

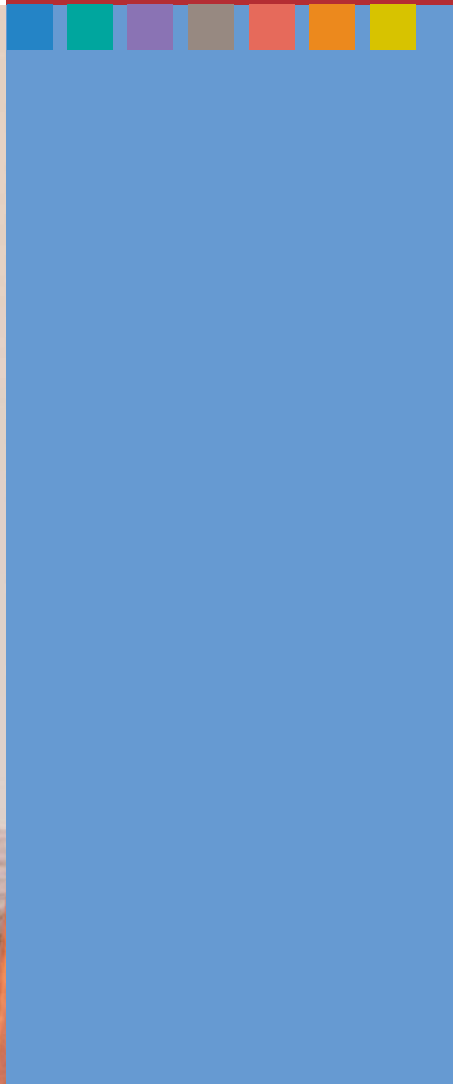


Australian Government
Department of Immigration and
Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs



AUSTRALIA'S SUPPORT FOR HUMANITARIAN ENTRANTS

2004-05





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Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

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The statements and views expressed by the humanitarian entrants who feature in the profiles are those of the entrants and are not necessarily those of the Australian Government, its employees, officers or agents.

Policies in relation to the department's programs change over time. For current information on the department's programs visit the department's website at www.immi.gov.au.

Data sources

Data provided in this booklet is as recorded in the Immigration Records Information System (IRIS), the Travel and Immigration Processing System (TRIPS), the Humanitarian Settlement Client Information System (HuSCI), the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) Database, the Settlement Database, and the Adult Migrant English Program Management Reporting (ARMS) System. Demographic data, such as ethnicity, education, English proficiency, and reading ability are as stated by the entrant at the time of visa interview.

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I am pleased to introduce *Australia's Support for Humanitarian Entrants 2004-05*.

The book provides an overview of government support for people settling in Australia under the Humanitarian Program, focussing particularly on assistance provided under the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS).

The Australian Government remains strongly committed to assisting people in humanitarian need through a dedicated resettlement program.

In 2004-05 over 13 000 people arrived under the Humanitarian Program which represents a 28 per cent increase on the last program year. The IHSS is a key program that provides the necessary services and assistance for humanitarian entrants to settle successfully in Australia.

Entry into Australia is only the start of the resettlement process. The Australian Government recognises that, for many humanitarian entrants, adjusting to a new life in Australia is not easy, especially for those who have experienced trauma and disruption in their lives.

To ease the challenges of resettling, humanitarian entrants receive intensive assistance under the IHSS during their initial settlement period.

The Australian Government continues to look for ways to improve services to meet the needs of humanitarian entrants. The recent tender for the provision of services to humanitarian entrants will see a more streamlined and coordinated approach to the resettlement process.



Throughout this book you will find the stories of humanitarian entrants who have rebuilt their lives in Australia. I would like to thank the people who have willingly shared their stories and provided a valuable insight into the resettlement experience.

I look forward to the continued, vital contribution of service providers and volunteers whose energy, commitment and cooperation ensures the ongoing effectiveness of government assistance to humanitarian entrants.

I hope you find *Australia's Support for Humanitarian Entrants 2004-05* useful and informative.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Cobb'. The signature is stylized and fluid, with a large loop at the end of the first name.

