



## Resettlement Country: Australia

Last updated: 09/03/2022

### 1. Resettlement Policy and Program Description

#### 1.1 Program Year/Cycle:

- Start date: 01-Jul-21 End Date: 30-Jun-22

#### 1.2 Resettlement Policy and Program

- Provide a brief history and description of the resettlement policy and program.
- non-UNHCR referrals and pathways to be discussed at 13 (addendum on complementary pathways)

Australia is committed to sharing responsibility with other countries for protecting and finding orderly resolutions for refugees and others in humanitarian need. Australia supports the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as the international body responsible for this process, and UNHCR's three durable solutions of voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement. Australia contributes to these three durable solutions in a number of ways including through the Humanitarian Program which provides resettlement places to those displaced as a result of conflict, persecution or other humanitarian situations. Australia also works in partnership with refugee hosting countries and international organisations through the use of development assistance, capacity building initiatives and support for displaced persons.

The Humanitarian Program has two components:

- The **offshore** (resettlement) component offers resettlement to people outside Australia who cannot be repatriated or locally integrated and are in need of humanitarian assistance.
- The **onshore** (protection) component of the Program is for people who arrive lawfully in Australia and engage Australia's protection obligations because they are either found to be a refugee or meet the complementary protection provisions and meet other relevant visa criteria. These persons are granted a Permanent Protection visa.

More than 920,000 refugees and others in humanitarian needs have been resettled in Australia since the end of World War II.

In December 2021, the Australian Commonwealth Government announced a new Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP) with the aim to harness the groundswell of community enthusiasm to engage in a community-supported refugee settlement model. Under the model, everyday Australian will have the opportunity to directly support refugees to settle in Australia.

A total of 1,500 refugees referred by the UNHCR, and granted visas under the Refugee category of the Humanitarian Program, are intended to participate in the Pilot. The Pilot will operate as a dedicated settlement pathway for a cohort of unlinked refugees. Places will commence with 100 refugees in the first year and steadily increase each subsequent year of the Pilot.

Refugees arriving through the Pilot will have access to the same income support and Medicare as other refugees arriving in Australia. However, they will be provided settlement support by a group of trained community volunteers, rather than government-funded settlement service providers under the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP), for the first 12 months after arrival.

Supporters will be responsible for providing a range of practical and in-kind settlement and integration support, including help with finding housing, work and learning English. Priority will be given to supporters in regional areas.



### 1.3 Ministries and Departments

- Indicate the ministries and departments responsible for the resettlement program.

The Humanitarian Program, as well as settlement programs including the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP), are administered by the Department of Home Affairs.

### 1.4 Process for Determining the Resettlement Admission Targets

- Describe the process for determining the program cycle resettlement admission targets.

Australia's Humanitarian Program follows the Australian financial year which runs from 1 July to 30 June. Each year, the Australian Government sets the size and composition of the program, taking into consideration:

- the views of the Australian public, state and territory governments, Commonwealth agencies, and peak refugee and humanitarian organizations;
- UNHCR's submission on global resettlement needs;
- Australia's capacity to facilitate the successful entry and settlement of humanitarian entrants into our society; and
- expert advice to manage risks to the Australian community.

## 2. Eligibility for Refugee Status and other forms of International Protection

### 2.1 National Legislation defining eligibility

- Summarize the national legislation and any relevant national policies defining eligibility for refugee status and other forms of international protection, with reference to the grounds for inclusion, cessation and exclusion.

The domestic legislative basis for refugee status for asylum-seekers and the criteria for accepting refugees and other humanitarian entrants from overseas is in the *Migration Act 1958* and the *Migration Regulations 1994*.

The offshore component of the Humanitarian Program reflects Australia's commitment to the system of international protection. The offshore component goes beyond Australia's international obligations and reflects the desire of Australians to assist those in humanitarian need.

The offshore component has two categories. The Refugee category is for people who are subject to persecution in their home country and are in need of resettlement. A significant number of applicants who are considered under this category are identified by UNHCR and referred by UNHCR to Australia. The Refugee category contains the following visa subclasses: Refugee, In-country Special Humanitarian, Emergency Rescue and Woman at Risk.

The Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) is for people who are outside their home country and subject to substantial discrimination amounting to gross violation of human rights in their home country. A proposer, who is an Australian citizen, permanent resident or eligible New Zealand citizen, or an organisation that is based in Australia, must support applications for entry under the SHP. Whilst SHP applicants are not referred by UNHCR, they may be registered with UNHCR and be a resettlement priority in their own right.

The Community Support Program (CSP) is a way for Australians to help refugees and others in humanitarian need begin a life in Australia. The CSP connects refugees overseas with individuals, businesses and community organisations in Australia who are ready to give them a hand with the



practicalities of migration, settlement and employment (refer to section 13, *Addendum on Complementary pathways*).

Both Refugee category and SHP visas are for permanent residence with the prospect of citizenship, but there are differences between the two in entitlements to government-funded settlement support.

