

## 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 2003-04, 33,883 clients drawn from some 190 language backgrounds were assisted by the Adult Migrant English Program.
- The Translating and Interpreting Service received over 657,000 calls in 2003-04.
- The Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) provides intensive, initial settlement services to Humanitarian Program entrants. In 2003-04, 10,401 humanitarian entrants were assisted under the IHSS.



# Citizenship, Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services

Australia has always been linguistically and culturally diverse. According to the 2001 Census, 23 per cent of the population were born overseas, and a further 20 per cent born in Australia have a parent born overseas. With current and future migration, diversity will continue to be a feature of the Australian population.

Citizenship, multicultural policy 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 responsibilities.

## Multicultural Australia

### Multicultural Policy

In May 2003, the Government released its multicultural policy statement, *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity*, and announced 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*, and sets strategic directions for 2003-2006 as:

- promoting community harmony;
- increasing the responsiveness of public administration to the needs of a culturally diverse population; and
- optimising the social and economic benefits of cultural diversity.

Australian multicultural policy recognises and celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. It embraces Australian-grown customs and the heritage of Indigenous Australians, early European settlers, and the diverse range of more recent migrants to Australia. It accepts and respects the right of all Australians to express and share their individual cultural heritage, while maintaining 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.

Multicultural policy aims to build on our success as a culturally diverse, accepting and open society, united through a shared future and a commitment to our nation, its democratic institutions and values, and the rule of law.

This vision is reflected in the four principles that underpin multicultural policy:

- Responsibilities of all – all Australians have a civic duty to support those basic structures and principles of Australian society, which guarantee us our freedom and equality and enable diversity in our society to flourish;
- Respect for each person – subject to the law, all Australians have the right to express their own culture and beliefs and have a reciprocal obligation to respect the right of others to do the same;

- Fairness for each person – all Australians are entitled to equality of treatment and opportunity. Social equity allows us all to contribute to the social, political and economic life of Australia; and
- Benefits for all – all Australians benefit from the significant cultural, social and economic dividends arising from the diversity of our population. Diversity works for all Australians.

### Community Harmony

In the aftermath of recent international and domestic events, perceptions of culture, ethnicity and religion have become more sensitive and emotive issues. Multicultural policy provides tools for containing and combating these stresses, and the possible threats to social cohesion.

DIMIA State and Territory offices consult and liaise extensively with community groups and individuals. Departmental advice enables ministers to accurately identify and engage with those communities most in need of support and to accurately target messages decrying racism and vilification when needed. Consultation and liaison, following the outbreak of war in Iraq in 2003 and more recent arson and racist attacks in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne, showed that government actions and messages promoted resilience of affected communities and demonstrated an ongoing commitment to realising the benefits of cultural diversity.

DIMIA also assisted communities to come together to share common understandings, learn from each other, and therefore minimise community relations tensions. During 2003-04, the Arab, Muslim and Jewish communities continued to express a high degree of anxiety about elevated levels of racial and religious vilification and property damage. The Department consulted with Muslim women and conducted a forum in June 2004, exploring issues affecting them and assisting to create links with established women's organisations.

The Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims and Jews, launched in March 2003, supports and encourages Australians to respect the rights of religious communities. The Australian Partnership of Ethnic and Religious Organisations, launched in June 2003, is another example of how inter-faith dialogue is succeeding in building bridges between Australians. DIMIA has provided practical support for these initiatives.

## Access and Equity

Assessment of Australian Government agencies' planning and delivery of services in 2003, against the performance indicators associated with the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* (the Charter), showed a continuation of the trend of improvement observed in recent years. A number of new initiatives are being pursued by DIMIA aimed at streamlining and mainstreaming access and equity reporting arrangements, revitalising commitment to the Charter, and building agencies' capacity across the Australian Public Service to implement it effectively and efficiently. The initiatives pursued by DIMIA include production of an access and equity manual that would provide "best practice" examples of strategies for meeting the Charter requirements, and provision of bilateral support and training to agencies. The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2005) of the introduction of 'access and equity' as a public policy also provides an opportunity for highlighting achievements over the last 20 years and announcing new initiatives where further action is needed.

The Department has furthered working relationships with local governments and their associations through sponsorship of a National Award for Local Government category. The 'Strength in Diversity' award recognises excellence in responding to culturally and linguistically diverse constituencies. The award provides DIMIA with a vital medium through which to work with local government, to highlight good practice that could be replicated, and to make the links between migration, service delivery for culturally and linguistically diverse clienteles, community harmony and sustainable communities.

## Productive Diversity

The Productive Diversity program continues to promote the economic and business benefits of the language and cultural diversity of Australia's workforce and population. The priorities for the program in the next two years will be to continue to produce resource materials and tools to support Australian businesses to better manage and realise the potential benefits of cultural diversity. These resources and tools can be accessed on the Diversity Australia website: [www.diversityaustralia.gov.au](http://www.diversityaustralia.gov.au). The program will also continue to build partnerships and promote the benefits of diversity within peak industry bodies and to CEOs of large corporations and small and medium size enterprises through an integrated communication strategy.

