

LOCAL REFUGEE ACTION PLAN



Liverpool City Council, Liverpool MRC in collaboration with
the Liverpool Refugee and Migrant Interagency

LIVERPOOL'S GROWTH

Liverpool is the face of modern multicultural Australia. We have the richness of Aboriginal heritage, cultural diversity and language. We are home to one of the highest concentrations of Australia's recent arrivals. The cultural diversity of our city creates opportunities to increase the community's capacity, develop community leadership, and become active members of society.

In Liverpool, we aim to reach out to those who may feel they live 'in' a community but are not part 'of' it. We seek to engage and give a voice to those who may feel isolated or marginalised; and encourage all to participate in all aspects of civil society.



Liverpool is going through rapid and significant economic, demographic, infrastructural, and physical change and is one of the fastest growing regions in Sydney. For example:

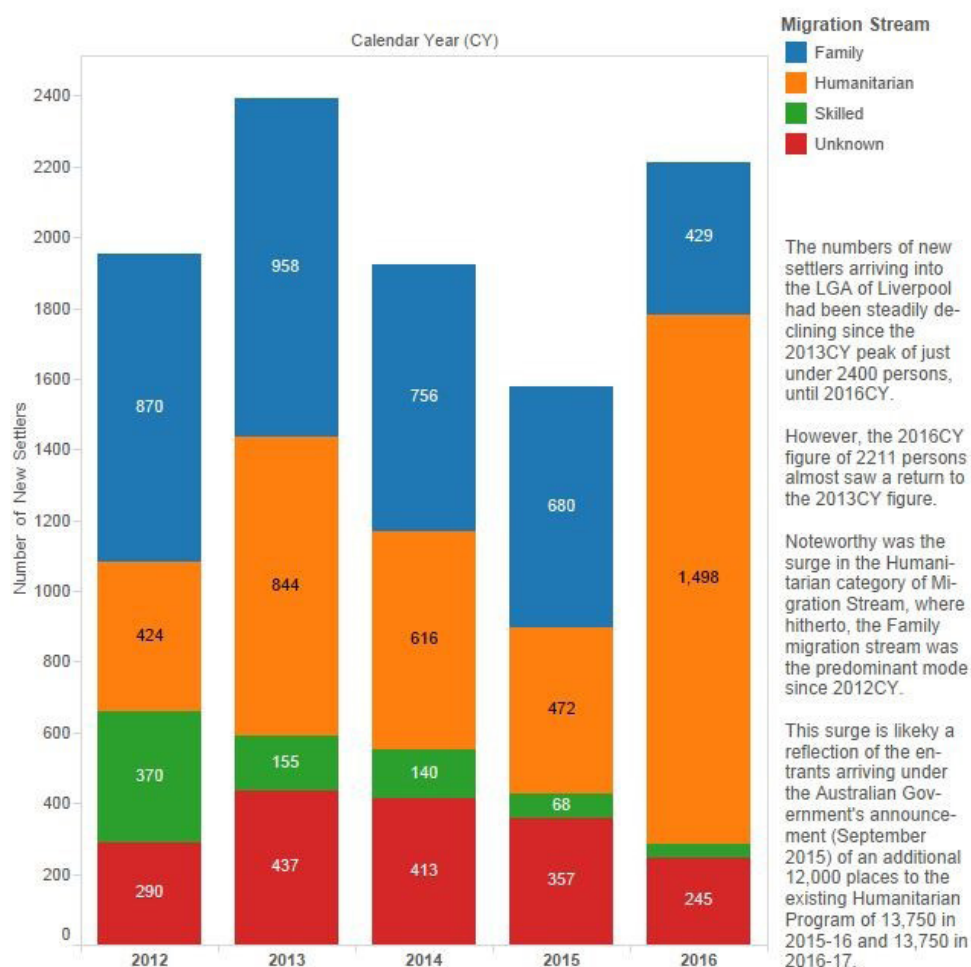
- The population is expected to almost double, from 180,000 to more than 320,000, over the next 20 years.
- Increases in refugee resettlement, as announced by the Australian Government of 12,000 Syrian-Iraqi refugees over 2016-2017, in addition to an incrementally growing annual humanitarian intake are expected to have a significant impact on Liverpool.
- Liverpool is becoming a learning city, with the University of Wollongong opening on a small scale in 2017, before moving into larger premises in the new Civic Plaza development in 2019. Western Sydney University has unveiled plans for its new Higher Education Centre at Liverpool, a move that will significantly expand higher education opportunities for residents, help transform the city's knowledge economy and drive business development in the region.
- The proposed Western Sydney Airport development is expected to transform and drive future investment, jobs, and therefore settlement patterns.

