

CHAPTER 3. LABOUR FORCE ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

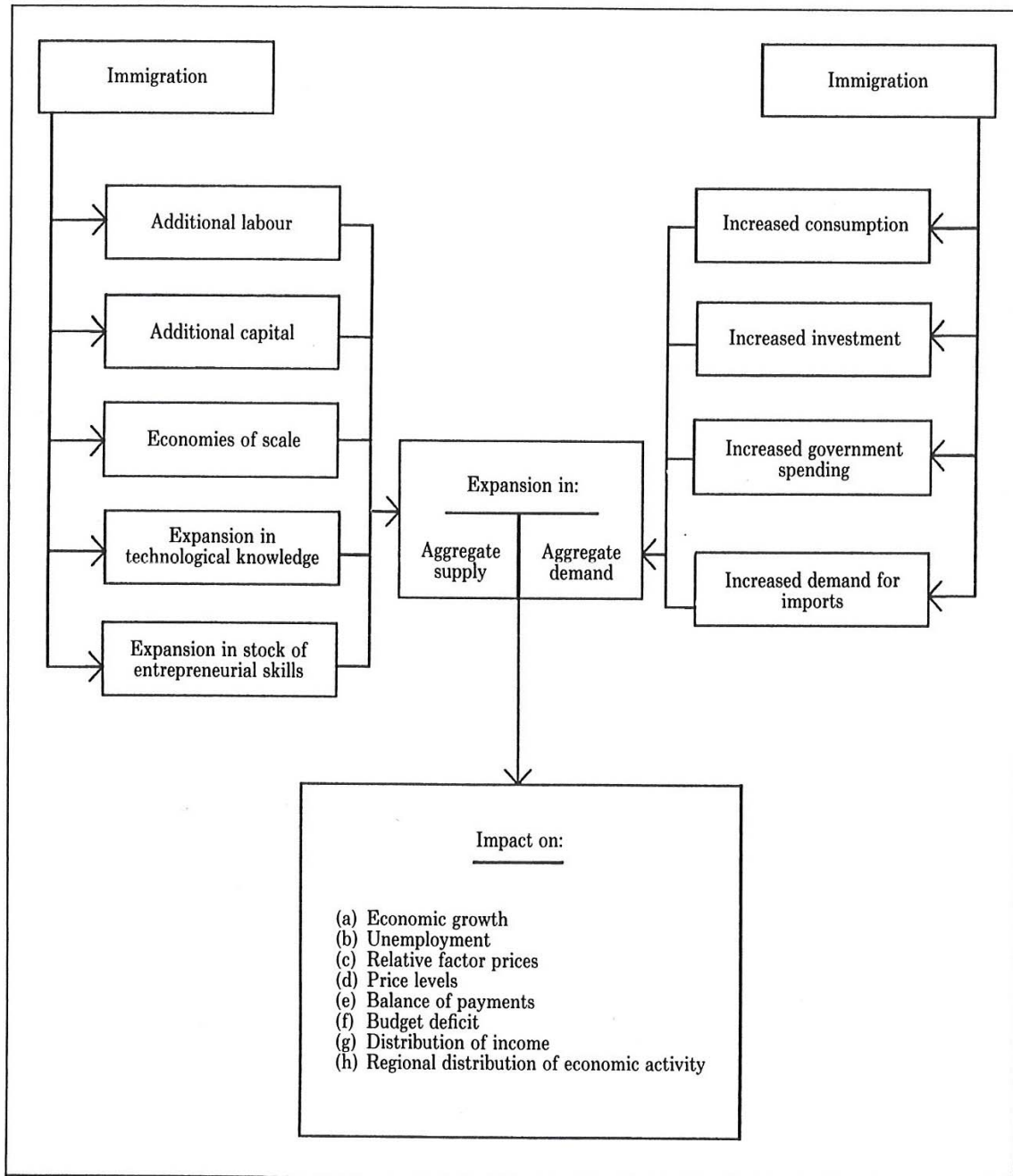
One of the most fundamental elements in assessing the contribution of any migrant group to the host society (but by no means the only dimension) is their contribution to the economy. The economic contribution of migrants remains one of the strongest justifications for the Australian immigration program and while the justification for the Humanitarian Program is emphatically a humanitarian one it is also important to recognise that this group of migrants also makes significant economic contributions.

What is involved in assessing the economic contribution of a sub-group of immigrants? The multiple dimensions of this contribution are summarised in Wooden's (1994a, 113) model of the economic impact of migration which is shown in Figure 3.1. Clearly, immigration impacts upon both aggregate supply and demand in the economy. One of the major elements in assessing the economic contribution of humanitarian settlers relates to the supply side issue of the labour force. This will be the focus of the present chapter while other economic contributions are considered in Chapter 4.

In assessing humanitarian settlers' contribution to the Australian labour force this chapter will first of all address the issue of labour force participation levels and then move on to analysing the work status of refugees and compare them to the other migrant population as well as non-migrants. The analysis will examine patterns for different refugee groups and for groups differentiated on the basis of their length of residence in Australia. The latter is of particular importance since it is argued here that much of the prevailing stereotyping of refugee-humanitarian settlers as being disengaged from the workforce and being heavily dependent upon social security is in large part a function of only examining their initial years in Australia. Accordingly, the approach here is to examine engagement with the labour force across a longer period of residence in Australia. Indeed, we examine intergenerational differences by separately analysing the workforce participation in the second generation of refugee-humanitarian settlers.

Figure 3.1: The Economic Impact of Immigration

Source: Wooden, 1994a, 113



The chapter goes on to examine the sectors of the economy in which refugee-humanitarian migrants are currently engaged, and in the past, have been engaged. It is important to disaggregate the areas of the labour market in which migrants work, since there is considerable international evidence of segmentation of labour markets associated with migration. Accordingly, particular sub-sectors of the economy can become disproportionately dependent on the impact of migrants.

The next section examines the economic situation of the various refugee-humanitarian migrants in Australia. The ability of migrants to engage in the workforce is an important determinant of their ability to earn an income, purchase services and engage in other dimensions of society. Therefore, we examine issues such as the income and housing situation of different groups of refugee-humanitarian migrants.

Wooden (1994b, 219) has identified two key questions in the investigation of the labour market experience of immigrants, and these are of relevance when we attempt to assess the economic contribution of refugee-humanitarian settlers:

- Do immigrants fare as well as the Australia-born in the labour market?
- How long does it take before the disruptive effects of settlement on labour market outcomes are worked out, if at all?

The latter question is of particular significance in considering refugee-humanitarian settlers because for them the migration process has been more disruptive (and often more traumatic) than is the case for other immigrants. This points to one of the major arguments of this report, namely that it is important to be cognisant of the specific nature of humanitarian migration in assessing adjustment to life in Australia and, accordingly, it is necessary to adopt a longer time reference period in assessing this adjustment.

Wooden (1994b, 220) also points out that there have been two bodies of theory which have guided research on the labour market performance of migrants in Australia. On the one hand, human capital theory based on neo-classical economics argues (Wooden, 1994b, 220):

‘differences in pay, occupational status, probability of employment, and so forth, between immigrants and natives reflect differences in the average productive co-abilities of the two groups’.

A second approach argues that the labour market position of an individual is not just a function of their characteristics and abilities but because they experience discrimination as a result of the group they belong to. While in Australia there is a comprehensive suite of antidiscrimination legislation, especially applying to the workplace, it has been demonstrated that differences in the labour market performance of migrants and non-migrants cannot be totally explained by differences in their human capital endowments (Chiswick and Miller, 2007). It is important to bear in mind these two perspectives when examining the labour

market engagement of humanitarian groups since both apply to the labour market experience of humanitarian settlers in Australia. Indeed, in the Australian context, it would appear that the Segmented Assimilation model of Portes, Fernandez-Kelly and Haller (2005), which combines both perspectives, is relevant. This approach argues that some migrants experience structural barriers which limit their access to employment and other opportunities, while others experience upward mobility.

The approach taken in this chapter is that it is important to examine the labour market experience of migrant groups over time. In this time context, the neo-classical approach suggests that over time migrants will experience upward mobility as they accumulate experience, skills etcetera. The ethnic disadvantage approach, however, suggests that immigrants are trapped in low status, low wage, and insecure jobs and are not able to be upwardly mobile due to discrimination. Again, the evidence in Australia suggests that both approaches have relevance.

In this chapter a range of primary and secondary data sources are employed to examine the labour market experience of refugee-humanitarian settlers. We will first address issues of participation in the labour force and a number of factors which impact on ability to participate in the workforce such as level of education and language ability. Finally we assess the incomes received by settlers.

3.2 LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

3.2.1 The Longitudinal Survey of Immigration in Australia (LSIA)

It is widely accepted in the migration literature that in the search to understand the immigration and settlement processes a longitudinal approach is the most appropriate method of research. In Australia the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants in Australia (LSIA) has been especially significant in providing insights into immigration and settlement and has been important in policy development (Hugo, 2004). It also has been influential in shaping official and community perceptions of the economic contribution of refugee-humanitarian migrants to Australia. Analysis of the three waves of LSIA 1 (VandenHeuvel and Wooden, 1999), where migrants were interviewed in 1994-96 initially and then again in 1995-97 and 1997-99, showed that humanitarian migrants fared worse in the labour market than other visa categories of migrants. Table 3.1 shows that labour force participation rates were

substantially lower than average although they improved substantially over the three year period over which the migrants' experience was traced. It is especially notable that the unemployment rates were very high. Even after three years in Australia, a third of refugee-humanitarian settlers were unemployed.

Table 3.1: Labour Force Participation Rate and Unemployment by Visa Category (Percent)

Source: VandenHeuvel and Wooden, 1999, 25

	<i>Preferential Family</i>	<i>Concessional Family</i>	<i>Business/ ENS</i>	<i>Independent</i>	<i>Humanitarian</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Participation rate</i>						
Wave 1	48	80	85	90	43	58
Wave 2	54	86	94	93	56	65
Wave 3	58	90	95	93	66	69
<i>Unemployment rate</i>						
Wave 1	36	37	2	26	84	37
Wave 2	19	18	3	9	49	19
Wave 3	16	9	2	4	33	14
Unemployed at one or more waves	28	37	5	28	54	32

Note: Only immigrants who were the principal applicants are represented by these data.

Cobb-Clark (2006b) has compared refugee-humanitarian settlers in LSIA 1 and LSIA 2. The results are shown in Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3 and a striking pattern is in evidence. In Figure 3.2 it will be noted that not only are humanitarian labour force participation rates lower for humanitarian settlers than other visa categories in both LSIA 1 and LSIA 2, but there is a deterioration in second wave labour force participation after 18 months in Australia compared with the first wave. The latter is in contrast to the experience of other visa categories where labour force participation rates increased. Figure 3.3 is also striking in showing how much higher unemployment rates are for humanitarian settlers in both waves. Although there is a reduction between LSIA 1 and LSIA 2 (as there was for other visa categories), unemployment rates remained very high after three years of settlement in both waves. Cobb-Clark (2006b, 50) points out that humanitarian migrants were an exception to an overall positive picture which emerged from comparing LSIA 1 and LSIA 2 which showed improved labour market outcomes for new migrants:

‘Humanitarian immigrants entering the labour market were simply much less likely to have entered the labour market 18 months after migration’.

Figure 3.2: Labour Force Participation Rate 18 Months After Migration, by Gender and Visa Category

Source: Cobb-Clark, 2006b, 33

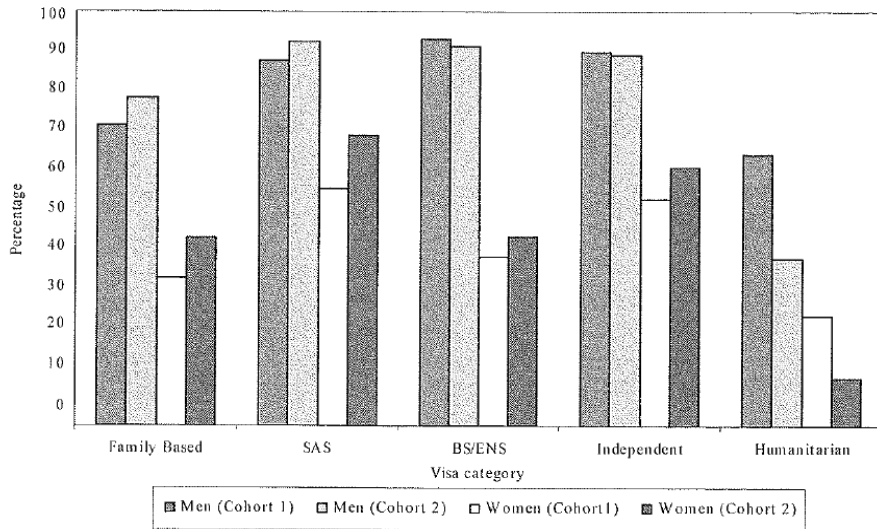
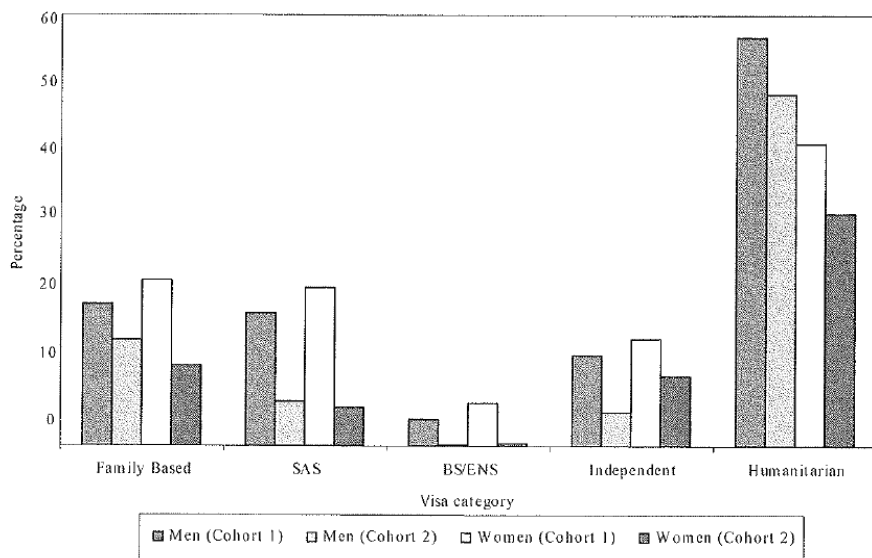


Figure 3.3: Unemployment Rate 18 Months After Migration, by Gender and Visa Category

Source: Cobb-Clark, 2006b, 33



Note:
 SAS – Skilled – Australia Sponsored
 BS/ENS – Business Skills/Employer Nomination Scheme

She puts this down to the altered composition of the humanitarian intake between the two streams. She also notes that the numbers of humanitarian settlers in the second LSIA was considerably smaller than in LSIA 1.¹¹

Very similar findings have emerged from the Canadian Longitudinal Survey of Migrants. Phythian, Walters and Anisef (2009) have analysed data from that survey and showed that refugees (and Business Class migrants) had the lowest probabilities of being employed.

In an earlier section we have examined some of the limitations of LSIA. Although there is no doubt that humanitarian migrants do experience greater difficulty entering the Australian labour market than other visa categories, especially skilled migrants, there are a number of concerns which suggest that the LSIA data alone should not be relied upon to provide a comprehensive picture of humanitarian settler labour market performance. These include:

- The selection bias in LSIA respondents discussed earlier.
- The fact that the data only follow the settlers for 18 months after they have settled in Australia so that it is only the labour market performance in the very early period of settlement that is captured.

In this section we will attempt to overcome these concerns as far as possible. Firstly, 2006 census data are used so that a representative picture can be presented. Secondly, it is possible to examine the labour market performance of humanitarian settlers at different stages of their settlement in Australia, not just the initial months. Indeed we not only consider the labour market engagement of refugee settlers with varying length of residence in Australia but also the performance of the second generation of humanitarian settlers.

¹¹ She notes that the percentage of the sample made up of humanitarian settlers was only half (eight percent) that of LSIA 1. However, the actual intake of humanitarian settlers, both in numerical and percentage terms, varied very little through the 1990s. The smaller sample hence may have had some impact on the results.

3.2.2 Labour Force Participation at the 2006 Census

At the outset we must recognise the limitations of cross-sectional data in examining engagement in the workforce. In fully assessing the contribution of any population sub-group to the workforce, one needs to examine the entire working lives of the individuals in that group and not just their status at a single point in time. Cross-sectional data presents only the picture at a single point in time. The engagement in the labour force at that point in time can present quite a different picture to the lifetime engagement in the workforce because it is influenced by a number of time-specific factors including:

1. The extent to which the group is made up of very recent arrivals. This will always inflate the unemployment rate and decrease the participation rate because there is a consistent pattern of new entrants to the workforce having lower levels of engagement with the workforce. This, of course, applies not only to newly arrived migrants but others entering a labour force for the first time like school leavers transitioning to work. Clearly for many refugees there is a 'double jeopardy' situation since they have a larger young adult proportion of new entrants to the workforce than is the case for other migrant visa categories. Importantly, then, where recent arrivals are disproportionately represented in a migrant group we can expect a lower level of engagement with the workforce.
2. Secondly, one of the important factors relates to the labour market conditions which prevailed at the time of arrival of migrant groups. There are wide fluctuations in Australian labour market conditions over time and these have influenced the ease with which they have been able to enter the labour market in these crucial early years of settlement. If greater difficulty is experienced in those early years, this is likely to influence longer term abilities to succeed in the labour market.
3. The current age structure of the group is also influential. The extent to which the groups are concentrated in the prime working ages undoubtedly influences engagement in the workforce. If a group has a concentration in the oldest ages it is to be expected that there would be low engagement.

