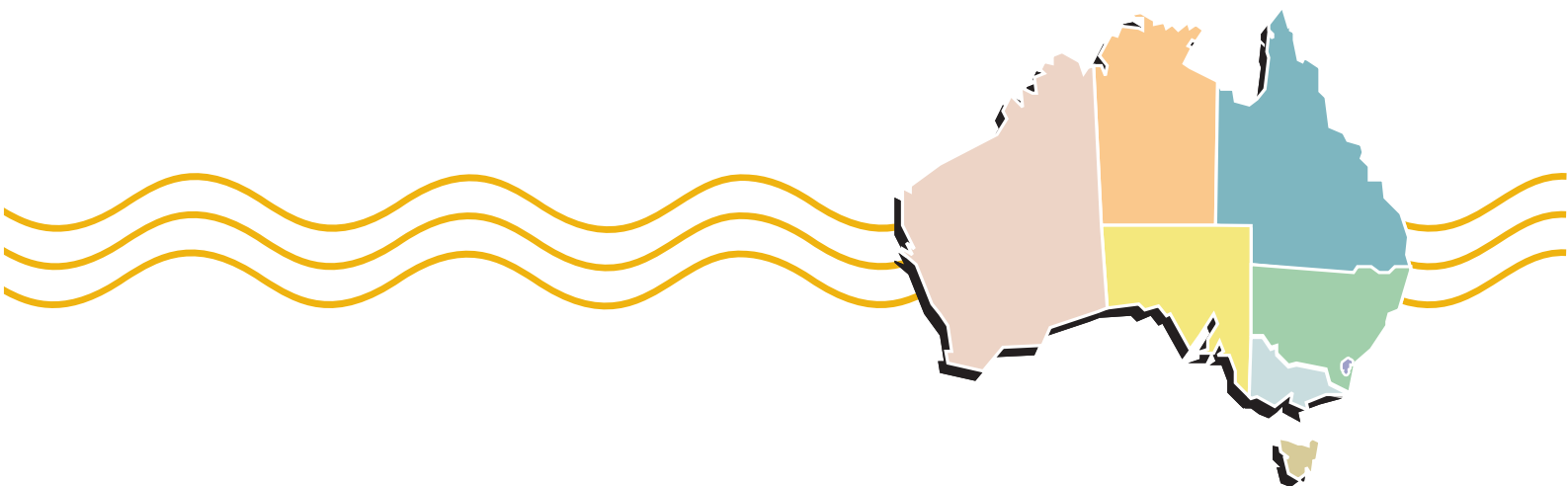


Chapter 7

Citizenship, Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services

- The take up rate of Australian citizenship has risen steadily over the past 15 years. About 75 per cent of those born overseas and residentially eligible have acquired citizenship.
- Of the more than 900,000 permanent residents currently eligible to acquire Australian citizenship, more than half are from just two countries - the United Kingdom and New Zealand.
- In 2002, 32,074 clients drawn from some 100 language backgrounds were assisted by the Adult Migrant English Program.
- The Translating and Interpreting Service received over 593,000 calls in 2002-03.
- The Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) provides intensive, initial settlement services to Humanitarian Program entrants. In 2002-03 10,041 humanitarian entrants were assisted under the IHSS, an increase of 27 per cent compared to 2001-02.



Citizenship, Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services

Prior to European settlement, the Australian population was linguistically and culturally diverse and is increasingly diverse, with 23.1 per cent of the population having been born overseas. This diversity will continue to be a feature of the Australian population with current and future migration.

Citizenship, multiculturalism and settlement services share the common purpose of strengthening our society by inclusion and equal participation of all Australians, with a balance of entitlements and obligations.

Multicultural Australia

Australian multiculturalism recognises and celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. It accepts and respects the right of all Australians to express and share their individual cultural heritage within an overriding commitment to Australia. All Australians are expected to respect the basic structures and principles underwriting our democracy - these are the Constitution, parliamentary democracy, freedom of speech and religion, English as the national language, the rule of law, acceptance and equality.

Multiculturalism embraces the heritage of Indigenous Australians, early European settlement, Australian-grown customs and the heritage of the diverse range of migrants to Australia. Multiculturalism also refers to the policies and programs that are designed to:

- promote social harmony;
- make administration more responsive to the needs of a culturally diverse population; and
- optimise the social and economic benefits of cultural diversity.

Multicultural Policy

In May 2003, the Government reaffirmed its commitment to multiculturalism with the release of the policy statement, *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity*, and the allocation of \$1.1 million per year for three years to implement the strategic directions of the policy statement. The statement updates the multicultural policy framework of the 1999 *New Agenda for Multicultural Australia*. It also sets the Government's strategic directions for 2003–2006 as being community harmony and the benefits of Australia's cultural and language diversity, through the Access and Equity strategy and Productive Diversity program. It is apt that the release of the policy statement occurred in the 25th anniversary year of multiculturalism as official Government policy.

The release of the policy statement was one outcome of an assessment, begun in 2002 and completed in 2003, of the *New Agenda* and the work of the Council for Multicultural Australia. Another outcome was the appointment of a second Council for Multicultural Australia to assist the Government to promote community harmony and the benefits of diversity.

The assessment of the *New Agenda* concluded that the broad framework, concepts and principles of multiculturalism have considerable support. It also found that the *Living in Harmony* initiative (including Harmony Day), the Access and Equity strategy and the Productive Diversity program are making a positive impact, with strong community recognition. It identified that one of the future challenges is to communicate the messages of multicultural policy, a challenge that takes on greater significance in the current international climate.

Community Harmony

In the aftermath of recent international and domestic events, perceptions of culture, ethnicity and religion have become more sensitive and emotive issues. The assessment of implementation of the *New Agenda* indicated that multicultural policy provides vital tools for containing and combating these stresses, and the possible threats to social cohesion.

DIMIA State and Territory offices conduct and liaise extensively with community groups and individuals. Information gained from consultation and liaison assisted DIMIA to play a pivotal role in creating opportunities for the Prime Minister and Ministers Ruddock and Hardgrave to meet with communities and offer support. Our advice enabled Ministers to accurately identify and engage with those communities most in need of support and to accurately target messages decrying racism and vilification. Consultation and liaison following the Bali bombing showed that government actions and messages promoted resilience of affected communities and an ongoing commitment to realising the benefits of cultural diversity.

DIMIA also assisted communities to come together to share common understandings and to learn from each other, and therefore minimise community relations tensions. The Ministers and department pursued this strategy in the lead up to and during the war on Iraq. At this time, no major incidents that adversely affected community harmony were reported. Nevertheless, during 2002–03 the Arab, Muslim and Jewish communities expressed a high degree of continuing anxiety about elevated levels of racial and religious vilification and property damage.

