rate of less than \$15 per hour (see Figure 5-5). Correspondingly, males were more likely to receive more than \$20 per hour. This is reflected in males reporting a higher average hourly pay rate of \$23.26, almost two dollars more per hour than females (\$21.44).

Figure 5-5: Hourly rate of pay for WHMs, by sex



Note, males reported 7,200 jobs; females reported 11,102 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

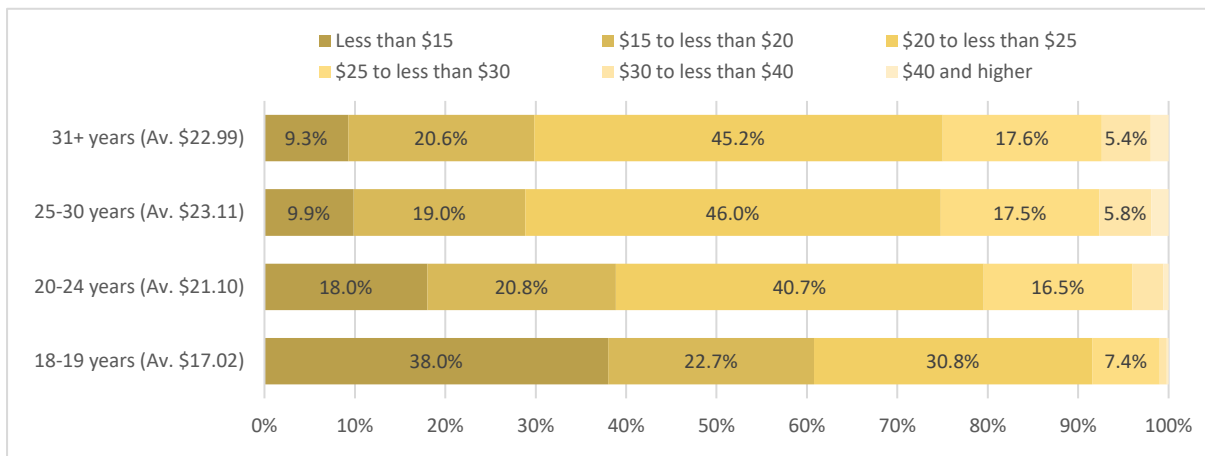
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

The youngest WHM workers (aged 18-19 years) received less pay per hour than the older cohorts, with more than a third (38.0%) paid less than \$15 per hour and an average of \$17.02

¹⁶ <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/minimum-wages>

(see Figure 5-6). The youngest cohort were also the least likely to provide a response regarding their amount of pay.

Figure 5-6: Hourly rate of pay for WHMs, by age group



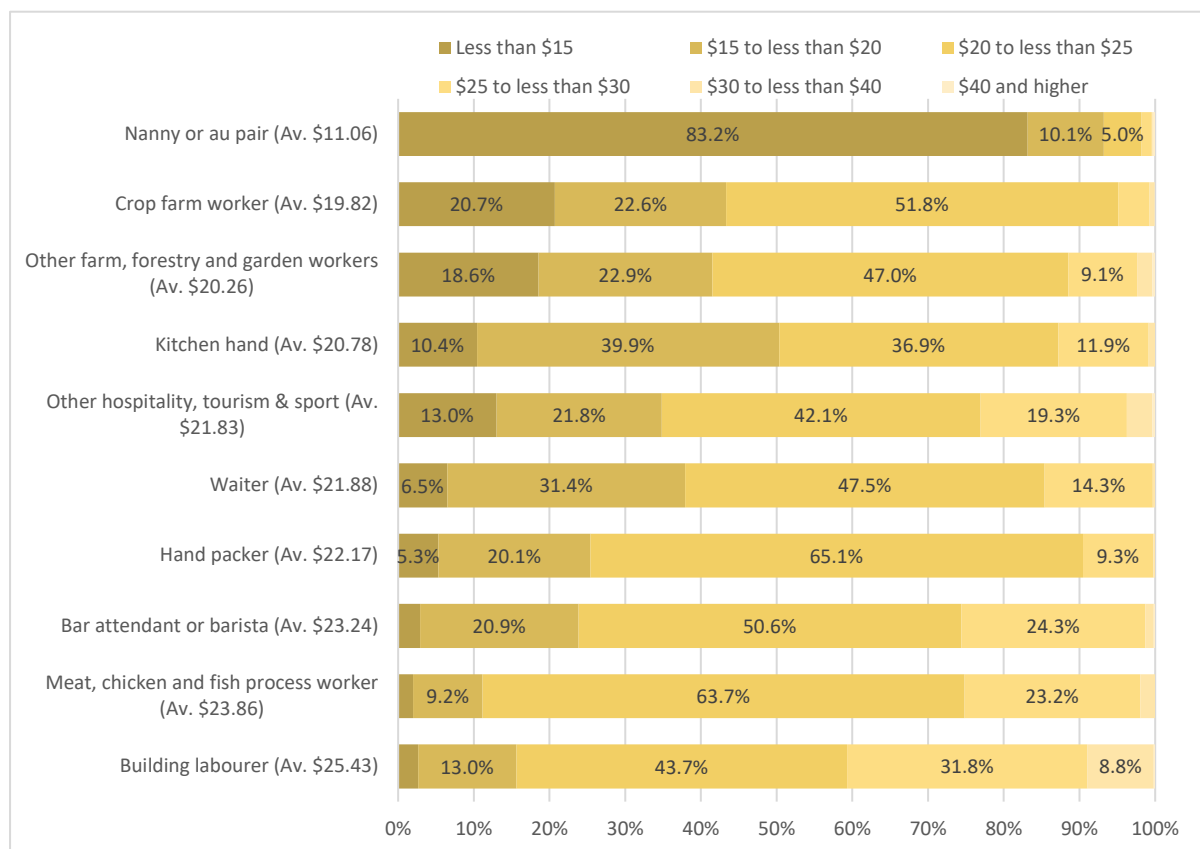
Note, Age 18-19 years reported 1,007 jobs; Age 20-24 reported 5,566 jobs; Age 25-30 reported 9,852 jobs; Age 31+ reported 1,532 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

The ten most common jobs by average pay rate are shown in Figure 5-7. Nannies and au pairs were the seventh most common occupation for WHMs. As previously mentioned, nannies and au pairs were most likely to indicate a low or \$0 hourly rate of pay with 83.2% receiving less than \$15 per hour and an overall average of \$11.06. The highest number of WHMs jobs were crop farm workers who received an average of \$19.82 per hour. Just under one in ten (8.9%) building labourers were paid more than \$30 per hour; those working in this job were best paid (\$25.43 per hour) amongst the most common jobs.



Figure 5-7: Hourly rate of pay for Top 10 WHM jobs

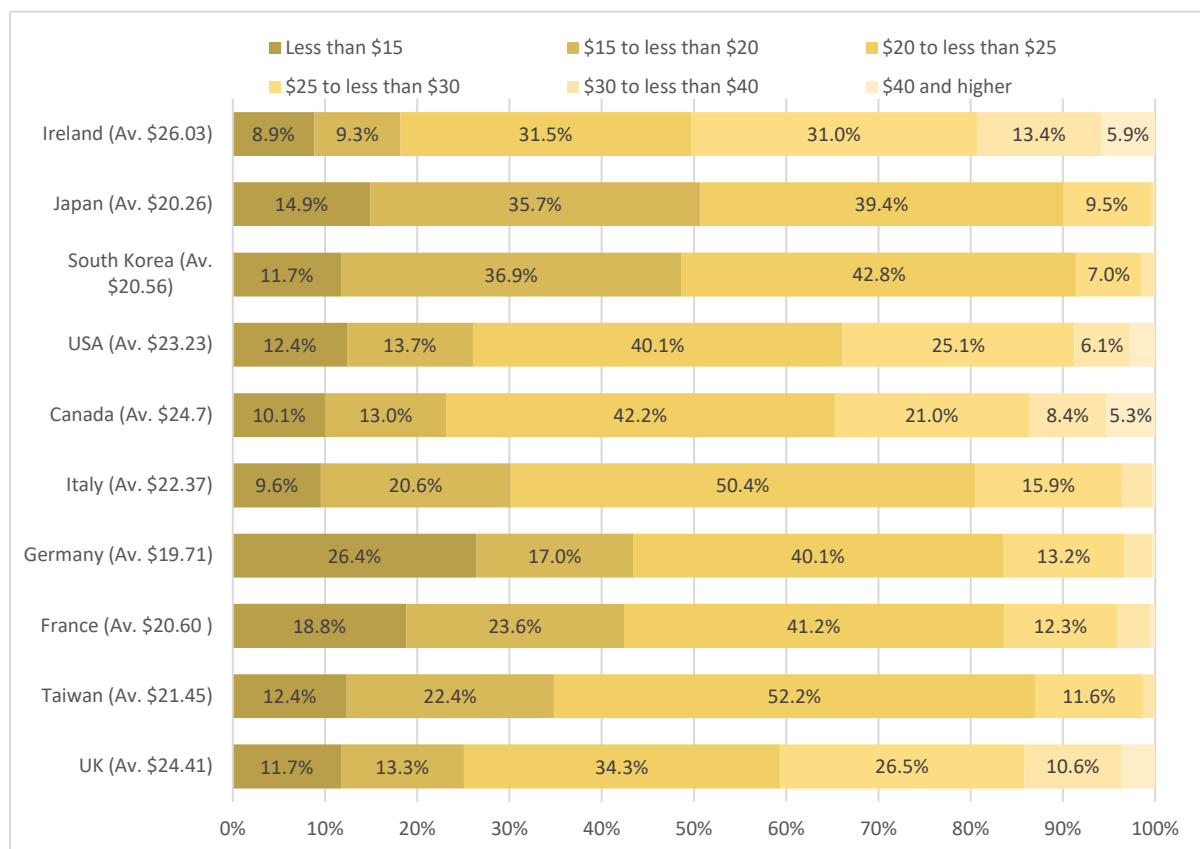


Note, for this purpose Top 10 jobs are those reported most commonly and account for 11,729 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Accounting for the highest number of young workers, German workers were the lowest paid (\$19.71 per hour on average) of all WHM countries (except for Poland whose citizens only reported 19 jobs) (see Figure 5-8). Almost one in five (19.3%) Irish WHMs received more than \$30 per hour with an overall average of \$26.03 per hour. The hourly rate is most likely due to the type of job (rather than nationality) as almost half of jobs for German WHMs were in low-paying jobs (crop farm workers, nannies or au pairs, or as other farm workers) while fewer than one quarter of Irish WHMs reported being engaged in these jobs.

Figure 5-8: Hourly rate of pay for Top 10 WHM countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the most listed jobs, and account for 14,849 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

5.2.2 Hours per week

When they had a job, most WHMs were working the equivalent of full-time, indicating the value of this workforce to employers in Australia. Almost half (46.8%) of the jobs reported by WHMs involved between 30 to 40 hours per week, with one in five (20.1%) jobs exceeding 40 hours per week (see Table 5-6). A relatively small proportion of WHM jobs (6.2%) were for fewer than ten hours per week – with cleaners, teachers and educational support workers most likely to be working limited hours. WHM jobs in the Northern Territory (29.6%) and Western Australia (25.1%) were most likely to involve more than 40 hours per week (see Figure 5-9) while just under one in ten (9.4%) Tasmanian jobs were for ten or fewer hours. On average WHMs reported jobs where they worked 35.8 hours per week. Hours worked per week ranged from a high of 39.0 hours highest in the Northern Territory down to 34.6 hours in the Australian Capital Territory.¹⁷

¹⁷ See Appendix A for a statistical analysis of the differences in hours worked across cohorts.



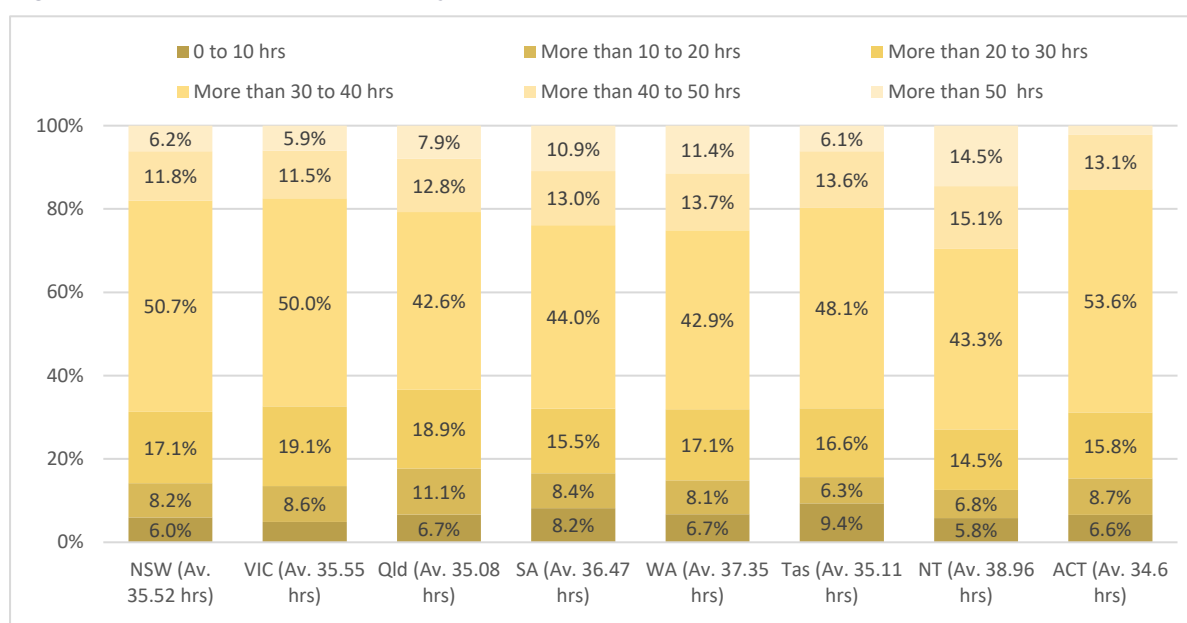
Table 5-6: Hours worked per week

| | No. of jobs | % of jobs |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 0 to 10 hours | 1,210 | 6.3% |
| More than 10 to 20 hours | 1,731 | 8.9% |
| More than 20 to 30 hours | 3,452 | 17.8% |
| More than 30 to 40 hours | 9,053 | 46.8% |
| More than 40 to 50 hours | 2,415 | 12.5% |
| More than 50 to 60 hours | 929 | 4.8% |
| More than 60 hours | 553 | 2.9% |
| Total | 19,343 | 100.0% |

Note, data was provided for a total of 19,343 jobs. Missing data not included.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 5-9: Hours worked per week, by state

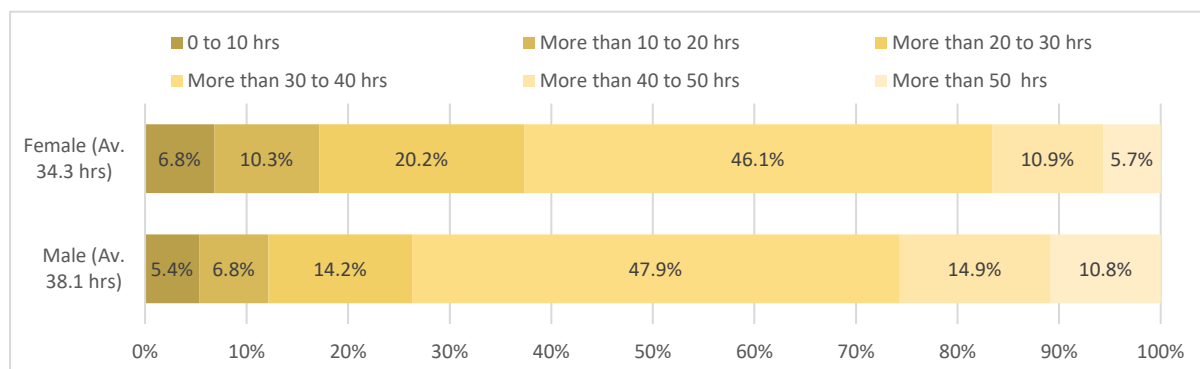


Note, data was provided for a total of 19,343 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Males (10.8%) were twice as likely as females (5.7%) to work more than 50 hours per week (see Figure 5-10). Jobs held by males (14.9%) were also more likely than those held by females (10.9%) to require between 40 and 50 hours. This is reflected in jobs reported by males requiring an average of 38.1 hours per week and jobs for females being 34.3 hours per week. Jobs for the youngest cohort of WHM workers involved the fewest work hours per week as 43.0% of WHMs aged 18-19 years worked 30 hours or less, compared with a third of the older WHM cohorts (see Figure 5-11).

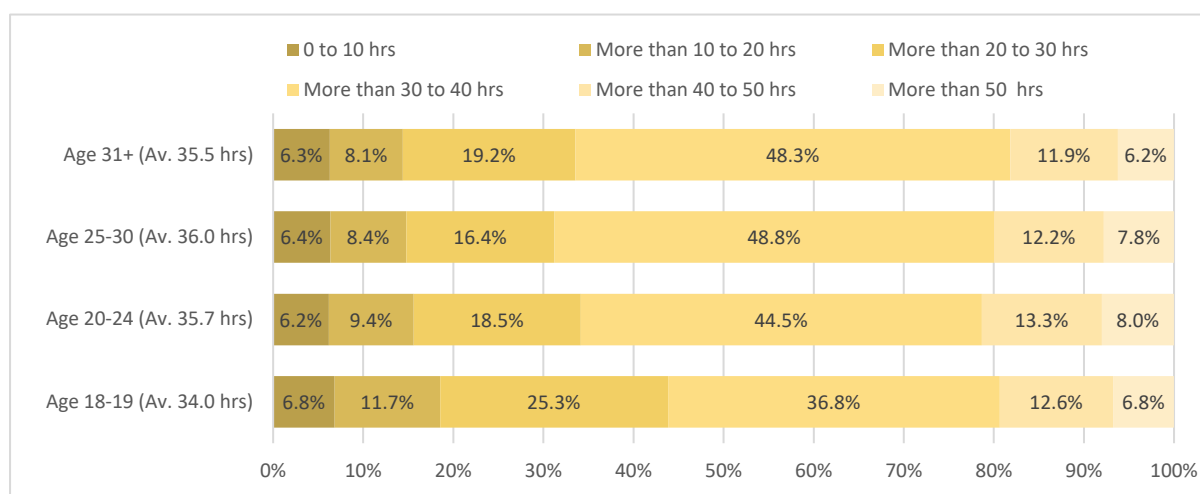
Figure 5-10: Hours worked per week, by sex



Note, males reported 7,489 jobs; females reported 11,854 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 5-11: Hours worked per week, by age group



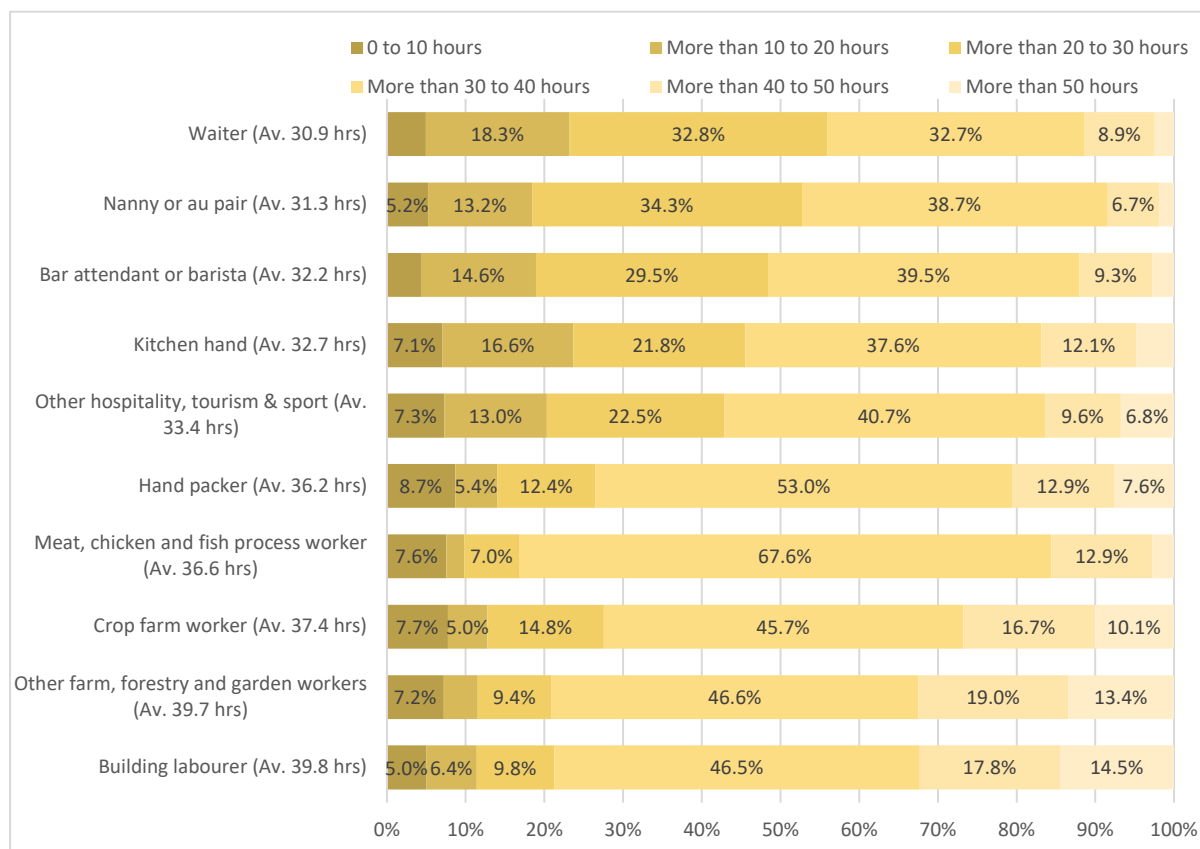
Note, Age 18-19 years reported 1,132 jobs; Age 20-24 reported 6,014 jobs; Age 25-30 reported 10,418 jobs; Age 31+ reported 1,646 jobs. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

The ten most common jobs are presented by hours worked in Figure 5-12. Waiters were the second most common WHM job, with these workers reporting the fewest hours of the Top 10 jobs. Waiters worked an average of 30.9 hours per week with almost one quarter working fewer than 20 hours. Building labourers worked longest of the Top 10 and averaged 39.8 hours per week; 14.5% of building labourers worked more than 50 hours per week. Of note, two thirds (67.6%) of meat, chicken and fish process workers reported a working week of 30 to 40 hours.



Figure 5-12: Hours worked per week in Top 10 jobs

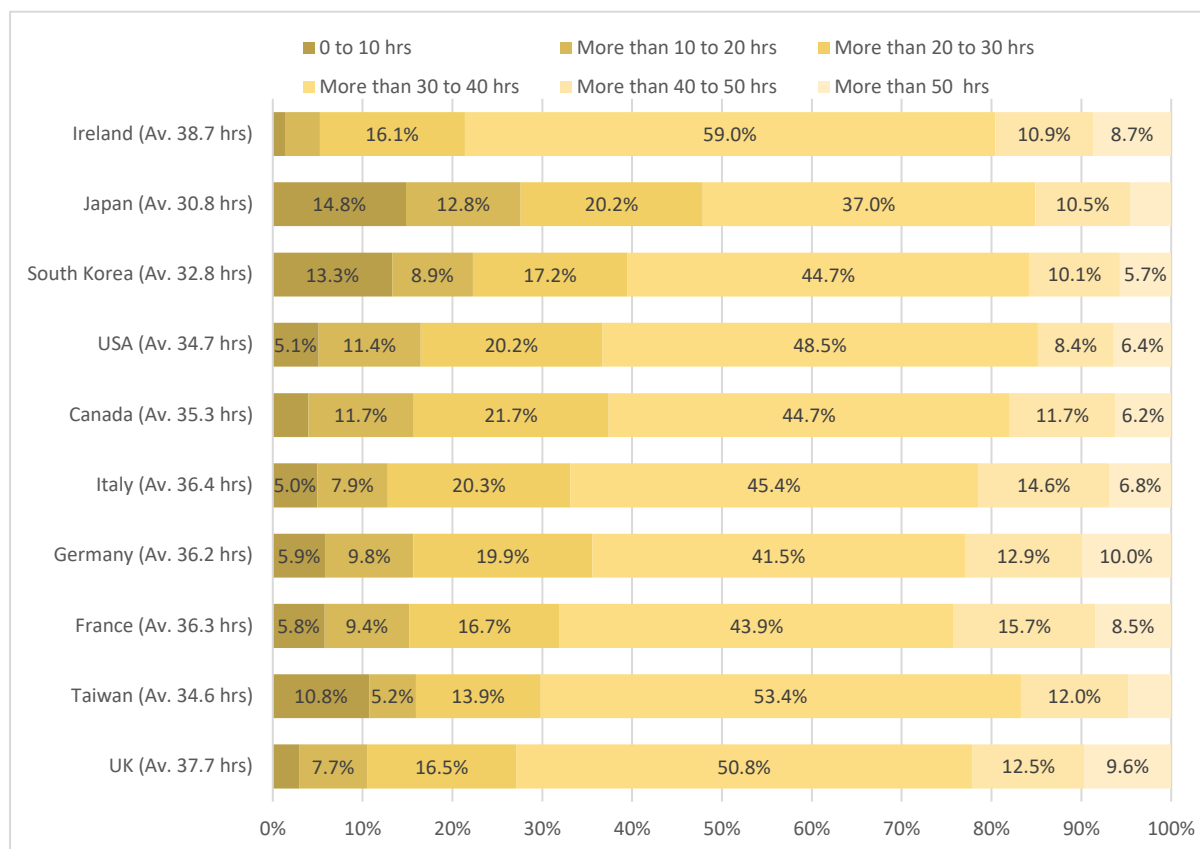


Note, for this purpose Top 10 jobs are those reported most commonly and account for 12,485 jobs. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Of the Top 10 countries, WHMs from Ireland (38.7 hours) and the United Kingdom (37.7 hours) worked the longest hours per week on average (see Figure 5-13). This is reflected in a low proportion of British (27.1%) and particularly Irish (21.4%) workers employed for fewer than 30 hours per week. Japanese WHMs reported the lowest number of hours per week, an average of 30.8 hours. Almost half (47.9%) of the jobs undertaken by Japanese WHMs required fewer than 30 hours per week.

Figure 5-13: Average hours worked per week for Top 10 countries



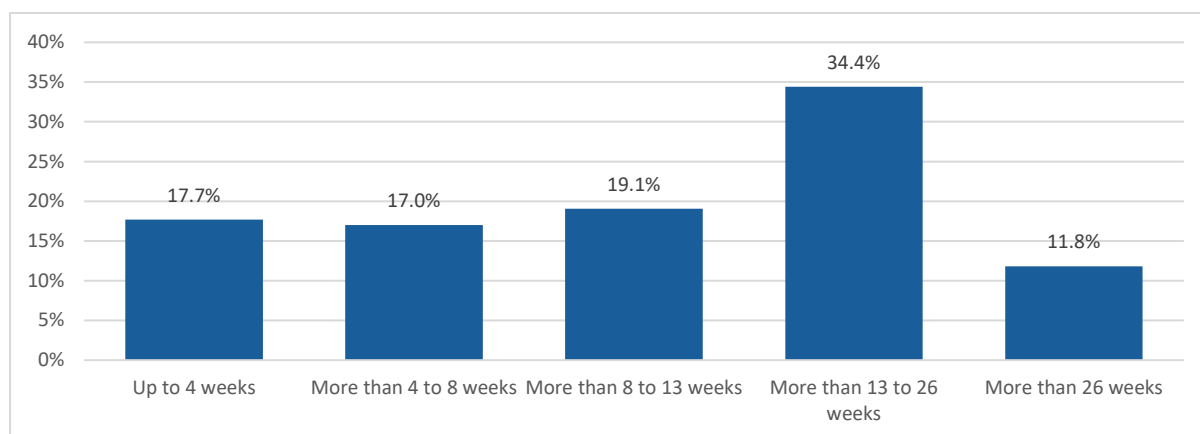
Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the most listed jobs, and account for 15,753 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

5.2.3 Duration of work

WHMs reported working an average of 15 weeks per job, with a third (34.4%) of jobs held for between three and six months (13 to 26 weeks) (see Figure 5-14). WHMs worked for fewer weeks per job in Tasmania (10.7 weeks) and South Australia (12.3 weeks), spending longer periods in jobs in the Australian Capital Territory (16.7 weeks), Victoria and New South Wales (16.1 weeks each, see Figure 5-15).

Figure 5-14: Weeks worked per job

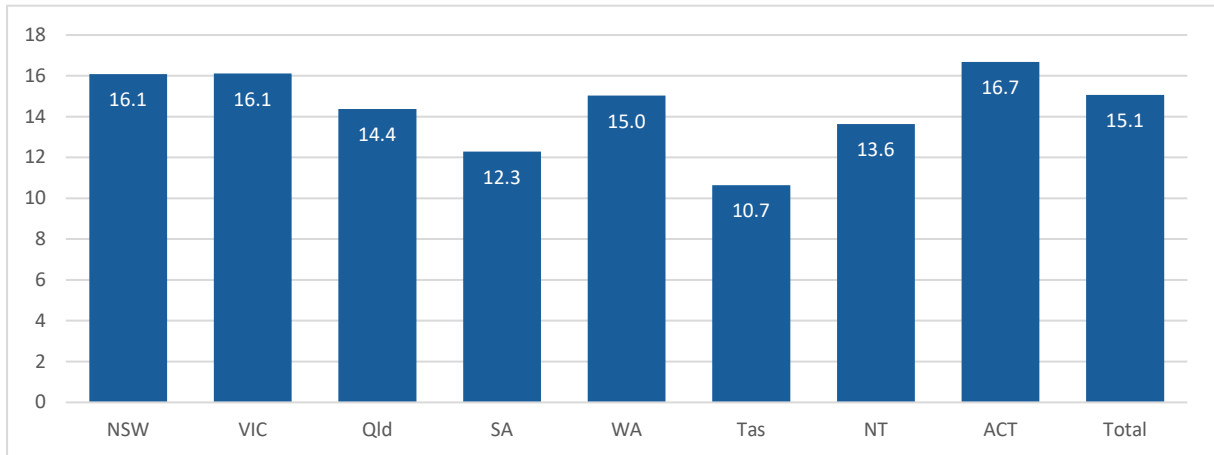


Note, data was provided for a total of 19,598 jobs.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.



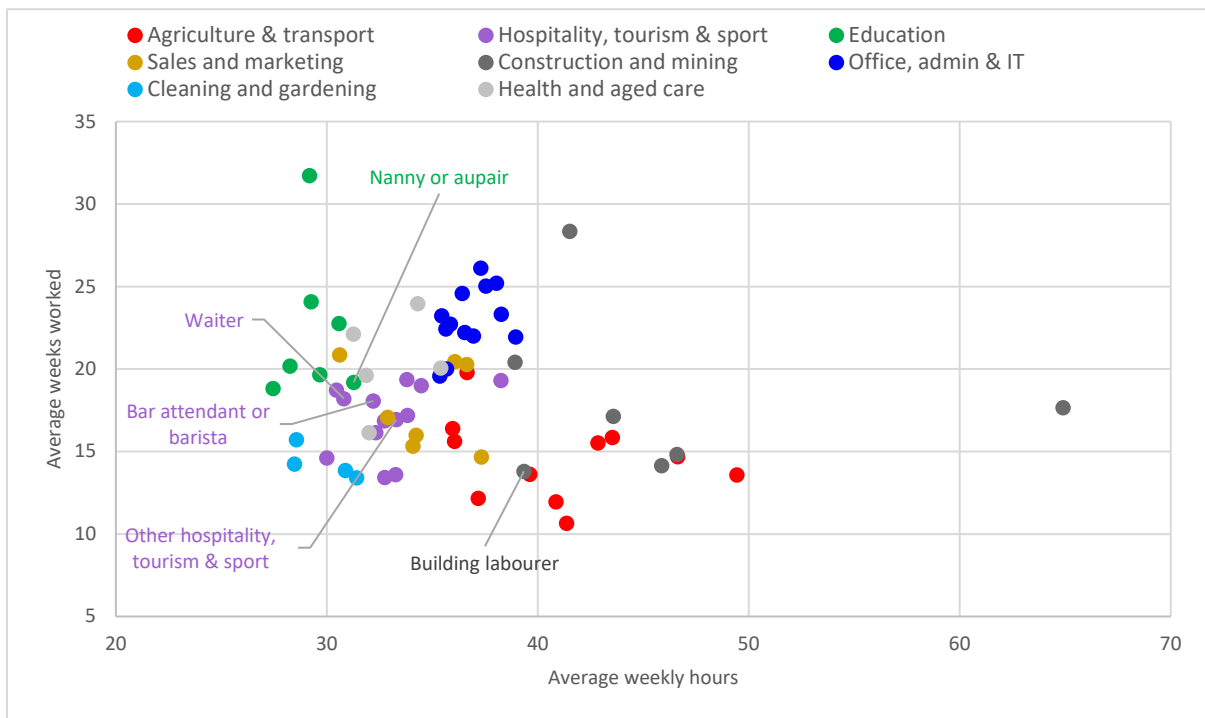
Figure 5-15: Average weeks worked per job, by state



Note, data was provided for a total of 19,598 jobs.
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

The intensity of employment, based on the total duration of employment, varied across jobs. Civil engineers worked for the longest total number of hours during their stay in Australia, averaging 41.5 hours per week across 28.4 weeks, followed by drillers, miners and shot firers who worked 65 hours per week across 17.7 weeks. Those who worked the fewest total hours during their stay were employed as cleaners, averaging 28.5 hours per week for 14.2 weeks. Figure 5-16 shows the similarities between industry groups for intensity of work. Jobs in construction and mining and agriculture and transport tend to be higher hours per week for a shorter overall duration, compared to jobs in office, admin and IT which are fewer hours per week but for a longer duration.

