

4 Age, gender and cultural and linguistic diversity

Client characteristics

Figure 4.1 shows the age and gender distribution of SAAP clients in Australia during 2001–02. In all age groups under 45 years there were more female than male clients. As a consequence, more females (53,300) than males (41,700) received services (Table 4.1). However, there were more male than female clients in New South Wales, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory (Table 4.4. See also Table 4.1 in the State and Territory supplements associated with this publication). The largest group of clients for both males and females was 20 to 24 year-olds, with 16% of all clients being in this age group (Table 4.1). In contrast, less than 5% of all clients were over the age of 54. The average age of clients was 33 for males and 30 for females.

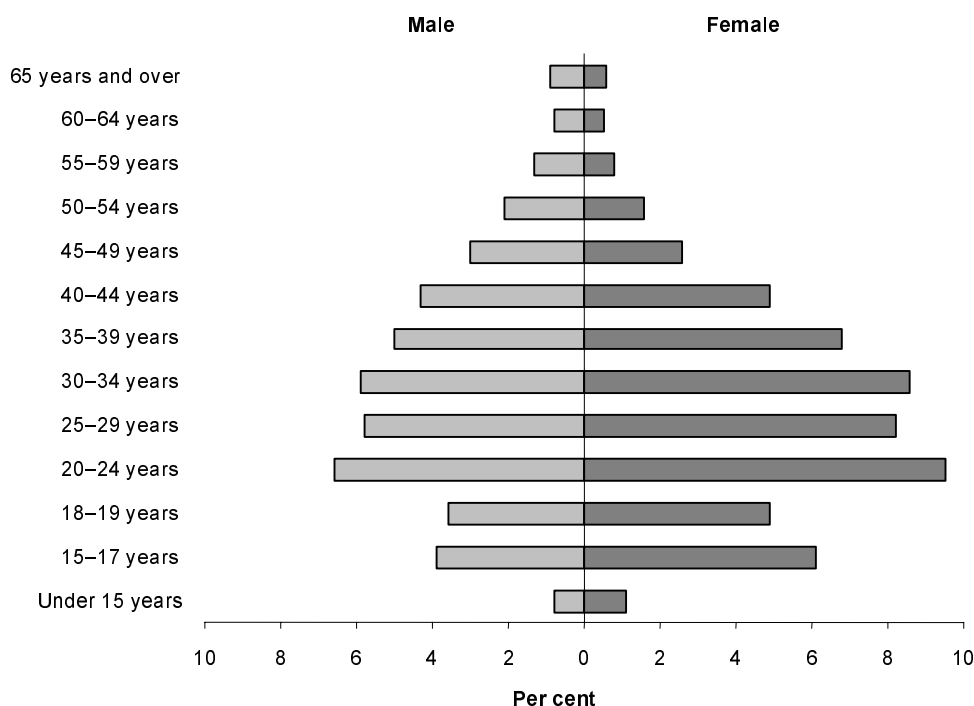
Eighty-five per cent of SAAP clients were born in Australia (Table 4.3). The next most common places of birth were Oceania, ‘other Europe and the former Soviet Union’, and South-East Asia (around 3% each). Two per cent of SAAP clients were born in the United Kingdom, Ireland and associated islands. Less than 1% of SAAP clients were born in the Americas.

People born in Australia were more likely to become SAAP clients than those born elsewhere: only 73% of the Australian population aged over 10 years were Australian-born, compared with 85% of SAAP clients. On the other hand, people born in the United Kingdom and Ireland, ‘other Europe and the former Soviet Union’, and various parts of Asia were under-represented among SAAP clients.

The distributions of male and female clients by country of birth were generally similar. However, the percentages of female clients from South-East Asia, North-East Asia and ‘South and Central America and Caribbean’ were around double those for males.

There was some variation between male and female clients in terms of cultural and linguistic diversity. While slightly more male (6%) than female clients (4%) were born in English proficiency group 1 countries, clients born overseas in other countries (English proficiency groups 2–4) comprised a higher percentage of female clients than male clients.² Twelve per cent of the 52,000 female clients were born in these countries, compared with 8% of the 40,600 male clients (Table 4.4). Further, a higher proportion of female clients than male clients were Indigenous Australians (20% of female clients compared with 12% of male clients). Overall, Indigenous Australians were over-represented as SAAP clients relative to their population size: less than 2% of Australians aged 10 years or over identified as Indigenous Australians in June 2000, compared with around 17% of SAAP clients in 2001–02. The over-representation of Indigenous Australians influences the relative proportions of other cultural and linguistic groups in SAAP, in particular the large proportion of Australian-born people as shown in Table 4.3.