Following the Bali bombing, the Council for Multicultural Australia initiated contact between ethnic and religious groups. It subsequently helped the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils (FECCA) to facilitate the establishment of the Australian Partnership of Ethnic and Religious Organisations (APERRO), a national partnership to foster and maintain community harmony. Ethnic and religious community members have welcomed the initiative and expressed support for the aims of the partnership. APERRO broadens and complements the Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims and Jews, the first formal project of which was launched by the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Gary Hardgrave, MP, in March 2003.

Access and Equity

Access and Equity reporting in recent years demonstrates that Commonwealth agencies assess that they are continuing to improve their performance against the performance indicators associated with the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Society*. Commonwealth agencies' assessments will be examined in the context of implementation of the recommendations of the *Report of the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants*, to be managed by a high-level taskforce chaired by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

In addition, as a result of collaboration in previous years, the department has furthered working relationships with the National Office of Local Government (NOLG) and the Australian Local Government Association with sponsorship of a national local government award, 'Strength in Diversity'. The award will recognise excellence in managing and responding to culturally and linguistically diverse constituencies. The award will provide DIMIA with another avenue with which to work with local government, to highlight good practice that could be replicated; to make the links between migration, service delivery for culturally and linguistically diverse clientele, community harmony and multiculturalism.

Productive Diversity

The Productive Diversity Partnership program continues to focus on its primary objective to encourage and support businesses to make better use of the language skills, business networks and market knowledge of Australia's diverse workforce and population. The program continues to develop and disseminate resource materials, case studies and tools to help business to capitalise on diversity. Engagement of the corporate sector in the program's activities through partnership is a key strategy for the program. Five Productive Diversity case studies under the theme "valuing and celebrating diversity makes good business sense" were developed and launched in 2002–03, involving AMP, Drake International, Ford Australia, McDonald's Australia and Telstra.

The department, through sponsorship of pilot projects in Darwin and Queensland, forged direct links between the migration program, settlement services and productive diversity. One focus of the projects is skilled and business migrants and their families. The projects aim

to support business to make greater use of the state-specific and regional migration initiatives and to fill skill-gaps in the local labour market. Two newly established Working Groups, comprising DIMIA, Queensland state government agencies, seven local government areas and employers are currently implementing strategies to take advantage of the skills, and cultural and linguistic diversity in the Central Queensland region. The Darwin project resulted in an action plan to be implemented in the next 12 months to enhance the employment of migrants, including refugees, in the Northern Territory. The two pilot projects will be evaluated with the aim of assessing their application in other States and Territory.

Living in Harmony

In May 2002, the Government extended the *Living in Harmony* initiative with the provision of \$3.5 million a year until 2005–06 to promote community harmony and address issues of racism in Australia through a community grants program, national partnerships, and the promotion of Harmony Day.

The Minister announced the 2003–04 *Living in Harmony* community grants round on 23 April 2003. In response to the impact of recent world events and other identified issues, the department invited, among others, applications addressing inter-faith and inter-generational issues. The department received 592 applications, an increase of 28 per cent over the 2002–03 grants round. This continues a trend of growing community interest in the *Living in Harmony* grants program, and a readiness on the part of local communities to take leadership in fostering creative, cohesive, diverse communities. The Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs announced the 44 successful applicants on 22 August 2003, with new grants totalling \$1.5 million.

Harmony Day 2003 was the most successful yet, with a 117 per cent increase in the number of registered community-based events from 304 in 2002 to 661 in 2003. It provided an opportunity for all Australians to reflect on and celebrate our success as a culturally diverse and harmonious community. It received extensive positive media coverage, which reflected that Harmony Day is increasingly becoming a time when communities come together to celebrate and promote community harmony.

The department successfully worked with Council for Multicultural Australia members' knowledge, skills, extensive networks and insights to create or build on existing partnerships with national organisations with local bases, such as the Australian Football League (AFL) and the Returned Services League, Surf Life Saving Australia, Rotary and others. Through a DIMIA-QBE Sydney Swans Australian Football League (AFL) partnership, promotion of Harmony Day 2003 culminated in a highly successful and televised community harmony match at Telstra Stadium, Sydney Olympic Park, on 29 March.

Australian Citizenship

As a cornerstone of our inclusive and culturally diverse society, Australian citizenship acts as a strong unifying force in the Australian community, as it encompasses those shared civic values which unite all Australians. These shared civic values include loyalty to Australia and its people, a belief in the democratic process, respect for the rights and liberties of other Australians and a commitment to uphold and obey Australia's laws. It is the commitment to these values that is one of the great strengths of the Australian community, and Australian citizenship is the common bond which unites us all.

Acquiring Australian citizenship is an important way of showing pride in being part of Australia's dynamic and diverse society. Australian citizenship extends the same responsibilities and privileges to all Australians, allowing full participation in the Australian community. Australia's approach to citizenship is inclusive and non-discriminatory.

Applying for Australian Citizenship

People born in Australia of Australian citizen or permanent resident parents become Australian citizens by birth; migrants to Australia may acquire citizenship upon application and by meeting certain eligibility criteria (for grant of Australian citizenship).

Generally, people can apply for Australian citizenship when they have been present in Australia as a permanent resident for a total of two years in the previous five years, including twelve months in the two years immediately before they apply. While there may be some exceptions, a person seeking Australian citizenship must:

- be a permanent resident and at least 18 years old;
- understand the nature of the application;
- be of good character;
- have a basic knowledge of the English language;
- have an adequate knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship; and
- intend to reside in Australia, or maintain a close and continuing association with Australia.

Children who are 16 or 17 years of age may be able to acquire citizenship in their own right, subject to meeting certain criteria and children under 16 years of age may be included on a responsible parent's application for citizenship.

Responsibilities and Privileges of Australian Citizenship

People who acquire Australian Citizenship:

- are entitled, under Australian law, to the same rights as all Australian citizens;
- must enrol on the electoral register and vote in State/Territory and Federal elections;
- may apply for appointment to public office, nominate to stand for election as a Member of Parliament (subject to section 44(i) of the Australian Constitution), apply to enlist in the defence forces or for government jobs for which Australian citizenship is required;
- may apply for an Australian passport and may re-enter Australia without the need for a re-entry visa when they travel overseas;
- may seek assistance from Australian diplomatic representatives while they are overseas;
- may register as Australian citizens, children who are subsequently born overseas; and
- are required to serve on a jury if called to do so and may help defend Australia should the need arise.

