

***Migrants***

***and***

***Refugees***

**A policy statement of the  
Communist Party of Australia**

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# ***Migrants and Refugees***

Today, worldwide, there are an estimated 20 million refugees, 30 million “displaced” persons, and 150 million “economic” migrants.

About 20 million people have been uprooted from their homes and forced to cross an international border. Huge though this number is, there is an even greater displacement crisis. There are an estimated 30 million internally displaced persons in the world. The number may be even higher.

In the Asia-Pacific region alone there are half a million internal refugees in Sri Lanka, close to two million Afghans in Pakistan, two million Burmese refugees on the border of Bangla Desh, several hundreds on the border between West Papua and Papua New Guinea.

Some refugees have been resettled in other countries but millions of others are spread across the world housed in refugee camps. However, their distribution is unequal. The real burden of assisting refugees is borne by the world’s poorest nations.

One new feature of current refugee flows is their high female component, which has developed against the backdrop of the growing use of female labour, especially women from Third World countries.

## ***A CRISIS OF CAPITALISM***

Migration and refugee flows are a consequence both of imperialism in today’s world and yesterday’s colonial occupations. They are a natural response to poverty, war, unemployment, homelessness and persecution—all of which are capitalist-made social phenomena. Natural disasters are only a small contributing factor.

Wars orchestrated by the US and NATO, economic sanctions imposed by the capitalist countries, ethnic and religious sectarian conflicts, which the rivalries and competitiveness of capitalism encourage and capitalist governments foment as a means of “divide and rule”, as well as political persecution in many countries have all contributed to the waves of refugees fleeing their countries.

A consequence of the rivers of wealth flowing in the form of profits to the transnational corporations is the globalisation of poverty that afflicts the underdeveloped world. Corporate globalisation demands the free circulation of capital and commodities. People are reduced to mere commodities and their rights to migration are subject to market considerations.

Poverty also impacts on many in the developed capitalist countries, particularly the immigrants and, more particularly, asylum seekers who find themselves outside local immigration laws. These victims of corporate globalisation constitute a reservoir of cheap labour.

Migration is thus a structural component of labour force mobility. As such, the transnational corporations seek to influence government migration policies to suit their needs.

There is a direct relationship between globalisation, the growth of poverty and discrimination, and the suppression of rights. As globalisation proceeds, more people are denied their economic, political, social and cultural rights. The brutal exploitation of underdeveloped countries by the transnationals has made it more difficult for people to survive in their traditional communities or countries.

Skyrocketing debt and unfair trade rules have produced economic crises in many countries. Structural adjustment programs imposed by the IMF, the World Bank and the developed industrial countries have undermined production, employment and social programs, contributing to migration and a flow of refugees from many countries and regions.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES**

Protecting refugees is a core human rights issue. At the centre of the international refugee regime is the fundamental right of any individual to seek asylum in another country.

Article 14 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrines the rights of asylum seekers. It states that “***Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution***” when all other forms of human rights protection have failed. Individuals should be able to leave their country freely and seek refuge elsewhere. The availability of asylum can be a matter of life or death for those at risk of persecution or abuse.

While there is an assumption that everyone enjoys basic human rights, this is not the case, particularly for refugees.

The UN declared right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution is under serious threat. It is being ignored or applied in a discriminatory manner by a number of countries, including Australia.

Although the vast majority of refugees continue to seek protection in the world's poorer nations, it is the wealthy industrialised states of Europe, North America and Australia that have adopted the most hostile and restrictive refugee policies designed to stem flows and keep people out and to deny them the elemental right to apply for refugee status.

These restrictive policies are implemented within a climate of hostility and xenophobia towards asylum seekers coming from some countries. Politicians and the media have shamelessly manipulated racist fears in order to muster political support.

## **CRIMINALISING REFUGEES**

Increasingly restrictive immigration policies have forced some of the millions of refugees to make use of clandestine means to enter countries, contributing to a distorted impression of asylum seekers and their rights.