The program organised two business luncheons in 2004 (in Melbourne and Sydney) involving over 300 corporate business leaders, and representatives of peak industry bodies, ethnic chambers of commerce and bilateral business associations. The themes of the two events were 'doing business with Europe' and 'doing business with China', promoting the benefits of cultural diversity for Australian business. The program also produced and disseminated widely a case study titled *Australia's Halal Food Industry: Current and Potential Contribution to the Australian Economy*. The case study provides:

- an estimate of the value of food exports (AU\$3.7 billion) to Muslim countries in 2002;
- a commentary on the potential future contribution of the industry to the Australian economy, using projections of growth in the industry and the size of potential global Muslim consumer markets;
- an indication of the current size of the domestic Halal consumer base and its growth prospects through Muslim temporary visitors to Australia, such as students, tourists and business people; and
- a series of testimonials and micro case studies highlighting food manufacturers and other industry members that have been successful in producing and selling Halal products; domestically and overseas.

## Living in Harmony

In May 2002, the government extended the *Living in Harmony* initiative with the provision of \$3.5 million per year until 2005-06 to promote community harmony and address issues of racism in Australia through a community grants program, national partnerships, and a public information strategy, incorporating Harmony Day.

The Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs invited expressions of interest for the 2004-05 *Living in Harmony* community grants on 3 April 2004. The Department received 529 applications. The Minister announced the 42 successful applicants on 13 August 2004, with new grants totalling nearly \$1.5 million.

Harmony Day 2004 was the most successful yet, with a 17 per cent increase in the number of registered community-based events from 661 in 2003 to 767 in 2004. Harmony Day provides 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.

The Council for Multicultural Australia again assisted the Department to develop its relationships with Harmony Day partners, the number of which increased from 12 in 2003 to 19 in 2004.

## 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 apply for grant of Australian citizenship provided they meet certain eligibility criteria.

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 application. 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 under 16 years of age living in Australia may be included in a responsible parent's citizenship application. Children aged 16 or 17 years may apply for Australian citizenship in their own right, with the consent of a responsible parent.

### Responsibilities and Privileges of Australian Citizenship

The responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship include the right to:

- vote and elect Australia's governments;
- stand for public office or nominate for election to Parliament (subject to section 44(i) of the Constitution);
- apply for an Australian passport and re-enter the country without a resident return visa;
- seek assistance from Australia's diplomatic representatives while overseas;
- apply to enlist in the armed forces and apply for government jobs;
- register children born overseas to an Australian citizen parent as Australian citizens by descent; and
- serve on a jury if called to do so.

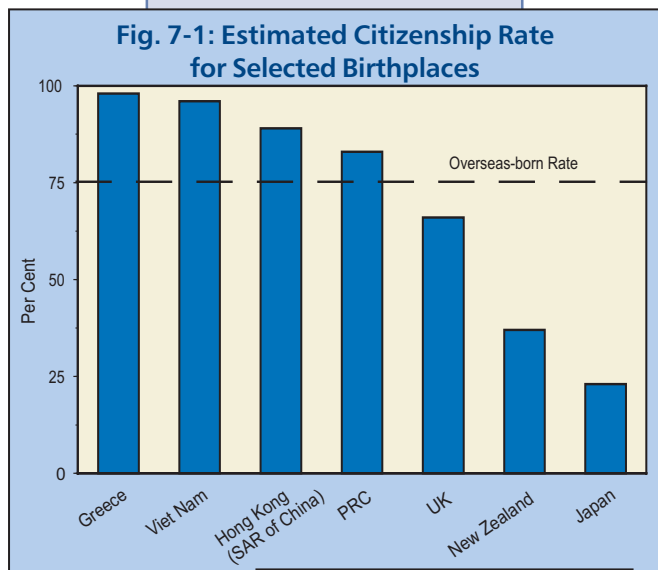
Those choosing to become Australian citizens make a pledge to be loyal to Australia and its people, share in the belief in the democratic process, respect the rights and liberties of other Australians, and uphold and obey Australia's laws.

### 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 at civic or community events.

Since their introduction, affirmation ceremonies have been growing in popularity. On Australian Citizenship Day, 17 September 2004, 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.

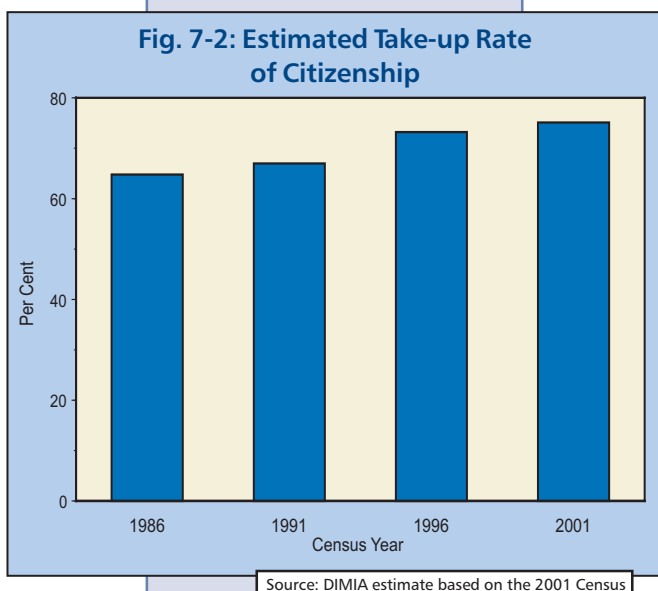
Information from the 2001 Census indicates that the take-up of Australian citizenship by migrants varies significantly. The five countries with the highest take-up rates are Greece (98.0 per cent), Hungary (97.1 per cent), Lebanon (97.0 per cent), Egypt (96.3 per cent) and Viet Nam (96.0 per cent).