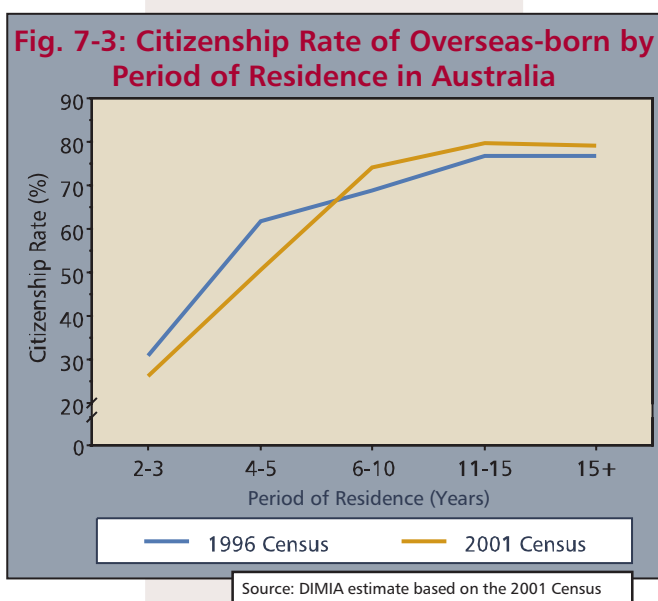
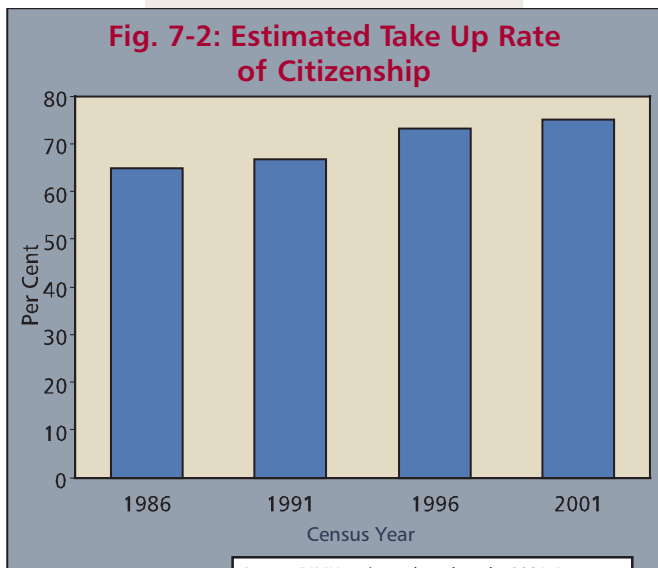
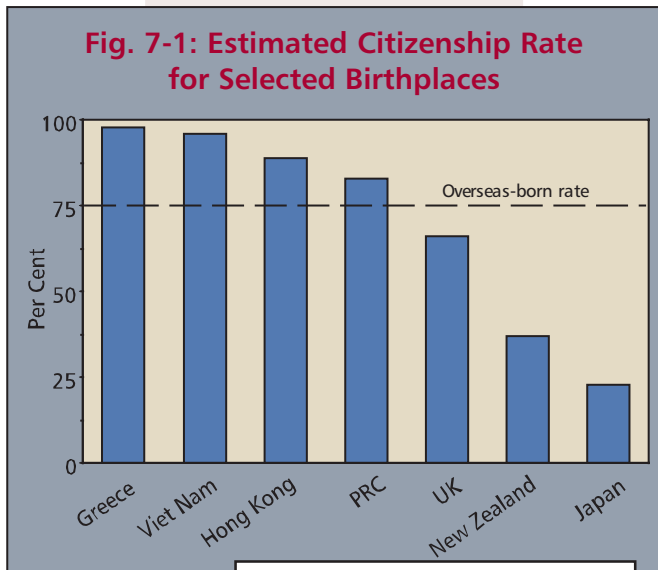
Those choosing to become Australian citizens make a pledge to be loyal to Australia and its people, share in the belief of the democratic process, respect the rights and liberties of other Australians, and uphold and obey Australia's laws.

Australian Citizenship Affirmation

The Australian citizenship affirmation is a statement all Australian citizens can make to affirm their loyalty and commitment to Australia and its people, and is based on the Australian Citizenship Pledge made by new citizens.

The affirmation was developed in response to an increasing number of Australian-born citizens expressing a desire to declare their commitment to Australia. Affirmation ceremonies are often held after citizenship ceremonies, or at other appropriate occasions such as on Australia Day or other civic or community events.

Since their introduction, affirmation ceremonies have been growing in popularity. On Australian Citizenship Day, September 17, 2003 many thousands of people affirmed their citizenship at special citizenship ceremonies and other events around Australia. The affirmation is increasingly being used on other significant days such as Australia Day and Harmony Day.



Take-up of Australian citizenship by Overseas-born

The take-up of Australian citizenship by migrants is measured by their citizenship rates. The rates measure the percentage of eligible migrants becoming Australian citizens from different countries.

Information from the 2001 Census indicates that the take-up of Australian citizenship by migrants varies significantly. The five countries with the highest take-up rates are Greece (98.0 per cent), Hungary (97.1 per cent), Lebanon (97.0 per cent), Egypt (96.3 per cent) and Viet Nam (96 per cent).

The numbers of residentially eligible non-citizens from countries with the lowest take-up rates of Australian citizenship are the United Kingdom (346,200 eligible non-citizens), New Zealand (204,900), Malaysia (27,900), Ireland (16,000), Indonesia (14,500), USA (14,200) and Japan (12,300).

In recent years the Australian Government has been promoting the profile and significance of Australian citizenship in the community and encouraging eligible permanent residents to become Australian citizens. Of the more than 900,000 permanent residents currently residentially eligible to acquire Australian citizenship, more than half are from just two countries - the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

The highest number of non-citizens who are residentially eligible to apply for Australian citizenship are from the United Kingdom (346,200), New Zealand (204,900), Italy (44,200), Malaysia (27,900), Germany (23,400) and PRC (20,700).

The take-up of Australian citizenship has risen steadily over the past 15 years. Of those people living in Australia who were born overseas, just over 75 per cent of those residentially eligible have acquired citizenship.

New Policy Developments

Amendments to Australian Citizenship Law

The Australian Government made a number of amendments to the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948* (the Act) during 2002. The amendments were made as part of the Government's response to the (former) Australian Citizenship Council's report *Australian Citizenship for a New Century*.

One of the key amendments was the repeal of section 17 of the Act relating to the loss of Australian citizenship on acquisition of another citizenship. Australian citizens who acquire another citizenship on or after 4 April 2002 no longer lose their Australian citizenship. Those who lost Australian citizenship prior to 4 April 2002 continue to be able to apply to resume their Australian citizenship. The change recognises the benefits to Australia of Australians living and working overseas and allows the growing number of internationally mobile Australians to take advantage of opportunities in other countries while retaining their links with Australia.