John Cobb
Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

IHSS Service Principles

- › Humanitarian entrants are individuals who have the inherent right to respect for their human worth and dignity.
- › Humanitarian entrants are able to exercise choice.
- › Humanitarian entrants are informed and involved in decision making.
- › Services are designed and administered in ways which promote humanitarian entrants' competence and help them to achieve self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.
- › The health and wellbeing of humanitarian entrants are protected.
- › The best interests of children are taken into account.
- › The least intrusive and the least disruptive option which offers the highest degree of stability and certainty is selected.
- › Traditional, cultural and religious values are respected.
- › Services and decisions are ethical and humanitarian entrants are not exploited.
- › Services promote participation of humanitarian entrants in the wider community and their understanding of legal obligations.
- › Organisations providing services are accountable to those who use their services and the Commonwealth.
- › Humanitarian entrants are enabled to access services in a coordinated way which minimises gaps and duplication between services received.

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Acronyms

AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
ARMS	Adult Migrant English Program Management Reporting
AS	Accommodation Support
AUSCO	Australian Cultural Orientation
CRSS	Community Refugee Settlement Scheme
CSSS	Community Settlement Services Scheme
CSWE	Certificates in Spoken and Written English
DIMIA	Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
EHA1	Early Health Assessment and Intervention
HELP	Higher Education Loan Program
HFS	Household Formation Support
HuSCI	Humanitarian Settlement Client Information System
IGOC	Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946
IHSS	Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy
IIOA	Initial Information and Orientation Assistance
IRIS	Immigration Records Information System
MRC	Migrant Resource Centre
MSA	Migrant Service Agency
OAA	On Arrival Accommodation
PASTT	Program of Assistance for the Survivors of Torture and Trauma
PPV	Permanent Protection Visa
PS	Proposer Support
RPBV	Return Pending Bridging Visa
RPV	Return Pending Visa
RRAC	Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council
SHP	Special Humanitarian Program
SPLM/A	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army
SPP	Special Preparatory Program
SSR	Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants
THV	Temporary Humanitarian Visa
TIS	Translating and Interpreting Service
TPV	Temporary Protection Visa
TRIPS	Travel and Immigration Processing System
UHM	Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minor
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



YATTA FOLLY (LIBERIA)

When Yatta tucks her daughter Patience into a safe, warm bed at night, she is reminded of just how far she has come from Liberia.

In Australia Yatta has found peace, security and opportunity—things she had never known in her former country. In 2004–05, Australia has been able to provide assistance to more than 13 000 people just like Yatta, who are escaping discrimination or persecution in their home country.

When Yatta was a child, rebel gang members broke into the family home and dragged her father and step mother out into the street where they were assaulted. The rebels forced Yatta and her brothers and sisters to clap their hands while they watched helplessly.

The rebels ceased their attack only when government soldiers arrived and began a counter-attack. Yatta's brothers carried their parents into the bush where the family hid for a week before escaping to the Ivory Coast.

The family left the Ivory Coast in 2002 when civil war escalated. They fled to a refugee camp in Guinea and Yatta began working for Action Against Hunger, an organisation that aims to educate refugees living in camps about health, sanitation and disease prevention. At the time there were frequent outbreaks of measles, cholera and diarrhoea.

In 2004 Yatta's stepmother and father decided to apply for resettlement in the United States. Yatta, her daughter, sisters and brothers applied to come to Australia instead. All five sisters and Patience arrived in Sydney in January this year, and their brothers followed later in the year.

At the airport they were met by service providers contracted to DIMIA to help new humanitarian arrivals settle into life in Australia.

Yatta and her family were taken to their initial accommodation, where they lived for one month. They were then assisted to find long-term accommodation and provided with a basic package of goods to help them start setting up a household.

Other settlement assistance included help to access Centrelink and Medicare benefits, set up bank accounts and enrol Patience in school.

DIMIA also helped the family sign up for English classes through the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). In the AMEP classes they learnt about Australian society, culture and customs which helped them adjust to life in Australia. As Yatta's English improved, she became confident enough to begin studying and working part time. She recently completed a course in Aged Care Nursing at TAFE, and now hopes to study pharmacology.

Her enthusiasm for learning extends to her daughter's education.

“My plans for her are to go to school and keep learning. I want to help her read and write and use computers. I hope for a better future for her, and I know she will have one in Australia. Thank you so much for bringing us here,” says Yatta.

THE INTEGRATED HUMANITARIAN SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

History of the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy

Until the 1970s, Australian settlement services made no distinction between the needs of humanitarian entrants and other migrants. Like other migrants arriving by assisted passage, humanitarian entrants were eligible for accommodation at migrant hostels.