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 estimated to be 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.

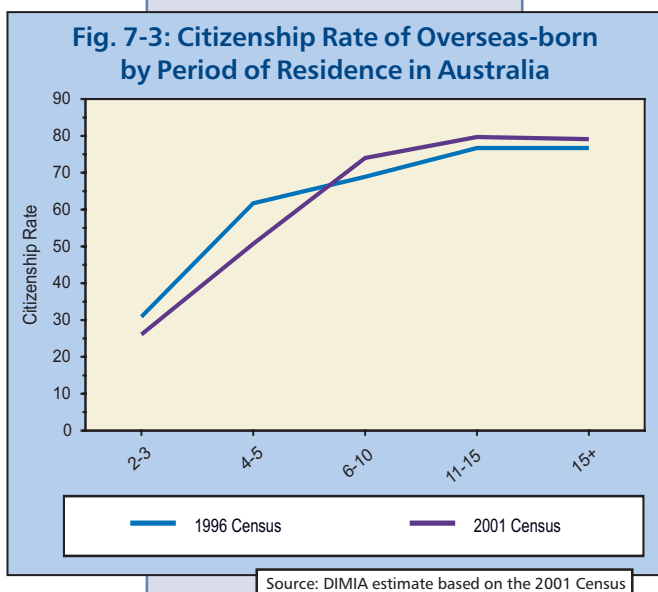


## New Policy Developments

### *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.

### Policy Changes

In October 2003, a change in policy was introduced to provide for grant of Australian citizenship under s13(9)(a) and (b) of the Act, to children under the age of 18 who were born in the period after a 'responsible parent' lost Australian citizenship under s17 of the Act.

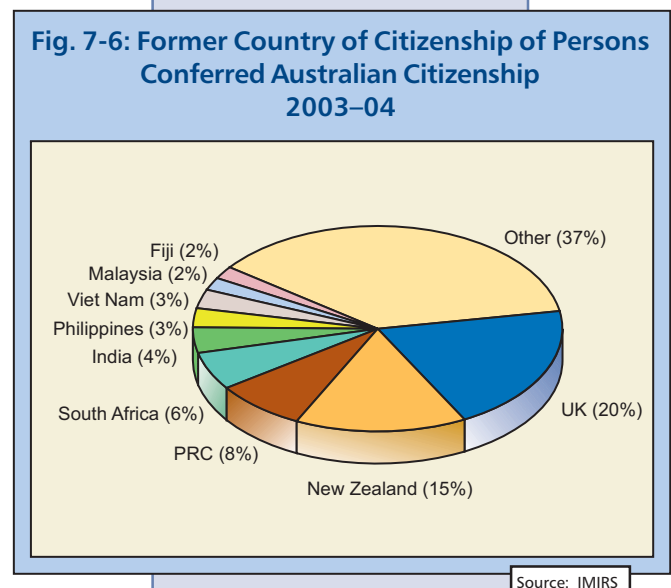
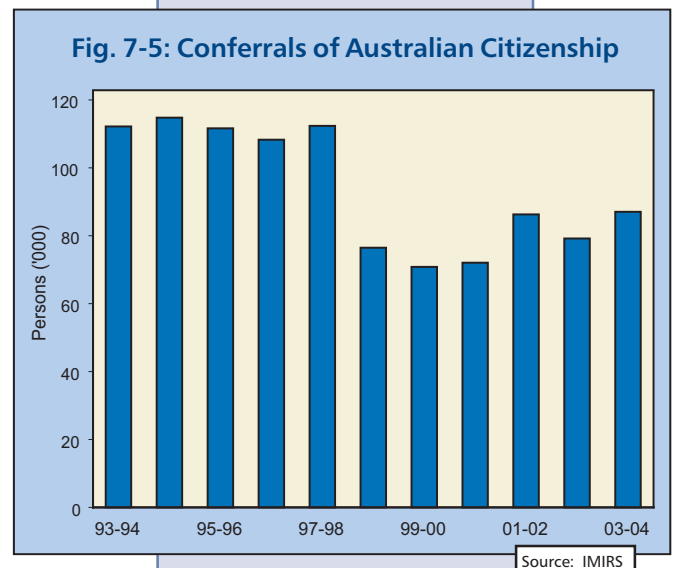
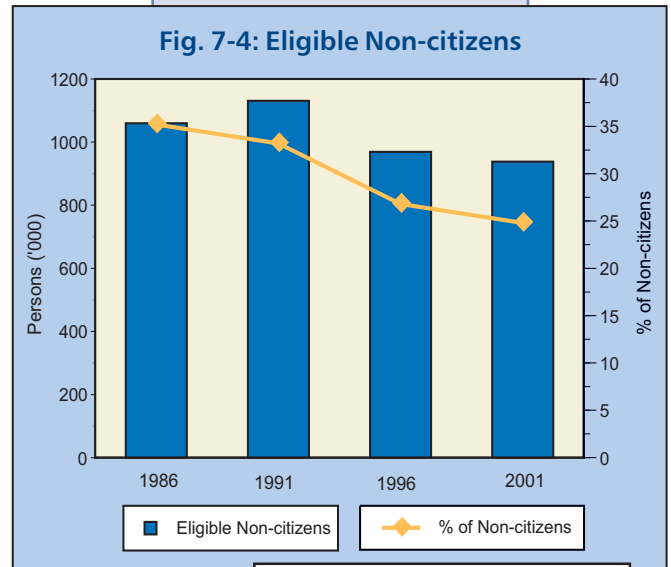
This policy change flows on from the amendments to the Australian Citizenship Act introduced in 2002. The policy change is consistent with the objectives and policy rationale of the repeal of s17.

