



Estimating the impact of the Australian settlement sector – Initial findings from the literature

Settlement Council of Australia

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Executive summary

The role of Australia's migration system in supporting economic growth, workforce productivity and social cohesion is a contemporary policy consideration. The recently released Migration Strategy sets out a roadmap for a once in a generation reform of the system, which seeks to raise living standards by boosting productivity, to meet skills shortages, to build stronger Australian communities and to develop a faster, fairer, and more efficient system for migrants and employers. These policy reforms are presented against a backdrop of escalating geopolitical tensions (most recently in Ukraine, Sudan, and Gaza), which are driving an increase in the number of displaced persons internationally and is also driving change in the demographic characteristics and types of need among those who are granted Australian humanitarian visas.

Against this context there is a growing case to systematically research and analyse the socioeconomic value of successful settlement in Australia, and publicly communicate this value. Deloitte Access Economics was engaged by the Settlement Council of Australia to explore the feasibility of such a study, in a report delivered in early 2024.

The feasibility study considered the available evidence that could be used to estimate the contributions of the settlement sector to socioeconomic outcomes. This document is an extract of that report, which outlines findings from academic research, policy papers and program evaluations which consider the economic and social benefits associated with settlement outcomes. In some cases, this literature touches on the settlement services sector in realising those benefits. Select international studies bolster the literature on the impact of employment and language related supports for migrant cohorts.

The literature review was targeted in its scope, focusing on identifying research which could form a basis for a research paper on the social and economic contributions of the settlement sector and – where data allows – the estimation of the sector's social return on investment. In a system as complex and porous as the migration settlement sector, estimating client outcomes and attributing those outcomes to the interventions of the formal sector requires the collection of detailed data on clients' outcomes over time.

An important caveat in interpreting the findings of the literature review presented in this document is that the threshold of evidence to demonstrate impact is high. There may be a disconnect between the level of detail which can be established in the data and the contributions which are demonstrated in anecdotal and qualitative evidence on the role of the sector in supporting clients' settlement journeys. This conclusion only reinforces the value of additional research to synthesise what is known and to add to the evidence base about the sectors' contribution to outcomes.

The literature review presented in this document informs a 'benefits framework' which comprises various hypotheses about the relationship between settlement services and client outcomes. The review finds:

- An extensive body of Australian and international literature on the economic impact of migration, with nuance in findings across studies and contexts. These studies, which differ in their estimation approach, have generally found migrants to play a positive role in increasing economic activity, as measured on GDP, fostering improved fiscal sustainability and in addressing skill shortages.¹
- Some studies draw a distinction between the impacts of migration on GDP and GDP per capita (for both residents and migrants) and are inconclusive as to whether very high levels of migration enhance the welfare of existing residents.
- Some studies also consider broader measures of benefit, including migrants and refugees' contributions in the form of labour force participation, volunteering and entrepreneurship, supporting local economies through demand for goods and services, and contributing to a diverse and multicultural social fabric.
- The existing literature does not seek to explicitly attribute the benefits to the settlement sector, and rarely quantifies the relative impact of settlement interventions on migrants' outcomes. Nonetheless, some literature detailed in this report identifies correlation between accessing settlement supports and clients' outcomes, as they relate to wellbeing (Chen et al 2019) and employment (Cheng et al 2021; Department of Home Affairs and the Telethon Kids Institute 2022).

¹ Lowy Institute, *Economic Migration and Australia in the 21st Century* (19 October 2016) <<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/economic-migration-australia-21st-century#heading-3888>>.

- Several studies emphasise the benefits of language supports, delivered directly through the sector or through referrals supporting access to English learning and translation services. Language proficiency or support are associated with other medium-term outcomes for clients, including employment and other measures of economic participation.

The literature review provides valuable evidence to inform hypotheses about both the direct and indirect impacts of settlement services, though does not find existing literature which distinctly compares outcomes for users and non-users of settlement services. While some literature compares outcomes for different groups of permanent visa holders but at best infers the role of settlement support in those outcomes – usually focusing on the impact of a specific intervention (such as an employment service or language program), rather than the suite of supports offered by a settlement caseworker. As it stands, the extent to which the settlement sector itself enables settlement outcomes is less established in the literature and publicly available datasets. The feasibility study which this literature review supports also revealed datasets which could be used (or collected) to develop a clearer evidence base on the socioeconomic value associated with the settlement sector.

This document concludes by outlining the key methodological considerations in using the available evidence to add to the quality of the evidence base underpinning the settlement sector, and to inform more substantial work which could in turn be used to inform policy development and to engage with Australian Governments about the potential to expand settlement service provision to existing and future newcomers to Australia.

Deloitte Access Economics

1 Background and context

1.1 Research objectives

In March 2023, the Review of Australia's Migration System set out a vision for a migration program which supports the nation's economic success, geopolitical position, and social fabric.² The Review set out a roadmap for 'a once in a generation reform' of the system and made recommendations that included:

- Recalibrating migration settings to maximise economic outcomes and remain internationally competitive.
- Redefining the approach Australia takes to determine the size and composition of the migration program, through long-term and holistic planning, informed by improvements to data collection and evaluation.
- Taking actions to unlock all migrant potential, including by reviewing settlement and integration programs, to ensure they are responsive to local differences in settlement location, and migrant need.

The Migration Strategy aims to shift the overall character of its migration system away from temporary migration and toward permanent residence and citizenship. Its priorities include recalibrating skilled migration settings, simplifying the migration system for migrants and employers, delivering outcomes post arrival, and working toward a system which demonstrated integrity, fairness, and inclusion.³ Alongside these reforms which focus on, but are not limited to, skilled migration, escalating geopolitical tensions (most recently in Ukraine, Sudan, and Gaza), which are driving an increase in the number of displaced persons internationally also drive change in the demographic characteristics and types of support needs among those who seek humanitarian protection in Australia.

An effective and well-resourced settlement sector will be essential to ensuring the success of Australia's migration system as it responds to a shifting economic and political landscape. The key programs supporting the settlement of humanitarian and other vulnerable migrants to Australia are the Humanitarian support program (HSP), the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program and the Australian Migrant English Program (AMEP). The 2023-24 Federal Budget expanded the eligibility criteria for SETS, to allow providers to support clients who arrived in Australia more than five year prior, though without an expansion to the funding allocation for providers.

Against the context of a rising cost of operations for settlement providers, the Settlement Council of Australia engaged Deloitte Access Economics to undertake a feasibility study to understand opportunities to estimate and communicate the economic and social value associated with the settlement sector and to demonstrate the returns to government in funding supports for newcomers.

1.2 This document

This report is an extract of the feasibility study completed for the Settlement Council of Australia, which outlines the reviewed evidence in the academic literature about settlement outcomes and the role of settlement services. It is developed to be read as an input to future work rather than as a comprehensive view of the benefits associated with settlement outcomes.

This work is not intended to make comment on migration volumes to Australia or the benefits of migration, but rather consider the benefits that can be unlocked through settlement supports for communities recently arrived in Australia. The complete feasibility study comprises analysis from the literature review, discusses the strengths and limits of existing data sets to potentially quantify the benefits for clients associated with the settlement sector, discusses the methodological risks, and proposes options to develop an estimate of the socioeconomic contribution of the settlement sector.

² Department of Home Affairs, *Review of the Migration System* (March 2023) <<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-migration-system-final-report.pdf>>.

