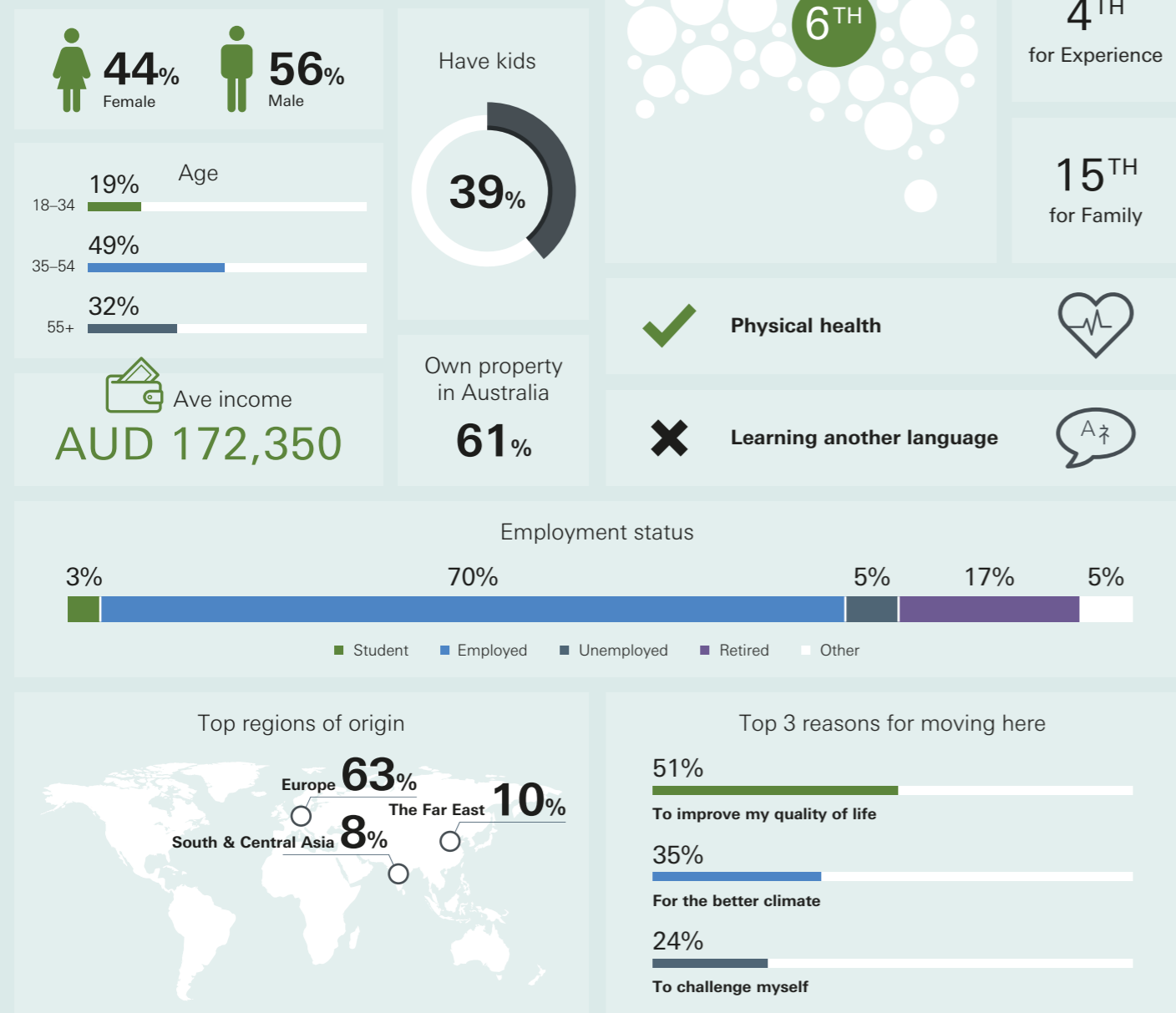


Expats in Australia

Based on 809 interviews



Expats from Australia

Based on 956 interviews



Australia

Expats in Australia

Expats travel the world sampling new sights, smells, tastes and experiences. They revel in living among different people and cultures. But expats in Australia often find life is strangely familiar.

More than half come from the UK and, overall, most come from the European Union, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the USA. They probably already speak the local language.

At work too, most say the culture, levels of stress and other important factors are similar to those they left behind, though their salaries are higher.

But what makes them come from the other side of the world is the quality of life, and they find it in bucketloads. More than half of expats here say their physical health is better than at home and that they feel safer and more secure. They are more active in a natural environment that almost three quarters say is better than the one they left behind.

Half of the parents who move to Australia say the decision has even brought them closer to their children.

There are tangible benefits, too. Almost half have invested in property – often living in a better home than before. In fact, far more expats in Australia have property here than the average expat globally (66% vs 44%).

It's the first time most expats have lived abroad but they know they're on to a good thing. They stick around. Almost two thirds have lived here for more than five years.

All these things help explain why more than half of those people who were drawn to Australia from across the sea now describe themselves as Australian. It's surely the ultimate endorsement.

But is it all too easy? Can a new life in Australia really help expats discover the wide range of experiences, cultures and people the world has to offer?

The nation is rightly proud of its multiculturalism, but there's no evidence in this year's study that this translates to a wider awareness of others, or that their new life has given them a much stronger sense of self.

Without the usual pressure to learn, those living here have one of the lowest language skill levels in the world, for example. Just half (51%) can speak another language compared with 80% of expats in general.

And when HSBC asked Australia-based expats how their personalities had changed since living abroad, fewer said they were more tolerant, open-minded, knowledgeable, adaptable or even responsible than the global average.

Australian nationals abroad

Australians leaving the country seem equally keen to embrace the unknown. Often young and unlikely to yet have children, they want to challenge themselves with a new life overseas, to progress their careers and to develop their skills.

They travel to territories well known for their strong and very different cultures than the one they're used to, including the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand.

Their salaries tend to drop slightly when they move abroad though, and comparisons with the working environment at home aren't typically positive.

But they throw themselves into their new life, immersing themselves in the local culture and growing their social circle – a contrast to expats in Australia, half (48%) of whom say their social circle is smaller than it used to be.