These factors are to be borne in mind when looking at the situation of refugee-humanitarian groups at the time of the 2006 population census with respect to labour force engagement as is shown in Table 3.2. First of all, with respect to labour force participation rates, a few of the major trends that can be identified are:

- First generation refugee-humanitarian groups have lower levels of participation in the workforce than the Australia-born population. It will be noted, however, that there are several groups which have higher levels of participation in the workforce than is generally the case for all migrant groups who originated from countries where the main language is a language other than English. Hence relatively high participation rates can be observed for those born in Vietnam, Iran, Burma, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, El Salvador, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Bulgaria, Romania, Chile, East Timor, Eritrea, Laos and Slovakia. It will be noted that a characteristic of this group of countries is that in most cases the peak of refugee-humanitarian migration to Australia was a decade or more ago.
- It is notable that very low levels of labour force participation, however, were recorded by some of the earliest waves of refugee-humanitarian settlers – Lithuania, Ukraine, Latvia, Estonia and Hungary. This is a function of the very old age structure of these groups. The bulk of these migrants came to Australia as young working-age refugees in the early 1940s and 1950s. Accordingly, almost all are now in the retirement ages. It is not surprising then that there are low levels of participation for this group.

Table 3.2: Australian Refugee-Humanitarian Birthplace Groups, First and Second Generation: Labour Force Participation and Unemployment, 2006
 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). 2006 Census

Country of Birth	Labour Force Participation Rate		Unemployment Rate	
	First Generation	Second Generation	First Generation	Second Generation
Australia	67.1	66.9	4.9	5.0
Mainly English Speaking	64.5	na	4.2	na
Language/s Other Than English Group	55.6	na	7.3*	na
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Bulgaria	60.6	77.0*	7.3*	5.7*
Croatia	45.9	79.3*	5.6*	4.7
Estonia	19.1	79.2*	4.4	5.0
Hungary	39.5	79.6*	5.6*	5.3*
Latvia	20.0	82.3*	4.7	4.1
Lithuania	22.0	81.0*	5.8*	4.9
Romania	58.7	70.6*	8.1*	6.9*
Russian Federation	54.8	74.7*	8.8*	5.2*
Slovakia	65.5	79.7*	5.3*	4.9
Ukraine	39.7	80.9*	7.0*	4.4
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chile	67.2*	69.2*	6.7*	9.1*
Czech Republic	57.3	80.1*	5.1*	4.5
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	53.9	71.6*	7.7*	8.7*
Cambodia	59.1	50.2	11.4*	15.8*
East Timor	64.0	65.6	7.5*	11.4*
El Salvador	70.4*	43.9	8.0*	18.4*
Laos	66.1	55.3	9.2*	14.8*
Lebanon	45.5	66.5	12.0*	8.2*
Vietnam	61.9	50.4	11.4*	13.2*
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Afghanistan	46.0	58.4	17.7*	10.1*
Burma (Myanmar)	59.3	81.6*	5.3*	4.6
Burundi	21.3	63.4	27.3*	4.9
Congo	51.9	74.8*	16.8*	5.8*
Eritrea	57.9	36.2	16.8*	na
Ethiopia	59.4	49.5	13.8*	24.4*
Iran	60.3	54.9	11.6*	9.3*
Iraq	40.7	63.1	22.2*	9.1*
Liberia	49.9	100.0*	22.1*	na
Sierra Leone	64.2	42.9	16.1*	na
Somalia	41.5	36.8	30.7*	14.3*
Sri Lanka	70.9*	72.8*	6.4*	4.9
Sudan	40.3	60.9	28.2*	9.4*
Kurdish Ancestry	56.5	na	14.9*	na
Tamil Ancestry	40.5	na	12.9*	na

* Above Australia-born figure.

Note: For several recently arrived groups the numbers in the second generation are very small.

- Low levels of participation are apparent among the most recently arrived groups, especially those from Africa: Sudan, Congo, Liberia, Burundi and Somalia. This is also the case for those from Afghanistan and Iraq. It is interesting that although the Sri Lanka-born have a high level of workforce participation, the people indicating

they had Tamil ancestry had a much lower participation rate. This reflects the fact that recently arrived Tamil refugee-humanitarian settlers are a small minority of the Sri Lanka-born.

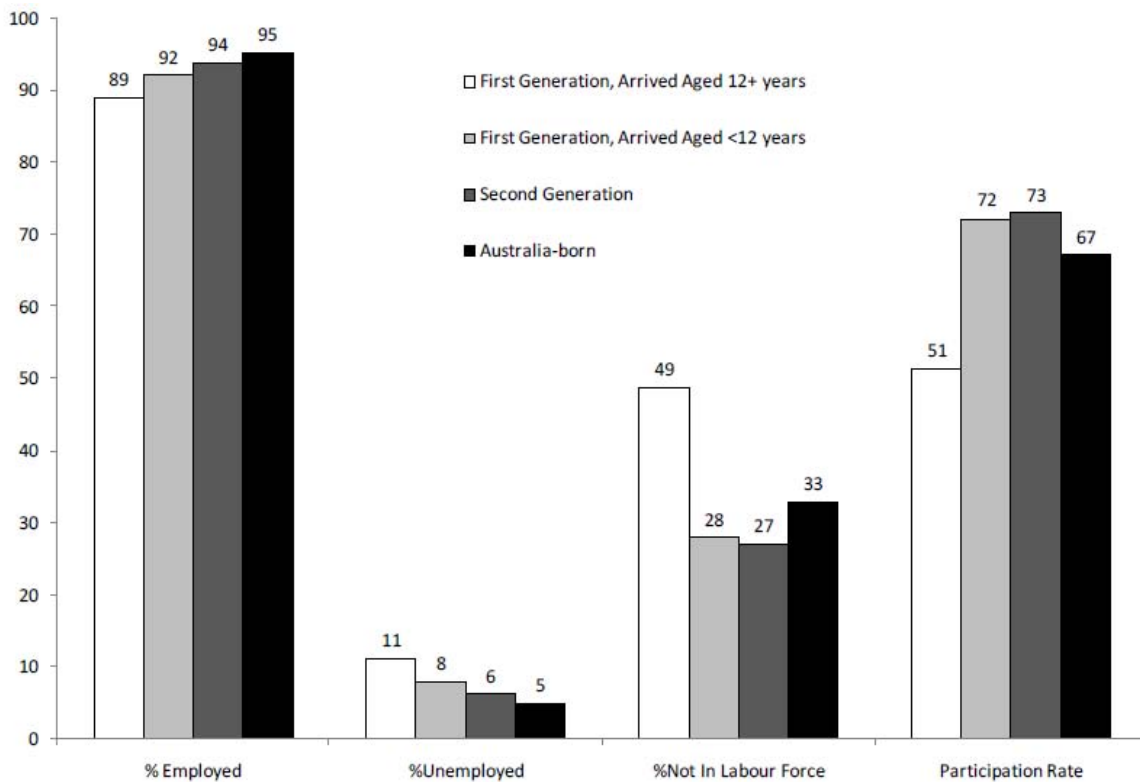
3.2.3 Labour Force Participation Among the Second Generation

A most striking feature of Table 3.2 is the fact that whereas very few (three) first generation refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups have a higher level of workforce participation than the Australia-born, for the second generation of these groups a clear majority have a higher level of participation than the Australia-born. It is especially noticeable in Table 3.2 that there are massive increases in labour force participation rates between first and second generation migrants. For example, for the large Lebanon-born group, the first generation have a low level of labour force participation but the second generation rate is more than 20 percentage points higher. Clearly there are striking patterns of intergenerational mobility in terms of labour force participation.

The importance of adopting a generational perspective is apparent in Figure 3.4 which aggregates all of the refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups to consider participation rates for three generation sub-groups:

- Refugee-humanitarian birthplace settlers who arrived in Australia aged 12 years of age or more.
- Refugee-humanitarian birthplace settlers who arrived in Australia aged less than 12 years of age and received most of their formal education in Australia.
- Australia-born people who gave a refugee-humanitarian birthplace group as their ancestry.

Figure 3.4: Australia: Refugee-Humanitarian Birthplace Groups, First and Second Generation and Australia-Born Labour Force Status, 2006
 Source: ABS 2006 Census



As was indicated in Chapter 1, for many observers it is the first group that comprises the first generation and the second two groups that are the second generation. For others the first two groups are the first generation. It is noticeable in Figure 3.4 that in fact there is quite a similarity in the labour market experience of the second two groups and this is quite different to those who were born overseas and came to Australia aged 12 years or more. In fact, if we compare the labour force participation of the two second generation humanitarian birthplace groups (Figure 3.4) to that of the Australia-born (Table 3.2) the rates are substantially higher for the second generation humanitarian settlers. It is clearly important to adopt a longer time perspective in assessing the labour market experience of refugee-humanitarian settlers than the usual practice of examining experience within a short period after arrival.

We will now divide those born in refugee-humanitarian countries between those who arrived aged 12 years or more and those who arrived as children aged less than 12 and received most of their education in Australia, in order to separate those who were educated in Australia from those who arrived in Australia as adults. Table 3.3 compares the labour force

participation levels of the two groups at the 2006 population census. Not all the birthplace groups are included because among the recent arrivals the number of second generation who are in the workforce is zero or very small since they have been in Australia only a short period. Hence most of the African groups are not included. A striking pattern is in evidence where the labour force participation rates of those who arrive as children are substantially higher than those who arrive as adults. Indeed, for two thirds of the groups the labour force participation rates of the overseas-born who arrived aged less than 12 years are higher than those of the Australia-born.

Table 3.3: Australia: Refugee-Humanitarian Birthplace Groups – People Who Arrived Aged 12 Years and Above and Those Aged Less Than 12 Years: Labour Force Participation and Unemployment, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

	Labour Force Participation Rate		Unemployment Rate	
	Less Than 12	More Than 12	Less Than 12	More Than 12
Australia	67.1		4.9	
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Croatia	75.3*	38.5	5.6*	5.6*
Hungary	69.4*	31.9	4.8	6.0*
Romania	69.8*	57.2	7.9*	8.0*
Russian Federation	61.1	54.7	8.3*	8.8*
Ukraine	55.3	37.8	7.0*	7.0*
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chile	80.6*	62.1	7.0*	6.5*
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	53.7	55.6	7.0*	12.1*
Cambodia	74.2*	56.7	8.2*	12.1*
East Timor	77.4*	60.5	6.6*	7.8*
El Salvador	77.3*	67.7*	9.7*	7.1*
Laos	83.9*	61.0	7.9*	9.7*
Lebanon	65.2	40.7	8.8*	40.7*
Vietnam	79.3*	58.9	7.9*	12.3*
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Ethiopia	53.1	60.4	10.7*	13.9*
Iran	69.6*	59.0	9.0*	12.3*
Iraq	45.6	40.5	19.1*	22.7*

* Above Australia-born figure

3.2.4 Labour Force Participation According to Length of Residence in Australia

Another way of examining the influence of time on labour force participation is to compare refugee groups according to their length of residence in Australia. Table 3.4 compares the labour force participation rates of persons who arrived before 1996 with those who arrived after 1996 in the refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups. There are quite complex patterns in evidence here. It will be noted that overall the participation rates of the longer standing settlers who came to Australia before 2006 are higher than for those who came more recently, although for both groups it is below the level for the Australia-born. However, closer examination of the table reveals a more complex pattern. For the European groups who mostly arrived in Australia in the early post-war years as Displaced Persons the pattern in fact is for higher participation rates among the more recent arrivals. This reflects the fact that many of the longer standing migrants in these birthplace groups are in fact aged over 65 years of age and hence are retired. Hence for groups like those from Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Ukraine the recent arrivals have a higher participation rate.

A quite different picture emerges if we examine refugee-humanitarian groups who have arrived in Australia mainly since the 1970s. In all cases except the Lebanon-born, labour force participation rates are not only substantially higher among longer standing groups but in most cases the participation rates of those groups are higher than for the Australia-born. Indicative is the pattern for the large group of Vietnam-born. The participation rate for longstanding groups is 64 percent compared with 52.3 percent for those arriving since 1996. The numbers of Africans that arrived before 1996 are small. However, for the Ethiopia- and Eritrea-born, substantial numbers arrived before 1996 and they show a clear pattern of higher labour force participation than those who arrived after 1996.

Table 3.4: Australia: Country of Birth by Year of Arrival in Australia by Labour Force Status, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Country of Birth	Unemployment Rate		Participation Rate	
Australia	4.9		67.1	
	Arrived After 1996	Arrived 1996 or Before	Arrived After 1996	Arrived 1996 or Before
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Bulgaria	7.4	7.0	75.0*	55.4
Croatia	8.9	5.0	57.3	44.3
Estonia	8.3	2.6	82.6*	14.5
Hungary	8.1	5.4	69.8*	38.1
Latvia	12.4	3.5	68.5*	17.9
Lithuania	6.5	4.3	59.5	18.5
Romania	9.8	7.3	67.6*	56.9
Russian Federation	12.4	6.0	64.9	50.2
Slovakia	4.5	5.3	83.7*	57.6
Ukraine	10.2	5.7	63.5	34.9
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chile	11.5	6.3	60.8	68.0*
Czech Republic	4.9	5.3	77.9*	53.4
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	9.2	7.0	50.4	56.3
Cambodia	15.2	10.6	52.9	61.0
East Timor	10.6	7.4	43.0	65.1
El Salvador	13.2	7.8	57.8	71.0*
Laos	14.6	8.7	51.3	67.5*
Lebanon	21.3	10.3	52.1	44.9
Vietnam	18.9	10.3	52.3	64.0
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Afghanistan	21.8	12.3	41.0	55.5
Burma (Myanmar)	9.0	4.1	56.4	61.1
Burundi	34.3	0.0	18.9	100.0*
Congo	25.4	8.3	47.4	69.9*
Eritrea	22.2	14.1	47.6	67.7*
Ethiopia	15.4	11.9	52.3	69.9*
Iran	21.2	7.6	51.3	65.8
Iraq	30.0	14.9	34.4	50.1
Liberia	22.6	10.1	47.9	88.5*
Sierra Leone	18.6	0.0	63.2	77.2*
Somalia	35.0	26.3	38.3	49.1
Sri Lanka	11.1	4.3	70.8*	71.4*
Sudan	34.3	9.2	37.4	58.0
Total Refugee-Humanitarian Groups	17.0	8.3	52.2	56.7

* Above Australia-born

Where we examined intergenerational differences it is apparent that once one takes a time perspective beyond the initial years of settlement, for most groups there is a convergence toward, and even beyond, Australia-born labour participation patterns. One distinct group which differs from this is the Lebanon-born but for other groups that arrived in significant numbers since the 1970s, this pattern of increasing participation is strong.

3.2.5 Gender Differentials

Thus far we have considered workforce participation for the total population but there are important differences between males and females in workforce participation, as is evidenced by Australia-born males being 73.7 percent compared with 60.9 percent for Australia-born females. Table 3.5 shows the labour force participation for first generation refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups and similar male/female differentials are in evidence. The average participation levels are lower than for the Australia-born for both males and females. However, it is notable that for several of the longer established birthplace groups the participation levels are quite close to the Australia-born (e.g. Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Chile, East Timor, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia). It is noticeable, however, that the difference from the Australia-born is substantially greater for females than males. This points to the refugee-humanitarian birthplace first generation group women experiencing greater difficulty than their male counterparts in penetrating the labour market.

It is also interesting to examine gender differentials in labour force participation among the second generation. Table 3.6 presents the participation rates for Australia-born males and females who indicate that their ancestry is from one of the refugee-humanitarian birthplace countries. The results present a strong contrast to the first generation. Table 3.6 shows that, on average, both males and females among the second generation have higher participation rates than is the case for the Australia-born. It is also interesting to note that the difference is greatest for females than males. This suggests that the intergenerational improvement in labour force participation benefits females more than males among refugee-humanitarian groups.

