

building opportunity

2013 Policy Briefing

settlement

education

training

employment

research

volunteering

social enterprise

skilled migrant programs



A Substantial Platform

AMES is a statutory body that began providing English language classes since 1951. Today AMES works with more than 40,000 clients a year providing direct settlement, education, training and employment services to newly arrived migrants and refugees in Australia.

AMES is the only organisation that provides all of these primary services to multicultural communities. It does this through:

- partnerships developed with agencies and institutions across the state,
- employment of 1000 staff who speak 90 languages,
- contracting of 200 Community Guides from varying cultural backgrounds who work with families settling in Victoria,
- engaging 1,800 volunteers from the general community,
- the use of central infrastructure and delivery across the state via AMES regional sites and networks,
- attracting diversity of a range of tendered government contracts.

This population and geographic reach makes AMES the largest contemporary service provider in Australia.

Vision

“Full participation for all in a cohesive and diverse society.”

AMES understands that the need for a strong migration program is economically driven. Migration is essential to the sustained growth of Australia's workforce and a key ingredient in meeting the challenges of an aging population. Thus, emphasis on increasing skills and employment is integral to all AMES activity.

A Co-ordinated and Integrated Approach

AMES activity is based on a co-ordinated framework that assists us to provide comprehensive and integrated services to address short and medium term settlement outcomes for migrants and refugees.

Programs

70% of migrants and refugees are young and in their “prime working years” compared to 28% of Australian-born. Thus, early investment in preparation for employment, through English tuition, vocational training, work orientation and job searching support is critical.

The suite of AMES settlement services reflects this approach and includes:

- Direct Settlement Services
- English Language and Training programs
- Employment programs
- Asylum Seeker programs
- Community Capacity Building programs and
- Research and Policy initiatives.

Partnerships

AMES has a strong track record in the development of relationships with client communities, formal partnership contracts with 38 agencies and over 100 collaborative partnerships with corporate and non-government agencies.

Contracts

AMES partnerships support our contract delivery of:

- Humanitarian Settlement Services
- Adult Migrant English Program
- Language Literacy and Numeracy Program
- Distance Learning
- Victorian Training Guarantee
- Job Services Australia
- Community Detention Program, Community Assistance Scheme and Asylum Seeker Assistance.

Value Adding

As a consequence of the size, scope and approach to service delivery (See Settlement Framework), AMES is also able to:

- secure education and employment outcomes through synergies across programs
- engage schools, workplaces, businesses, sport and arts organisations in projects that reinforce our contracted activity
- develop social enterprises
- trial and research new settlement service models and to inform policy at state and national levels
- consultation with a large number of refugees and migrants to support research endeavours
- operate a Multicultural Hub in the Melbourne CBD that provides access to community based programs which complement our other services
- host international, national, state and local conferences, forums and events to discuss policy and program issues and showcase Australia's work
- communicate with the general public about program activity and outcomes
- provide information and advice to government as requested.

Asylum Seeker Services

AMES is well placed to both inform and respond to asylum seeker policy reforms.

With the increasing number of people arriving by boat, AMES and our partners have responded to government policy through the provision of Community Detention services and services for people on Bridging Visas.

Depending on eligibility criteria, the following services were made available on a time limited basis:

- Transition accommodation in four AMES operated facilities
- Tenancy training
- Health care assistance
- School enrolments for children
- English classes focusing on job seeking skills and language for meeting immediate needs
- Information about community services and orientation to the local area, provided by multilingual Community Guides, in the same language as the new arrival
- Distribution of living allowance payments provided by government
- Case management in response to individual client needs
- Work assistance to those arriving prior to August 2012.

The Future

It is recommended that future arrangements for support of asylum seekers include:

1. The right to work and assistance in finding employment during the period of status resolution. This will decrease the level of government resources required to support this group and assist the settlement process in the event that they are granted Protection Visas.
2. Greater access to English language tuition.

Outcomes over the past 12 months

- 48 families provided with Community Detention support
- 1,700 people provided with Community Assistance Scheme and Asylum Seeker Assistance Scheme services
- 700 people provided with English language tuition
- 2 large accommodation facilities and 30 flats procured in Melbourne
- 80 new staff employed to provide services
- AMES ability to respond to government policy in a timely manner



Direct Settlement

AMES approach is to build on the strengths and capabilities of new arrivals and assist them; to live independently in Australia and to contribute socially and economically in their local communities.

AMES has a reputation for best practice settlement services. In conjunction with partner agencies, services provided include:

- Multilingual Community Guides providing assistance with Medicare, Centrelink, banking, health, public transport and schools for children
- Settlement information courses, which provide information about Australian culture, laws and services
- Provision of transitional and longer term accommodation in a range of AMES properties and private rental
- Connecting new arrivals to government programs and community activities that increase social connection and networks
- Complex Case Support for those who have experienced significant trauma or require support beyond the scope of more standardised approaches.