Since September 2013, the onshore component of the Program has been reserved for people who arrive lawfully in Australia and engage Australia's protection obligations because they are either found to be a refugee or meet the complementary protection criteria under the *Migration Act 1958*. People found to engage Australia's protection obligations must also satisfy health, character and security requirements for the grant of a Permanent Protection visa.

Permanent Protection visa applications are individually assessed in accordance with the *Migration Act 1958*. The relevant provisions in the Act are based upon Australia's interpretation of its *non-refoulement* obligations in the *1951 Convention relating to the status of Refugees* and its *1967 Protocol*, the *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, and the *1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*.

Asylum-seekers who arrive in Australia without a valid visa and are found to be in need of international protection, may be offered temporary protection.

## 2.2 Additional Information

- Provide any other relevant additional information.

## 3. Resettlement Decision-Making

### 3.1 Resettlement Admissibility and Public Interest Criteria

- Outline any resettlement admissibility (including inadmissibility) or applicable public interest criteria.
- Cite specific categories or situations in which recognized refugees will be inadmissible for resettlement.

As well as meeting the threshold criterion of persecution described above, applicants for resettlement to Australia in the Refugee category must satisfy the decision-maker that there are compelling reasons for giving special consideration to granting them a visa, having regard to the following factors:

- the degree of persecution the applicant is subject to in their home country;
- the extent of the applicant's connection to Australia;
- whether there is any suitable country other than Australia able to provide for the applicant's settlement and protection from persecution; and
- Australia's resettlement capacity.

All applicants for offshore humanitarian visas must meet public interest criteria intended to safeguard the Australian community's health, access to health services, safety and national security. Applications may be refused on character grounds where there is evidence of criminal conduct or the applicant represents a security threat or danger to the Australian community.

### 3.2 Requests for Reconsideration

- Explain any procedures for refugees or UNHCR to request reconsideration of negative resettlement decisions based on inadmissibility, public interest criteria, eligibility for international protection, or other reasons.



There is no provision for merits review of decisions to refuse offshore humanitarian visa applications. Applicants may reapply at any time. There is also no provision under the Migration Regulations for the Minister to intervene in Refugee and Humanitarian (Class XB) visa applications.

### 3.3 Dependency

Explain any limitations on considering dependent family members or caregivers of resettlement applicants who are not individually in need of international protection, including individuals with derivative refugee status and non-refugee applicants residing in the same household.

The holder of a permanent humanitarian visa in Australia can propose declared immediate family members for entry to Australia through the offshore Humanitarian Program<sup>1</sup>. This is commonly referred to as the 'split family' provisions. Immediate family members may include the visa holder's spouse or de facto partner (including same sex partner), dependent children or, if the visa holder is under 18 of years, parent.

Other family members such as parents and siblings can also be proposed under the SHP.

A dependent child is the child or step-child of a visa holder who is less than 18 years of age or is 18 years of age or more and is dependant on that visa holder or is incapacitated for work due to the total or partial loss of bodily or mental functions. A child or step-child who is engaged to be married, or has a spouse, or a de facto partner is excluded.

Spouses are recognised if they are married to each other under a marriage that is valid for the purpose of the *Migration Act 1958*, they have a mutual commitment to a shared life to the exclusion of all others, the relationship between them is genuine and continuing, and they live together or do not live separately and apart on a permanent basis.

De facto relationships are recognized if they are between individuals who, although not in a married relationship, are committed to a shared life to the exclusion of all others, their relationship is genuine and continuing, they live together or do not live separately and apart on a permanent basis, and they are not related in certain ways.

## 4. Legal Status on Arrival and Citizenship

### 4.1 Legal Status on Arrival

- Explain the legal status of resettled refugees on arrival.
- Explain whether the legal status of resettled refugees is different to the status afforded to individuals who may be received through a parallel humanitarian admission program, if applicable.
- Explain whether the legal status of resettled refugees is different than asylum seekers recognized as refugees under the 1951 Convention and those granted subsidiary protection.
- Explain the duration of this legal status and any required procedures to change this status.

Offshore humanitarian entrants have permanent residence on arrival in Australia.

The onshore component of the Humanitarian Program enables people seeking asylum in Australia to have their claims for protection assessed. Asylum-seekers who entered Australia with a valid visa and are found to engage Australia's protection obligations and to meet health and character requirements are granted a Permanent Protection visa, which allows for permanent residence in Australia. Asylum-seekers who arrive in Australia without a valid visa and are found to engage

---

<sup>1</sup> The exception is people granted Permanent Protection visas who arrived as "illegal maritime arrivals" (IMAs) on or after 13 August 2012, who are barred by law from proposing people (including their 'split family') under the offshore Humanitarian Program.



Australia's protection obligations and to meet health and character requirements are granted a temporary protection visa which allows for temporary residence in Australia. Humanitarian entrants are issued with ICAO-compliant, machine-readable Australian Migration Status (AMS) ImmiCards to facilitate their travel to Australia, prove their visa status and help them enrol for government services.

