

Community Support Program Snapshot Report 1

March 2023



Released by Department of Home Affairs
under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

1. Methodology and sample demographics

Snapshot Report 1 presents the findings for Arrival Group 1. An arrival group is defined as the period in which Community Support Program (CSP) refugees must arrive in Australia in order for their data to be collected in time for inclusion in a specific Snapshot Report. For Snapshot Report 1, CSP refugees arrived in Australia between 24 August and 1 December 2022.



Arrival group 1
CSP refugees who arrived between
24 Aug-1 Dec 2022



Sample data

All adult CSP refugees, their Australian Supporter, and the matched Humanitarian Settlement Program (referred to as HSP2) refugees from Arrival Group 1 were invited to take part in an online survey.

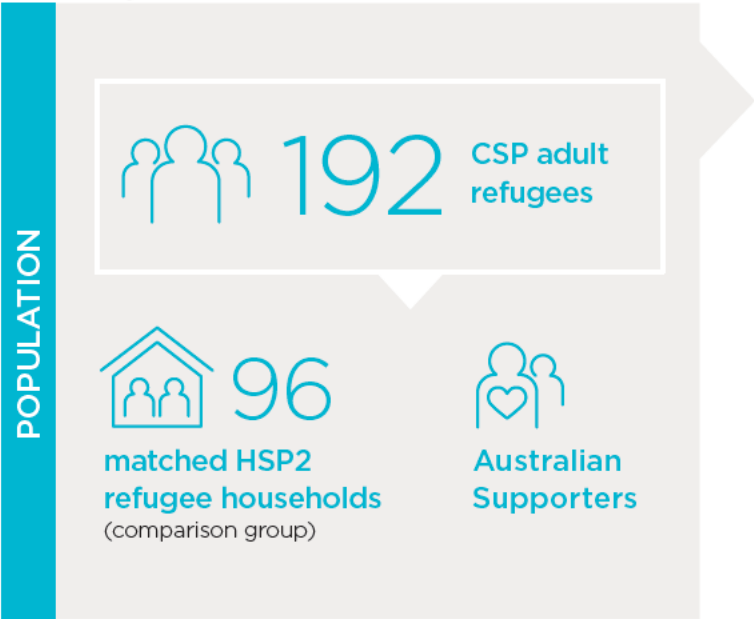
Table 1 details the data included in Snapshot Report 1. Only a small percentage of the CSP (4%) and their matched HSP2 refugees (3%) completed the online survey. As such, results should be interpreted with caution.

Table 1: Data included in Snapshot Report 1

	Survey	Interview
CSP	n=7 (4%)	n=3 (150%)*
HSP2	n=3 (3%)	n=3 (150%)*
Australian Supporters	n=3**	n/a

* Methodology is to interview 2 refugees; Owing to low survey response rates, an additional refugee was interviewed for Snapshot Report 1

** Number of Australian Supporters invited to participate is unknown; only 2 completed the whole survey



CSP and HSP2 refugees sample demographics

Key characteristics of the CSP sample were used to find a comparison group in HSP, called HSP2. The **key matching characteristics** were:

- linked (know someone in Australia)
- aged 18-50 years
- level of English proficiency (adequate)
- family type
- country of origin

Overall, the demographic characteristics of CSP and HSP2 refugees were fairly similar. Although both groups reported having high English proficiency (speaking English well or very well), 5 of the 7 CSP survey respondents completed the survey in Dari or Arabic. Likewise, one of the 3 HSP2 survey respondents completed the survey in Dari.



Australian Supporters sample demographics

Only **2 Australian Supporters** completed the survey, one sponsored a family member, the other was a community organisation.

All respondents were male and under 35 years old. While the demographics of the population of Australian Supporters is unknown, it may indicate that those who are older are not completing the online surveys.

2. What impact did participating in CSP have on the Australian Supporters? (KEQ* 8)



The Australian Supporters felt **fulfilled** from participating in the settlement program

(PL outcome** 35)

Of the **2 supporters** that responded, both reported that providing support to the CSP refugee had:



provided them with a **sense of purpose**



been **enjoyable**



provided them with a **sense of achievement**



been **rewarding**



Participating in CSP **increased supporters' social networks**

(PL outcome 43)

Of the **2 supporters** that responded:



one had made friends with other **Australian Supporters**



both had made friends with the **humanitarian entrant(s)**



both had made **new friends in the community**



Participating in CSP increased supporters' **understanding of the settlement landscape** (e.g., opportunities, challenges, and support required to settle)