Over the next three years AMES will:

- consolidate the Multilingual Community Guides program and assess the feasibility of utilising the guides in a wider range of AMES activities,
- explore further ways of integrating services required for successful settlement and
- work with local governments and other key agencies to increase settlement outcomes in rural and regional areas.

Outcomes in 2012

- Approximately 5,000 people linked to Medicare, Centrelink, health care and other services, settled in their own accommodation and enrolled in education, where appropriate.

The Future

In addition to maintaining existing support for settlement programs it is recommended that government:

1. Encourages service innovation to maximise outcomes and efficiencies.
2. Supports program integration including:
 - immediate connection of entrants who are seeking work to specialist job service providers and
 - seamless connection between Settlement Services and English programs.

English Language and Vocational Training Programs

A key to successful settlement is the ability to speak and understand English in a broad range of contexts, particularly as a pathway to employment.

AMES provides English language and vocational training programs across the state via:

- Counselling services focusing on education and employment pathways
- Volunteer home tutoring services delivered by 1,800 volunteers
- Distance learning provided via IT access on a national basis
- Youth Programs combining English tuition with other activities that assist the settlement process
- Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program training that enables jobseekers to participate more effectively in further training and employment
- Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training programs (SLPET) which provide English, vocational training and work experience to clients exiting English language training
- Vocational Education and Training focusing on skill development in industry areas such as Children's Services, Aged Care and Hospitality industries.

Outcomes in 2012

- 16,782 Adult Migrant English Program clients participated in language and settlement training, improved their communication, literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge of Australian society, culture, laws and services
- 809 job seekers participated in language, literacy and numeracy training with 96% achieving learning outcomes expected in the Australian Skills Framework
- 5,155 units of vocational training provided with an 81% client retention rate
- 868 clients undertook placements in work experience with 131 securing employment and 338 securing further study opportunities

The Future

It is recommended that:

1. English language services, provided through a range of strategies, continue to be provided to migrants and refugees.
2. Vocationally language tuition is provided across all levels of the Adult Migrant English Program, thus increasing clients' employment potential.
3. IT systems are targeted to support and measure service delivery processes and outcomes.

Over the next three years AMES will:

- emphasise vocational training within language programs,
- further integrate activity across programs,
- develop recommendations for more integration between programs and refinements to measuring outcomes, and
- innovate in the IT area.

Employment Programs

AMES clients are focused on becoming self-reliant and contributing citizens.

AMES Employment Programs include:

- Jobs Services Australia placing job seekers in employment and providing skills assessment and training
- Skilled Professional Migrants Programs that assists recently arrived migrants to find employment appropriate to their qualifications and experience
- Social Enterprises designed to assist AMES clients gain work experience including the operation of small businesses
- Structured Opportunities in Settlement via contracting of Community Guides who then move to employment in the Settlement and other sectors.

3. Ensure migrants are eligible for the full range of employment services immediately on arrival (excluding social security benefits).
4. Provide employment and cultural orientation to skilled migrants who are not able to find work independently.

Over the next three years AMES will:

- integrate activity across individual employment programs and across settlement and education programs to improve client outcomes and
- engage with Commonwealth Departments in development of a more integrated approach to program design, contracting and outcome measurements.

Outcomes in 2012

- 14,361 clients provided services through the Jobs Services Australia program. Of these, 5,424 attained employment
- 230 clients completed the skilled migrant programs. Research indicates that 70% of participants are in employment, post program
- 96 skilled migrants matched with corporate sector mentors
- 38 clients worked in AMES Social Enterprises
- AMES Catering Social Enterprises served 900 clients
- 3 Social Enterprises currently operating
- 200 Community Guides contracted to support service delivery with many transiting to work in the justice, human services and settlement sectors

The Future

It is recommended that:

1. CALD specialist Employment Services should be more targeted to newly arrived migrants and refugees.
2. Link DIAC and DEEWR IT systems so that CALD job seekers can be automatically allocated to a CALD specialist employment service provider.

Community Programs

Community based activities add value to the direct settlement, education and employment programs delivered by AMES.

The AMES Multicultural Hub, operates in partnership with the City of Melbourne, is located in the CBD and provides opportunities for people to participate in a range of community based education and social activities.

Sports, Arts and Community programs, with emphasis on young people, are supported by a range of community partnerships and are integrated into AMES Settlement, Education and Employment activities and wider community events.

Citizenship Courses are provided to assist migrants and refugees prepare for the citizenship test.

Client Retreats are provided in partnership with a range of community agencies to assist clients to network and share education and employment experiences in informal environments.