Humanitarian entrants intending to travel overseas and return to Australia and who do not hold and cannot obtain a passport issued by their country of origin should obtain a Convention travel document (*titre de voyage*) or certificate of identity from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade before they leave Australia.

#### 4.2 Eligibility for Citizenship

- Explain the timeline for eligibility to apply for citizenship.
- Provide any other relevant information as needed.

Humanitarian entrants aged 18 and over who have lived in Australia for at least four years may be eligible to apply for citizenship. Information about eligibility for Australian citizenship can be found at [www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Citi](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Citi).

## 5. Processing Priorities

### 5.1 Processing Priorities

- Outline the processing priorities (e.g. if certain groups are prioritized for processing, name these groups and the reasons for their prioritization). If no processing priorities, indicate "N/A."
- Indicate whether UNHCR or non-UNHCR referrals are prioritized, and which organizations (if any) may be involved in case identification and referrals for resettlement consideration besides UNHCR.

The offshore Humanitarian Program has traditionally prioritised resettlement of refugees in greatest need and those with family ties to Australia. Priority has also been given to vulnerable women and children, unaccompanied minors, LGBTQI+ and refugees who are willing to settle in regional Australia.

Australia established specific provisions within the Refugee category in 1989 for women at risk in recognition of the priority given by UNHCR to vulnerable women and children. Australia continues to give priority to some refugees from protracted populations, including through multi-year resettlement commitments.

In 2021-22, the Program continues to focus on providing assistance to priority situations in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Americas. Caseload allocations are grouped by Region to allow flexibility in managing distribution and optimizing program delivery outcomes.

Australia's resettlement program intake has been drawn from a range of nationalities, ethnic and religious groups, reflecting global displacement arising from conflict and persecution. The program operates flexibly to respond effectively to evolving humanitarian situations and global resettlement needs.

## 6. Special Considerations

### 6.1 Unaccompanied and Separated Children

- State the national definitions for unaccompanied and separated children and explain relevant legislation.
- Explain the legal rights of the child.



- Explain the country program requirements for Best Interests Determinations (BID) and Best Interests Assessments (BIA), including any inconsistencies with the 2021 UNHCR Best Interests Procedure Guidelines.
- Explain any other relevant information.

Unaccompanied children applying under the Humanitarian Program for entry to Australia are required to meet the same criteria as other applicants, including the criterion that permanent settlement in Australia is the most appropriate durable solution. Decision-makers must be satisfied that the grant of the visa to the child would not prejudice the rights and interests of any other person who has custody or guardianship of, or access to, the child.

Under the *Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946* (Cth) (IGOC Act), the Minister for Home Affairs, and the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs, are guardians of unaccompanied children under the age of 18, who arrive in Australia without being in the charge of, or for the purpose of being cared for by a parent as recognized under Australian law. The Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors Program provides care, supervision, accommodation and support services to these children, in partnership with state and territory child welfare authorities and directly contracted service providers. Assistance is available until the child reaches 18 years of age, or leaves Australia permanently, or becomes an Australian citizen, or the provisions of the IGOC Act ceases to apply to the child. Support may also be provided in exceptional circumstances to other vulnerable unaccompanied minors who do not fall within the scope of the IGOC Act.

## 6.2 Minor Marriage

- Explain relevant national legislation concerning minor/early marriage (under 18 years of age).
- Explain whether, once resettled, the spouses would be legally permitted to live together.
- Explain whether there is a risk of a split decision, e.g., accepting the child, but not the child's spouse.
- Explain the legal rights of the child, the child's spouse, and his/her children.

## 6.3 Polygamous Marriage

- Explain national legislation concerning polygamous marriage and legal recognition of spouses.
- Explain the legal rights of each of the spouses and all of the children as well as the rights for cohabitation.
- Explain the possibility for accommodating the submission of polygamous families, including case composition, and any documentation and other requirements.
- Explain whether there is a risk of a split decision.

Australian migration legislation reflects the broader provisions of the *Marriage Act 1961*, which does not cater for polygamous marriages.

For migration purposes, a person is the spouse of another person (whether of the same sex or a different sex) if they are in a married relationship. Persons are in a married relationship if, amongst other considerations, they have a mutual commitment to a shared life as a married couple to the exclusion of all others. Similarly, a person is in a de facto relationship with another person if they are not in a married relationship but have a mutual commitment to a shared life to the exclusion of all others.

## 6.4 Refugees with a physical or mental disability or a serious medical condition

- Explain any limitations on resettlement consideration of refugees with specific needs associated with a disability or a serious medical condition.
- Provide any other relevant information.

Refer to *Section 10.1 Pre departure Medical Screening* for further information about Health criteria and medical examinations.



## 6.5 Large families and single adults

- Explain any limitations on resettlement consideration of large refugee families and/or single adults.
- Provide any other relevant information.

Australia does not limit the size of family groups that are considered for resettlement.

Australia does not require a particular family dynamic when considering family groups for resettlement (other than only a single spouse is allowed). The vulnerable women and children focus in the program means there are a high volume of family groups with a sole female parent.