Figure 5-16: Job duration by industry group



Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

5.2.4 Total pay

Income per job was variable aligning with the fact that half (50.4%) of WHM jobs were held for less than three months. One quarter of jobs (27.2%) paid between \$10,000 and \$20,000, while just under one in five (20.7%) of jobs paid WHMs \$5,000 to \$10,000 (see Table 5-7). Earnings of more than \$40,000 were relatively rare, occurring in 4.4% of jobs.

Table 5-7: Total pay per job

| | No. of jobs | % of jobs |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Up to \$1,000 | 1,574 | 9.0% |
| More than \$1,000 to \$2,000 | 1,072 | 6.1% |
| More than \$2,000 to \$5,000 | 2,813 | 16.1% |
| More than \$5,000 to \$10,000 | 3,614 | 20.7% |
| More than \$10,000 to \$20,000 | 4,751 | 27.2% |
| More than \$20,000 to \$40,000 | 2,894 | 16.6% |
| More than \$40,000 | 763 | 4.4% |
| Total | 17,481 | 100.0% |

Note, data was provided for a total of 17,481 jobs. Missing data not included.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

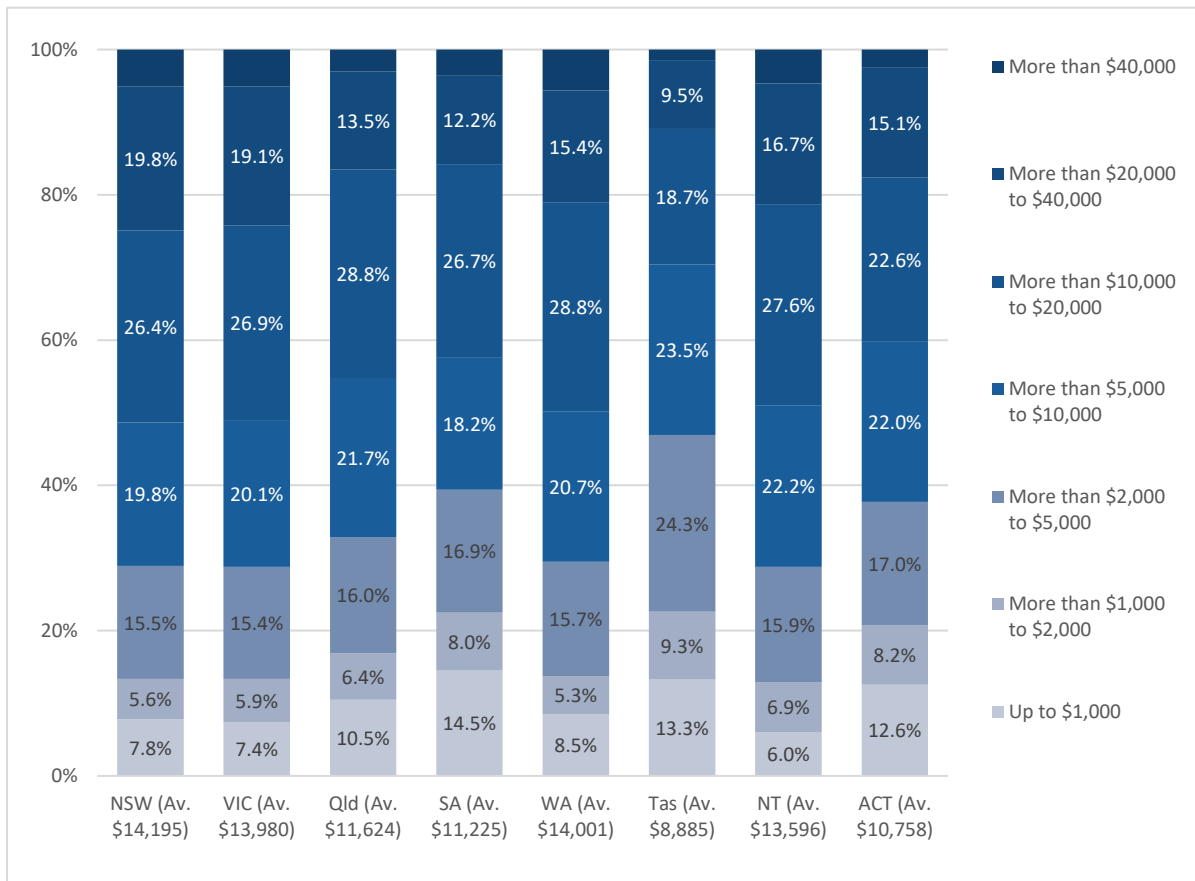
On average WHMs were paid \$13,053 per Australian job.¹⁸ As job income was largely dependent on the duration of work, Tasmania WHMs (average \$8,885) earned less per job than workers in other states and territories (see Figure 5-17), with 46.9% of Tasmanian jobs yielding less than \$5,000 income. In New South Wales, Western Australia and Victoria WHMs earned around \$14,000 per job; in these states about half of all workers earned more than \$10,000 per job.

Male WHMs (\$14,117) were paid almost \$2,000 more per job than females (\$12,368), with the largest difference in the proportion of those paid \$20,000 and higher per job (17.8% compared with 15.7%, respectively; see Figure 5-18). This disparity is particularly notable as males (14.6 weeks) worked almost one week less per job than females (15.4 weeks).

¹⁸ Weekly pay is summarised here for the 9010 WHMs who reported (in all jobs in which they worked) both the number of hours they worked, and hourly rate of pay and had an average weekly pay of \$1,565. Average weekly pay for males was \$1,820, which was higher than the average weekly pay for females at \$1,415. Average weekly pay increased with age. Those aged 18-19 years earned the least per week on average at \$950, followed by those aged 20-24 years who earned on average \$1,390 per week. WHMs aged 25-30 years were paid on average \$1,730 per week, and those aged over 31 years were paid on average \$1,670 per week. Of the top ten countries of citizenship, weekly pay was highest for WHMs from the United Kingdom at an average of \$1,780, and lowest for those from Japan at an average of \$1,055.



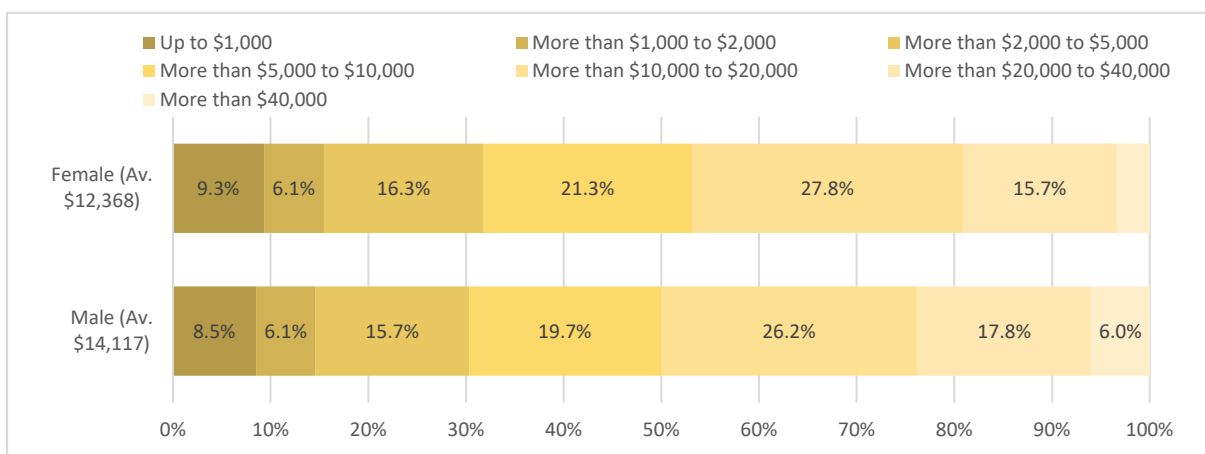
Figure 5-17: Total pay per job, by state



Note, data was provided for a total of 17,481 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 5-18: Total pay per job, by sex

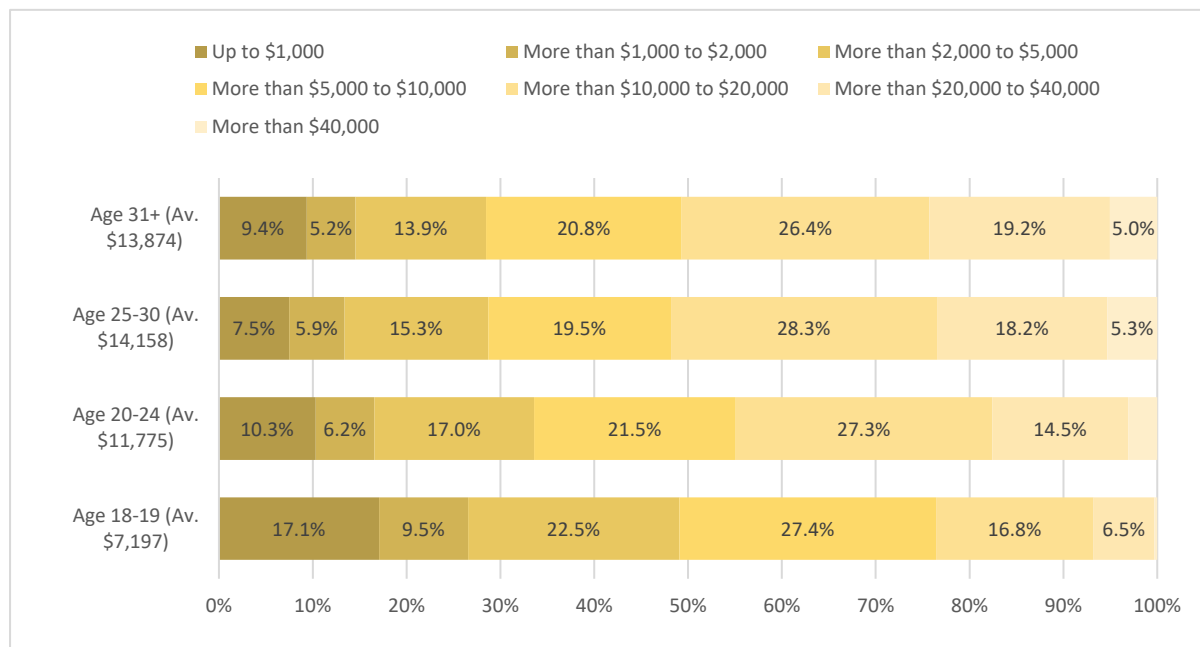


Note, data was provided for a total of 17,481 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

The youngest cohort of workers (aged 18-19 years) received the lowest pay per hour (\$17.02; see Figure 5-6), worked the fewest hours per week (34.0 hours; see Figure 5-11) and worked the fewest weeks per job (12.4 weeks) resulting in them receiving less pay per job (\$7,197; see Figure 5-19).¹⁹

Figure 5-19: Total pay per job, by age group



Note, data was provided for a total of 17,162 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

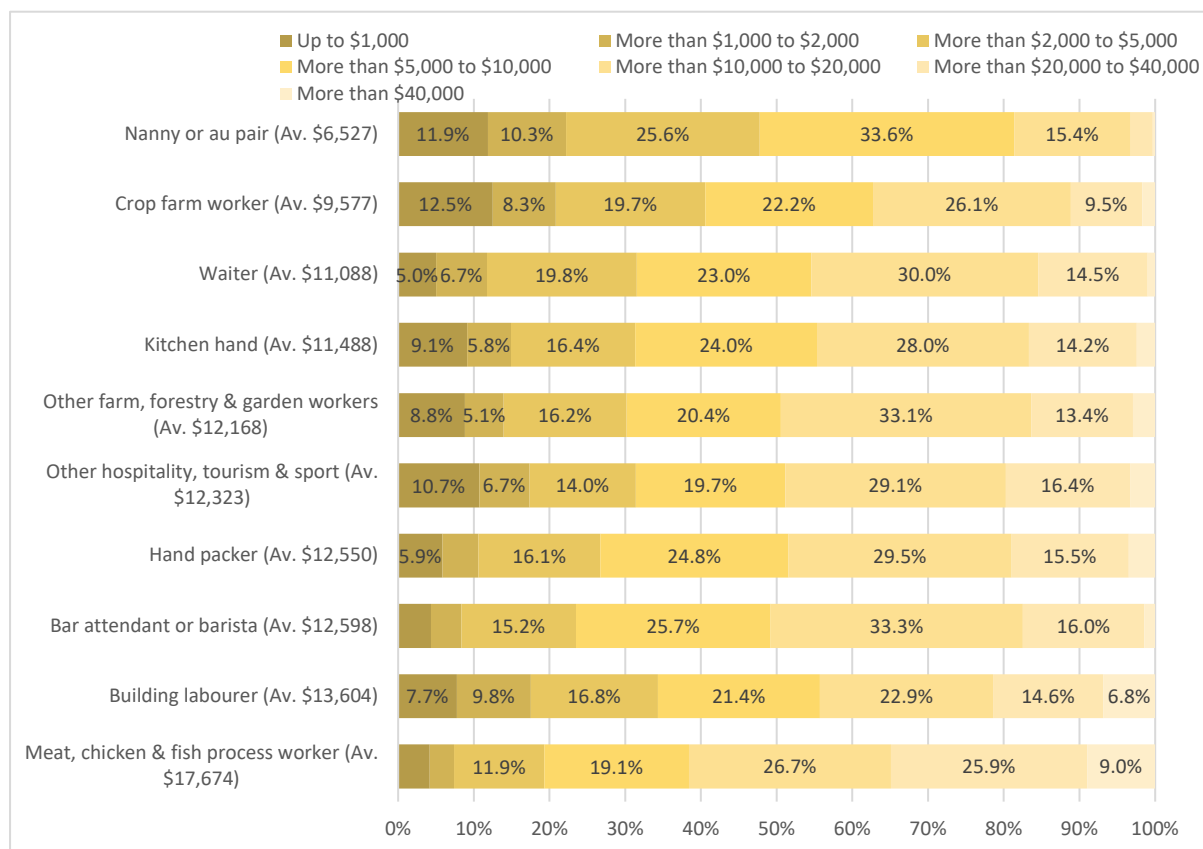
Of the ten most common jobs, meat, chicken, and fish process workers received the highest pay per job receiving an average of \$17,674 for an average of 19.6 weeks work (see Figure 5-20). This can be contrasted with nannies and au pairs who received \$6,527 for a similar duration (19.3 weeks). Crop farm workers spent an average of 11.8 weeks on a job for \$9,577 pay; whereas building labourers worked on a job for an average of 12.0 weeks to receive an average of \$13,604. Half (50.8%) of this group earned more than \$10,000. Waiters received an average of \$11,088 per job, with four in five (81.4%) paid less than \$10,000.

The high proportion of young German WHMs and the comparatively low pay rate for young workers has contributed to the fact that German citizens (\$9,511) reported the lowest pay per job of the Top 10 countries (see Figure 5-21). Only 12.1% of German WHMs reported being paid more than \$20,000 in a job (see Figure 5-22). This can be contrasted with the Irish, more than three quarters (78.6%) of whom worked more than 30 hours per week for an average of 17.4 weeks for \$19,025.

¹⁹ This young cohort also provided fewer comprehensive data, resulting in 14.1% of average pay data being recorded as missing.



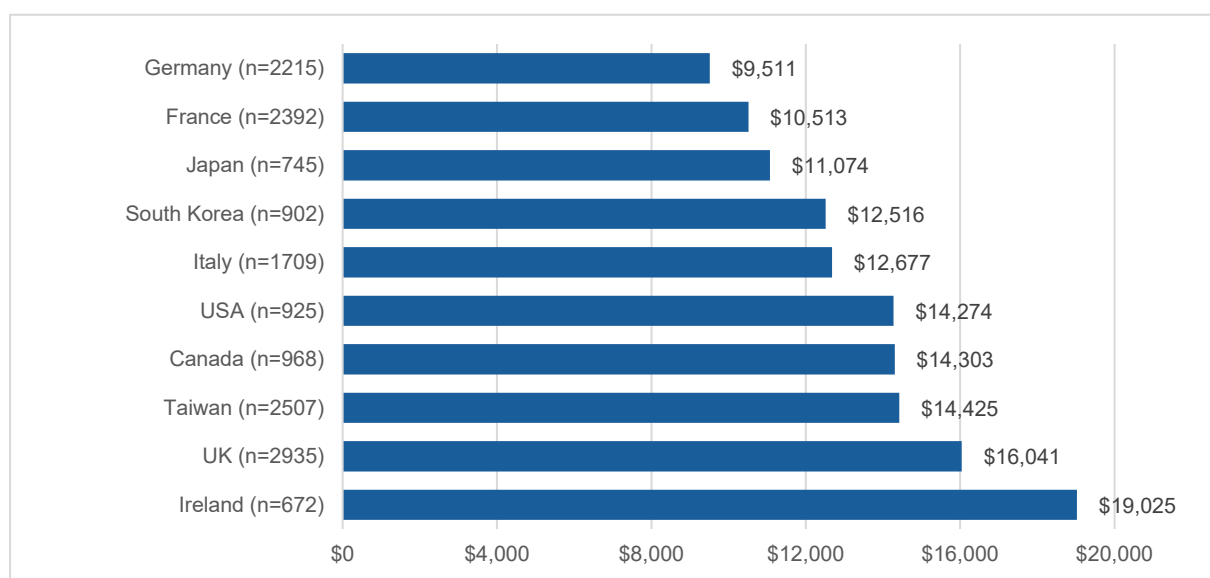
Figure 5-20: Total pay per job in Top 10 WHMs jobs



Note, for this purpose Top 10 jobs are those reported most commonly and account for 11,255 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

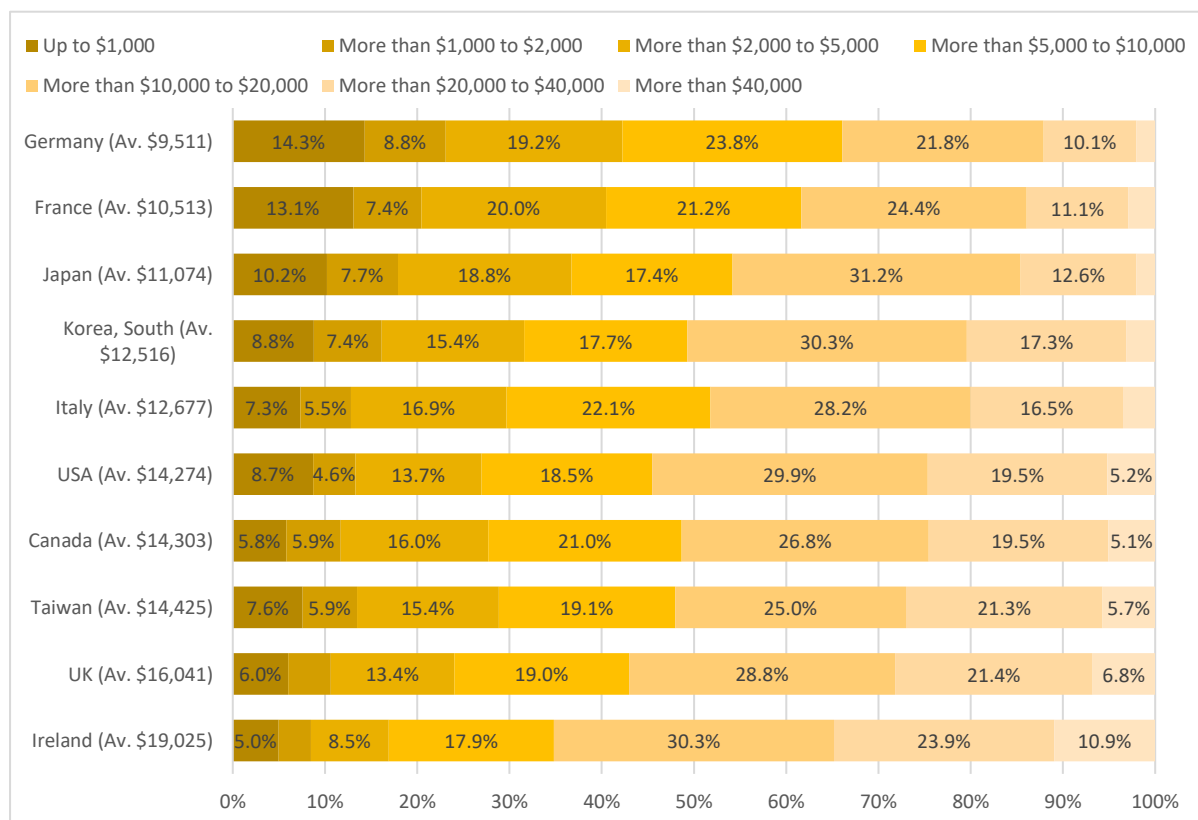
Figure 5-21: Average pay per job for Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the most listed jobs, and account for 15,970 jobs.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 5-22: Pay per job for Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the most listed jobs, and account for 14,174 jobs. Missing data not included. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

5.3 Spending

5.3.1 Structure of expenditure

Survey participants were asked to estimate their average weekly expenditure for each location in which they spent longer than one week. Expenditure was allocated over seven categories including accommodation, transport, food and drink, entertainment, tourism, bills, and other.

Accommodation was identified as the largest expenditure category for WHMs with average total expenditure of \$8,000²⁰ (see Table 5-8). The next largest categories were food and drink with average total expenditure of \$4,600 followed by entertainment at \$3,300. As previously discussed, men had a higher expenditure than women during their time in Australia. This typically came from increased expenditure on food and drink (\$5,100 for men; \$4,400 for women), entertainment (\$3,800 for men; \$2,900 for women) and tourism (\$3,100 for men; \$2,800 for women). In dollar terms, men and women spent roughly equivalent amounts on accommodation. However, this represented a higher proportion of female expenditure overall, at 31.2%, compared with 28.2% for males (see Figure 5-23).

Expenditure across all categories increased consistently with the age group of the WHM - except for transport, tourism and bills which were higher for those aged 25 to 30 years. While lower in

²⁰ Data is rounded to the nearest \$100.



average dollar terms (\$5,900), accommodation expenditure of the young cohort aged 18 to 19 years was one third (33.2%) of their total spend - a higher proportion than other WHMs (see Figure 5-24). This was balanced by a reduced spend on food and drink (\$2,800; 15.8% of their total expenditure), compared with the other cohorts who averaged well over \$4,000 (16.9% to 18.1% of expenditure for their age cohorts).

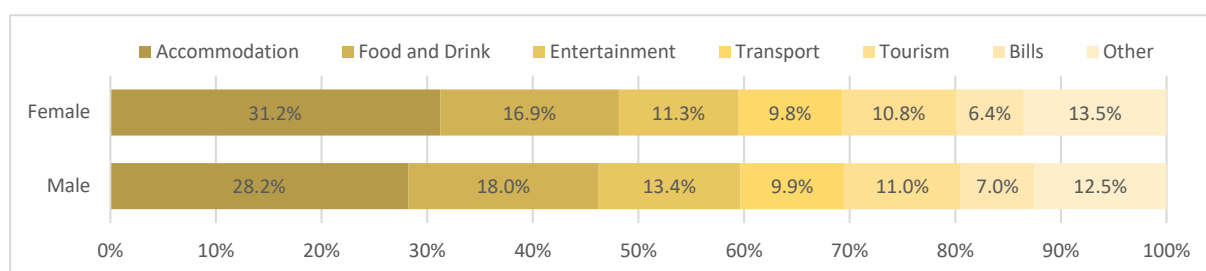
Table 5-8: Average expenditure categories by sex, age group, and Top 10 countries

| | Accommodation | Food and Drink | Entertainment | Transport | Tourism | Bills | Other |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>(a) by sex</i> | | | | | | | |
| Male | \$7,974 | \$5,095 | \$3,790 | \$2,784 | \$3,114 | \$1,969 | \$3,537 |
| Female | \$8,092 | \$4,374 | \$2,938 | \$2,541 | \$2,787 | \$1,669 | \$3,498 |
| <i>(b) by age group</i> | | | | | | | |
| 18-19 years | \$5,926 | \$2,818 | \$2,099 | \$1,878 | \$1,898 | \$964 | \$2,285 |
| 20-24 years | \$7,663 | \$4,271 | \$3,028 | \$2,312 | \$2,538 | \$1,727 | \$3,797 |
| 25-30 years | \$8,315 | \$4,999 | \$3,525 | \$2,904 | \$3,330 | \$1,903 | \$3,355 |
| 31+ years | \$9,049 | \$5,530 | \$3,842 | \$2,758 | \$3,154 | \$1,834 | \$4,433 |
| <i>(c) by country</i> | | | | | | | |
| Germany | \$6,400 | \$3,590 | \$2,236 | \$2,221 | \$2,056 | \$1,154 | \$3,726 |
| UK | \$9,380 | \$4,939 | \$4,184 | \$2,770 | \$3,629 | \$1,811 | \$4,035 |
| France | \$7,948 | \$4,555 | \$3,248 | \$2,674 | \$2,573 | \$1,558 | \$3,127 |
| Taiwan | \$6,615 | \$4,387 | \$2,495 | \$2,673 | \$3,431 | \$1,896 | \$3,168 |
| Italy | \$8,290 | \$4,700 | \$3,015 | \$2,661 | \$2,748 | \$1,712 | \$2,959 |
| Canada | \$9,271 | \$4,751 | \$3,232 | \$2,511 | \$2,656 | \$1,427 | \$2,485 |
| USA | \$9,038 | \$4,358 | \$2,595 | \$2,211 | \$1,976 | \$2,176 | \$2,700 |
| South Korea | \$7,673 | \$6,002 | \$3,184 | \$3,122 | \$3,688 | \$3,126 | \$4,868 |
| Netherlands | \$7,588 | \$4,011 | \$2,383 | \$2,247 | \$1,735 | \$1,107 | \$1,790 |
| Japan | \$7,405 | \$4,243 | \$2,333 | \$2,435 | \$2,599 | \$1,545 | \$3,947 |
| Other | \$8,558 | \$5,325 | \$3,995 | \$2,931 | \$3,557 | \$1,949 | \$4,187 |
| <i>(d) by week</i> | | | | | | | |
| | \$197 | \$114 | \$80 | \$65 | \$71 | \$44 | \$86 |
| TOTAL | \$8,046 | \$4,637 | \$3,271 | \$2,632 | \$2,909 | \$1,776 | \$3,515 |

Note, Average weekly expenditure is calculated based on the average WHM stay of 9.4 months. For this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the most WHMs reporting valid expenditure. 'Other' aggregates the responses of WHMs from all other countries.

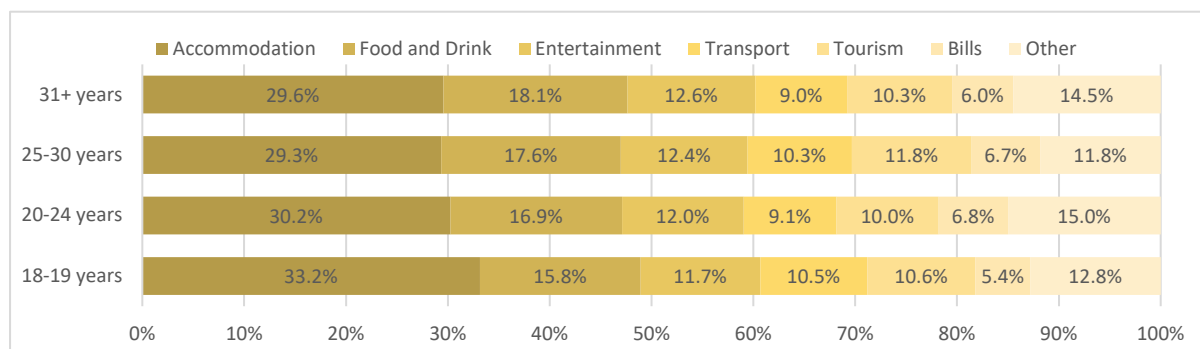
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 5-23: Expenditure category, by sex



Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 5-24: Expenditure category, by age group

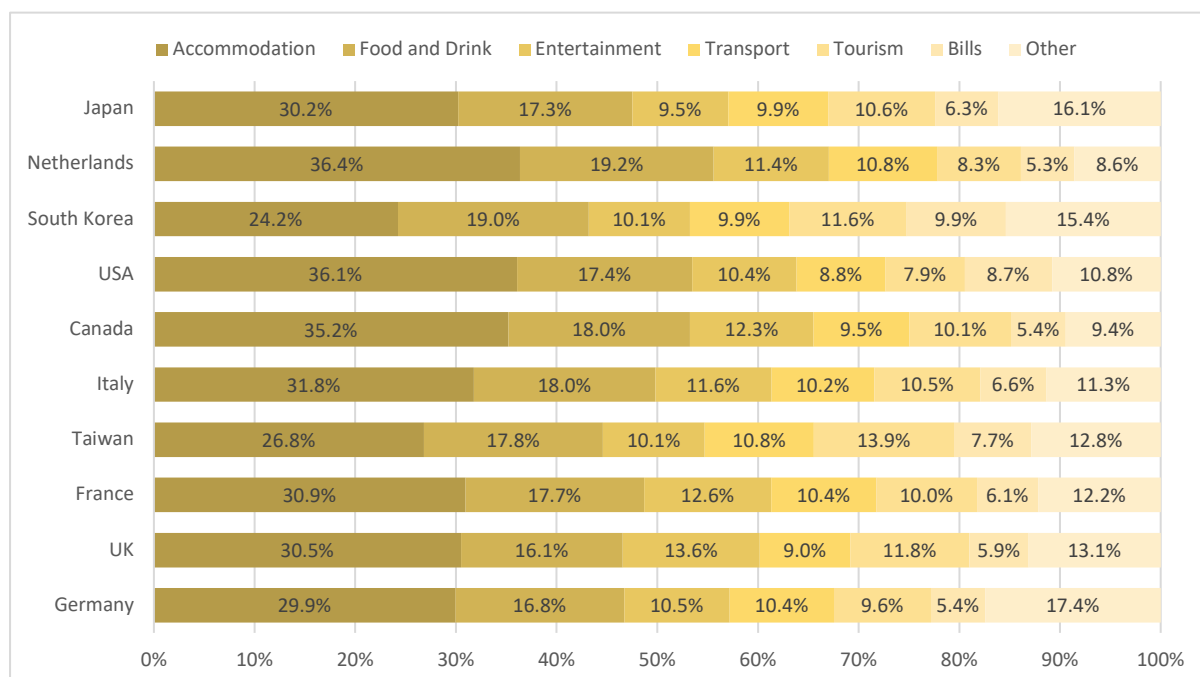


Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Some significant differences are observable in the expenditure by country of citizenship (see Figure 5-25). Highest average accommodation expenditure was for WHMs from the United Kingdom who spent an average of \$9,400. However, this (30.5%) aligned closely with the overall average accommodation spend of 30.0%. It can be compared with the high accommodation spends of WHMs from Canada (\$9,300) and the United States (\$9,000), whose accommodation share of expenditure was high at an average 35.2% and 36.1% share of their total expenditure. WHMs from Germany (\$6,400) and Taiwan (\$6,600) spent the least accommodation dollars, with this making up a relatively low share of their total expenditure (29.9% and 26.8%, respectively) – noting that Germany had the highest non-allocated (or other) spend.

Average expenditure on food and drink for the Top 10 countries ranged from a low of \$3,600 (16.8% share of expenditure) for German WHMs to a high of \$6,000 (19.0% share) for South Korean WHMs. WHMs from the United Kingdom reported they spent 16.1% (\$4,900) of their total expenditure on food and drink. Japanese WHMs spent a 9.5% share of their total expenditure on entertainment, compared with a high of 13.6% for those from the United Kingdom.

Figure 5-25: Expenditure category, by Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the most WHMs reporting valid expenditure. 'Other' aggregates the responses of WHMs from all other countries.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.



5.3.2 Total expenditure

The average weekly expenditure²¹ of a WHM was estimated to be \$658 (see Table 5-9). Given an average duration of 9.4 months, the average total expenditure of a WHM (aggregated over the duration of their stay) was estimated at \$26,800. Significant differences in total expenditure were apparent across sex, age, and country of citizenship. Consistent with their higher earning profile, men spent more than women - \$28,300 compared to \$25,900 for women. As men stayed for a shorter duration than women, their average weekly expenditure (\$698) was also higher than women (\$627).