Publicity which showcases the work that AMES undertakes and the positive contribution that people from varying cultural backgrounds make to Australian society.

Outcomes in 2012

- 3,750 events were held at the Hub
- 78,189 people from 55 countries visited the Hub to participate in activities or attend free English conversation, Job Club and pronunciation classes
- 77 volunteers from 33 different language groups participated in Hub activities with 70% of these engaged in supporting Hub operations
- 18,559 of visitors to the Hub were international students with the majority of visitors coming from China or Taiwan
- 300 regular Hub users reported that 81% met people from different cultures, 79% made new friends and 92% able to freely express themselves
- 5 AMES sites incorporate sport and arts based activity into their programs

- Heartlands Refugee Art Prize that aims to open up career pathways in the Arts sector for established and emerging artists
- 8 citizenship courses conducted
- 99 clients from 20 countries attended retreats
- over 1,000 media hits

The Future

It is recommended that future direct settlement and education programs strengthen a focus on development and implementation of community based programs to increase settlement outcomes.

Over the next 3 years AMES will:

- expand the range of activities taking place within the Multicultural Hub and continue to drive sustainable delivery
- develop more community based activity with focus on the Sport and Arts sector.

Research and Policy

Daily contact with thousands of new arrivals gives AMES the unique ability of almost instant and continuous feedback.

AMES activity is informed by research and evaluation undertaken by our Research and Policy Unit.

This has led to the development of knowledge that is shared with an extensive network of partners. The evidence we collect is also used to provide input to government policy in areas that affect our clients.

We are in a unique position in having access to a large number of clients at our centres, on a daily basis, who can share their experiences with us, through the research process. Our clients also benefit from this work as knowledge is translated into practice.

There are also employment benefit where clients are beginning to work with large scale national and state research institutions via focus group testing and undertaking bilingual research interviews.

Our research endeavours include:

Words to Work: A study of the experiences of people in the Adult Migrant English Program in Melbourne.

A Case for Social Procurement: An evaluation of a social enterprise model in meeting industry standards in a housing maintenance contract.

Finding Satisfying Work: A study of migrants and refugees in Australia four years after arrival.

National Broadband Network Trial: An evaluation of the use of the National Broadband Network in facilitating English language training in a virtual classroom.

An Australian Research Council project focusing on labour market outcomes of migrant accountants who settle in Australia.

A VicHealth Innovations Research project focusing on creating healthy work places which reduce race based discrimination supporting cultural diversity.

Creating employment opportunities in academic and business research institutions for our clients.

As a consequence of our practice and research base AMES is often called upon by governments to provide advice on policy reforms.

The Future

It is recommended that AMES research activity is acknowledged as an asset in achieving informed innovation and is appropriately resourced in funding contracts.

Over the next three years AMES will:

- continue to undertake applied research
- continue to provide policy development support to governments
- support clients to enter the research field as a means to accessing employment.

AMES Locations

This map shows the extensive network of AMES sites, partners and sub-contractors delivering services throughout metropolitan Melbourne and Victoria.



Legend

- A** Head Office
- B** Education (AMES)
- C** Education (Partner)
- D** Education (Subcontractor)
- E** Employment (AMES)
- F** Employment (Partner)
- G** Settlement (AMES)
- H** Settlement (Partner)
- I** Settlement (Subcontractor)

Metropolitan Melbourne

1	Melbourne	A		
2	Berwick	D		
3	Boronia	D		
4	Box Hill	B E G		
5	Broadmeadows	E G		
6	Brunswick		H	
7	Carlton	D		
8	Chadstone	C D		
9	Cheltenham	D		
10	Coburg	E		
11	Cranbourne	D		
12	Croydon	C		
13	Dandenong	B E F		
14	Fitzroy	D		
15	Flemington	D		
16	Footscray	B E F G		

17	Frankston	D F		
18	Glenroy	E		
19	GlenWaverley	C		
20	Hampton Park	D		
21	Hawthorn	C		
22	Hoppers Crossing	C		
23	Kensington	K		
24	Keysborough	D		
25	Knox	H		
26	Moorabbin	C		
27	NarreWarren	D		
28	Noble Park	B F G		
29	North Melbourne	D		
30	Oakleigh	B E		
31	Ormond	D		
32	Pakenham	D		