The Community Refugee Settlement Scheme (CRSS) was established in 1979 to support humanitarian entrants who did not wish to stay in hostels but preferred to move directly into the general community. The cornerstone of the CRSS was a network of volunteer groups who provided assistance with finding accommodation, employment, general orientation, and social support.

A review of migrant hostels in 1984 led to the closure of several hostels and a general shift towards self-contained accommodation. In 1986, the then Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs established On Arrival Accommodation (OAA) to provide self-contained, self-catering units with co-located support services for humanitarian entrants. The former migrant hostels were closed and replaced with government-leased flats.

The then Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs introduced the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) in 1997 as the national framework for improving humanitarian settlement services. The strategy aimed to make more effective use of settlement services for humanitarian entrants through partnerships with community organisations and by improving the linkage between settlement planning activities and service delivery.

The IHSS evolved into a package of specialised services for humanitarian entrants who receive intensive, initial settlement support which aims to promote their competence and encourage independence.

IHSS services are delivered by contracted service providers, the majority of which are not-for-profit community based organisations. In addition, volunteer groups assist service providers and offer entrants friendship and social support.

In May 2003, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (the department) evaluated the effectiveness of the IHSS through the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants (SSR) and an assessment of the IHSS. These confirmed that the IHSS delivers timely, consistent, quality services to humanitarian entrants and made the following recommendations:

- > case management and coordination across IHSS service types be strengthened
- > arrangements for volunteer involvement in humanitarian settlement be reviewed to connect volunteers with funded service providers and clarify their roles and responsibilities
- > pre-embarkation cultural orientation classes for African humanitarian entrants be introduced, in light of the difficulties being experienced by this caseload
- > options for increasing support to SHP entrants and proposers be explored.

These recommendations have been implemented, a number through the new contracts for delivery of IHSS services which began in October 2005.



HAFIZA AZAMI (AFGHANISTAN)

There were days when Hafiza Azami felt the shudder of rockets exploding near her as she walked to the local store. “It was not easy I can tell you. When they exploded, I remember looking around and thinking: where are my children? I recall many nights when we couldn’t sleep,” Hafiza said.

In 1998, after almost three decades of war and conflict, Hafiza fled Afghanistan with her husband and three children. The family spent many nights travelling over the mountains to Pakistan, where they settled temporarily. The following year they applied for resettlement through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

In July 2003 the family began their new life in Australia. Flying into Brisbane airport they were met by staff from Assisting Collaborative Community Employment Support Services Incorporated (ACCESS), an organisation funded by DIMIA to provide assistance to new humanitarian entrants.

Staff from ACCESS took them to their new home and provided them with furniture, white goods, food, and other supplies. In the following days ACCESS staff and volunteers helped the family settle into life in Australia.

“They were great, they helped us with everything,” said Hafiza. “They introduced us to the bank and the housing department, and made sure our children were in school and even took us shopping. They gave us all the support we needed,” she said.

Hafiza’s husband began English classes under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) soon after the family arrived and is still improving his skills.

“Now he can communicate in broken English, but he still has some difficulty with writing and speaking skills,” said Hafiza. “I can definitely see him improving though, and he is enjoying the help he’s getting through the program.”

Support from ACCESS staff and the AMEP made the difficult task of setting up life in Australia easier.

“I felt excited and happy, knowing I was coming to a country where I could have a secure life and a future for my children, but it was also sad because I was leaving my family and friends and coming so far away from my homeland,” said Hafiza. “When we arrived everything was new and unfamiliar, but I knew it was only a matter of time before it would feel like home.”

Soon after arriving, Hafiza began voluntary work as a community helper and translator. A year later she got a job as an Administration Officer in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in Queensland.

For Hafiza the best things about life in Australia are security and opportunities.

“My children have much better opportunities here. They can go to school, have great teachers that help them, access to libraries, the Internet, computers. Everyday they come home carrying one or two new books from the library. I would never have been able to provide these things for them in Afghanistan.”

She also appreciates the multicultural nature of Australia.

“There are so many different people from different backgrounds and countries. Most people around me have come here from another country, and that’s what makes me feel at home,” Hafiza said.

AUSTRALIA'S HUMANITARIAN PROGRAM

Australia has a planned annual Humanitarian Program to ensure it responds effectively to global refugee and humanitarian developments. The program also ensures that support services are provided in Australia to meet the specific needs of humanitarian entrants.

The Humanitarian Program has two components:

- > The **offshore program** offers resettlement as a means of protection and a durable solution for people overseas who need humanitarian assistance and who have no other option available to them.
- > The **onshore program** offers protection to people in Australia who have been found to be in need of protection under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the status of Refugees (Refugees Convention).