Table 3.5: Country of Birth of Person by Sex and Labour Force Status, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Country of Birth	Male		Female	
	Percent Unemployed	Participation Rate	Percent Unemployed	Participation Rate
Australia	5.0	73.7	4.8	60.9
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Bulgaria	5.8	62.3	8.8	59.0
Croatia	5.7	51.7	5.5	39.8
Estonia	6.5	21.1	1.7	17.5
Hungary	5.3	42.8	6.1	36.0
Latvia	4.0	23.2	5.5	17.4
Lithuania	6.1	23.0	5.8	21.1
Romania	8.4	65.6	7.5	52.1
Russian Federation	7.2	64.5	10.1	48.9
Slovakia	4.7	66.6	5.8	64.4*
Ukraine	6.2	46.5	7.8	34.8
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chile	6.4	78.1*	7.0	57.7
Czech Republic	5.0	58.8	5.2	56.0
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7.5	60.4	8.1	47.4
Cambodia	9.3	73.4	14.1	46.7
East Timor	6.9	75.7*	8.1	52.6
El Salvador	8.0	80.3*	8.1	61.2*
Laos	8.2	76.3*	10.4	56.6
Lebanon	11.8	62.1	12.6	27.6
Vietnam	9.6	73.6	13.6	51.5
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Afghanistan	16.6	61.9	20.7	27.1
Burma (Myanmar)	5.2	68.1	5.5	51.2
Burundi	27.7	31.4	20.8	9.0
Congo	17.1	59.7	18.1	41.6
Eritrea	13.7	75.3*	22.8	41.0
Ethiopia	11.6	72.5	17.0	46.2
Iran	11.5	68.7	11.9	51.1
Iraq	21.4	55.0	24.4	25.0
Liberia	17.7	63.5	28.0	38.1
Sierra Leone	16.8	72.0	15.6	55.6
Somalia	26.6	58.8	39.3	26.1
Sri Lanka	5.1	80.3*	8.3	61.4*
Sudan	27.7	51.9	30.4	26.2
Total Refugee-Humanitarian Groups	9.6	65.8	11.2	45.2

*Above Australia-born average

Table 3.6: Australia-Born, Ancestry Multi-Response by Sex and Labour Force Status

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Ancestry	Male		Female	
	Percent Unemployed	Participation Rate	Percent Unemployed	Participation Rate
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Bulgarian	5.2	80.8*	4.3	72.9*
Croatian	5.0	84.3*	4.4	74.4*
Estonian	5.1	83.7*	4.7	75.3*
Hungarian	5.2	84.6*	5.4	74.9*
Latvian	4.6	86.3*	3.8	78.5*
Lithuanian	4.7	85.3*	4.7	77.0*
Romanian	6.8	73.5	6.7	67.9*
Russian	5.3	79.8*	5.1	70.2*
Slovak	4.6	82.7*	4.2	76.6*
Ukrainian	4.6	85.6*	4.1	76.5*
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chilean	9.5	72.7	9.0	66.0*
Czech	4.5	84.5*	4.5	75.8*
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnian	9.5	74.8*	7.5	68.0*
Khmer	16.7	49.2	15.4	51.3
Timorese	11.6	67.0	12.2	65.2*
Salvadoran	19.8	49.7	26.8	43.6
Lao	19.7	55.1	9.9	55.7
Lebanese	8.7	74.5*	7.5	58.8
Vietnamese	15.8	48.1	10.9	52.7
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Afghan	9.0	60.3	11.0	55.9
Burmese	4.6	86.3*	5.2	76.8*
Southern and East African, nec	5.0	71.4	6.4	55.3
Central and West African, nec	7.6	80.8*	2.9	71.8*
Eritrean	0.0	25.9	0.0	38.9
Ethiopian	13.0	53.5	0.0	38.9
Iranian	11.6	52.5	7.1	57.1
Iraqi	12.9	63.9	6.7	60.7
Liberian	0.0	100.0*		
Sierra Leonean	0.0	50.0		
Somali	23.5	58.6	0.0	19.5
Sinhalese	5.3	75.4*	4.8	70.5*
Sudanese	11.8	60.7	12.7	60.4
Kurdish	13.2	63.3	14.3	45.7
Tamil	16.1	36.4	13.6	41.0
Total Ancestry Groups	6.6	77.7*	5.8	68.5*
Australia-Born	5.0	73.7	4.8	60.9

*Above Australia-born average.

Note: For several recently arrived groups the numbers in the second generation are very small.

3.2.6 Labour Force Participation – Survey Evidence

In sum, then, 2006 Census data show that refugee-humanitarian settlers experience lower labour participation rates than both the Australia-born and other types of settlers but these differences reduce substantially over time and for some long established refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups there is a reversal of these differences in the second generation. In this section we will examine evidence on labour force participation of refugee-humanitarian groups from a number of surveys including that undertaken for this study.

Table 3.7: Australia: Labour Force Participation Rates for Immigrants by Visa Category, 1970-2007

Source: ABS, *Workforce Survey*, various issues

	Humanitarian	All Settlers	Temporary Migrants
Arrived 1997-2007	50.4	68.8	66.2
Arrived 1984-2004	58.3	67.0	72.7
Arrived before 1999	67.2	71.9	na
Arrived 1970-96	79.1	68.0	na
Arrived 1970-93	76.2	69.8	na

Table 3.7 uses data from the ABS monthly labour force surveys to examine labour force participation of refugee humanitarian migrants over the period since 1993. It is noticeable that the early labour force surveys show much higher levels of participation among humanitarian groups than more recent surveys. On closer examination, however, it will be noted that the most recent surveys only cover a relatively short period of arrival in Australia, whereas the earlier ones included people who arrived over a longer period. Clearly, the longer the period of residence, the higher the level of workforce participation among the humanitarian origin population. When a longer time perspective is taken than the initial period of settlement there is a pattern of convergence towards Australia-born patterns of labour force participation.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) *Settlement Outcomes of New Arrivals* (SONA) Study completed a questionnaire soon after arrival in Australia and Table 3.8 shows that indeed the workforce participation rates of refugee-humanitarian settlers are

quite low compared with other visa categories. However, it will also be noted that a significantly higher proportion than other groups indicated they were involved in some form of study. This provides another insight into the labour force participation of this group – the fact that many arrive without sufficient language and other relevant background experience to compete in local labour markets.

Table 3.8: DIAC Settlement Outcomes of New Arrivals Study (SONA) and HSS: Work Status by Visa Category, 2009

Source: DIAC

Work Status	Family (%)	Humanitarian (%)	Skilled (%)
Work for wage or salary	43.5	24.1	77.2
Run my own business	4.9	1.6	7.4
Study and work	6.3	10.1	5.3
Study full-time	3.9	20.4	1.9
Study and look after my family	6.6	16.2	1.8
Unemployed and looking for work	8.4	11.3	5.1
Unemployed and NOT looking for work	.6	3.3	.2
Setting up a business but not yet making money	1.2	.7	1.5
Look after my family	24.8	18.1	5.5
Retired, no longer working	5.4	4.4	.3
Voluntary or other unpaid work	1.5	1.9	.8
N	1889	5336	1309
Humanitarian Settler Survey			
Employed	53.6		
Unemployed and looking for work	8.8		
Studying	20.0		
Other – Not in workforce	17.6		
Total	100		
N	649		

Note: Multiple responses allowed so will not add up to 100 percent

Although data from the Humanitarian Settler Survey (HSS) is not multiple choice, it is also presented in Table 3.8 and it will be noted that the proportion engaged in the workforce is substantially higher. This reflects the fact that unlike the SONA Study, a significant proportion of the HSS respondents had been in Australia over a longer period which is evident in Table 3.9. The pattern of increasing engagement in the workforce with increasing time of settlement among humanitarian settlers is a strong one.

The SONA Study asked a question of those who were in work about satisfaction with employment and Table 3.10 shows that humanitarian settlers have a lower proportion than other groups who like their work, perhaps reflecting the fact that many are unable to obtain work concomitant with their qualifications, especially in the early years of settlement (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007). The HSS survey found that only 48.1 percent of working respondents said that their job matched their experience and qualifications. The initial period of settlement is of great significance for all immigrants. Entering the labour market

Table 3.9: Summary Statistics for Humanitarian Program Migrants, by Period of Residency

Source: ABS, 2010b, 15

	Period of Residency			
	Recent Residents (2003-06)	Longer Term Residents (2000-02)	All Migrants	All Persons
Sex	52% male/ 48% female	58% male/ 42% female	48% male/ 52% female	49% male/ 51% female
Median age (years)	20	29	31	37
Don't speak English well or at all (%)	38	25	14	3
Employed (aged 15 and over) (%)	22	38	61	57
Has a post-school qualification (aged 15 and over) (%)	22	30	63	53

Table 3.10: DIAC Settlement Outcomes of New Arrivals Study (SONA): Satisfaction with Job by Visa Category, 2009 (Percent of those working)

Source: DIAC

What Do You Like About Your Main Job	Family	Humanitarian	Skilled
Like my job	56.6	42.3	55.5
Job is ok but could be better	34.5	37.2	37.5
Do not really care – it's just a job	5.0	9.9	4.3
Do not like my job	2.8	5.8	1.7
No answer	1.2	4.8	1.0
Total N	942	1542	1099

in a totally new context where the settler has little or no knowledge of the labour market represents a major challenge. It was interesting in the HSS survey that the problems faced by new humanitarian arrivals meant that only 23.4 percent actually sought work within the first three months of arrival and 18.9 percent actually obtained a job in that first three months. After six months the proportion increased to 41 and 33 percent respectively. This reflects the cultural, information and language barriers that confront the refugee settlers in the early years in Australia.

3.3 UNEMPLOYMENT

3.3.1 Introduction

In assessing economic contribution through the labour force it is also relevant to consider patterns of unemployment among humanitarian settlers. There is a consistent pattern in Australian immigration settlement that:

‘unemployment rates are higher among the overseas-born compared with the Australia-born, and within immigrant groups are higher amongst those from a [non-English speaking background] NESB though ... (there is a) ... large dispersion of unemployment rates across birthplace groups. Of course immigrants almost by definition are likely to experience a bout of unemployment on arrival’ (Wooden, 1994b, 232).

Moreover, he goes on to point out:

‘Refugees do worst of all immigrant groups, but even much of their disadvantage is the result of poor English language, skills and the relative recency of their arrival’.

The Australian Government Productivity Commission (2006, 64) Report into *Economic Impacts of Migration and Population Growth* also drew attention to the differences between visa categories in unemployment levels. Table 3.11 shows the data they present and indicates that unemployment rates are substantially higher for humanitarian groups regardless of age. The Report also notes (page 63) that there has been a decline in the differential between Australia-born and overseas-born unemployment rates. There is a lack of data to

Table 3.11: Unemployment Rates of Immigrants by Year of Arrival, Visa Group and Age Group, 2004

Source: Australian Government Productivity Commission, 2006, 64

Year of arrival	Visa	Age				Total
		15-24	25-44	45-64	65 & over	
		%	%	%	%	%
1990 to 2004	Skilled	0.0 ^d	5.2	1.8 ^c	0.0 ^d	4.3
	New Zealand citizen	7.0 ^c	2.4 ^c	6.9 ^c	..	3.8
	Family stream	21.3 ^c	8.4	5.4 ^c	0.0 ^d	8.8
	Humanitarian	25.0 ^d	14.1 ^c	22.2 ^c	..	16.9 ^c
	Temporary visa ^a	7.3 ^c	5.9 ^c	7.1 ^d	0.0 ^d	6.4 ^d
	All programs	11.4	5.8	5.2	0.0 ^d	6.2
2000 to 2004 ^b		11.3	7.0	5.2 ^c	0.0 ^d	7.6
1990 to 1999 ^b		11.6	4.9	5.1	0.0 ^d	5.1
Australian-born		10.3	3.9	2.8	0.4	4.9

^a Temporary residents planning to stay in Australia for 12 months or more. ^b Total for all visa classes.
^c Based on estimates with relative standard errors greater than 50 per cent and likely to be unreliable.
^d Based on estimates with relative standard errors between 25 per cent and 50 per cent. .. Not applicable.

Table 3.12: Australia: Unemployment Rate of Refugee-Humanitarian Migrants, 1993-2007

Source: ABS, 1994b, 1997, 2000, 2005a and 2008

Year		Unemployment Rate (%)
1993	Principal Applicant	18.3
	Partner of PA	16.5*
1996	Principal Applicant	21.9
	Partner of PA	5.9*
1999	Principal Applicant	15.8*
	Partner of PA	26.8*
2004	Main Applicant	10.5*
	Other Applicant	13.3*
	Total	11.6*
2007	Recent Migrants - Main Applicant	np
	Recent Migrants - Other Applicant	24.5*
	Recent Migrants - Total	np

* estimate has a relative standard error of 25 to 50%
np - not available for publication

examine whether or not this convergence applied to all migrant visa categories. Table 3.12 brings together data from a range of sources, mainly the ABS monthly labour force survey. This would indicate there may have been a reduction in unemployment rates of refugee-humanitarian settlers over the 1993-2004 period.

3.3.2 Unemployment of Humanitarian Settlers at the 2006 Census

In the discussion on labour force participation data for the 2006 census (Section 3.2.2), data from the census enumeration on unemployment among refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups is presented alongside participation information. The patterns evident in census unemployment data are similar to those relating to labour force participation, namely:

- Levels of unemployment are higher among humanitarian migrants than among the Australia-born or other visa categories of immigrants.
- Unemployment levels decline with increasing length of residence in Australia and are lower among the second generation than the first generation.
- There are differences between groups, with some groups continuing to experience higher levels of unemployment than the Australia-born with extended residence in Australia and even into the second generation.

There can be no doubt that humanitarian settlers experience greater unemployment and lower labour force participation than those arriving on other visa categories. Table 3.13, drawn from the ABS/DIAC Data Linkage Project, shows that among migrants who arrived between 2001 and 2006, those who were in the humanitarian stream had lower labour force participation and higher unemployment.

As was pointed out when considering labour force participation, any consideration of migrant engagement with the labour force needs to take account of the time it takes for them to adjust to the new context in which they find themselves and that for refugees this may take longer than for other migrants. Hence we need to include a time dimension in considering patterns of unemployment. Firstly it is useful to examine in more detail the second generation. We have already seen that there are substantially lower unemployment rates among the Australia-born children of refugee-humanitarian settlers but it is also relevant to divide those settlers who were born overseas between those who arrived aged 12 years or more from those who arrived as dependent age children. Table 3.3 compares the unemployment rates of the two

groups in the refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups in 2006. Overall the unemployment rate was substantially lower among those who arrived as children. This is especially important since it was established in Chapter 2 that dependent children are a particularly significant group in the humanitarian intake.

Table 3.13: Visa Type of Arrivals 2001-06 by Labour Force Status in 2006: Proportion (Percent) of All migrants Aged Over 15 Years

Source: ABS/DIAC Data Linkage Project

Labour Force Status	Family	Humanitarian	Skilled	Other	Total (a)
Employed, worked full-time	35.4	16.6	48.6	52.9	40.4
Employed, worked part-time	16.3	10.5	18.4	16.3	16.8
Employed, away from work	3.8	3.1	3.3	0.0	3.5
Unemployed, looking for full-time work	4.0	5.3	3.1	0.0	3.6
Unemployed, looking for part-time work	2.5	3.5	2.6	0.0	2.6
Not in the labour force	36.2	57.7	23.2	30.8	31.5
Not stated	1.9	3.3	0.9	0.0	1.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
%Employed	89.6	77.5	92.5	100.0	90.7
%Unemployed	10.4	22.5	7.5	0.0	9.3

(a) Total migrants does not include temporary migrants.

Similarly, when we differentiate humanitarian birthplace groups between those who have been in Australia less than ten years from those who have been in Australia longer, Table 3.4 shows that there are some striking differences especially for those groups whose major intake has been since 1996. Nevertheless it will be noted that unemployment levels remain higher than those for the Australia-born even among those who have been in Australia longer. Early work by Jones and McAllister (1991, 21) found that refugee status remains an explanatory factor in models of both duration of initial employment and of subsequent point of time of unemployment. There thus would appear to be some persistent barriers to refugee-humanitarian settlers gaining employment. The fact that labour force participation rates are higher than the Australia-born among those humanitarian settlers arriving as dependent children but their unemployment rates are also higher suggests this.

There are some differences between males and females in unemployment rates as is evident in Table 3.5 and Table 3.6. Among first generation settlers female unemployment levels are generally higher than for males, while the reverse is the case for the second generation. For

both groups unemployment levels are also generally a little higher than that for the Australia-born.

As is the case with the consideration of labour force participation, it is important to take a longer term perspective in examining unemployment. Figure 3.4 shows that there is a clear pattern of reduction in unemployment rates between the first generation who arrived aged 12 years or more (11 percent), those who arrived aged less than 12 years and hence had most of their schooling in Australia (eight percent) and the children born to humanitarian settlers in Australia (six percent).

3.3.3 Other Studies of Unemployment Among Humanitarian Settlers

The pattern of refugee-humanitarian settlers having a higher level of unemployment than other migrant groups has been a consistent finding in Australian labour force surveys over the last decade, as Table 3.14 shows. Collins (2010, 13) has argued that immigrant unemployment rates, especially those from refugee-humanitarian settler backgrounds, have been sensitive to the place where immigrants settle. He argues:

‘In Australia’s two largest immigrant cities, Sydney and Melbourne, unemployment rates have been highest in the western suburbs where most immigrants, particularly those from family stream and humanitarian program and those with lower levels of human capital and English language ability settle’.

Table 3.14: Australia: Unemployment Rates for Immigrants by Visa Category, 1970-2007

Source: ABS, *Workforce Survey*, various issues

	Humanitarian	All Settlers	Temporary Migrants
Arrived 1997-2007	na	5.5	6.8
Arrived 1984-2004	11.6	6.6	4.7
Arrived before 1999	15.8	6.2	na
Arrived 1970-96	21.9	9.7	na
Arrived 1970-93	18.3	13.6	na

To demonstrate this point he presents data from one of Sydney’s most multicultural suburbs, Canterbury, where there were large numbers of Arabic, Vietnamese and Khmer settlers. Table 3.15 shows the very high rates of unemployment for these groups. These patterns have continued as is evident from Table 3.2 data from the 2006 census showing the unemployment rates for the first and second generation refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups. Some of the interesting points in evidence are:

- As with participation rates, there is a strong pattern of unemployment levels being higher for all refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups than is the case for the Australia-born. Nevertheless it will be noted that the highest levels of unemployment are among recently arrived refugee-humanitarian groups, especially those from Africa (Sudan, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia) as well as Iraq and Afghanistan. It is also notable that the rates of unemployment are still high in the largest, longer standing groups from Vietnam and Lebanon for whom the rates are more than twice those of the Australia-born. It needs to be stressed, however, that perhaps for many of the refugee-humanitarian groups it is not at all appropriate to compare their unemployment rate with that of the Australia-born. It is more appropriate to compare their unemployment levels with youth unemployment because they are more similar in terms of being new entrants to the labour market lacking experience of that market.

Table 3.15: Unemployment Rates, Canterbury Local Government Area, 1991 and 1996 by Language and Birthplace

Source: Collins, 2010, 13

Language	Birthplace	1991 Canterbury	1991 Sydney	1996 Sydney	1996 Canterbury
English	Australia	9.0	8.7	7.0	7.2
Arabic – Christian	Middle East	34.0	30.4	21.1	29.2
Arabic – Islam	Middle East	47.1	45.1	31.1	37.1
Chinese	Vietnam	28.4	26.2	18.9	23.1
Chinese	China	14.3	14.6	10.8	11.1
Vietnamese	Vietnam	35.5	41.7	29.4	30.2
Khmer	All origins	40.9	40.2	32.9	32.7
Lao	All origins	34.7	28.3	23.4	27.1

- Again, it is striking that there are generally very large differences in rates of unemployment between the first and second generations of refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups. Indeed, in the case of ten groups, the level of unemployment is lower than for the Australia-born in the second generation. In most of the African cases the second generation are too young to have any second generation groups that are of working age. It is apparent then that an intergenerational perspective provides quite a different picture of engagement with the labour force.
- It is interesting that the unemployment rates indicated by census data, even among the recently arrived groups like those from Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia, are considerably lower than the rates found in LSIA 1 and LSIA 2 (Figure 3.3) after settlers had been 18 months in Australia. Only the small numbers from Somalia had an unemployment rate of greater than 30 percent and only Sudan, Liberia and Burundi had rates greater than 20 percent.