Typical expenditure patterns are observed across age groups with younger WHMs spending less during their stay. Those aged 18 to 19 years spent an average of \$17,900 during their time in Australia, compared to \$25,300 for the 20 to 24 year cohort, \$28,300 of the 25 to 30 year cohort, and \$30,600 for those aged over 30 years. South Korean WHMs had the highest expenditure of Top 10 countries (\$31,700), followed by those from the United Kingdom (\$30,700). At the other end of the spectrum those from the Netherlands (\$20,900) and Germany (\$21,400) spent the least.

Table 5-9: Total expenditure by sex, age group, and Top 10 countries.

| | Average (\$) | Average Week | No. of Responses |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
| (a) by sex | | | |
| Female | \$25,900 | \$627 | 5,078 |
| Male | \$28,262 | \$698 | 2,902 |
| (b) by age group | | | |
| 18-19 years | \$17,869 | \$538 | 652 |
| 20-24 years | \$25,336 | \$650 | 2,744 |
| 25-30 years | \$28,331 | \$662 | 3,868 |
| 31+ years | \$30,600 | \$700 | 630 |
| (c) by country | | | |
| Germany | \$21,384 | \$594 | 1,134 |
| UK | \$30,747 | \$733 | 1,287 |
| France | \$25,683 | \$665 | 950 |
| Taiwan | \$24,665 | \$543 | 770 |
| Italy | \$26,083 | \$629 | 649 |
| Canada | \$26,333 | \$671 | 462 |
| USA | \$25,053 | \$651 | 460 |
| South Korea | \$31,663 | \$709 | 348 |
| Netherlands | \$20,861 | \$582 | 269 |
| Japan | \$24,507 | \$560 | 350 |
| Other | \$30,506 | \$708 | 1,301 |
| Total | \$26,787 | \$658 | 7,980 |

Note, average weekly expenditure is calculated based on the average number of weeks spent in Australia. For this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the most WHMs reporting valid expenditure. 'Other' aggregates the responses of WHMs from all other countries.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

5.3.3 Expenditure and employment

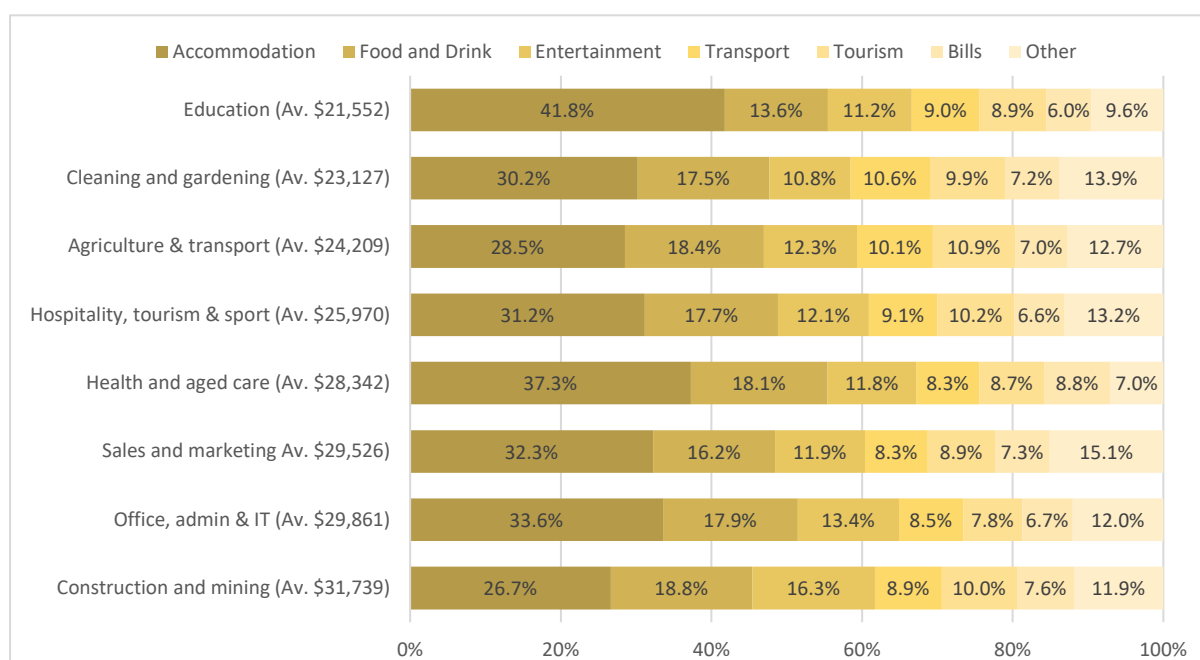
Across the industries in which WHMs worked while in Australia, there are noticeable differences in both total expenditure and the structure of expenditure (see Figure 5-26). Those who worked

²¹ Note, only 37.4% (n=7,980) of WHMs provided valid information about their average weekly expenditure in at least one place of stay. We note, responses with regard to accommodation proved easiest for respondents and were answered more consistently. Estimates of transport spending tended to align with local transport expenses (i.e. local bus, train and petrol costs) rather than tickets between destinations. WHMs had difficulty providing estimates of weekly spending on entertainment, tourism, and bills resulting in significant missing data.

in the construction and mining industry reported spending the most, with an average of \$31,700, and those who worked in education reported spending the least, which at an average of \$21,600 was a third lower than those in construction and mining. WHMs who reported education as their industry were most likely to be au pairs, explaining the low expenditure. WHMs employed in the education sector also spent a significantly higher proportion of their expenditure on accommodation (41.8% of total expenditure) and a lower proportion on food and drink (13.6%). There is also a trend towards lower proportions of expenditure on accommodation in industries such as agriculture and transport (28.5%) and construction and mining (26.7%) which are typically located in regional and remote areas of Australia where accommodation prices are typically lower.

Due to an incongruity between survey participants who responded to questions about how much they were paid and participants who responded to questions about how much they spent, it is difficult to compare expenditure with incomes, as each group is independent. Only 5,300 WHM responded to both types of questions. Of these responses, WHM from all but three countries²² spent more than they received in income.

Figure 5-26: Expenditure by category by industry group



Note, average total expenditure is calculated as the total expenditure of people who work in an industry group, divided by the total number of workers in that group.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020

²² These countries (Sweden, Belgium and Slovenia) had a low number of survey respondents.

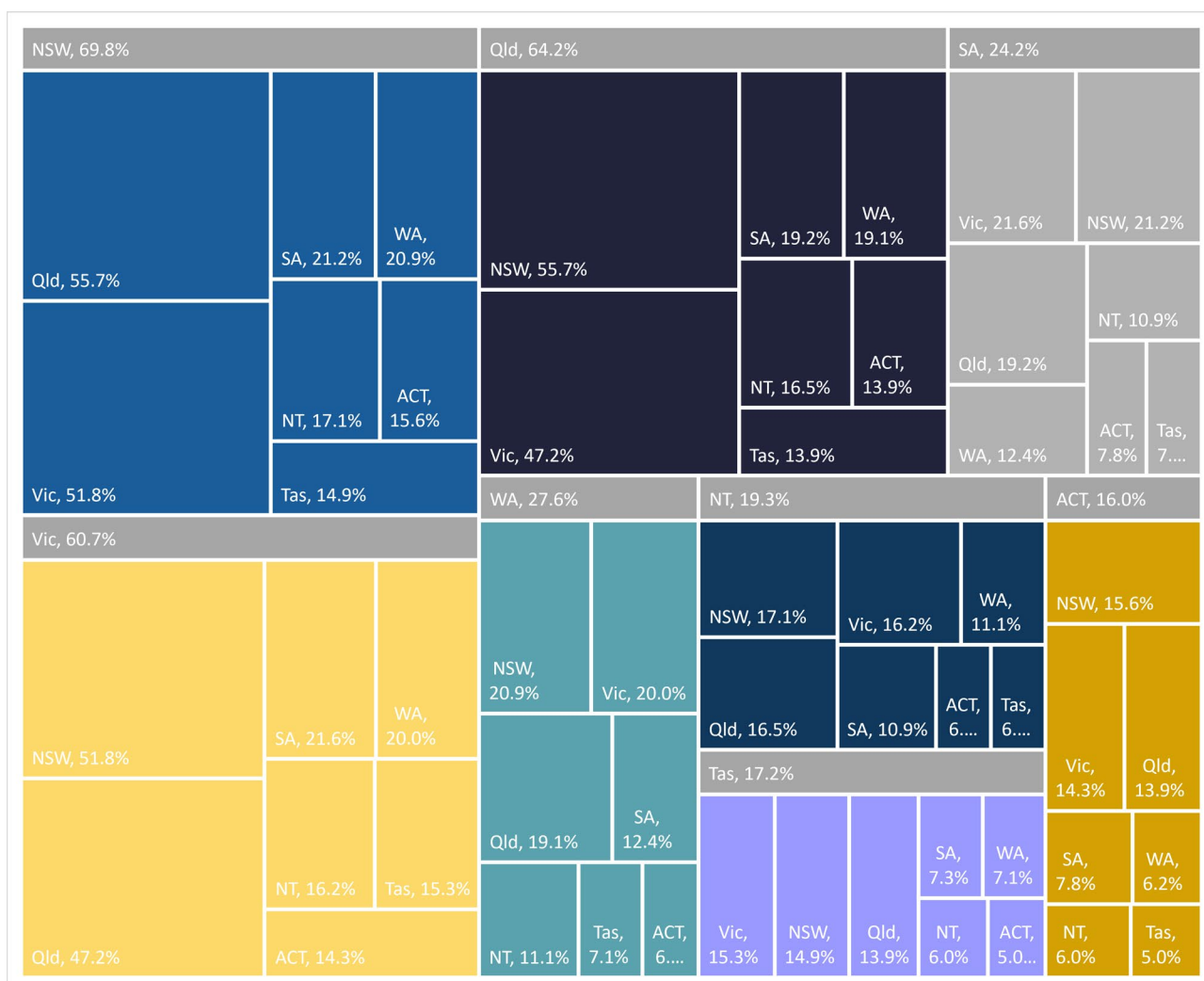


6 WHM: Domestic travel

6.1 Mobility between states and territories

Seven in ten (69.8%) WHMs visited New South Wales with Queensland (64.2%) and Victoria (60.7%) also visited by a significant number of WHMs (see Figure 6-1). Approximately one quarter of WHMs visited Western Australia (27.6%) and South Australia (24.2%). Fewer than one in five WHMs visited the Northern Territory (19.3%), Tasmania (17.2%) or the Australian Capital Territory (16.0%). More than half (55.7%) of WHMs visited both New South Wales and Queensland. However, only 14.9% visited both New South Wales and Tasmania. The likelihood of visiting Tasmania was highest for those who also visited Victoria (although at 15.3% a visit to Victoria was not a huge boost to Tasmanian visitation). A visit to Western Australia occurred for one in five WHMs who visited New South Wales (20.9%), Victoria (20.0%) and Queensland (19.1%). WHM visits to South Australia followed a similar proportion also staying in New South Wales (21.2%), Victoria (21.6%) and Queensland (19.2%).

Figure 6-1: Proportion of WHM visiting states and territories



Note, Percentages in the table were calculated by using the No. of respondents visiting designated states/territories divided by the total number (21,315) of WHMs surveyed. Because multiple responses were allowed, these figures sum to more than 100%.

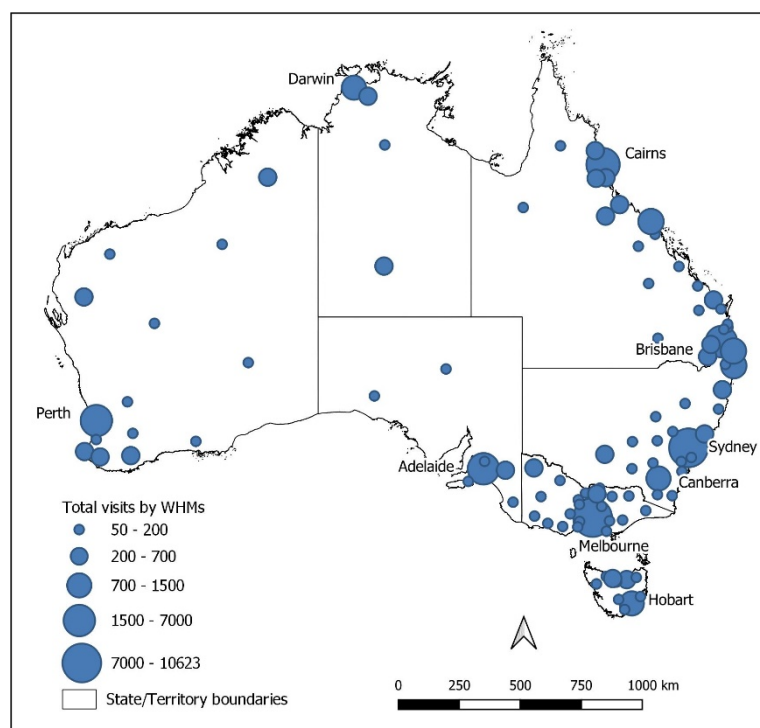
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

WHMs were asked to indicate up to three locations they spent the most time in for each state and territory. They reported visiting 1,949 of the total 2,310 (84.4%) SA2²³ locations in Australia; this included most rural and remote SA2s. WHMs identified a total of 60,865 location visits, an average of 2.9 (SA2) locations per person.

Areas (SA3) with more than 50 WHM visits are presented in Figure 6-2. Most frequently, WHMs identified SA2s within greater capital cities for a visit. Greater Sydney area was visited 10,623 times, Greater Melbourne was the second most popular area with 8,968 visits, followed by Greater Brisbane (5,699 visits). The most frequently visited regional area was Cairns in Far North Queensland, with 2,095 WHMs reportedly travelling to this town. Also popular with WHMs was Byron Bay on the New South Wales coast (1,089 visits), and the Queensland areas of Surfers Paradise (1,063) and the Whitsundays (979).

The trend amongst WHMs was to select urban areas, specifically capital cities, as their main visitation location in the state or territory. Greater Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth topped the list of primary locations. Other long-stay locations included Cairns, followed by the other capital cities (Adelaide, Canberra, Darwin and Hobart). Locations identified for the second and third longest stay in the state or territory followed a similar pattern with Greater Sydney, Cairns, Brisbane, and Melbourne along with the regional areas of Byron Bay, the Whitsundays and Surfers Paradise, also referenced for long stays by WHMs.

Figure 6-2: Major localities (SA3) visited by WHMs



*Note, dots indicate SA3 centroids in regional areas and greater capital cities.
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.*

²³ Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) area is an Australian Bureau of Statistics geographic category. There are 2310 SA2 regions in Australia including special purpose regions. SA2s have populations generally between 3,000 and 25,000 persons, with smaller SA2s tending to be more remote (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

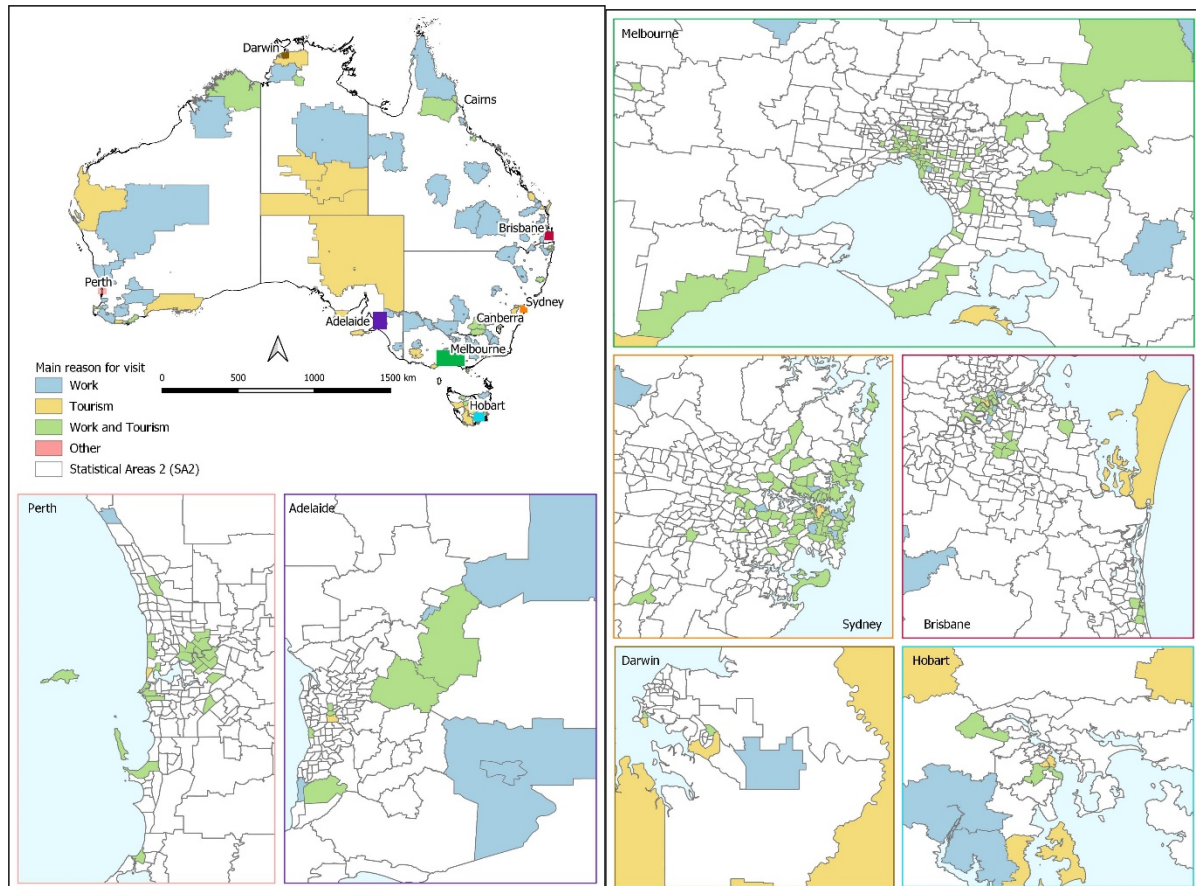


6.2 Reasons for visiting destinations

WHMs were asked to specify their reasons for visiting each location. Options included for work, tourism, study, to visit family and friends, and other reasons. Figure 6-3 presents this data by the predominant reason for the visit.²⁴ Areas were classified and mapped according to the *main* reason these areas were visited.

'Work' was the most common reason WHMs visited 587 SA2s across Australia, and it was the *only* reason 198 SA2s were visited. Those travelling for 'tourism'-related purposes accounted for visits to 190 SA2s, 84 of which were visited entirely for tourism activities.

Figure 6-3: Main reason for visit to location (SA2)



Note, 'Other' represents visits for study, to see family and friends, and other reasons. Areas in white show where there was no predominant reason identified for visiting an area.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

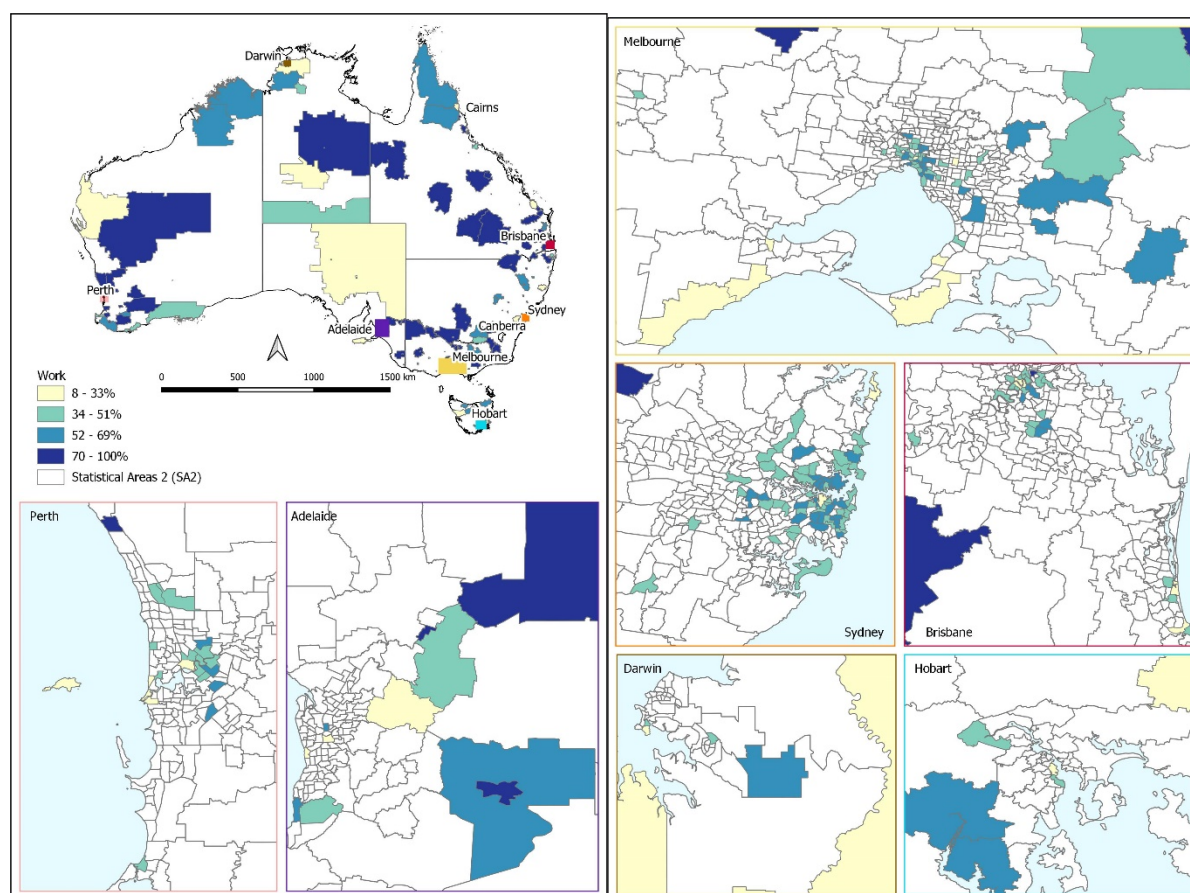
Around one third of all visits to Greater Sydney (37.0%), Greater Melbourne (33.7%) and Greater Brisbane (32.7%) were for work reasons. Work was cited as the main reason for around one quarter of WHM visits to Greater Perth (28.9%) and Greater Darwin (22.8%), while less than one fifth of visits to Greater Adelaide (17.3%) and Greater Hobart (10.5%) were for work purposes. The most highly visited SA2s in Australia were Sydney-Haymarket-The Rocks and Melbourne with these also the most visited locations for work (both with approximately 20% of visits for this purpose, see Figure 6-4). This is in the context of very high visitation to these areas noting four in

²⁴ The 'main reason' was identified where 60% or more of the visits were for a particular purpose (i.e. where 60% or more of the visits were for work, the area was classified as a primarily 'Work' destination) where the combined total of visits for work and tourism was 60% or more, the area was classified as a primarily 'Work and Tourism'.

five visits to these areas were designated by WHMs for other purposes (most often tourism). In contrast, although low in number, work was designated as the only reason for all (100%) visits to Barmera (SA) and Scone (NSW). Although again in small numbers, work was the reason for over 90% of the visits to Moree-Narrabri and Inverell-Tenterfield in New South Wales as well as visits to Nhulunbuy in the Northern Territory, and Boonah, Longreach and Torres Strait Islands in Queensland.

The River Murray region in South Australia was a popular place for WHMs to seek work, with over 80% of visits to Renmark, Loxton, Murray Bridge and Waikerie designated for work purposes. Work was the focus for nine in ten visits to Shepparton Region-East in Victoria and the small numbers visiting Meekatharra in Western Australia. In Tasmania, Smithton was the most visited place for work, with three quarters of the WHMs who visited doing so for work-related purposes.

Figure 6-4: Visited location (SA2) for work reasons



Note, only SA2s with a count of ≥ 10 visits are shown.
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

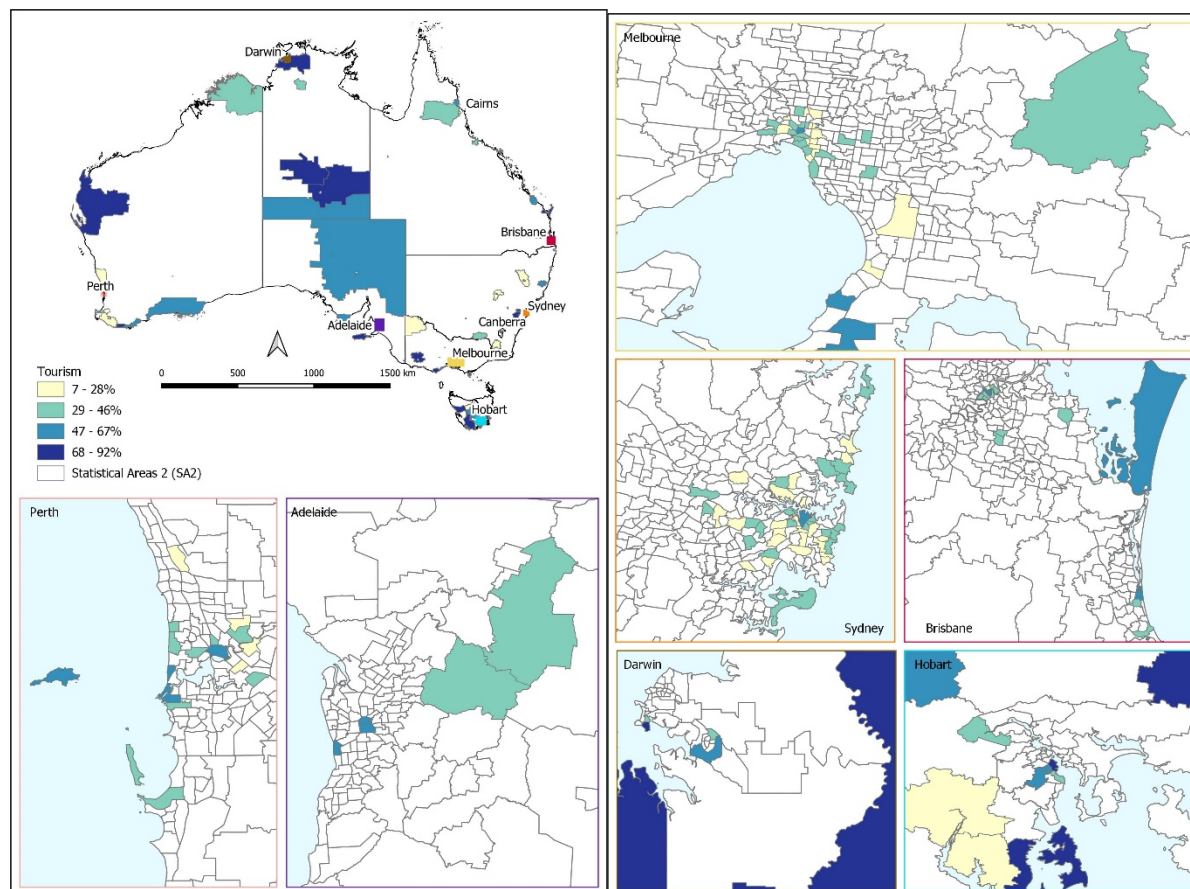
In total, almost three in five (57.2%) visits to capital cities were for tourism purposes. Greater Hobart was the most popular tourism capital city destination, with almost four fifths (78.1%) of WHM visits for this purpose. Around two thirds of WHM visits to Greater Darwin (65.5%) and Greater Adelaide (63.0%) were for tourism, while tourism was the reason for around half of Greater Perth (50.3%) and Greater Brisbane (51.9%) WHM visits.

Tourism was the primary reason for visiting a high number of SA2 destinations peaking at more than four in five visits to Yuendumu-Anmatjere (near Alice Springs) in the Northern Territory and four in five visits to Hobart, Tasmania (see Figure 6-5). In terms of number of visits



specified for tourism purposes, Sydney-Haymarket-The Rocks had the highest number, followed by Melbourne and Brisbane City, with these representing around two thirds of all visits to these areas.

Figure 6-5: Visited location (SA2) for tourism reasons



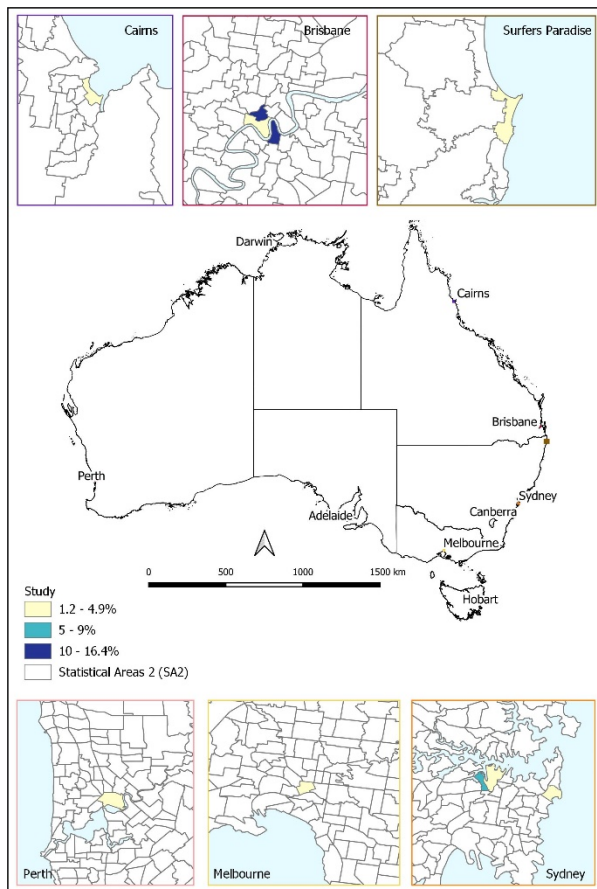
Note, only SA2s with a count of ≥ 10 visits are shown.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

There were few areas designated by WHMs that were visited mainly for study purposes. The locations with the largest number of visits for this reason included Sydney-Haymarket-The Rocks (representing 2.8% of all visits to this area) and Brisbane City (3.5%) (see Figure 6-6). The area with the highest proportion (20.0%) of visits specifically for study was Epping-North Epping in Greater Sydney - although this accounted for a total of only a handful of visits to this area. Although WHMs identified greater capital cities as primary study sites fewer than 3% of visits to these areas were focused on study – with tourism and work the leading reasons for visits. Of the capital cities, Greater Perth (2.6%) and Greater Brisbane (2.5%) recorded the highest proportion of study-related visits.

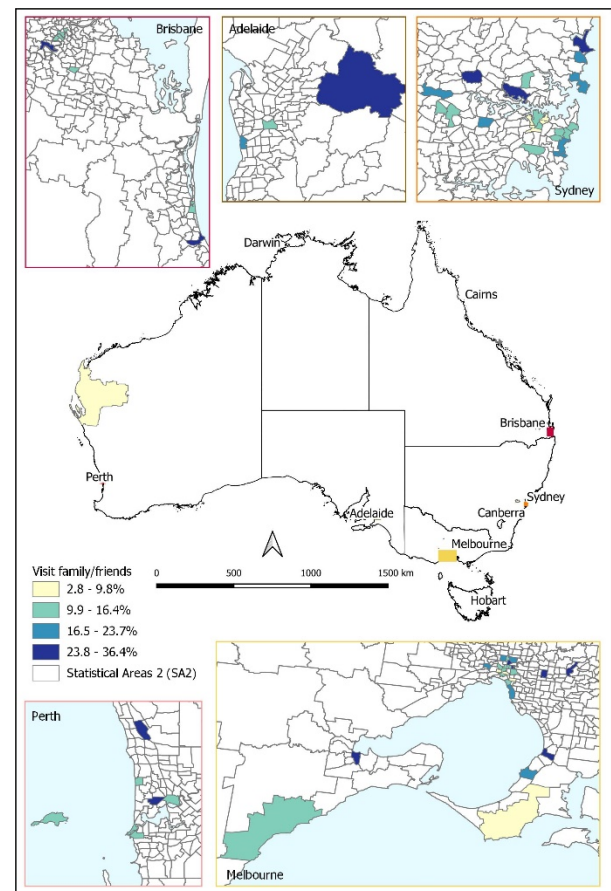
Visits to family and friends accounted for less than one sixth of all visits to the greater capital cities, Greater Melbourne had the highest proportion of visits for this purpose (13.6%), followed by Greater Adelaide (13.5%), Greater Perth (13.5%), and Greater Sydney (12.1%). Less than 10% of WHM visits to Greater Brisbane, Hobart and Darwin were to see family and friends. The highest number of visits to see family and friends were for Sydney-Haymarket-The Rocks and Melbourne, accounting for 11.8% and 12.9% respectively of all visits to these areas (see Figure 6-7). Areas with a high proportion of visits specifically to see family and friends included Ringwood (Victoria, 36.4%), and Western Australia's Mandurah (32.3%) and Claremont (35.7%).