³ Department of Home Affairs, *A Migration Strategy for Australia* (11 December 2023) <<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/migration-strategy>>.

2 Findings from literature

Key findings

- The positive economic outcomes associated with migration are well established, with existing studies demonstrating migrants and refugees' contributions in the form of labour force participation, volunteering, and entrepreneurship, supporting local economies through demand for goods and services, and contributing to a diverse and multicultural social fabric.
 - The existing literature does not seek to explicitly attribute benefits to the settlement sector, and rarely quantifies the relative impact of settlement interventions on migrants' outcomes. Nonetheless, some literature detailed in this chapter identifies correlation between accessing settlement supports and clients' outcomes, as they relate to wellbeing (Chen et al 2019) and employment (Cheng et al 2021; Department of Home Affairs and the Telethon Kids Institute 2022).
 - Several studies emphasise the role of English proficiency in settlement outcomes. Research by the Department of Home Affairs and the Telethon Kids Institute (2021) indicates that the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) increases participants' English proficiency, with this increased proficiency then linked to improvements in other outcomes including an increase in the probability of employment, higher earnings, reduced reliance on income support, and decreased dependence on public housing. International research also infers a 'chain of impact' between language training, skills, and labour market outcomes (Lochmann et al 2019).
 - Studies like Abood et al 2021 examine settlement services literacy (SSL) variations and the impact of settlement services on enhancing SSL, crucial for migrants to access and utilise services effectively. While settlement services are shown to target some SSL indicators, systematic achievement is lacking.
 - Other international studies explore the influence of services and integration programs, programs which generally encompass language training and cultural orientation and other supports, on refugee outcomes. These papers look at settings in Germany (Brucker et al 2019, Battistic et al 2019), Sweden (Joonas et al 2012), and the Netherlands (de Vroome et al 2010).
 - The literature does not consistently indicate a significant or positive effect of the sector (e.g., Chen 2019).
-

2.1 Scope of this literature review

The literature review in this chapter is focused on papers which consider the benefits of settlement, though it also touches on relevant work which considers the benefits of migration in general. The key research objectives and questions guiding this review are outlined below:

- **Identifying outcomes:** what is the relationship between settlement services and the outcomes of clients in Australia and international contexts?
- **Quantifying outcomes:** has the difference in outcomes for 'more settled' or more supported migrants been quantified?
- **Quantifying avoided costs:** Is there evidence to show the benefits of early intervention in terms of avoided costs for government associated with crisis supports?
- **Attribution and contributions:** which outcomes can be attributed to the settlement sectors interventions?

While Section 2.5 considers the literature on the benefits of migration in general, Section 2.4 focuses on the literature which more directly links client outcomes and service use. While there are few papers identified which monetise the benefits associated with stronger settlement outcomes, the review provides an evidence base to inform the analysis of existing data sources (Chapter 3) and to identify the data gaps which might be filled through primary data collection.

2.2 Summary of the available literature

The economic benefits of migration, including humanitarian migration, are well established in the literature. The available studies demonstrate that migrants and refugees make a substantial contribution to the Australian

economy and society, primarily focusing on the benefits associated with migrant cohorts' economic participation (employment and spending).

There are no identified studies which explicitly attribute the benefits of effective migration to the settlement sector's intervention. Papers rarely quantify the relative impact of settlement interventions on migrants' outcomes. However, there are three types of literature outlined in this section which could be used to frame the contributions of the settlement sector:

- Firstly, a range of studies focus on the **barriers** to effective settlement, and in some cases estimate a cost associated with ineffective settlement. A common example are papers which estimate the economic losses associated with the underutilisation of migrant workers' skills and experience. These studies could be used to demonstrate the potential economic return associated with settlement interventions to tackle barriers such as underutilisation.
- Secondly, there are several studies which track **outcomes** for migrant cohorts over time, as they settle. These studies cover a variety of settlement outcomes and consider migrants' health, social and civic engagement, language proficiency, and educational participation. Often, these studies provide the outcomes measures needed to move beyond a labour-market-participation view of migrants' economic contributions.
- Thirdly, program **evaluations** provide a source of evidence on the specific impact of migrant supports, and in some cases, the difference in outcomes for the 'treatment' group receiving support to settle. These studies focus on identifiable programs such as English training (including the AMEP), job-related supports and, in international contexts, coaching and casework models. While studies do not always compare outcomes for non-users of a specific program, they often suggest a correlation between accessing settlement supports and clients' outcomes.

The key findings from these different types of literature are summarised in Chapter 2.4 as they map to settlement outcomes. The papers discussed are outlined further in Appendix A.

2.3 A benefits framework

The implications drawn from the literature review reveal that while the literature may not offer direct answers, it does provide valuable evidence to inform hypotheses about both the direct and indirect impacts of settlement services. Figure 2.1 below outlines the potential for quantifying benefits based on existing literature and our understanding of available data, which may be used to demonstrate connections between client outcomes and settlement service interventions.

Various outcomes, including employment, education, health, wellbeing, English proficiency, and housing, show evidence in the literature of a correlation between service use and improved outcomes, with existing data sources suggesting a strong opportunity for quantification. Conversely, outcomes like skills recognition and access to language services, acknowledged in the literature for their role in facilitating improvements in other outcomes, pose challenges for quantification due to their derived benefit in facilitating other outcomes.

The relationship between service use and outcomes like civic participation, finance, transport, and entrepreneurship is less explored in the literature, making it challenging to establish a clear link through available data. However, there is a potential to draw relationships between improvements in these outcomes and other variables. A subset of outcomes, namely justice and family support, lacks literature discussion or adequate data, likely necessitating reliance on case studies for qualitative analysis (see Table B.1 in Appendix B for further details).

While a comprehensive study on the impact of settlement supports on settlement journeys based solely on the literature does not appear to be feasible, the literature does highlight datasets for potential use in a Deloitte Access Economics study and sheds light on the methodological issues that any subsequent study would need to address.

Figure 2.1 : Ability to assess the relationship between service use and outcomes for successful settlement



Legend

- The literature shows a correlation between service use and outcomes, providing a strong opportunity to quantify the link between accessing supports/services and positive outcomes.
- Existing literature suggests these outcomes improve others, but quantification is challenging, as the derived benefit lies in facilitating other outcomes.
- Quantifying the impact of settlement supports on these outcomes may be challenging, but it may be possible to establish relationships between these outcomes and other variables.
- Due to limited literature and data variables pertaining to these outcomes, it is likely that a reliance on case studies will be necessary for their qualification.

Source: Deloitte Access Economics (2023)

2.4 The impacts of settlement services

2.4.1 Health and wellbeing

Using Building a New Life in Australia (BNLA), a connection can be drawn between humanitarian migrants’ use of government services and their general health.

Chen et al (2019) draw a connection between clients seeking support from the settlement sector, and their subsequent experiences of social integration and health.⁴ The study uses data from BNLA to consider the outcomes for 1,723 humanitarian migrants who held permanent visas from 2013 to 2016. The study identified individuals who had used four types of resettlement services; help on accessing public housing, undertaking English language training, undertaking job training or further study, receiving social security payments.⁵ Importantly, it did not differentiate between services provided by the settlement sector and those offered by other mainstream government services. It finds the influence of utilising resettlement services on health outcomes to be limited. Specifically, the paper does not find any significant links between resettlement services use and mental health. The study did find that participation in job training or further study demonstrated a positive effect on general health.