3.4 ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH

3.4.1 Introduction

One of the most consistent findings of research into immigrant settlement in Australia has been that a lack of proficiency in the English language is a crucial factor explaining low levels of workforce participation and high levels of unemployment of migrants (Wooden, 1994b, 223). Undoubtedly, this is an important factor helping explain lower levels of engagement in the workforce than the Australia-born among humanitarian settlers, especially in the early years of settlement. It is important to recognise that the level of ability to speak English is lower among humanitarian settlers than it is among other migrant visa categories. This is one of the very important findings which emerge from the data linkage project in which census and DIAC data were combined and allowed us for the first time to identify the visa category of recent arrivals in census results. Accordingly, Table 3.16 shows that at the 2006 census the proportion of migrants who had arrived since 2001 who could not speak English well or at all was significantly higher for humanitarian arrivals (36.5 percent) than for other visa groups, especially skilled migrants.

It is a striking finding that more than a third of humanitarian migrants reported that they either could not speak English at all or not speak it well. This creates a very significant barrier to their entry to the labour market. Figure 3.5 shows the lower level of English proficiency among humanitarian migrants compared with other migrant groups. These data also show that in 2006 almost three quarters (74 percent) of humanitarian migrants who did not speak English well or at all were 'not in the labour force' and only 16 percent were employed. Of those who spoke English very well, 40 percent were employed.

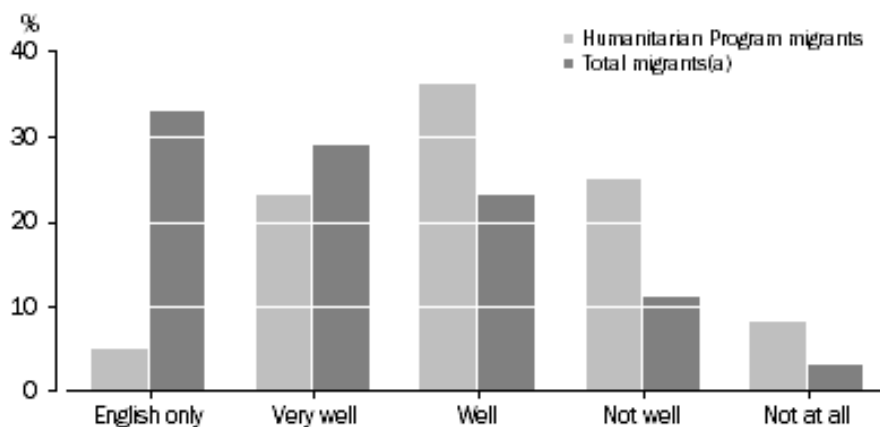
Table 3.16: Visa Type of Settler Arrivals, 2001-06 by English Proficiency in 2006: Proportion (Percent) of All Migrants Aged Over 15 Years

Source: ABS/DIAC Data Linkage Project

	Family	Humanitarian	Skilled	Other	Total
Very well	37.3	25.6	55.6	37.5	44.3
Well	35.4	37.8	34.6	37.5	35.2
Not well	22.1	28.0	8.5	25.0	16.5
Not at all	5.3	8.5	1.3	0.0	3.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100	100.0

Figure 3.5: Migrants' Proficiency in Spoken English, 2006

Source: ABS, 2010b, 9



(a) Total migrants includes Humanitarian Program migrants.

Source: Visa subclass (DIAC, SDB extract), Proficiency in spoken English (ABS, 2006 Census)

The limited data also allows us to examine the impact of length of residency on the ability to speak English. Table 3.17 shows that recently arrived humanitarian migrants have a much higher percentage who are not able to speak English well.

Table 3.17: Summary Statistics for Humanitarian Program Migrants, by Period of Residency

Source: ABS, 2010, 15

	Period of Residency		All Migrants	All Persons
	Recent Residents (2003-06)	Longer Term Residents (2000-02)		
Sex	52% male/ 48% female	58% male/ 42% female	48% male/ 52% female	49% male/ 51% female
Median age (years)	20	29	31	37
Don't speak English well or at all (%)	38	25	14	3
Employed (aged 15 and over) (%)	22	38	61	57
Has a post-school qualification (aged 15 and over) (%)	22	30	63	53

Table 3.18: Humanitarian Settlement Survey: How Settlers Got Their First job in Australia, 2009

How They Got Their Job	Number	Percent
Government Recruiting Agency	38	10.3
Private Recruiting Agency	19	5.1
Friend/Relative	131	35.4
Local Community Organisation Referral	36	9.7
Newspaper/Internet Advertisement	59	15.9
Other	87	23.5
Total	370	100.0

In this context it is interesting to note from the HSS that a significant proportion of the respondents indicated that they got their first job through friends or relatives. It is apparent

from Table 3.18 that informal means were very important. This reflects the difficulties that cultural and language distance can create for humanitarian settlers which make it difficult for them to access formal means of entering the labour market.

3.4.2 Ability to Speak English at the 2006 Census

If we consider individual refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups, Table 3.19 shows that almost all first generation humanitarian groups have substantial proportions who are not able to speak English well or not able to speak it at all. It is understandably higher among recently arrived groups such as those from Sudan (31.2 percent), Afghanistan (30.3 percent), Burundi (72.2 percent) and Congo (38.5 percent). However, it is noticeable that there are relatively high rates among some of the groups who have been resident in Australia much longer. Of some concern here is the fact that 43.5 percent of the Vietnam-born are not able to speak English well or are not able to speak it at all, despite the fact that most have been in Australia for over a decade. This may help explain persistent high levels of unemployment among Vietnamese who have been resident more than ten years in Australia despite having higher levels of workforce participation than the Australia-born. It points to the crucial importance in providing English language training to new humanitarian arrivals if they are to be successful in the labour market. Even among the second generation Australia-born children of Vietnamese settlers, almost a fifth (18.9 percent) are not able to speak English well or not able to speak it at all. Most of the other second generation groups which have low levels of English proficiency are recently arrived groups.

It is useful to examine the experience of the Vietnamese in a little more detail. Table 3.20 shows the labour market experience of the Vietnam-born according to their length of residence in Australia. A clear pattern is in evidence with the unemployment rate falling systematically from 26.2 percent among those who had lived in Australia less than five years to 8.2 percent for those who had been in Australia longer than 20 years. Again, however, even among those who had been in Australia more than 20 years the unemployment rate is higher than for the Australia-born. The table also shows the pattern of labour force participation increases with length of residence in Australia.

Table 3.19: Australian Refugee-Humanitarian Birthplace Groups, First and Second Generation: Ability to Speak English, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Country of Birth	Percent Not Able to Speak English Well or At All		Percent Speaking Language Other Than English At Home	
	First Generation	Second Generation	First Generation	Second Generation
Australia	10.9	15.9	6.5	1.5
Mainly English Speaking (MES)	3.5	-	4.0	-
Language/s Other Than English (LOTE)	20.8*	-	69.3	-
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Bulgaria	11.8*	8.8	79.2	19.4
Croatia	23.4*	4.5	83.2	32.7
Estonia	7.6	3.7	53.9	6.8
Hungary	10.6	4.6	62.8	13.2
Latvia	6.9	3.2	56.9	10.6
Lithuania	11.7*	3.6	54.4	8.6
Romania	14.3*	11.3	81.2	34.6
Russian Federation	21.3*	11.1	85.7	18.3
Slovakia	5.9	9.4	72.2	25.7
Ukraine	24.9*	5.0	85.7	17.5
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chile	15.6*	8.5	86.1	46.0
Czech Republic	5.6	7.3	61.7	11.5
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	26.8*	14.5	95.0	62.1
Cambodia	45.7*	19.6*	94.6	71.7
East Timor	34.8*	10.8	90.6	47.3
El Salvador	17.8*	11.5	92.9	69.0
Laos	35.7*	11.6	92.4	64.3
Lebanon	22.9*	7.3	92.6	63.9
Vietnam	43.5*	18.8*	97.0	88.1
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Afghanistan	30.3*	28.7*	96.9	70.9
Burma (Myanmar)	21.1*	22.1*	66.2	11.4
Burundi	72.2*	51.6*	95.9	32.5
Congo	38.5*	25.4*	79.6	27.7
Eritrea	22.4*	26.9*	95.7	62.8
Ethiopia	16.1*	15.7	84.7	50.6
Iran	18.3*	14.0	91.2	59.3
Iraq	28.1*	37.2*	96.1	76.3
Liberia	21.1*	61.6*	44.9	20.0
Sierra Leone	14.2*	39.6*	81.1	11.3
Somalia	17.4*	31.4*	95.5	78.4
Sri Lanka	5.5	13.9	64.8	24.8
Sudan	31.2*	60.8*	95.5	68.9
Kurdish Ancestry	26.0*	-	82.5	-
Tamil Ancestry	14.6*	-	69.9	-

*Above Australia-born average

Table 3.20: Vietnam-Born and Year of Arrival in Australia by Labour Force Status, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Years since arrival	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the Labour Force	Total	Percent Unemployed	Participation Rate
0-4 years	2,640	939	4,336	7,915	26.2	45.2
5-9 years	4,831	856	4,369	10,056	15.1	56.6
10-14 years	7,843	1,592	7,869	17,304	16.9	54.5
15-19 years	17,686	2,619	15,412	35,717	12.9	56.8
20+ years	47,486	4,263	22,692	74,441	8.2	69.5
Total	80,486	10,269	54,678	145,433	11.3	62.4

It is also interesting to note in Table 3.19 that in almost all of the first generation humanitarian birthplace groups most households use a language other than English at home. Indeed in three quarters of the birthplace groups more than 75 percent of households use a language other than English at home. There are clearly strong levels of language maintenance even among groups that have been in Australia over a long period. This is reflected in the fact that among the second generation, relatively high levels of speaking a language other than English at home are recorded, though lower than for the first generation. While many of the second generation will still be living with the first generation for groups like the Vietnamese, Lebanese, Cambodians and Laotians, many second generation are old enough to have their own households. Yet the levels of speaking a language other than English at home are very high even among these second generations. Of course, speaking a language other than English at home is not necessarily an indication of low ability to speak English.

Lack of proficiency in the dominant language is clearly, however, a major barrier to successful labour force participation among humanitarian settlers. This is strikingly demonstrated in Table 3.21 which cross-tabulates the labour force experience of first generation humanitarian groups against their ability to speak English. A striking pattern is in evidence. Firstly, with respect to participation rates, it is apparent that there is a consistent relationship between ability to speak English and level of labour force participation. Those who are able to speak English very well have a 70.2 percent labour force participation rate compared with only 12.1 percent for those who cannot speak English at all and 36.3 percent

for those who cannot speak the language well. Indeed, for those who speak English very well, participation rates are substantially higher than for the Australia-born. Similar striking patterns are apparent for the unemployment rate, with 7.7 percent of those who speak English well being unemployed compared with almost a third (31.5 percent) among those who cannot speak English at all. However, even for those that speak English well unemployment is higher than for the Australia-born. This reflects the phenomenon of the ‘refugee gap’ which has been identified in North America as well as Australia, whereby even when other factors are controlled, refugees have lower levels of workforce performance compared with other migrant groups and the native-born.

Table 3.21: First Generation Refugee-Humanitarian Groups: Proficiency in Spoken English by Labour Force Status, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Proficiency in English	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the Labour Force	Total	Percent Unemployed	Participation Rate
Very Well	126,667	10,614	58,196	195,477	7.7	70.2
Well	92,233	11,162	77,989	181,384	10.8	57.0
Not Well	35,281	8,819	77,420	121,520	20.0	36.3
Not At All	2,170	999	23,060	26,229	31.5	12.1
Total	256,351	31,594	236,665	524,610	11.0	54.9
Australia-Born	6,646,009	342,760	3,427,464	10,416,233	4.9	67.1

Turning to the second generation of Australia-born who have an ancestry in a humanitarian migrant source country, the relationship between English proficiency and labour market engagement is shown in Table 3.22. It is evident that the numbers who have little or no English in this group are quite small so the patterns are not as strong as for the first generation. Nevertheless, it is apparent that those who have better English have lower levels of unemployment and higher levels of workforce participation.

Table 3.22: Second Generation Refugee-Humanitarian Groups: Proficiency in Spoken English by Labour Force Status, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

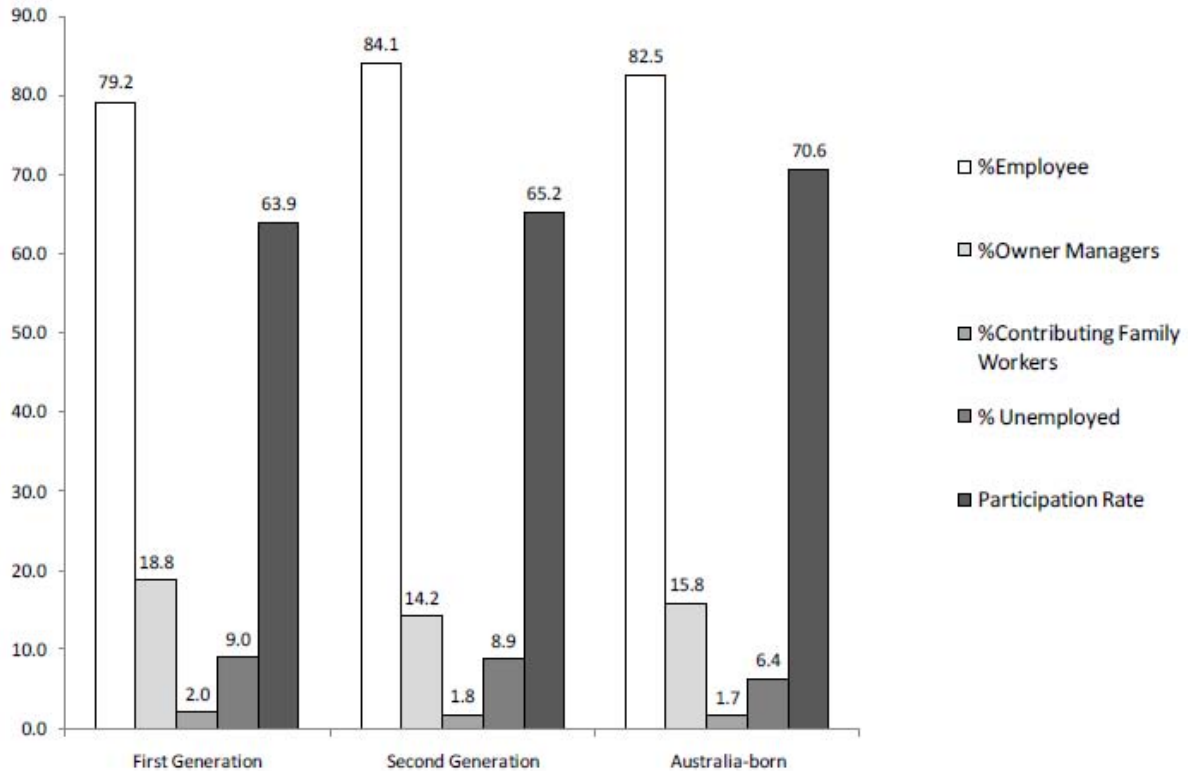
Proficiency in English	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the Labour Force	Total	Percent Unemployed	Participation Rate
Very well	50,318	4,782	28,568	83,668	8.7	65.9
Well	2146	302	2,065	4,513	12.3	54.2
Not well	533	62	624	1,219	10.4	48.8
Not at all	33	0	172	205	0.0	16.1
Total	53,030	5,146	31,429	89,605	8.8	64.9

The improvement in English ability and its impact on labour market outcomes is evident from when we compare unemployment levels and labour market participation for the three generations of humanitarian settlers. Figure 3.6 shows this strong relationship in data from the 2006 Australian population census. The key issue is then that if there are programs to assist refugee-humanitarian groups in developing their ability to speak English, the result will be higher levels of engagement in the workforce. There is a great deal of evidence that enhancing English language is a crucial element in assisting adjustment of humanitarian settlers in the labour market and in Australian society more generally (Ryan, 2008).

While a low level of English proficiency clearly is an important explanation for humanitarian arrivals having lower levels of engagement with the workforce than the Australia-born, it is apparent that this alone does not provide a total explanation. It is significant that even when English language proficiency is high, both first and second generations of humanitarian settlers still have higher levels of unemployment than the Australia-born, even though their labour force participation rates are higher. This suggests that there are other barriers which are confronting them. One of these relates to education and this is considered in the next section.

Figure 3.6: Australia: Speaks English Well or Very Well by Employment Type, Unemployed and Participation Rate for First, Second Generation and Australia-Born, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census



3.5 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

3.5.1 Introduction

Another significant barrier to engagement with the labour force among migrant groups relates to education and training. The relationship between education and success in the labour market is a strong one, not only among the humanitarian settler population but also among the Australian population generally. Table 3.23 shows results from the DIAC/ABS Data Linkage of Settlement Data Base and 2006 Census data. It clearly indicates that humanitarian settlers have much higher percentages with no post-school qualification than other visa categories.