Repressive laws and practices have aggravated the already difficult conditions facing asylum seekers. They are stigmatised through descriptions such as “illegal”, “queue jumpers”, “they’ll take your job”, “they’re not like us”, “they’re different”. This fuels anti-immigrant and anti-refugee feelings while imposing institutional discrimination often based on racial and religious grounds even though this is not openly stated.

**In reality many asylum seekers who flee persecution and human rights abuse leave their countries under extraordinary circumstances and have no opportunity to obtain visas or travel documents.**

Recognising this, article 31 of the Refugee Convention includes provisions to prohibit countries from punishing refugees for illegal entry in the country of asylum, so long as the refugee travels directly from his or her country of origin and reports to the authorities in the country of destination without delay.

Growing barriers to legal entry such as quotas and preference to those with wealth or skills has meant that asylum seekers have increasingly turned to criminal human trafficking and smuggling syndicates who are able to circumvent routine immigration controls. These criminal networks employ dangerous and illegal practices, including physical and sexual exploitation, confiscation of passports, forced prostitution and forced labour, even torture.

In 2000 the media carried horror stories of women trafficked from the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries and held in slave-like conditions in Western Europe.

Trafficking in and the smuggling of people have been described as two of the most serious developments in transnational crime.

Protecting the human rights of trafficked and smuggled persons has not been the primary motive behind efforts by the Australian Government to tackle the problem. Instead, combatting human trafficking and smuggling became a central means by which to exclude asylum seekers. This has occurred with little regard to the reasons why asylum seekers make use of these rings and little regard to the root causes of the current mass refugee situation.

## ***MIGRANTS IN AUSTRALIA***

The White Australia Policy was first adopted by State governments in the 1850s and '60s to maintain the Anglo-European composition of Australia's population. White supremacist ideas were deliberately fostered in Australia's early years.

Since 1945, almost 5.7 million people have come to Australia as immigrants. In the same period the population of Australia rose from about 7 million to around 19 million.

Mass migration was introduced to provide developing Australian industries with the necessary skilled and unskilled labour force in the post-war years. It was a period of rapid industrial development. However, many migrants were discriminated against in terms of type of job, pay rates and job opportunities. Migrant women provide most of the savagely exploited outworkers.

While the level and degree of adaptation of migrants to Australian society varies from group to group, many migrants, particularly those from non-English speaking countries remain alienated, exploited and discriminated against.

Unemployment among migrants with non-English speaking backgrounds is higher than for the rest of the workforce. For migrants without post secondary qualifications, language skills are often a key to employment.

Migrants with non-English speaking backgrounds often experience disadvantages in education, social handicaps in everyday life and restricted opportunities for cultural preservation and development. They experience prejudice and discrimination, often in a veiled form.

The number of people currently accepted by Australia as immigrants is at a very low level and has been low for many years.

This small intake of migrants makes no difference to the availability of jobs. Employment levels are essentially determined by the general state of the economy. Nor does the immigration intake significantly impact on Australia's natural environment or resources.

As the economic and social system and governments makes life harder and less secure for all but privileged Australians, it becomes easier for right-wing political forces to divide Australian workers from their migrant fellow workers, by blaming migrant working people for the country's problems, particularly unemployment.

The struggle for migrant rights has become an important part of the overall movement for democracy in Australia. Demands for equal opportunity, campaigns against discrimination, and promotion of multiculturalism all add to the democratic movement.

The struggle for the social and political rights of immigrants and against racism is an integral part of the struggle for unity to build a progressive, alternative social alliance that can bring about change in Australia.

## **REFUGEES IN AUSTRALIA**

Australia receives relatively few refugees by world standards. In 2001 the Australian Government established a quota of only 12,000 refugees through its humanitarian program. This number has remained static for three years despite the ever-increasing numbers of refugees worldwide.

The refugees who reach Australian shores are generally fleeing their homelands because of wars, repression and/or economic injustice.