⁴ Chen, W., Wu, S., Ling, L., & Renzaho, A. (2019). Impacts of social integration and loneliness on mental health of humanitarian migrants in Australia: Evidence from a longitudinal study. *Australian and New Zealand journal of public health*, 43(1), pp.46-55.

⁵ The study looks at whether an individual has undertaken English language training but does not specifically look at participation in SEE or AMEP, variables which are available in the BNLA dataset.

Other research compares the outcomes of humanitarian migrants with those of other population groups and shows the relatively higher incidence of health issues in the population.

Recent ongoing research by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) investigates health outcome patterns and service utilisation among refugees and humanitarian entrants relative to other permanent migrants (by visa class) and the rest of the Australian population.⁶ This research offers a descriptive comparison of outcomes among humanitarian entrants, settlement service users, with other groups. Health outcomes of interest include occurrences of long-term health conditions and underlying causes of death. While the analysis does show variation in outcomes by cohort (humanitarian visa holders, other permanent visa holders, rest of Australian population), it does not attribute the outcomes to the settlement service sector.

2.4.2 English proficiency

Australian and international literature establishes a chain of impact between language programs, language acquisition and proficiency, and settlement outcomes, predominately related to employment.

Several studies consider the role of English proficiency in settlement outcomes. Using data from BNLA, Cheng et al (2021) explore the relationship between English proficiency and labour market outcomes among humanitarian migrants. Their results indicate that a higher level of English proficiency is linked to an increased likelihood of engaging in the labour force, as well as achieving success in securing employment. Moreover, their research establishes a strong association between participation in an English training program and the acquisition of improved language skills.⁷ These findings align with Smart et al (2017) whose research indicates that English language proficiency of humanitarian migrants tends to improve over time in Australia, with a majority of participants having taken English language classes since their arrival, and demonstrates a link between enhanced English skills and a higher likelihood of employment.⁸

Research by the Department of Home Affairs and the Telethon Kids Institute (2021) specifically considers the impact of the Australian Migrant English Program (AMEP) on migrant outcomes. Firstly, it establishes the impact of the AMEP on English proficiency, finding that the English proficiency of AMEP clients upon program exit was higher than at the point of entry, with improvements generally more pronounced for clients who spent longer periods participating in the program. These higher rates of English proficiency are then linked to improvements in other settlement outcomes, including probability of employment, higher earnings, reduced reliance on income support and decreased dependence on public housing.⁹ While these papers can be used to infer the 'chain of impact' related to settlement interventions, these studies do not draw a causal link between settlement services and client outcomes.

International research also infers a 'chain of impact' between language training, skills, and labour market outcomes. For instance, Lochmann (et al 2019) investigate the impact of language training on the employment outcomes of refugees in France, utilising a threshold in language test scores to create a quasi-experimental setting. Their findings indicate that an additional 100 hours of language training is associated with a 15 to 27 percentage point increase in the likelihood of refugee participants entering the labour force.¹⁰

2.4.3 Engaging with mainstream services

Research emphasises the importance of enhancing access through employing bicultural workers and investing in multilingual services.

The Australian Institute of Family Studies (2017) highlights in its research that barriers, rather than the availability of services, frequently present the most significant challenge for migrants in utilising services. According to service providers, language barriers emerge as the primary hurdle, as many clients lack proficiency in English, and

⁶ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Health of refugees and humanitarian entrants in Australia* (3 November 2023), <<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/cald-australians/health-of-refugees-and-humanitarian-entrants>>.

⁷ Cheng, Z., Wang, B., Jiang, Z., Taksa, L., & Tani, M. (2021). English skills and early labour market integration: Evidence from humanitarian migrants in Australia. *International Migration*.

⁸ Australian Institute of Family Studies, *English skills, engagement in education, and entrance into employment of recently arrived humanitarian migrants* (October 2017), <<https://aifs.gov.au/research/research-reports/recently-arrived-humanitarian-migrants>>.

⁹ Department of Home Affairs and the Telethon Kids Institute, *Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Impact Evaluation Project* (2022), <<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/amep/about-the-program/benefits-study-with-amep>>.

¹⁰ Lochmann, A., Rapoport, H., & Speciale, B. (2019). The effect of language training on immigrants' economic integration: Empirical evidence from France. *European Economic Review*, 113, pp.265-296, <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0014292119300200>>.

services often lack language support. Additional impediments include limited awareness of available services, geographical location, and the inflexibility of service delivery.¹¹

Some studies (such as Abood et al 2021) explore the variations in 'settlement services literacy' (SSL) among clients and the impact of settlement services on enhancing SSL and, consequently, outcomes. SSL, which refers to the proficiency in foundational information, competencies for service navigation, developmental processes, and political skills, is crucial for migrants to be able to effectively access and utilise settlement services, critically evaluate them, and engage in political mobilisation during their settlement experience. The paper finds that language proficiency is the main barrier to accessing information and services, and that settlement services address various SSL indicators, primarily focusing on basic SSL. The paper finds that systematic achievement of SSL is lacking, and programs do not consistently cover all indicators, including political or critical SSL.¹² The paper concludes that alternative service delivery approaches are required to reduce structural inequalities in terms of clients' access to SSL, and that research is needed to develop a service model that incorporates service literacy.

Australian studies which consider the value of bicultural workers respond to the context that women migrants are especially likely to face significant barriers in accessing government services due to language barriers, cultural norms, and caring responsibilities.

For refugee and migrant women, the barriers to effective settlement can often be more substantial, with family responsibilities, culture and norms about gender roles and a lack of childcare often a key impediment to service access.¹³ Riggs et al (2012) studied refugee mothers learning English and revealed that the primary obstacle was child-rearing responsibilities, with concerns about culturally inappropriate childcare. Service providers observed a preference for male attendance in English classes, aiming to improve employment opportunities, and instances where women were discouraged from mixed-gender classes by husbands or family members.¹⁴

Several studies have noted the need to implement strategies to better engage refugee and migrant women. The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health advocates for the enhancement of mental health services for migrant and refugee women by investing in multilingual and ethno-specific organisations, offering free interpreting services to all migrant women, providing staff with gender and culturally sensitive training, and ensuring the availability of multilingual information on women's health.¹⁵ The integrated health care service for asylum seekers and refugees in the South-East of Melbourne provides one such example of a service tailoring healthcare delivery to meet the unique needs of this priority population. Service users reported high levels of satisfaction, emphasising the significance of establishing trusting relationships with staff, having access to bicultural workers, benefitting from onsite interpreting services, and experiencing integrated care.¹⁶

Existing literature highlights the importance of bicultural workers in community engagement, leveraging their shared language and culture, community connections, and lived experiences for more effective interaction with multicultural communities. These workers play a key role in improving service utilisation, helping users navigate complex systems, building community trust, and providing culturally tailored interventions to address potential barriers.¹⁷ Riggs et al (2012) emphasise the crucial contribution of bicultural playgroup facilitators, settlement case workers, and refugee health nurses as primary means of facilitating initial access to maternal and child health services for refugee families in Victoria.¹⁸ Furthermore, multiple studies have underscored the importance of

¹¹ Australian Institute of Family Studies, *Empower migrant and refugee women: supporting and empowering women beyond five-year post settlement* (23 September 2017) <https://aifs.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/rr38-empowering_migrant_women_report_1_0.pdf>.