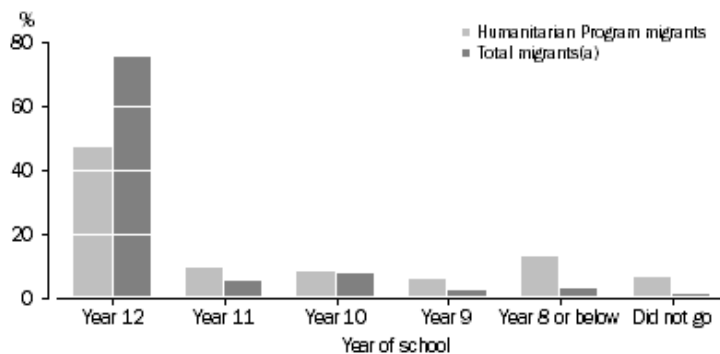
Table 3.23: Visa Type of Settler Arrivals, 2001-06 by Post-School Qualification in 2006: Proportion (Percent) of All Migrants Aged Over 15 Years
 Source: ABS/DIAC Data Linkage Project

	Family	Humanitarian	Skilled	Other	Total
Postgraduate degree	7.6	1.1	18.4	0.0	12.4
Bachelor degree	24.2	6.2	35.4	16.1	28.3
Advanced diploma / diploma / Grad Dip.	13.0	9.6	13.3	16.6	12.9
Certificate	11.4	12.4	9.8	12.6	10.7
No Qualification	43.9	70.7	23.0	54.7	35.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Further analysis of the linked data set by the ABS (2010, 11) showed that:

‘the proportion of Humanitarian Program migrants who had completed year 12 or equivalent (47 percent) was lower than the proportion in the general migrant population (75 percent) (Figure 3.7). There was a higher proportion of Humanitarian Program migrants (13 percent) with an educational level of year 8 or below when compared to the general population of all migrants (3 percent). The rate of persons who never attended school was higher for Humanitarian Program migrants (7 percent) than it was for the total migrant group (2 percent)’.

Figure 3.7: Highest Year of School Completed by Migrants, 15 Years and Over, 2006
 Source: ABS, 2010b, 11



(a) Total migrants includes Humanitarian Program migrants.

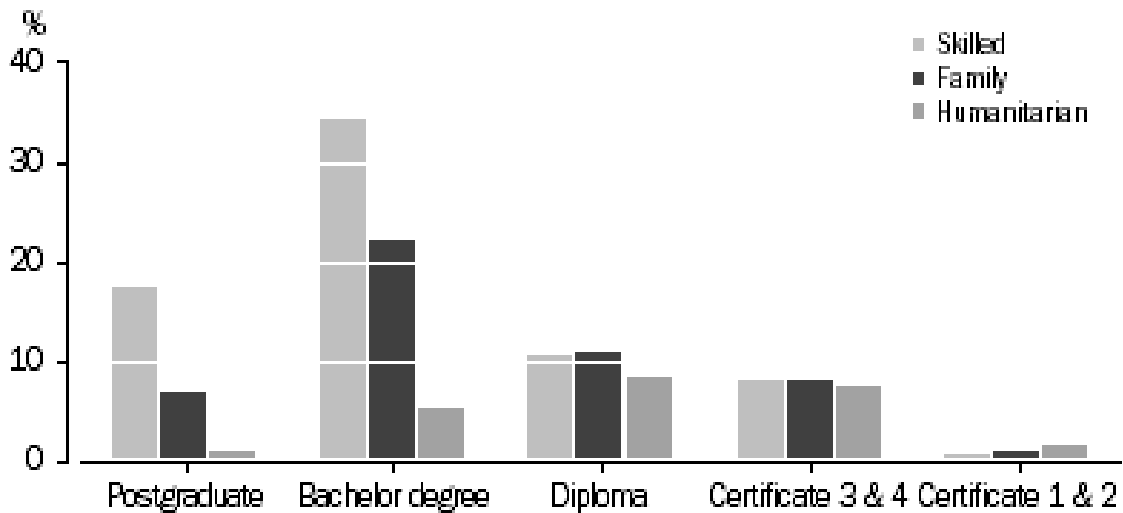
Source: Visa subclass (DIAC, SDB extract), Highest year of school completed (ABS, 2006 Census)

The ABS (2010b, 11) also found that:

‘In 2006, a higher proportion of skilled and family migrants had completed a postgraduate degree (18 percent and 7 percent respectively), when compared with their humanitarian counterparts (1 percent). This was also the case for those migrants who had completed bachelor degrees. A third of skilled migrants had completed a bachelor degree (34 percent), compared with 22 percent of family migrants and 5 percent of Humanitarian Program migrants’.

Figure 3.8: Non-School Qualifications of Migrants by Visa Type, 15 Years and Over, 2006

Source: ABS, 2010b, 11



Notes: Does not include graduate diploma/graduate certificate, certificate level not further defined level of education inadequately described or not applicable.

Source: Visa subclass (DMAC, SDB extract), Nonschool qualification: level of education (ABS, 2006 Census)

3.5.2 2006 Census Data on Educational Achievement of Humanitarian Settlers

Table 3.24 shows the labour force participation and unemployment rates for first and second generation humanitarian settlers according to their level of education and compares them to the situation for the Australia-born. For all three groups there are clearly higher levels of workforce engagement with higher levels of education and training. Nevertheless first generation humanitarian settlers have higher unemployment and lower labour force participation than the Australia-born regardless of their level of education. Turning to the experience of the second generation, their labour force participation rates are strongly related to education level and for all levels are above those for the Australia-born. It is interesting, however, that their unemployment levels are a little higher than those of the Australia-born. Again, as was the case when holding English proficiency constant, there is a pattern of higher labour force participation but also higher unemployment than for the Australia-born. This would strongly indicate the existence of other barriers to engagement in the workforce such as some form of discrimination, again pointing to the ‘refugee gap’ phenomenon.

Table 3.24: Australia: First and Second Generation Refugee-Humanitarian Birthplace Groups and Australia-Born Unemployment Rate and Labour Force Participation Rate by Level of Education, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Level of Education	Australia-Born		First Generation		Second Generation	
	Unemployment	Participation	Unemployment	Participation	Unemployment	Participation
	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate
Degree or Higher	1.8	85.3	5.7	80.9	2.3	89.6
Diploma/Certificate	3.6	79.1	7.9	68.9	4.8	84.8
No Qualification	7.0	58.6	14.0	44.7	9.6	61.2
Total	4.9	68.7	10.3	56.3	6.2	73.9

Table 3.25 depicts the proportion of the first and second generation humanitarian settlers aged 20 years and over who have no post-school education. Clearly, for most groups first generation humanitarian settlers have a higher proportion who do not have any post-school education than is the case for the Australia-born. This clearly is a barrier to engagement in the workforce. However, it is important to recognise that for almost all groups a significant

proportion of adults *do* have post-school qualifications and stereotyping refugee-humanitarian settlers as unskilled is totally inappropriate. It is especially interesting, however, in Table 3.25 that there is strong evidence of cross-generational upward mobility with respect to education. The proportion of persons with post-school education increases across the generations for two thirds of the groups. Moreover, while almost all of the first generation has a higher percentage with no qualifications than the Australia-born, the opposite is the case for the second generation. Indeed, although there is some variation between refugee-humanitarian groups, in-depth discussions with key informants show education is highly valued by some birthplace groups. This is reflected in the high incidence of post-school education in the second generation.

Table 3.25: First and Second Generation Refugee-Humanitarian Groups: Post-School Qualification, Age 20+ Population, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Country of Birth	First Generation		Second Generation	
	No Qualification	Post-School Qualification	No Qualification	Post-School Qualification
Australia	51.4	48.6	52.4	47.6
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Bulgaria	34.4	65.6*	43.6	56.4*
Croatia	61.8*	38.2	38.7	61.3*
Estonia	52.9*	47.1	35.1	64.9*
Hungary	43.2	56.8*	38.5	61.5*
Latvia	54.5*	45.5	34.8	65.2*
Lithuania	58.8*	41.2	37.0	63.0*
Romania	40.7	59.3*	39.4	60.6*
Russian Federation	29.3	70.7*	39.2	60.8*
Slovakia	26.6	73.4*	35.0	65.0*
Ukraine	44.9	55.1*	39.2	60.8*
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chile	45.2	54.8*	38.8	61.2*
Czech Republic	29.1	70.9*	33.9	66.1*
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	50.9	49.1*	43.1	56.9*
Cambodia	78.6*	21.4	61.1*	38.9
East Timor	76.1*	23.9	57.1*	42.9
El Salvador	47.8	52.2*	58.7*	41.3
Laos	70.0*	30.0	55.2*	44.8
Lebanon	74.4*	25.6	47.0	53.0*
Vietnam	69.6*	30.4	55.0*	45.0
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Afghanistan	70.9*	29.1	61.1*	38.9
Burma (Myanmar)	49.8	50.2*	42.6	57.4*
Burundi	77.8*	22.2	59.3*	40.7
Congo	40.8	59.2*	54.9*	45.1
Eritrea	60.2*	39.8	57.1*	42.9
Ethiopia	56.2*	43.8	67.7*	32.3
Iran	41.8	58.2*	47.5	52.5*
Iraq	67.5*	32.5	40.8	59.2*
Liberia	56.0*	44.0		
Sierra Leone	44.7	55.3*		
Somalia	66.7*	33.3	62.5*	37.5
Sri Lanka	36.1	63.9*	38.6	61.4*
Sudan	67.5*	32.5	45.1*	54.9*
Total Refugee-Humanitarian Groups	59.5*	40.5	41.1	58.9*

* Above Australian average

In Table 3.25 it will also be noted that there are a few groups in which there is a decline between the first and second generation in the proportion with post-school qualifications. These are generally two groups of countries. For some of the longer established groups the original refugee-humanitarian migrants were the intelligentsia who fled countries like Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Russian Federation, Slovakia and El Salvador. Hence they had disproportionately high levels of post-school education among the first generation. A second category includes recently arrived groups like those from the Congo, Ethiopia and Iran where there were very few second generation people of an age to have completed post-school education. The overwhelmingly strong pattern is of the second generation having significantly higher levels of education compared with the first generation.

Education clearly impacts upon unemployment among refugee-humanitarian groups. Figure 3.9 shows a clear pattern for the first and second generation as well as for the Australia-born, with unemployment decreasing with education. However, even when education is controlled there are still higher levels of unemployment among the refugee groups, especially the first generation, suggesting that other factors, including discrimination, are influential. Similar impacts of education are in evidence when we consider labour force participation in Figure 3.10.

Figure 3.9: Australia: Percent Unemployed by First, Second Generation and Australia-Born and Qualifications, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

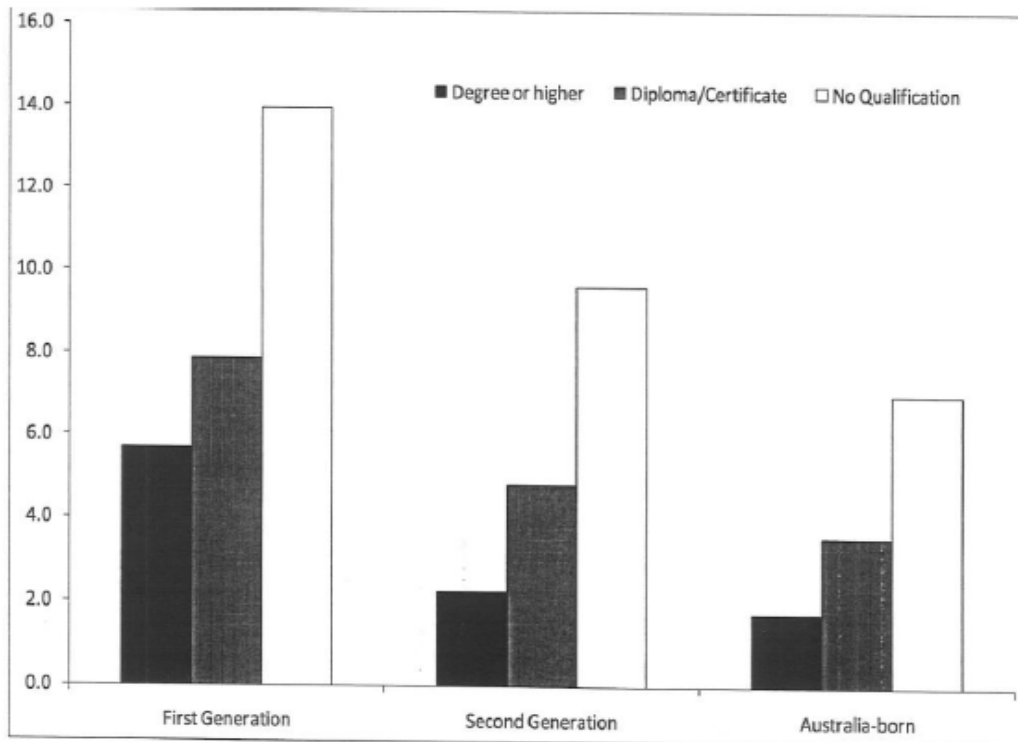
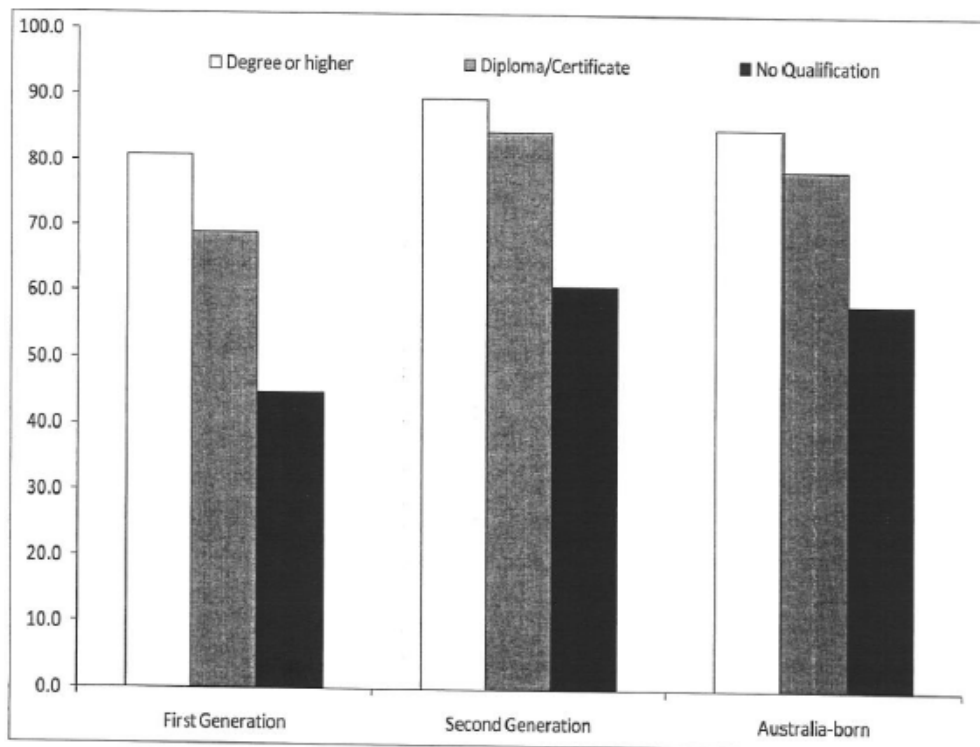


Figure 3.10: Australia: Participation Rate by First, Second Generation and Australia-Born and Qualifications, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census



3.5.3 Current Education Attendance

Given that first generation humanitarian settlers generally have lower levels of educational attainment than the Australia-born, it is interesting to examine the extent to which they are currently attending educational institutions. Table 3.26 shows the proportion of first and second generation humanitarian settlers who are currently aged 15-19 and 20-24 years who are still attending some form of educational institution. Some striking patterns are in evidence. For most first generation settler groups the proportions who are still attending an educational institution is greater than for the Australia-born. Only two groups in fact have lower percentages – those from Estonia and those from Lebanon. The numbers from Estonia are extremely small but those from Lebanon are quite large and the lower participation in education is a concern. Nevertheless, the overwhelmingly dominant pattern is for high participation in education at the young adult ages. Indeed, the averages for all of the refugee-humanitarian groups (77.6 percent for those 15-19 and 44.2 percent for those 20-24) are quite a bit higher than those for the Australia-born (70.1 and 28.5 percent). This points to the well documented pattern of many refugee-humanitarian groups placing considerable emphasis on their children's education. Most of the first generation people represented in Table 3.26 would have arrived in Australia as dependent age children. This has been noted, for example, for the large Vietnamese group and this is reflected in the high proportion aged 15-19 and 20-24 who are still attending some form of educational institution (77.2 and 41.2 percent).

There is then a strong pattern among refugee-humanitarian groups being heavily involved in post-school education which adds another dimension to the picture which is emerging of considerable upward cross-generational mobility. When refugee-humanitarian settlers are given the opportunity they participate in post-school education to a greater degree than the Australia-born.