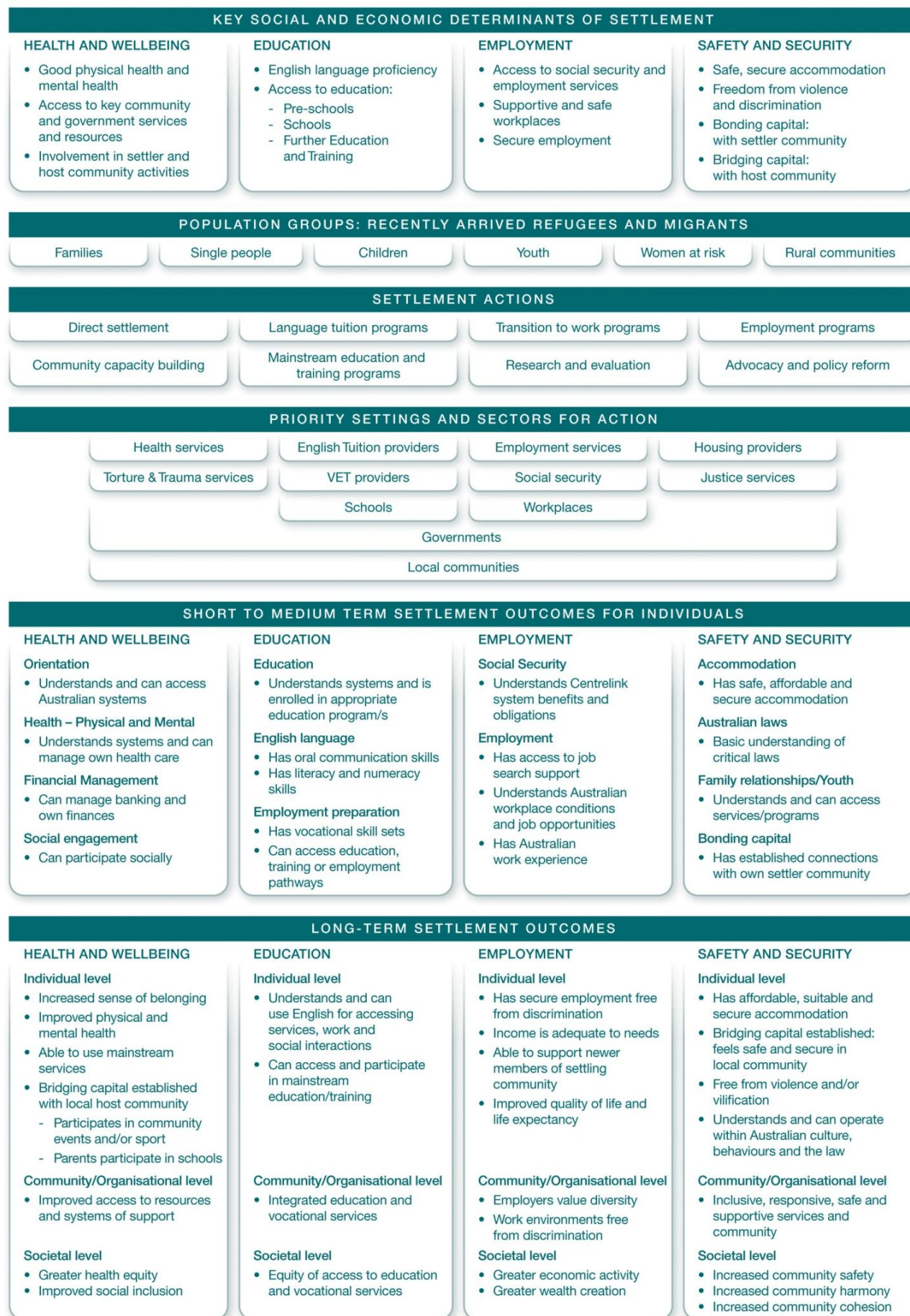
33	Prahran	C		
34	Preston	E G		
35	Richmond	D		
36	Knoxfield	H		
37	Springvale	B E F H		
38	St Albans	B E		
39	Sunshine	C E		
40	Werribee	B C E G		
41	Williamstown	D		
42	Yarraville	D		

Regional Victoria

1	Ararat	D		
2	Bacchus Marsh	D		
3	Bairnsdale	D		
4	Ballarat	D I		
5	Bendigo	D I		
6	Camperdown	D		
7	Castlemaine	D		
8	Colac	D I		
9	Daylesford	D		
10	Echuca	D		
11	Geelong	D I		
12	Hamilton	D		
13	Horsham	D		
14	Korumburra	D		
15	Kyneton	D		
16	Maryborough	D		

17	Melton South	C		
18	Mildura	D I		
19	Moe	D		
20	Morwell	D I		
21	Portland	D		
22	Robinvale	D I		
23	Rosebud	D F		
24	Sale	D		
25	Shepparton	C I		
26	Stawell	D		
27	Sunbury	E		
28	SwanHill	D I		
29	Traralgon	D		
30	Warragul	D		
31	Warrnambool	D I		
32	Wonthaggi	D I		

AMES Settlement Framework



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