¹² Abood, J., Woodward, K., Polonsky, M., Green, J., Tadjoeddin, Z., & Renzaho, A. (2021). Understanding immigrant settlement services literacy in the context of settlement service utilisation, settlement outcomes and wellbeing among new migrants: A mixed methods systematic review. *Wellbeing, Space and Society*, <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666558121000300>>.

¹³ Australian Institute of Family Studies, *Empower migrant and refugee women: supporting and empowering women beyond five-year post settlement* (23 September 2017) <https://aifs.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/rr38-empowering_migrant_women_report_1_0.pdf>.

¹⁴ Riggs, E., Davis, E., Gibbs, L., Block, K., Szwarc, K., Casey, S., Duell-Piening, P., & Waters, E. (2012). Flexible models for learning English are needed for refugee mothers. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 52(2), pp.397-405, <<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1000188.pdf>>.

¹⁵ Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, *Policy Brief: Immigrant and Refugee Women's Mental Health* (November 2020) <https://www.mcwh.com.au/wp-content/uploads/MCWH-Policy-Brief_Mental-Health-.pdf>.

¹⁶ McBride, J., Block, A., & Russo, A. (2017). An integrated healthcare service for asylum seekers and refugees in the south-eastern region of Melbourne: Monash health refugee health and wellbeing. *Australian Journal of Primary Health*, 23(4), pp.323-328.

¹⁷ cohealth, *Supporting Bicultural workers: A literature review* (February 2022), <<https://www.cohealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Literature-Review.pdf>>.

¹⁸ Riggs, E., Davis, E., Gibbs, L., Block, K., Szwarc, K., Casey, S., Duell-Piening, P., & Waters, E. (2012). Accessing maternal and child health services in Melbourne, Australia: Reflections from refugee families and service providers. *BMC Health Services Research*, 12(1), pp.1-16, <<https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1472-6963-12-117>>.

incorporating bicultural and/or bilingual workers in healthcare settings to effectively engage culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities (see Migrant and Refugee Health Partnership 2022).¹⁹

2.4.4 Employment programs and job-matching

Program-level evaluations demonstrate the relationship between employment services for migrants and their labour market outcomes, though they tend not to quantify the impact relative to cohorts that did not use the program.

Settlement Services International (SSI) administers the NSW Government's Refugee Employment Support Program (RESP) in two regions, providing employment support to refugees through assistance in developing career plans, connecting them with local employers, and with education and training organizations.²⁰ SSI's submission to the Employment White Paper presented early evidence suggesting a higher employment rate among program participants, with 32 per cent securing employment within the first six months of arrival in Australia, compared to the national figure of 17 per cent of refugees in employment after 18 months in Australia between 2017 and 2022.²¹ Additionally, an interim review of the Australian Governments' *Career Pathways Pilot for Humanitarian Entrants* program showed that, following specialised career advice, 11 to 17 per cent of participants obtained employment in their pre arrival occupation.²² Other evidence notes that the challenges faced by refugees and humanitarian migrants in securing employment aligned with their skills and previous experience.²³ These findings indicate the potential role of support programs in strengthening clients' employment outcomes.

Other international studies explore the influence of services and integration programs, programs which generally encompass language training and cultural orientation and other supports, on refugee outcomes. One study conducted in Germany (Migration Policy Institute 2019) finds that refugees who completed integration courses or utilised other employment services generally exhibited higher rates of employment.²⁴ Similarly, a study in the Netherlands (De Vroome et al 2010) not only affirmed the positive correlation between language proficiency and employment opportunities but also emphasised the significance of integration courses as additional crucial factors for economic integration.²⁵

Several other studies confirm the benefits of investments in bespoke job search and assistance on migrant labour market outcomes. Battisti et al (2019) collaborated with a German NGO for a field experiment assessing the impact of job search assistance on recently arrived refugees in Germany. While all refugees received help with their CVs and basic job search information, a randomly selected group participated in direct job-matching services which involved placing their CVs in a database for potential employer matching, and the NGO directly forwarding these CVs to employers. The results indicated that after twelve months, refugees with lower education levels who received this extra job search assistance were 16 percentage points more likely to be employed than counterparts without this support.²⁶

In Sweden, Joona and Nekby (2012) evaluated the impact of providing intensive coaching through the Public Employment Service (PES) on refugee outcomes. In the study, a randomly selected group received intensified coaching from caseworkers, in addition to the traditional programme supports which consists of job search assistance, validation of foreign credentials, job application and interview support. Their findings suggested that

¹⁹ Migrant and Refugee Health Partnership, *Building on Strength: Developing Australia's Bilingual and Bicultural Health and Care Workforce* (4 June 2022) <<https://culturaldiversityhealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Building-on-Strength-Bilingual-and-Bicultural-Workforce-Policy-Brief.pdf>>.

²⁰ NSW Department of Education, *Refugee Employment Support Program* (15 November 2023) <<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/access-the-refugee-employment-support-program>>.

²¹ Settlement Services International, Submission No 51 to Treasury, *Employment White Paper* (November 2022)

²² Deloitte Access Economics for the Department of Home Affairs, *Interim Evaluation of the Career Pathways Pilot for Humanitarian Entrants*, July 2019, <<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settlement-services-subsite/files/career-pathways-pilot.pdf>>

²³ Tan, Y., Rudd, D. & Lester, L. (2023). Employment, income, and skill alignment of humanitarian migrants in the Australian labour market: Metropolitan and regional contexts, 2000-2016. *Geographical Research*, 62(1), <<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1745-5871.12621>>.

²⁴ Migration Policy Institute, Integrating refugees and asylum seekers into the German economy and society: empirical evidence and policy objectives (December 2019) <https://cdn.givingcompass.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/18123415/TCM_2019_Germany-FINAL.pdf>.

²⁵ De Vroome, T., & Van Tubergen, F. (2010). The employment experience of refugees in the Netherlands. *International Migration Review*, 44(2), pp.376-403.

²⁶ Battisti, M., Giesing, Y., & Laurentsyeva, N. (2019). Can job search assistance improve the labour market integration of refugees? Evidence from a field experiment. *Labour Economics*, 61, <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S092753711930065X>>.

those who received intensive coaching were 6 percentage points more likely to be employed at the end of the observation period (22-30 months) compared to those who received the regular coaching.²⁷

2.4.5 Entrepreneurship

The economic investment in refugee entrepreneurship programs have been quantified and are material.

The Settlement Services International (SSI) 2023 'Billion Dollar benefit' report cited a 2019 study, which suggested that \$1 billion in economic value could be generated a year within 10 years by supporting refugees in Australia to launch new businesses.²⁸ The original paper developed by the Centre for Policy Development (CPD) was not designed to demonstrate the benefits of the settlement sector, the estimation considers how investment in refugee entrepreneurship supports leads to returns in the form of economic gains, including profits to business owners and wages to employees, and fiscal gains, in the form of lower welfare spending and higher tax revenues.²⁹

2.4.6 Skills recognition

The economic cost associated with the under-recognised skills and experience of migrant cohorts are commonly estimated and provide a basis for understanding the potential gains and opportunities that could be unlocked through recognising and leverage their diverse talents.