## 6.6 Other

- Explain any other case composition scenarios for which special considerations need to be taken.

Australia continues to consider survivors of violence and torture referred by UNHCR for resettlement. Specialized counseling and medical services and English classes for survivors of torture and trauma are among the settlement services available to Humanitarian Program entrants.

The Woman at Risk program, a subcategory of the Refugee category, is for female applicants who are subject to persecution or registered as being of concern to UNHCR. They must also be living outside their home country; not have the protection of a male relative; and be in danger of victimization, harassment or serious abuse because of their gender.

## 7. Dossier Selection Processing

*Cases submitted on a dossier basis do not involve resettlement country selection interviews. Acceptance decisions are based solely on the documentation submitted by UNHCR. If the program does not include dossier selection processing indicate "N/A."*

### 7.1 Dossier Selection Policies

- Explain the policy for receiving selections on a dossier basis, including the decision-making process.
- Indicate which submissions are eligible to be received on a dossier basis.

Applications for Refugee category visas are received direct from applicants or after referral by UNHCR or NGOs. Under Australian immigration law, the application must be made on the prescribed form and sent to the relevant prescribed address. Applications for Refugee category visas must be lodged at an Australian overseas mission (see below for processes relating to emergency or urgent cases). Processing of such applications takes place at Australian overseas missions that are referred to as 'humanitarian posts'. For applications referred by UNHCR, The Resettlement Registration Form (RRF) is reviewed at the Humanitarian Post and if the Refugee falls within Australia's program priorities the UNHCR field office is advised that we accept the referral and is requested to submit the requisite visa application.

Initial processing of SHP and CSP applications, which must be lodged in Australia, is done at the Special Humanitarian Processing Centre (SHPC). Applications may be refused by the SHPC or sent to the relevant overseas post for further consideration, interview and decision. Further information is available at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/refugee-and-humanitarian-program/the-special-humanitarian-program>.

### 7.2 Additional Information

- Provide any other relevant information.



## 8. Interview Selection Processing

Resettlement country interview selection processing means that the resettlement country conducts an interview as part of the selection process. If the program does not include a resettlement country interview indicate "N/A."

### 8.1 Interview Selection Policies

- Explain the policy and procedures for interview selection, including prescreening, interviews, and the decision-making process.
- Explain virtual selection interview procedures, if applicable.

Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis against the criteria set down in the *Migration Regulations 1994*. Those applicants who appear to satisfy threshold requirements are interviewed to explore their claims and to verify family composition. Unsuccessful applicants receive a letter that indicates the criterion that was not satisfied.

Applications may be refused by the SHPC or sent to the relevant overseas post for further consideration, interview and decision. Further information is available at [www.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/refugee-and-humanitarian-program/the-special-humanitarian-program](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/refugee-and-humanitarian-program/the-special-humanitarian-program).

### 8.2 Additional Information

- Provide any other relevant information.

## 9. Processing Timeframes

### 9.1 Policies for receiving emergency and/or urgent submissions

- Explain the policies for receiving emergency and urgent submissions.
- Explain any limitations to receiving emergency and urgent submissions.

The Emergency Rescue visa is a subclass of the Refugee and Humanitarian visa class. It is used for applicants who are subject to persecution in their home country (whether living there or elsewhere), have urgent and compelling reasons to travel to Australia and face an immediate threat to their life or personal security. Only a small number of Emergency Rescue visas are granted each year.

All applicants for permanent entry, including those for Emergency Rescue visas, must meet health, character and national security requirements before visa grant. Due to the urgency of these applications, a flexible approach may be required in arranging health checks and the procedures will vary according to the circumstances of each case. This will be determined by the Department of Home Affairs in consultation with the UNHCR office responsible for the cases.

### 9.2 Average Processing Times for Emergency Cases

- Indicate and explain reception of submission to decision timeframe.
- Indicate and explain decision to departure timeframe.

Emergency Rescue cases are given highest processing priority of all applications for resettlement. The Department of Home Affairs aims to decide whether to accept an application within two days of receiving the resettlement registration form (RRF) from UNHCR. Once an application is accepted, the Department aims to evacuate the applicant within three days of the decision to accept, pending health, character and national security checks (Emergency Rescue applicants must meet health, character and national security criteria before the visa is granted). The speed with which health checks can be undertaken will vary depending where the applicant is located. If the





applicant requires an Australian issued travel document (the ImmiCard) the processing is likely to take at least two weeks as the travel document has to come from Australia.

### 9.3 Average Processing Times for Urgent Cases

- Indicate and explain reception of submission to decision timeframe.
- Indicate and explain decision to departure timeframe.

### 9.4 Average Processing Times for Normal Cases

- Indicate and explain reception of submission to decision timeframe.
- Indicate and explain decision to departure timeframe.

Processing times and visa grant times vary from region to region. In 2021–22 at 28 February 2022 the average processing time for Refugee stream visas from application registration to the granting of a visa was 73.3 weeks and the average processing time for Special Humanitarian Program visas was 118.1 weeks.