(PL outcome 41)

For the **2 supporters** who responded, participation in CSP resulted in an increased understanding (**a lot**) of the:



the process to get **professional skills recognised**



job and educational opportunities for humanitarian entrant(s)



social integration opportunities for humanitarian entrant(s)



the **impact of immigration** and **role of multiculturalism** on Australian society, and the **positive contribution** humanitarian entrant(s) can make to a local community

For the **2 supporters** who responded, participation in CSP resulted in an increased understanding (**a little – lot**) of the:



settlement/migrant services available in their region



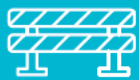
local networks that can be accessed to provide additional support



cultural/religious groups available in the local community



the number of **immigrants accepted into Australia**



Participation in CSP has **NOT** resulted in increased understanding of the **level of racism or negative stereotypes** that humanitarian entrant(s) encounter, for the 2 supporters who responded.



Australian supporters seemed to be **confident to provide** settlement support

(PL outcome 39)

The **2 supporters** who responded were very confident in their ability to **cope with difficult tasks or problems** while supporting the refugee household (M=5 / 5).



Australian supporters had **mixed experiences** of the **emotional and challenging** nature of providing support

Of the **2 supporters** who responded, one supporter who was from a community organisation and the other was a family member.

- The supporter who was a community organisation was supporting 2 people, 2–3 times a month, 6–0 hours a week and found this to be challenging and emotionally draining.

- In contrast, the supporter who was a family member was supporting more people (4 people) and spending more time with them (a few times a month, 26+ hours a week) and yet, perhaps not surprisingly, did not find this challenging or emotionally draining.

*KEQ refers to Key Evaluation Question **PL outcome refers to the outcome (and it's associated placement number) depicted in the Program Logic (PL) developed for the CSP evaluation.

3. How appropriate was the support provided by the Australian Supporters to meet the needs of the refugees? (KEQ 6)



Compared to HSP2, CSP refugees received **more hours of support** and seemed more satisfied with the support they received to access **essential services**

(PL outcome 18)

CSP refugees reported a **higher number of hours** of support from their supporter (M=19 hours) compared to HSP2 refugees (M=1.5 hours).

5 of 6 CSP refugees reported receiving help to access essential services (e.g., bank, Medicare).

All 5 CSP refugees who received help, were **satisfied** with the help they received.

CSP refugees seemed to get more tailored, flexible, and timely support compared to HSP2 refugees who did not always have their needs met in a timely fashion, if at all (e.g., a request for music training). They described instances of waiting for support to help them to access medical appointments that never materialised, prompting them to try book these appointments by themselves. One HSP2 refugee described their caseworker as very busy and sometimes forgot about them.



Support to access **everyday essentials** was reportedly mixed

(PL outcome 33)

CSP and HSP2 refugees reported they were **generally satisfied** with access to everyday essentials in the interviews.

Support to access everyday essentials was, however, mixed.

2 of 3 CSP refugees who needed it, received help from their supporter to get **essential items** (e.g., groceries, clothing).

2 of 4 CSP refugees who needed it, received help from their supporter to get **furniture or appliances**.



Compared to HSP2, CSP refugees were more likely to be in **stable housing** and to **receive support** to secure housing more quickly through the Australian Supporter advocating on their behalf

(PL outcome 28)

CSP refugees were more likely to be in **long-term housing** (6 out of 7) than HSP2 refugees (1 out of 3).

Of those in long-term housing, 4 of 6 CSP refugees did so in **1 month or less**.

CSP refugees had tailored support to secure housing quickly. Whereas HSP2 refugees noted the lack of support and delays with finding secure housing. Australian Supporters were able to advocate for CSP refugees with rental agencies to explain their circumstances (e.g., no evidence of regular income). One Australian Supporter put money in a CSP refugee's bank account to demonstrate to the real estate agency that they had sufficient money to pay the rent.



CSP and HSP2 refugees expressed the necessity to receive a driver's licence/own a car. Some CSP refugees reported receiving support to learn to drive and to use public transport (PL outcome 30)

4 of 6 CSP refugees **hold an Australian driver's licence** (P or L) and mostly did not need help with learning to drive (3 of 4). No HSP2 refugees hold a licence.

- Of the 2 CSP refugees without a licence, one received support to learn how to drive.
- One HSP2 refugee noted that they asked for help but ended up doing it by themselves.

2 of 3 CSP refugees who needed it, received support to **use public transport**. However, CSP refugees primarily relied on their supporters for their transport needs while HSP2 refugees had to rely on public transport.