Figure 6-6: Visited location (SA2) for study reasons



Note, only SA2s with a count of ≥ 10 visits are shown.
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 6-7: Visited location (SA2) to see family and friends



Note, only SA2s with a count of ≥ 10 visits are shown.
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

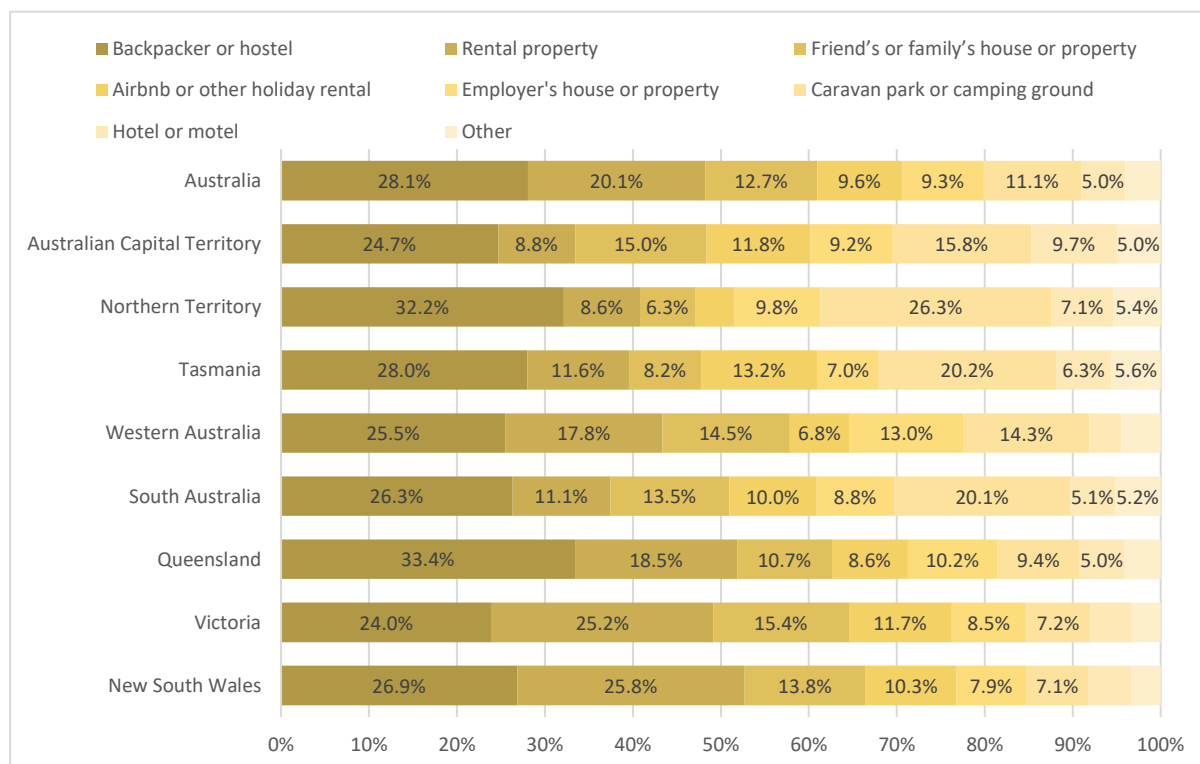
6.3 Accommodation types in various locations

Overall, 61,106 accommodation stays were reported by WHMs²⁵ who provided information about an average of 4.6 stays during their time in Australia. The most common type of accommodation for WHMs were backpackers/hostels (28.1%) and rental properties (20.1%; see Figure 6-8). Excluding those who did not know their accommodation type (and 'other'), the least common accommodation type was hotel or motel (5.0%) and employer's house or property (9.3%). Compared with the evaluation undertaken by Tan et al. (2009), the proportion of WHMs staying in hostels has decreased by about ten percentage points. This is likely to be due to the increased prevalence of short-term 'Airbnb' style accommodation options as reported in 9.6% of stays. Across states and territories, stays in backpackers or hostels were most common in Queensland (33.4% of Queensland stays) and least common in Victoria (24.0% of Victorian stays). More than one quarter (26.3%) of stays in the Northern Territory were in a caravan park or camping ground, making this a very popular accommodation choice in the territory.

²⁵ 13,265 WHMs provided accommodation data.



Figure 6-8: Accommodation type, by state and territory

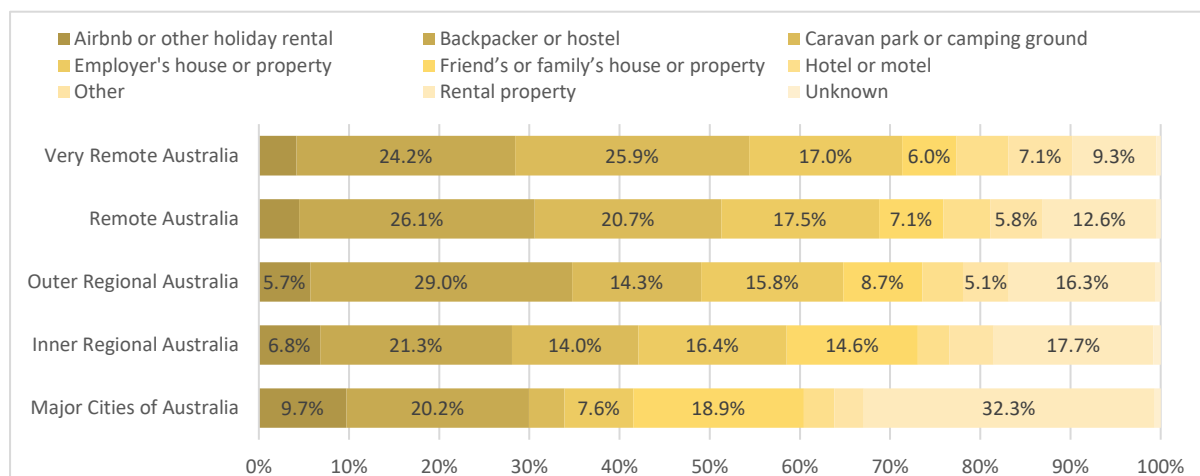


Note that percentages in the above figure are calculated by dividing the number of stays in a specific type of accommodation in a state or territory by the total number of stays recorded in that State. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

There were significant differences between WHM accommodation stays based on the remoteness classification of the area in which they stayed. In major Australian cities, rental properties were the most commonly reported accommodation type, representing 32.5% of all city stays (see Figure 6-9). Airbnb and holiday rental stays were also common in the major cities representing about 10% of all city stays. In outer regional and remote areas more than one quarter of WHM stays were at backpackers and hostels, while 26.1% of stays in very remote Australia were in caravan parks or camping grounds, closely followed by backpacker and hostel stays (24.4%). Likely due to the nature of work in these regions, and the limited availability of other accommodation types, employers provided housing for 16-18% of stays in all regional areas, compared with only 7.7% of those staying in major cities.

Figure 6-9: Accommodation type used by WHMs, by region



Note, labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Short term stays were relatively common amongst WHMs (see Table 6-1). Excluding responses indicating no time spent at a location, the most common duration of stay was shorter than one week, a finding consistent across all states and territories. In the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory, stays of less than one week were considerably more common than in the other states. In New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and Western Australia, the second most common stay duration was 4 to 12 weeks, and the third most common stay duration was 12 to 26 weeks. The median duration of accommodation stay was consistent across Australia, standing at 4 weeks for stays in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia, 2 weeks for stays in South Australia, and 1 week for stays in Tasmania, Northern Territory, and the ACT.

Table 6-1: Duration of accommodation stay, by state or territory

| | NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | ACT |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Less than 1 week | 31.1% | 30.0% | 31.6% | 46.6% | 28.7% | 49.0% | 50.8% | 65.7% |
| 1 to 2 weeks | 11.7% | 11.8% | 12.2% | 11.5% | 12.6% | 12.3% | 11.6% | 6.7% |
| 2 to 4 weeks | 10.8% | 10.8% | 11.6% | 9.5% | 12.3% | 10.1% | 10.0% | 5.4% |
| 4 to 12 weeks | 17.7% | 18.7% | 17.8% | 14.5% | 20.1% | 15.5% | 12.5% | 7.6% |
| 12 to 26 weeks | 16.1% | 16.3% | 18.0% | 10.9% | 15.9% | 9.0% | 9.3% | 8.0% |
| 26 to 52 weeks | 10.2% | 10.2% | 6.6% | 5.3% | 8.5% | 2.9% | 4.3% | 5.8% |
| More than 52 weeks | 2.4% | 2.3% | 2.1% | 1.6% | 1.9% | 1.0% | 1.6% | 0.8% |
| Median (weeks) | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

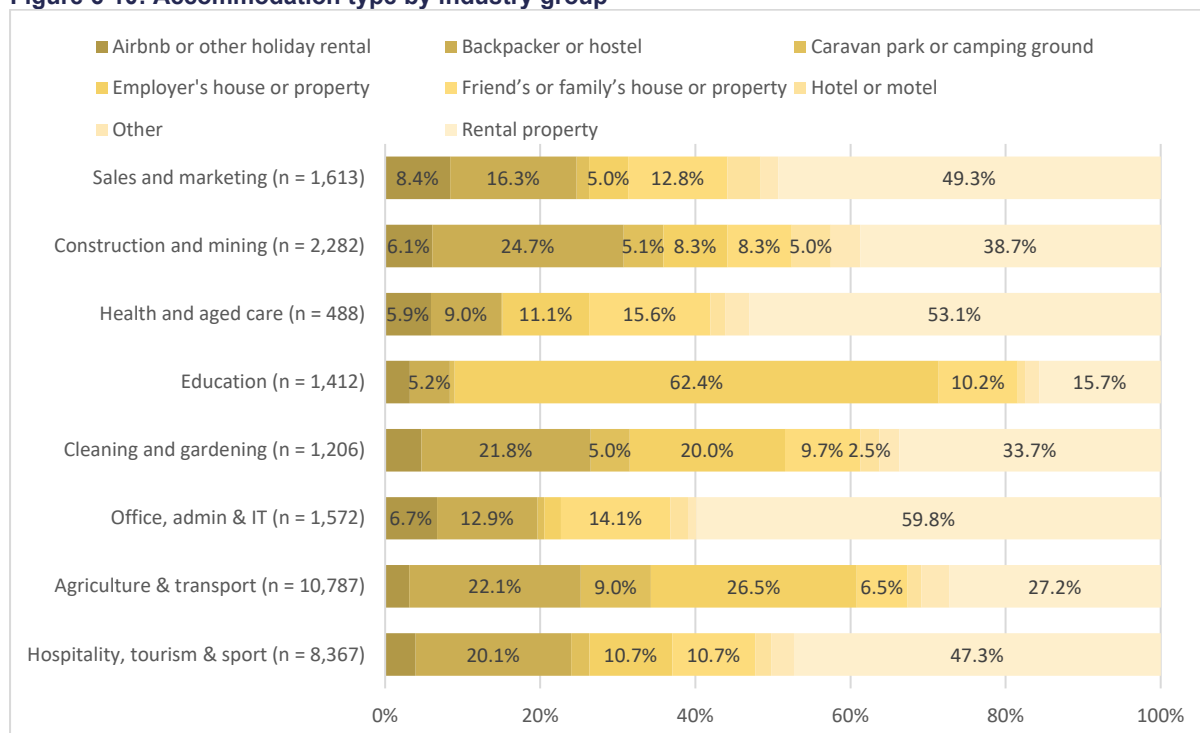
Note, Based on 53,498 recorded stays. Excludes stays of 0 weeks and missing data.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Across industry groups, there were also significant differences in WHMs' accommodation types (see Figure 6-10). The overwhelming proportion (62.4%) of stays for those employed in education were in employer's house or property. This is due to the high proportion of individuals in this sector working as nannies and au pairs. Most (59.8%) of those working in office, administration and IT reported stays in rental properties, with more than half (53.1%) of those working in health and aged care also reporting stays in rental accommodation. Around one quarter (27.2%) of WHMs in agriculture and transport reported stays in rental properties, another quarter (26.5%) in their employer's house or property and just under a quarter (22.1%) in backpackers or hostels.



Figure 6-10: Accommodation type by industry group



Note, proportions are calculated by dividing the number of stays in an accommodation type in an industry group by the total number of stays reported for that industry. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

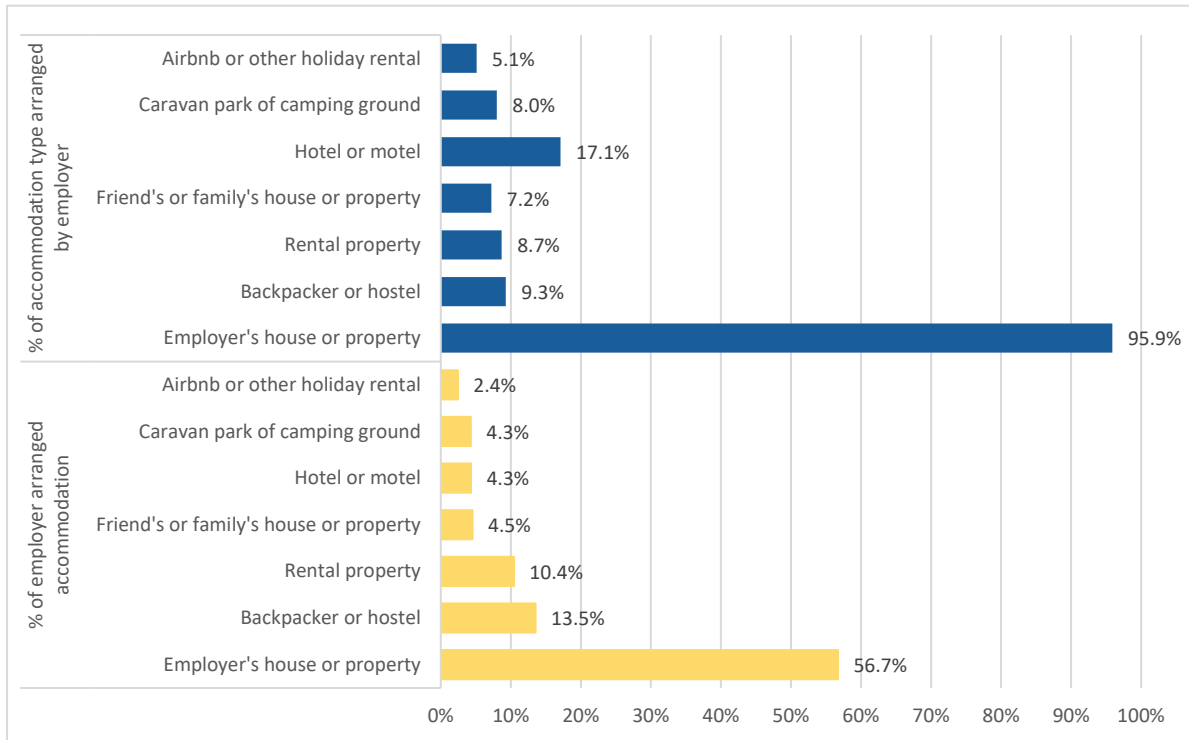
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Information about whether employers arranged accommodation for WHMs was provided by 12,404 WHMs for 54,498 stays.²⁶ Of these accommodation stays, 8,557 (15.7%) were arranged by the employer. Employers were significantly more likely to arrange accommodation for a WHM at the employer's own house or property, with more than half of all employer-arranged accommodation (56.7%) being of this type (see Figure 6-11). Other significant accommodation types organised by employers were backpackers and hostels (13.5%) and rental properties (10.4%). Overall, more than nine in ten (95.9%) accommodation stays in an employer's house or property were arranged by the employer.²⁷ Employers also arranged almost one in five (17.1%) hotel or motel stays.

²⁶ Representing 89.2% of all reported stays.

²⁷ It is likely that other stays of this type may have been arranged by job hire agents.

Figure 6-11: Accommodation arranged by employer by accommodation type



Note, 8,238 types of stay were arranged by employers and presented here. Other and unknown responses not included.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.



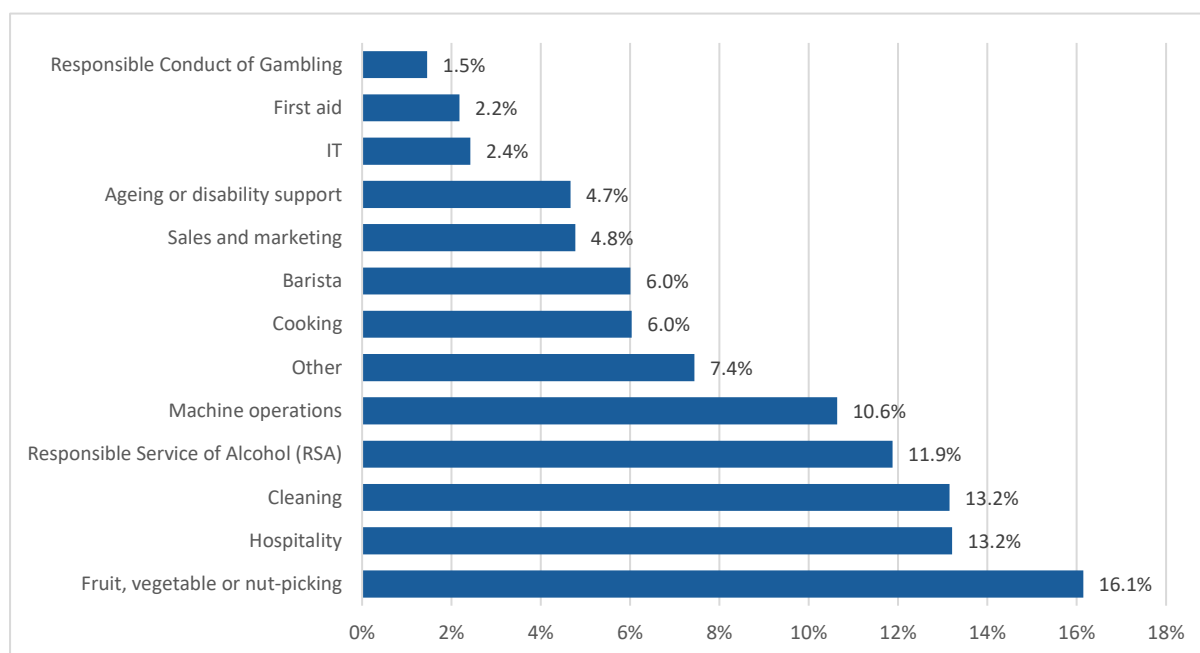
7 WHM: Training and education

7.1 On-the-job training

About two in five (n=9,182) surveyed WHMs reported receiving at least one type of on-the-job training in their main reported job in each state or territory worked.²⁸ Multiple training responses were allowed for an individual job and data was provided for 12,987 jobs, covering 32,920 incidences of training. Of those who reported that they received training, the average number of skills courses/training undertaken was 3.6. WHMs were most likely to receive non-specific skills training, with job induction, and work health and safety the two most common types of training received. Assuming induction and work health and safety training occurs once per job, WHMs reported inductions for approximately two in three jobs (66.5%), and work health and safety training in more than half (52.6%).

The most common on-the-job training specific to a job (see Figure 7-1) was fruit, vegetable or nut picking, representing 16.1% of on-the-job training specific to a job, followed by hospitality training (13.2%) and cleaning training (13.2%). The least offered on-the-job training specific to a job was for responsible conduct of gambling (1.5%) and first aid (2.2%).

Figure 7-1: Types of on-the-job training undertaken specific to job



Note, 17,455 incidences of training specific to job were reported. Multiple training responses were allowed.
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Most on-the-job training was reported in two industry groups – hospitality, tourism and sport (34.0%) and agriculture and transport (28.8%). Inductions and work health and safety training made up 66.2% of all training undertaken in construction and mining and 69.1% of those in office, administration and IT industries, but only half of those in agriculture and transport (52.5%) and just over one third (36.1%) of training opportunities in hospitality, tourism and sport. Relative to the proportion of WHMs working in each industry, there is a considerably lower amount of training offered in education which accounts for 6.5% of all employment but only 4.8% of all trainings. Hospitality and health and aged care provided the most training relative to employment.

²⁸ No training was offered in 5,010 jobs, reported by an additional 4,014 WHMs.

Almost half of those in hospitality, tourism and sport who reported training specific to their jobs reported either training in Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) or in hospitality. Training in agriculture and transport was focused on either fruit, vegetable or nut picking (44.4%) or machine operations (20.4%). In construction and mining, job specific training was focused on machine operations (30.4%), whereas IT was the focus for half (48.6%) of training in office, administration, and IT. There are significant differences between industry groups when it comes to being offered on-the-job training. Table 7-1 shows the proportion of WHMs who reported that they received no training while employed.

Table 7-1: On-the-job training by industry group

| Industry | Proportion receiving no training |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Education | 35.0% |
| Cleaning and gardening | 14.4% |
| Office, admin & IT | 12.9% |
| Agriculture & transport | 11.8% |
| Sales and marketing | 11.8% |
| Hospitality, tourism & sport | 9.7% |
| Construction and mining | 8.1% |

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

7.2 Formal study

One in twenty WHMs (5.0%) provided information about formal courses of study they were undertaking during their working holiday in Australia. Aligning closely with the proportion of women (61.5%) responding to the survey, 61.6% of WHMs undertaking formal study were women (see Table 7-2). Most of the courses reported by WHMs were undertaken in New South Wales (33.8%) and Queensland (32.7%). Very few courses were reported in the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory, combining for 2.3% of the total number of courses, commensurate with the lower numbers of visitors to these states and territories.

Table 7-2: Courses WHMs enrolled, by state/territory and sex

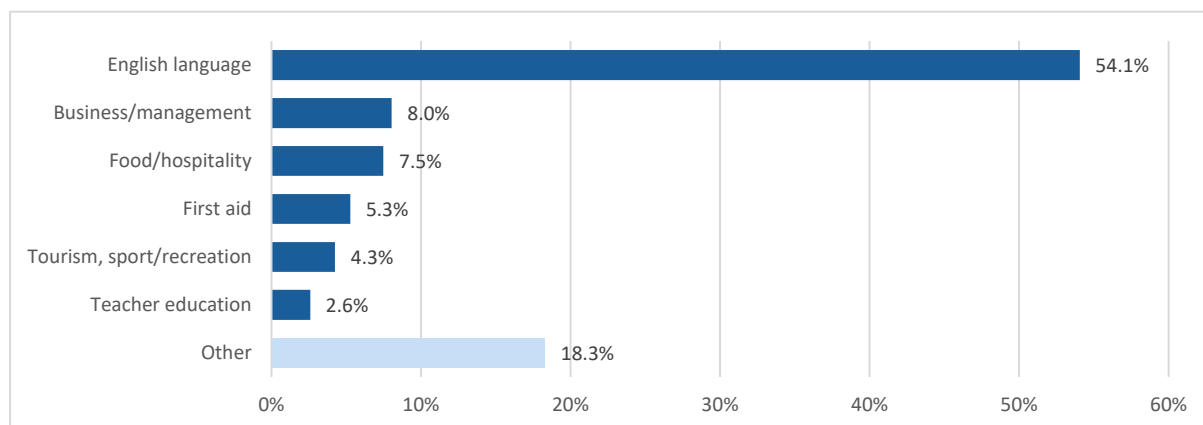
| | Male (%) | Female (%) | Total (%) | Total Courses |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| NSW | 11.7% | 22.2% | 33.8% | 365 |
| Vic | 7.7% | 10.4% | 18.1% | 195 |
| Qld | 12.4% | 20.2% | 32.7% | 353 |
| SA | 1.7% | 2.2% | 3.9% | 42 |
| WA | 4.2% | 5.3% | 9.4% | 102 |
| Tas | 0.7% | 0.4% | 1.1% | 12 |
| NT | 0.2% | 0.8% | 1.0% | 11 |
| ACT | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 2 |
| TOTAL | 38.6% | 61.6% | 100.0% | 1,082 |

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

More than half (54.1%) of all reported courses were for English language (see Figure 7-2). Business or management courses accounted for 8.0%, with 7.5% of courses being for food and hospitality. Almost one in twenty courses undertaken were designated 'other' courses which included university courses and degrees (e.g. engineering, nursing, medicine, marine biology), short courses and internships along with vocational training (e.g. white cards, barista training, high risk work licence, forklift licence). The low number of responses for this question, as well as the preponderance of English courses indicate that formal study options do not appear to be a significant pull factor for WHMs coming to Australia.



Figure 7-2: Fields of study of Australian WHMs



Note, Based on reports of study involving 1,082 courses.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

The average course duration for WHMs in Australia was 14.7 weeks, with men (15.1 weeks) spending about half a week longer studying than women (14.5 weeks). Time studying increased with age, with WHMs aged 18 to 19 years studying for 12 weeks on average, followed by 13.6 weeks for those aged 20 to 24 years, 14.2 weeks for those aged 25 to 30 years, and 18.8 weeks for those aged 31 years and older. This is congruent with older WHMs taking on average more courses than younger WHMs. For example, WHMs aged 31 years and older reported studying an average of 1.2 courses per person. Whereas WHMs aged 18 to 19 years averaged 1.1 courses per person. Response rates are low by citizenship, and averages for the United Kingdom, Canada, the Netherlands and the United States - which are lower than other countries - should be interpreted with caution. A summary is presented in Table 7-3.

Table 7-3: Average weeks of courses, by sex, age group, and country

| | Average weeks | No. of courses |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| (a) by sex | | |
| Male | 15.1 | 352 |
| Female | 14.5 | 575 |
| (b) by age group | | |
| 18-19 years | 12.0 | 51 |
| 20-24 years | 13.6 | 314 |
| 25-30 years | 14.2 | 447 |
| 31+ years | 18.8 | 87 |
| (c) by country | | |
| Germany | 10.6 | 67 |
| UK | 19.4 | 12 |
| France | 10.6 | 114 |
| Taiwan | 17.3 | 118 |
| Italy | 16.9 | 109 |
| Canada | 25.0 | 12 |
| USA | 20.4 | 37 |
| South Korea | 12.2 | 112 |
| Netherlands | 19.6 | 20 |
| Japan | 13.1 | 202 |
| Other | 19.8 | 122 |
| TOTAL | 14.7 | 925 |

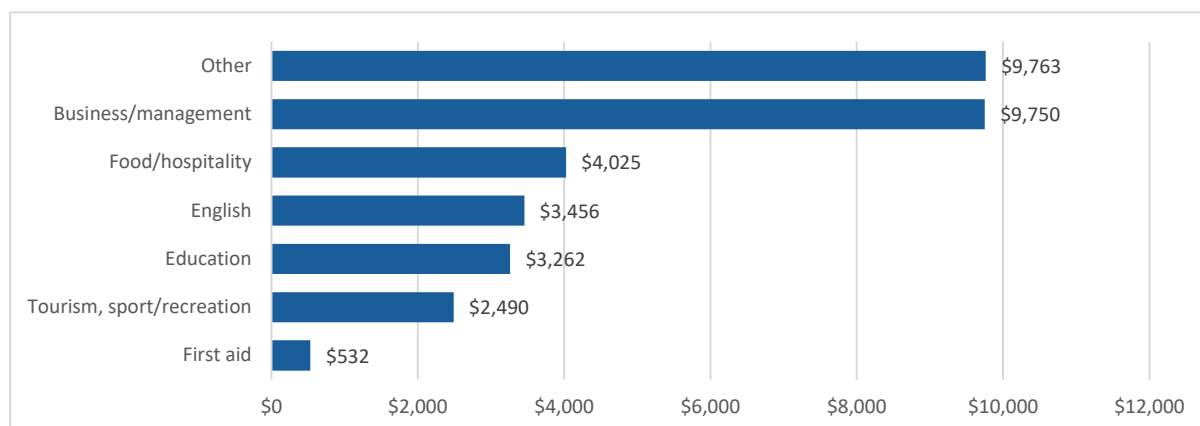
Note, the countries presented here are based on the ten most commonly reported citizenship of WHMs, not the countries with the highest response rates to this question. Total excludes responses who did not specify their sex, age, or country of citizenship.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

7.2.1 Study expenditure

From the 677 WHMs who provided an estimate of spending on courses while in Australia, the average total expenditure was \$5,400,²⁹ and the average number of courses studied was 1.2. Business and management courses were the most expensive of the specified course types, averaging \$9,800 (see Figure 7-3). However, the cost of 'other' courses³⁰ was slightly higher on average (this may relate to the number of full fee-paying university courses included). First aid courses, tending to be of the shortest duration, were the least expensive with an average cost of \$532.

Figure 7-3: Average WHM expenditure on study while in Australia



Note, Based on a total of 773 courses studied. 'Other' was a response option in the survey.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Due to the low number of responses, interpretation of study expenditure by country of citizenship must be done with caution. WHMs from Germany and France spent the least on study, with average study expenditure of \$3,800 and \$3,900 respectively. Those from the United States reported spending the most on study with average expenditure of \$15,000, followed by WHMs from China who spent an average of \$12,900 on study.

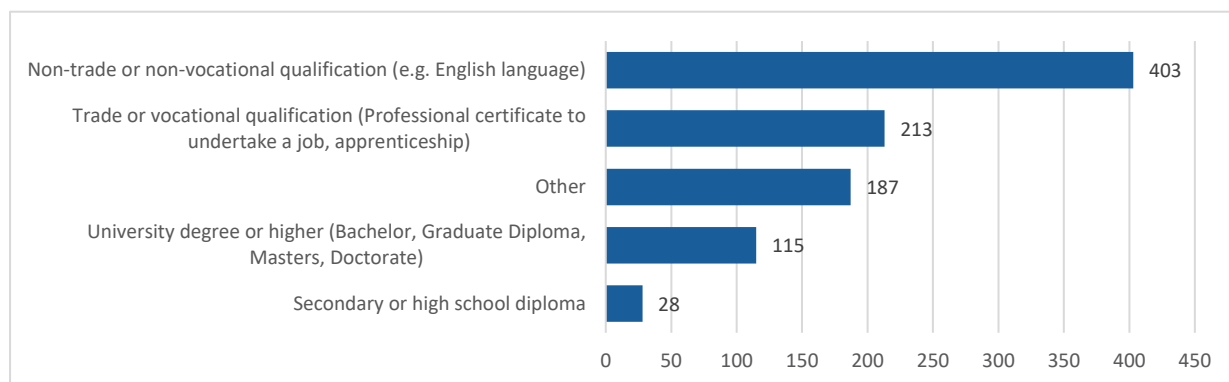
Qualifications received from studying in Australia were reported by 808 WHMs across a total of 946 courses (see Figure 7-4). Almost half (42.6%) of all qualifications received by WHMs were non-award courses, and almost one quarter (22.5%) were trade or vocational qualifications. Only one in eight (12.2%) qualifications received by WHMs in Australia were at university level or higher.

²⁹ Total study expenditure is rounded to the nearest \$100.

³⁰ The small number of 'other' courses mean this cannot be disaggregated.



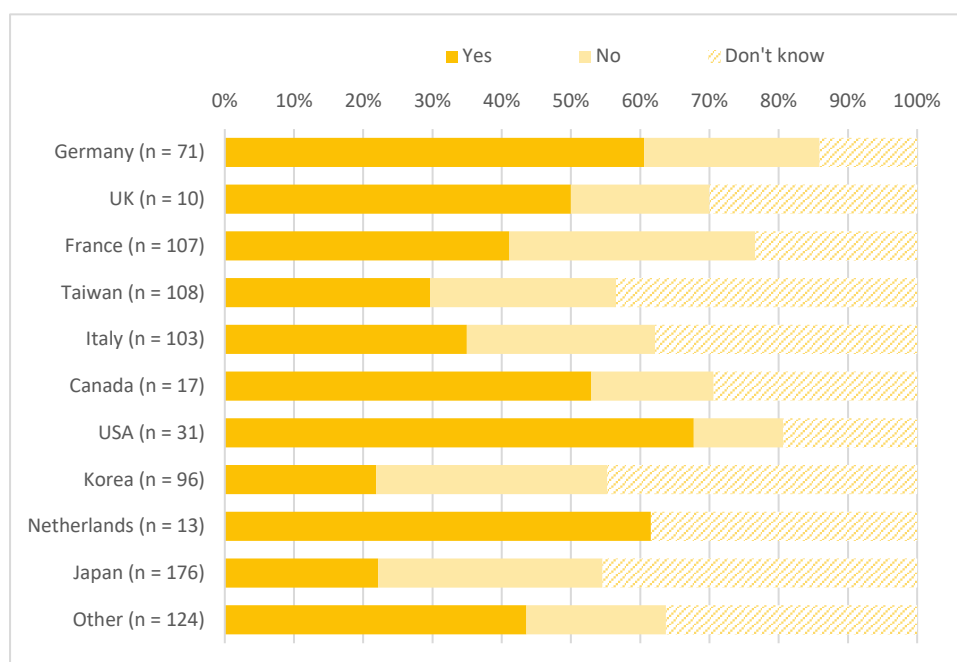
Figure 7-4: Qualifications received from courses in Australia



Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

WHMs were evenly split in their expectations that their qualification received in Australia would be recognised in their home country. Slightly more than one in three (36.4%) expected their qualification would be recognised, compared to those WHMs who expected their qualification would not be recognised (27.5%). The remainder (36.1%) were unsure. WHMs from English-speaking or European countries tended to be more certain that their qualifications would be recognised in their home country, whereas those from Asian countries were the least certain. Given the low numbers in some countries, results should be viewed as indicative.