Other key amendments to the Act included the introduction of a number of measures in the interests of young people and strengthening aspects of the integrity of the Australian citizenship process. These amendments, along with other amendments to Australia's citizenship legislation, took effect from 1 July 2002.

Promotion of Australian Citizenship

The Australian Government continued to promote Australian citizenship in 2002 and 2003, following a very successful campaign in 2001.

The objectives of the Australian Citizenship Promotion campaign are to promote the acquisition of Australian citizenship among eligible migrants and to enhance the profile and significance of Australian citizenship in the community. The extent to which this has been achieved has been measured by a number of factors as described below:

- Public recognition of the impact of the 2001 Australian Citizenship Promotion campaign through the winning of two national communication awards conferred by the Australian Marketing Institute and the Public Relations Institute of Australia;
- Campaign activity ensured that interest in Australian citizenship and citizenship application levels continued to be strong when compared to the base year of 2000. There has been an increase in use of the citizenship website;
- Over 2,000 people became Australian citizens at ceremonies around Australia for Australian Citizenship Day on 17 September 2003; and
- A range of promotional products were launched, principally aimed at raising the profile and significance of Australian citizenship among the general community.

Operational Issues

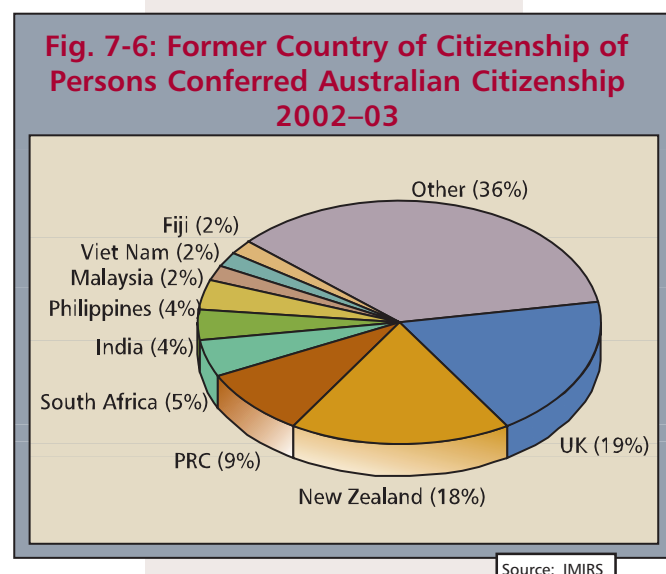
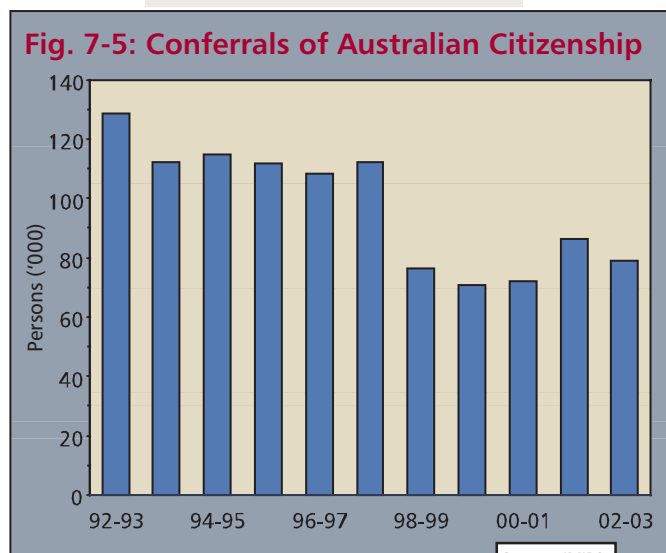
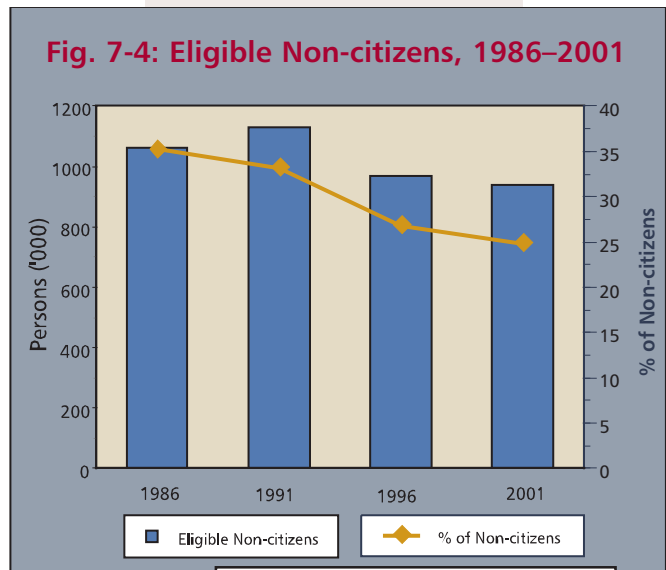
Applications for Australian Citizenship

The citizenship promotion campaign in 2001 and the smaller campaigns in 2002 and 2003 endeavoured to arrest the decline in citizenship applications experienced in previous years. The decline was approaching 10 per cent per annum. 87,023 persons applied for the grant of Australian citizenship in 2002–03, which was a slight decrease compared to the total of 89,946 who applied in 2001–02.

Conferrals of Australian Citizenship

In 2002–03, citizenship was conferred on 79,164 people, compared with 86,289 in 2001–02.

Of the 79,164 who became Australian citizens in 2002–03, 14,854 were citizens of the United Kingdom. The next highest were citizens of New Zealand (13,994 conferrals), followed by PRC (7,126 conferrals).



Citizenship e-Lodgement

A citizenship e-Lodgement service was launched on 30 September 2002, allowing applications for the grant of Australian citizenship to be lodged via the Internet. This provides citizenship services that are convenient for clients as well as generating efficiencies by reducing manual processing time for DIMIA staff.

There has been a positive response to the citizenship e-Lodgement service, with 8.5 per cent of applications received via e-Lodgement in 2002–03 following introduction of the service. The proportion of e-Lodged applications is growing steadily.

Integrity of Australian Citizenship

The Government views the integrity of Australian Citizenship processes as an important prerequisite for Australian citizenship to be valued and a positive force in our community.

A number of measures have been undertaken to enhance the integrity of citizenship processes and minimise the potential for fraud. These include the introduction of a new citizenship quality assurance program and enhancement of controls in DIMIA computer systems. Persons who have obtained Australian citizenship as a result of fraud are considered for possible deprivation of citizenship. Further strengthening of the deprivation powers in respect to fraud is planned.

