

### **Estimating actual length of stay from migrant cards: the case of Australia**

Australia provides a good example of the use of migrant cards on both entry into and departure from the country, as it serves to determine with a great deal of accuracy the actual length of stay of travellers in the country.

The cards include a central core of common questions which all travellers are obliged to answer and other specific questions on either entry or departure, which vary according to the category of traveller concerned. Three categories of traveller are identified:

- Permanent emigrants: residents abroad planning to set up home in Australia, or Australian residents planning to set up home abroad
- Visitors or temporary travellers: residents abroad travelling to Australia temporarily for tourism or other purposes but intending to return to their countries of residence
- Residents in Australia returning from or travelling to another country.

The fields common to both cards include:

- First name and surname
- Passport number
- Flight number or name of ship on which traveller arrived in or will depart from the country
- Country of embarkation and intended country of disembarkation
- Occupation
- Nationality
- Date of birth
- Date
- Signature

With these common fields, and by means of the passport number in particular, it is possible to cross-check the date of entry against that of departure and so make an extremely reliable estimate of the traveller's length of stay in Australia and determine whether he is a visitor or resident.

*Australian Incoming and Outgoing passenger Cards*