



MEDIA RELEASE

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Muval migration data recognised in academic journal: research shows removalist data can help track how Australia moves

Anonymised moving enquiry data from national online removalist booking platform Muval has been recognised in peer-reviewed academic research, with a new article in *Australian Geographer* examining whether removalist data can be used to estimate internal migration in Australia.

The article, *Can removalist data be used to estimate internal migration in Australia?*, by E. Charles-Edwards, J. Raymer and P. Wohland, explores the potential of Muval digital trace data to estimate internal migration between 2019 and 2023.

For Muval, the publication marks a significant milestone: data generated through its moving platform is not only helping Australians compare and book removalists, but also contributing to national understanding of population movement, housing pressure, regional growth and planning demand.

"Every move tells a story, and when those moves are aggregated and anonymised, they reveal something much bigger about Australia. For years, Muval has seen migration shifts emerging before they appear in official statistics. Having that insight examined and published in an academic journal is an important validation of the role our data can play in helping governments, planners, researchers and communities understand where Australians are moving - and why," Muval Chief Executive Officer James Morrell said.

The study used a multiple regression framework to compare Muval search data with 2021 Census migration estimates. It found a positive relationship between Muval data and Census-based migration measures, with a 1% increase in relevant Muval searches associated with a 0.29% increase in inward migration and a 0.35% increase in outward migration at the SA4 regional level.

Key findings from the article include:

- Muval data provides a timely, real-world signal of moving intent before many relocations appear in official statistics
- Muval search activity showed a clear positive relationship with Census-recorded inward and outward migration
- A 1% increase in relevant Muval searches was associated with a 0.29% increase in inward migration and a 0.35% increase in outward migration at the SA4 level
- Around half of Muval records involved interstate moves, compared with about 10% of moves captured by the 2021 Census, reflecting the stronger role of professional removalists in longer-distance moves
- The article concludes that removalist data can be a valuable supplementary source for understanding internal migration, rather than a direct replacement for official statistics

Muval says the research highlights the importance of responsible modelling when using commercial platform data for population analysis, particularly because moving enquiries are weighted toward people who need professional removal support.

The research builds on Muval's collaboration with University of Queensland population geographers, which has already supported the development of MuveRank, Muval's real-time migration ranking tool for Australian regions. MuveRank uses de-identified and anonymised planned move records to show migration gains, losses and total movement across capital cities and SA4 regions.

"Traditional migration data is incredibly valuable, but it often arrives with a lag. Our platform gives us a live window into moving intentions before many relocations are completed. That makes Muval data uniquely useful as an early indicator of housing, workforce and population pressures," Mr Morrell said.

The findings have practical implications beyond the removals industry. Faster signals about internal migration can support better decision-making in areas such as housing supply, infrastructure, transport, education, health services, regional development and disaster recovery planning.

Muval will continue to expand its migration insights through the Muval Index, MuveRank and ongoing research collaborations, with the goal of helping Australians, policymakers and industry better understand the forces shaping where people choose to live.

The full academic article is available via [Taylor & Francis](#).

**The research uses anonymised Muval digital trace data and compares it against 2021 Australian Census migration estimates. Muval data should be interpreted as a supplementary indicator of migration intent and removalist-related moving activity, not a replacement for official statistics.*

About Muval

Muval is a free platform that helps people find the best local and interstate removalists in Australia, compare their prices, and book online. Muval.com.au is one of the top ranked moving house platforms in Australia and provides an important service for those looking to save time and money when looking to move house.

For more information, images, graphs, case studies and interviews contact:
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