Australian right-wing governments have now established a regime of political and racially based discrimination which has created immense barriers to refugees from certain countries receiving even consideration as refugees.

Conversely, the same governments have welcomed and given preference to refugees who are seen as politically desirable — those who are seen as being useful to their efforts to undermine the trade union movement and other progressive organisations.

In the post-WWII period, Labor's Immigration Minister, Arthur Calwell, admitted former Nazi collaborators from Eastern Europe, people who fled with the Nazis rather than face the wrath of their own people.

Later, anyone from Eastern Europe who claimed to be an opponent — or a 'victim' — of communism was similarly welcomed and their passage to Australia expedited. Later still, Australian Governments welcomed with open arms former soldiers and supporters of the South Vietnamese puppet regime and racist white settlers who were supporters of apartheid in southern African countries.

Most recently, the Howard Government warmly welcomed the Kosovar refugees who became refugees in a crisis engineered by the US and its NATO allies for their own strategic purposes. Significantly, no such



invitation has been issued to the hundreds of thousands of Serbian refugees “ethnically cleansed” from Croatia by the fascist Tudjman regime and from Kosovo itself once NATO took over that province.

Of course Australia is not alone in this. In 1999 UNHCR was unable to raise any funds towards a US\$4 million appeal to move the refugee camps in Guinea away from its border with Sierra Leone where they were at serious risk of cross border attacks. At the same time the agency had a weekly budget of US\$10 million for Kosovar refugees.

Refugees are not illegal. There is no such status as refugees who are “legal” and others who are “illegal”.

Under both Australian and international law a person is entitled to make an application for refugee asylum when they allege they are escaping from persecution.

People who arrive in Australia without prior authorisation and/or with no documents or false documents are not illegal. Nearly all of them are asylum seekers – a legal status under international law.

“Illegals” are those who overstay their visas. In Australia the great majority of these are from western countries, including 5,000 British tourists.

The majority of recent refugee arrivals are from Afghanistan, a country that has been described as one of the most difficult countries in the world in which to survive. In 1999, 93 per cent of Afghan applicants who sought asylum in Australia were recognised as genuine refugees and were therefore eligible under Australian law to remain in Australia.

Generally 84 per cent of all asylum seekers are found to be legitimate refugees and are able to stay in Australia.

Australia is the only industrialised country that mandatorily detains asylum seekers while their claims are being examined. Community based

alternatives (home detention, transitional housing, temporary visas, etc) have been extended to refugees by most other countries.

Sweden receives similar numbers of asylum seekers as Australia, despite having less than half the population. Detention is only used to establish a person's identity and to conduct criminal screening. Most detainees are released within a very short time, particularly if they have relatives or friends living in Sweden. Of the 17,000 asylum seekers currently in Sweden 10,000 reside outside the detention centres. Children are only detained for the minimum possible time (a maximum of 6 days).

## ***RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION***

Racism is a weapon used by the enemies of progress to divide society by blaming ethnic groups for unemployment, social disturbances, drugs and even health problems. Racism and narrow nationalism blur the class relationships and divert attention from the real causes of social problems.

Racial, religious and social differences are promoted as the ruling class and its compliant mass media use every means to promote social and working class disunity.

Racism makes it possible for capitalism to sustain and continue its exploitation of Australia's multi-ethnic working class. It uses the same means to justify the theft of land from its former Aboriginal owners. The appeal of the corporate rich to the public to accept greater sacrifices has been accompanied by a sharp increase in the use of racism as a weapon to divide and rule.

Widespread insecurity and hardship provide an audience for the proponents of these theories who invariably claim their right to "freedom of speech" when their false theories are challenged.

People looking for the reasons for the growing problems they face are force fed the simplistic demagoguery of racism to make it harder for them to find the real answers — which are to be found within the system of capitalism itself.