All CSP refugees described intentions or a need to own a car, in the interviews. One CSP refugee described the local work options as limited with lower wages and that having a licence would improve their employment prospects and income.

4. What early signs of social integration are we seeing compared to HSP? (KEQ 1)



Compared to HSP2, CSP refugees seem to feel more welcome in their community and able to draw on **support networks** (PL outcome 15). However, both groups still faced challenges with creating friendships and building up their **social networks**

(PL outcome 17)

6 of 7 CSP refugees **felt welcome** in their community, compared to 1 of 3 HSP2 refugees.

4 of 7 CSP refugees found it **easy to make friends**, compared to 1 of 3 HSP2 refugees.

5 of 7 CSP refugees had **participated in leisure or sporting activities**, compared to 1 of 3 HSP2 refugees.

5 of 7 CSP refugees agreed that it had been easy to get help from others in their local community, compared to 1 of 3 HSP2 refugees.

While one CSP refugee reported they have found it easy to make friends, mostly due to **connections in their local church, house-mates, and through their workplace**, the remaining CSP and HSP2 refugees reported challenges in making friends due to **language barriers**, everyone around them being busy, and limited opportunities to meet people while they were settling in. One CSP refugee recounted that, once they moved out of their relatives' home, the contact with these relatives reduced significantly due to the busyness of life.



Both CSP and HSP2 refugees reported that their **cultural identity** is respected and valued by the local community

(PL outcome 14)

All CSP (7 of 7) and HSP2 (3 of 3) refugees felt like their culture is valued by others in their local community. This sentiment came through strongly in the qualitative data as well. None of the refugees reported any discrimination. However, it became apparent that many of the refugees had experienced more extreme forms of discrimination prior to settling in Australia and in comparison, Australia was seen as embracing and respectful of their cultural identity.



Both CSP and HSP2 refugees reported a **high sense of belonging**

(PL outcome 19)

In comparison to HSP2, CSP refugees were more likely (but not statistically significant) to **feel a sense of belonging** (M=2.9 vs M=2.5 / 3).

5 of 6 CSP refugees felt part of their community, compared to 1 of 2 HSP2 refugees.

One CSP refugee described how his local church community "feels like family"



Both CSP and HSP2 refugees were still building their level of **trust and connection with their local community**

(PL outcome 11)

Neither CSP nor HSP2 refugees described anything that has made them feel unwelcome in Australia.

CSP refugees seem to **trust others** in their community slightly more (4 of 6) than HSP2 refugees (1 of 2).

One HSP2 refugee described feeling frightened in their home, and was not comfortable with their proposer.

HSP2 refugees seem to **feel more connected** to people in Australia (2 of 2), compared to CSP refugees (3 of 6). CSP refugees had connected with people in their community who speak the same language or through church.

Most CSP refugees in the interviews, described their neighbours as friendly but had not developed any meaningful connections beyond the occasional 'Hello'.



Compared to HSP2, CSP refugees seem to have **better social and emotional wellbeing**

(PL outcome 12)

Compared to HSP2, CSP refugees were **less psychologically distressed** (not statistically significant) ($M=0.6$ vs $M=1.3$ / 5).

However, physical or emotional health has similarly **impacted their work**, including housework (3 of 6 CSP refugees compared to 1 of 2 HSP2 refugees).

All CSP and HSP2 refugees who required healthcare had received this (1 CSP; 2 HSP2).

The qualitative data supports the quantitative data and suggests that CSP seem to have better social and emotional wellbeing. Interviews revealed that for some HSP2 refugees, the distress and impact on their mental health was due to supporting children who were stressed, or feeling isolated and lonely themselves.



Both CSP and HSP2 refugees reported they **felt optimistic about their and their family's future**

(PL outcome 13)

Levels of optimism were high among CSP and HSP2 refugees, with all reporting to feel hopeful about their future employment, finances, housing, children's future, and life in Australia in general.

One CSP described how being in Australia made them feel optimistic to access things, such as a SIM card, which they previously weren't able to do.

5. What early signs of economic integration are we seeing compared to HSP? (KEQ 2)



CSP refugees were more likely to be **participating in the workforce**, compared to HSP2 refugees (PL outcome 24)

5 of 6 CSP refugees reported working in the previous 4 weeks, compared to 1 of 3 HSP2 refugees. This is to be expected as the visa requirements for CSP refugees states that the main applicant needs to have employment secured prior to arriving, or at least a pathway to employment.