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

The ability of all Australians to speak our national language is a key unifier - it is central to the successful management of our multicultural society. Recognising this, the Australian Government invests around \$100 million annually in the Adult Migrant English Program to provide up to 510 hours of English language tuition to new arrivals. For most clients, this tuition is provided free of charge. Up to an additional 100 hours is also available to refugees and humanitarian entrants under the Special Preparatory Program.

Since its inception more than 55 years ago, more than 1.6 million people have been assisted by the AMEP. For them, the program has been the central, most critical factor in their successful settlement in their new country - not just for learning English, but for gaining some of the core skills and knowledge they need to take charge of their future and achieve their personal, social and economic goals.

AMEP tuition is delivered by service providers who are specialists in teaching English as a second language. Tuition is provided through nearly 200 venues across Australia. A range of different learning options is available to clients to ensure that wherever AMEP clients are and whatever their circumstances and learning preferences, they will be able to access tuition which is most appropriate to their needs. These options include classroom or community based tuition, distance learning, or 'one on one' tuition with the help of a volunteer home tutor.

The AMEP also supports community agencies offering language assistance to people not eligible for the AMEP through the Home Tutor Scheme Enhancement Program. This support includes training for tutors and help with curriculum advice and teaching materials.

In 2002 (calendar year), the AMEP provided 6.3 million hours of tuition to 32,074 clients. In addition:

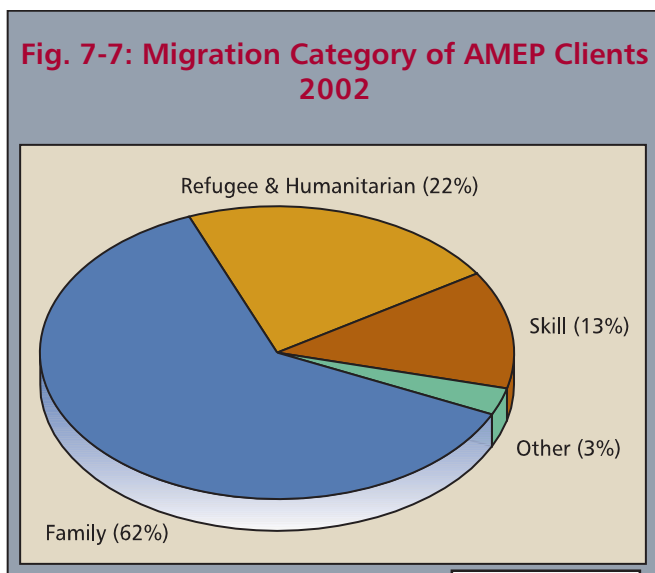
- 3,827 refugee and humanitarian entrants participated in the Special Preparatory Program; and
- 4,097 clients participated in the home tutor scheme.

The AMEP client profile is very diverse, reflecting the diversity of the broad Australian community: last year, clients were drawn from 183 countries of birth and 142 language backgrounds. Major source countries were PRC, Viet Nam, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Iraq, Lebanon and Sudan.

In 2002, the migration category of AMEP participants was as follows:

Refugee and Humanitarian:	22 per cent
Family:	62 per cent
Skill:	13 per cent
Other:	3 per cent

Fig. 7-7: Migration Category of AMEP Clients 2002



Source: AMEP Statistics

AMEP outcomes

The key outcome areas for the AMEP are:

- *"Reach"*: the extent to which eligible migrants and refugees take up their 510 hour entitlement;
- *"Retention"*: the extent to which clients who enter the program use their AMEP entitlement; and
- *"Results"*: the English language and settlement outcomes achieved by AMEP clients.

Reach:

Seventy five per cent of adult settlers who arrived in 2002 and who were self determined as in need of English tuition had registered with the AMEP by 30 June 2003.

The registration rate for each key migration category was:

Refugee and Humanitarian	87 per cent
Family	73 per cent
Skill	65 per cent

In 2003, AMEP client numbers are expected to total around 36,500.

Retention:

In 2002 AMEP clients stayed in the program, on average, the following hours:

Refugee and Humanitarian	399 hours
Family	344 hours
Skill	356 hours

Results:

AMEP clients' language outcomes are reported against the Certificates in Spoken and Written English (CSWE), a national competency based curriculum accredited under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

The CSWE consists of three levels - Level I (beginners), Level II (post beginners) and Level III (intermediate) and recognises three stages of learning based on the client's previous learning experience.

On completion of a stage clients receive the appropriate certificate (if they have achieved a sufficient number of the stated competencies) or a statement of attainment (if they have completed an entire module within a certificate) or a record of achievement setting out which competencies they have achieved.

Certificates/statements of attainment were awarded to exiting AMEP clients as follows:

Level I	37.5 per cent
Level II	25.3 per cent
Level III	23.1 per cent
Record of achievement	14.2 per cent

New Policy Developments

The *Settlement Services Review*, commissioned by DIMIA last year, made a number of recommendations with regard to the AMEP. These include the commissioning of research to identify the availability of ESL pathways provided by State/Territory governments, and identification of client profiles who are not eligible for the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program and who do not take up the State/Territory specific ESL programs following completion of their AMEP entitlement.

Other recommendations related to the five-year timeframe for completion of AMEP tuition, the targeting of the Special Preparatory Program, the recruitment of volunteer tutors and the Home Tutor Scheme Enhancement Program.

Consideration as to how these recommendations might best be progressed is currently underway.

Operational issues

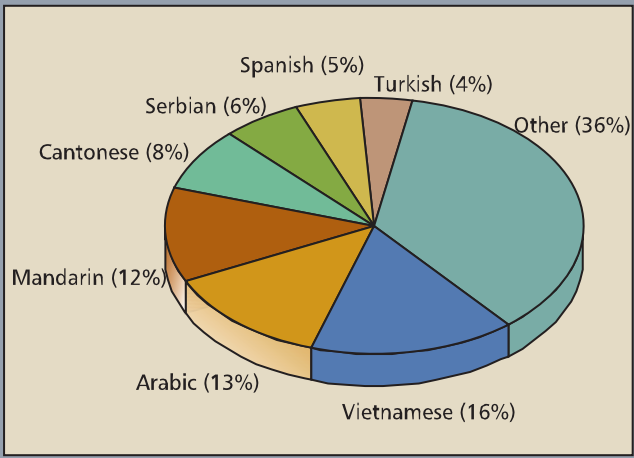
The AMEP was first put to public tender in 1997, with the commencement of five-year contracts between the Commonwealth and service providers Australia-wide for AMEP tuition delivery.