² English proficiency group 1 countries are Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. English proficiency groups 2–4 refer to all other countries (excluding Australia).



Source: Table 4.1.

Figure 4.1: SAAP clients by age and gender, Australia, 2001-02 (per cent all clients)

Table 4.5 shows the cultural and linguistic diversity of SAAP clients across the States and Territories. Reflecting the large proportion of Indigenous people in the general population, the Northern Territory had the largest proportion of Indigenous clients (53%, compared with 17% nationally). This over-representation was even more pronounced among female clients: 71% of female clients in the Northern Territory were Indigenous Australians compared with 20% nationally. The lowest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients was recorded in Victoria (5%). On the other hand, Victoria had the highest proportion of clients born overseas in countries in English proficiency groups 2-4 (15% compared with 10% nationally). The percentage of male clients who were born in these countries was smaller than the corresponding percentage of female clients in all jurisdictions except Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

SAAP use

As mentioned in Chapter 3, 68% of all clients had just one support period during 2001-02, and clients averaged 1.8 support periods each (Table 3.1). The pattern of repeat use varied with age and gender (Table 4.2). Overall, 70% of female clients had one support period while the corresponding figure for male clients was 66%. Consequently males averaged slightly more support periods, at 2.0 each, with females averaging around 1.7 support periods each. Clients aged 45 to 64 years returned to SAAP agencies more often than other clients (2.1 support periods each). This was due to the relatively high average number of support periods per client for males in this age category (2.4). In comparison, females aged 45 to 64 years averaged 1.7 support periods each. Clients under 15 years of age made up less than

2% of all SAAP clients. They returned less often than others to SAAP services, averaging around 1.5 support periods each. Seventy-four per cent of this client group had only one support period.

The average number of support periods per client also varied according to cultural and linguistic diversity. Clients from Indigenous backgrounds had the highest number of support periods each, averaging 2.4 (Table 4.4). In comparison, clients from countries in English proficiency groups 2–4 had fewer support periods per client, averaging 1.5. Australian-born non-Indigenous clients averaged 1.8 support periods each.

In Australia during 2001–02, for every 10,000 people aged 10 years and over in the general population, 56 people used SAAP services (Table 4.2). There was, however, a large variation across the States and Territories. After adjusting for different age distributions, the number of SAAP clients per 10,000 people aged 10 and over ranged from 46 in New South Wales to 189 in the Northern Territory. These differences largely reflect the varying usage of SAAP services by clients of different cultural backgrounds and the different population profiles in the States and Territories (see Table 4.4 in the State and Territory supplements associated with this publication). It may also reflect the availability of SAAP services across the States and Territories.

The proportion of people accessing support varied considerably by age. People aged from 15 to 24 years were more likely to go to SAAP agencies than people in other age groups (Table 4.2). The highest rate of use was by 18 and 19 year-olds, with 147 clients for every 10,000 people in this age bracket. The next highest usage rates were by 15 to 17 year-olds and 20 to 24 year-olds, among whom there were 116 and 117 clients, respectively, for every 10,000 people. Only 6 people per 10,000 people aged over 65 years, and 11 per 10,000 people aged under 15 years, became SAAP clients.

The proportion of people accessing SAAP services also varied by gender. Females were more likely to use SAAP services than males: there were 62 female clients for every 10,000 females aged 10 years and over in the general population and 50 male clients per 10,000 males. The highest rate of use was by 18–19 year-old females among whom there were 174 clients per 10,000 females, compared to 122 male clients per 10,000 males.

4.1 Tables

Table 4.1: SAAP clients, by age and gender, Australia, 2001-02

Age	Percentage of all clients		Percentage of gender group		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	%	Number
	%	%	%	%	%	
Under 15 years	0.8	1.1	1.7	2.0	1.9	1,800
15-17 years	3.9	6.1	8.9	10.8	10.0	9,500
18-19 years	3.6	4.9	8.2	8.7	8.4	8,000
20-24 years	6.6	9.5	15.0	16.9	16.1	15,300
25-29 years	5.8	8.2	13.1	14.6	13.9	13,300
30-34 years	5.9	8.6	13.5	15.4	14.5	13,800
35-39 years	5.0	6.8	11.4	12.1	11.8	11,200
40-44 years	4.3	4.9	9.8	8.7	9.2	8,700
45-49 years	3.0	2.6	6.9	4.7	5.7	5,400
50-54 years	2.1	1.6	4.7	2.9	3.7	3,500
55-59 years	1.3	0.8	2.9	1.4	2.1	2,000
60-64 years	0.8	0.5	1.7	0.8	1.2	1,200
65 years and over	0.9	0.6	2.1	1.0	1.5	1,400
<i>Total</i>	<i>43.9</i>	<i>56.1</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (number)	41,700	53,300	41,700	53,300	..	95,000
Mean age (years)	..	..	32.5	30.0	..	31.1
Median age (years)	..	..	31	28	..	29