Figure 7-5: Expectations that qualifications received in Australia would be recognised at home



Note, Countries shown are those with the highest number of WHMs in the survey.

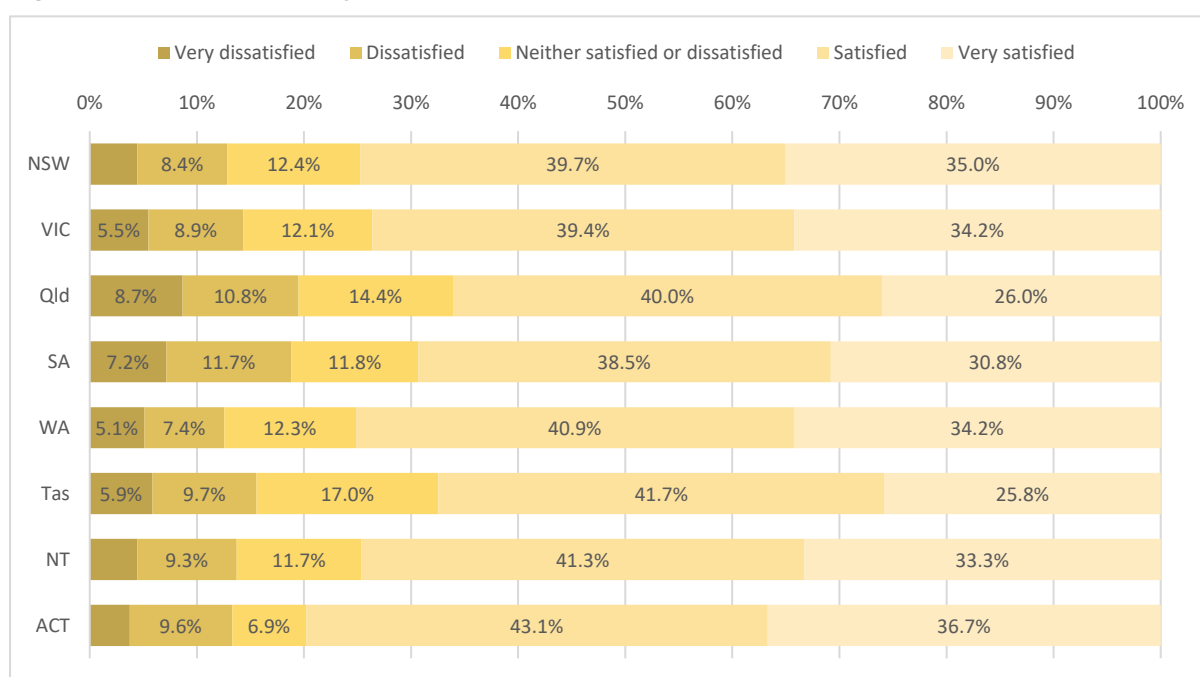
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

8 WHM: Motivations and experiences

8.1 Job satisfaction

About half (52.0%) of WHMs provided information about satisfaction with their main paid job in each state in which they worked. These responses cover 16,335 jobs. WHMs tended to be satisfied in their jobs. More than seven in ten jobs were reported as satisfying to some extent (31.8% very satisfied; and 40% satisfied). Very high job satisfaction was reported in more than one third of main jobs in the Australian Capital Territory (36.7%), followed by New South Wales (35.0%) and Victoria (34.2%; see Figure 8-1). Dissatisfaction was comparatively low although it peaked at almost one in five (19.5%) main jobs in Queensland and 18.9% in South Australia - of which 8.7% and 7.2% respectively were rated as very dissatisfactory.

Figure 8-1: Job satisfaction by state



Note, percentages are calculated using the number of main jobs as the denominator, n = 16,335.

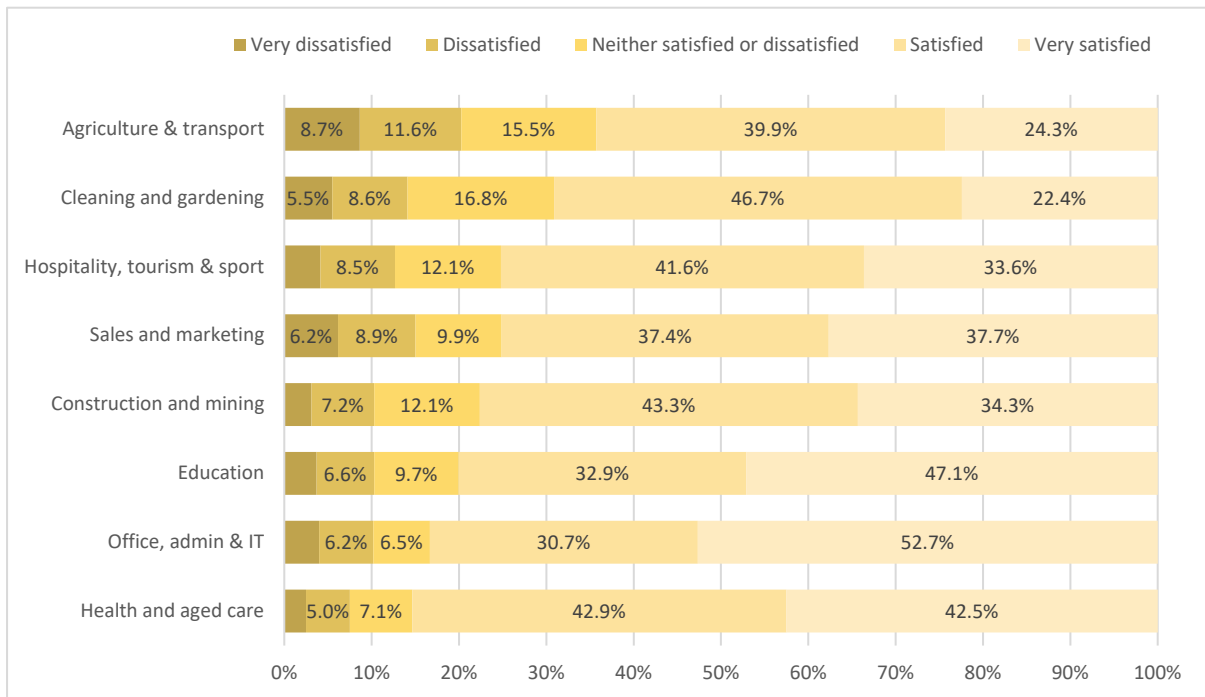
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

WHMs engaged in health and aged care were most satisfied, reporting satisfaction with 85.4% of jobs in this industry group (42.9% satisfied, 42.5% very satisfied, see Figure 8-2). WHMs working in the office, administration and IT industry were also well satisfied - more than half (52.7%) of these jobs were very satisfying with a further 30.7% satisfied, a total of 83.4% satisfaction. Although job satisfaction for three quarters (75.1%) of sales and marketing jobs was good, WHMs in 15.1% of these jobs reported a level of dissatisfaction. Satisfaction for cleaning and gardening jobs was second lowest (69.1%), accompanied by the highest proportion (16.8%) of WHMs reporting neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction with the job.

Satisfaction was lowest for jobs in agriculture and transport, where one in five jobs (20.3%) were reported as dissatisfying - 8.7% of main jobs in this industry were reported as very dissatisfying, and 11.6% dissatisfying. It is noteworthy that within this industry group, one quarter (25.1%) of crop farming jobs were considered dissatisfying (to some extent).



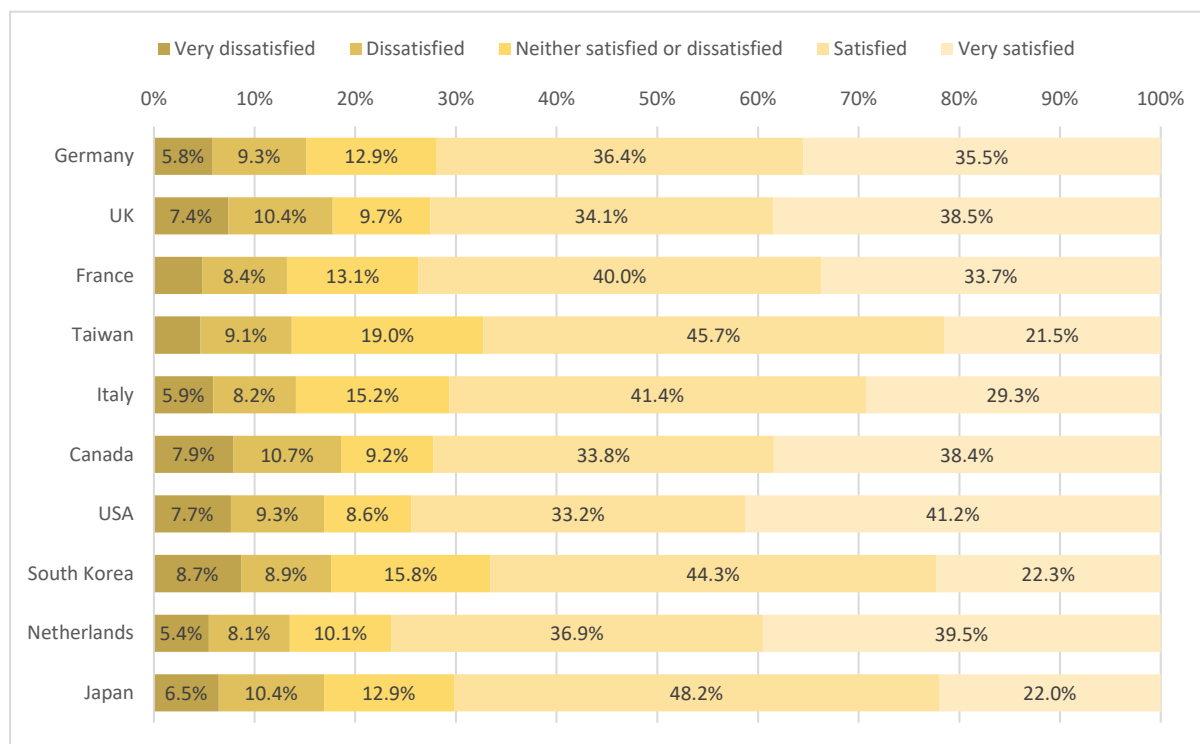
Figure 8-2: Job satisfaction by industry



Note, percentages calculated based on n = 14,491 main jobs with WHM reported satisfaction and industry group. Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 8-3 shows job satisfaction by country of citizenship. Overall, WHMs from Canada were the most dissatisfied with nearly 1 in 5 (18.6%) reporting they were either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied in their job, followed closely by those from the UK who reported 17.7% dissatisfaction. Citizens from the Netherlands were the most satisfied in their jobs, with more than 3 in 4 (76.4%) reporting they were either satisfied or very satisfied in their job, followed by those from the USA (74.4%), and France (73.7%). The highest level of very dissatisfied responses was from citizens of South Korea, at about 1 in 10 (8.7%), followed by Canada (7.9%). The highest level of very satisfied responses was from citizens of the USA, with more than 2 in 5.

Figure 8-3: Job satisfaction by country of citizenship, by Top 10 countries



Note, percentages calculated based on n = 13,291 main jobs with WHM reported satisfaction and country of citizenship.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020

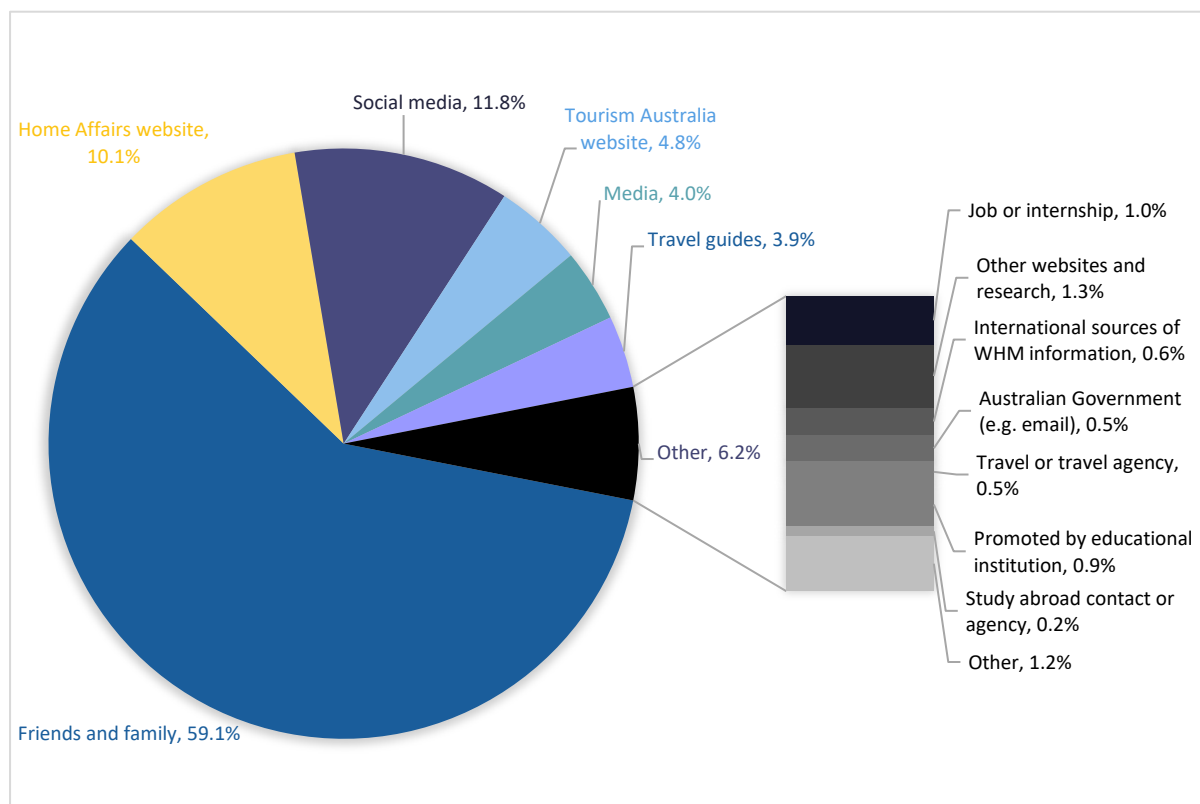
8.2 WHM perspective

8.2.1 Finding out about the WHM program

Three in five (59.1%) WHMs reported the main means by which they learnt about the WHM program was through friends and family (see Figure 8-4). A further one in five learnt about it either through social media (11.8%) or through the Department of Home Affairs website (10.1%). Fewer than one in twenty reported learning about the program via the Tourism Australia website (4.8%), media (including television, radio or advertising; 4.0%) or travel guides (3.9%). The 'other' means (6.2%) listed by WHMs could be classified as through an existing job or internship or via a potential employer in Australia, through an educational facility or a study abroad agency. Some reported doing their own research about working holidays usually with the aid of the internet or hearing about the program via a travel agent, or simply because they were well travelled. A small proportion (0.5%) indicated they learnt about the Australian WHM program from Australian Government emails.



Figure 8-4: Methods used for finding out about the WHM program



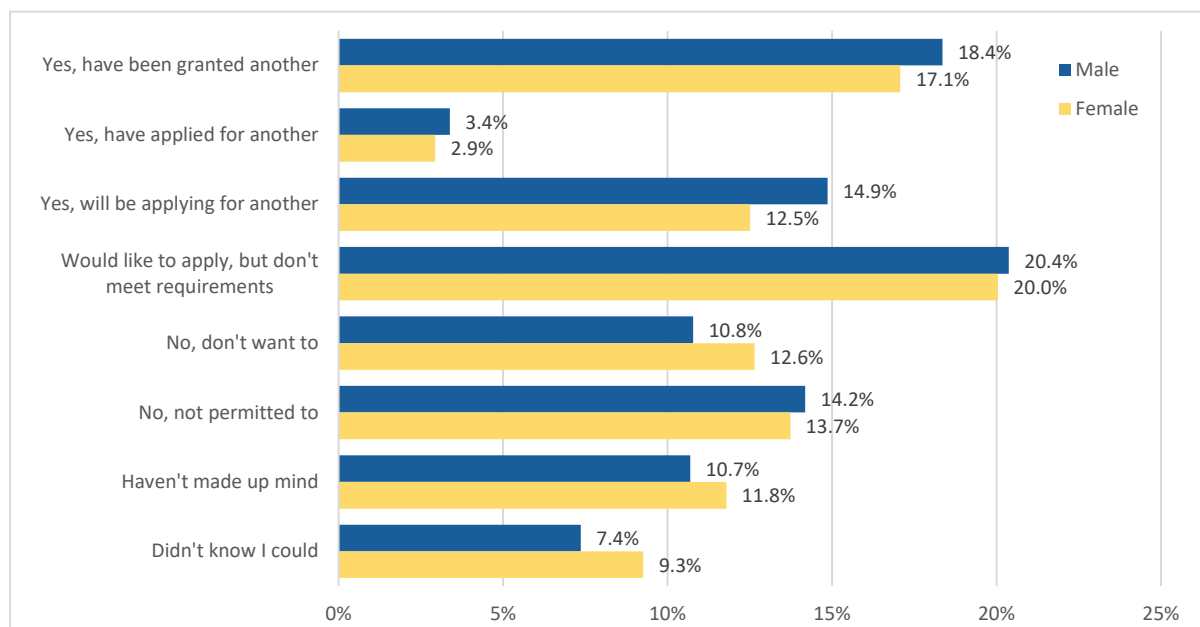
Note, data was provided for a total of 9,738 WHMs.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

8.2.2 Decisions about applying for subsequent WHM visa

Males (36.6%) were more likely than females (32.5%) to want a subsequent WHM visa, with more males having been granted, having applied for and planning to apply for a subsequent WHM visa (see Figure 8-5). Males were marginally more inclined than females to report they would like to apply but don't meet requirements (20.4% and 20.0%, respectively) and that they were not permitted to apply (14.2%, 13.7%). In contrast, compared with males, females were more likely to indicate they didn't want to (10.8%, 12.6%), didn't know they could (7.4%, 9.3%) or hadn't made up their minds (10.7%, 11.8%) about applying for another WHM visa.

Figure 8-5: Intention to apply for a subsequent WHM visa by sex



Note, data was provided for 3,666 male and 6,066 female WHMs.

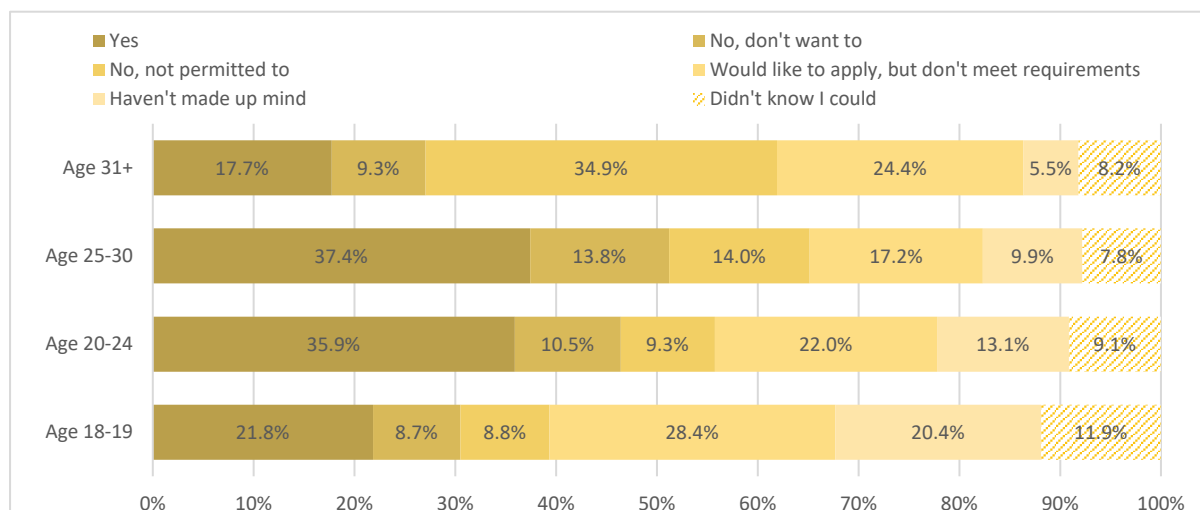
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Intention to apply for another Australian WHM visa varied by age cohort (see Figure 8-6). The oldest age cohort (31 years and over) were least likely to indicate they had or intended to apply for another visa (17.7%), a quarter of this group (24.4%) said they would like to but don't meet requirements, while more than a third (34.9%) indicated they did not meet requirements. One in five (21.8%) WHMs aged 18-19 years were interested in another WHM visa with a similar proportion (20.4%) unsure and yet to make up their mind. Just under one in ten (8.6%) of all WHMs were unaware that they were able to apply for a subsequent visa.

More than two in five Japanese (42.3%) and Taiwanese (41.3%) WHMs were applying for a subsequent visa (see Figure 8-7). One in five WHMs from the United States of America reported they did not want to apply for another visa, which was reflected in the low proportion (22.7%) who said they were applying. Italians (18.7%) and WHMs from the United Kingdom (18.6%) were most likely to say they were not permitted to apply for another visa. There was a relatively low rate (24.7%) of German WHMs applying for subsequent visas, with many of this youthful cohort not having made up their minds.

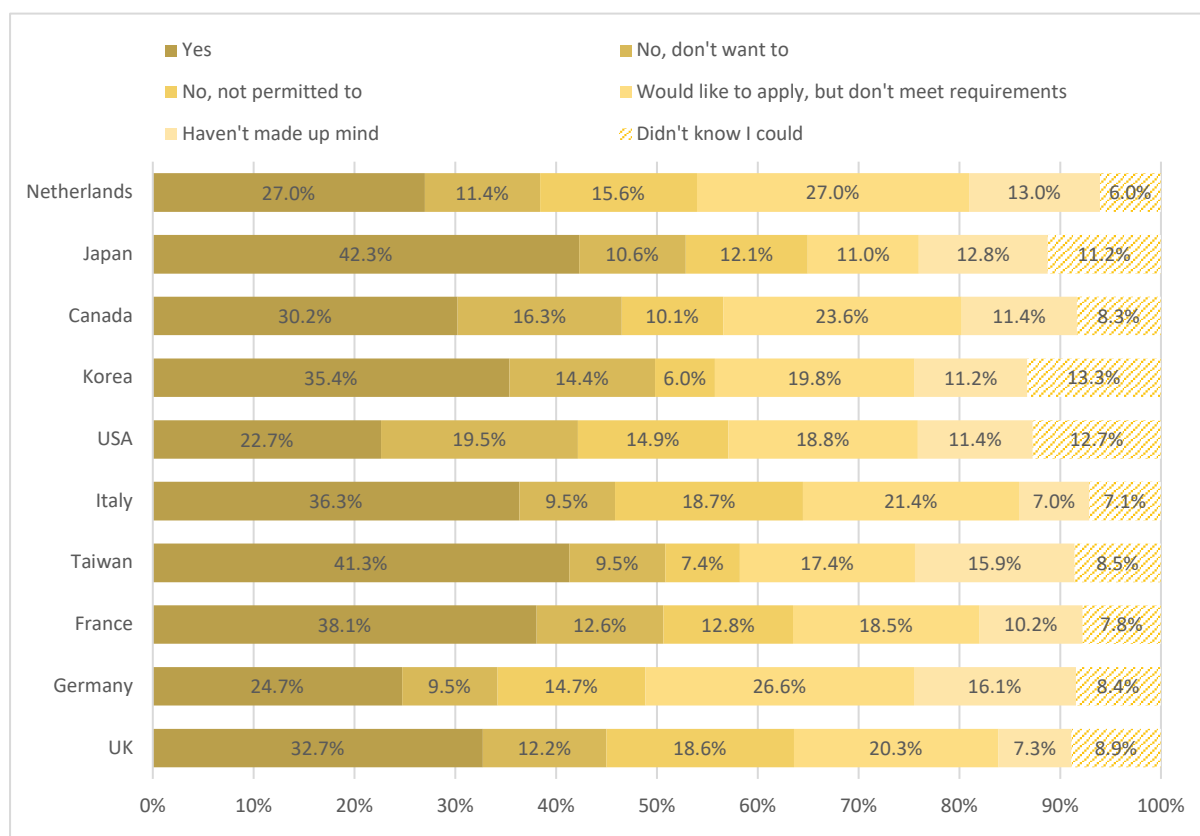


Figure 8-6: Intention to apply for a subsequent WHM visa by age group



Note, data was provided for 783 WHMs aged 18-19, 3,189 aged 20-24, 4,820 aged 25-30 and 806 aged 31 and over. Yes responses included those who had applied, had been granted or intended to apply. Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 8-7: Intention to apply for a subsequent WHM visa by Top 10 countries



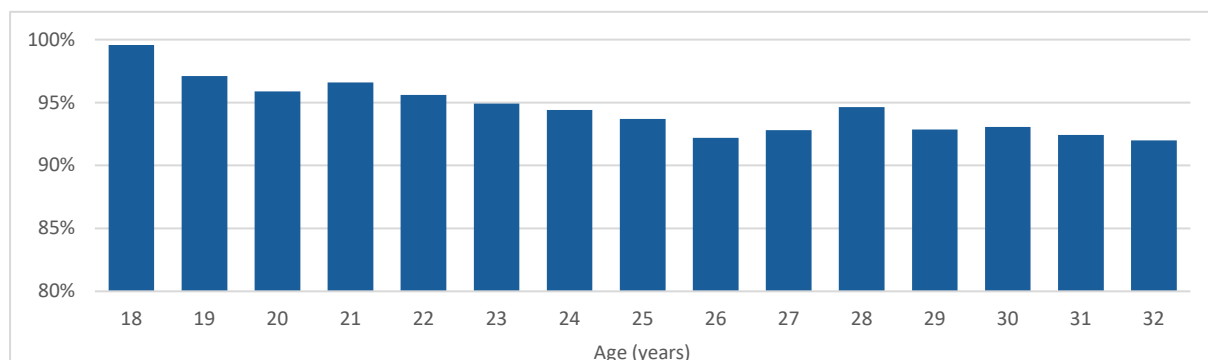
Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the most responses to this question, and account for 8,175 WHMs. Yes responses included those who had applied, had been granted or intended to apply. Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

8.2.3 Recommending the WHM program

Indicating strong endorsement of the WHM program, almost all (94.2%) WHMs reported they would recommend the program to their friends. Females (94.6%) were more like to endorse the

program than males (93.5%). A positive recommendation was also related to age; 99.6% of those aged 18 years would recommend the program, reducing fairly steadily with age to 92.0% of 32 year old WHMs (see Figure 8-8).

Figure 8-8: Would recommend the WHM program, by age

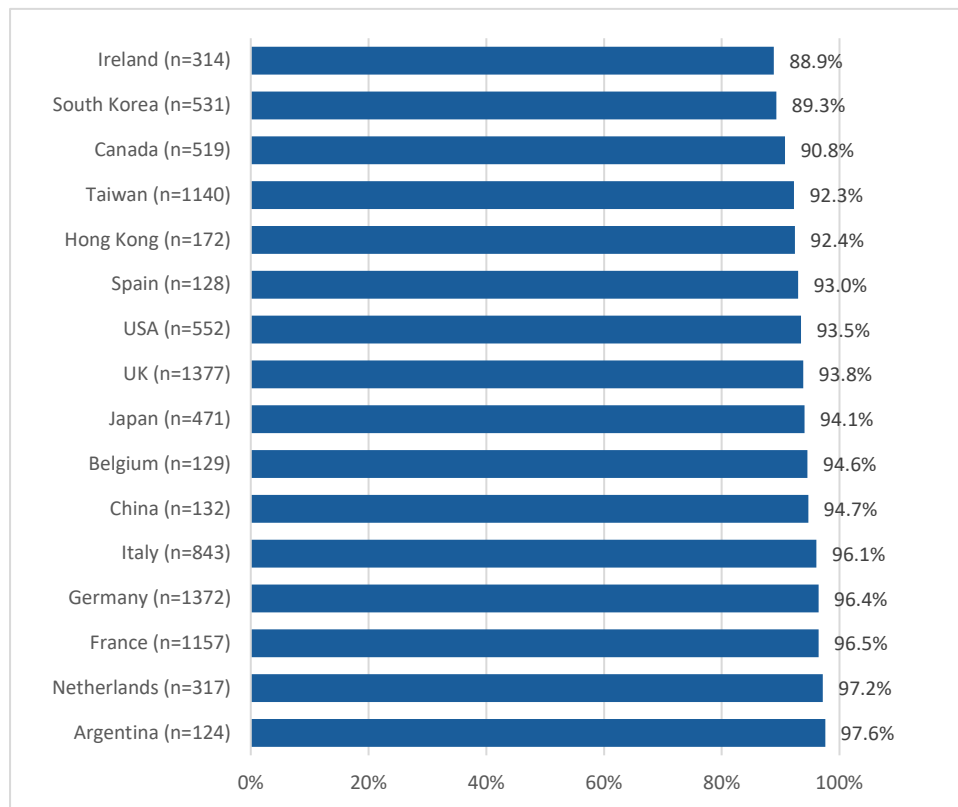


Note, Responses are shown for 9,692 WHMs based on age at arrival. The small number aged over 32 years on arrival are not presented.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

While still accounting for nine in ten affirmative responses, Irish (88.9%) and South Koreans (89.3%) were the least likely to recommend the WHM program to their friends (see Figure 8-9). Almost all Argentinians (97.6%) and Dutch (97.2%) WHMs would endorse the program to their friends. Only those countries with more than 100 responses were included to ensure the responses were representative.

Figure 8-9: Would recommend the WHM program, by citizenship



Note, for this purpose countries of citizenship with more than 100 response are presented. 'Other' includes aggregated responses from all other countries. Responses were provided by 9,856 WHMs.

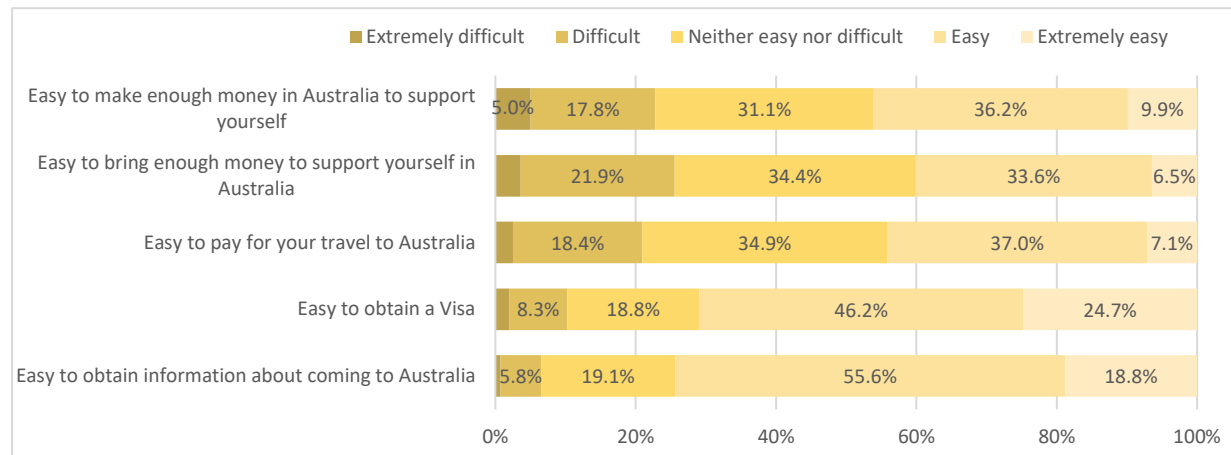
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.