### Promotion of Australian Citizenship

The Australian Government continued to promote Australian citizenship in 2004.

The objectives of the Australian Citizenship Promotion campaign are to promote the acquisition of Australian citizenship among residentially eligible migrants and to enhance the profile and significance of Australian citizenship in the community. The campaign has been very successful in maintaining application levels for Australian citizenship above pre-campaign levels. The campaign has also successfully engaged the wider community in the campaign, raising the profile and significance of Australian citizenship in the community.

Almost 4,000 people became Australian citizens at ceremonies around Australia for Australian Citizenship Day on 17 September 2004.



## 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 more than \$100 million annually in the Adult Migrant English Program to provide up to 510 hours of English language tuition to eligible new arrivals. For most clients, this tuition is provided free of charge.

In 2004, the five-year limit for completion of AMEP entitlements was removed to allow greater flexibility to AMEP participants if, for family or personal reasons, they are unable to take up their tuition within the first five years of arrival in Australia.

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 over 250 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 tutors and help with curriculum advice and teaching materials.

The **Special Preparatory Program (SPP)** offers additional hours of tuition in a specially tailored, supportive environment, to eligible humanitarian entrants who have been assessed as having special needs arising from their pre-migration experiences, eg torture and trauma.

Since 1997, up to 100 hours have been available for eligible humanitarian entrants through the SPP. In 2004, the hours available to eligible entrants between 16 and 24 years of age with low levels of schooling (ie, 0-7 years) were increased to up to 400 hours.

In 2003-04, the AMEP provided over 6.2 million hours of tuition to 33,883 clients. In addition:

- 4,154 humanitarian entrants participated in the Special Preparatory Program; and
- 4,201 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 176 countries of birth and 190 language backgrounds. Major source countries were the PRC, Viet Nam, the Sudan, Iraq and Lebanon.

In 2003-04, the migration category of AMEP participants was as follows:

Humanitarian Entrants:	25.0 per cent
Family:	61.5 per cent
Skilled:	12.0 per cent
Other:	1.5 per cent

### 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

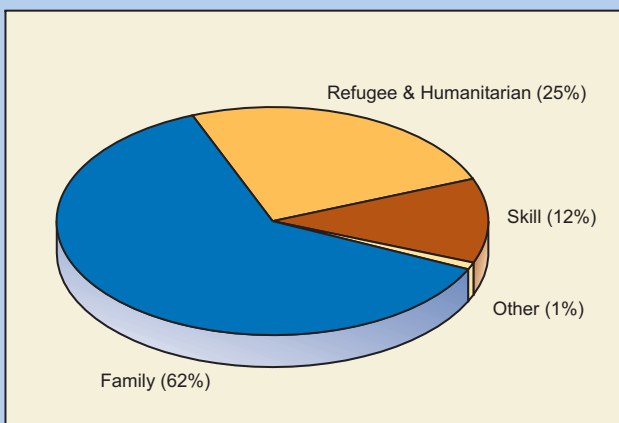
Sixty eight per cent of adult settlers who arrived in 2003-04 and who self assessed as in need of English tuition had registered with the AMEP by 30 June 2004.

The registration rate for each key migration category was:

Humanitarian Entrants	78 per cent
Family	64 per cent
Skill	62 per cent

In 2004-05, AMEP client numbers are expected to total over 38,000.

**Fig. 7-7: Migration Category of AMEP Clients 2003-04**



Source: AMEP Statistics

## Retention

In 2003-04, AMEP clients stayed in the program, on average, the following hours:

Humanitarian Entrants	415 hours
Family	356 hours
Skill	363 hours

## Results

AMEP clients' language outcomes are reported against the Certificates in Spoken and Written English (CSWE), a 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.

In 2003-04 Certificates/Statements of attainment were awarded to exiting AMEP clients as follows:

Level I	35 per cent
Level II	26 per cent
Level III	20 per cent
Record of achievement	19 per cent

## AMEP Research Centre

The AMEP Research Centre provides a range of research, teaching and professional development, curriculum development and publication activities to meet the needs of the AMEP. During 2003-04, research projects included:

- Research to identify the availability, eligibility requirements and use of English as a Second Language (ESL) courses funded by State and Territory Governments. The Report was released in July 2004; and
- Research into identifying strategies for service providers to recruit volunteer tutors to assist AMEP delivery.