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 596.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 4.2: SAAP clients: number of support periods per client by age and gender of client, Australia, 2001-02 (per cent)

Number of support periods	Under 15 years	15-17 years	18-19 years	20-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65+ years	Total	
								%	Number
Male clients									
1	75.7	66.2	69.3	68.0	64.4	65.0	70.7	65.9	27,500
2	16.5	19.4	16.6	16.3	17.2	17.3	15.0	17.2	7,200
3	4.3	7.1	6.9	7.3	7.6	6.7	7.1	7.2	3,000
4	2.4	3.0	2.7	3.1	3.8	3.3	2.6	3.4	1,400
5	0.2	1.6	1.5	1.8	2.0	1.9	0.9	1.8	700
6+	0.9	2.7	3.0	3.5	5.1	5.9	3.7	4.5	1,900
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	1.7	8.9	8.2	15.0	47.8	16.3	2.1	100.0	..
Total (number)	700	3,700	3,400	6,200	19,900	6,800	900	..	41,700
Mean number of support periods	1.38	1.68	1.68	1.83	2.15	2.36	2.10	..	2.04
Per 10,000 population	9	88	122	94	69	30	8	..	50
Female clients									
1	73.5	65.7	69.8	68.1	69.8	76.3	82.7	69.9	37,300
2	15.1	19.2	18.8	19.2	17.9	14.5	7.7	17.8	9,500
3	6.4	7.6	6.2	6.3	6.5	4.5	5.4	6.3	3,400
4	2.7	3.4	2.1	2.6	2.5	2.0	1.3	2.6	1,400
5	0.9	1.8	1.1	1.5	1.3	0.8	0.2	1.3	700
6+	1.5	2.3	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.6	2.1	1,100
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	2.0	10.8	8.7	16.9	50.8	9.8	1.0	100.0	..
Total (number)	1,100	5,800	4,600	9,000	27,100	5,200	500	..	53,300
Mean number of support periods	1.49	1.71	1.58	1.65	1.66	1.68	1.60	..	1.66
Per 10,000 population	13	144	174	140	92	23	4	..	62
All clients									
1	74.4	65.9	69.6	68.1	67.5	69.9	75.2	68.1	64,700
2	15.7	19.3	17.9	18.0	17.6	16.1	12.3	17.5	16,700
3	5.5	7.4	6.5	6.7	6.9	5.7	6.4	6.7	6,400
4	2.6	3.2	2.4	2.8	3.1	2.7	2.1	2.9	2,800
5	0.6	1.7	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.4	0.6	1.5	1,400
6+	1.3	2.5	2.4	2.7	3.3	4.2	3.3	3.1	3,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	1.9	10.0	8.4	16.1	49.5	12.6	1.5	100.0	..
Total (number)	1,800	9,500	8,000	15,300	47,000	12,000	1,400	..	95,000
Mean number of support periods	1.45	1.70	1.62	1.72	1.87	2.06	1.91	..	1.83
Per 10,000 population	11	116	147	117	80	27	6	..	56

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 596.
2. 'Per 10,000 population' shows how many people out of every 10,000 in the general population become SAAP clients. The rate is estimated by comparing the number of SAAP clients with the estimated resident population in the designated age group as at 30 June 2001 (preliminary estimates). For the age group under 15 years, only those aged 10 to 14 are included in the calculations.
3. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2001a.

Table 4.3: SAAP clients: birthplace by gender, Australia, 2001-02

Birthplace	Male	Female	Total	Australian population 10+		
	%	%	%	Number	%	
Australia	85.8	83.6	84.6	79,200	73.3	12,143,100
Oceania (excluding Australia)	3.2	3.0	3.1	2,900	2.8	458,400
UK, Ireland and associated islands	2.8	1.7	2.2	2,100	7.3	1,202,800
Other Europe and the former Soviet Union	2.7	2.7	2.7	2,500	7.1	1,176,300
Middle East and North Africa	1.2	1.6	1.4	1,300	1.3	223,300
South-East Asia	1.5	3.6	2.7	2,500	3.3	552,500
North-East Asia	0.3	1.0	0.7	600	1.8	304,200
Southern Asia	0.5	0.6	0.6	500	1.2	192,500
North America	0.3	0.2	0.3	200	0.5	88,700
South and Central America and Caribbean	0.3	0.6	0.5	500	0.5	81,000
Africa (excluding North Africa)	1.3	1.3	1.3	1,200	0.8	139,700
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	..	<i>100.0</i>	..
Total (%)	43.8	56.2	100.0	..	..	..
Total (number)	41,000	52,600	..	93,700	..	16,562,500

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 1,938.
2. 'Australian population 10+' refers to the estimated resident population aged 10 years and over at 30 June 2000 (preliminary estimates) and includes people resident in the external territories.
3. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2001b.