Of those who were not working:

- the CSP refugee said they didn't know if they were planning to work in the next 12 months
- while one of the HSP2 respondents said yes, and the other respondent said no.

CSP refugees have reportedly been successful in finding work, whereas the HSP2 refugee interviewed seemed to have found casual intermittent work through a neighbour as a cleaner filling in for her when the neighbour was sick or unable to work. CSP refugees relied on several strategies to find work, including applying directly or tapping into their social network like neighbours, sponsors, and other connections.



Both CSP and HSP2 refugees were either **currently working or studying, or intending to work or study** in the next 12 months

(PL outcome 24)

6 of 7 CSP refugees and **3 of 3** HSP2 refugees were either studying, or intending to study in the next 12 months.

Considering work and study intentions combined, 6 of 7 CSP refugees and 3 of 3 of HSP2 refugees were either currently working and/or intending to work and/or study in the next 12 months.

6. What early signs of integration in terms language acquisition are we seeing compared to HSP? (KEQ 3)



CSP refugees were more likely to already be **studying English**, and both groups intend to study English, despite both groups self-reporting **higher levels of English proficiency**

(PL outcome 26)

Overall, CSP and HSP2 refugees reported **high levels of English proficiency** (only one CSP rated their proficiency as 'not well').

Despite this:



3 of 7 CSP refugees studied English in the past 4 weeks, compared to none of the HSP2 refugees.



5 CSP refugees and all 3 HSP2 refugees planned to study English in the next 12-months.¹

One CSP refugee noted that enrolling in English course also had social benefits.

Both groups reported limited use of interpreters in their day to day activities. One CSP said that, twice an Arabic speaking person happened to be around when they needed help with interpreting.

¹ One CSP refugee does not plan to study English, and one does not know.

7. What early signs of integration in terms self-sufficiency are we seeing compared to HSP? (KEQ 4)



Both CSP and HSP2 refugees were confident in their ability to be **self-sufficient**, either out of a desire to be independent, or out of necessity

(PL outcome 32)

Levels of **confidence** to do a range of tasks **independently** such as finding a job, using public transport, or getting help from the police, was similarly high for CSP and HSP2 refugees (M=2.7 vs 2.7 /3).

CSP and HSP2 refugees expressed in the interviews, that they have had the **freedom and agency** to make choices about their lives, and both groups demonstrate **a desire to be independent**.

Both groups seem to have become self-sufficient quite quickly. In many instances, the expediency in which they became self-sufficient, was out of necessity because the caseworker or relative was too busy.

8. Key insights and recommendations



Key insight 1

Community organisations found supporting the CSP refugees more challenging and draining.

Recommendation 1

To understand why some supporters found it more draining than others and, given the finding in CRISP about the impact the group size may have on mitigating this, a question about group size should be added to the online survey to identify any future patterns. Likewise, the number of supporters and whether their supporter is a relative or community organisation needs to be added to the CSP survey to help interrogate the findings and understand the observed patterns.



Key insight 2

3 out of 7 CSP refugees faced challenges with creating friendships and building up their social networks. Social networks are an important protective factor for mental health and long-term outcomes for refugees.

Recommendation 2

Interviews with Arrival Group 2 need to include refugees that are struggling to make friends to understand the barriers they are facing. Australian Provider Organisations (APOs) may be able to support CSP refugees to build social networks more, if they understand the characteristics of those who are struggling, and the barriers they face.



Key insight 3

1 of 7 CSP refugees were not working and did not intend to work or study in the next 12 months. Because both adult household members are not necessarily represented in the study, it is not possible to determine whether at least one person intends to work, at the household level.

Recommendation 3

Interviews with Arrival Group 2 need to include households where neither adult intends to work or study in the next 12 months to understand some of the barriers facing these households. This will provide important insights for the Department. To understand workforce participation at the household level, an additional question will need to be added to the survey to capture whether their partner intends to work in the next 12 months as well.



Key insight 4

Survey response rates for CSP, HSP2 and Australian Supporters were particularly low (less than 4%).

- Online surveys are used for all 3 groups and relies on the APO sending the link and reminders to the CSP refugees and Australian Supporters; and the Department sending the link to the HSP2 refugees. This approach was chosen because of their level of English proficiency, however the survey was translated into 4 languages. Only 2 of the 7 completed the survey in English. While a response rate of about 10% is expected, the response rate for CATI, used for CRISP and HSP1, was 80-100%. However, this option is expensive.
- CSP survey respondents were mostly male and would likely predominantly be the head of the household who responded.
- Australian supporter respondents were all male and aged between 25-34 years old.