An increasing body of research has highlighted the issue of skill underutilisation among migrants in Australia. CEDA's (2021) report emphasises the significant cost of skills mismatch among permanent skilled migrants, estimating over \$1.25 billion in foregone wages from 2013 to 2018. This mismatch not only results in individual financial losses but also broader economic impacts, including reduced productivity and innovation as companies are unable to acquire the essential skills required for rapidly emerging and high-growing occupations. Among their recommendations, they suggest creating a government-regulated online platform for skills-matching jobs.³⁰

In line with this concern, Deloitte Access Economics research for Multicultural Affairs Queensland (2018) underscores a prevalent issue of skills underutilisation among migrants in Australia. Survey findings indicate that 27 per cent of migrants and refugees encountered difficulties in securing jobs that aligned with their qualifications. Many faced non-recognition of their credentials or work experience, and a significant 50 per cent of skilled migrants were not applying the expertise gained prior to their arrival in Australia. The report also used a Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) modelling approach to estimate that improved skill and experience recognition of migrants and refugees could boost the Queensland economy by \$250 million in the next 10 years.³¹

While these reports do not primarily focus on humanitarian migrants, the implications extend to this group. The Untapped Potential study, commissioned by SSI, reveals that migrant and refugee women constitute a growing untapped segment in the Australian workforce. Despite possessing high skills, qualifications, and motivation, migrant and refugee women, particularly from low- and middle-income countries, are more likely to be employed in roles below their educational and experiential capacities compared to Australian-born women in the labour market.³²

2.4.7 Housing

Australian literature highlights the essential role of government or case settlement workers in providing housing assistance to humanitarian migrants, though the current body of literature is limited.

The successful settlement of recently arrived humanitarian migrants is significantly influenced by their ability to secure housing. Research by Ziersch et al (2023) explores the housing experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in South Australia, finding that individuals utilise various sources to find houses, with family and friends, case

²⁷ Joona, P., & Nekby, L. (2012). Intensive Coaching of New Immigrants: An Evaluation Based on Random Program Assignment. *The Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 114(2), <<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/j.1467-9442.2011.01692.x>>.

²⁸ Settlement Services International (SSI), *Billion Dollar Benefit: A roadmap for unleashing the economic potential of refugee and migrants*, (June 2023) <<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2023-06/apo-nid323189.pdf>>.

²⁹ Centre for Policy Development and Open Political Economy Network, *Seven steps to SUCCESS: enabling refugee entrepreneurs to flourish*, (11 April 2019) <<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2019-04/apo-nid229866.pdf>>.

³⁰ CEDA, *A good match: Optimising Australia's permanent skilled migration* (26 March 2021) <<https://www.ceda.com.au/Admin/getmedia/150315bf-cceb-4536-862d-1a3054197cd7/CEDA-Migration-report-26-March-2021-final.pdf>>.

³¹ Deloitte Access Economics, *Seizing the opportunity: Making the most of the skills and experience of migrants and refugees*, (report commissioned by Multicultural Affairs Queensland, November 2018) <https://www.des.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0023/313637/migrant-skills-report.pdf>.

³² Settlement Services International, *Untapped potential: trends and disparities in the economic participation of migrant and refugee women in Australia* (September 2022) <https://www.ssi.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/OP_Untapped_Potential_Report.pdf>.

workers and other service providers being some of the primary contributors.³³ Data from BNLA supports this, revealing that for over a third (38 per cent) of participants, assistance from government or case settlement workers was the main source of support in finding housing. Moreover, most participants were positive about the assistance provided to them by the government/case settlement worker.³⁴

According to the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (2002), housing assistance accounted for less than 5 per cent of services for recent migrants. However, for individuals utilising these services, it played a significant role, constituting 13 per cent of their total assistance, nearly as important, in terms of services used, as support for finding employment. Notably, the study revealed that humanitarian migrants, who comprised 14 per cent of the total migrant population, constituted 36 per cent of housing assistance service users, with 95 per cent classified as high users, utilising services on four or more occasions.³⁵

2.5 Quantifying the benefits of migration

2.5.1 The economic benefits of migration to Australia

There exists an extensive body of Australian and international literature on the economic benefits of migration, with nuance in findings across studies and contexts. These studies, which differ in their estimation approach, have generally found migrants to play a positive role in increasing economic activity, as measured by GDP, fostering improved fiscal sustainability and in addressing skill shortages.³⁶ Some studies draw a distinction between the impacts of migration on GDP and GDP per capita (for both residents and migrants), and are inconclusive as to whether very high levels of migration enhance the welfare of existing residents. These effects are likely to depend on the context of migration and may vary from country to country.

Some studies quantify the aggregate market benefits associated with migration – including humanitarian migration – and centre on the returns associated with employment and population growth.

Some literature seeks to quantify the benefits associated with migration in aggregate terms. These studies usually involve modelling a ‘shock’ to the economy in terms of increased migration and its flow-on impacts to the economy in terms of employment, consumption, tax revenue and investments. These studies use a CGE modelling approach which takes a ‘top down’ view to simulate a structural change to the economy and its potential impact. Recent and high-profile studies of this nature include:

- Analysis commissioned by the Business Council in 2021 (and recently published in the BCA response to the Migration Review) included an estimate that annually for every 1,000 migrants there is \$38 million more tax revenue, \$124 million in higher economic output and \$59 million in increased investment.³⁷
- A 2021 Treasury Paper estimated that the 2018-19 permanent migrant cohort (Skill, Family, Humanitarian) makes a positive cumulative lifetime contribution of \$20 billion higher than a cohort drawn from the Australian population especially due to the younger age of these migrants.³⁸
- Deloitte Access Economics modelling undertaken for Oxfam Australia (2017) suggested that increasing Australia’s humanitarian migration intake to 44,000 per annum over a five-year period could increase the size of the Australian economy by \$37.7 billion in net present value terms over the next 50 years, supporting an additional 35,00 FTE jobs and \$4.9 billion in GDP annually between 2018-19 and 2067-68.³⁹ This study includes cost to government of supporting these cohorts as a positive expenditure shock in that model, and finds that while GDP rises, GDP per capita falls in the modelled scenario. It is important to recognise that

³³ Ziersch, A., Due, C., & Walsh, M. (2023). Housing in Place: Housing, Neighbourhood and Resettlement for People from Refugee and Asylum Seeker Backgrounds in Australia. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, pp.1-24, <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12134-023-01008-w>>.

³⁴ Australian Institute of Family Studies, *Housing outcomes for recently arrived humanitarian migrants*, (December 2017) <https://aifs.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/bnla-researchsummary-housing_0.pdf>.

³⁵ Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, *The role of housing and other services in successful settlement of new arrivals to Australia* (November 2002) <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/sites/default/files/migration/documents/AHURI_RAP_Issue_14_The_role_of_housing_and_other_services_in_successful_settlement_of_new_arrivals.pdf>.

³⁶ Lowy Institute, *Economic Migration and Australia in the 21st Century* (19 October 2016) <<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/economic-migration-australia-21st-century#heading-3888>>.

³⁷ Ernst & Young (2021), *A hit to economic growth: we need to catch up lost migration for the good of all Australians*, as cited in Business Council of Australia (2023) *Migration makes Australia stronger*, <https://www.bca.com.au/migration_makes_australia_stronger>.

³⁸ The Treasury, *The lifetime fiscal impact of the Australian permanent migration program* (December 2021) <https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/p2021-220773_1.pdf>.

³⁹ Deloitte Access Economics, *The economic and social impact of increasing Australia’s humanitarian intake* (report commissioned by Oxfam, August 2019) <<https://www.deloitte.com/au/en/services/economics/perspectives/economic-social-impact-increasing-australias-humanitarian-intake.html>>.

these distributional effects may evolve over time as migrants labour market participation and employment outcomes grow as they settle.