Table 4.4: SAAP clients and support periods per client, by cultural and linguistic diversity and gender of client, Australia, 2001–02

Cultural and linguistic diversity	Male	Female	Total	Australian population 10+		
Clients	%	%	%	Number	%	Number
Indigenous Australians	11.9	20.4	16.7	15,400	1.9	306,500
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	74.0	63.3	68.0	62,900	71.5	11,836,600
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	5.7	4.1	4.8	4,500	10.4	1,719,700
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	8.3	12.1	10.4	9,700	16.3	2,699,600
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	..	<i>100.0</i>	..
Total (%)	43.8	56.2	100.0	..	..	..
Total (number)	40,600	52,000	..	92,500	..	16,562,500
Support periods	Mean number per client			Total number		
Indigenous Australians	2.87	2.13	2.36	36,800	..	..
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	1.98	1.56	1.76	112,700	..	..
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	1.95	1.51	1.74	7,800	..	..
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	1.57	1.42	1.47	14,100	..	..
<i>Total</i>	<i>2.05</i>	<i>1.66</i>	<i>1.83</i>	..	..	..
Total support periods (%)	49.4	50.6	100.0	..	..	..
Total support periods (number)	84,700	86,800	..	171,500	..	..

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 3,072 clients.
2. For derivation of cultural and linguistic diversity, see the counting rules (Appendix 1, Section A1.4). English proficiency groups are based on country of birth—see Glossary.
3. 'Australian population 10+' refers to the estimated resident population aged 10 years and over at 30 June 2000 (preliminary estimates). The figures for Indigenous Australians are from experimental estimates based on the 1996 Census produced by the ABS. The number of 'Australian-born non-Indigenous people' is derived from the Australian-born population minus the number of Indigenous Australians.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 1998; ABS 2001b.

Table 4.5: SAAP clients: cultural and linguistic diversity and gender of client, by State and Territory, Australia, 2001–02 (per cent)

Cultural and linguistic diversity	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total	
Male clients										
									%	Number
Indigenous Australians	12.3	4.6	18.5	11.9	8.7	7.8	10.2	26.7	11.9	4,800
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	71.7	80.6	71.5	70.1	79.5	83.6	75.4	62.7	74.0	30,000
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	7.4	3.6	5.5	8.2	5.5	4.9	5.5	5.4	5.7	2,300
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	8.6	11.3	4.5	9.8	6.3	3.7	8.9	5.2	8.3	3,400
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	..
Total (%)	32.2	26.1	22.2	8.5	8.6	4.1	2.4	3.0	..	..
Total (number)	13,000	10,600	9,000	3,500	3,500	1,700	1,000	1,200	..	40,600
Female clients										
Indigenous Australians	20.3	5.5	29.0	47.0	17.6	10.6	13.9	70.6	20.4	10,600
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	62.5	74.5	59.5	36.8	69.2	84.0	69.8	23.4	63.3	32,900
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	4.1	3.4	4.9	6.3	4.1	2.3	3.9	1.9	4.1	2,100
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	13.1	16.6	6.6	9.9	9.1	3.1	12.3	4.1	12.1	6,300
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	..
Total (%)	24.3	33.7	16.9	10.4	9.8	3.6	1.8	3.6	..	..
Total (number)	12,600	17,500	8,800	5,400	5,100	1,900	900	1,800	..	52,000
All clients										
Indigenous Australians	16.2	5.1	23.7	33.2	13.9	9.3	12.0	53.0	16.7	15,400
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	67.2	76.8	65.6	49.8	73.4	83.8	72.6	39.1	68.0	62,900
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	5.8	3.5	5.2	7.1	4.7	3.5	4.8	3.3	4.8	4,500
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	10.8	14.6	5.5	9.9	8.0	3.4	10.6	4.5	10.4	9,700
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	..
Total (%)	27.8	30.3	19.2	9.6	9.3	3.8	2.0	3.3	..	..
Total (number)	25,700	28,100	17,800	8,900	8,600	3,600	1,900	3,100	..	92,500

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 3,072 clients.
2. Number of clients within a State or Territory relates to clients who ever received assistance from a SAAP agency in that State or Territory. Since a client may have support periods in more than one State or Territory, State and Territory figures do not sum to the national figure.
3. For derivation of cultural and linguistic diversity see the counting rules (Appendix 1, Section A1.4).
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.