

# **INTEGRATION OR EXCLUSION?**

The resettlement experiences of  
refugees in Australia

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## Abstract

Recent policy changes have created a new era of refugee resettlement in Australia. As a result of the introduction of the onshore refugee program, a two-tier resettlement assistance system has developed. This system differentiates between refugees who have been issued protection visas offshore and onshore, and provides considerably less resettlement assistance to onshore-visaed refugees with Temporary Protection Visas (TPVs). The exclusion of TPV holders from resettlement assistance programs and the temporary nature of the visa has prompted this comparative study of the resettlement experiences of two groups of recently arrived refugees. This thesis considers the experiences of recently arrived refugees within the economic, social, cultural and political spheres of resettlement, in order to develop a deeper understanding of the inter-related nature of the resettlement process and the impact of visa category on the integration of refugees in contemporary Australia.

Kuhlman's (1991) model of refugee resettlement, and definition of integration form the basis of the theoretical framework of the thesis. A multiple method approach has been applied to the study and data from the second cohort of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA) was analysed to present a macro level understanding of the resettlement experiences of recent arrivals in Australia. In Adelaide, interviews with key informants and service providers were undertaken in conjunction with a series of in-depth interviews with 10 Sudanese offshore-visaed Humanitarian entrants and 9 Iraqi onshore-visaed refugees, to provide detailed descriptions of the resettlement experience.

While the resettlement process is found to be difficult for all refugees, the TPV policy acts to compound the problems and disadvantages refugees face in resettlement. Under these circumstances it is found that TPV holders experience social exclusion during their early resettlement in Australia. The importance of host-related factors on the resettlement experience are therefore found to be extremely relevant in contemporary Australian refugee resettlement. Policies regarding visa conditions, and refugees' eligibility for resettlement assistance have a significant impact in all spheres of the resettlement process. These findings suggest that the influence of host society policies must be accorded more

weight in theories of resettlement, given their ability to extensively influence the resettlement process. Further this thesis presents substantial evidence against the TPV policy and recommends that temporary protection in Australia be reviewed, in order to ensure the social inclusion and successful integration of future refugee arrivals.

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## **Declaration**

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available in all forms of media, now or hereafter known.

Julia Hinsliff

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---

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>ABS</b>	Australian Bureau of Statistics
<b>AMEP</b>	Adult Migrant English Program
<b>ARA</b>	Australian Refugee Association
<b>DIMA</b>	Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
<b>DIMIA</b>	Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>GHQ</b>	General Health Questionnaire
<b>HECS</b>	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation for Migration
<b>IHSS</b>	Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy
<b>LSIA</b>	Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia
<b>LSIA1</b>	Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (first cohort)
<b>LSIA2</b>	Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (second cohort)
<b>MRC</b>	Migrant Resource Centre
<b>MRCSA</b>	Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia
<b>NESB</b>	Non English Speaking Background
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organisation
<b>PA</b>	Primary Applicant
<b>PPV</b>	Permanent Protection Visa
<b>PTSD</b>	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
<b>RPV</b>	Return Pending Visa
<b>SAC</b>	Special Assistance Category
<b>SACE</b>	South Australian Certificate of Education
<b>SAHT</b>	South Australian Housing Trust
<b>SBS</b>	Special Broadcasting Service
<b>SHP</b>	Special Humanitarian Program
<b>STTARS</b>	Survivors of Trauma and Torture Rehabilitation Service
<b>TAFE</b>	Technical and Further Education
<b>TB</b>	Tuberculosis
<b>THV</b>	Temporary Humanitarian Visa

<b>TIS</b>	Translating and Interpreting Service
<b>TPV</b>	Temporary Protection Visa
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commission for Refugees