- Deloitte Access Economics modelling undertaken for Multicultural Affairs Queensland (2018) estimated economic returns for the Queensland economy of \$250 million over the next ten years could be unlocked by better recognising the skills and experience held by migrant and refugee workers.⁴⁰

Importantly, the approach taken to develop estimates such as these involves modelling the potential economic benefits of achieving an outcome (such as higher rates labour force participation, or a larger total population). These studies do not seek to detail the interventions required to achieve these outcomes, nor do they cost these interventions to the extent seen in a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) or social return on investment (SROI) study.

Other related studies demonstrate the economic impact of migration by demonstrating the breadth of contributions made by migrants to local labour market in descriptive terms. For instance, a research collaboration between the Centre of Population, Australian Treasury and the OECD uses administrative data from PLIDA to analyse recent trends in regional employment and productivity, with a focus on the characteristics and geographic distribution of migrants in Australia.⁴¹ Additionally, the analysis provides insight into the relationship between migration, employment, and productivity at the regional level in Australia as well as in other OECD regions.⁴² This paper finds that:

- migrants to Australia are more likely to live in metropolitan regions and have much higher average education relative to Australian born residents.
- regions with a higher migrant population also have higher employment rates among Australian residents and higher levels of labour productivity.
- these variations in the characteristics of migrants and non-migrants are more pronounced in Australia than in other OECD countries.
- despite a higher level of education relative to the Australian population on average, the migrant cohort have lower employment rates, mainly arising from a lower participation rate among migrant women.

However, there is also literature which demonstrates some displacement effects of migration.

A growing body of literature highlights variability of the impact of migration for different cohorts and distinguishes the aggregate benefits of migration from the per capita (distributional) impacts. Some Australian studies have demonstrated that the economic benefits associated with migration are predominately shaped by the higher skill level usually seen among the migrant population, reflecting the policy intent of the skilled migrant stream. The Migration Review recently noted that the migration of lower skilled workers can adversely impact employment and wage growth, reflecting the findings of international and Australian studies that some local cohorts (younger and low-skilled resident cohorts) tend to experience displacement effects from increased migration. In considering these findings and their implications for social cohesion, it is important to note that:

- migrants' skill levels can increase after arrival in Australia
- the barriers which see migrants not able to utilise their skills in Australia are often beyond the individuals' control, and could be partially addressed through reforms such as a greater investment in qualification recognition
- not all migration pathways to Australia have the policy intent of strengthening Australia's skills base (for instance, the Humanitarian program).

These factors underscore the role of the settlement sector and public service systems in ensuring that migrants to Australia are supported to achieve their economic potential.

2.5.2 The social impacts of migration

These studies identify the social benefits associated with migration to Australia, though these contributions are rarely quantified in monetary terms.

⁴⁰ Deloitte Access Economics, *Seizing the opportunity: Making the most of the skills and experience of migrants and refugees*, (report commissioned by Multicultural Affairs Queensland, November 2018) <https://www.des.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0023/313637/migrant-skills-report.pdf>.

⁴¹ PLIDA is the Person-Level Integrated Data Asset held by the ABS. This dataset is outlined in more detail in Chapter 3.

⁴² OECD (2023), *Regional productivity, local labour markets, and migration in Australia*, 39, OECD Publishing, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/urban-rural-and-regional-development/regional-productivity-local-labour-markets-and-migration-in-australia_3cc8f669-en>.

While these studies demonstrate the quantum of impact which migration sector reforms may support across the Australian economy, they quantify only 'market' benefits associated with migration. Although these papers *qualify* the social returns associated with migration, they are rarely assigned an economic value. In other areas of the literature, the social benefits associated with migration are identified. These include:

- Humanitarian migrants exhibit higher **entrepreneurship** rates than the general Australian population, fostering innovation, increased employment, and economic growth. Research by Deloitte Access Economics (2019) and by the Centre for Policy Development (2019) finds migrant business owners develop local businesses which support the broader community by providing improved access to products, and supporting job creation, heightened tax revenue, and reduced welfare spending.⁴³
- Humanitarian and family stream migrants, along with subsequent generations, are found to significantly contribute to **civic engagement** by establishing and sustaining multicultural organisations, as highlighted by research from the Refugee Council of Australia (2010).⁴⁴ These cohorts volunteer at higher rates, with research undertaken by Settlement Services International (2020) revealing that almost two-thirds of surveyed refugees volunteered in the prior month, surpassing the rates of civic engagement seen in the general population.⁴⁵ This active community involvement enhances social vibrancy and cultivates a strong sense of communal belonging.
- Migrants actively enrich the **multicultural fabric** of Australian society, bringing diverse perspectives and values that promote mutual learning and cultural appreciation in workplaces and communities. The Refugee Council of Australia's (2010) report emphasised that humanitarian and family stream migrants contribute valuable social capital, fostering a cohesive and connected community.⁴⁶ A study by Settlement Services International (2020) revealed that 52% of surveyed humanitarian migrants have diverse friendship networks, including people from their ethnic community and others in Australia.⁴⁷
- Humanitarian and family stream migrants contribute significantly to Australia's **global economic ties** through substantial remittance payments. The Refugee Council of Australia (2015) cited World Bank estimates that in 2014, migrants and refugees from Australia sent nearly \$16 billion in outward remittances. Deloitte Access Economics (2019) also reported that 70% of humanitarian migrants sent money to their homeland, citing a 2008 survey from a Department of Immigration and Citizenship report.⁴⁸ While this money does not flow to Australia (and so is often considered a 'loss' when considered through an economic return lens), there is a social benefit associated with this global connectedness. Over the past three decades, migration has diversified skills and networks, expanding regional and global trade and investment links. Importantly, research by the Refugee Council of Australia (2010) indicates that refugee populations actively foster trade connections with their home countries, further strengthening Australia's global economic ties.⁴⁹

⁴³ Deloitte Access Economics, *The economic and social impact of increasing Australia's humanitarian intake* (report commissioned by Oxfam, August 2019) <<https://www.deloitte.com/au/en/services/economics/perspectives/economic-social-impact-increasing-australias-humanitarian-intake.html>>; Centre for Policy Development and Open Political Economy Network, *Seven steps to SUCCESS: enabling refugee entrepreneurs to flourish*, (11 April 2019) <<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2019-04/apo-nid229866.pdf>>.

⁴⁴ Refugee Council of Australia, *Economic, civic and social contributions of refugees and Humanitarian entrants – literature review* (report commissioned by Department of Immigration and Citizenship, December 2010) <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settlement-services-subsite/files/economic-civic-social-contributions-refugees-humanitarian-entrants-literature-review_access.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Settlement Services International, *Foundations for Belonging: A snapshot of newly arrived refugees* (June 2020) <https://www.ssi.org.au/images/Signature_Foundations_Report_withlink.pdf>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Refugee Council of Australia, Submission No 20 to Productivity Commission, *Migrant Intake into Australia Inquiry* (11 June 2015) <https://www.pc.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/190406/sub020-migrant-intake.pdf>; Deloitte Access Economics, *The economic and social impact of increasing Australia's humanitarian intake* (report commissioned by Oxfam, August 2019) <<https://www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/economics/articles/economic-social-impact-increasing-australias-humanitarian-intake.html>>.