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN LIVERPOOL

The following graph reflects the numbers and composition of migrants settling into the Liverpool Local Government Association (LGA) over the last five years. A marked increase in humanitarian entrants settling in the Liverpool LGA can be observed between 2015-2016, with numbers tripling from 472 in 2015, to 1498 in 2016.

Number of New Settlers to Liverpool LGA (by Migration Stream and Calendar Year)

source: DSS Settlement Reporting Facility (2017)



data | analyse | interpret
a Liverpool MRC work-in-progress

In view of the increase in refugee settlement in the Liverpool LGA, Liverpool City Council and Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre have adopted a collaborative approach to address settlement in Liverpool to better align coordination in service delivery and to reduce service duplication.

Liverpool has held four sector briefing sessions since May 2016 with government and non-government agencies, comprising approximately 100 attendees. These briefings have been established to keep relevant agencies up to date with information in relation to the additional intake and provide an avenue to identify service gaps and a collaborative approach for Liverpool.

SUMMARY FROM SECTOR BRIEFING SESSIONS

Stakeholders were engaged in consultation in relation to current programs and gaps in service provision. Below are summary points from discussions held at sector briefing sessions which identified key issues and challenges.

Sector gaps, challenges and needs:

- Limited funding and resourcing to respond to the additional support requirements of the additional intake.
- Lack of ongoing case management for highly vulnerable clients – while Complex Case Support is an option, this only lasts for up to six months generally and issues can often extend well beyond this period.
- There is a need for greater collaboration across the sector and improved communications among all stakeholders.
- The need to keep track / accessing refugee re-settlement of communities after initial settlement period is crucial to evaluation process (i.e. after exiting Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) support).
- A need for additional supports to respond to unique issues and needs faced by older refugees (i.e. 65+) such as social isolation, aged care services and further English language support (cf. exclusion from Skills for Education and Employment program (SEE)).
- The need for the Liverpool Community Leaders Forum to be better resourced and informed.

Language barriers / service access issues:

- Lack of funding for services to access translating and interpreting services and underutilisation by services such as specialists.
- A regulatory framework for accountable culturally appropriate support to refugees is lacking and needed.
- Recurring issues exist around translation of letters / communication as correspondence is usually in English.
- Length of wait time to access services is problematic, often because of insufficient resourcing.
- There is a need for more computer literacy support as service engagement becomes increasingly digitally based.

English language acquisition, education and employment:

- Challenges with adjustment in schooling due to disrupted education. There is also a greater need for remedial education where broken schooling exists.
- No Intensive English Centre support for young people aged 18 years and over in the Liverpool area. Alternative pathways to further study for refugee young people are required and there needs to be consideration for a seniors college in Liverpool as it is a challenge for students to travel to Bankstown.
- Overseas skills recognition challenges. Costs are high and alternate pathways need to be developed.
- Post Adult Migration English Program (AMEP) English support needs for those ineligible for the SEE Program i.e. carers, people aged over 64 and people who have pre-level 1 English proficiency.
- A lack of disability data / information for planning in schools mean that there are significant delays in placement into school for these students.

- A lack of understanding regarding loss of English language entitlements for the Special Preparatory Programme (SPP) and AMEP in the community. There is a need for community education around this. Newly arrived people are postponing enrolment and therefore losing their hours.
- Mental health, torture and trauma may attribute to broken attendance of AMEP, which means students start from zero again. There needs to be greater awareness among all stakeholders of the consequences of this.
- A need for more employment programs to help refugees to join the workforce and gain meaningful employment.

Youth needs:

- A need for more resources and programs for refugee young people, such as youth mentoring programs, and recreational activities that are affordable, well suited and culturally appropriate.
- There is a lack of specific services catering to young refugees.
- More arts based projects especially for young people that are on-going are required, because all current programs are ad hoc.