## 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 tuition of ESL, 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 period 2003-04 to 2007-08, and will enable English language tuition to be provided to about 500,000 new arrivals across Australia.

## Translating and Interpreting Service

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 \$22m per annum to individuals, Commonwealth and State/Territory government agencies, community organisations, 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 2002-03, over 88 per cent of all interpreting jobs and over 99 per cent of all translating jobs were completed by NAATI Accredited/Recognised interpreters and translators. For 2003-04, these figures improved with 89 per cent of all interpreting jobs and 100 per cent of all translating jobs being completed by NAATI Accredited/Recognised interpreters or translators.

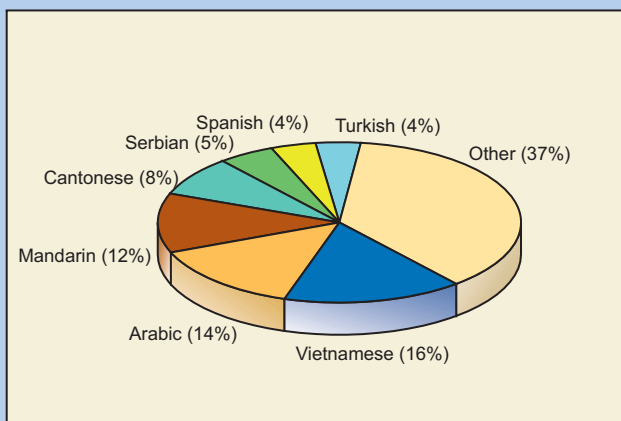
In 2002-03, the highest demand languages were Arabic, Vietnamese, Dari (Afghani), Serbian, Mandarin, Persian, Cantonese, Bosnian, Spanish and Turkish. In 2003-04, these were Vietnamese, Arabic, Mandarin, Cantonese, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, Korean, Persian and Greek.

## New Technology

The *Automated Telephone Interpreting Service (ATIS)*, which provides access to telephone interpreters for English speaking clients in the 18 TIS high-demand languages, was made available to all TIS client organisations from February 2004. Following formal Ministerial launches in several States in July 2004, it is anticipated uptake will grow significantly.

Work progressed on schedule to move TIS into the mainstream DIMIA IT environment.

**Fig. 7-8: Main Languages Used by Interpreters  
(On Site and Phone) 2003–04**



Source: TIS Statistics

## Telephone Interpreting

In 2002–03, TIS received 593,730 incoming calls via the national telephone number (131 450) converting to 352,271 telephone interpreting assignments in more than 100 languages and dialects.

In 2003–04, TIS received 657,487 incoming calls converting to 413,726 telephone interpreting assignments. Telephone interpreting saw growth of 14.9 per cent. This significant growth reflected greater use of the generally more cost-effective telephone interpreting option over on-site interpreting and improved operator performance. Nationally and for the full 2003–04 year, TIS contact centre operators answered 90 per cent of telephone calls within 30 seconds.

## On-site Interpreting

In 2002–03, 61,078 on-site interpreting assignments were provided nationally.

In 2003–04, on-site interpreting requests declined, with a total of 49,225 on-site interpreting assignments being delivered. Factors behind the decline included:

- The Government's measures on border protection resulted in only one unauthorised boat arrival in the last two financial years. This led to low demand for on-site interpreters associated with the processing of applications for protection by asylum seekers in immigration detention facilities, including assistance provided by registered migration agents under the Immigration Advice and Application Assistance Scheme.
- The cost of on-site interpreting charges together with the rate reduction for pre-booked telephone service has encouraged clients to move towards using telephone interpreting as a more cost-effective way of utilising their resources.
- In some States, the emergence of competitor language service agencies providing on-site interpreting services at lower prices and taking a share of the market. However, more recent closure of some of these new services have also seen many clients returning to TIS.

## Fee-free Translating and Interpreting Services

The Australian Government makes available around \$6.5 million annually to TIS for fee-free translating and interpreting services to approved individuals and community organisations.

### *Interpreting Services*

The objective of fee-free interpreting services is to facilitate participation of migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds in Australia's social and economic life.

The total number of fee-free interpreting services provided in 2003–04 to eligible individuals and organisations amounted to 113,752. A breakdown of the fee-free interpreting services provided is as follows:

- Telephone interpreting services: 94,922
- On-site interpreting services: 18,830

The Doctors Priority Line provides prompt fee-free telephone interpreting services for medical practitioners in private practice to help them communicate with their permanent resident and Australian citizen patients who have difficulty with the English language.

Promotion of the Doctors Priority Line to medical practitioners in 2003-04 contributed to an 18.5 per cent increase in telephone use by medical practitioners compared to 2002-03. During 2003-04, of 10,377 telephone interpreting services provided to medical practitioners, a total of 7,341 were provided through the Doctors Priority Line. The initiative also resulted in a 14.4 per cent decrease in the number of on-site interpreting services provided to medical practitioners in 2003-04.

