

Humanitarian Youth Arrivals to Victoria (Update 7/06)

Overview

The information presented below is derived from statistics collated by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) based on the data records of Humanitarian entrants. This information is useful in providing a general overview of the primary source countries and settlement trends for refugee young people currently residing in Victoria.

How many refugee young people?

In 2005, 64% of Australia's 13,075 Humanitarian arrivals were under the age of 25. Young people aged 12-24 represented 31% of the total intake. An examination of the data in Figure 1 shows that there has been a slight decrease (8%) in the number of youth arrivals in Victoria over the past year, dropping from 1,127 in 2004 to 1,117 in 2005.

The number of youth entrants coming under the Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) - a visa category which requires applicants to have a proposer in Australia and pay for their own airfares - has dropped slightly, while the numbers coming under the Refugee and Women at Risk programs have increased. Young people on SHP visas still represent the most significant proportion of all Humanitarian youth entrants (66%). This has implications relating to the financial burdens experienced by families on SHP visas who have incurred the cost of airfares and are frequently indebted to their proposers in Australia upon arrival.

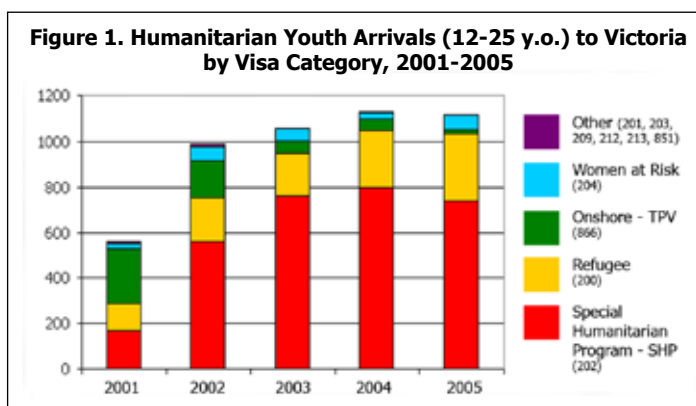
Where are refugee young people coming from?

Young people from Africa and the Middle East represent the largest components of the Humanitarian program for the age group 12-25 (see Figure 2), with young people from Sudan accounting for 50% of all Humanitarian youth entrants to Victoria in 2005.

Sudan	559	Tanzania	5
Iraq	118	Tibet (So Stated)	5
Liberia	89	Sierra Leone	4
Afghanistan	81	China	**
Burma	72	Egypt	**
Ethiopia	59	Former Yugoslavia	**
Iran	25	Guinea	**
Burundi	24	Ivory Coast	**
Thailand	13	Kenya	**
Zaire	12	Kuwait	**
Somalia	9	Palestinian Authority	**
Eritrea	8	Turkey	**
Indonesia	7	Uganda	**
Congo Republic	5	Zimbabwe	**
Sri Lanka	5	TOTAL	1117

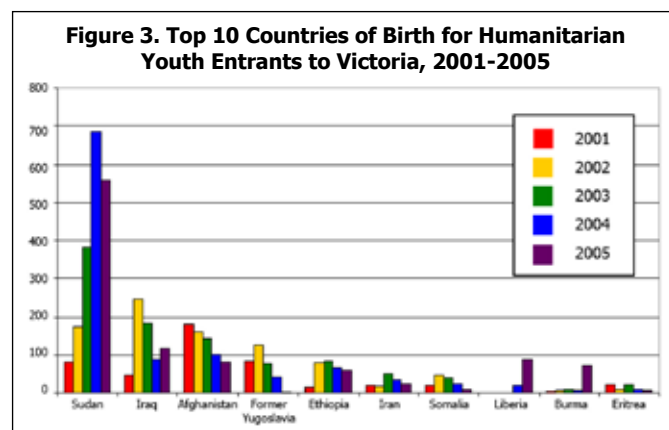
* Note: Country of birth does not necessarily reflect cultural background. For example, Humanitarian entrants born in Thailand are likely to be Karen or Burmese.
 ** Indicates less than 3 persons

It should be noted that as the information was collected directly from Humanitarian entrants at the time visas were granted, some anomalies and issues around accuracy may arise. For example, Local Government Areas (LGAs) of residence are nominated on arrival and movement between LGAs - a common trend during the initial settlement period - will not be reflected in this data.



In terms of the top 10 countries of birth for youth entrants, Figure 3 shows a drop in the number of Sudanese young people arriving between 2004 and 2005, and a shift in the African intake away from the Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea) towards West Africa (Liberia, DR Congo, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Ivory Coast). There has been a significant increase in young people arriving from Liberia and Burma and a slight increase in the number of Iraqi arrivals.

In 2005, 70.2% of Humanitarian youth entrants to Victoria were from Africa, 20.3% were from the Middle East, 9.3% were from Asia and the Pacific, and 0.2% were from Europe.



Changing needs and demographics of refugee families

New and emerging communities

Figure 4 shows some of the major new source countries for refugee young people accepted for settlement in Victoria through the Humanitarian Program. These represent new and emerging communities from West Africa (Liberian, Burundian, Congolese) and Southeast Asia (Karen, Chin, Burmese).