The conservative offensive against “political correctness” is another cover under which to promote racism and intolerance of progressive ideas and take back what has been achieved in the struggle for democratic economic, political and social rights.

“Divide and rule” has been and remains a main tactic of the ruling class. Whenever they erect a racial or a national barrier the ruling class creates particularly favourable conditions for the furtherance of their aims and objectives.

## ***MULTICULTURALISM***

Our response to racism and discrimination based on race and religion is multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism draws on the reality that migrants to Australia from many countries have enriched the total Australian cultural and language heritage. Multiculturalism unites people and promotes tolerance of others who have a different background. It creates an understanding of others by drawing on the best in the cultures of other countries.

Multiculturalism is now a fact of Australian life, but it does not suit the purposes of those who seek to divide people in order to maintain their class rule and their vested interests. Instead of multiculturalism they promote assimilation. By this is meant the imposition of the Anglo-Saxon cultural heritage as the only one that is acceptable.

The Murdoch and Packer-dominated mass media persist in highlighting negative features — real or imagined — in ethnic communities, such as

youth criminal gangs. The positive contribution to Australian society made by ethnic minorities is ignored by a mass media obsessed with looking for enemies and scapegoats.

In times of international tension, as with the US “war on terrorism”, for example, Moslems in Australia are being subjected to hostile attacks.

There is a deliberate attempt to promote a narrow Australian nationalism and attitudes of superiority although most Australian people have friendly attitudes towards the people of other countries.

Extreme right-wing organisations such as One Nation, the League of Rights, the National Front, Moral Rearmament and religious fundamentalist groups have become more active and open. They promote racism, religious intolerance and neo-fascist attitudes.

The fact that a number of One Nation policies are being implemented by the Howard Government is a warning that in circumstances of acute class struggle and international tension, the Australian ruling class could resort to open fascist measures to suppress discontent and opposition.

Racist myths and stereotypes — including allegations that migrants cause unemployment — provide convenient cover for governments seeking to justify the slashing of public sector spending.

Evidence shows that migrants do not take jobs but, by enlarging Australia’s market, actually create jobs. Unemployment and job insecurity flow from the corporate drive for ever greater profits, from the slashing of jobs as “cost cutting” is pursued and from corporate bankruptcies.

## ***IMMIGRATION, POPULATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT***

Every nation has the right to determine its immigration policies and the intake of refugees, while recognising internationally accepted obligations

towards asylum seekers and refugees whose plight may arise from a number of reasons. In establishing an intake target, any government will take into account many social, economic, political and environmental considerations.

This approach, however, has nothing in common with the repeated assertion of the leaders of the Howard Government that “Australia will determine who comes to our shores”. Howard’s assertion is intended to deny and deliberately create barriers to the rights of refugees. It promotes racism, fear and prejudice.

In February 2002 a Population Summit held in Melbourne discussed the need for a national population policy for Australia, setting clear population targets.

The proponents of population growth, including from increased immigration, present Australia as a rich, vast and under-populated continent that requires more people for economic growth.

Those arguing for a limit on immigration and a population ceiling argue that Australia’s environment is degraded because of population pressures and that allowing more people into the country would place unacceptable strains on the environment and natural resources.

There is no doubt that Australia faces widespread environmental problems: soil erosion and salination, endangered species, an increasing incidence of toxic algal blooms in our rivers, declining fish stocks, air pollution, vulnerable and limited water supplies, declining bio-diversity and a fall in the productivity of forests and farms.

However, the environmental crisis is mainly created by the rapacious exploitation of the earth’s common resources for private profits. Ignoring present warnings, capitalism continues to aggravate the crisis by a callous and reckless disregard for the predictable consequences of its unplanned



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**Opposing racism**





**End mandatory detention**



**Vanstone attacks migrant education**



and largely uncontrolled activities. Even in the face of mounting global danger, it will stop at nothing to maximise corporate profits.

While population numbers have to be taken into account when considering the environment, the assertion that population alone is the cause of environmental problems is used to divert attention from those mainly responsible.

