

JOANNE RYAN MP

LalorFactSheet



Immigration and Citizenship

Immigration: The Background

Australia's Migration Programme does not discriminate on the basis of race or religion. This means that anyone from any country can apply to migrate, regardless of their ethnic origin, gender or colour, provided they meet the criteria set out in law.

All applications for migration to Australia are assessed against requirements set out in the **Migration Act and Regulations**. There are different criteria for different categories of visas and the criteria are established to meet Australia's national interests and needs. The government determines the criteria and sets the number of people who can enter under the programme on an annual basis. The policies and legislation governing migrant selection are applied equally to all applicants.

The criteria for the Migration Programme are selective—those applicants who meet Australia's requirements and have good prospects for successful settlement are chosen. There are detailed rules governing entry in each migration category and selection is based on a case-by-case assessment of applications.

Migrants may be selected on the basis of such factors as relationship to an Australian permanent resident or citizen, skills, age, qualifications, capital and business acumen. All applicants must also meet the health and character requirements specified by migration legislation.

If a person satisfies Australia's selection criteria, they stand an equal chance of being selected, unless there is a cap imposed on the number of visas allocated to a particular category.

All applicants for permanent entry to Australia must be assessed against Australia's health and character requirements, which are designed to exclude any people whose presence in Australia would not be in the interest of the Australian community.

People who might be excluded from entry on character grounds include criminals or associates of criminal organisations, war criminals and any person likely to vilify a segment of the community.

Migrants are selected under the Migration Programme in three streams—**skill, family and special eligibility**; while the **Humanitarian** Programme offers resettlement to refugees and to displaced persons who have suffered discrimination amounting to gross violations of their human rights.

Key Weblinks

Skill Stream (127, 774 places in 2014-15)

<http://www.border.gov.au/about/corporate/information/fact-sheets/24/overview-skilled>

Family Stream (61,085 places in 2014-15)

<http://www.border.gov.au/about/corporate/information/fact-sheets/29/overview-family>

Humanitarian Programme (13,750 places in 2014-15)

<http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Refu>

Visa Wizard

<http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Visa-1>

Parliamentary Library Immigration Links

http://www.aph.gov.au/about_parliament/parliamentary_departments/parliamentary_library/browse_by_topic/



Immigration Contacts

Type	Who	Contact
Government	Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection	131 881
Non-profit	Refugee Council of Australia	(03) 9600 3302
Non-profit	Wyndham Community & Education Centre	(03) 9742 4013
Independent Statutory Authority	Victorian Legal Aid	1300 792 387
Non-profit	Phoenix Migrant Resource Centre Westage Region	(03) 9391 3355

Local Migration Agents

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection accepts all applications lodged, regardless of who lodges them. You are able to lodge any kind of visa application or asylum claim yourself and most applications can be lodged online.

However, if you do not feel confident in lodging an application, or if your case is complex, you may want to engage a registered migration agent to help you in your dealings with the department.

A migration agent cannot influence the outcome or fast-track the processing of your application or guarantee you a visa. You are responsible for the accuracy of information and supporting documentation provided as part of your application, even if you use a registered migration agent. If you make non genuine claims or provide false documents, your visa may be cancelled.

An up-to-date list of migration agents with contact details can be found at: <https://www.mara.gov.au/search-the-register-of-migration-agents/>



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Australian Citizenship

Australian citizenship is an important step in your migration story. Becoming an Australian citizen means that you are making an ongoing commitment to Australia and all that this country stands for. It is also the beginning of your formal membership of the Australian community. It is the step that will enable you to say 'I am Australian'.

Australian citizenship is a privilege that offers enormous rewards. By becoming an Australian citizen, you are joining a unique national community. Our country has been built on the combined contributions of our Indigenous people and those who came later from all over the world. We celebrate this diversity and at the same time, strive for a unified and harmonious nation.

The strength of the Australian community means that we work together to solve problems and to make Australia the great country that it is. We have a stable system of government and Australians respect the authority and laws of the government. Our stability, our culture and our laws have been shaped by our history. By joining the Australian community, you will inherit this history and you will be in a position to contribute to it.

Responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship

As an Australian citizen you must:

- obey the law
- defend Australia should the need arise
- serve on a jury if called to do so
- vote in federal and state or territory elections, and in a referendum

As an Australian citizen you have the right to:

- vote in federal and state or territory elections, and in a referendum
- apply for work in the Australian Public Service or in the Australian Defence Force
- seek election to parliament
- apply for an Australian passport and re-enter Australia freely
- receive help from an Australian official while overseas
- register children born overseas as Australian citizens by descent.

Apply for Citizenship online

<http://www.citizenship.gov.au/>



Please don't hesitate to contact my office to discuss any issues or ideas that you may have.

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