### 9.5 Additional Information

- Provide any other relevant information.

## 10. Predeparture Arrangements

### 10.1 Predeparture Medical Screening

- Explain policies on predeparture medical screening and cost coverage.
- Explain which agency or entity conducts or coordinates medical screenings.

Applicants for resettlement, the same as all applicants for permanent visas, must satisfy health criteria. Australian visa applicants undergo health testing by approved doctors in various locations worldwide. The health criteria require applicants to be free from active tuberculosis and any disease or condition that is a threat to public health and safety.

Applicants are generally required to undertake a medical examination, a chest X-ray (if aged 11 and over), other tuberculosis screening (if aged between 2 and 10), and an HIV test (if aged 15 or older, or an unaccompanied minor).

Medical examinations and X-rays are conducted by doctors and radiologists from the overseas panel doctor network who have been approved by the Department of Home Affairs. The Australian Government meets the cost of health assessment of applicants for Refugee and SHP category visas unless the applicant is applying under the Community Support Program.

Applicants who do not satisfy health criteria because they have active tuberculosis are given the opportunity to undergo specialist treatment before they are reassessed.

Applicants for refugee or humanitarian visas who do not satisfy health criteria on the basis of significant cost, or the likelihood of prejudice to the access of Australian citizens or permanent residents to health care or community services, are considered for waiver of health criteria. Health criteria are usually waived if the basis is cost.

If the basis is prejudice to access, the decision-maker will consider whether it is undue, taking into account applicants' individual circumstances, and any compassionate and compelling circumstances.

Waiver of health criteria is considered only after applicants have satisfied all other criteria for the visa, and undergone required examinations.



The Departure Health Check (DHC) is a health check of offshore humanitarian visa holders usually carried out within 72 hours of their departure to Australia, primarily to ensure that they are fit to travel to Australia. The DHC is not mandatory, but it is strongly encouraged. It is undertaken in addition to mandatory health examinations completed prior to the granting of a visa (see subsections 9.1 - 9.3). Depending on the location of the visa holder, standard DHC activities may involve:

- a physical examination
- tuberculosis evaluation for people with a history of tuberculosis (this may include a chest x-ray)
- malaria and parasites testing and treatment
- measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) immunizations for people born after the year 1996 and aged over nine months, except pregnant visa holders and those who present acceptable evidence of previous immunization
- other treatments or vaccinations as requested by the department, such as polio vaccination.

The DHC protects the health of humanitarian visa entrants by:

- ensuring they are 'fit to fly' or if not, then providing or referring for treatment
- providing appropriate latest health information needed during travel
- providing recommendation of referrals to healthcare services they may need upon arrival in Australia.

The DHC also contributes to maintaining the high level of public health enjoyed by the Australian community.

If any problems are identified through the DHC, the visa holder may be assisted in a number of ways including:

- delayed travel and immediate treatment until they are 'fit to fly;'
- provision of a medical escort to accompany them and tend to their health needs while in transit;
- recommended follow up treatment arranged for them once they arrive in Australia.

## **10.2 Required Predeparture Treatment**

- Include information about any required predeparture treatments, including presumptive treatments and cost coverage.

If travel is delayed for medical treatment, new travel arrangements will be made. The Department of Home Affairs will cover the costs of the medical treatment.

In some cases a medical escort may be provided to accompany offshore humanitarian visa holders with special health needs that cannot be substantially improved with treatment before their travel to Australia. The medical escort accompanies the visa holder during their travel to Australia and hands over their care to a health professional for medical follow-up, on arrival, in Australia.

## **10.3 Predeparture Orientation**

- Explain predeparture orientation sessions, including their duration.
- Explain which agency or entity conducts or coordinates predeparture orientation.



- Explain the languages in which the sessions are facilitated.

The Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) program is offered to offshore humanitarian visa holders over the age of five years, prior to their departure for Australia. AUSCO gives practical advice about departure and travel processes, post-arrival settlement services and life in Australia.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) delivers AUSCO courses on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs.

AUSCO courses are voluntary and delivered over a period of up to five days. There are different courses for five group types: adults, children, pre-literate, youth and combined. Courses are delivered by facilitators in-language or through the use of interpreters.

Units covered in the AUSCO curriculum include:

- Overview of Australia
- Settlement services
- Housing
- Health
- Money
- Education
- Employment
- Law
- Travel to Australia

The Department of Home Affairs regularly reviews the AUSCO curriculum to ensure it meets participants' needs.

AUSCO links closely with onshore settlement support and orientation delivered under the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP).

#### **10.4 Travel Arrangements and Documents**

- Explain which agencies or entities coordinate travel to the resettlement country.
- Explain travel cost coverage policy and procedures.
- Explain which agency or entity issues any needed travel documents.

All Refugee visa holders have their travel arranged by IOM and paid for by the Australian Government.

For entrants who hold a Special Humanitarian Program visa the proposer or the applicant must pay for their travel to Australia. Assistance may be available under IOM's travel loan fund known as the No-Interest Loan Scheme (NILS). See [australia.iom.int/services-global-special-humanitarian-visa-subclass-202-holders](http://australia.iom.int/services-global-special-humanitarian-visa-subclass-202-holders).