The environment is not being destroyed because people are trying to produce more food to feed growing populations. It is being destroyed because production is directed into the most profitable areas, regardless of the impact on humans or the environment, by predatory corporations which control agricultural resources. This is as true in Australia as it is in Bangladesh, Mexico or the USA.

The intensive production of beef, sheep, wheat, rice and cotton, mainly by agribusiness conglomerates, has led to salination, widespread erosion, outbreaks of blue-green algae and other environmental disasters.

The private ownership of land and the monopolisation of Australia's natural resources lead to their inefficient use. One way this is demonstrated is through the choice of **what** is grown. The few who control the majority of farmland will grow whatever brings the highest profit.

Australia is the driest continent in the world; Europe is one of the wettest. It is illogical and damaging to have transferred the agricultural system of the wettest continent in the world to the driest continent in the world without even attempting to adapt to the realities of Australia's natural conditions.

Enough grain is produced in the world to provide everyone with ample protein and more than 3,000 calories a day. But over one-third of this grain is fed to livestock.

In Mexico, where at least 80 per cent of the children in rural areas are undernourished, livestock, mostly for export to the USA, consume more basic grains than the country's entire rural population.

The application of science, planned and controlled use of water supplies, and avoidance of over-exploitation (overstocking, for example) of the land and its limited resources could sustain a larger population in Australia.

The widespread assertion that hunger and environmental degradation are caused by "over-population" is typical of capitalist ideology. It says a lot about how ordinary people are regarded. People are pictured as a liability when, in reality, all creativity, all wealth begins with people, with human labour.

The best approach to combat ecological degradation is not through population and immigration controls but through more equitable socio-economic policies and fairer distribution of wealth and resources. Also needed are measures such as changing production methods, government controls on crops and practices that damage the environment, and replacing agri-businesses with democratically run co-operatives.

## ***WHAT IS TO BE DONE***

Working people of various ethnic origins form an inseparable part of the Australian nation and constitute a component part of the labour movement and society as a whole. However, migrant workers will not become involved in the common struggles unless their social and cultural heritage is respected and action is taken to overcome widespread discrimination against migrant communities, even, in some cases, their demonisation.

Governments should be made responsible for promoting acceptance that migrants have the same status and rights as other Australians. Governments should be responsible for opposing any manifestations of racism and hostility. It is not acceptable for governments to allow

monopoly media interests to promote racist attitudes towards ethnic minorities.

Refugees to Australia should be accorded the rights provided under the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

Australian Governments and all other institutions and organisations should promote multiculturalism which enriches the whole of Australia's cultural life.

Despite the faults of various governments and some institutions, a new Australian culture reflecting the multicultural character of society is arising as the outcome of cultural interaction between various ethnic groups. It is becoming national in character, unified and integrated and is not the result of a process of assimilation.

It requires opposition to assimilation and to the enforced imposition of the predominant European culture on migrants who come from different continents with other cultures.

Australia already has anti-discrimination and anti-vilification laws. These should be strengthened and enforced, and be backed up by a broad and united movement to defend the rights of migrants and refugees as well as indigenous Australians.

Immigration criteria should be free from discrimination based on race or nationality and give priority to humanitarian considerations, particularly family reunions and refugees, given the huge refugee populations at present attempting to escape war, poverty and persecution.

Immigration should be subject to government schemes that provide real settlement assistance through adequate language training, provision of housing and health care, and employment or welfare benefits in lieu of employment.

Ethnic segregation and discrimination in employment should be outlawed in order to ensure the rights of migrants and refugees and to combat the consequences of racist divisions in the working class movement.

Participation by migrants in trade unions should be actively encouraged. To achieve this, extra efforts by trade unions are required to defend the rights of migrant workers. More facilities are needed to further migrant workers' understanding of their new conditions and rights. Active support for their struggles will significantly increase migrant workers' participation in the trade union movement.