Table 3.26: First and Second Generations Still Attending Education by Age, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Country of Birth	First Generation		Second Generation	
	15-19	20-24	15-19	20-24
Australia	70.1	28.5	71.0	28.6
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Bulgaria	90.9*	57.1*	72.7*	38.7*
Croatia	78.7*	38.6*	75.8*	31.6*
Estonia	68.0	24.0	81.4*	41.8*
Hungary	80.7*	41.0*	75.3*	34.2*
Latvia	95.7*	59.3*	82.1*	40.3*
Lithuania	72.7*	52.5*	78.9*	39.4*
Romania	74.8*	37.0*	75.5*	34.2*
Russian Federation	84.2*	54.0*	74.8*	39.1*
Slovakia	79.0*	54.5*	76.2*	42.4*
Ukraine	83.6*	50.7*	79.4*	39.2*
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chile	72.5*	39.5*	78.1*	36.1*
Czech Republic	82.5*	55.3*	77.6*	38.8*
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	81.6*	43.6*	72.7*	32.1*
Cambodia	75.4*	31.2*	75.1*	33.9*
East Timor	74.8*	25.4	75.6*	34.8*
El Salvador	70.6*	36.4*	81.6*	44.4*
Laos	75.9*	40.0*	81.5*	38.6*
Lebanon	64.9	26.1	73.6	27.6*
Vietnam	77.2*	41.2*	86.3*	48.2*
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Afghanistan	75.6*	42.4*	82.3*	60.5*
Burma (Myanmar)	82.8*	56.9*	68.0	32.7*
Burundi	87.2*	80.8*	67.6	30.8*
Congo	73.8*	44.2*	48.1	30.4*
Eritrea	79.8*	51.8*	91.7*	42.9*
Ethiopia	73.5*	48.0*	84.3*	50.0*
Iran	79.6*	58.1*	88.4*	54.5*
Iraq	73.8*	35.6*	74.2*	34.1*
Liberia	72.3*	52.4*		
Sierra Leone	73.0*	50.7*	60.0	
Somalia	75.6*	48.3*	89.5*	
Sri Lanka	89.5*	63.5*	86.5*	45.0*
Sudan	74.1*	58.3*	73.8*	64.7*
Total Refugee-Humanitarian Groups	77.6*	44.2*	78.2*	35.7*

* Above Australia-born average

3.6 OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY

3.6.1 Introduction

One of the ways in which the refugee-humanitarian groups are distinctive in their involvement in the labour market is in the specific sectors of the economy they are engaged in and the type of work that they do. A recent study of Refugees and Employment in Australia (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007, 12) involved substantial primary data collection among first generation settlers in three refugee-humanitarian groups – ex-Yugoslavs, people from Middle East backgrounds and Africans. Their key findings are of considerable relevance to the present discussion:

- High levels of unemployment in each group.
- Massive loss of occupational status among skilled refugees.
- Persistence of a segmented labour market with refugees disproportionately being allocated unattractive jobs.
- Loss of human capital benefits to Australia and a waste of skills in short supply.
- Refugees face structural disadvantage in the labour market.
- Discrimination on the basis of race, religion and ethnic origin plays a role in creating unsatisfactory employment outcomes.
- ‘Everyday’ street racism does not affect levels of life satisfaction among refugees as much as perceived racism in the labour market.

These case study findings make it important to examine where in the labour market refugee-humanitarian settlers are concentrated on a national scale.

3.6.2 Findings from the 2006 Population Census

It is apparent that recently arrived humanitarian settlers are concentrated in different types of occupations than other immigrants. Table 3.27 shows that at the 2006 census one third of recent humanitarian settlers who were employed worked as labourers – three times the rate for other recently arrived settlers. There is an overwhelming concentration in manual occupations and very low proportions who were managers and professionals (10.3 percent)

compared with all migrants (39.3 percent). This concentration in unskilled occupations is especially evident among recently arrived humanitarian migrants but is also apparent in longer standing groups.

Table 3.27: Visa Type of Settler Arrivals, 2001-06 by Occupation in 2006: Proportion (Percent) of All Migrants Aged Over 15 Years

Source: ABS/DIAC Data Linkage Project

	Family	Humanitarian	Skilled	Other	Total (a)
Clerical and Administrative Workers	14.2	4.1	12.9	0.0	13.0
Community and Personal Service Workers	11.0	13.5	7.6	0.0	9.1
Labourers	16.8	33.0	7.8	17.0	12.4
Machinery Operators and Drivers	6.1	13.7	3.1	16.3	4.8
Managers	9.9	3.7	11.2	11.3	10.4
Professionals	21.0	6.4	36.0	11.3	28.7
Sales Workers	8.0	6.8	8.0	12.8	8.0
Technicians and Trades Workers	13.0	18.9	13.5	31.2	13.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Total migrants does not include temporary migrants.

Table 3.28 shows the proportions of first and second generation humanitarian settlers who are employed that work in high status managerial and professional jobs and the proportion that work in lower status low skilled and unskilled jobs. An interesting pattern is in evidence. Only a small proportion of first generation humanitarian settlers have proportions of workers in higher status jobs higher than for the Australia-born. These are predominantly among the birthplace groups that have been in Australia a long time and many undoubtedly came to Australia as children and were educated in Australia. They include predominantly European groups (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Russian Federation, Slovakia and the Ukraine). It is well below the Australian average for the more recently arrived groups. The proportion of groups in the second generation in higher status occupations is greater but again it is mainly longstanding groups that are represented. There is a general pattern of an increase in the proportion in higher status occupations increasing across the generations.

Table 3.28: Australia: First and Second Generation Refugee-Humanitarian Groups – Percent of Labour Force in Professional and Unskilled Occupations, 2006
 Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Birthplace	Percent Professionals		Percent Unskilled	
	First Generation	Second Generation	First Generation	Second Generation
Australia	40.3	39.1	18.2	18.8
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Bulgaria	53.5*	47.5*	22.4*	21.2
Croatia	26.2	41.7*	25.4*	15.2
Estonia	49.6*	53.7*	18.0	12.0
Hungary	45.6*	54.9*	14.1	15.8
Latvia	52.0*	51.7*	15.0	13.6
Lithuania	47.6*	51.3*	16.9	13.9
Romania	40.1	46.2*	17.0*	18.1
Russian Federation	52.4*	49.2*	15.1	13.4
Slovakia	41.7*	46.0*	17.7	15.6
Ukraine	48.0*	45.9*	17.0	14.3
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chile	31.5	35.8	22.0*	-
Czech Republic	43.9*	52.3*	15.5	14.1
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	23.0	37.7	29.1*	18.6
Cambodia	25.2	23.8	35.8*	37.8*
East Timor	23.4	24.9	34.3*	-
El Salvador	27.4	22.8	29.3*	45.3*
Laos	24.7	25.3	31.0*	33.7*
Lebanon	32.7	39.4*	20.7*	19.5*
Vietnam	32.0	32.1	26.0*	31.8*
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Afghanistan	21.0	30.2	34.1*	34.1*
Burma (Myanmar)	37.1	40.5*	24.7*	20.3*
Burundi	37.5	29.7	34.1*	-
Congo	46.6*	35.4	25.8*	18.4
Eritrea	25.6	42.9*	30.9*	-
Ethiopia	24.9	20.0	30.7*	-
Iran	47.7*	35.9	15.0	33.8*
Iraq	26.7	42.7*	29.0*	18.7
Liberia	16.0	-	41.1*	-
Sierra Leone	21.6	-	32.3*	-
Somalia	20.2	10.7	22.6*	-
Sri Lanka	48.3*	54.9*	16.7	20.8*
Sudan	25.8	34.5	39.1*	34.4*
Kurdish Ancestry	41.8*	24.5	-	-
Tamil Ancestry	39.0	-	33.7*	-
Total Refugee-Humanitarian Groups	34.6	43.7*	23.7*	17.2

* Above Australia-born average.

Note: The number of second generation persons in recently arrived groups are very small so the rates should be interpreted with care.

Turning to the populations who work in lower status occupations, Table 3.28 shows that for almost all recently arrived refugee groups the proportions are higher than for the Australia-born while for many longstanding groups the percentages are smaller. There is some reduction among the second generation but for recently arrived groups the numbers of second generation workers are very small and their rates need to be interpreted with care. Again, however, there is some evidence of upward mobility across the generations although overrepresentation in lower skilled occupations is still in evidence.

The pattern of occupational structure then is of first generation refugee-humanitarian settlers being underrepresented in higher status managerial and professional occupations and overrepresented in low skilled occupations. This is especially true of more recently arrived groups, especially those from Sub-Saharan Africa. Because the second generation is very young it is difficult for several groups to have sufficient numbers in workforce ages to make a valid comparison between generations. Nevertheless, there appears to be an improvement in occupational status between the generations with generally higher proportions of second generation being in the higher status occupations.

3.6.3 Evidence of Occupational Skidding

A significant issue in examining the occupations of the refugee-humanitarian origin population is the extent to which their skills and training are fully utilised in the labour force. There has been evidence of ‘occupational skidding’ among some migrant groups whereby significant proportions are not able to obtain work commensurate with their qualifications. In order to investigate this issue here we have examined the extent to which refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups with ‘degree or higher’ occupations and who are working, are employed in professional or managerial, higher status occupations. Table 3.29 shows a clear pattern of the proportion of first generation humanitarian settlers with graduate qualifications who are in managerial or professional occupations – which was considerably lower than was the case for the Australia-born. This is particularly the case for recently arrived groups from

Table 3.29: Australia: First and Second Generation Refugee-Humanitarian Birthplace Groups Percent of Workers with Bachelor or Higher Qualifications in Managerial or Professional Occupations, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Birthplace	First Generation	Second Generation
Australia	85.9	86.2
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>		
Bulgaria	71.7	83.8
Croatia	77.1	83.1
Estonia	72.9	86.1
Hungary	81.0	84.5
Latvia	77.7	86.4*
Lithuania	68.9	87.5*
Romania	76.5	85.5
Russian Federation	73.1	85.6
Slovakia	66.5	81.3
Ukraine	68.2	84.1
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>		
Chile	76.6	75.0
Czech Republic	76.2	86.2
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	65.7	81.8
Cambodia	71.7	72.3
East Timor	72.9	61.0
El Salvador	66.3	100.0*
Laos	72.1	66.0
Lebanon	76.6	82.6
Vietnam	74.2	72.0
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>		
Afghanistan	52.8	71.6
Burma (Myanmar)	63.6	79.1
Burundi	77.7	-
Congo	77.6	-
Eritrea	61.8	-
Ethiopia	69.9	-
Iran	75.7	74.5
Iraq	62.6	78.7
Liberia	70.4	-
Sierra Leone	60.3	-
Somalia	46.6	-
Sri Lanka	77.9	82.7
Sudan	61.3	84.6
Total Refugee-Humanitarian Groups	73.6	83.4

* Above Australia-born average.

Africa, Afghanistan and Iraq. Table 3.29 also compares the first and second generations of refugee-humanitarian settlers in the proportion with degree or higher education qualifications who are in professional and managerial occupations. This shows a clear pattern of higher levels of qualified members of the second generation having jobs in higher status occupations. Indeed, on average the proportion is ten percent higher. The differences are especially high in the longest standing humanitarian birthplace groups from Europe.

The examination of occupations produces a number of conclusions. Firstly, it is apparent that a significant proportion of workers among humanitarian settlers have skills belying the stereotype of this group as being overwhelmingly a low skill population. However, it is apparent that these skills are not being fully utilised in the labour market with a significant mismatch between skills and occupation being apparent. There is evidence that this mismatch is significantly reduced in the second generation of settlers.

3.6.4 Industry

Turning to the types of industry that first and second generation humanitarian settlers are engaged in, Table 3.30 shows the percentage of workers who are employed in manufacturing and some striking patterns are in evidence. First of all it will be noted that almost all groups have significantly higher proportions of their workers employed in the manufacturing sector than is the case for the Australia-born. Indeed for some first generation groups (Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians and East Timorese) the proportion is three times or more that of the Australia-born (10.3 percent). It is also noticeable that recently arrived groups from African countries, Afghanistan and Iraq also have relatively high proportions of workers in manufacturing. Another noticeable trend in Table 3.30 is the contrast between the first and second generations. For almost all groups there is a substantial reduction in the proportion of

Table 3.30: Australia: First and Second Generation Refugee-Humanitarian Birthplace Groups Percent of Workers Employed in Manufacturing, 2006
 Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Birthplace	First Generation	Second Generation
Australia	10.3	10.2
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>		
Bulgaria	10.5*	9.2
Croatia	20.4*	10.9*
Estonia	10.8*	8.3
Hungary	14.4*	10.8*
Latvia	7.9	9.9
Lithuania	11.4*	9.5
Romania	20.9*	9.7
Russian Federation	9.1	9.6
Slovakia	13.9*	8.6
Ukraine	10.8*	11.2*
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>		
Chile	18.0*	8.7
Czech Republic	14.3*	9.2
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	18.1*	9.9
Cambodia	33.5*	11.5*
East Timor	32.8*	7.5
El Salvador	17.2*	7.8
Laos	36.9*	9.8
Lebanon	11.3*	7.4
Vietnam	30.5*	8.5
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>		
Afghanistan	18.1*	7.9
Burma (Myanmar)	18.3*	9.1
Burundi	17.9*	7.9
Congo	13.2*	11.6*
Eritrea	22.8*	-
Ethiopia	20.4*	18.8*
Iran	9.5	5.9
Iraq	17.6*	7.7
Liberia	22.9*	-
Sierra Leone	19.2*	-
Somalia	15.7*	12.0*
Sri Lanka	14.2*	8.1
Sudan	25.5*	20.5*

* Above Australia-born average.

workers employed in manufacturing. Indeed for most second generation groups the proportion working in manufacturing is less than that for the Australia-born.

In research into post-World War II migrants' labour market experience, a strong theme has been the clustering of migrants in lower end occupations. Indeed, some have argued that there has been a segmentation of the labour market along ethnic lines (Wooden, 1994b, 247). This effect has been diluted by the shift in immigration policy which has focused more on skill (Hugo, 1999). Nevertheless, it is apparent from the data presented here that first generation refugee-humanitarian settlers have concentrated in lower status occupations. Indeed it is refugee-humanitarian migrants who are the main migrant group that is contributing to meeting strategies in low skilled jobs in the Australian labour market. Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2006) have suggested that this concentration in low status occupations means that humanitarian settlers could be forming an emerging segmented second tier labour force in Australia.

3.7 INCOME

3.7.1 Introduction

The skill orientation of Australia's migration program since the mid 1990s has led to an increase in the average earnings of migrants. Wooden (1994b, 239) summarises the literature up to that time by indicating that overall immigrants had a slightly higher average income than the Australia-born. However, there were significant variations between individual birthplace groups although those from mainly English speaking countries had earnings above the Australia-born and those from other countries on average had lower incomes. Moreover, there are significant differences between different visa categories of settler arrivals. Collins (2010, 24) has found:

'The greatest disadvantaged group of immigrants is those who arrive under the humanitarian program as refugees. They experience the highest rates of unemployment and earn the lowest incomes. They are more likely to be in poverty than other immigrants'.

Table 3.31: Visa Type of Settler Arrivals, 2001-06 by Individual Income (Weekly) in 2006: Proportion (Percent) of All Migrants Aged Over 15 Years

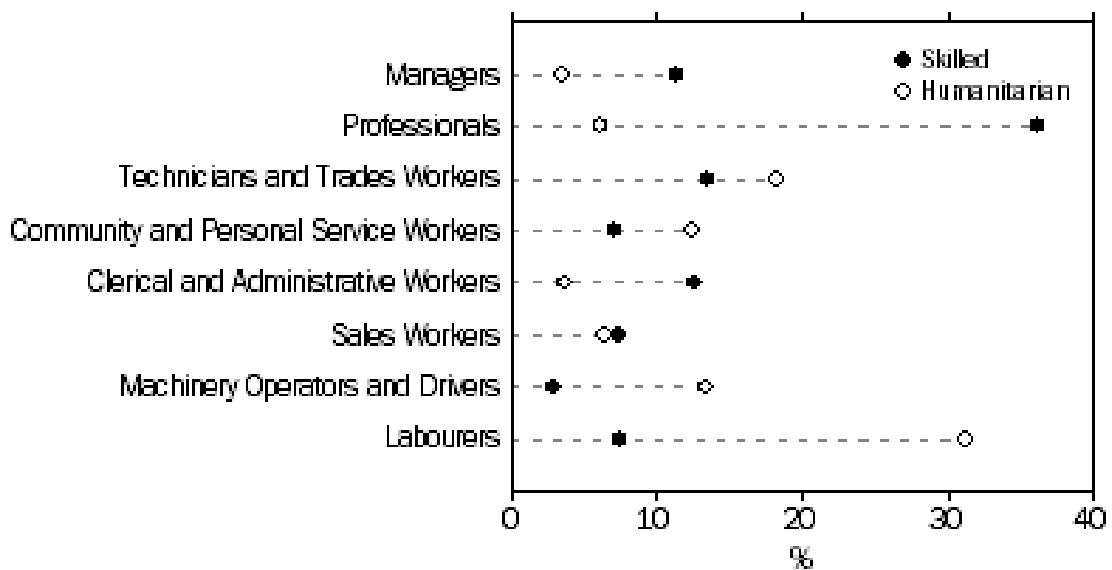
Source: ABS/DIAC Data Linkage Project

	Family	Humanitarian	Skilled	Other	Total
Negative or nil income	22.8	8.4	19.3	11.9	19.9
\$1 - \$149	9.6	16.5	7.8	11.0	9.2
\$150 - \$249	10.7	33.2	5.4	16.4	9.8
\$250 - \$399	9.5	12.9	7.4	14.2	8.8
\$400 - \$599	14.8	15.4	11.9	26.5	13.5
\$600 - \$799	11.4	7.0	12.7	11.9	11.7
\$800 - \$999	7.5	2.8	9.7	8.2	8.3
\$1,000 to \$1,299	6.3	2.1	10.3	0.0	7.9
\$1,300 or more	7.4	1.7	15.6	0.0	11.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

This is certainly the case for recently arrived settlers. Table 3.31 and Figure 3.11 show the individual incomes of different visa categories of recently arrived settlers at the 2006 census. It is notable that humanitarian settlers had the smallest percentage of all groups who had zero or negative incomes. This was partly because, unlike other visa categories of settlers, they have immediate access to unemployment benefits. However, it is noticeable in Table 3.31 that almost a half of humanitarian settlers were earning less than \$250 per week compared with 19 percent of all recent arrivals. Recent humanitarian settlers are strongly concentrated in the low income groups.

