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Market Wrap

Rear Window

Edited by Andrew Main

Australians count for something overseas:

This year's census will probably be the most accurate yet, except for one issue: Australians overseas.

An expatriate collective called the Southern Cross Group estimates there may be as many as a million Australians overseas and organised a kind of parallel census, taking a snapshot of its members on August 8, the same date as the official census.

It's doing it in conjunction with an organisation of expats in the US called Advance. They will hand the results to Graeme Hugo, Adelaide University's professor of geography - and a noted expert on demography, who says that even estimating the number of Australian professionals overseas is difficult.

"There could be between 800,000 and a million but we just don't know," he told The Australian Financial Review. His research suggests that the number of people who identified themselves clearly as Australians working overseas has grown steadily in recent years.

About half of the total are in Europe and half of this group are in the UK, he says. Just to show there's more to life than moaning about the weather, he notes that the number in the UK has about doubled in the last decade.