Current policy, which denies welfare benefits and health cover during the first one or two years of settlement, should be abolished. Government services for migrants and refugees, such as educational and welfare programs, should be expanded.

Special language training for migrants should be expanded, including paid English classes on the job, with opportunities for migrants to learn their rights in Australia through publications in their original languages. Interpreter services should be extended.

Segregation in education along ethnic lines should be opposed. A single system of education for all with provision for multicultural education and overseas languages is required. Governments should only fund an inclusive public education system at all levels.

Special campaigns should be launched to encourage English-speakers to learn another language. For Australia to be a truly multicultural community, the learning experience cannot be one way. Efforts should be made on both sides to develop real communication, cultural understanding and sensitivity.

The Federal Government should give additional funding to the public broadcasters, the ABC and SBS specifically, for the promotion of multiculturalism and to counter the pernicious influence of the monopoly capitalist media.

Support should be given to progressive, ethnic organisations which encourage multiculturalism, help build the trade union movement, help build the unity of the working class, struggle for the rights of migrants, contribute to the peace and democratic movements and for progressive change in Australia.

Australia's foreign policy contributes to the refugee crisis. Australia supports and actively participates in actions that cause large numbers of people to become refugees.

Among the largest groups of refugees in the world today are people fleeing from the effects of the Australian-supported genocidal blockade of Iraq, the US-sponsored and Australian-supported wars in Afghanistan and the Middle East, and the neo-colonialist interventions against popular revolutionary and liberation movements in Central and Northern Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America.

Australia should send **substantial** aid to countries suffering from natural disasters such as drought or flood. But Australia should also send aid to and expand trade on mutually beneficial terms with countries experiencing economic and structural difficulties so as to forestall the development of refugee crises in the first place.

Instead of increasing military spending to pay for the cost of policing sanctions against Iraq, the attack on Afghanistan and the so-called "Pacific solution", a humanitarian Australian Government would cut its military budget by ten per cent, using a substantial part of these savings for aid to underdeveloped countries.

Australian governments should increase the intake under refugee programs in consultation and co-ordination with the United Nations. Australia has a duty and obligation to the world to accept its share of refugees. We should receive and process asylum seekers speedily in a manner that is humanitarian, non-racist, and without bias against progressive people.

The Australian Government should conform to and implement the decisions and recommendations of the UN conventions on refugees.

The mandatory detention of refugees in what have become concentration camps should be abolished. The detention centres should be closed and the compulsory deportation of asylum seekers stopped immediately.

All refugees awaiting a decision on their applications should be distributed into the wider community and issued with temporary visas. Once in Australian waters or on our shores, there should be no more “Pacific solutions”. Refugees should have their right to access the Australian court system guaranteed as well as their right to protest. A procedure should be adopted for checking all arrivals for security, criminal background and health without the current mandatory detention and brutality.

The use of military force against asylum seekers entering Australian waters by boat and their transport to other countries should be ended. This was not done with Vietnamese who left their country after the war. The forced relocation of the Tampa refugees to other countries is an outrageous act of racism, political bias and inhumanity.

The “Pacific solution” should be wound up immediately. It is inhumane and serves no useful purpose other than to stoke the fires of the Howard Government’s self-made “boat people crisis”.

Refugees can and should be housed in normal hostel housing conditions. They do not need to be — and indeed should not be — isolated from the general Australian community. The Howard Government’s detention and punishment regime is aimed at exacerbating the situation for its own political ends.

We need a new Australian government whose policy towards refugees is based on a humanitarian outlook, which acknowledges their refugee rights, is sympathetic and assesses their applications for refugee status in a humane manner and on merit, not on political expediency.

# **MIGRANT AND REFUGEE FACTS**

**In 2001 there are around 22.3 million “people of concern” to the United Nations worldwide.**

Of 6 billion human beings on earth, 500 million live comfortably, while 5.5 billion are poor.

