



Refugee Council  
of Australia

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## **ENDING TEMPORARY PROTECTION: ANOTHER STEP IN VITAL REFORMS**

The Australian Government's budget announcement that it will scrap the temporary protection visa (TPV) system is an important step towards restoring the nation's commitment to providing ongoing protection to people who have fled persecution.

The Refugee Council of Australia also supports the modest increase in the refugee and humanitarian program by 750 places to 13,750 from 2009-10, as well as an additional \$49.2 million over four years for vocational English training for migrants.

"We are pleased that the Government has begun delivering on its promises to reform some of the most damaging aspects of the refugee migration system, to ensure that Australia lives up to its international obligations, and to provide practical settlement assistance for refugees and humanitarian entrants," Paul Power, CEO of the Refugee Council, said.

"Having access to permanent protection will mean that approximately 1000 TPV-holders can finally go about the task of rebuilding their lives with some certainty about their migration status. It will also enable these refugees who have been living in our community to reunite with their family members from whom they have been separated for many years."

The notion of only granting temporary protection to refugees was first raised in 1998 by former One Nation MP, Pauline Hanson. At the time it was universally derided, including by then Immigration Minister Phillip Ruddock who subsequently adopted the policy in 1999. Since then, of the 11,000 TPVs granted, more than 9500 people received a permanent protection visa when their TPV expired.

"No one will lament the end of the TPV regime, a clearly failed policy which damaged the mental health of refugees needing protection and left vulnerable families separated for years," Mr Power said.

"The commitment to increase the overall refugee and humanitarian intake represents the first increase in the program since 2004. While the quota does not match the growth in the overall migration program, it will go some way to helping Australia do its part in international efforts to ease global refugee crises.

"Increased funding for English language training for migrants settling in Australia will assist in developing sustainable employment pathways for refugees, who are keen to acquire the skills necessary to avail themselves of work opportunities."

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The Refugee Council of Australia represents  
non-government organisations and  
individuals working with and for refugees  
in Australia and around the world