8.3 Travel to and in Australia

Three quarters (74.4%) of WHMs said it was either easy or very easy to obtain information about coming to Australia (see Figure 8-10). Seven in ten (70.9%) also reported it was easy to obtain a visa. One quarter to one-fifth of WHMs reported some difficulty in paying for travel to Australia - and bringing and/or making enough money to support themselves in Australia.³¹

Figure 8-10: Factors making WHM travel to and within Australia easy



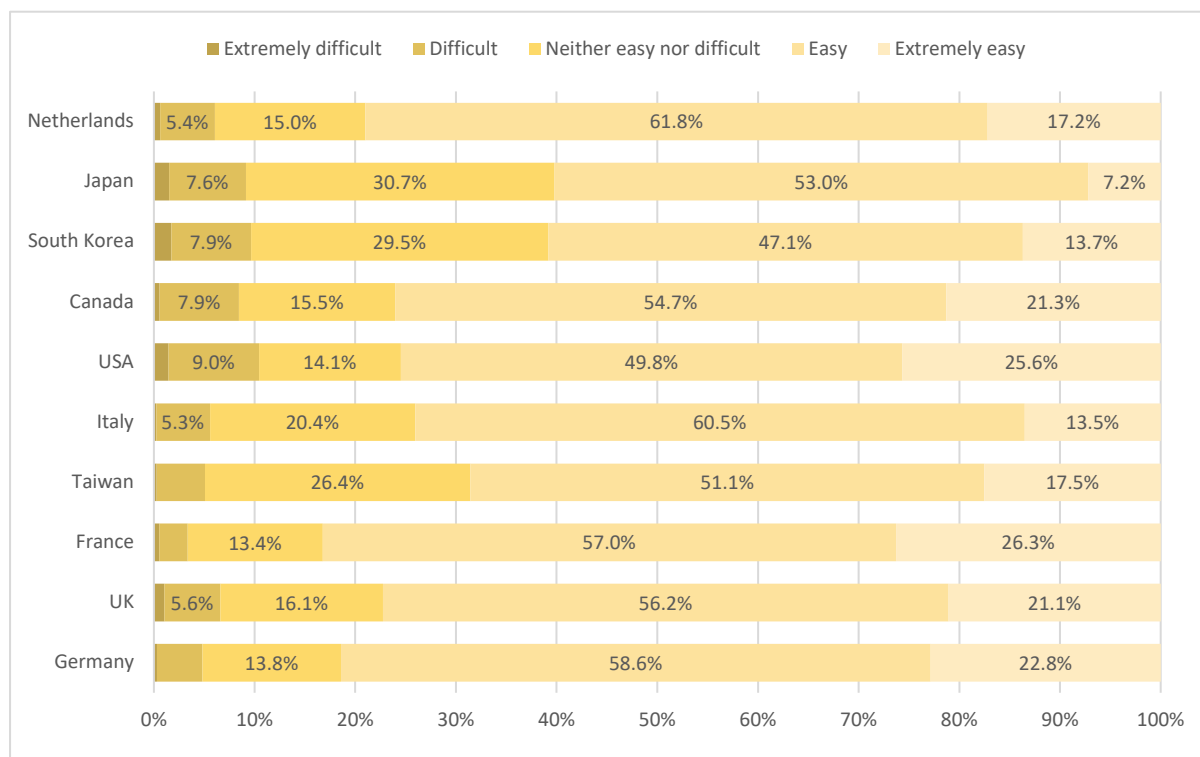
Note, data was provided by 9,782 WHMs. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

While there was a level of conformity, WHMs from some countries reported less ease in the pragmatics of travelling to Australia. Of the Top 10 countries, those with citizenship from a partner country in Asia had more difficulty getting information about WHM visas to Australia, compared with citizens from European or North American countries. Only three of five WHMs from South Korea (60.8%) and Japan (60.2%) reported it was easy to obtain information about coming to Australia compared with 81.4% of German and 83.2% of French WHMs (see Figure 8-11). The process for obtaining a visa was easiest for French (with 83.1% reporting it was easy or very easy) and Canadian (86.6%) WHMs, compared with those from Taiwan (57.7%), South Korea (60.4%) and Japan (63.7%; see Figure 8-12).

³¹ This was not related to work and earnings in Australia.

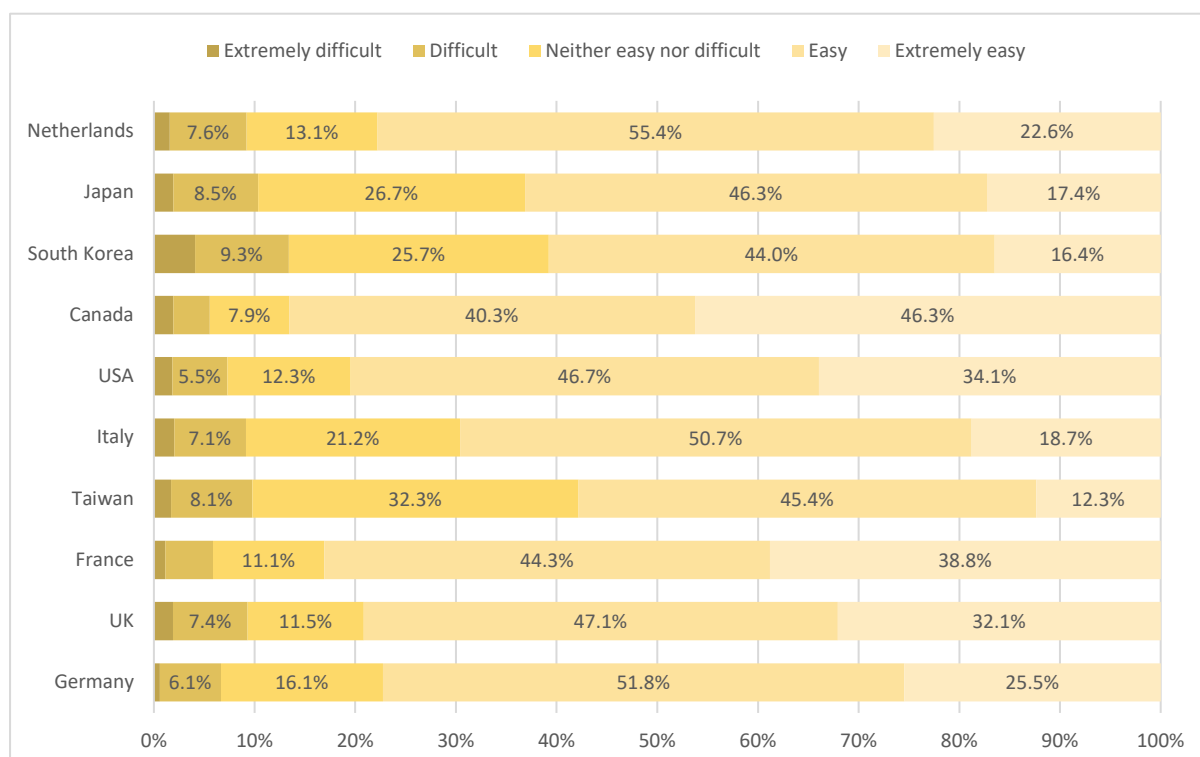
Figure 8-11: Easy to obtain information about coming to Australia, by Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those providing the most responses to this question, and account for 9,782 WHMs. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 8-12: Easy to obtain a WHM Visa, by Top 10 countries



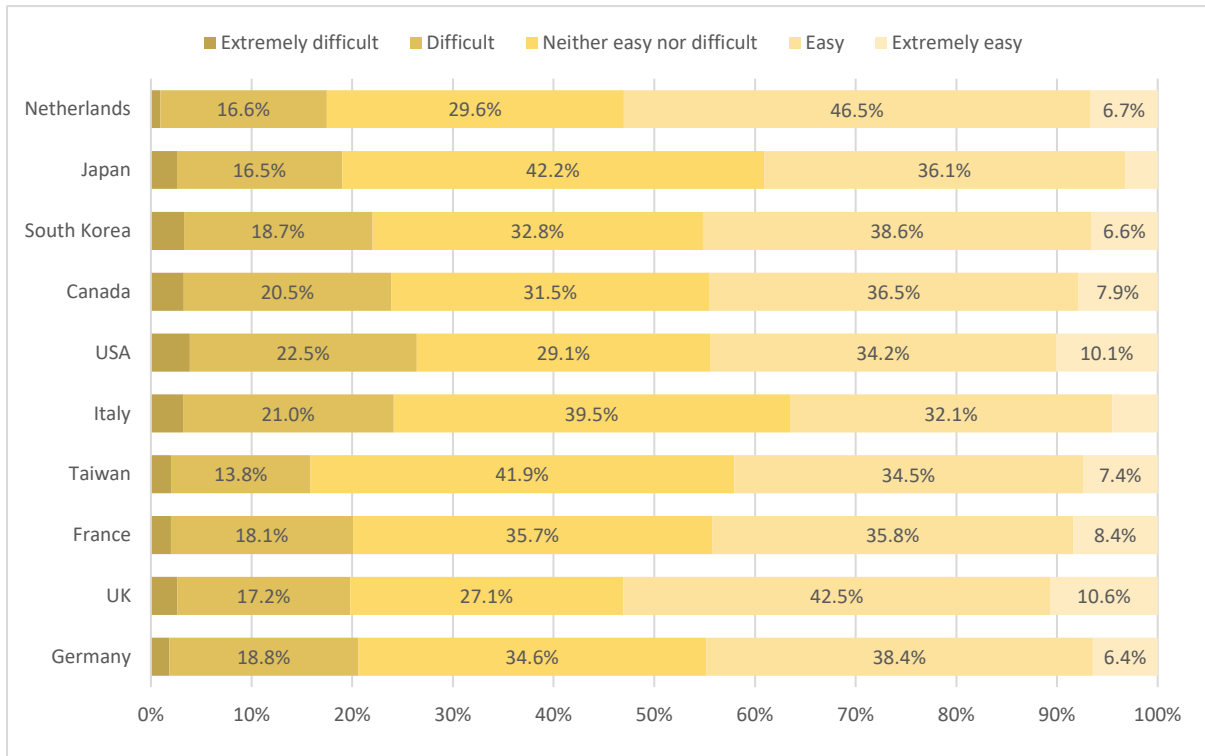
Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those providing the most responses to this question, and account for 9,782 WHMs. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.



WHMs from the Netherlands (53.2%) and the United Kingdom (53.1%) found it easiest to pay for travel to Australia (see Figure 8-13) and bring money to support themselves (see Figure 8-14) in Australia (53.5% and 48.1%, respectively). While Italian WHMs reported less ease on both these counts (36.6% and 33.3%, respectively), they were most inclined to report ease in making enough money in Australia to support themselves (54.7%) - with only 13.9% reporting any level of difficulty with this (see Figure 8-15). It is noteworthy that with more than one quarter of WHMs providing a 'neither easy nor difficult' response, most difficulty in paying for travel to Australia was reported by Americans (26.3%), followed by Italians (24.3%).

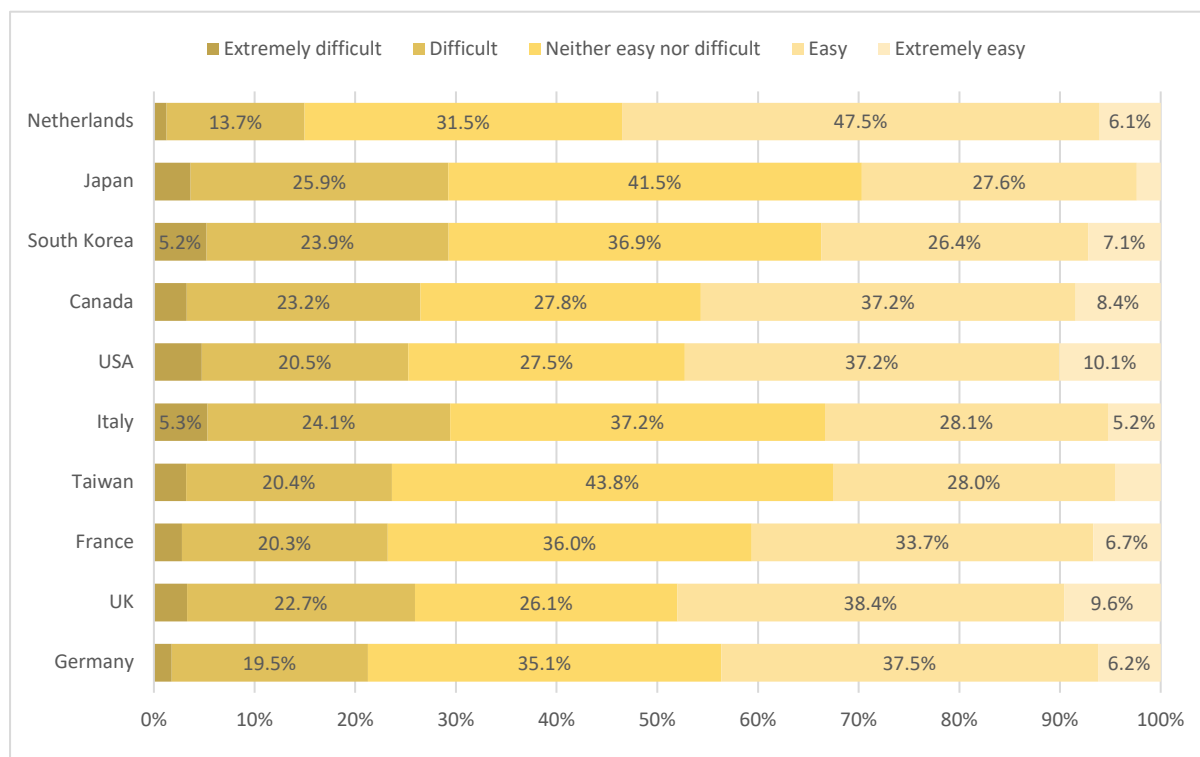
Figure 8-13: Easy to pay for travel to Australia, by Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those providing the most responses to this question, and account for 9,782 WHMs. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

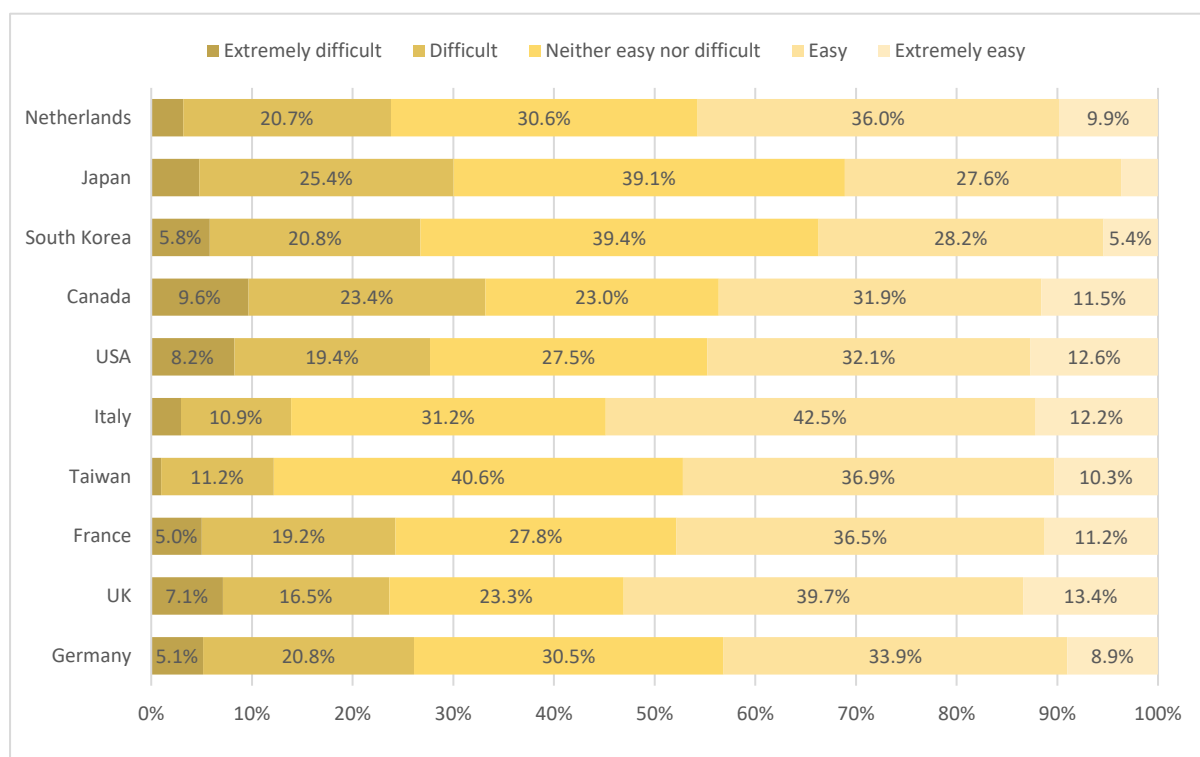
Figure 8-14: Easy to bring enough money in Australia for support, by Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those providing the most responses to this question, and account for 9,782 WHMs. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

Figure 8-15: Easy to make enough money in Australia for support, by Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those providing the most responses to this question, and account for 9,782 WHMs. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

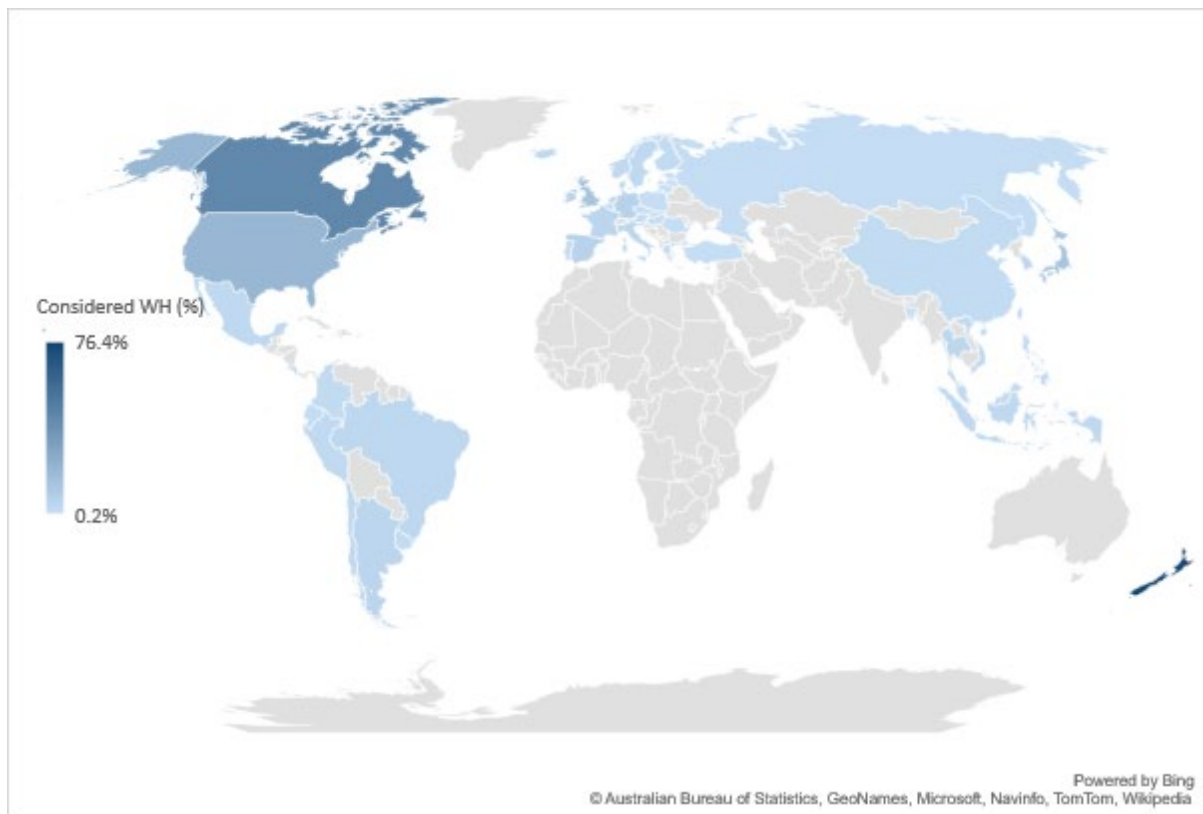
Source: WHM Survey, 2020.



8.4 Destination decisions

Australia was the only destination considered by more than one third (34.3%) of WHMs. Destinations considered by other WHMs are presented in Figure 8-16. Only five countries were considered by more than one in ten WHMs. New Zealand was most popular, considered by three quarters (76.4%) while fewer than half (43.3%) thought about Canada as a WHM destination, one in five (19.9%) considered the United States, and fewer than one in eight considered the United Kingdom (13.5%) or Japan (13.3%). Rounding out the Top 10 alternate destinations considered were Germany (6.5%), Ireland (6.1%), Spain (6.1%), France (4.9%) and Argentina (4.7%).

Figure 8-16: Proportion (%) considered for a working holiday in alternate country

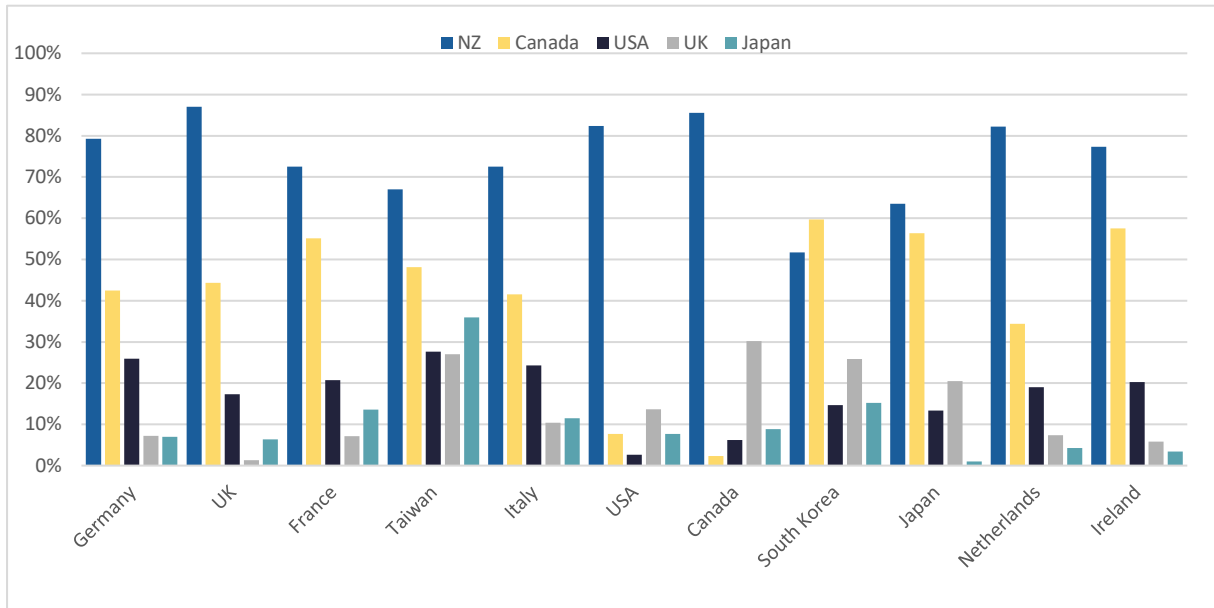


Note, data was provided by 6,430 WHMs.

Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

WHMs from nine of the Top 10 countries considered New Zealand as their most likely alternate working holiday destination country (see Figure 8-17). However, Canada was preferred by three in five South Koreans (59.7%), exceeding this country's interest in New Zealand. WHMs from Japan (56.4%) and Ireland (57.5%) also showed strong interest in Canada. Consideration of a working holiday in the United States was moderate to low – strongest interest was shown by Taiwanese (27.6%) but only 13.4% of Japanese, 14.7% of South Koreans and 17.3% of WHMs from the United Kingdom considered a working holiday there. Canadians (30.2%) were most interested in working in the United Kingdom; while Taiwanese (36.0%) were most likely to consider Japan as an alternative to Australia.

Figure 8-17: Top 5 considered WH destinations for Top 10 countries



Note, for this purpose Top 10 countries are those with the most responses to this question, and account for 5,666 WHMs. Multiple responses are possible
 Source: WHM Survey, 2020.

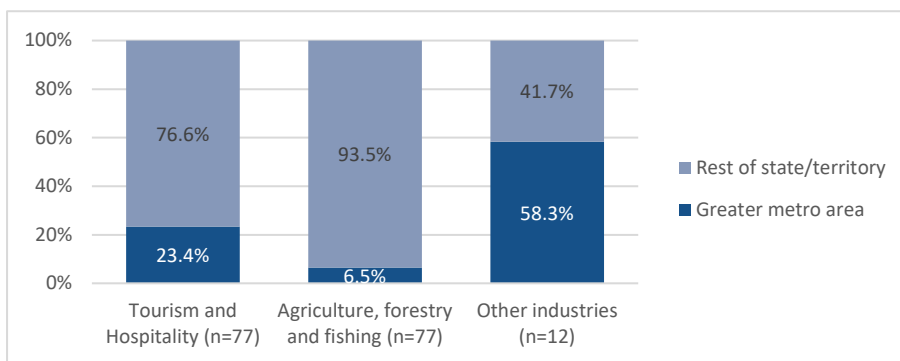


9 Employers: Perspectives on the WHM program

The WHM Employers Survey gathered information about employer experiences of WHMs and the WHM program (see Section 3 for more details). The survey was targeted to both agriculture, forestry and fishing ('agriculture') businesses and tourism and hospitality businesses with these industries providing the same number of responses (n=77). A small proportion (7.2%) of the 169 responses were received from businesses in other industries. Four in five (81.9%) businesses were situated in non-metropolitan areas. In some analyses employers were classified by location into those with businesses in greater capital cities or in other locations in each state and territory (four indicated they had businesses in both locations and were excluded for these analyses). Only 16.5% of businesses were from the greater capital cities.

Twenty-one interviews of employers were subsequently conducted with a cross-section of agriculture, tourism and hospitality businesses to gather contextual information. The employer survey and interviews were conducted between late 2020 and early 2021 and therefore reflect the impact of COVID-19, which the earlier WHM surveys did not.

Figure 9-1: Employer respondents, by industry



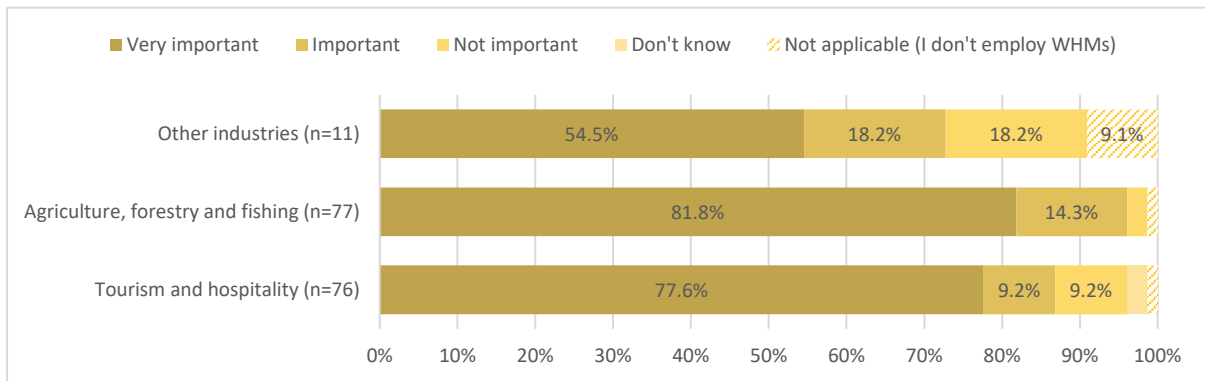
Note, region data was provided by 166 employers.

Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

9.1 Importance of WHMs to Australian businesses

Four in five employers from agriculture (81.8%) and tourism and hospitality (77.6%) businesses reported WHMs were very important to their business, with a further 14.3% and 9.2% respectively indicating they were important (see Figure 9-2). Almost one in ten tourism and hospitality businesses (9.2%) reported WHMs were not important to their business. A small proportion (6.5%) of responses came from businesses in other industries, only half (54.5%) of whom indicated WHMs were very important to their business, with a further 18.2% indicating they were important to them.

Figure 9-2: Importance of WHMs to employers



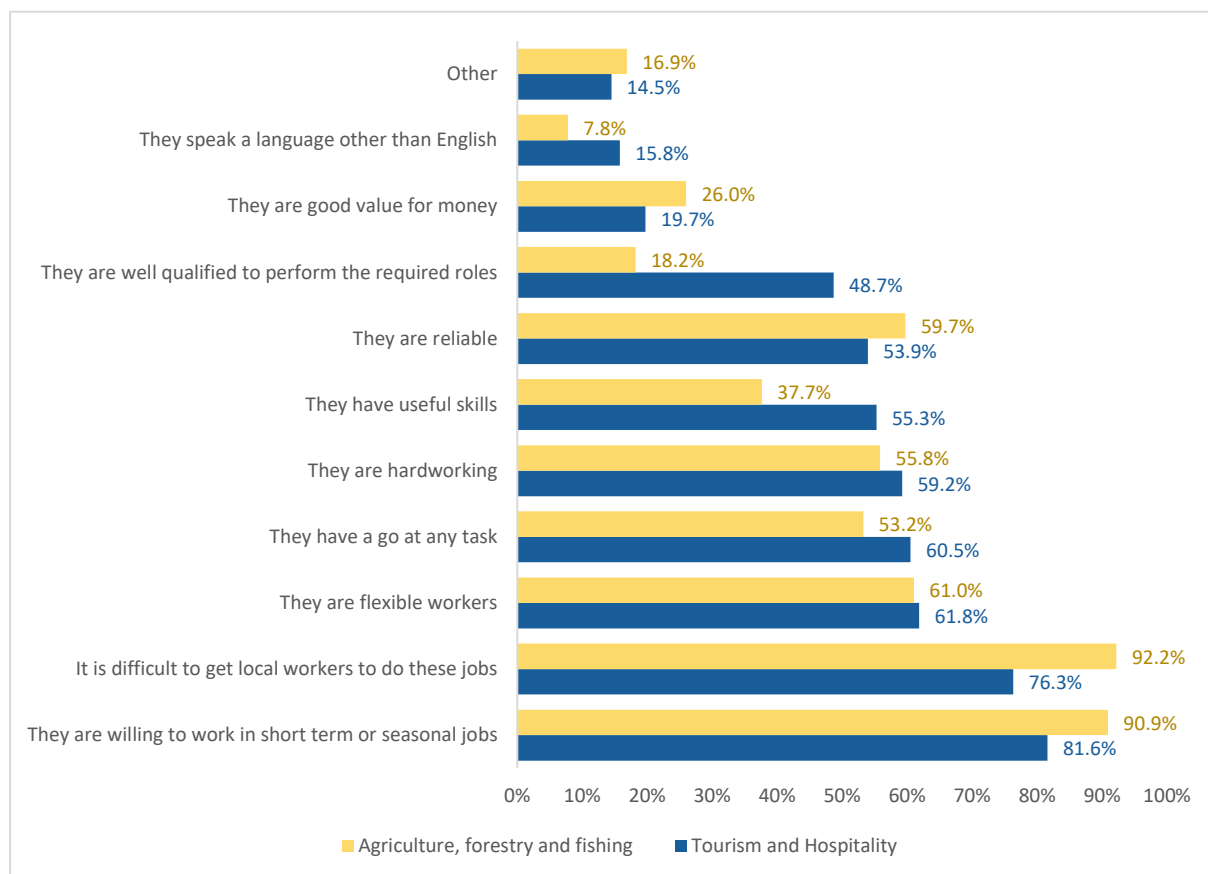
Note, data was provided by 169 employers. Labels are not shown when less than 5%.

Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

Employers considered WHMs to be important for a range of reasons. More than nine in ten employers in agriculture businesses reported it was difficult to get local workers to do the jobs WHMs had been traditionally engaged in, and that WHMs were valued as they were willing to work in short-term and seasonal positions (see Figure 9-3). A high number of employers from tourism and hospitality businesses also agreed with these statements – although to a lesser extent. More than half of employers from both business groups reported WHMs were valued for their flexibility, that they would ‘have a go’ at any task and were hardworking and reliable. Agriculture employers were less likely to indicate WHMs had the requisite skills or were well qualified for the job.



Figure 9-3: Reasons WHMs are important to employers



Note, data was provided by 76 tourism and hospitality employers and 77 agriculture, forestry and fishing employers. Employers from other industries are not presented here. Multiple responses are possible. Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

Interview feedback from WHM employers strongly reinforced the message that WHMs fill a critical niche in the Australian job market, performing a range of jobs that otherwise would struggle to attract local labour. Agricultural businesses ranged from citrus farms to broad acre cropping, glasshouse production to livestock farming and cattle breeding operations. Businesses within tourism and hospitality included regional/remote resorts, caravan parks, hostels and other holiday accommodation services, various tour operators and adventure tourism, and restaurants and café operations located in diverse holiday destinations. A consistent theme across these businesses was that WHMs fill roles that would otherwise remain unfilled and without them business operations and viability would be compromised.

9.1.1 Critical support in peak season

Businesses that rely on WHMs are typically seasonal in nature. All have core staff who work year-round but rely on additional workers to manage the volume of demand generated in peak season,³² of which there can be multiple over the course of a year. In the agriculture industry, examples include the fruit and vegetable picking, packing and pruning season, and managing the demands of lambing season in livestock farming. In these contexts, the ability to source extra workers and particularly those with experience can make the difference between fruit that is picked or left to rot on the trees, and lifting lambing survival rates:

³² Also see Section 10.2.