### *Fee-free Translations*

Fee-free extract translations of settlement-related personal documents are provided to eligible migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds during the first two years of permanent residence in Australia. The number of settlement-related document translation tasks completed in 2003-04 amounted to 18,642.

The ten highest demand languages for fee-free translating and interpreting in 2003-04 were: Arabic, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Serbian, Cantonese, Persian, Turkish, Spanish, Russian and Bosnian.

## **Settlement Policy, Planning and Services**

### **Review of Settlement Services**

In May 2003, the Australian Government released the *Report of the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants* (the Review). 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.

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

Review recommendations target key areas of settlement need – English language and literacy proficiency, employment and access to early intervention services to help those at risk of not settling successfully, particularly families and youth.

In the 2004 Budget, the Australian Government announced \$267.6m over four years to deliver an increased Humanitarian Program and to expand settlement services. Of this, \$100.9m over four years will fund initiatives which respond to recommendations of the Review. \$83m will fund DIMIA settlement programs, while \$13.2m will be directed to the Department of Family and Community Services for family and youth programs and \$4.1m will be directed to the Department of Education, Science and Training for vocational English language training.

The Budget also recognised the needs of ageing, established communities with a further \$11.6m provided over four years to create a new program to strengthen culturally appropriate aged care within the Department of Health and Ageing.

To date 20 of the Review's recommendations have been implemented. Progress on the remaining recommendations is underway.

### **Settlement Planning**

Currently, the National Integrated Settlement Strategy (NISS) provides the planning framework which aims to link and improve the services available to migrants and refugees in Australia at the local, regional, State/Territory and national levels.

The *Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Services* identified the need for a more focused, regionally-based, needs-based planning process for DIMIA-funded settlement services, which is supported by improved data analysis capacity and more open communication and consultative arrangements. Such a planning process would support more pro-active and accurate targeting of DIMIA-funded services through grant advertisements and would facilitate the increased settlement of humanitarian entrants in regional locations offering appropriate employment opportunities.

To achieve this, the current settlement planning process and the NISS are being reviewed and a new needs-based planning process will be implemented in 2005.

### **Settlement Database (SDB)**

The Settlement Database (SDB) provides statistical data for departmental officers, other government agencies and community organisations involved in the planning and provision of migrant settlement services. It is an important tool for the planning, targeting and evaluation of settlement services and thus facilitates better service delivery for migrants.

The SDB contains over 1,300,000 records of settler arrivals and visas issued since 1 January 1991, including data on country of birth, age, sex, migrant category, main language, English proficiency, location of residence in Australia, and many other variables. Base records are incorporated daily from DIMIA processing systems and supplementary information is added to these base records from other sources, including an information form completed by approved applicants for permanent residence. The SDB can be accessed via the Internet at [www.immi.gov.au/settle/data](http://www.immi.gov.au/settle/data) with customised reporting available.

### **Settlement Information**

Information to assist new arrivals settle in Australia is provided through DIMIA's *Life in Australia* website [www.immi.gov.au/settle](http://www.immi.gov.au/settle). The information that the website provides is aimed at prospective and newly-arrived migrants, their sponsors and service providers. The topics that may be accessed from this site include: basic facts about Australia, help for migrants, translating and interpreting, learning English, multilingual information, work and business, housing, health and education, and youth-related information. New material added in 2003-04 included information on Australian culture and values.

In addition, the website has information booklets called *Beginning a life in Australia* which contain information on the types of services available to new and prospective migrants and advice on where to go to ask for assistance. The booklets have been developed with specific information for each Australian State and Territory and are translated into 22 community languages. The booklets are updated every six months.

## Grants for Migrant Community Services

The Commonwealth provides funding for grants to not-for-profit community based organisations under the Community Settlement Services Scheme (CSSS) and through 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;
- who live in rural or remote areas; and
- who are refugee and humanitarian entrants or family stream entrants with lower levels of English proficiency.

In 2003-04, DIMIA supported the provision of settlement services to the migrant community through the administration of 352 service agreements with organisations funded under CSSS and through core funding to MRCs/MSAs.

A total of \$27.13 million was provided for migrant community services grants to support the settlement needs of migrants in 2003-04. Of the \$27.13m, \$18.82 million was directed to the CSSS, \$8.16 million was allocated for core funding to MRC/MSAs, and \$0.15m was allocated for training of funded organisations.

## CSSS Program

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.

The principal 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).

A total of 181 new CSSS grants were awarded for the period commencing 1 October 2003 – 30 June 2004. Combined with existing grants, there were 313 CSSS grants managed in the 2003 funding period.

During 2003-04, the CSSS funding year (previously October to September) was aligned to the financial year. Consequently, the majority of grants active in 2003 were operating for nine months - 1 October 2003 to 30 June 2004. Approximately 21 per cent of funds were directed to small and emerging communities, 10 per cent towards rural and remote communities, and 28 per cent towards refugee and humanitarian entrants. The remaining funding was provided to other migrant communities with specific settlement needs.

