



Answer to question:

PARLIAMENTARY JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION

MIGRATION, PATHWAY TO NATION BUILDING INQUIRY

QUESTION: I am just interested if there is any study or review that has been done comparing who takes the lead, whether it is regional development organisations, whether it is business or whether it is a settlement service? Where does it work, where does it not work and why not? Has there been any work in that space that you are aware of?

ANSWER: Research conducted by SSI and the University of New England shows that successful regional settlement is built on a multi-partner approach. Their report, “From the 'resistant' to the 'champions' Community”, released February 2023, shows that successful settlement and integration involve mutual adaption by the host community and newcomers, and that successful initiatives work across the whole community to support regional settlement.

The report is available at

https://www.ssi.org.au/images/insights/Community_attitudes_toward_refugee_settlement_in_Armidale_Report_2023_1.pdf

Likewise, research by the Monash Migration and Inclusion Centre and Welcoming Cities identifies five key factors for successful regional settlement:

- Locally-driven coordination, consultation, planning and budgeting
- Meaningful consultation and a culture of welcome in receiving communities
- Employment that matches demand with the characteristics of new migrants
- Accessible housing, transport and culturally-appropriate services
- Established ethnic communities and multicultural organisations (desirable)

The report is available at <https://welcomingcities.org.au/regional-migration-queensland/>

The Regional Australia Institute also identifies a range of key stakeholders and initiatives for successful regional settlement in their report “Steps to Settlement Success”, available at

https://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/common/Uploaded%20files/Files/MigrationToolkit_v6.pdf

QUESTION: I will want to come back at the end to ask about comparable countries and settlement programs and all these issues that we've discussed, even including citizenship ceremonies and tests and things, and whether you can give us some indication of that, especially given we're going to be chairing this international refugee committee. It is a great opportunity for Australia to actually not only lead—I think we lead in many ways, but we're learning that others may be doing things a little bit differently....

ANSWER:

Regarding questions on the citizenship test, we refer to the response to questions on notice to this committee from our member organisation Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, which compares citizenship requirements across several countries.

UNHCR's Integration Handbook for Resettled Refugees has best practice examples from various resettlement countries on how to support refugee resettlement. It provides examples in the areas of support services, housing, health, language, employment and education. The Handbook is available at <https://www.unhcr.org/handbooks/ih/>

Canada

In Canada, the Settlement Program assists immigrants and refugees in overcoming barriers specific to the newcomer experience, such as a lack of official language skills and limited knowledge of Canada, so that they can participate in social, cultural, civic and economic life.

This program focuses on

- needs assessment and referrals
- information and orientation
- language training and skills development
- employment-related services and
- community connections

There are also support services to ensure that programming is accessible, such as transportation, child-care and translation services. All services are designed and delivered by service provider organizations in Canada and overseas.

The Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) provides immediate and essential support services and income support to assist in meeting refugees' resettlement needs. Essential services are supported through contributions to service provider organizations.

RAP services include, but are not limited to

- reception services
- assistance with accommodations
- links to essential federal and provincial programs
- life-skills training, including orientation on finances and other day-to-day matters

Information is available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/partners-service-providers/funding.html>

New Zealand

In New Zealand, refugees who arrive under the Refugee Quota Program are granted Permanent Residence status in New Zealand. They spend their first 2 weeks in New Zealand in managed isolation. They then transfer to Te Āhuru Mōwai o Aotearoa. The Centre is managed by Immigration New Zealand, which works in partnership with other government agencies and non-government organisations to run the five-week reception program. The reception program prepares refugees for their new lives in New Zealand.

Prior to arrival in New Zealand refugees are provided with information on working and living in New Zealand and an assessment is completed for each refugee to identify needs and services required once refugees arrive at the Centre. Settlement health assessments are also completed outside of New Zealand before arrival and any followed up by the medical team at the Centre. Key focus areas for the reception program are:

- Health and mental health assessments, initial treatment and health promotion, and
- Settlement planning, including orientation to working and living in New Zealand and an employment assessment for working age refugees, and
- Education, including English language. Refugee children are also prepared for their introduction into the New Zealand classroom and national curriculum.

After completing the reception program, quota refugees are settled throughout New Zealand in: the Auckland region, Waikato, Manawatu, the Wellington region, Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin, Invercargill, Blenheim, Timaru, Ashburton, Levin and Masterton. Suitable housing is located for refugees prior to completion of the reception program – either public housing or private rentals.

In the community, quota refugees are provided settlement support for up to 12 months including a community orientation program that complements the reception program and support to link to services they require to support their settlement in communities.

Information is available at <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/our-strategies-and-projects/supporting-refugees-and-asylum-seekers/refugee-and-protection-unit/new-zealand-refugee-quota-program>