Public infrastructure challenges:

- Physical infrastructure needs to be improved to support public transport. Public transport is cumbersome. For example; an eight minute drive instead of a 45 minute bus ride.
- New arrivals also face the challenge of knowing how to navigate the transport systems. Moreover, transport for people without their own vehicle is difficult, especially for people who are living on the outskirts of suburbs where very few public transport options are available.
- Recreational activities and space for young people and adults is lacking. Addressing this could significantly improve social support and connection.
- Venues and facilities are lacking. This is partially because of the cost attached to existing venues, which makes it difficult to run community programs and seminars near the Liverpool City Centre.

Health Issues:

- There are significant challenges to timely disability support access on arrival. This includes equipment, National Disability Insurance Scheme support, home modifications and assessment.
- There is a need for resourcing as well as sector development for mainstream services to be more responsive to the significant mental health concerns presenting among newly arrived refugees.
- Across age support from Early Childhood is needed to support newly arrived refugees.
- Policy restrictions and procedural challenges in pursuing family reunion is creating mental stress for newly arrived refugee families.

SUMMARY FROM SECTOR BRIEFING SESSIONS (CONT.)

Roundtable discussions held with Professor Peter Shergold

NSW Coordinator General for refugee resettlement Professor Peter Shergold provided the following updates and information.

Key focus areas:

Supporting refugees to enter the labour market – NSW Corporate Engagement Strategy is working closely with Friendly Nation Initiative and Business Council of Australia to improve employment opportunities for refugees. The NSW Government is working with corporate leaders on pathways and job opportunities. Below is a list of organisations demonstrating an interest in supporting the initiatives:

- AMP Foundation
- Woolworths
- Telstra
- Westpac
- Australia Post
- Harvey Norman
- Clubs NSW
- NRMA
- Allianz

Whole of community approach

A whole of community approach is required, with the aim to harness goodwill which exists across all sectors of the community to improve settlement outcomes for refugees. There is also a need to harness civil society through individual supportive measures.

Examples below:

- **Individuals** – Over 750 offers of assistance have been registered on the NSW Government 'I Can Help' website by individuals to assist refugees. <https://www.nsw.gov.au/refugee-settlement/i-can-help>
- **Education sector** – All NSW Universities have committed to additional initiatives to support refugee students (including scholarships).
- **Syrian and Iraqi communities** – Capturing, promoting, and supporting the work that communities already do.
- **Business Sector** – Premier's Roundtable elicited strong support from leading employers to provide training, to mentoring, micro-financing and support for entrepreneurs and job pathways.
- **Clubs NSW** – MOU to provide employment and work experience opportunities for refugees.
- **NSW Public Sector** – A commitment to provide at least 100 jobs.

WAY FORWARD LOCALISED ACTION PLAN

Following sector briefings and identifying local Liverpool needs the Localised Action Plan was established to support the overall process. The Localised Action Plan is a living document and will continue to be updated, and measured against its progress and evolve with trends.

PRIORITY AREA: SOCIAL INCLUSION, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCESS

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURABLE OUTCOMES
Establish ongoing arts based mentoring and leadership programs for young people	January 2017 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of young people engaged • Leadership opportunities increased for young people • Mentors established and supporting the program
Address social isolation and access to aged care services for older refugees (65+) and those with disabilities	April 2017 – December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate a linkage of support services for older refugees • Strategies developed to support older refugees gain access to services and programs • Consultations with older refugees • Number of older refugees participating in activities
Develop and maintain a community leaders forum	March 2017 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders forum established • Number of leaders involved in the project • Aims and objectives of the group developed • Outcome based/united forum to address key issues and responses
Advocate for translating and interpreting services funding for state funded services	June 2017 – December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of state funded services consulted • Strategies developed to address underutilisation by services • Community education and engagement with real estate agents and specialist services that should use translating services
Improve transportation disadvantage and access for people in the Liverpool LGA, including 2168 area	August 2017 – March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key transport issues highlighted to relevant providers • Responses collated and alternate options developed
Explore opportunities to create venues to run community programs in the City Centre, including youth friendly spaces	July 2017 – December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venues and spaces explored • Opportunity to trial spaces in CBD for communities • Low cost usage for low socio-economic groups
Establish welcome programs for refugees	March 2017 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs developed and promoted • Social impacts on all communities • Sense of belonging, pride and respect in Liverpool

