

## **2010 Key issues and priorities in refugee settlement policy**

- 1. Employment** – Investigating ways of improving employment outcomes for refugee and humanitarian entrants, through evaluating and improving the effectiveness of Job Services Australia and giving greater support to successful job placement strategies.
- 2. Housing** – Giving careful consideration to the needs of refugee and humanitarian entrants in strategies to improve housing affordability for Australians on low incomes.
- 3. Education and training** – Improving opportunities for newly arrived young people of post-compulsory school age. Ensuring the education needs of school-aged refugee and humanitarian entrants are not overlooked within the National Education Agreement. Improving the accessibility of apprenticeships and traineeships to new arrivals and people with lower literacy.
- 4. Young people** – Ensuring the needs of newly arrived young people are met through targeted settlement and other programs, with a particular focus on addressing education and training pathways, housing and homelessness, police and legal issues, intergenerational conflict, racism and discrimination, and negotiating culture and identity.
- 5. Families** – Ensuring there are culturally competent family services to support new arrivals with the stress of resettlement, cultural adjustment and the reconfiguration of their families.
- 6. Regional settlement** – Ensuring there is appropriate community and service support for refugee and humanitarian entrants who would like to settle in regional areas or would like to relocate in search of employment.
- 7. Settlement services** – Reviewing the provision of settlement services for refugee and humanitarian entrants, in particular the structure of the Settlement Grants Program and the impacts of short-term funding strategies on service delivery and viability.
- 8. Migration advice and legal assistance** – Expanding access to free migration advice and legal assistance for people seeking to propose humanitarian entrants, as well as for people seeking onshore assistance.
- 9. Positive promotion of humanitarian program and multiculturalism** – Responding to negative rhetoric about refugees, asylum seekers and multiculturalism with a confident and positive promotion of Australia's diversity and its role in welcoming and supporting refugees. Funding independent research on migration issues, to improve national knowledge and planning.
- 10. Planning for a larger resettlement program** – Developing plans for a medium-term expansion of the offshore refugee and humanitarian program, given pressing global refugee resettlement needs and the importance of Australia offering constructive options to assist the development of an Asia-Pacific regional refugee protection framework.

This list of issues was compiled for the information of members of the new Australian Parliament. Each year, after extensive community consultation, the Refugee Council of Australia puts together a submission to the Australian Government on issues to consider in planning the Refugee and Humanitarian Program. The above issues and many others relating to refugee settlement have been explored in recent submissions. For more information, see <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/resources/consultations.html> Additional Refugee Council research on employment, education and other issues can be found at <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/resources/reports.html>