For entrants granted visas under the Community Support Program, the applicant, their family or others must pay for their travel to Australia. CSP entrants are unable to access assistance under the IOM Refugee Travel Loan Fund.

## **11. Reception and Integration**



### 11.1 Overview

- Describe which integration model(s) (i.e., community sponsorship, co-sponsorship, government-led integration, etc.) is (are) used to support reception and integration of resettled refugees.
- Explain which agencies, entities, organizations (or which types of organizations) facilitate reception and integration arrangements.

Government assistance is designed to help entrants settle into their local community and establish new lives in Australia. Humanitarian entrants are the highest priority for government-funded settlement services because of their special needs and circumstances.

The Department of Home Affairs is the Australian Government agency with responsibility for settlement services. The Department administers a range of onshore settlement and language support services that help humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants to become self-reliant and participate equally in Australian society. Programs include the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP), and a range of settlement grants, including the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) Program and Free Translating and Interpreting Services (FTS). Services are delivered by contracted service providers.

Proposers will generally provide SHP entrants with some level of initial settlement support instead of government funded HSP service providers. However, where the capacity of the proposer is limited, the HSP will fill the service gap.

The Department of Home Affairs also has responsibility for foundation skills programs, including the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). Federal, state and local government agencies, non-government organizations and community groups are all involved in the delivery and provision of services. Volunteers also work with service providers to support entrants and assist them to settle into the local community.

### 11.2 Placement

- Explain the procedures for placement of resettled refugees, including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for placement of resettled refugees within the country.

The settlement location of humanitarian entrants is determined by a number of factors, particularly where family or friends permanently in Australia live. All SHP entrants are proposed by family, friends or an organisation based in Australia. These entrants generally settle near their proposers as they provide settlement assistance and valuable social support. About 40 per cent of refugee entrants have links to Australia.

For 'unlinked' entrants, i.e. those without family or friends in Australia, the department considers a range of factors when deciding on a suitable settlement location. These include the specific requirements of the entrant, such as health needs, availability of service, and the community's ability to provide a welcoming and supportive environment.

### 11.3 Reception

- Explain the reception procedures (including temporary arrangements if applicable), including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for receiving refugees in the country.
- Explain language assistance services provided.

On their arrival in Australia, humanitarian entrants receive settlement support from the Australian Government's Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP). The HSP is delivered by contracted service providers in each state and territory of Australia. HSP service providers meet entrants at the airport and transport them to accommodation where a property induction is undertaken. Entrants also receive a food package, mobile phone and instructions on how to contact emergency



services. If required, HSP service providers assist entrants to address urgent health needs by accessing relevant health services. In the days following an entrant's arrival, HSP service providers help them to register for essential government services and provide orientation to services in their local area including shops and transport.

Reception procedures include the provision of an interpreter or bilingual case worker if required. Entrants are also given, in their first language, visual aids and instructions of how to access an interpreter.

#### 11.4 Orientation

- Explain orientation and orientation services including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for orientation and cost coverage.

Under the HSP, humanitarian entrants aged 15 years and over can participate in an orientation program. Orientation supports entrants to develop their understanding of the Australian way of life, including laws and values, as well as build foundational life skills needed to function independently.

The program is delivered by HSP Service Providers through a combination of group sessions and real-life scenarios, in accordance with a national curriculum framework that can be adapted to local settings.

The curriculum framework consists of ten topics identified as core competencies for successful settlement:

- Settlement Services
- Housing
- Health
- Australian Law
- Education
- Employment
- Family Functioning and Social Support
- Money
- Transport
- Feeling and Home in Australia

Each topic has a number of key outcomes. These provide a nationally consistent description of orientation outcomes that participants need to attain.

The key outcomes are written at three different levels of understanding - 'awareness', 'knowledge' and 'application'. First, participants become **aware** of situations, issues, behaviours or attitudes within a topic. Then, they build their **knowledge** and skills within the topic. Finally, they **apply** their knowledge, understanding, experience and skills to complete tasks.

This design allows participants to retain knowledge and build their skills cumulatively over the course of their time in the HSP, which is generally between 12-18 months from arrival in Australia.



## 11.5 Support Services

- Explain support services to meet immediate material needs including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for support services and cost coverage.

Under the HSP, humanitarian entrants receive individualised case management support from contracted HSP service providers to develop the ability to manage their needs independently across nine domains identified as being essential to successful settlement. In addition to the aforementioned reception and orientation services, HSP support also includes access to a package of basic household goods, referral to mainstream and specialist support services (for example health, domestic and family violence, child and youth welfare), connections to local community groups and activities, and help to access English language learning, employment services and education and training opportunities.

The Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) Program builds on the foundation services provided by the HSP by assisting humanitarian entrants and eligible migrants in their first five years in Australia to become self-reliant and participate equitably in society. The SETS program aims to foster social participation, economic wellbeing, independence, personal wellbeing and community connectedness.