PRIORITY AREA: EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURABLE OUTCOMES
Advocate for an Intensive English Senior Centre in Liverpool	April 2017 – February 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultations and discussions held with IECs in Liverpool and Bankstown • Current capacity of student intake/waiting lists • Need identified through report findings • Recommendations put forward to relevant bodies
Explore alternate pathways to study for young people	January 2017 – June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate options available for young people • Identified gaps in pathways • Advocacy for CALD students i.e. Links 2 Learning models to be funded in the Liverpool LGA
Support programs for parents to help them understand the school education system	January 2017 – December 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultations with parents/teachers • Program plan outlined • Increased engagement of parents
Investigate opportunities that provide English and computer literacy classes for seniors 65+	April 2017 – December 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships established • Courses developed • Number of seniors attending • Feedback from participants • Knowledge gained • Advocacy for on-going courses for seniors
Apply for funding to establish on-going employment opportunities for refugees	December 2016 – June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project scope developed • Funding grant submitted • Opportunities developed
Develop pathways for refugees to gain local work experience and gain meaningful employment	March 2017 – June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of local business and organisations signed up to support refugees gain local experience • Employment training courses delivered • Number of refugees gaining experience and confidence in the workforce

PRIORITY AREA: HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURABLE OUTCOMES
Raise awareness about the mental health challenges experienced by Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community members to improve the understanding of general public, stakeholders and communities	January 2016 – December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness around mental health and its impacts on communities • Number of workshops delivered • Number of communities participated • Development of a resource film • Development of a speaker's network
Investigate opportunities and options for ongoing case management for highly vulnerable clients	January 2016 – December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options presented for on-going case management support • Advocacy for increased complex case management and support
Develop strategies that aim to better support parenting from early childhood through to adolescence	March 2017 – December 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased parenting programs available • Strategies developed and programs delivered • Number of families participated and its positive impact on children and adolescence
Crime prevention and safety awareness	January 2017 – December 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime prevention workshops delivered • Increased community awareness around safety and support available • Understanding about safety and rights • Increased community engagement between police and the community

Liverpool Council and the Liverpool MRC thanks the following participants who were part of the sector briefing sessions to guide the development for the Localised Action Plan and contribute to a shared response for Liverpool.

Name	Role	Organisation
Peter Andrews	Service Centre Manager	Department of Human Services
Dr Eddie Jackson	Director Community & Culture	Liverpool City Council
Kamalle Dabboussy	CEO	Liverpool MRC
Guy Haberley	Duty Officer	NSW Police - Liverpool LAC
Marisa Salem	Manager	Refugee Health
Olivia Nguy	Client Services Manager	Liverpool MRC
Shabnam Bhana	Community Development	Liverpool City Council
Emma McCarthy	Officer	Liverpool MRC
Rebekah Elliott	A/Coordinator	Liverpool City Council
Rafaella Frisina	CPO	GreenValley Police
Kenneth Hardie	Duty Officer	NSW Police - Liverpool LAC
Nesan Kistan	Captain, Multicultural Director	Salvation Army
Andrea Pritchard	Direct Services Team Leader	STARTTS
Bernardino SIRY	MCLO	NSW Police – Green Valley LAC
Belinda Spicer	Team Leader	Salvation Army – Greater Liverpool
Ruth Ta’ala	Multicultural Service Officer	Department of Human Services
Marlin Babakhan	Manager	Multicultural Health
Amin Gadalla	Service Officer	Multicultural Health
Jacqueline Druart	Manger	MTC Australia
Yamamah Agha	HSS Service Delivery Manager	SSI
Iryna Druzenko	Manger	Navitas
Anita Cuca	Manager	Anglicare
Maxine Goodwin	Officer	Sisters of Charity Outreach
Pat Hall	Manager	Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections
Maree Collins	Officer	Officer Mission Australia
Natalie Amery	Officer	Anglicare
Nick Magriplis	A/Director	Public Schools
Cristian Soto Hernandez	Officer	TAFE
Sayed Osman	Caseworker	Bonnie Women’s Service
Amitabh Rajouria	Service Coordinator	SSI

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