Figure 3.11: Occupation of Employed Migrants, 15 Years and Over, 2006

Source: ABS, 2010b, 13-14



Source: Visa subclass (DIAC, SDB extract), Occupation (ABS, 2006 Census)

The pattern of income for individual refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups is shown in Table 3.32. A strong pattern is in evidence. Almost all first generation refugee-humanitarian settler groups have higher proportions earning less than \$250 per week in 2006 than the Australia-born. Among recently arrived groups the proportions with low incomes were quite high – Burundi (61.9 percent), Somalia (49.5 percent), Sudan (47.7 percent), Iraq (48 percent), Afghanistan (43.3 percent) and Congo (39.2 percent). This contrasts with the fact that Burundi migrants had a high proportion with Bachelor or higher qualifications (Table 3.8). This reflects the fact that some recent arrivals have difficulty getting work commensurate with their qualifications.

Table 3.32: Australia: First and Second Generation Refugee-Humanitarian Birthplace Groups Gross Weekly Individual Income, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Birthplace	Percent Earning \$1-\$250		Percent Earning More Than \$1,000	
	First Generation	Second Generation	First Generation	Second Generation
Australia	22.1	22.9	20.1	19.3
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>				
Bulgaria	27.8*	15.4	20.8*	27.5*
Croatia	37.8*	16.3	12.0	26.6*
Estonia	36.2*	16.5	8.0	31.8*
Hungary	34.0*	18.2	14.5	26.5*
Latvia	37.3*	16.0	8.3	31.4*
Lithuania	38.2*	15.7	7.7	30.1*
Romania	27.6*	21.4	18.0	25.2*
Russian Federation	30.0*	18.0	16.3	27.3*
Slovakia	21.5	18.0	18.1	26.4*
Ukraine	39.6*	16.6	11.2	28.3*
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>				
Chile	24.2*	24.7*	18.9	12.2
Czech Republic	24.9*	17.1	16.6	29.4*
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	37.6*	21.2	10.2	16.9
Cambodia	32.2*	39.0*	8.2	2.7
East Timor	28.8*	24.7*	10.0	7.0
El Salvador	25.7*	36.7*	9.5	3.3
Laos	26.2*	31.0*	11.5	4.5
Lebanon	39.3*	25.0*	8.9	16.2
Vietnam	32.1*	38.5*	11.7	5.0
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>				
Afghanistan	43.3*	36.5*	4.5	8.7
Burma (Myanmar)	26.0*	19.4	14.6	22.1*
Burundi	61.9*	19.5	2.0	16.8
Congo	39.2*	23.1*	12.0	13.9
Eritrea	35.2*	44.0*	7.1	7.0
Ethiopia	31.8*	23.9*	8.2	4.5
Iran	30.6*	32.9*	16.6	9.4
Iraq	48.0*	28.1*	5.9	16.4
Liberia	35.8*	-	4.4	-
Sierra Leone	25.4*	-	7.3	-
Somalia	49.5*	37.5*	3.3	-
Sri Lanka	18.8	21.3	22.3*	20.7*
Sudan	47.7*	29.2*	5.0	16.1
Kurdish Ancestry	30.3*	-	12.0	-
Tamil Ancestry	20.8	-	9.4	-

* Above Australia-born average.

Table 3.32 also shows the proportions of the second generation in the low income category and it is noticeable that only half of the groups have a proportion above the Australia-born average. It is noticeable that those for which the proportion is lower are mainly long

established European groups but it must be remembered that the numbers of second generation are very small among recently arrived groups. It is interesting in Table 3.32, however, that the two largest refugee-humanitarian groups – the Vietnamese and Lebanese – not only had high proportions who had a low income among the first generation but also among their second generation.

The table also indicates the proportion of the humanitarian birthplace groups having a higher income (more than \$1,000 per week). Again, a striking pattern is apparent with only two first generation groups having a higher percentage than the Australia-born having such an income. It is noticeable, however, that a larger number of second generation humanitarian settlers had higher incomes compared with the Australia-born. It is noticeable again that the longstanding European humanitarian settlers are prominent among those second generation groups that have a high proportion earning a high income.

3.8 HOUSING

Another strong indicator of the extent of incorporation as well as of the economic situation of migrants is the extent to which they have been able to enter the housing market (Hassell and Hugo, 1996).

Table 3.33 indicates that at the 2006 census the proportion of humanitarian settlers who had arrived since 2001 and were able to begin to purchase their home was significantly lower than for other visa categories. Some 70 percent of humanitarian settlers were still renting.

Turning to individual birthplace groups, Table 3.34 shows the proportion of first and second generation humanitarian settlers who either own or are purchasing their own home. These data have to be interpreted with some care because the Australia-born population are considerably older than the refugee-humanitarian population and hence are more likely to own their own home because home ownership generally is greatest in older age groups. Nevertheless it is apparent that most refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups' first generation have lower proportions who own, or are purchasing, their home than the Australia-born. It is noticeable that those with above average levels of home ownership are the longer standing groups. It is interesting that high rates were recorded by the Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians who had low incomes, reproducing a pattern of earlier generations of low skilled

migrants who placed a high priority on property purchase. Understandably there are quite low rates of home ownership among recently arrived humanitarian groups.

Table 3.33: Visa Type of Settler Arrivals, 2001-06 by Tenure of House in 2006: Proportion (Percent) of All Migrants Aged Over 15 Years

Source: ABS/DIAC Data Linkage Project

	Family	Humanitarian	Skilled	Other	Total
Fully owned	13.1	2.5	8.9	15.7	10.1
Being purchased	38.4	17.7	35.3	51.4	35.1
Being purchased under a rent/buy sch	0.5	0.9	0.4	0.0	0.5
Rented	42.5	70.0	51.0	25.4	49.1
Being occupied rent-free	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.0	0.9
Being occupied under a life tenure sch	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Not applicable /not stated/'other tenure type'	4.2	8.1	3.7	6.1	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

As was the case with income, there is clear evidence of intergenerational mobility with more second generation groups having home ownership rates above the Australian average. The problem of the age structures of this group being younger than the Australia-born is an issue but there are some clear patterns with several groups having higher proportions owning their own home than the Australian second generation. Moreover, for many groups the proportions owning their own home are significantly higher than for the first generation.

Table 3.34: Australia: Percentage of First and Second Generation Refugee-Humanitarian Birthplace Groups Who Own Or Are Purchasing Their Own Home, 2006

Source: ABS, 2006 Census

Birthplace	First Generation	Second Generation
Australia	73.1	73.6
<i>Groups Arriving 1946-60</i>		
Bulgaria	65.3	77.1*
Croatia	85.2*	80.4*
Estonia	80.3*	74.1*
Hungary	76.9*	71.3
Latvia	83.4*	73.5
Romania	67.7	72.1
Lithuania	83.6*	71.0
Russian Federation	60.3	72.4
Slovakia	60.5	77.9*
Ukraine	70.0	77.8*
<i>Groups Arriving 1960s and 1970s</i>		
Chile	62.0	65.2
Czechoslovakia	71.3	73.5
<i>Groups Arriving 1980s and 1990s</i>		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	71.5	74.3*
Cambodia	78.5*	75.8*
East Timor	70.8	65.9
El Salvador	50.7	56.4
Laos	76.0*	75.2*
Lebanon	70.4	74.2*
Vietnam	78.5*	79.0*
<i>Recent Arrivals</i>		
Afghanistan	31.7	54.7
Burma (Myanmar)	67.2	71.8
Burundi	4.9	53.1
Congo	24.0	58.6
Eritrea	29.9	48.1
Ethiopia	40.0	52.6
Iran	54.2	71.8
Iraq	44.2	56.0
Liberia	6.5	-
Sierra Leone	11.1	31.0
Somalia	9.2	16.2
Sri Lanka	70.4	78.9*
Sudan	13.8	23.8
Kurdish Ancestry	56.7	-

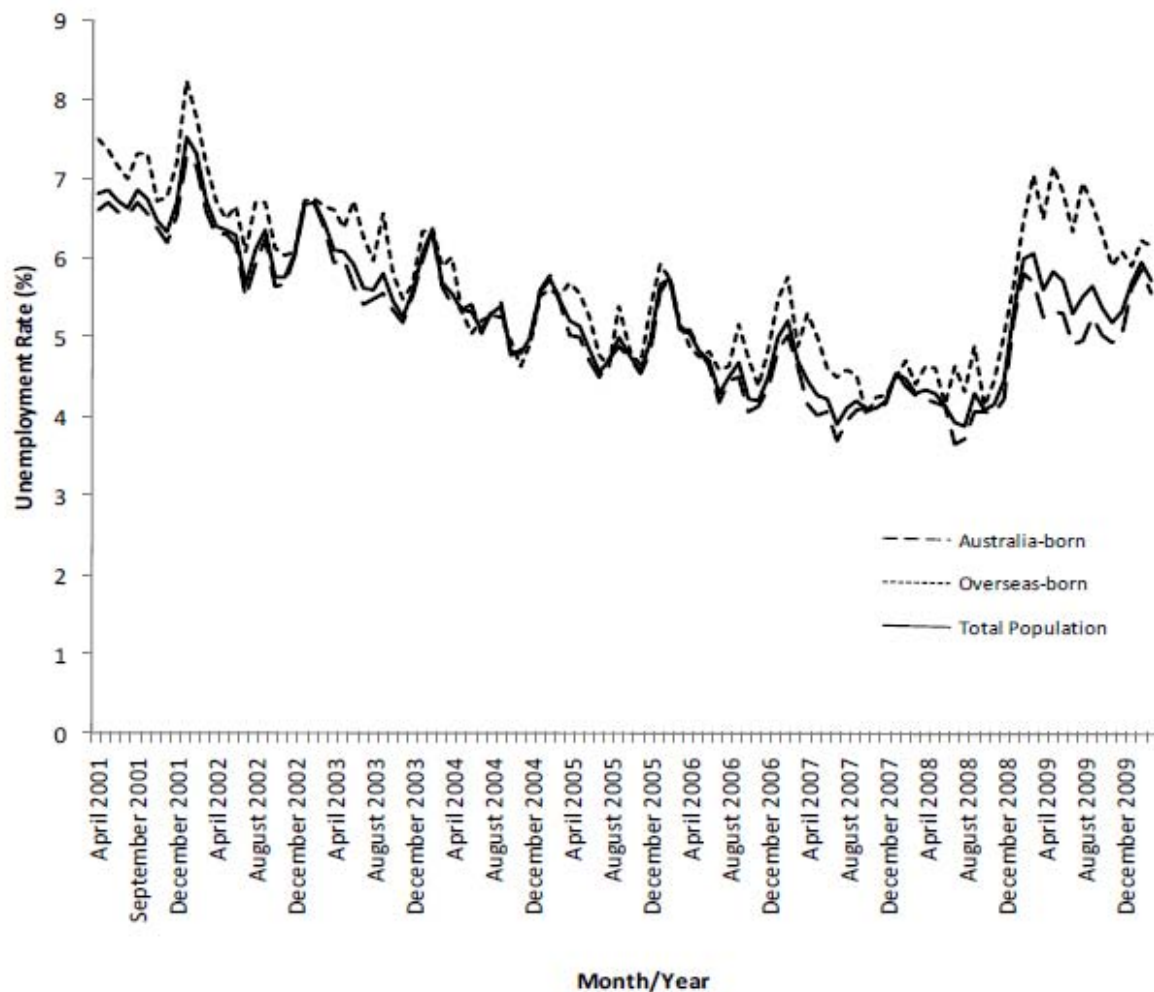
* Above Australia-born average.

3.9 THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS (GFC)

The Global Financial Crisis (GFC) has been the deepest global economic downturn since the 1930s Great Depression. It is inevitable that this has impacted considerably on international migration and migrants (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2009). In assessing its effects on migration, Fix *et al.* (2009, 1) make three basic propositions, the third of which is of relevance to the present study. This was that ‘the recession has hit migrants and their financial wellbeing particularly hard’. While it is true that the impact of the GFC has been somewhat less in Australia than in other OECD nations (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, and DIAC, 2009, 16) it is important to briefly consider the economic impact of the GFC on humanitarian settlers in Australia.

Figure 3.12: Australia: Unemployment Rate of the Population by Birthplace, April 2001 to March 2010

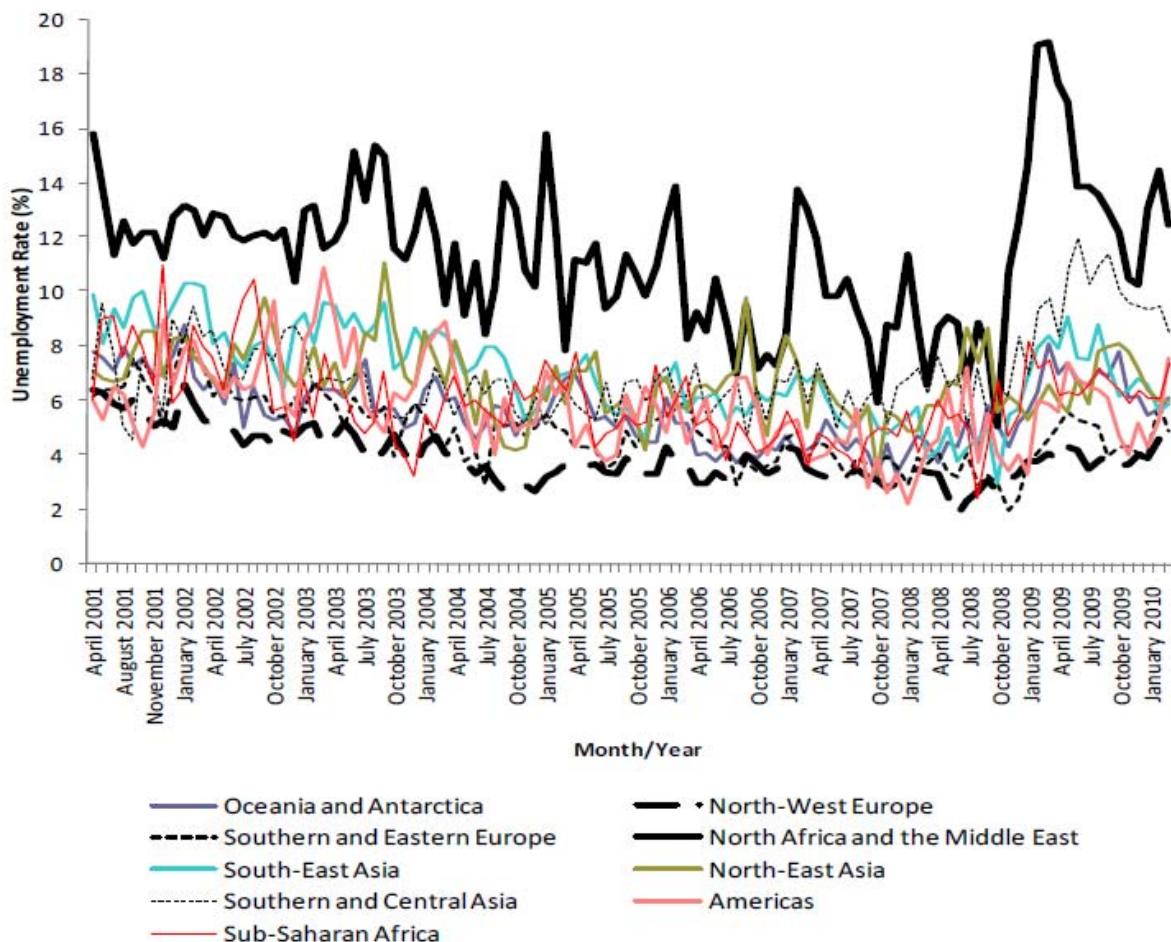
Source: ABS Australian Labour Force Surveys



Hugo (2010b) has shown that while the effects of the GFC in Australia have been less than in other OECD countries, there have been some significant impacts on the scale and composition of migration to and from Australia. However the focus here is on the effects on migrants settled in Australia. Figure 3.12 shows that there was an upturn in unemployment of both the Australia- and overseas-born. While there is a long history of migrants having a higher level of unemployment than the Australia-born (Wooden, 1994b, 222) it is evident from Figure 3.12 that the difference widened during the GFC.

Figure 3.13: Australia: Unemployment Rate of the Overseas-Born by Region of Birth, April 2001 to March 2010

Source: ABS Australian Labour Force Surveys



The data from Figure 3.12 were drawn from the ABS monthly labour force survey. While these data do not indicate under which visa category migrants settled in Australia, it does have some data on countries of origin. Figure 3.13 shows the breakdown of unemployment

rates according to the region of birth and it is striking that the upturn in unemployment with the GFC has been greatest for those migrants from North Africa and the Middle East, the bulk of whom are from refugee-humanitarian backgrounds. It is apparent that while the impact of the GFC in Australia has been less than in other OECD countries, the effects have been greater among migrants than the Australia-born. Among migrants it has been people from non-English speaking and refugee backgrounds who have been especially vulnerable, and females more so than males (Hugo, 2010b).

3.10 DISCUSSION OF HUMANITARIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

In this section the results of secondary data analysis are combined with information derived from key informant interviews to assess the participation of humanitarian settlers in the Australian labour market. Engaging with the labour market is pivotal to successful settlement and one of the most visible and important contributions that refugees and humanitarian entrants make in Australia. While refugees pursue employment as a means of acquiring economic security for their own families, they also actively view this as a way of giving back and contributing to the community and new country that has provided them with another chance. Safe and satisfying employment is also a pathway to community participation and new arrivals' learning about the country and the culture they have settled in. Being so wide, the humanitarian program captures migrants with a wide range of skills and qualifications, many of whom have experienced post-secondary education prior to migration. However most refugees and humanitarian migrants need extensive support to enter the workforce in Australia, and more specifically to access jobs that recognise their skills and education.

New migrants and refugees who have been in the country for less than five years are often at a disadvantage when it comes to finding work. Key informants from the employment and refugee sectors highlighted however that refugees and humanitarian entrants face unemployment at greater levels than their counterparts coming in through other migration streams. When they do gain employment, it is often more precarious and less upwardly mobile. For those who engage in vocational training, it is often at low levels with limited progression to employment. Because of these factors some refugees may never have the opportunity to maximise their social and economic participation as citizens.