In 2002, the second round of tendering for the program was undertaken. Out of this process, 18 new contracts with service providers began on 1 July 2003.

Services to be provided under the new contracts comprise the provision of English as a Second Language tuition through a range of learning options, programs and support services. These include: classroom, community based, distance learning or home-based tuition, provision of the AMEP Australian Citizenship course, provision of the special preparatory program for humanitarian entrants, counselling and referral services, and childcare support.

Collectively, the 18 new contracts which commenced on 1 July 2003 are worth in excess of \$500 million over the next five years, and will enable English language tuition be provided to about 500,000 new arrivals across Australia.

Fig. 7-8: Main Languages Used by Interpreters (On Site and Phone) 2002-03



Source: TIS Statistics

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)

The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) provides a national twenty four hour a day, seven days a week telephone interpreting service. TIS provides interpreting on a fee-for-service basis with a revenue base of approximately \$21m per annum to individuals, Commonwealth and State/Territory government agencies, community organisations and private sector businesses and organisations.

TIS aims to answer 90 per cent of calls within 30 seconds, provide a confirmed appointment for on-site interpreter requests within three working days and process 90 per cent of fee-free extract translation requests within 20 working days of request.

To ensure that high quality services are provided, TIS uses National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) Accredited/Recognised interpreters and translators wherever possible. In 2001-02, over 86 per cent of all interpreting jobs and over 95 per cent of all translating jobs were completed by NAATI Accredited/Recognised interpreters and translators. For 2002-03, these figures improved with 88 per cent of all interpreting jobs and 99 per cent of all translating jobs being completed by NAATI Accredited/Recognised interpreters or translators.

In 2001-02, the highest demand languages were Vietnamese, Mandarin, Arabic, Cantonese, Spanish, Serbian, Turkish, Korean, Russian and Greek. In 2002-03, these were Arabic, Vietnamese, Dari (Afghani), Serbian, Mandarin, Persian, Cantonese, Bosnian, Spanish and Turkish.

Consolidation to a Single Site

Spanning 2001-03, TIS consolidated from three operational sites (Sydney, Perth and Melbourne) to a single site in Melbourne. Early in 2002-03, all functions previously the responsibility of TIS Central Office in Canberra were also transferred to Melbourne. All TIS services are now delivered by the TIS National Centre in Melbourne.

Full Cost Recovery - TIS User Charges

On 1 July 2003, the final adjustment to TIS user charges came into effect. From this date, all fee paying clients of TIS pay user charges based on the principle of full cost recovery.

New Technology

Advances in new technology featured prominently in 2002-03 with changes including the installation of a facility which enables faxed job confirmations to be despatched directly from TIS desk top computers. The introduction of an Interactive Voice Response Unit which will automate a percentage of telephone interpreting business is in the final testing phase and will be piloted later in 2003 with a general roll-out planned for early 2004.

Telephone Interpreting

In 2001–02, TIS received 491,242 incoming calls via a national telephone number - 131 450 - which resulted in the delivery of 289,149 telephone interpreting assignments in more than 100 languages and dialects.

In 2002–03, telephone interpreting saw growth of 21 per cent with a total of 593,730 incoming calls converting to 352,271 telephone interpreting assignments. The significant growth reflected the greater use of the cost-effective telephone interpreting option over the more expensive on-site interpreting option and improved operator performance. Nationally and for the full 2002–03 year, 90 per cent of telephone calls were answered by an operator within 30 seconds.

On-site Interpreting

In 2001–02, 74,620 on-site interpreting assignments were provided nationally.

In 2002–03, on-site interpreting requests declined, with a total of 61,078 on-site interpreting assignments being delivered. Factors impacting on the decline included the Government's measures on border protection which resulted in no unauthorised boat arrivals reaching our shores. This led to a low demand for on-site interpreters associated with the processing of asylum seekers in immigration detention facilities. The emergence of some competing language service agencies in some States was also a contributing factor.

Fee-free Translating and Interpreting Services

The Australian Government invests around \$6.5 million annually in TIS to provide fee-free interpreting services to approved individuals and community organisations providing services to migrants who do not speak adequate English.

The objective of fee-free interpreting services is to facilitate full participation of migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds in Australia's social and economic life through the provision of effective communication means.

The total number of fee-free interpreting services provided in 2002–03 to eligible individuals and organisations amounted to 102,344. A breakdown of the fee-free interpreting services provided is as follows:

- telephone interpreting services: 78,475;
- on-site interpreting services: 23,869.

Doctors Priority Line (1300 131 450)

Promotion of the Doctors Priority Line to medical practitioners in 2002–03 contributed to a 17.7 per cent increase in telephone use by doctors compared to 2001–02. During 2002–03, of 8,761 telephone interpreting services provided to medical practitioners, a total of 6,799 was provided through the Doctors Priority Line. The initiative also resulted in 4.79 per cent decrease in the number of on-site interpreting services provided to medical practitioners in 2002–03.

Fee-free Translations

Fee-free extract translations of settlement-related personal documents are provided for eligible migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds during the first two years of permanent residency in Australia. During 2002–03, this function was outsourced to AMEP centres for document collection and VITS LanguageLink for document translation. The number of settlement-related document translation tasks completed in 2002–03 amounted to 6,426.

The 10 highest demand languages for fee-free translating and interpreting in 2002–03 were: Vietnamese, Arabic, Serbian, Mandarin, Bosnian, Cantonese, Turkish, Persian, Spanish, and Russian.

Settlement Policy, Planning and Services

Review of Settlement Services

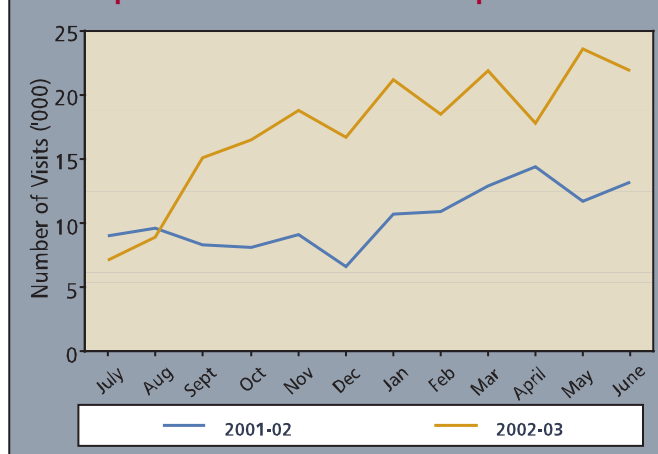
In 2002–03 the Department conducted a *Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants*. The review focused on the specialist settlement services provided by DIMIA including the Migrant Resource Centre/Migrant Service Agency (MRC/MSA) network; the Community Settlement Services Scheme (CSSS); the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS); the Adult English Migrant Program; and the Translating and Interpreting Service.