SETS providers play a key role in facilitating pathways to employment readiness, education and learning English. Providers are encouraged to partner with employers, vocational education and training providers and other educational institutions, as well as support access to other key government services such as the Adult Migrant English Program, the Skills for Education and Employment program and employment service providers (jobactive services). Specific focus is given to building capability and resilience amongst young humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants to stay engaged in education and make successful transitions into employment. Additional funding has also been provided to SETS providers to increase their capacity and capability to identify and support women in situations of Domestic and Family Violence.

The SETS program also funds a non-governmental organization to facilitate a Community of Practice (CoP), which provides a shared platform for sector-wide collaboration bringing together SETS providers to collectively harness and maximize the sector's contribution to the effective settlement of migrants and refugees in Australia.

### **Access to interpreting and translation services**

The Department of Home Affairs provides the Translating and Interpreting Service, (TIS National), the Free Interpreting Service (FIS) and the Free Translating Service (FTS).

TIS National provides an important service to people who face language barriers when participating in the community. TIS National offers immediate telephone, pre-booked telephone, remote video and on-site interpreting services 24 hours a day, every day of the year for non-English speakers and agencies who need to communicate with them. Priority lines are available for emergency services, hospitals and medical practitioners. TIS National services are available on a free or user-pays basis, depending on circumstances, for clients in both the public and private sectors.

The FIS is delivered by TIS National on behalf of the Australian Government, providing eligible groups with access to interpreters to communicate with their clients who have limited or no English language proficiency. Access to the FIS is not time-limited and is available on an ongoing basis to anyone in Australia who holds a Medicare card.



The FTS allows people settling permanently in Australia to have up to ten documents translated, within the first two years of their eligible visa grant date. Eligible documents include those that will assist their participation in community engagement, employment and education and community engagement.

Refugees who receive settlement support under the CRISP will also have access to most mainstream government support services, with community support groups focused on providing settlement and social support.

### **11.6 Housing**

- Explain housing assistance provided including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for housing services and cost coverage.
- Specify housing at initial reception if different from subsequent longer-term arrangements.

Housing assistance is provided to humanitarian entrants by contracted service providers under the HSP. This support includes the provision of short-term housing to accommodate entrants on their arrival in Australia, as well as help to secure long-term housing through the private rental market.

HSP accommodation services also include the payment of an entrant's rent and utilities for their first 28 days in Australia, and the provision of a package of basic household goods to help establish their new residence.

In addition, the HSP Orientation program includes a dedicated housing topic, through which entrants receive tenancy education, including how to complete tenancy application processes and information about the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants.

### **11.7 Health**

- Explain the health services available to refugees including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for housing services and cost coverage.

When humanitarian entrants arrive in Australia through the Humanitarian Program, they arrive as permanent residents and can access Medicare; Australia's universal health insurance scheme.

Entrants receive assistance from HSP service providers to register for Medicare and attend a health assessment following their arrival in Australia. HSP service providers may also support entrants to access other health services as required, including torture and trauma counselling through the Australian Government's Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (PASTT).

In addition, the HSP Orientation program includes a dedicated health topic, through which entrants learn the skills and knowledge required to manage their own health needs beyond the HSP.

### **11.8 Language**

- Explain available language training opportunities including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for facilitating them and cost coverage.

For over seventy years the Australian Government has invested in English language training through the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), which provides eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants with English language tuition to learn foundation English language skills to enable them to participate in Australian society. English language skills are essential to secure employment, access further education and training and better connect with the Australian community. Thirteen Registered Training Organisations currently deliver the AMEP at approximately 300 locations across Australia.



The Australian Government made significant legislative changes to the AMEP which commenced in April 2021. The previous 510-hour tuition cap was removed and the eligibility threshold for the program was raised from functional English to vocational English. Additionally time limits on enrolling, commencing and completing AMEP tuition were also removed for those in Australia as at 1 October 2020. These changes mean that more people will be able to access free English tuition, for longer, and until they reach a higher level of proficiency.

The Government also provides free child-care services for pre-school children for clients accessing the AMEP. The AMEP also offers vocation specific English language tuition and up to 80 hours of work experience to assist settlement.

A publicly available self-paced online learning website ([AMEPOnline](#)) was launched in April 2021. The platform provides over 170 English learning modules over three different levels, based on identified themes and issues relating to settlement in Australia. It has been designed for low bandwidth and to be used on mobile devices. The website can be accessed from anywhere, including overseas.

Further information about AMEP can be found at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/amep/about-the-program>.

HSP service providers assist humanitarian entrants to register with the AMEP and overcome barriers to their participation.

## **11.9 Education**

- Briefly explain the educational system and policy, including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for supporting access to education for resettled refugees, and cost coverage.

Humanitarian Program entrants have access to the same educational services as Australian permanent residents in general. Schooling is compulsory in Australia until the age of 15 years and free primary and secondary education is available.

HSP service providers assist humanitarian entrants to enrol in school and access other education opportunities.