Family size

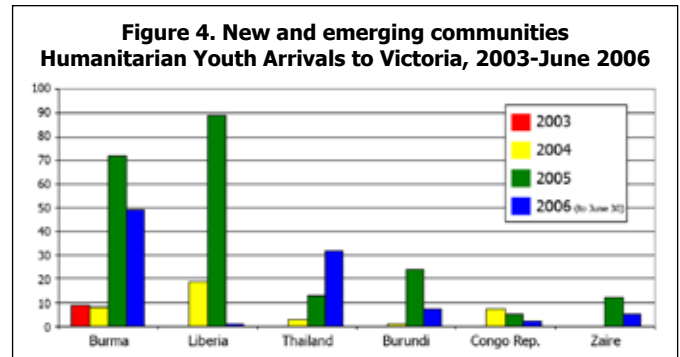
Within the Humanitarian Program, average family size has increased over the past 5 years, predominantly due to the larger groups of families arriving from Africa. Within the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS), for example, 30% of families assisted in 2004/05 had 5 or more members.

Languages spoken

36.8% of all Humanitarian entrants assisted under IHSS in 2004/05 nominated Arabic as their main language, representing the large cohorts of Sudanese and Iraqi arrivals. Other significant languages nominated included Other African (Dinka, Nuer etc), Dari, Persian/Farsi, Amharic, Tigrinya, Burmese, Serbian and Assyrian.

Time spent in refugee camps

In 2004/05, 52% of refugees assisted through IHSS in Australia had spent more than 5 years in a refugee camp, and 32% had spent 10 years or more in a camp. This represents a shift in focus to resettling refugees who have spent prolonged periods in camps.



Note: Source countries do not necessarily reflect cultural background. For example, arrivals from Thailand are likely to be Karen or Burmese from camps on the Thai-Burma border. Those coming from Zaire are likely to be Burundian or Rwandan.

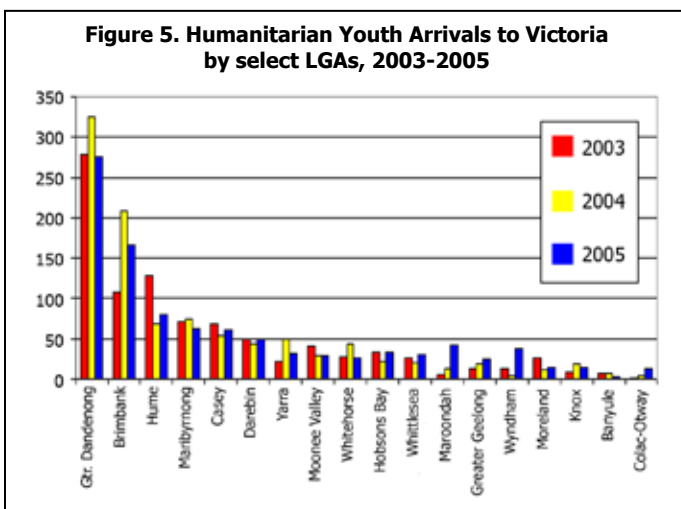
Schooling

The average number of years of schooling of people arriving on Humanitarian visas has been decreasing over the past five years. There are a significant proportion of young people arriving in Victoria with little or no previous education. Those assisted through IHSS in 2004/05 had an average of 2.4 years of schooling, which is a significant decrease compared with the average 5.7 years of schooling in 2003/04 (this includes adults).

Where are refugee young people settling in Victoria?

Figures 5 and 6 confirm many of the settlement trends of recent years, with the outer southeastern and northwestern regions of Melbourne being the primary destination for Humanitarian arrivals in Victoria. In 2005, 24.7% of all Humanitarian youth entrants settled in the City of Greater Dandenong followed by 15% in Brimbank, 7.3% in Hume and 5.5% in Maribyrnong and Casey.

There continues to be a trend in settlement to metropolitan fringe areas, particularly Wyndham, Hume, Casey and Whittlesea. LGAs that saw significant growth in Humanitarian youth arrivals between 2004 and 2005 included Wyndham (660% increase), Maroondah (207%), Colac-Otway (160%) and Hobsons Bay (52%).



Greater Dandenong	276	Yarra Ranges	8
Brimbank	167	Boroondara	7
Hume	81	Not Recorded	6
Maribyrnong	62	Ballarat	5
Casey	61	Moira	5
Darebin	49	Manningham	4
Maroondah	43	Stonnington	4
Wyndham	38	Warrnambool	4
Hobsons Bay	35	Banyule	**
Yarra	33	Frankston	**
Whittlesea	32	Bass Coast	**
Moonee Valley	30	Melbourne (Unspecified)	**
Whitehorse	27	Baw Baw	0
Greater Geelong	25	Bayside	0
Greater Shepparton	17	Cardinia	0
Knox	15	Latrobe	0
Moreland	15	Mornington Peninsula	0
Colac-Otway	13	Port Phillip	0
Monash	12	Queenscliffe	0
Kingston	10	South Gippsland	0
Melbourne	10	Swan Hill	0
Glen Eira	8	Wodonga	0
Mildura	8	TOTAL	1117

* LGAs are nominated on arrival. Movement between LGAs after initial settlement are not reflected in these statistics. For example, we know that many families will move several times in the first few years of settlement in order to secure affordable and suitable accommodation.