Barraket (2007) maintains that despite a historically tight labour market in Australia, some groups of new migrants and most refugees are disproportionately at risk of full labour market exclusion, or exclusionary transitions into the labour force. Forty three percent of working age refugees remain unemployed 18 months after arrival in Australia (DIAC, 2006).

The impacts of unemployment and underemployment spill into other spheres. For example, different cultural expectations about the role of work and its place in the family have important implications in terms of undermining family dynamics and power structures. One key informant noted that amongst many of her clients from specific African communities, the male has traditionally played the head of household and men's worth has been judged on their ability to support their family. Unemployment and under-employment generates different and often adverse family dynamics and conflict. When the breadwinner role is lost, this creates a social imbalance within the household and can often generate conflict.

While unemployment remains high for many people coming through the humanitarian channel, contribution to the labour market in this early phase must be acknowledged given that many refugees and humanitarian entrants are allocated 'unattractive jobs' or low skilled employment, despite high levels of skills and education (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007). As observed by DIAC (2006) where new arrivals entering Australia on humanitarian grounds or through family sponsorship do gain access to employment, the positions they hold in Australia tend to be less skilled than those they held in their countries of origin (DIAC, 2006). Refugees and humanitarian entrants are often 'funnelled' into low paying and casualised sectors of the labour market.

To some degree the barriers to employment for refugees and humanitarian migrants are similar to those facing migrants within other categories. Dr Farida Tilbury from Murdoch University, a specialist in refugee integration into the labour force, noted for example that like migrants who have come in under the skilled or family streams, refugees who have arrived in Australia with skills and post-school qualifications must seek *skills recognition* (discussed in more detail below) in order to work. All migrants therefore face the same licensing and skills upgrading issues in pursuing their occupation.

At the same time there are a series of inter-related barriers to employment that are unique to refugees and humanitarian entrants. Key barriers identified by key informants to refugees'

employment are identified in Table 3.35. These barriers are located in refugees' pre- and post-migration experiences.

Refugees' country of origin and *pre-settlement experiences* play a key role in influencing the likelihood of employment outcomes in Australia. More recent waves of humanitarian migrants have fewer life skills, little health awareness, basic budgeting or marketing skills and find it extremely difficult to go on with day-to-day living. Many individuals from African communities have been de-skilled through the process of being a refugee. Extensive periods in camps and violent or unstable situations have limited or prevented individuals' schooling, further education and employment experiences, resulting in a lack of confidence and more generally a lack of preparedness to enter the labour market. While these factors make accessing employment in the first instance extremely difficult, they also contribute to problems with regards to retaining employment.

Table 3.35: Barriers to Employment for Refugees as Identified by Key Informants

Pre-Migration	Australia
Exposure to violence, instability and persecution	Mental health issues due to pre- and post-migration experiences Physical disability/health problems
Lack of /limited education Disrupted education due to long periods in camps/exposure to violence and instability	Illiteracy/low levels of literacy Low English proficiency/ communication and language barriers Limited qualifications/skills (particularly amongst older age groups)
Lack of knowledge about the Australian labour market	Lack of opportunities/finances to have skills recognised Lack of knowledge/awareness about skills recognition processes Lack of driver's licence/difficulty accessing transport
No opportunity to scope/research the Australian labour market	Lack of established networks Limited capacity/capability of job network providers Lack of work experience in Australia Experiences of racism and discrimination
Lack of documentation prior to migration	Lack of/limited knowledge about Australian workplace culture Lack of documentation on arrival
Misinformation about employment opportunities	Difficulty accessing/sustaining employment and training opportunities Unrealistic expectations around employment opportunities

Unlike business and family migrants, refugees' pre-migration experience prevents them from doing research into Australia's labour market before they arrive. Many refugees have lived in camps for prolonged periods, while others have had little or limited time to plan their journey. Consequently they are at a disadvantage from other migrants because they have not had the resources or *opportunity to scope the labour market* or prepare for transitioning into it.

On arrival in Australia, the reality for many humanitarian entrants is a scenario where they must deal with finding employment at the same time that they are securing long-term accommodation, gaining their driver's licence, finding adequate and affordable childcare and pursuing education – all factors that contribute to refugees finding satisfying and sustainable employment in the first instance.

Finding the first job is critical to accessing the labour market and it is often the first job that is most difficult to find because refugees have *little or no local work experience* prior to arriving and in Australia. Without work experience and a lack of local references, refugees have a limited understanding of Australian workplace culture and find it difficult to access the employment market in the first place.

Work experience is the main need identified by refugees according to key informants specialising in the refugee employment sector. Employers do not want to take on the perceived risks associated with employing refugees and humanitarian arrivals who have not had work experience in Australia. Unpaid work experience attracts occupational health and safety costs. A key consequence of the factors cited above is that humanitarian entrants engage with low skilled and low paying jobs that usually involve hard labour and long hours in the first instance. Thereafter accessing satisfying and suitable employment and career progression is difficult due to a range of factors discussed below.

Employer discrimination was cited as a key obstacle to accessing employment in the first instance. Employers are often unaware of (a) the distinction between refugees and other migrant streams and related to this, the specific needs that the former may require with regards to maintaining employment and (b) the skills and knowledge refugees may have acquired outside Australia. For some employers, there is a common perception that refugees lack awareness about workplace culture and practices and are therefore more difficult to employ. Mature age refugees face a double disadvantage. Key informants working in the refugee sector and specialising in employment pointed out that there needs to be more emphasis on educating employers rather than skilling migrants in many cases. Australian employers need awareness-raising that migrants and refugees bring in skills, but also that they bring in a diverse and valuable range of skills that can generate innovative practices and knowledge within the workplace.

Under the Howard Government, the Joint Standing Committee on Migration (2006) emphasised that humanitarian entrants may face some *skills recognition difficulties* not faced by entrants under other migration schemes due to a range of complex personal circumstances. For example, humanitarian entrants are more likely to arrive without documentary evidence of their qualifications. While refugees' qualifications may be recorded in the humanitarian interview, this data can get lost in the system and currently there is no way of documenting refugees' skills and qualifications once they arrive in Australia. Key informants from Migrant Resource Centres and settlement agencies similarly observed that clients identified the skills recognition process in Australia to be too time consuming and complex to navigate, therefore cementing their decision not to engage with this pathway. Most significantly they noted that more so than other migrants, refugees and humanitarian migrants often do not have the financial resources to have their qualifications/skills recognised.

In 2006, the Joint Standing Committee on Migration released its *Negotiating the Maze* report which examined the structural barriers that hamper the efficient recognition of skills of those trained overseas. With regards to refugees the Committee was advised that 'the cost of getting qualifications recognised is a significant impost for all of these groups but for refugee and humanitarian entrants, these costs can constitute a major barrier'. In addition, they were informed that:

'Recognition of qualifications is only the first step for many migrants and refugees with trades' qualifications. The next step for many trades is to satisfy the appropriate licensing and registration to practice their trade in Australia. Meeting licensing and registration requirement also incurs significant costs. For example, the cost of recognition of qualifications and meeting licensing and registration requirements for electricians is over \$1000' (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2006, 259).

Even if they did have access to financial resources, many key informants noted that the *system and procedures for skills recognition is particularly complex and difficult to negotiate*. Consequently many humanitarian entrants who enter Australia with skills or high levels of education take a step back within their careers or find work that is very different to what they have been trained in within their country of origin.

Compounding this trend are two other major barriers to refugees finding safe, secure and satisfying employment. First and most critical, according to key observers from various sectors, is the *problematic structure of employment assistance*:

- Community representatives for example noted that most mainstream Job Network Providers dealing with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities and refugees in particular, are often not trained in cultural sensitivity and had little or no understanding of the unique barriers faced by humanitarian entrants. For example, several key informants mentioned that many newly arrived refugees currently find themselves working in abattoirs – a highly unpopular work location for locals due to poor working conditions and low pay. While this work may be a useful starting point for refugees, informants noted that there have been situations where the abattoir environment has generated the resurfacing of trauma amongst some individuals relating back to violent and bloody situations they may have experienced prior to arriving in Australia. It is pivotal that employment agencies are sensitive to the specific needs and circumstances that many of these migrants have experienced. Key informants pointed out that many had little motivation to acquire this knowledge.
- This is largely because Job Network Providers are given financial incentives to place people into jobs. The key objective is access into employment. Consequently providers are often uninterested in the suitability of employment for their clients and accordingly job seekers from a refugee background are less likely to sustain employment. Key informants also noted that Job Network Australia is also not focused on training, re-training or up-skilling refugees in a sustained manner.
- These problems associated with the current Job Network Provider scheme have been identified as long standing. In its submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration (2006: 261-262), the Refugee Council of Australia noted that:

‘Job Network providers ... are not financially remunerated for placing long term job seekers in skill recognition procedures, as a client needs to be placed in employment before this remuneration is received from [Department of Employment and Workplace Relations] DEWR. This leads to Job Network Providers being encouraged to place difficult job seekers in employment that is not necessarily commensurate with their

skills and qualifications as the process of assisting them with skills recognition is not financially lucrative.’

- For all of these reasons, settlement agencies and community representatives reported extensive dissatisfaction amongst refugees with Job Network Providers.
- The current structure of Centrelink assistance was also identified as a factor discouraging individuals from finding formal employment. Through misinformation and lack of awareness, key informants noted that many of their clients feared that loss of welfare benefits would actually reduce the household income and accordingly would seek out cash for work employment or fear gaining employment altogether. This fear of losing Centrelink assistance is compounded because much of the work available for newly arrived refugees is often casualised and therefore often short term and insecure. It also limits Australia’s ability to harness refugees’ skills and labour within the formal economic sphere.

Job Network Providers who were interviewed provided an interesting alternative perspective to these views. Several observed that in many instances, refugees’ high and often unrealistic expectations, particularly amongst younger age groups, about job opportunities and the pace of professional mobility was problematic in terms of their ability to sustain employment. Some called for a need to engage in career counselling and education around career pathways but qualified, however, that any forms of education and counselling must acknowledge the tension between career expectations, heavy family pressures and expectations within the context of employment.

Secondly, many refugees have *little or no access to social or family networks*, resulting in limited support and assistance, compared to other migrants. Existing community networks play a critical role in facilitating first jobs. Several key informants observed that refugee communities are often concentrated in specific sectors. In New South Wales for example, some African communities are increasingly engaged in the security industry; Iraqis and Afghans are more likely to move into trade; and Nepalese and Burmese move into taxi driving. In most scenarios once a refugee/humanitarian entrant is accepted for work within factories etcetera, if they prove themselves within the first few weeks as reliable and hard working, this is an opening for others within the community to access employment at that

site. Networking through word of mouth within the refugee community is a key source of employment opportunities but is also welcomed by employers keen to meet labour shortages.

At the same time, Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2006) have identified that lack of mainstream networks and the influence of 'ethnic path integration', or reliance on bonding networks within ethnic communities, can contribute to directing new arrivals into undesirable employment within *secondary labour-market niches*. Many of these jobs are characterised by unhealthy work environments, including long hours, relatively high occupational health and safety risks, and limited job security.

The transition from education to employment for refugees was described as problematic for similar reasons to those underpinning high unemployment and underemployment. TAFE courses such as aged care, child care and community development are popular amongst newly arrived communities but employment prospects remain limited due to a number of factors including employers' misperceptions/discrimination about selecting refugees, lack of work experience and refugees' lack of awareness about workplace culture and practices. Career pathways need to be goal-oriented and individually-tailored in order to maximise employment outcomes.

The post-schools pathway is also problematic. Research by Joyce *et al.* (2009) illustrates that the vast majority of refugees arriving in Australia are between the ages of 16 and 35 years, and some refugee youth are embarking on university education. They argue that most refugee youth have experienced a range of traumatic experiences that compound the difficulties in adjusting to a new country. Many of these youth have experienced disrupted schooling in the past and have to take on household duties that make secondary education difficult in their resettled countries. In addition as noted by several key informants, young people from a refugee background feel a strong need to financially support their families. Consequently many feel the need to enter the workforce immediately rather than go onto the post-school education.

Aggravating this problem, key informants from several states noted that children who have been in Australia for short or even more significant periods have little understanding of the post-school pathways that are available to them and the importance of post-school education for employment opportunities. Secondary schools have a responsibility to develop clear and effective post-school pathways but are often not resourced enough to implement this.

Schools should have in place careers and transitions programs that provide every young person with careers advice to support them to make informed and effective course and career decisions. This will mean that students can have every opportunity to succeed, and lead fulfilling and productive lives. Tailored assistance to young adults is dispersed within schools amongst career counsellors, teachers and specialised English as a Second Language (ESL) staff and extra funding is based on the size of the CALD population within the school. Consequently schools with small but significant numbers of refugees often miss out on extra funding and any specialised assistance depends on the goodwill and ability of individual school staff.

It is clear then that new humanitarian arrivals in Australia face considerable challenges in gaining access to the labour market, even at times of prosperity and low unemployment. The barriers that all migrants face are exacerbated by the background of refugees. Hence this chapter has shown that humanitarian settlers in the early stages of settlement had significantly higher unemployment, lower labour force participation, lower incomes and concentration in lower status occupations than either the Australia-born or the other types of migrant settlers. What is also shown here, however, is that there is a clear pattern of upward mobility over the lifecycle of humanitarian settlers. This was also evidenced in the discussion with key informants. Over time there is a pattern of convergence toward the Australia-born population and for many humanitarian groups their second generation outperform the Australia-born in the labour market.

A common theme among key informants from both government and non-government sectors was the notion of 'sacrifice'. This referred to the process where new humanitarian migrants would work hard in menial and low skilled jobs in order to ensure their children received tertiary education. It is often through second generation refugees and humanitarian entrants that the extent of economic contribution becomes most marked. Due to the hard work and determination of their parents, the second generation experience higher levels of post-school education and experience greater success in the labour force. Having been socialised in the Australian context, and where provided opportunities, this generation also engages more with the mainstream community, so enabling a higher degree of social and civic contribution.

The process of upward mobility in the labour market is by no means a universal one among humanitarian settlers. This is apparent among studies of Vietnamese settlers in the 1980s and 1990s (Lewins and Ly, 1985; Tran and Holton, 1991). For many humanitarian settlers initial

penetration of the labour market involves downward mobility or deskilling in relation to their skills and post-work experience. There have, however, been many who have been able to achieve upward mobility. In the early years of Vietnamese settlement, Tran and Holton (1991, 172) found:

‘For every successful Vietnamese professional and business person, there are at least a dozen others who are employed as factory workers, labourers and domestic outworkers or who remain unemployed. The limited success achieved by the Vietnamese in a comparatively short space of time has been the result of much hard working, adaptability and flexibility in seeking out and working within available niches in the labour market’.

Two decades on it has been shown in this chapter that the Vietnamese labour market situation has improved. Yet levels of unemployment remain above the national average and a disproportionately high number of workers are in unskilled occupations. This points to the complexity of refugee (and all migrant) settlement. There is evidence too, though, of significant numbers in some groups (especially the Vietnamese and Lebanese) who have experienced little upward mobility. However, the overwhelming evidence presented here is of substantial upward mobility. Tran and Holton (1991) found that in a sample of Vietnamese refugees who had been in Australia only a few years, a fifth had already experienced upward mobility. For almost all refugee-humanitarian birthplace groups there are improved labour market outcomes with time in Australia and especially across generations.

3.11 CONCLUSION

One of the consistent themes in Australian research on adjustment of migrants to the labour market is that, even after key factors such as ability to speak English and level of education are controlled, migrants often have lower levels of labour market achievement than the Australia-born. It is apparent that there are lingering discrimination and institutional barriers to participation in the labour market. This chapter has shown that this is certainly the case for refugee-humanitarian settlers.

The labour market experience of migrants is a key element in assessing their contribution to Australia, especially the economic contribution. It is apparent from the analysis that a quite negative picture of humanitarian settler labour force engagement is obtained if one examines only the initial years of settlement. However, if a longer term perspective is applied it is apparent that humanitarian settlers converge toward the total population in their involvement in the labour force. Moreover, there is also strong evidence of upward mobility between generations in terms of labour participation.

While this chapter has presented evidence that refugee-humanitarian settlers' labour market experience converges toward that of the Australia-born over time, it has also been demonstrated conclusively that refugee-humanitarian settlers in Australia have experienced greater difficulty than other migrant groups in adjusting economically, socially and culturally. This applies not only in Australia but in other countries with substantial immigrant intakes that include refugees, especially in the United States, Canada and European countries. A ubiquitous phenomenon which has been identified in these countries is the '*Refugee Gap*' (Connor, 2010, 377). Refugee-humanitarian settlers in all these countries on average have less English language ability, less educational experience, different and less access to family support, and poorer mental and physical health, with a high proportion living in disadvantaged areas. However, one of the most perplexing issues relates to the fact that once key determinants of disadvantage for all immigrants, such as English language ability, education, work experience etcetera, are controlled for, refugee-humanitarian settlers still have lower occupational, employment and earnings as well as other outcomes than other migrant and non-migrant groups. A gap remains. An understanding of this is a major gap in our knowledge of migrant adjustment, not only in Australia but elsewhere as well. This is of importance not only to maximise the economic benefits which humanitarian settlers deliver to the country but also to give those settlers the same opportunities that other Australians enjoy. The international literature makes clear that refugee-humanitarian settlers face larger obstacles to their economic integration than other immigrant groups (Connor, 2010; Kibria, 1994; Portes and Stepick, 1985; Takeda, 2000; Waxman, 2001; Potocky-Tripodi, 2001, 2003, 2004). Richmond (1988) points out that refugees are conceptually different from other migrants and that they need to be considered differently when examining their economic adaptation. When it comes to analysing the economic adaptation of refugees, we need to treat them differently from skilled entrants, on a conceptual basis. Family stream entrants may also display different economic involvement indicators.