⁴⁹ Refugee Council of Australia, *Economic, civic and social contributions of refugees and Humanitarian entrants – literature review* (report commissioned by Department of Immigration and Citizenship, December 2010) <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settlement-services-subsite/files/economic-civic-social-contributions-refugees-humanitarian-entrants-literature-review_access.pdf>.

Implications for future research

The review did not find existing literature which distinctly compares outcomes for users and non-users of settlement services, suggesting that attributing client impacts to the sector using only the existing public studies will be challenging or require some assumptions. Some analysis compares outcomes for different groups of permanent visa holders but at best infers the role of settlement support in those outcomes. Any studies that compare outcomes for users and non-users evaluate the impact of a specific intervention (such as an employment service or language program), rather than the suite of supports offered by a settlement caseworker.

The extent to which the settlement sector itself enables settlement outcomes is less established in the literature and publicly. That is, the clean attribution of impacts to the sector is not possible using the literature alone. To demonstrate the impact of the sector on client outcomes robustly – and to quantify the value of those outcomes using an established frameworks such as Social Return on Investment (SROI) – analysis of outcomes data is necessary.

The literature review was undertaken with a view to assess the feasibility and options for a study to demonstrate the impact of the settlement sector on client outcomes. While it was established that the literature alone was insufficient to assess the sector's impact on outcomes, the feasibility study undertaken for the Settlement Council of Australia did reveal datasets which could be used to add to an evidence base on the socioeconomic value associated with the settlement sector. These include:

- Australian longitudinal surveys such as *Building a New Life in Australia* (BNLA), which presents detailed information on the settlement experience and can demonstrate client outcomes over time, though it is challenging to cleanly distinguish users and non-users of services, and some settlement outcomes are not measured.
- The *Person-Level Integrated Data Asset* (PLIDA) held by the Australian Government, which allows agency data to be linked, meaning it could in theory be used to provide a detailed view of individual clients' visa class, service use and outcomes such as employment, welfare receipts, income, education, and health service use over time.
- Other Australian datasets, such as those developed based on the Census collection, which can provide descriptive statistics for different migrant cohorts, but do not provide the depth of information needed to identify an uplift in outcomes associated with service use.
- A client survey, which could be used to fill gaps in the data, presenting an opportunity for more comprehensive community-centred research, but requires consideration of complex challenges during design and implementation.

The available data will influence the completeness of any estimation of sector impact – including the validity of the counterfactual(s) and requiring some benefits to be described qualitatively.

2.6 The opportunity for future research

This research sought to assess and add to the quality of the evidence base underpinning the settlement sector, and to inform more substantial work which could in turn be used to inform policy development and to engage with Australian Governments about the potential to expand settlement service provision to existing and future newcomers to Australia.

There is an opportunity for data collection to strengthen the available evidence to estimate impact, by including clear measures of client's service use over their settlement journey. This data could allow the sector and its researchers to move to undertake analysis to demonstrate the sector's role in supporting settlement outcomes, including understanding the contributions to different interventions.

Additional research using existing data and primary research could focus on the settlement sector's contributions to outcomes beyond employment and education. The literature review (Section 2.3) demonstrates gaps in the available evidence relation the settlement domains including entrepreneurship, civic participation, financial security and literacy, transport use and family and social wellbeing. This evidence would enable a more complete analysis of the diversity of social and economic outcomes achieved through effective settlement.

Appendix A: Literature scan

Table A.1 summarises the key papers analysed in the literature scan (Section 2), with a focus on encompassing academic research, policy papers, and program evaluations which identify and quantify the impact of settlement services and other programs on the outcomes of migrants.

Table A.1: Papers analysed in the literature scan

Paper and Authors	Objective and datasets	Cohorts	Outcomes of interest	Key findings	Implications for our approach
Chen et al (2019) ⁵⁰ Impacts of social integration and loneliness on mental health of humanitarian migrants in Australia: evidence from a longitudinal study	Academic paper focused on outcomes for humanitarian migrants. To examine the impacts of social integration and loneliness on the mental health of humanitarian migrants (HMs) in Australia over time.	Humanitarian migrants using settlement supports. Looks at 1,723 HMs who held permanent visa from 2013 to 2016. Identifies participants use of four types of resettlement service (help to access public housing, undertaking English language training, undertaking job training or further study, receiving social security payments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General health • Mental health • Social integration and loneliness 	Do not find any significant links between resettlement services use and mental health, only the relationship between job training or further study and general health was significant.	This paper provides a basis to identify settlement users in the BNLA dataset, although it does not clearly distinguish between government mainstream and settlement-specific services.
Cheng et al (2021) ⁵¹ English skills and early labour market integration: Evidence from humanitarian migrants in Australia	Academic paper focused on outcomes for humanitarian migrants. To examine the relationship between English proficiency and the labour market outcomes of humanitarian migrants (HMs) in Australia.	Humanitarian migrants. Looks at 2,899 HMs who held permanent visas from 2013 to 2017. Identifies participants involvement in English training programmes, including AMEP, SEE and the TAFE system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour force participation • Employment • Proficiency in English 	A greater proficiency in English is related to an increased likelihood of participating in the labour force and achieving success in securing employment. Additionally, a positive relationship	This paper establishes a chain of impact between settlement users' participation in English training programmes, improved English proficiency and better employment outcomes, although it does not directly link use of services to improved outcomes.

⁵⁰ Chen, W., Wu, S., Ling, L., & Renzaho, A. (2019). Impacts of social integration and loneliness on mental health of humanitarian migrants in Australia: Evidence from a longitudinal study. *Australian and New Zealand journal of public health*, 43(1), pp.46-55.

⁵¹ Cheng, Z., Wang, B., Jiang, Z., Taksa, L., & Tani, M. (2021). English skills and early labour market integration: Evidence from humanitarian migrants in Australia. *International Migration*.

Paper and Authors	Objective and datasets	Cohorts	Outcomes of interest	Key findings	Implications for our approach
				exists between participation in an English training programme and improved language skills.	
Abood et al (2021) ⁵² Understanding settlement services literacy and the provision of settlement services for humanitarian migrants in Australia – A service provider perspective	Academic paper focused on the settlement services literacy of humanitarian migrants. To investigate the provision of settlement services (SS) in relation to settlement services literacy (SSL).	Settlement services providers. Involves 26 service providers from Greater Western Sydney and Greater Melbourne between 2019 and 2020.	Settlement service literacy (SSL), including basic SSL, critical SSL, and political SSL.	Settlement service providers address many of the indicators that promote SSL acquisition, primarily basic SSL, with less emphasis on critical SSL and political SSL. However, this facilitation is not systematically or purposefully achieved	This paper provides evidence to support the role of settlement services in facilitating SSL acquisition among service users. It also highlights that the ability to engage with settlement services is impacted by SSL.
Department of Home Affairs and the Telethon Kids Institute (2022) ⁵³ Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Evaluation	Longitudinal research study of the AMEP To analyse the effectiveness of the AMEP and look at the relationship between participation in the AMEP and migrant outcomes in Australia.	Participants in AMEP. Looks at 403,000 AMEP clients from 2003 to 2019 who are found in the AMEP dataset, which is then linked to PLIDA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English proficiency Labour force participation Income and income support payments Housing 	Participants in the AMEP experienced improvements in English and participation in the AMEP was associated with improved labour force participation, higher incomes, a reduced reliance on income support and public housing.	This paper establishes a direct relationship between participation in an English training program and improved outcomes, although, it does not provide a comparison to the outcomes of ‘non-users’.