The review also examined DIMIA's role in working with other service providers to encourage the development and delivery of mainstream services that respond appropriately to the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Australian population.

This review was the first major review of Australia's settlement services since the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* was introduced in 1998 and since a series of adjustments during the late 1990s refocused the Migration Program to increase the proportion of skilled stream migrants.

Over 140 written submissions and 39 public consultations provided significant input to the Review. The Review was also informed by the *IHSS evaluation*, the pilot *Client Survey on the Effectiveness of DIMIA-funded Community Settlement Services*, responses to DIMIA's June 2002 exposure paper *Supporting Settlement in Rural, Regional and Remote Australia* and further analysis of data collected by the *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia*.

**Fig. 7-9: Settlement Information Kits
Comparison of website visits per month**



The review found that Australia has one of the most comprehensive settlement programs in the world. However, the extent of disadvantage in the current humanitarian intake and the increasing diversity of the population (characterised by lower concentrations of migrants from a wider range of source countries than in the past) pose challenges for service delivery.

DIMIA will seek to ensure ongoing improvements to settlement services by progressively implementing the 61 recommendations from the Review.

Settlement Planning

The National Integrated Settlement Strategy (NISS) is a planning framework that underpins the provision of settlement services to newly arrived migrants and humanitarian entrants. DIMIA assists service providers to plan for the provision of services to these groups by helping to identify and respond to service gaps or barriers in programs that assist with the early settlement process. This is achieved through Settlement Planning Committees in each state and territory, which comprise representatives from mainstream service providers from all levels of government. In addition, the department seeks to foster cooperation and coordination across all levels of government and within the Commonwealth in the delivery of culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

Statistical data are provided through the DIMIA Settlement Database (SDB) to assist government and community agencies in the planning and provision of migrant settlement services. Data are used to plan, target and evaluate settlement services and to ensure service delivery is responsive to needs. The database can be accessed on the Internet at www.immi.gov.au/settle/data/select_dynamic_report.shtml with customised reporting available.

Settlement information

Relevant and timely orientation material to help new arrivals settle in Australia is provided through the DIMIA website www.immi.gov.au under Life in Australia. This includes comprehensive information on employment assistance, housing, health services and education. Self-contained Settlement Information Kits are also available from the website for each state and territory and are translated into 21 languages. Each kit contains essential information and useful contacts to assist newly arrived migrants and humanitarian entrants during their early settlement period.

Grants for Migrant Community Services

The Commonwealth provides funding for grants to community-based organisations under the Community Settlement Services Scheme (CSSS) and core funding to the national network of Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) and Migrant Service Agencies (MSAs) to deliver settlement services. These services are intended principally for recent arrivals:

- whose communities are small and emerging, or
- who live in rural or remote areas, or
- who are refugee and humanitarian entrants or family stream entrants with lower levels of English proficiency.

In the funding period 2003 (October 2003 to June 2004) out of a total budget of \$14.4 million, \$4.9 million of CSSS funding was directed towards small and emerging communities, \$1.6 million towards rural and remote communities, and \$6.7 million per cent towards refugee and humanitarian entrants. The remaining funding was aimed at assisting migrants with additional specific settlement needs, including those from established communities whose needs could not be adequately addressed by mainstream services.

Through the CSSS, the department is able to respond to factors such as changes in the composition of the migrant intake and settlement patterns and high priority needs that may emerge. Funding priority is given to services that facilitate access to mainstream services.

The core function of the CSSS is to provide grants funding to community organisations so that they can deliver services and implement projects which:

- provide information, orientation, referral and casework services to new arrivals helping them to settle in Australia and gain access to mainstream services (direct client services);
- assist migrant communities to develop their capacity to organise, plan and advocate for their own needs (community capacity building); and
- develop settlement planning and service delivery networks to encourage delivery of culturally and linguistically appropriate services by mainstream service providers, including playing an advocacy role (service planning and development).

Core funding to the MRCs/MSAs network in 2001–02 was \$9.2 million and in 2002–03 was \$9.5 million to provide support for delivering a range of services to clients. MRCs/MSAs vary in terms of their potential client base, their position in the broader community, and the breadth of their service delivery activities. MRCs/MSAs provide similar functions to CSSS funded organisations in relation to providing direct client services, developing community capacity building skills and service planning and development. However, MRCs/MSAs also provide a mentor role and can support CSSS grants on behalf of smaller or inexperienced organisations.

MRCs/MSAs also attract and manage grants from other Commonwealth and State/Territory governments, actively participate in settlement planning and networking, develop service directories for the local area and develop and enhance volunteer work. A pilot survey conducted in 2002, *Client Survey on the Effectiveness of DIMIA-Funded Community Settlement Services*, found clients placed a high value on the information role of MRCs/MSAs in terms of meeting immediate everyday needs and of providing assistance with tasks such as finding accommodation and employment and registering for social security.

MRCs/MSAs and CSSS organisations are guided by Service Principles aimed at facilitating access and equity for clients in service delivery and at assisting communities to become self reliant.

Funding to CSSS and MRC/MSA organisations is linked to the achievements of outputs and outcomes. Organisations are required to report quarterly on performance, providing information regarding the progress of the work program, financial details and milestone reports. DIMIA staff responsible for managing MRC/MSA and CSSS funding carry out regular consultations with funded organisations to assist them in meeting their performance requirements. A National Training Strategy was implemented in 2002–03 through which DIMIA staff provided training on DIMIA's performance and accountability framework and the role and responsibilities of management committees of CSSS and MRC/MSA organisations.

Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy

The Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) provides intensive, initial settlement services to Humanitarian Program entrants, to assist them to rebuild their lives in Australia. These initial services are delivered by 34 contracted service providers across all states and territories, assisted by volunteers registered under the Community Support for Refugees (CSR) scheme. The services provided under the IHSS include:

- Initial Information and Orientation Assistance (IIOA), which links entrants to the services they need in the initial stages of settlement. This includes meeting entrants at the airport, taking them to register for Centrelink benefits and health support such as Medicare. IIOA also has a role in coordinating with other IHSS Services;
- Accommodation Support (AS), which ensures that refugee entrants have accommodation on arrival and have assistance to secure long-term accommodation as soon as possible;
- Household Formation Support (HFS), which provides entrants with some material goods to start establishing a household in Australia;
- Proposer Support (PS), which provides information and a post-arrival 'help' service to assist proposers in meeting their responsibilities to special humanitarian program entrants;
- Early Health Assessment and Intervention Assistance (EHAI), which offers entrants information on health services available to them, a physical health screening and psychological assessment, and referral to other health services including torture and trauma counselling where required; and
- Service Support for Providers (SSP), which provides support and training to IHSS service providers to meet the service needs of entrants and their obligations as contractors. SSP is also responsible for the recruitment, coordination and registration of CSR groups and for providing them with support and training. As at 30 June 2003 there were 138 registered CSR groups, comprising 978 volunteers.