A program of rolling financial and performance audits of CSSS funded organisations commenced in May 2004. Audits of ten CSSS organisations in WA, NSW and SA were undertaken prior to 30 June 2004. Further audits are planned in 2004-05.

## MRCs/MSAs

Funding to the MRC/MSA network provides for the administration and operational costs of the organisation and support for a range of services to clients. MRCs/MSAs have similar functions to CSSS funded organisations in relation to direct client services, developing community capacity building skills and service planning and development. However, MRCs/MSAs also provide a mentoring role and can manage CSSS grants on behalf of smaller or inexperienced organisations.

MRCs/MSAs also attract and manage grants from other Commonwealth agencies and State/Territory governments, actively participate in settlement planning and networking, develop service directories for the local area and develop and enhance volunteer work.

In total, 31 MRCs/MSAs received core funding during 2003-04; at the end of 2003-04 there were 28 MRCs/MSAs. Core funding to three MRCs: Botany MRC (NSW), Northern Suburbs MRC (WA) and South Metropolitan MRC (WA), ceased at the end of December 2003 due to declining client numbers. Botany MRC subsequently received supplementary funding through the CSSS for the period 1 January 2004 to 30 June 2004. The two MRCs in WA merged and a new Metropolitan MRC commenced operation on 5 January 2004.

In response to the recommendations of the Settlement Services Review, a new standardised work program for MRCs/MSAs was developed in consultation with MRCs/MSAs for implementation, as a pilot, in the 2004-05 MRC/MSA Service Agreement. This will assist MRCs/MSAs identify their work in preparation for the introduction of a combined grants program and to streamline reporting.

Consultation with MRC/MSAs commenced (with distribution of a discussion paper in January 2004) on the development of a new client statistical reporting system to replace the current Settlement Client Information System (SCIS) which ceased to operate in the Department's new technical environment from July 2004.

## Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy

The Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) provides intensive, on arrival settlement support to humanitarian entrants. IHSS aims to help humanitarian entrants achieve self-sufficiency as soon as possible by providing them with specialised services on a needs basis.

Under the IHSS, contracted service providers deliver the following services across all States and Territories:

- Initial Information and Orientation Assistance provides information, and service coordination and links entrants to the services they need in the initial stages of settlement.
- Accommodation Support offers entrants accommodation on arrival and assists them to locate long-term accommodation as soon as possible.
- Household Formation Support (HFS) provides entrants with a basic package of material goods to start establishing a household in Australia.
- Early Health Assessment and Intervention (EHAI) helps entrants to overcome physical and psychological health problems and encourages health care providers to be sensitive to the needs of humanitarian entrants.
- Proposer Support helps proposers to fulfil their role of assisting entrants to settle including access to pre-arrival information resources and a post-arrival “help” service through which further information and guidance are available.

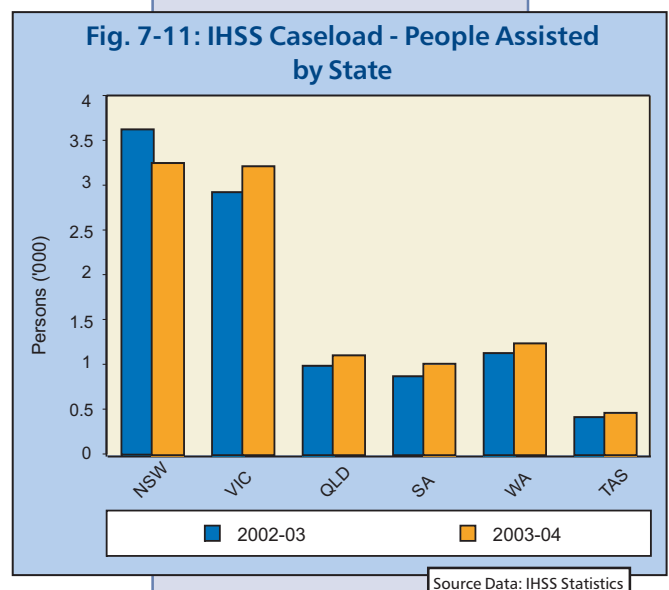
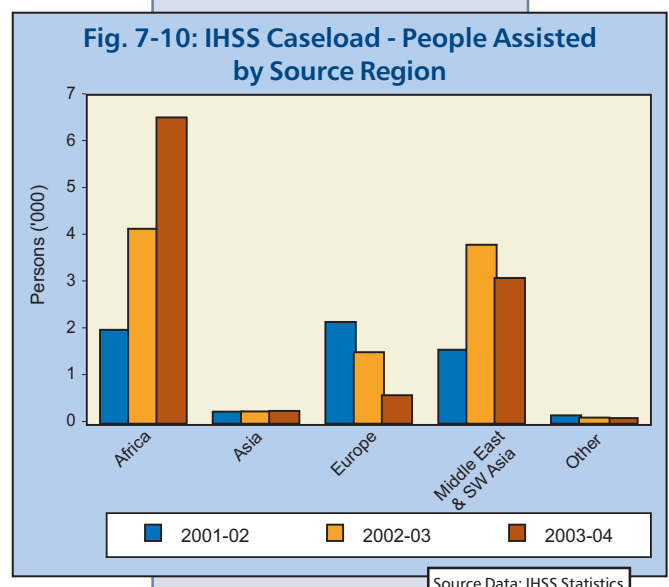
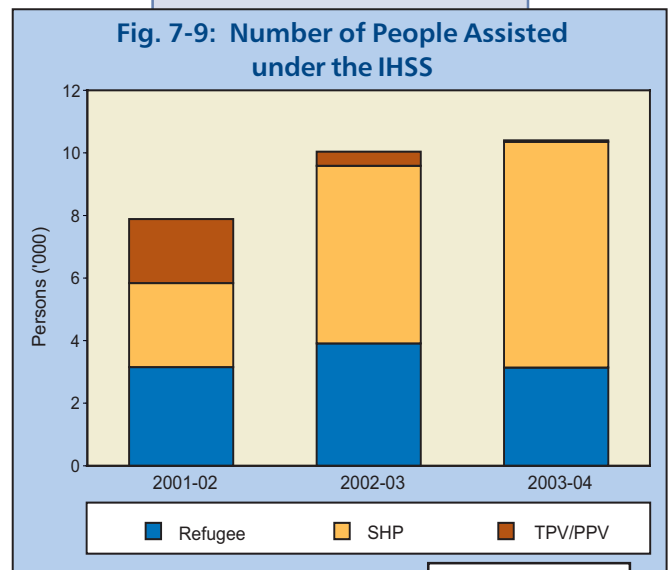
In addition, Community Support for Refugees volunteer groups assist service providers and offer entrants friendship and social support. As at the end of June 2004 there were 1,413 CSR volunteers in 157 CSR groups.