Offshore program

The **offshore program** consists of these visa categories:

Permanent visas

The **Refugee category** includes visa subclasses:

- > 200 Refugee
- > 201 In Country Special Humanitarian
- > 203 Emergency Rescue
- > 204 Woman at Risk.

Refugees are people subject to persecution in their home country who have been assessed as having a strong need for resettlement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Many do not have family or friends in Australia.

The **Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) category** comprises visa subclass 202 Global Special Humanitarian.

SHP entrants are people outside their home country who have experienced substantial discrimination amounting to gross violation of human rights. SHP entrants have a proposer in Australia—a friend, relative or community organisation who has agreed to assist them settle in Australia.

Temporary visas

The **Temporary Humanitarian Visa (THV)** has two categories:

- > 447 Secondary Movement Offshore Entry Temporary
- > 451 Secondary Movement Relocation Temporary.

These visas are for people who have bypassed or abandoned effective protection in their country of first asylum and for whom humanitarian entry to Australia is appropriate.

Onshore program

The **onshore program** consists of these visa categories:

- > 866 Permanent Protection Visa (PPV)
- > 785 Temporary Protection Visa (TPV).

Asylum seekers who have entered Australia lawfully on genuine documents and are found to be refugees and meet character requirements are able to access a PPV.

Asylum seekers who entered mainland Australia unlawfully (without a valid visa or on fraudulent documents) and who are found to be refugees and meet character requirements are granted a TPV, which gives them residence for three years in the first instance. TPV holders can apply for a further protection visa, which may be a permanent visa.

The Return Pending Visa (RPV) provides 18 months stay for former TPV and THV holders

whose further protection visa applications are unsuccessful, to enable them to make orderly arrangements for departure. The Removal Pending Bridging Visa (RPBV) was introduced to enable the release, pending removal, of people in immigration detention who have been cooperating with efforts to remove them from Australia, but whose removal is not reasonably practicable at the time.

The Humanitarian Program responds to changing international circumstances. Table 1 shows the top ten countries of birth of those who settled in Australia under the Humanitarian Program over the past ten years and illustrates the changing focus of the program. The major

focus of the program in the early years was the Balkan countries, but that has now been replaced by African countries.

In 2004–05, seven of the top ten birthplaces were in Africa with the majority of entrants coming from Sudan. Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan have consistently been in the top five for the last five years. It is the first time Liberia appeared in the top ten and also the first time in ten years that no Balkan country featured in the top ten.

Further information about Australia's Humanitarian Program is available in the booklet *Refugee and Humanitarian Issues—Australia's Response* or at http://www.immi.gov.au/refugee/migrating_refugee.htm

Table 1: Top ten countries of birth of humanitarian entrants 1995–96 to 2004–05

RANK	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
1	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Former Yugoslavia	Iraq	Former Yugoslavia	Former Yugoslavia	Sudan	Sudan	Sudan
2	Iraq	Iraq	Iraq	Iraq	Former Yugoslavia	Croatia	Sudan	Iraq	Iraq	Iraq
3	Former Yugoslavia	Former Yugoslavia	Former Yugoslavia	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Croatia	Sudan	Afghanistan	Former Yugoslavia	Afghanistan	Liberia
4	Sri Lanka	Vietnam	Croatia	Croatia	Afghanistan	Iraq	Iraq	Afghanistan	Iran	Afghanistan
5	Iran	Croatia	Somalia	Afghanistan	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Afghanistan	Croatia	Iran	Ethiopia	Sierra Leone
6	Croatia	Sri Lanka	Afghanistan	Sudan	Sudan	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Ethiopia	Former Yugoslavia	Iran
7	Cambodia	Iran	Sudan	Somalia	Iran	Iran	Sierra Leone	Croatia	Egypt*	Kenya*
8	Afghanistan	Somalia	Sri Lanka	Iran	Somalia	Ethiopia	Iran	Egypt*	Kenya*	Egypt*
9	Somalia	Sudan	Iran	Sri Lanka	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	Somalia	Ethiopia	Kenya*	Congo	Ethiopia
10	Burma	Burma	Vietnam	Ethiopia	Kuwait	Sri Lanka	Somalia	Sierra Leone	Somalia	Congo

*Entrants born in Kenya and Egypt would predominately be children of Sudanese nationals in refugee camps.