## **AUSTRALIA**

In 1999-2000 Australia received about 12,700 applications for asylum. Germany received 95,000 and Britain 71,000.

At September 18, 2001 there were six facilities in Australia used for immigration detention purposes. The numbers housed in these centres at that time were Derby WA – 841; Port Headland WA – 577; Perth WA - 34]; Woomera SA – 1383; Woomera Residential Housing Project SA – 13; Villawood NSW – 346; Maribynong Victoria - 77.

At 12 April, 2002 there were 1618 people in all Immigration Detention Facilities. Of these:

184 were children.

346 have been in detention between 12-18 months (55 children).

256 have been in detention for over 18 months (28 are children).

In 2000, approximately 300,000 refugees arrived in Europe to seek asylum. By contrast, 4,174 reached Australia by boat or plane.

Australia's present ethnic mix is 74 per cent Anglo-Celtic, 19 per

cent other European and 4.5 per cent Asian. Over 150 languages have been introduced into Australian life. Nearly 77 per cent of the population is Australian-born.

Since 1945, almost 5.9 million people have come to Australia as new settlers. Today 13.7 per cent of Australia's 19 million people were born overseas in non-English speaking countries.

Since planned post-war migration started, more than 599,000 people arrived under humanitarian programs, initially as displaced persons and more recently as refugees.

As well as the migrant intake there were 41,078 persons who left Australia permanently in 1999-2000. Of these 20,234 were Australian. Other substantial groups who left Australia for good were migrants from New Zealand (4526) and Britain (3,959).

Australia's current migration program estimates the following intakes:

- Family Stream (22,074)
- Skill Stream (30,464)
- Special Eligibility (108)
- Humanitarian Program (60,070)

The intake of skilled migrants increased from about 29 per cent in 1995-96 to about 38 per cent in 1996-97.

The number of China-born persons in Australia declined from 29,907 in 1901 to 6,404 in 1947. This effect was due to the implementation of the White Australia Policy. By 1996 the number



of China-born persons reached 110,987 or 2.8 per cent of the overseas-born population.

The White Australia policy was not abandoned until 1972.

The Government's migrant plan for 2002-03 comprises an intake of:

- Refugees from overseas – 4000 places
- Special Humanitarian Program – 6000 places
- Onshore Protection visas – 2000.
- Family migrants – 43,200 places
- Skilled migrants – 60,700 places.

The number in employment in June 2002 was 9,317,800. Of these 6,652,900 were in full-time employment. Part-time employment was 2,664,900. Full-time employment decreased and part-time employment increased. The number listed as unemployed was 643,900.

In 1997 when the unemployment rate among Australian-born was 7.7 per cent, the rate among male migrants was 9.1 per cent and for female migrants it was 10.5 per cent.

Recently over half the migrants from non-English speaking countries have arrived in Australia with post secondary school qualifications. Overall 11.8 per cent (11.4 per cent English speaking and 12.1 per cent non-English speaking) of migrants have a tertiary degree compared with 8.5 per cent of Australians born here.

34.8 per cent of migrants from non-English speaking countries are over-educated for their jobs and underpaid for their skill level compared with 11.6 per cent of the non-migrant born.

## **THE WORLD**

In a recent World Refugee Survey, which identifies the ratio of refugees to host country population, the Gaza Strip is listed as 1:2 – having the most significant refugee population in the world.

Other countries listed are Lebanon with 1:11, Iran 1:36, Tanzania 1/76, US 1/427, Germany 1:456, Britain 1/530, Canada 1:566, Australia 1:1583. Jap[an 1/316,750.

The United States receives less than 2 per cent of the world's migrants and refugees.

Trafficking in people is the fastest-growing business of organised crime and the biggest human rights violation in the world.

Since 1990, more than 30 million women and children have been trafficked within and from Southeast Asia for prostitution and sweatshop labour in the “slavery of our time”.

On average one migrant dies each day of the year crossing the militarised US-Mexico border.

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