The intensive assistance provided under IHSS is intended for the initial settlement period, which, in most cases, is about six months. Once humanitarian entrants exit the IHSS they are referred to general settlement services provided through Migrant Resource Centres and Migrant Service Agencies.

In 2003-04, 10,401 humanitarian entrants were assisted under the IHSS. Of these, 3,141 were Refugees (30.2 per cent), 7,214 were Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) entrants (69.4 per cent); and 46 were Temporary Protection Visa/Temporary Humanitarian Visa holders and Permanent Protection Visa holders (0.4 per cent).

The African caseload continued to increase in 2003-04, rising to 63 per cent in 2003-04 from 44 per cent the previous year. Entrants from the Sudan comprised 47 per cent of the total assisted under the IHSS in 2003-04 compared to 31 per cent in 2002-03. Although Iraqi nationals formed the second largest nationality group assisted, the proportion of Iraqis fell from 25 per cent in 2002-03 to 15 per cent in 2003-04. This was the result of the increasing focus of the Humanitarian Program on Africa and its decreasing focus on the Middle East, South West Asia and Europe.

As a result of the changing focus, the profile of IHSS clients assisted in 2003-04 also continued to be one of higher poverty levels, lower levels of education and English language proficiency and of greater comparative disadvantage.



The average amount of schooling received by humanitarian entrants in 2003-04 was only 5.0 years<sup>1</sup>, falling from 6.9 in 2001-02 and 6.4 in 2002-03. For the African caseload, the 2003-04 average was only 4.3 years.

75.3 per cent of the 2003-04 caseload indicated they required English language interpreting, up from 64 per cent in 2002-03.

21 per cent of all refugee and SHP entrants in 2003-04 had lived in refugee camps. Most of these people were from Africa, with more than a third having been in a refugee camp for ten or more years.

In 2003-04, DIMIA made the following improvements to IHSS services:

- The package of goods that entrants receive on arrival was enhanced;
- Tenancy training for Refugees aimed at assisting them to fulfil their obligations as tenants in Australia was introduced; and
- Support for Refugees with immediate health needs was increased.

In addition, as a result of the 2004-05 Budget:

- Humanitarian entrants will receive improved case coordination within the IHSS to ensure better use is made of existing services and to provide a single point of contact, particularly in case of emergency; and
- Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) entrants became eligible for initial information and orientation assistance and long term accommodation support.

## Pre-embarkation Information

In September 2003, a pre-embarkation cultural orientation program commenced in the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya for refugee and humanitarian entrants.

The objective of the Program is to better prepare entrants with the necessary knowledge to enhance their resettlement prospects, create realistic expectations for their life in Australia and to help entrants acquire information concerning Australian culture and society prior to arrival.

The Program has since been extended to both the Nairobi and Cairo regions, under contract with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). To date, there have been over 65 pre-embarkation training courses held in Nairobi, Kakuma, Kampala, Abu Rakhm and Cairo, assisting over 1,500 entrants.

## Former Child Migrants

In November 2002, the Australian Government established a travel fund to assist former child migrants with reunion visits to family in the United Kingdom and Malta. As at 30 June 2004, the Australian Travel Fund administrator had received 637 applications. A total of 563 applications had been approved and 308 former child migrants had undertaken their reunion visit as of that date.

The Child Migrants Trust received funding to continue providing tracing and counselling services to former child migrants. In 2003-04, memorials to former child migrants who settled in their state were completed in Queensland and Western Australia.

<sup>1</sup> Figures for average years of schooling are slightly depressed by the inclusion of Humanitarian Program entrants who have not reached school age in the calculations.