In addition, the HSP Orientation program includes a dedicated education topic, through which entrants build knowledge of Australia's education system including the different educational institutions in their local area.

## **11.10 Employment**

### **11.10.1 Employment Opportunities**

- Explain which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for supporting access to employment opportunities for resettled refugees, including types of employment available, and any requirements, in addition to cost coverage.

Humanitarian entrants are eligible for assistance from employment service programs including Jobactive, Transition to Work and Disability Employment Services. Jobactive is the Australian Government's mainstream employment service which assists eligible job seekers to get a job, learn new skills and develop a career path. Transition to Work supports young people aged 15 to 21 and Disability Employment Services helps people whose main barrier to employment is disability, injury or a health condition to find and keep a job.

HSP service providers assist humanitarian entrants to engage with employment service programs and access support to recognise pre-arrivals skills and qualifications.





In addition, the HSP Orientation program includes a dedicated employment topic, through which entrants build knowledge of Australia's employment market and learn practical skills including how to develop a resume and complete a job application.

Workplace relations advice is available to migrant workers to help them understand their workplace rights and protections. More information can be found at [www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/visa-holders-migrants](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/visa-holders-migrants)

### **11.10.2 Employment and Vocational Training**

- Explain employment and vocational training programs and cost coverage.

### **11.11 Financial Assistance**

- Explain the financial assistance provided to resettled refugees, including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for providing this assistance and cost coverage.
- Explain whether resettled refugees receive a resettlement "loan" which they are eventually obliged to repay the government once they are resettled and earning a taxable income.

When humanitarian entrants arrive in Australia through the Humanitarian Program, they arrive as permanent residents and can access income support payments under the same eligibility criteria as any other Australian permanent resident.

HSP service providers assist humanitarian entrants to register for income support payments following their arrival in Australia.

Humanitarian entrants to Australia do not receive a resettlement 'loan' which they are eventually obligated to repay the government once they are resettled and earning a taxable income.

### **11.12 Supporting Specific Needs**

- Explain the services provided to resettled refugees, including e.g. unaccompanied minors and refugees with specific health or other needs, including which agencies, entities, organizations are responsible for providing this assistance and cost coverage.

Under the HSP, humanitarian entrants receive settlement support from HSP service providers that is tailored to their needs through the development of individualised case management plans.

Clients with complex settlement needs receive Specialised and Intensive Services; a component of the HSP that provides additional case management support to assist entrants to access appropriate mainstream services and develop the skills to manage their complex needs independently.

### **11.13 Family reunification**

- Explain the possibilities, conditions, and timeframe for family reunification once a resettled refugee is in the country

The processing of applications under the SHP is governed by priorities. Highest priority is given to the immediate ('split') family of people who were themselves resettled through the offshore Humanitarian Program, and people proposed by relatives residing in a regional location (any location except Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney). The next priorities are for close family members of Australian citizens or permanent residents or eligible New Zealand citizens. Lowest priority is for any person proposed by a family member who was granted a Protection visa in Australia, regardless of the degree of their relationship (this includes 'split' family). As indicated above, some people who arrived as IMAs are ineligible to propose family members under the SHP.



## 12. References & Resources on resettlement

- *Include links to any relevant references and resources about the country resettlement program*

The Department of Home Affairs Refugee and Humanitarian Program:

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/refugee-and-humanitarian-program>

The Department of Home Affairs Settlement Programs:

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia>

## 13. Addendum on complementary pathways

- Separate complementary pathways available in the country to be discussed separately here.
- Present and describe existing complementary pathways (e.g., education scholarships, community sponsorship), humanitarian corridors, etc.
- References and resources on complementary pathways

Australia supports strategies to expand complementary pathways for refugee admission, in particular, expanding alternative humanitarian channels, which offer the best level of protection. The Community Support Program (CSP) is a private sponsorship program that enables communities and businesses, as well as families and individuals, to propose humanitarian visa applicants with employment prospects, and provide support to new humanitarian arrivals in their settlement journey.

The CSP contemplates the resettlement of people who are employable and capable of supporting themselves by the end of their first year in Australia. Prospective applicants must also have functional English, be aged between 18 and 50, and have a job offer or pathway to employment.

People applying under the CSP are granted visas in the SHP category. Their applications must be proposed by an approved proposing organisation (APO), which is a community organisation with the skills and experience to manage the application and settlement process and has entered into a deed of agreement with the Department of Home Affairs.

Australia's Coordinator-General for Migrant Services commenced a review into Australia's CSP in July 2020 and submitted the Findings of the Review of the Community Support Program to the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs, in May 2021. In response to those findings, in December 2021, the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs, announced changes to CSP to improve the accessibility of the program, including by reducing the up-front cost to participants. (From 1 July 2022, the Visa Application Charge will be reduced from the current<sup>2</sup> \$19,449 for a primary applicant to a total of \$7,760. From 1 July 2022, no Visa Application Charge will apply to secondary applicants.)

---

<sup>2</sup> As at 1 July 2021.