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Immigration Factsheets

New Refugee Settlement Locations

March 2019

Refugee Quota programme

- Currently, New Zealand settles quota refugees in the following eight settlement locations: Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill.
- An increase from 1,000 to 1,500 quota refugees annually from July 2020 requires an additional six new settlement locations throughout the country.
- All those selected for resettlement under New Zealand's Refugee Quota Programme undergo comprehensive on and off-shore screening and assessment processes focusing on credibility, security, risk and settlement needs. Refugees are required to meet Immigration New Zealand health requirements.
- For more information about the Refugee Resettlement Strategy: [INZ Refugee Resettlement Strategy](#)
- For more information about the Refugee and Asylum seekers: [Refugee and Asylum Factsheet](#)

New Settlement Locations

- Factors considered during the process of identifying new settlement locations included: housing and opportunity for future development of public housing, employment, education, health and cultural support services. Consultation with Mayors and local councils followed the initial assessment, to ensure an understanding of any issues from a local perspective. This information was fed into the final assessment and decisions were taken by the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy Senior Official's Group.
- Six new settlement locations have been selected. This will result in a total of 14 Refugee Resettlement locations throughout New Zealand.



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- Refugees will start arriving in the new settlement locations in 2020. Whanganui, Blenheim and Timaru will start receiving refugees from April 2020; with Masterton and Levin receiving refugee families from June 2020 and Ashburton receiving refugee families in August 2020.
- These dates for commencing refugee settlement will ensure that support services and local communities have time to develop as a refugee settlement location prior to the overall refugee quota increase to 1,500 from July 2020.
- It is planned that 3-5 families will be arriving every 8 weeks in new settlement locations. The nationalities have not yet been decided.

Housing

- The housing needs for all quota refugees are assessed by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). No refugee family leaves Mangere without a property being secured in their settlement location.
- Housing New Zealand is responsible for matching public housing in settlement locations for assessed quota refugees. Where Housing New Zealand does not have a current vacant property or where quota refugees do not qualify for public housing, a private rental home is sought in the community where they are to be settled.
- Work is already underway to minimise the impact of the refugee quota on housing in settlement locations.
- The additional settlement locations will provide more flexibility to place refugee families in locations where there is greater availability of housing when compared with the rest of the country.
- Additional housing options are being explored through the development of a Refugee Public Housing Plan in partnership with Housing and Urban Development and Housing New Zealand Corporation; as is the provision of additional accommodation funding to secure housing for refugees in settlement locations.
- All of these activities will ensure that quota refugees are able to live in safe, secure, healthy and affordable homes which suit their assessed needs – be it in public housing, community housing or private rental accommodation sectors.



Refugee Resettlement Programme

- All quota refugees currently spend their first six weeks in New Zealand at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre (MRRC) in Auckland, where they participate in a comprehensive reception programme that prepares them to live and work in the community.
- The reception programme addresses the priority areas of: health assessment, initial treatment and health promotion; settlement planning and orientation to New Zealand life; English language; and preparing working-age adults for employment and children for school. Families will be matched with a public or private tenancy prior to departing MRRC to their settlement location.
- During the reception programme, a Settlement Plan is developed with each quota refugee family that outlines the types of services they will be connected with to support their successful settlement in the community. This includes onward referrals as well as the family's goals and ambitions for their future.
- On arrival in settlement locations, Refugees receive 12 months government-funded settlement support. These settlement support services include coordination of a community orientation programme, enrolment in GP practices, early childhood education, schools, English language classes and employment. The Settlement Plans developed at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre provide guidance to the government's settlement support services provider, on the services required and any specific needs.
- A tender to deliver settlement support services in the six new settlement locations will be released in the coming months.

Settlement Location preparation

- Working with Local Council to support refugee settlement is essential for both refugee families and also the settlement location community.
- The Refugee Unit will be working closely with local councils and stakeholders to ensure that settlement locations are prepared in advance of arrivals.
- INZ will work alongside Council to provide further information and coordination to the community. This is likely to include attendance at council meetings, public events and stakeholder meetings.
- A full training day for service providers and key stakeholders will be given prior to the families arriving in the community. The training will include: Understanding the refugee resettlement process, refugee health and well-being, education, the refugee journey and settlement support



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services. This training is delivered in partnership with settlement service providers and partner government agencies.

Refugee Community Engagement

- The Refugee Unit is currently reviewing the approach taken to Refugee Community Engagement.
- With the opening of six new settlement locations there is an opportunity to review the current approach and ensure comprehensive and representative engagement with resettled refugees.
- A Community Engagement project is currently underway to gather information relating to existing practice and to explore future approaches as part of the National Refugee Resettlement Strategy. As part of the project, the National Refugee Resettlement Forum for 2019, will focus on development of models of community engagement in the refugee sector.