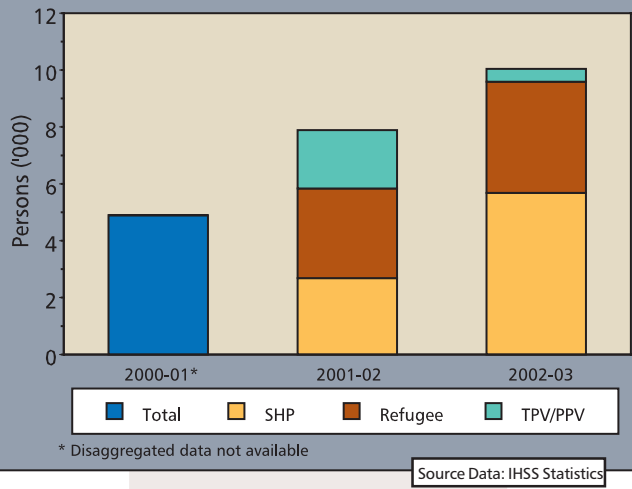
IHSS support is intended for the initial settlement period which, in most cases, is around six months. Once entrants exit the IHSS, and if need arises, they can access general settlement services provided through MRCs/MSAs and under the Community Settlement Services Scheme.

In 2002–03 10,041 humanitarian entrants were assisted under the IHSS, an increase of 27 per cent compared to 2001–02. Of these, 3,909 (38.9 per cent) were Refugees, 5,679 (56.6 per cent) were Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) entrants and 453 (4.5 per cent) were Protection Visa holders.

The overall cost to the Commonwealth of IHSS services was \$26.2 million, an increase from \$20.2 million in 2001–02.

Over the past several years there has been a progressive shift in client source region from Eastern Europe to Africa and the Middle East.

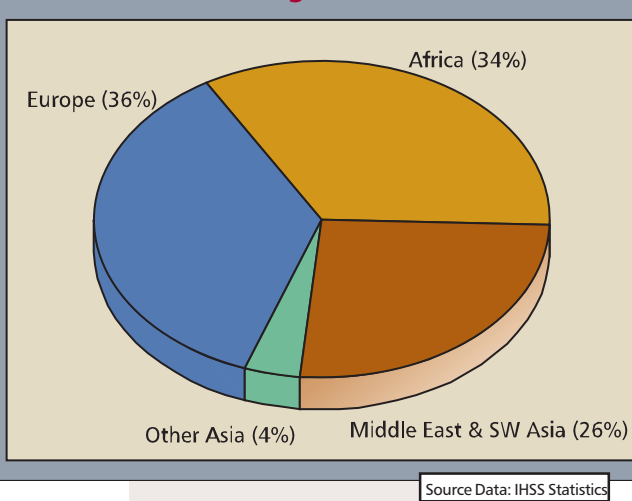
Fig. 7-10: Number of People Assisted under the IHSS



The shift in source region has resulted in an increasingly complex IHSS caseload. Compared to the earlier predominantly Eastern European clients, the recent clients from Africa and the Middle East have very few possessions or resources. In 2002–03, 64.2 per cent of people assisted stated that they required an interpreter. The median number of years schooling that IHSS clients had received was 6, a reduction from 8 in 2001–02. 1,478, or 15.4 per cent of all refugee and SHP entrants assisted, most of whom were from Africa, had lived in refugee camps.

A pre-embarkation information package is currently being developed to increase humanitarian entrants' prospects of effectively and quickly settling in Australia. The information will be provided to entrants prior to departure from their country of origin and will help orient humanitarian entrants to Australian life, society, culture and services. To supplement this, a Pre-embarkation Information and Cultural Awareness Training course is being piloted in Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya.

Fig. 7-11: IHSS Caseload - People Assisted by Source Region, 2001–02

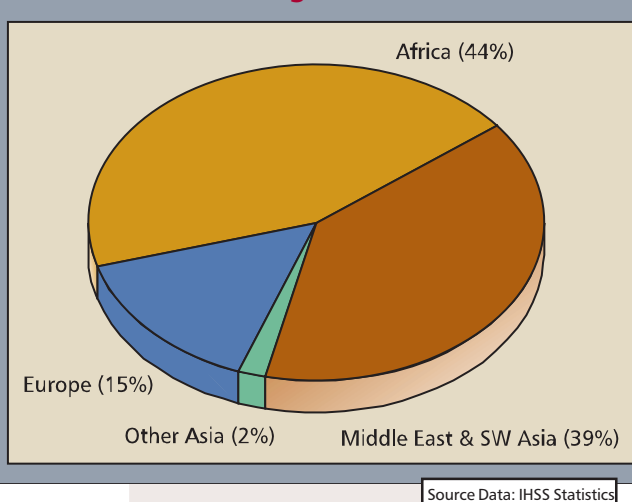


Performance of the IHSS was recently assessed by the Review of Settlement Services and a post-implementation evaluation of the IHSS conducted for the Department by an independent consultant. Both the Review and Evaluation found that there is now greater equity, certainty and timeliness in service delivery compared to the previous arrangements and high client satisfaction with the IHSS services. The Review and Evaluation also identified a need for:

- greater integration and coordination between IHSS and mainstream service providers, and between IHSS and longer term settlement services;
- increased assistance for humanitarian entrants moving into longer term accommodation and in establishing an household;
- improved assistance to gain early access to any necessary medical care;
- better support for entrants with proposers; and
- closer linkages between volunteers and providers.

A number of enhancements are being implemented in 2003–04 as part of the government's response to the Review.

Fig. 7-12: IHSS Caseload - People Assisted by Source Region, 2002–03



Former Child Migrants

In November 2002, International Social Services (ISS) was awarded the contract for administration of the \$3 million Australian Travel Fund to assist former child migrants with reunion visits to family in Britain and Malta. As at end of June 2003, 257 applications were approved with a further 112 pending approval. 75 former child migrants have completed their reunion visit.

The Child Migrants Trust has received funding of \$125,000 a year to continue providing counselling and tracing services to former child migrants. The department is also liaising with state agencies on the development of proposals for the erection of suitable memorials to former child migrants.