We had a 100% success rate with the lambing when [the WHM] came back the second time, so by her knowing things and us working together, we didn't lose a lamb at all. So we had all live lambs born – obviously us assisting – and to date those 55 lambs that were born are all still alive. [7]³³

In tourism and hospitality businesses, seasonality applies to peak holiday periods when short-term demand for services outstrips the capacity of core staff to deliver. Accommodation services, restaurants and bars that operate at 30% capacity in off-season may lift to over 90% in peak seasons. The ability to source additional workers can affect whether businesses open or close room availability and limit or extend food and beverage service options and times, decisions that are critical to the business bottom line. As one Queensland-based resort and tour operator commented in relation to the post-COVID-19 reduction of available WHMs:

We simply have not been able to obtain enough staff. We've still got caps on occupancy rates in our business because we don't have enough team members to open enough restaurants or enough people to clean the rooms if we're at 100%. [5]

9.1.2 Filling a local void in regions

The seasonal nature of work in these settings is central to employers' reliance on the WHM model. Employers consistently report that short-term work does not attract interest within the local labour market, with this cohort having a clear preference for ongoing work. Young people and students present one possible source of short-term labour, however they do not offer a consistent, reliable solution to cyclical workforce shortages:

But the locals are usually taken up with those 12-month jobs, they're not particularly interested in just the 16-week jobs. So, we have to draw from outside of the local area to get the amount of people we need - Australian and working holidays. [4]

We've had a few [young people], there were 16, 17-year-old kids and that worked really well but then they were lost to apprenticeships and school and uni et cetera. [3]

Locational considerations also factored into the labour force challenges described by employers, who were typically from regional-rural-remote areas. In many cases, there are not enough local workers to fill the spike in peak season demand. For example, one family-operated citrus farm in Northern Queensland is comprised of two permanent year-round positions supplemented by 20 to 30 additional workers during the peak picking, pruning and packing season from November to mid-April. Regarding local labour, the employer noted '*there's a few of the local Australians that do come in and work, but that's very, very difficult and very, very rare*' [13].

Distance from townships is also a barrier to employing locals. The experience described by one ski field resort operator was that '*nobody lives here on the mountain really all year round except for the few that have 12-month year jobs, and there are not very many of those*' [4]. Reluctance to commute daily means that ski resorts, as with other remotely located resorts, tend to employ workers on a live-in basis which is not generally suited to people with families and established networks. Agricultural employers tell a similar story, with many of these jobs involving working in isolated conditions, tens or hundreds of kilometres from the closest town, with workers living on-site and sometimes having limited opportunities to travel and socialise during the week: '*we're an hour and a half from town by an open highway doing 130 km an hour*' [18].

³³ Notations refer to deidentified businesses.



9.1.3 Nature of the work

A further perceived barrier to recruiting local labour is the nature of the work in WHM-employing businesses. Farm work, from fruit picking through to animal husbandry, is typically physically demanding, can be monotonous and repetitive, and frequently involves early starts and long days. Environmental conditions are challenging, including working outside in the elements, often through extremes of hot and cold.

We've had a few [local Australians] that we've tried through an employment agency but it just didn't work, they weren't committed, they weren't used to doing physical work and just didn't want to do it. It's just, for these roles, it's not a hard job but it's a fast-paced environment, and it is a physically demanding job; we expect people to put in their two bobs' worth and work... Some local people, they're just not committed. [3]

In tourism and hospitality, demand for labour centres on housekeepers and cleaning staff, chefs, cooks, kitchenhands, waiters, bar staff, baristas, reception staff and groundkeepers. Some of these jobs are hard to fill due to a basic skills shortage, for example chefs, cooks and high-quality baristas. Western Australian hospitality businesses have the compound disadvantage of the mining sector drawing skilled labour out of the regions, both local workers and WHMs. Employers note that some of the other jobs in tourism and hospitality are difficult to fill with local labour because they are not viewed as career opportunities, rather as stop-gap jobs for students or people in-between 'real work'. Reasons include some of the jobs not adhering to typical 9 to 5 workday hours and being seen as unsociable, some being necessarily part-time when people are looking for full-time work, and some of the roles (principally housekeeping and cleaning) being viewed as simply not desirable:

I would say in the housekeeping and cleaning department, it would be entirely working holiday visa people. Australians do not wish to do those types of jobs, a bit like fruit picking I'd say. So, we very rarely get Australians apply for those positions. But we always get a very good response from working holiday visa makers. [4]

In my experience, Australians generally don't want to work in hospitality as a career... I think it's an entrenched way of being. I don't see that changing, I really don't. I mean I've been doing this for 35 years... I see a lot of Australian apprentices, young people come through but invariably they drift away and they drift away because of the unsociable hours. Notwithstanding what we like to think, Australia – in my view anyway, very definitely a Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 workforce phenomenon. [1]

Because of the limited hours. That's the nature of the position, that all of our departures and cleans need to be done between 9 and 2 o'clock. And we're not a big enough property, and we don't do daily servicing, so we don't have enough work to offer a full 38-hour week to people. So, although we might have three staff, there's not 90 hours of housekeeping a week... I mean, it's every day, so it's seven days a week, so you've got to have a roster so people can have days off. And you've usually got a four-hour window of getting all the work done. [15]

9.1.4 A flexible mobile workforce

Employers' description of the role WHMs play in sustaining their business contrasts markedly with the challenges involved with sourcing local labour. Foremost among the reasons they value WHMs is their mobility and amenability to seasonal work:

Because they're mobile. If we're not harvesting, they'd be harvesting in [nearby towns] ... They can move to the area. While we try to encourage Australians - I don't expect someone from Brisbane to come up here, leave their home when they are established in Brisbane. Whereas these people are on holiday, so that they can react to where the seasons are. They want to be mobile and move around, that's part of the experience. That to me is the most valuable aspect that they bring with

them. If we need a lot of them, traditionally we can get a lot of them. They'll move where the work is. [2]

In the tourism and hospitality context, WHMs' travel plans generally time in with seasonal peaks, so they are in the right place at the right time to fill seasonal job vacancies. According to one outdoor education business with national operations, WHMs can deploy around the country in ways that local people cannot or prefer not to do. Notably, while WHMs tend to gravitate to where seasonal peaks occur in tourism businesses, the agriculture sector does not always have the same advantage. An ongoing challenge is ensuring WHMs are in the right locations at the right time to address regional labour shortages. This requires a better understanding of where and when regional shortages occur, and what measures (e.g. incentives) are effective in channelling WHMs there.

9.1.5 A motivated workforce

For employers a defining feature of WHMs is they are singularly motivated to work, to save a cache of money and to continue with their travels to maximise their working holiday experience. This explains why they will perform work roles that many locals tend to avoid:

The main reason that they're a good workforce is – my personal philosophy is that you can work in most jobs for six months, regardless of whether you enjoy it or not. So, if your aim is to save up money so you can keep travelling, then three to six months doing housekeeping is just something you can do. And if you're staying in backpacking hostel and you can go out with your friends, or down the beach, it's not that big an impact on your travelling lifestyle. But for a career choice - housekeeping is not really up there.

WHMs are generally perceived to have a strong work ethic, the ability to be flexible, a preparedness to try new things and a willingness to learn and adapt. Employers value the positivity, enthusiasm and cultural diversity WHMs bring to the workplace. For instance, in the backpacker hostel setting they provide a valuable complement to Australian staff:

That's a very healthy balance to run our properties. So you've got the long tenure employees that have all the knowledge, all the experience - tick all the boxes, and then we get a percent of the working holiday makers that have the other attributes... the energy, the enthusiasm, the ability to relate to our guest base. Both the employee and the guest speaking their own language, sharing the experiences is invaluable from a social point of view. It really helps, it lifts the atmosphere and it's part of that exchange that happens organically. [6]

In the agricultural context, on a remotely located cattle breeding farm, WHMs provide a positive energy that is crucial for effective teamwork:

We need to make sure that everybody works well together as a positive, happy, upbeat team... That is where working holiday makers would kick goals and tick boxes for us, because they want to be there, they want to have the experience. They don't see it as a career move. They're not upset by the extent of days that we work or the conditions that sometimes we're experiencing, such as extremely cold, extremely hot, extremely windy et cetera. Because they're having the Australian experience. And in that case, because they want to be there, they're enjoying it. And when they're enjoying it they're having fun and when they're having fun, that really helps our morale. [18]

WHMs also bring strong skill sets required by businesses, particularly in the tourism and hospitality industry. Ski resort business operators value them because many have prior experience and skills in the snow and therefore require minimal training. Europeans and Americans are viewed as having excellent skillsets in food and customer service:



If you're talking about a food and beverage person, if they've worked in Europe especially - and in America - they've worked for tips, so their customer service skills are very good. They have to! Because they don't get tips if they don't work well overseas. And especially in Europe it's treated more as a career, not a thing to do between school and your real job - so they have skills in waiting and bar service. They might not have Australian bar service, which is slightly different, but they certainly have waiting skills that usually are very good. [4]

The other thing that's a big difference is we find, particularly with Italians, that hospitality is seen as a career choice there. If you get a career hospitality person, not somebody who's just doing a fill-in job while they're at uni, they have a lot more experience and a lot more passion for the job. [19]

9.1.6 Managing transience

While employer endorsement of WHMs was extremely high, they also identified a range of challenges involved with their employment. The primary issue involved the transience of the WHM population – in one respect positive because WHM mobility is a bonus for seasonal work, but in another respect a liability because WHMs were prone to pack up and leave a job early with minimal notice:

They're not always as good as I hope them to be and they are transient, that's the other thing. Sometimes they'll come and they'll promise you the world... because it takes you two or three weeks to get them trained up and show them. And oh yeah, they'll stay forever or they'll stay the whole season, but a lot of times then suddenly - they've found a new girlfriend and the girlfriend wants to travel or they've just broken up with a girlfriend and they've had enough of the town and they'll leave, so that's a challenge. Sometimes, but not always, they're not that reliable. [9]

One operator of a remote holiday lodge attempted to manage the risk of workforce unreliability by offering cash incentives and travel reimbursements for completion of the agreed season, as well as fixed term agreements – with varying success:

Towards the end of the season, they're starting to look at their next position. And the next position might be putting some pressure on them to start early... We try and be pretty firm in an interview about our expectations of the timeframes and some people really honour that. But yeah, other people don't. [21]

Other challenges involved with employing WHMs include language issues, particularly pertinent to managing occupational health and safety, however these were generally reported to be relatively easy to overcome. There were occasional mismatches between work roles and WHM skills and aptitudes, but these were also viewed as relatively minor in the larger scheme. Only one employer indicated a generally negative experience with WHMs working in a remotely located tourism and hospitality business. This employer noted a distinct decline in WHM work ethic, life skills and resilience coinciding with the addition of new countries into the WHM program and a change in attendant levels of privilege, life experience and expectations of young people.

9.2 Employer perceptions of the WHM program

9.2.1 Benefits of the WHM program

Many aspects of the WHM program were viewed favourably by employers. Most notably nine in ten (90.7%) employers reported it provided an essential workforce (see Figure 9-4), with three quarters (74.8%) indicating it provided an economic boost to the local area. As noted in one agricultural employer interview:

Most shops will tell you; they only make money during the harvest season - the rest of the year they just survive... These backpackers are very important to our small town - they earn good money and they spend a fair portion of that here. [2]

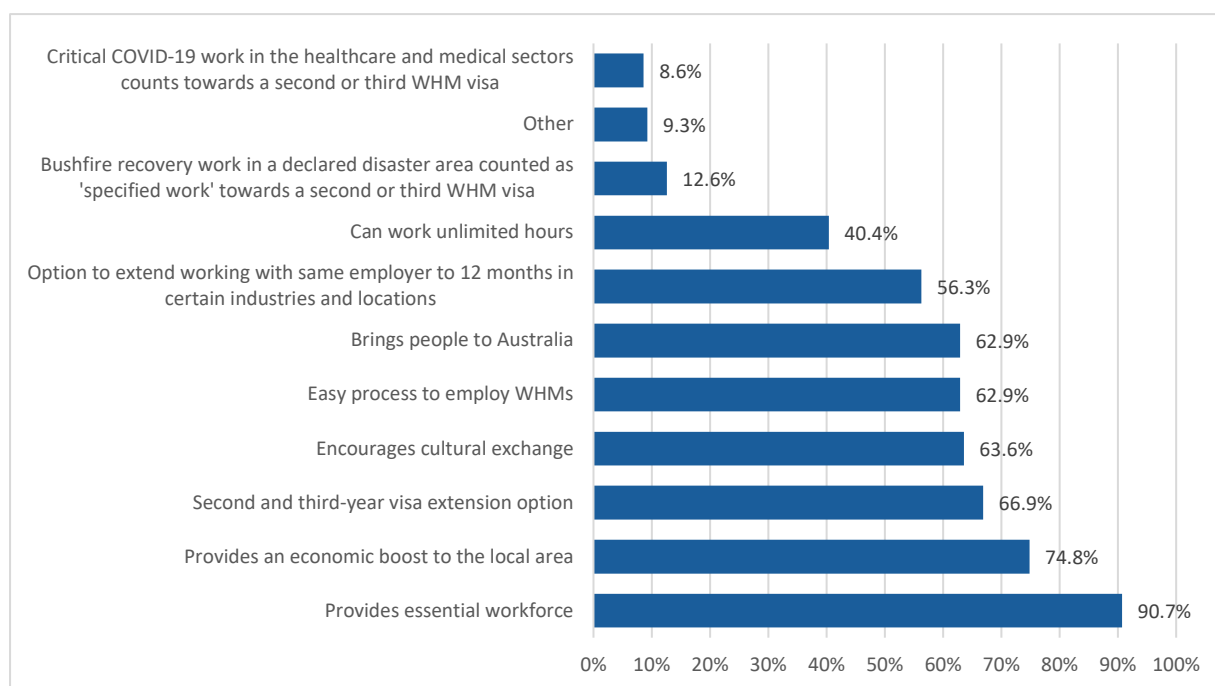
The second and third-year visa extension option was liked by two-thirds of businesses. Three in five reported that the program encouraged cultural exchange (63.6%), provided an easy process to employ WHMs (62.9%) and that it brought people to Australia. The interviews similarly highlighted the value of the cultural diversity contributed by WHMs at a business model level, organisational culture level, and at a broader societal level where cultural exchange is seen to enrich the people and communities that interact with WHMs:

We're a tourism destination, so the customers enjoy having an Italian waiter or an Argentinian waiter; a lot of the customers are well travelled and they quite enjoy the rapport with the staff. [19]

They were critical and we enjoyed actually having a really diverse team. We used to have dinners. Everyone brings something from their home country. Really it would boost morale. [21]

I mean I love backpackers... I also love the cultural exchange that comes from backpackers. I love that we can give them an Australian experience. We've got great friends and there's so many backpackers that I hold close to my heart, not for what they've brought to us, but also for the people that they are. It's very important to us as an industry. [18]

Figure 9-4: Features of WHM program that businesses like



Note, data was provided by 151 employers. Because multiple responses were allowed, these figures sum to more than 100%.

Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

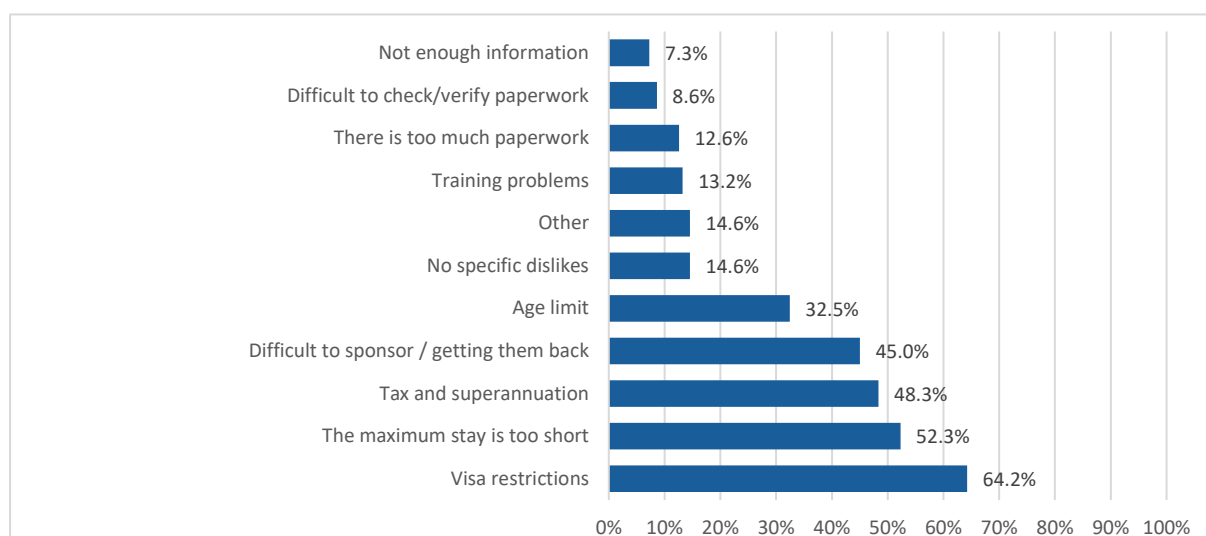
One in ten (9.3%) employers surveyed provided additional comments about the program often mirroring the comments from employer interviews. These employers talked about the benefits of WHMs. They were viewed as a good workforce who were happy to work in jobs and places where the local population was too small or unwilling. For some businesses they were seen as the only option, moreover second and third year WHM visa holders were viewed as farm-fit for the heat and manual tasks. Not only were WHMs willing to travel to remote areas, they were seen as contributing to the local economy by spending in the areas they worked.



9.2.2 Program restrictions

WHM program dislikes were related to visa restrictions (64.2%) such as the six-month limitation on working for one employer, designated industries and locations and the extension rules (see Figure 9-5). Half the employers felt that the maximum stay was too short (52.3%), they did not like the tax and superannuation requirements (48.3%) and reported that WHMs were difficult to sponsor, or to get them to come back (45.0%). One third did not like the program's age limitations (32.5%). Survey comments focused on the desire to retain a trained WHM worker for longer as the standard six-month limit was unsatisfactory for both worker and employer. There was also an expressed concern that there should be clear access for WHMs to information about workers' rights, minimum wages, safety and conditions.

Figure 9-5: Features of WHM program that businesses dislike



Note, data was provided by 151 employers. Multiple responses are possible

Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

The employer interviews highlighted many of the same issues as the survey. The six-month limitation on work with a single employer was regularly raised by employers, particularly where work requirements or seasonal periods extend beyond six months.³⁴ For many in tourism and hospitality a key issue is realising return on the time and investment involved in training workers:

One of the big disadvantages – and we have many, many people on working holidays – one of the big disadvantages over the years for us is that they can't extend. So they're not eligible to do that second stint with us. Because 12 months is a very different proposition to stick to. Usually they might take two [months] to train, depending on what the role is and what their previous experience is. [5]

A lot of other people I know in the [tourism and hospitality] industry complain about that aspect. They spend all this time and effort training someone and then they're going to leave. That's a structural issue from the government. [15]

Employers across both business groups called for the WHM program to extend the six-month limitation to twelve months with one employer:

³⁴ Section 1 reviewed some of the major changes to the WHM program since its inception. From the interviews, it is evident that not all employers are aware of changes that potentially benefit them. From November 2018, limits on WHMs working for one employer in plant and animal cultivation (anywhere in Australia) were raised from six to twelve months a fact not understood by some in the industry.

I think that could make a huge difference and a lot of people up here who have great relationships with them, their workplaces. And not just us. On the farms and things. I just think it's crazy to have that cap. [21]

The 88-day working in agriculture provision to qualify for a subsequent visa was raised by numerous employers. In the context of citrus farming, one employer noted that while the provision was useful in attracting more labour to the industry, there are WHMs in this group who are neither interested in nor well suited to farm work: *'they're just here to get things ticked off'* [2]. From the perspective of tourism and hospitality operators, the 88-day provision for agriculture work unduly incentivises WHMs to leave their jobs to seek agricultural work in order to obtain a visa extension:

Yes. I always pay well, and I think that's why we get them, but sometimes it's not only the pay that attracts them, it's the fact that they need to do a certain amount of hours to be able to get their next year's visa. If you're going to ask me what I don't like about the system, I don't like that it doesn't encourage backpackers and overseas workers to stay working in hospitality... I don't know how many hours they've got to do or how many days they've got to do – but they do have to do a certain amount of days working on a farm [to get a second or third visa]. [9]

Employers advocated greater flexibility in general regarding length of WHM employment and allowing pathways to retain valuable and willing employees as a sponsoring employer. In greater recognition of acute local labour shortages, one ski resort operator argued to be able to sponsor overseas workers for housekeeping and chef or cook positions, which are under huge demand with advertised roles remaining unfilled for months. In outdoor education, which has distinctive skill requirements:

If we could get 12 months solid out of somebody in one state and in one place that would be better. And then the ability to identify talent from that program and put them onto different visa stream would be ideal. [14]

9.2.3 Complex arrangements

Superannuation arrangements figured in employers' concerns about the WHM program with some employers preferring to see the extra paid directly to WHMs to spend in their travels:

I have to pay them super, 9.5%, which is fine, I'm happy to do that, but I just think for them, they're here to earn some money and they're travelling...I just think it's such a shame. I just wish I could just give it to them other than paying super; just give them extra on the wages. Generally, they spend it anyway on the Victorian economy while they're travelling, so that's the one thing I wish that could be changed. [3]

You know these people are here for two years on average and they're required to contribute ten percent into superannuation...whereas any salary that they earn in Australia, they spend in Australia. Very few backpackers leave the country with money in the bank. [15]

One view expressed by a tour business employer was that more complex WHM visa regulations and tax and superannuation arrangements are placing Australia at a competitive disadvantage in attracting WHMs:

In the past the appeal of Australia as a destination for working holiday makers has been the diversity, you can do so much when you come here. It was really easy for them come in... but now there's countries in South America and other places that they're like, "It's just so easy. We just get in there" and they do work, they get to travel. There's no feeling of any restrictions and they don't really pay much tax after they leave, and they've got all this money to continue to travel... wherever there's paperwork and red tape, these people are often really young and so they don't handle the paperwork as well – as well as what you and I would. [11]



Agricultural employers raised the operation of the horticulture award and the potential of WHMs to contribute business operations. According to one citrus farmer, rainfall halts work mid-week, however, make-up work on the weekend is constrained by penalty rates; and regulated working hours are not an ideal fit for the nature of the work:

We can't start too early because of our new awards whereas, particularly these Europeans, in summer they want to start the moment the sun is up and get to work and get out of the heat by lunchtime. [2]

In reflecting on the WHM program in general, employers identified potential forms of government assistance that would be useful in supporting the program. A consistent message was to open Australia's international borders as soon as feasibly and safely possible, and to fast track the entry of WHMs not just for agriculture but across all business sectors experiencing acute workforce shortages. More generally, employers not already benefitting from this argued strongly to extend the six-month working with a single employer provision to twelve months, in recognition of the extensive training and investment in WHMs by employers. To build the pool of workers, employers suggested expanding the list of partner countries and increasing the age limit to 35 or 40 years. In one case, to address the problem of WHM transience, an employer suggested government assistance to incentivise WHMs to stay with employers for a fixed term:

Should that be on the employer – should the employer have to pay that on top of award rates plus weekend penalties? Or can the Australian Government support businesses by offering an incentive to the employee if they stay with that employer for a set period of time? Whether that's six months or whether that's nine months. I'd be happy with six months and then if they want to stay on – happy days. [21]

Many employers highlighted what they perceived to be anomalies in their regional classifications, whereby they miss out on qualifying WHMs for visa extensions. This was particularly the case for ski field operators and offshore resorts, where access to labour is particularly problematic. There is a view that measures to encourage workers to mobilise in areas of need should specifically target acute workforce shortage conditions rather than be pinned to particular regions or industries.

Several employers highlighted the need to incentivise more WHMs to come to Australia, principally by addressing tax and superannuation arrangements so that WHMs receive higher payments, which they expect will be reinvested into local economies:

Going back to the old taxation scheme where once they left the country then they could claim a lot of the tax back. I think at the moment they're paying a much higher tax rate as well than what residents do. It just limits their spending, and these people who... have those experiences, they're over here and that's where that extra money is going to go... They're going to want to experience everything they can and push that money back into the economy here and that will go through the tourism industry as a whole. [11]

9.2.4 Increased support for employers

At a functional level, employers identified a centralised employment register or job board hosted on a government website to assist employers with limited social media skills, and clear information (including a single contact number) to assist new and existing employers to understand the complexities of the program.

From within agriculture, several employers highlighted a need for the government to better communicate with growers about their workforce needs. One citrus farmer conveyed the perception that government does not fully understand degree of resistance to the jobs on offer within the local workforce:

But I think a lot of them don't believe that it's that hard - that hard to get workers. They don't believe that we should have to get working holiday makers in. Like, why can't you just get locals?
[17]

This was supported by a cattle breeder who called for better consultation with industry about designing a program to transition job seekers into industry workforce gaps.

Greater government oversight over the workings of labour hire companies was raised by a few agricultural employers. It was observed that some labour hire companies were engaged in questionable practices. Improved regulation (rather than placing the onus on growers) and greater consistency in labour hire arrangements across the industry were advocated:

I feel every contractor should be doing the same thing for the worker. The workers on one farm really should be doing the same as the next farm. [17]

Finally, there was a call for government to take more initiative eliminating WHM exploitation by a minority of disreputable employers, to repair the image of Australian employers who are in the majority engaging WHMs in the true spirit of the program:

So there's two things. Can we please start smashing down on the employers who are doing the wrong thing by working holiday makers. They are ruining it for the rest of us. And the second thing is, can we please start getting some good news stories about these backpackers who have had a fantastic time. And can we please start focusing on that to support the industry. I feel like there's no pushback. I wish the media of Australia would help us or National Farmers Federation or something. I feel like there's so much focus on the negative people at the moment and there's not enough focus on the rest of us who are doing the right thing and getting great relationships and kicking goals for the working holiday makers... If people can't treat backpackers decently and treasure them for what they bring to their business, then they should be not allowed to take on backpackers or whatever. It's not okay that the rest of us have to suffer the bad image. [18]



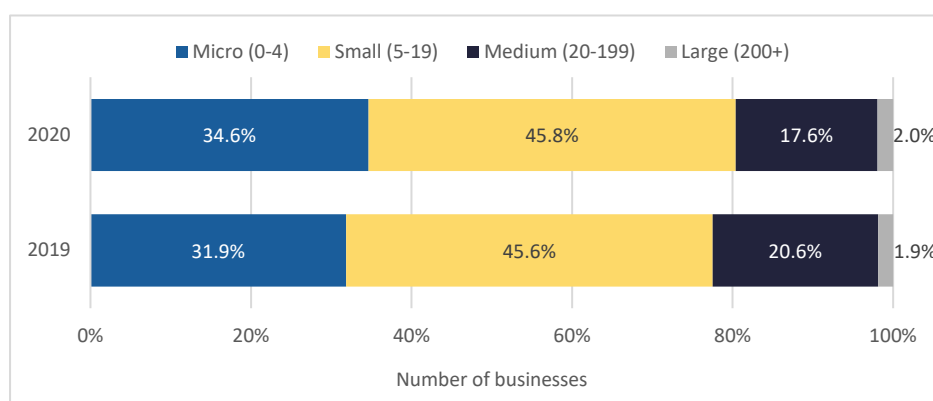
10 Employers: Impact of COVID-19

To account for the unexpected impact of COVID-19 on the WHM landscape during 2020 and 2021, employers of WHMs were asked to provide perspectives on the program generally and then to pinpoint COVID-19 related issues and experiences. This section outlines the specific impact of COVID-19 on business operations and perceived viability into the future, as well as responses and needs from an employer perspective.

10.1 Change in business size, 2019-2020

In 2019, surveyed businesses employed a total of 3,202 core staff. This reduced by 11.0% to 2,850 in 2020. Based on the core number of employees, employer businesses were categorised into ABS classifications of micro (0-4 employees), small (5-19 employees), medium (20-199 employees) and large (200+ employees) for 2019 and 2020. From 2019 to 2020 there was a marginal increase in the number of micro businesses with a corresponding decrease in the number of medium businesses (see Figure 10-1).

Figure 10-1: Business size by year



Note, data was provided for 160 employers for 2019 and 153 businesses for 2020. Only three large businesses participated in the survey.

Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

10.2 Access to seasonal workers

Agriculture, tourism and hospitality businesses traditionally manage times of both high (peak season) and low (off season) demand. This is particularly the case for businesses in tropical and/or regional areas. During periods of high demand employers hire additional workers to manage peak seasonal operations. With the limited availability of local labour reported for seasonal positions, WHMs have traditionally filled a key gap in performing these roles.³⁵ As discussed in Section 2.5, corresponding with the onset of COVID-19 the total number of WHM visas declined by 78% from 2019-20 to March 31, 2021. Survey results point to significant implications for access to WHMs at times of high workforce demand.

10.2.1 Seasonal workers required, 2019-2020

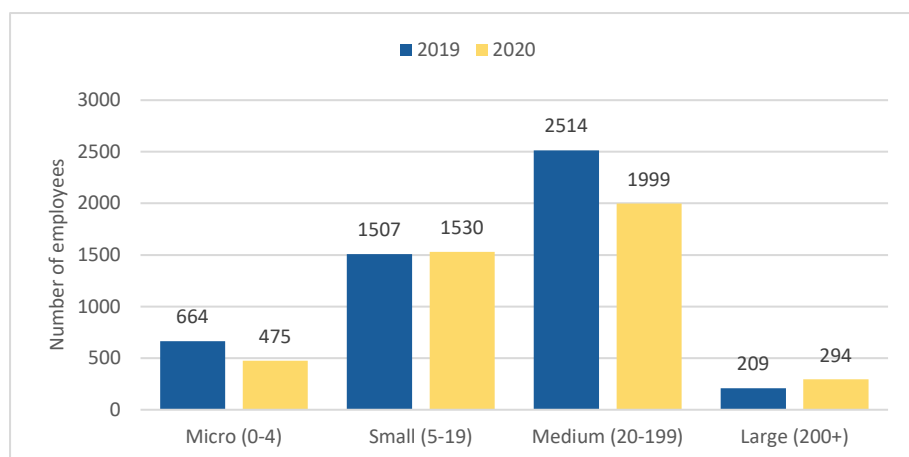
In 2019 businesses reported requiring an additional 4,894 staff during periods of high demand. In 2020 the number decreased by 12.2%, down to 4,298 additional staff required. The ratio of additional staff to core staff remained constant across the two years at about 2.5 times.

³⁵ For a discussion about the importance of WHMs to Australian businesses see Section 9.1.

The number of additional high demand positions required in micro and medium-sized businesses reduced by 28.5% and 20.5% respectively from 2019 to 2020 (see Figure 10-2), whereas the number remained static in small businesses.

The number of additional high demand positions required in micro and medium-sized businesses reduced by 28.5% and 20.5% respectively from 2019 to 2020 (see Figure 10 2), whereas the number remained static in small businesses. Reductions in positions required likely reflect decreased demand for seasonal services, hence reduced need for seasonal staff in businesses of this size.

Figure 10-2: Number of additional high demand positions required, by business size



Note, data was provided for 160 employers for 2019 and 153 businesses for 2020. Only three large businesses participated in the survey.

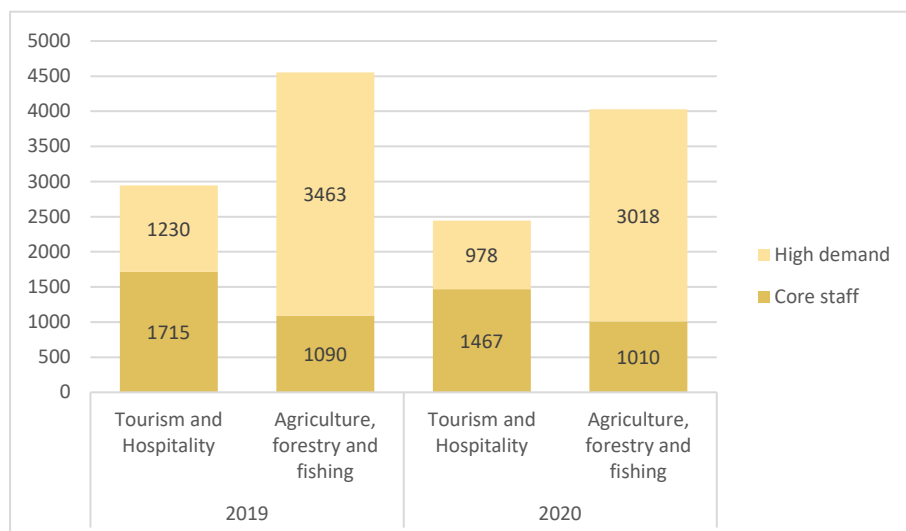
Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

10.2.2 Seasonal positions filled, 2019-2020

Figure 10-3 presents the number of core and additional staff employed by industry. The tourism industry experienced a significant decline in overall staff numbers from 2019 to 2020, with 14.5% fewer core staff and 20.5% fewer high demand staff. In comparison, agriculture, forestry and fishing businesses reported a 7.4% decline in core staff, and a 12.9% decline in additional staff during high demand periods.