⁵² Abood, J., Woodward, K., Polonsky, M., Green, J., Tadjoeeddin, Z., & Renzaho, A. (2021). Understanding immigrant settlement services literacy in the context of settlement service utilisation, settlement outcomes and wellbeing among new migrants: A mixed methods systematic review. *Wellbeing, Space and Society*.

⁵³ Department of Home Affairs and the Telethon Kids Institute, *Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Impact Evaluation Project* (2022), <<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/amep/about-the-program/benefits-study-with-amep>>.

Paper and Authors	Objective and datasets	Cohorts	Outcomes of interest	Key findings	Implications for our approach
<p>Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2023)⁵⁴ Health of refugees and humanitarian entrants in Australia</p>	<p>Data and insights on the health outcomes of humanitarian migrants. To provide insights into the health outcomes, health service use and causes of death for humanitarian entrants relative to other population groups.</p>	<p>Humanitarian migrants. Looks at humanitarian migrants who arrived in Australia from 2000 to 2020 and compares to other permanent migrants and the rest of the Australian population.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health service use • Health outcomes 	<p>Descriptive comparison of outcomes among humanitarian entrants, settlement service users, with other groups, including that humanitarian entrants had high rates of GP attendances, a higher rate of self-reported diabetes, higher rates of certain causes of death and were less likely to self-report mental health conditions</p>	<p>This paper provides an example of how PLIDA can be used and a basis to identify different groups of visa holders in the data asset.</p>
<p>Centre for Policy Development (2019)⁵⁵ Seven Steps to SUCCESS Report</p>	<p>Report outlining how to better support refugee entrepreneurs. Draws on Australian and international best practice to outline policy recommendations to better support refugee entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>Refugee entrepreneurs Looks at the economic and fiscal gains that could be realised from supporting refugee entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>The paper does not look directly at outcomes of refugees, but instead at the gains that could be realised from supporting refugee entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>Launching 1,000 new refugee businesses each year could result in \$98 million in annual economic and fiscal gains.</p>	<p>This paper provides evidence for the benefits that can be gained from investments in refugee supports, although it does not quantify the benefits of existing services available to humanitarian migrants.</p>
<p>Lochmann et al (2019)⁵⁶ The Effect of Language Training on Immigrants' Economic Integration:</p>	<p>Academic paper focused on employment outcomes for migrants. To examine the impact of language training on the</p>	<p>Migrants in France. Looks at first-time arrived migrants in France who were granted permit residence before the end of 2009 and who sat the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour force participation • Employment status • Type of employment • Household income 	<p>There is a significant positive relationship between the number of hours of language training and labour force participation, with the</p>	<p>This paper provides international evidence of the impact of language training programs on outcomes although it does distinguish between the</p>

⁵⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Health of refugees and humanitarian entrants in Australia* (3 November 2023), <<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/cald-australians/health-of-refugees-and-humanitarian-entrants>>

⁵⁵ Centre for Policy Development and Open Political Economy Network, *Seven steps to SUCCESS: enabling refugee entrepreneurs to flourish*, (11 April 2019) <<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2019-04/apo-nid229866.pdf>>.

⁵⁶ Lochmann, A., Rapoport, H., & Speciale, B. (2019). The effect of language training on immigrants' economic integration: Empirical evidence from France. *European Economic Review*, 113, pp.265-296.

Paper and Authors	Objective and datasets	Cohorts	Outcomes of interest	Key findings	Implications for our approach
Empirical Evidence from France	economic integration of migrants in France.	entry test to determine assignment to language classes.		effect higher for refugees and labour migrants relative to family migrants.	outcomes of service users and non-users.
Australian Institute of Family Studies (2017) ⁵⁷ Housing outcomes for recently arrived humanitarian migrants.	Research summary of the housing outcomes of BNLA participants. Examines the housing outcomes of humanitarian migrants interviewed in the Building a New Life Australia (BNLA) dataset, wave 2 and 3.	Humanitarian migrants. Looks at approximately 2,400 HMs who held permanent visas from 2013 to 2017. Identifies participants use of a government/case settlement worker to find housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing tenure and length • Support in finding housing • Housing stress 	Participants largely relied on family and friends, or a government/case settlement worker to find housing. For participants that used government/case settlement workers, they were largely positive about the assistance.	This paper provides evidence of the role of services in finding housing, although it does not clearly distinguish between government mainstream and settlement-specific services and between the outcomes of users and non-users.
Riggs et al (2012) ⁵⁸ Accessing maternal and child health services in Melbourne	Academic paper focused on refugee service access. To explore the perspectives of refugees accessing maternal and child health services in Victoria.	Refugee families. Seven focus groups conducted with 87 mothers from Karen, Iraqi, Assyrian Chaldean, Lebanese, South Sudanese, and Bhutanese backgrounds who were recruited from existing playgroups, a kindergarten, a peer education program, and an adult English language organisation.	The paper does not look directly at outcomes of service users, but rather at what facilitates access to MCH services, and what barriers exist.	Four primary methods were identified for facilitating initial access to MCH: through the birth notification service, settlement case workers, refugee health nurses, or bicultural playgroup facilitators. Barriers to access encompassed transportation challenges, English proficiency concerns, and difficulties in making phone bookings.	This paper establishes a foundation for the essential role of bilingual workers, settlement case workers and refugee health workers in facilitating access to health services, potentially serving as an indirect link to enhanced health outcomes.

⁵⁷ Australian Institute of Family Studies, *Housing outcomes for recently arrived humanitarian migrants*, (December 2017) <https://aifs.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/bnla-researchsummary-housing_0.pdf

⁵⁸ Riggs, E., Davis, E., Gibbs, L., Block, K., Szwarc, K., Casey, S., Duell-Piening, P., & Waters, E. (2012). Accessing maternal and child health services in Melbourne, Australia: Reflections from refugee families and service providers. *BMC Health Services Research*, 12(1), pp.1-16, <<https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1472-6963-12-117>>.

Paper and Authors	Objective and datasets	Cohorts	Outcomes of interest	Key findings	Implications for our approach
<p>De Vroome et al (2010)⁵⁹ The Employment Experiences of Refugees in the Netherlands</p>	<p>Academic paper focused on employment experiences of refugees. To explore the labour market integration of refugees in the Netherlands, looking at their odds of employment and occupational status.</p>	<p>Refugees. Use survey data collected in 2003 and 2004 which interviews more than 3,000 first-generation refugees in the Netherlands. Identifies participants pre-migration education, post-migration education and work experience, Dutch language proficiency, friendships, membership to organisations, health and wellbeing, and participation in an integration course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Occupational status 	<p>There is a significant positive link between education and employment and occupational status. Language proficiency is significantly related to occupational status. Social capital is positively associated with employment odds and occupational status. Successfully completing integration courses positively affects refugees' economic integration.</p>	<p>This paper provides international evidence for the impact of integration programs on outcomes. Importantly, it distinguishes between the outcomes of service users and non-users, by using those who completed the course and obtained a diploma and those who enrolled but quit without obtaining the diploma.</p>

⁵⁹ De Vroome, T., & Van Tubergen, F. (2010). The employment experience of refugees in the Netherlands. *International Migration Review*, 44(2), pp.376-403.

Limitation of our work

General use restriction

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