Figure 10-3: Number of core and additional positions filled, by industry

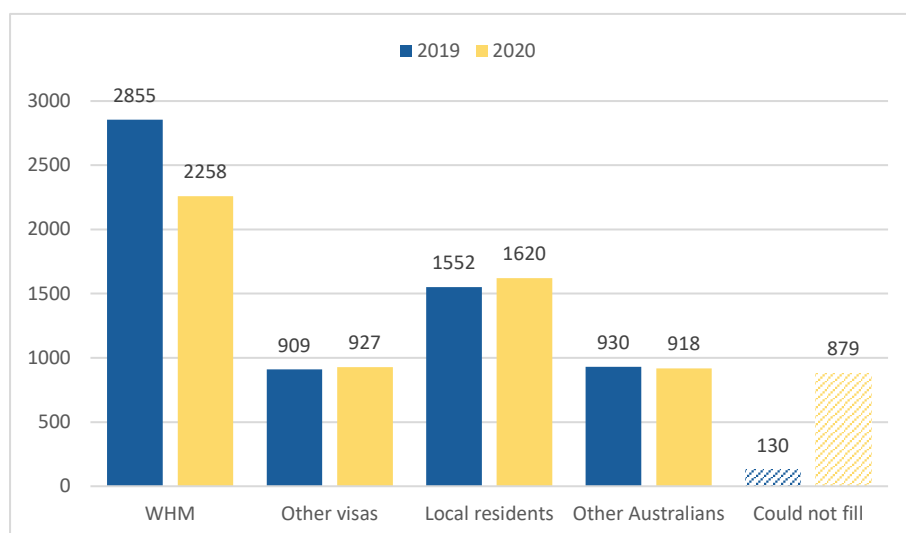


Note, data was provided for 147 employers from the tourism and hospitality and agriculture, forestry and fishing industries. Other industries not included.

Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

There was a reported 20.9% decline in the number of WHMs employed during periods of high demand by surveyed businesses (see Figure 10-4), likely due to the COVID-19 related withdrawal of WHMs from the labour market. A small increase (4.4%) was reported in employment of local residents and other visa holders (2.0%) however, these cohorts did not contribute sufficient numbers to make up the evident shortfall of WHMs. Businesses were five and a half times more likely to be unable to fill required positions in 2020 compared with the previous year, likely due to the absence of WHMs.

Figure 10-4: Filling of additional positions, by seasonal worker type



Note, data was provided for 160 employers.

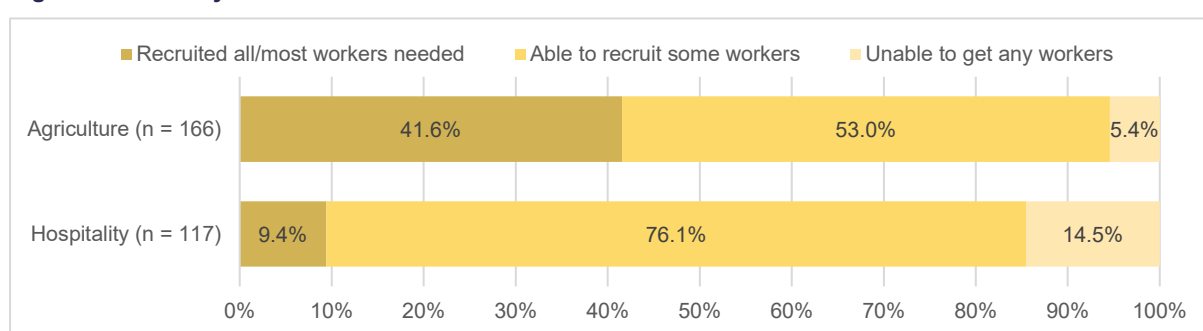
Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

10.3 Business challenges in the wake of COVID-19

10.3.1 Workforce recruitment, by industry and location

Employers reported on their success or otherwise of recruiting for required positions in 2020, with this aggregated by business sector in Figure 10-5. Hospitality staff (e.g. for jobs including food and beverage staff, cooks and chefs, bar staff, and kitchen hands) proved most difficult to recruit, with only 9.4% of businesses successful in recruiting workers for all positions. Recruitment of agricultural jobs (e.g., farm hands and fruit or vegetable packers and graders) proved the most successful, with more than two in five businesses seeking these roles able to fill most positions, and some workers available for most other businesses. Limited responses were recorded for a range of 'other' positions (such as cleaners, housekeepers, receptionists and office workers) which are not presented here.

Figure 10-5: Ability to recruit workforce in 2020

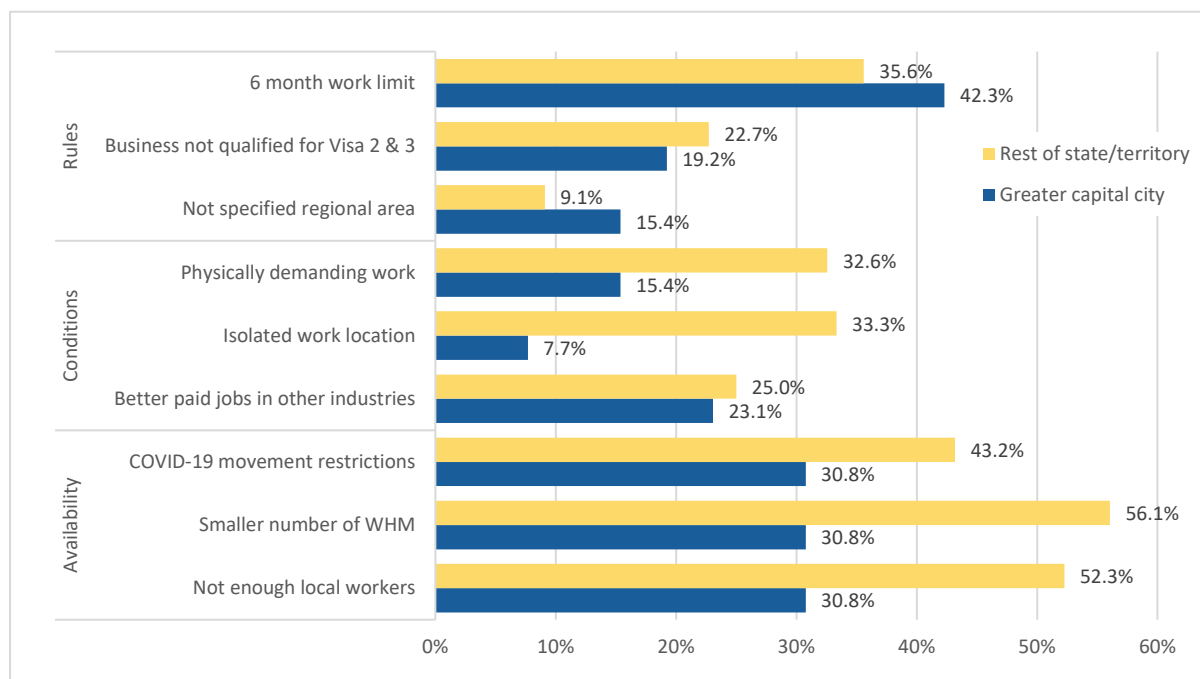


Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

Comparing businesses in greater capital cities with other locations in each state and territory, just over one quarter (27.8%) of businesses in greater capital cities reported they were successful recruiting all or most of the workers needed in 2020. Where they had difficulties, employers indicated a range of reasons (see Figure 10-6). Businesses in locations outside the greater capital cities reported the greatest difficulties with workforce availability - they struggled with smaller numbers of WHMs (56.1%), limited local workers (52.3%) and movement restrictions due to COVID-19 (43.2%). A third of these regionally based businesses also reported difficulties due to the isolated work location (33.3%), the physically demanding work conditions (32.6%) and the visa rules and regulations that limited WHMs to six-month work. The latter six-month work limit also posed the biggest difficulty for businesses in greater capital cities with 42.3% reporting this as an issue impacting recruitment.



Figure 10-6: Reasons for difficulties recruiting workers in 2020, by location



Note, data was provided by 153 employers (excludes employers with businesses in both capital cities and rural areas). Multiple responses are possible

Source: WHM Employer Survey, 2021.

One in ten businesses provided further comments on staff recruitment in 2020, many of which echoed earlier comments about recruitment in general. Some of these reiterated concerns that tourism businesses and associated job roles did not qualify WHMs for visa extensions. A couple expressed concern that local staff lacked the requisite skills, their supply was limited and they lacked interest in the available roles – for these businesses WHMs provided an important workforce. Another business indicated that WHMs had a poor work ethic and they preferred using the Australian Government’s Seasonal Worker Program. In some ways the pendulum had shifted in 2020 as the low supply of WHMs meant some were making more demands of businesses. In the context that very few WHMs entered Australia in 2020 and many returned home, there was considerable concern about an ever-dwindling supply in 2021.

Employer interviews offered a range of insights into the impact of COVID-19 on the recruitment of WHMs and flow-on effects for their businesses. Employers across both the agricultural and tourism and hospitality industries indicated that in ordinary times, WHM recruitment was generally successful in meeting workforce needs. This was reported to change radically following COVID-19 related border closures in March 2020.

10.3.2 The agriculture industry experience

For many in the agriculture industry, the first six months were satisfactory because pools of WHMs were already in place for the harvesting season and, if anything, COVID-19 increased the stability of the workforce:

That was the start of our harvest season last year and we employed 12, and I think, 10 of those were working holiday makers, and it really fell in our favour, I suppose, to some degree because when it occurred, when the pandemic hit and closed borders and all that started to happen, we had a pool of working holiday makers already here. We were able to employ them and they couldn't go anywhere else at the time. So they tended to stick with us. It worked reasonably well at that time.

[10]

What we found last year, the way it tied in with our season where we start in March, they were happy to be here, because the cities were rampant with it... They were settled, and they were here, and they stayed here. We did not have one backpacker leave us all season, not one. [2]

Following the initial six-month period, agricultural employers reported increasing difficulty sourcing new WHMs and concerns about missing market windows and losing product. The problems for farmers were two-fold, namely an ever-diminishing number of WHMs in the country and regions, and spiralling demands from WHMs who were now in high demand as a labour source:

They are asking for more money. They know that workers are just getting in short supply, and we are paying them more money. I don't know how much further we can go. But depending on the labour market, we just have to. I did mention that they wanted their own accommodation now. [2]

As a consequence of COVID-19, some agricultural businesses are picking up workers wherever and however they can, whereas some employers have been developing new approaches to worker recruitment. One citrus farmer has entered into a cooperative arrangement with the local supply chain:

We've had a meeting with one of the packing sheds and they are looking at bringing in a heap of Working Holiday Visas and they will supply farms – they will probably act as a contractor for us. They need the fruit to survive as well. We need the fruit picked. So it sort of goes in a circle. [17]

A remote cattle business has turned to grey nomads and travelling families to fill the gap left by WHMs. This has necessitated adjustments to the normal program, such as reducing the length of the workday and coming to terms with the more rigid scheduling of these cohorts:

Travelling families will come to the Territory in April and they will leave in November on the dot or October on the dot... And they've got a plan on what they want to do while they're up here and you can't rely on them. They might come for three weeks or a month maybe, but they've got a schedule. So they're not always fitting in to your program, whereas the backpacker will say, oh you have work? I get on a plane, I fly to Alice Springs tomorrow. And they will say, well I'll stay for three months and you know you've got them for three months. You just recruit somebody else before they go. [18]

10.3.3 The tourism and hospitality industry experience

Businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry experienced similar challenges to the agricultural industry, with some key differences. With the advent of COVID-19-related lockdowns, demand for services collapsed. Some businesses retained their WHM staff or paid for them to get home at considerable cost to the organisation, while others simply let their staff go and went into effective 'hibernation' for the lockdown period. While there has been little reprieve for businesses reliant on international travellers, subsequent domestic demand for tourism and hospitality services has placed many businesses under extreme pressure to source workers:

It's a great problem to have, but every restaurateur that I've spoken to said, "Oh my God, this has been the worst season we've ever had for staff." There's more demands for your services, and less staff to fill that demand. [19]

Small family-run businesses report individually picking up the overflow of work and being overwhelmed and exhausted in the process; in some larger organisations CEOs (e.g. in outdoor education) have returned to field work to maintain operations. While a last resort for many, an inevitable consequence has been the closure and/or cancellation of some services:

We're very worried about this upcoming start of the season, to the extent that we have made sure that we are not booked to capacity. So, we have structured our bookings and blocked out



rooms, when we know we're not going to be able to clean that with the two staff that we have. [15]

In the midst of this COVID-19-induced workforce pressure, some employers, noting the initial outflux of WHMs and the restrictions on new ones coming into the country, suggested the government should have adjusted the visa rules to support access to workforce. For example, one business found a WHM to fill a housekeeping role but could only keep her for three months:

We would have kept her on, but... her visa was running out and the government... wouldn't waive any of her visa requirements. [15]

One of the post-COVID-19 issues experienced by tourism and hospitality businesses related to WHM bargaining power generated by their low-supply high-demand status. For one employer this equated to unrealistic WHM demands in return for their labour:

"I want 60 hours, 20 of those will be at overtime and I'll tell you the hours that I'll work," and it's coming out of all their mouths. "No, I'm not interested in just full time. I want 60 hours and you will pay me time and a half and double time, as appropriate, for the 20 hours of those", and "No, I'm not working night shift. No, I'm not working early mornings. No, I'm not doing housekeeping. I'll tell you what I'm prepared to do and when I'm prepared to do it". [20]

For some employers, the challenges produced by COVID-19 related workforce pressures were leading them to the point of abandoning their businesses. One caravan park operator had invested in the business prior to COVID-19 and was prepared to continue investing provided sufficient workers could be sourced to fill necessary roles. In their absence, the plan was to sell the business after one more season of struggle.

Other employers were looking towards more innovative approaches to manage COVID-19 related pressures. In response to the downturn of demand, one international travel-focused tour operator had diversified the business to provide a buffer until the market regained momentum. Tellingly, there were employers from both industries who identified a shift in thinking about their workforce recruitment models. One citrus farmer noted that COVID-19 had reinforced the importance of greater self-sufficiency:

I think something that COVID has really shown us, in everything, is that we need to be more self-sufficient, and that is with our workforce as well, and if we've got a lot of younger people who are unemployed and yet we've got to bring a whole heap of people to this country to fill our employment gaps, we've got a problem somewhere... that's where we have to import our workers as well and I don't think that's a good long-term plan. [10].

The narrative was slightly different from one employer within the tourism and hospitality industry. A provider of outdoor education experiences, the business had responded to the COVID-19 disruption by purposefully reducing its reliance on WHMs:

I think this has given us a different insight to say we probably need to work harder now to train and develop an Australian workforce. So we've taken on 22 traineeships this year. We haven't done that before. We've also just taken on 15 people with no outdoor skills at all, not as trainees but as assistant leaders. And we know it's going to take us six months really to get much value out of them. But they give us feet on the ground and provide some support. So our dream is to do more of that so that across three or four years we will end up with the people who are training now being at a higher level skillset. [14]

The problem for maintaining this approach in the longer term (i.e., post-COVID) is that WHMs from the United Kingdom provide a 'quick fix' in this industry because they arrive highly trained in outdoor skills, whereas training in Australia is currently inadequate. A major investment is required to bring local workers up to standard and the concern is they will not remain in the industry long-term as the work is not amenable to family life and therefore likely to be a short-

term prospect. The dilemma reinforces the unique contribution WHMs make to particular industries in Australia:

If you imagine you're on a 20 day expedition with a group, so you work 20 days straight and you'd get the time off in lieu at the end of that. You'd get paid an overnight allowance and you'd get paid for the hours that you work - you get paid pretty reasonably, but once you meet somebody you perhaps have kids, that becomes a very difficult way to spend your working life, so we do know that there's a relatively short shelf life to our higher skilled people, and it takes three or four years to get them to that level. [14]

Another employer identified a downward trend in the use of WHMs in exchange for seasonal workers. Workers under the Seasonal Worker Program were perceived as more reliable than WHMs (i.e. less transient) and as friendly people who are easy to manage and get along with. While seasonal workers are seen to have less confidence and independence and need more work direction than WHMs, their stability as a workforce more than makes up for this.

10.3.4 Perceptions of future business prospects

Interviewed employers were subsequently asked about where they saw their businesses going and the role of WHMs in this over the next few years. A couple of citrus farmers were on a definitive growth trajectory and identified a crucial role in this for WHMs. Several agricultural employers identified an intention to grow their businesses tempered by concerns about their ability to source an adequate workforce:

Our plan is steadily needing more. That was what our plan is. But we're actually considering now putting the brakes on some expansion and just seeing how long this plays out for. Because it's no use growing a crop if you can't pick it... We'd like to keep going, but we just can't see a way forward in the next maybe two years. We're just nervous that we spend all this money to grow a crop and not get it off. [2]

We're wanting to expand our lambing from two to possibly three a year to grow our numbers and then have more sheep for meat. We do want to expand, but then you've got to look at how you're going to expand and find employees for the type of work long-term, that's probably our biggest hole. [7]

When asked about future projections, tourism and hospitality employers were cautiously optimistic about growth potential and generally emphatic that WHMs would necessarily play a key role in future operations. Strong domestic demand was projected to continue until the opening of international borders and then to return to business as usual. The major problem was finding workers to support demand in the meanwhile. One employer harboured deep concerns about the next two to three years, with not enough WHMs left in the country and any in-bound workers likely to be targeted to agriculture. In the context of running ski field operations, while some roles may survive without WHMs, others would not:

I think cheffing will be a problem because I normally have a couple from overseas cheffing. I think, food and beverage will possibly be okay. I think there will be enough skiers and snowboarders out there to want to come, but I don't know whether they'll have the skills, or the skills that we need. But housekeeping and cleaning will be a disaster. [4]

There was a consistent message from employers to fast-track the return of WHMs by every means possible, while maintaining a focus on the health and safety of the Australian public. They recognise it is a challenge but are calling out for innovative, responsive and collaborative approaches on the part of government and industry to rise to the challenge.



11 Conclusion

In 2019-20, the WHM program provided the opportunity for almost 190,000 visitors from 44 countries to work and travel in Australia and supported businesses to meet seasonal labour requirements in regional and remote Australia. This report highlights the strength of the WHM program in facilitating work and travel opportunities to encourage and support WHMs to explore the depth and breadth of the continent of Australia.

Primarily, WHMs used their time in Australia to travel, work, and experience Australian culture. They spent on average 9.4 months in Australia and worked on average for three months in each job they were employed, typically worked two jobs and earned \$13,000 for each job. Work often took place in regional and remote Australia, and remote areas were also visited for tourism purposes. Employment was particularly prevalent amongst agricultural businesses, with seasonal, short term, but high intensity jobs aligning with the needs of many WHMs. More than 20% of all jobs reported in the 2020 survey were for crop farm workers.

The mutually beneficial arrangement between WHMs and Australian employers was highly apparent. WHMs reported being satisfied or very satisfied in over 70% of the jobs in which they worked, and employers overwhelmingly considered that WHMs were extremely important for their businesses. WHMs were viewed as providing essential labour and generating much needed economic growth in regional and remote areas. They were also valued for contributing on a social and cultural level to both the workplace and local communities.

WHMs strongly endorsed the WHM program with almost 95% indicating they would recommend the program to others. However, it is important to continue efforts to ensure that an increased number of WHMs are satisfied with the jobs they undertake while in Australia. This is particularly relevant in agricultural jobs which are common for WHMs but also record the lowest satisfaction ratings. Notably, the final report from the Joint Standing Committee on Migration's Inquiry into the WHM program has recommended the establishment of a single point of contact hotline for WHMs to source information and advice about work rights and workplace exploitation concerns, together with accommodation and employment options. This aligns with employer feedback about strengthening perceptions of program safety and integrity to ensure that international WHMs continue to rate Australia as a preferred destination.

The findings of this report point to the success of policy-driven program changes geared to growing the program (increased partner countries and caps) and channelling WHMs into regional areas and industries with unmet labour demand (via second and third visa qualification provisions). However, some unevenness in labour distribution across industries was identified by employers. While historically geared to supporting the agriculture sector, recent policy developments to extend program provisions and benefits to other industries that struggle to source labour in peri-urban, regional, rural and remote parts of Australia are a timely response to concerns raised by tourism and hospitality employers in this report. Of particular note was the announcement in May 2021 - some months after data collection for the present report - of increased government support for Australia's tourism and hospitality sector through greater visa flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic period.

This report comes at a critical time as the nation recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. With Australia's international border closed, and expectations that it could remain closed until mid-2022, understanding how regional and remote businesses that rely heavily on WHMs interact with the local labour market is important for Australia's sustained recovery.

References

- AAP General News Wire. (2019). Working holiday-makers head to the regions. Australia, Sydney: Australian Associated Press Pty Limited.
- ABS. (2019). *ABS 1220.0 - ANZSCO - Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations, Version 1.3*. Retrieved from: <https://www.abs.gov.au/ANZSCO>
- Attorney General's Department (Cth). Migrant Workers' Taskforce. Retrieved from <https://www.ag.gov.au/industrial-relations/migrant-workers-taskforce>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2016). 1270.0.55.001 - Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2016 Retrieved from <https://www.abs.gov.au>
- Australian Government Austrade. (2020). *Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio Submission to the Inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker Program by the Joint Standing Committee on Migration, Submission 69*.
- Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2020a, 22 April 2020). (Subclass 417) Working Holiday Visa. Retrieved from <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/work-holiday-417>
- Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2020b, 22 April 2020). Subclass 462 Work and Holiday. Retrieved from <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/work-holiday-462>
- Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2020c, 17 January 2020). Working Holiday Maker (WHM) program. Retrieved from <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/whm-program>
- Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2020d). Working Holiday Maker (WHM) Program - Latest News. Retrieved from <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/whm-program/latest-news>
- Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2021). *Working Holiday Maker visas granted pivot table, 2020-21 to 31 March 2021 - comparison with previous years*. Retrieved from <https://data.gov.au/data/dataset/visa-working-holiday-maker>.
- Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection. (2015). *Working Holiday Maker visa programme report, 31 December 2015*. Canberra, Australia. <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-statistics/statistics/visa-statistics/visit>
- Committee for Economic Development of Australia. (2019). *Effects of temporary migration*. Melbourne
- Department of Home Affairs. (2021). *BP0017 Working Holiday Maker visas granted pivot table 2020-21 to 31 December 2020 - comparison with previous years*. Canberra. data.gov.au
- Education and Employment References Committee. (2016). *A National Disgrace: The Exploitation of Temporary Work Visa Holders*. Canberra.
- Fair Work Ombudsman. (2016). *Inquiry into the wages and conditions of people working under the 417 Working Holiday Visa Program* file:///C:/Users/more0020/AppData/Local/Temp/417-visa-inquiry-report-1.pdf
- Fair Work Ombudsman. (2018). *Haverst Trail Inquiry Report: A report on workplace arrangements along the Harvest Trail*
- Fels, A., & Cousins, D. (2019). The Migrant Workers' Taskforce and the Australian Government's Response to Migrant Worker Wage Exploitation. *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, 84, 13-45.
- Income Tax Rates Amendment (Working Holiday Maker Reform) Bill 2016 [and related Bills]. (2016). (Cth).
- Joint Standing Committee on Migration. (2020a). *Final Report of the Inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker Program*. Canberra
- Joint Standing Committee on Migration. (2020b). *Interim Report of the Inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker Program*. Canberra
- Parliament of Australia. (2020). Review of the Working Holiday Maker Program and its role in the economic recovery. Retrieved from https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/House_of_Representatives/About_the_House_News/Media_Releases/Review_of_the_Working_Holiday_Maker_Program_and_its_role_in_the_economic_recovery
- Phillips, J. (2016). *Australia's Working Holiday Maker program: a quick guide*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Productivity Commission. (2016). *Migrant Intake into Australia*. Canberra



- Rivzi, A. (2020). *A Fairer Pathway: Improving Australia's Temporary Migration Program*. Sydney, Australia
- Swoboda, K., & Dosser, R. (2016). *Income Tax Rates Amendment (Working Holiday Maker Reform) Bill 2016 [and related Bills]*. Canberra, Australia.
- Tan, Y., Richardson, S., Lester, L., Bai, T., & Sun, L. (2009). *Evaluation of Australia's Working Holiday Maker (WHM) Program*. Belconnen, ACT: Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- The Hon David Coleman MP. (2020). Coronavirus and Temporary Visa holders [Press release]. Retrieved from <https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/davidcoleman/pages/coronavirus-and-temporary-visa-holders.aspx>
- Wright, C. F., Clibborn, S., Piper, N., & Cini, N. (2016). *Economic migration and Australia in the 21st century*. Sydney, Australia
- Zhao, S., Bink, B., Kruger, H., Xia, C., & Stenekes, N. (2018). *What difference does labour choice make to farm productivity and profitability in the Australian horticulture industry? A comparison between seasonal workers and working holiday makers*. Canberra

Appendix A. Labour market contribution of WHMs to the Australian economy: Modelling employment, hours, wages, and job satisfaction

This section replicates the econometric models from the evaluation of the WHM program undertaken by Tan et al. (2009). In that report, four issues are modelled:

- The decision to take employment
- The supply of hours worked per day in the WHM's first job
- Wages per hour
- Job satisfaction

As in the NILS report, the modelling is conducted separately for males and females.

Employment

The employment model estimates the probability of being employed versus unemployed using a probit model. They consider the following variables as explanatory of a WHM's employment probability:

- Level of education
- English language ability
- Country of origin
- Reason for visiting Australia
- Visa type, duration, and 'number'
- Age
- Understanding of Australian culture before arriving
- Marital status
- Job prior to arrival

Not all of these questions were asked in the WHM survey 2020. As such, we model the decision to take employment as a function of education level, reason for visiting Australia, duration of residence in Australia, citizenship, and age. Country of citizenship has been reduced to include only those countries which individually make up more than 5% of the total sample - United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Taiwan, and South Korea. This accounts for 66% of all WHM in the survey. The remaining countries are grouped together as 'Other'.

The outcomes of these employment models produce similar results as those presented from the previous WHM survey and remain congruent with typical labour market outcome models.

- WHMs (both males and females) without a university degree were less likely to be employed in Australia.
 - WHMs with a high school degree were less likely to be employed than those with a university degree (males 4.2% less likely; females 3.7%).
 - Male WHMs who did not specify their level of education were 27% less likely to be employed than males with a university degree. For female WHMs who did not specify their education level, the decrease in probability was 20.2%
- WHMs who travelled to Australia expressly to work were more likely to work (males 7.5% more likely; females 6.9%), compared to those who visited Australia for other reasons.
- Each additional month of residence increased the likelihood of being employed by 1.7% for males and 1.8% for females.



- Compared to the United Kingdom (the country base-case) male WHMs from Taiwan and South Korea were more likely (5.6%) to be employed. Female WHMs from Taiwan were 6.2% more likely to be employed than those from the United Kingdom.

Interestingly, age and aged squared did not show the standard pattern for either males or females, with no significant differences occurring across age. This matches with the results for females of the previous WHM survey, but not for males, and is incongruent with standard labour market outcomes (albeit noting WHMs are all aged between 18 and 35 years).

Hours per day, wages, job satisfaction

As in the previous WHM survey, the hours, wage, and job satisfaction models are based on a two-stage selection model where outcomes are contingent on being employed. That is the model for employment specified above is first estimated to determine who is employed. The outcome variable (hours, wages, or satisfaction) is then calculated using this sample.

Hours per week

- Hours worked per week increased with age (but at a decreasing rate) by about 1.4 hours per week for each additional year for males (though only at the 10% significance level) but was not observed as influencing the hours of work of females.
- Male WHMs from Taiwan and South Korea worked about 3.2 fewer hours per week than those from the United Kingdom (the country base-case). South Korean, Taiwanese and Other female WHMs also worked between 1.5 fewer hours per week (Other) and 4.5 fewer hours per week (South Korea) compared to those from the United Kingdom.
- Compared with hospitality, tourism and sport (the industry base-case):
 - Males working in agriculture and transport worked about 6.2 hours more per week and females worked about 6 hours more per week.
 - Males employed in the construction industry also worked about 6 more hours per week whereas females worked almost 10 hours more per week.
 - Males employed in education worked about 8 hours fewer per week, while there was no effect on the female labour supply.
 - Both males and females employed in cleaning and gardening worked about 3 hours fewer per week.
 - Females worked more hours in office admin and IT, and sales and marketing, compared to the base-case, however, there were no differences between hours worked for these other industries for males.
- Level of education did not appear to influence the number of hours worked per week for males or females, excepting those with a trade education worked about 2 more hours per week compared to those with a university education.
- Across the states and territories, there were no differences in the observed hours worked for males compared to the base-case of the Australian Capital Territory, but females employed in Tasmania worked about 3.5 fewer hours per week than females employed in the Australian Capital Territory.
- There was no impact on hours worked per week for males or females for those who received on the job training.

- Duration of stay in Australia did not increase the number of hours worked per week for males, but each additional month decreased the number of hours worked for females by about 0.2 hours per week.
- An increase in wages by \$1 per hour increased the number of hours worked per week by about 0.26 for males. While there was still a statistically significant effect for females, the impact was much smaller, with a \$1 per hour increase in wage only increasing the number of hours worked per week by 0.08

Hourly rate of pay

The hourly rate of pay model suggests (in line with the previous WHM survey) that the wage setting behaviour for WHMs differs to that of the general population.

- There is a significant difference between wages paid to those in most industries compared to the industry base-case (hospitality and tourism).
 - For males, wages are lower in agriculture and transport (-76 cents/hour), and higher in health and aged care (\$10.50/hour), office admin and IT, (\$6.80/hour), construction and mining (\$4.11/hour), education (\$2.70/hour), and sales and marketing (\$1.13/hour).
 - For females, wages are lower in education (-\$5.20/hour), cleaning and gardening (-\$1.50/hour), and agriculture and transport (-\$1.34/hour), and higher in sales and marketing (\$1.16/hour), construction and mining (\$4.60/hour), office admin and IT (\$5.50/hour) and health and aged care (\$8.90/hour).
- For both males and females, receiving on the job training corresponded to an increase in hourly pay of \$1.00/hour for males, and \$1.70/hour for females.
- For females, there was no impact on wage rates for education levels, whereas for males, compared to those with university degrees, those with high school degrees were paid \$3.20 more per hour, those with trade degrees were paid \$0.85 more per hour, and those without high school degrees were paid \$3.10 more per hour.
- Wages followed the typical inverted-u shaped pattern for both males and females – increasing with age, but at a decreasing rate.
- The wage rate for males was more consistent across states and territories, with only those who worked in the Northern Territory and Western Australia earning more than those in the Australian Capital Territory (the base-case). For females, wages were higher in all states relative to the Australian Capital Territory. In New South Wales hourly wages were \$2.45/hour higher, in Northern Territory they were \$3.24/hour higher, in Queensland they were \$1.54/hour higher, in South Australia and Tasmania they were \$2.00/hour higher, and in Victoria and Western Australia they were \$2.50/hour higher.
- Time spent in Australia did not impact on the hourly wage rate for males or females.
- By country of origin, compared to the country base-case (United Kingdom)
 - Males from France, Italy, Taiwan, and South Korea earned between \$1.60 (Taiwan) and \$3.00 (South Korea) less per hour. Male WHMs from Germany and Other earned about the same as those from the United Kingdom.
 - For females, all WHMs earned less than those from the United Kingdom, ranging from \$0.70 (Other) to \$2.90 (South Korea) less per hour.

As is discussed in the previous report, it is not surprising that the wage setting behaviour would be different for WHMs than for the general population. Factors on both the employer and employee side can explain the results presented above. For example, WHMs who are working while in Australia to finance their trip may be more willing to accept lower paying jobs than their education level would suggest, knowing that they are not seeking



long-term employment. Additionally, on the demand side, employers may overlook shortcomings in an employee's 'human capital' attributes.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction in this round of the WHM survey was measured on a five-point scale where those who were very dissatisfied in their job scored it a 1, and those who were very satisfied with their job scored it a 5. Measured against this five-point satisfaction, unit increases in explanatory variables provide the change in job satisfaction. For clarity, impacts will be measured in the percentage increase or decrease in job satisfaction. For example, a reduction in job satisfaction of 0.1 points represents a decrease of $0.1/5 = 2.0\%$. As in the previous report, the effects of explanatory variables are mostly minor with respect to job satisfaction.

- Males who worked in agriculture and transport, health and aged care, and construction and mining were less satisfied than those in the base-industry of hospitality and tourism by between 6.5% (health and aged care) and 3.0% (construction and mining). Females were also less satisfied in agriculture and transport, but the effect size was much smaller at about 1.7% less satisfied compared to the base-case. Females employed in cleaning and gardening experienced the largest reduction in job satisfaction compared to the base-case, a reduction of about 3.0%. Females employed in education and office administration and IT were more satisfied, with the effect size particularly large at 7.4% higher for those employed in education.
- Jobs which provided on-the-job training were associated with increased job satisfaction for males of about 5.5% and females of about 3.2%
- Compared to WHM from the United Kingdom (the base country), male WHMs from Germany and France reported higher job satisfaction of 2.9% and 2.4% respectively. Women from Taiwan, and Korea experienced lower job satisfaction than those from the United Kingdom, by between -2.5% (Korea) and -1.6% (Taiwan).
- Males who earned more per hour were more satisfied in their job, but the effect was small – only 0.4% higher for each additional dollar per hour increase. There was no impact on job satisfaction with hours per week. Females also were more satisfied in their job if they were paid more, with satisfaction increasing by about 0.3% per dollar per hour. Unlike males, females were less satisfied with their job as the hours increased, with satisfaction decreasing by -0.05% per additional hour.
- Where duration of time in Australia had no impact on job satisfaction for males, each additional month stayed in Australia reduced job satisfaction for females by about -0.5%.



Australian Industrial Transformation Institute
College of Business, Government and Law
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100
Adelaide SA 5001
P: 08 8201 5083
E: aiti@flinders.edu.au