Recommendation 4

- Consider whether, in addition to the online survey, additional CATI interviews are undertaken to increase survey response rates for CSP, HSP2 and Australian Supporters. Noting that this would incur additional cost for the Department.
- Providing the Evaluation Team with the demographic breakdown of the CSP and HSP2 population that are sent the survey link would be helpful in understanding whether the survey sample is representative.
- The Evaluation Team needs to continue to check-in monthly with the APOs to check if key staff have moved on and to build the relationship.
- The Department to continue to encourage APOs to support the research and to continue to send reminders to HSP2 sample pool.
- Consider an additional focus group with APOs to be conducted in the next 6 months as opposed to only one at the end of the evaluation period.
- The Department to consider whether providing summary findings to the APOs would help with the buy-in and support of the research.

Citation: Povey, J., Burger, S-A., O'Donnell, K., Young, C., San Martin Porter, M., Lattz, M., Marshall, D., Lee, R., Hoffstaedter, G., Austerberry, S., Nuttall, G., Baxter, J., & McDaid, L. Community Support Program (CSP) Evaluation — Snapshot Report 1. Institute for Social Science Research, University of Queensland: Brisbane; 2023.

Institute for
Social Science Research

The University of Queensland
80 Meiers Road, Indooroopilly
Queensland 4068 Australia

T +61 7 3346 7471

E issr@uq.edu.au

issr.uq.edu.au

Community Support Program Snapshot Report 2

September 2023



Released by Department of Home Affairs
under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

1. Methodology and sample demographics

The 6-monthly Snapshot Reports present interim findings from the Community Support Program (CSP) evaluation. The reports serve as a mechanism for The Department of Home Affairs to collect and report on integration outcomes within the evaluation period. Snapshot Report 2 presents the findings for Arrival Group 2. An arrival group is defined as the period in which CSP refugees must arrive in Australia in order to have their data collected in time for inclusion in a specific snapshot report.



Arrival Group 2

CSP refugees who arrived between
9 Dec 2022 and **24 May 2023**

All adult CSP refugees, their Australian Supporter, and the matched Humanitarian Settlement Program (referred to as HSP2) refugees from Arrival Group 2 were invited to take part in an online survey.



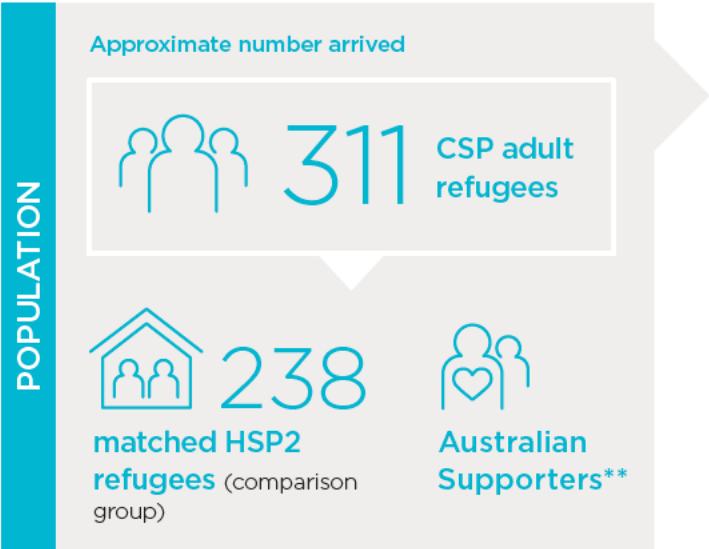
Sample data

Table 1 details the data included in Snapshot Report 2. Only a small percentage of the CSP and their matched HSP2 refugees,, and Australian Supporters completed the online surveys. As such, **results should be interpreted with caution.**

Table 1: Data included in Snapshot Report 2

	Surveys	Interviews	Focus group
CSP	n=12 (4%)*	n=3 (150%***	n/a
HSP2	n=4 (2%)*	n=2 (100%)	n/a
Australian Supporters	n=8**	n/a	n/a
Approved Proposing Organisation (APO)	n/a	n/a	19 participants from 10 of 11 orgs

*Not all participants provided answers to all questions, meaning some results are based on smaller numbers.
**Number of Australian Supporters invited to participate is unknown. Only 5 completed 100% of the survey.
***Original methodology was to interview 2 refugees per Arrival Group. Due to low survey numbers, an additional interview was conducted.

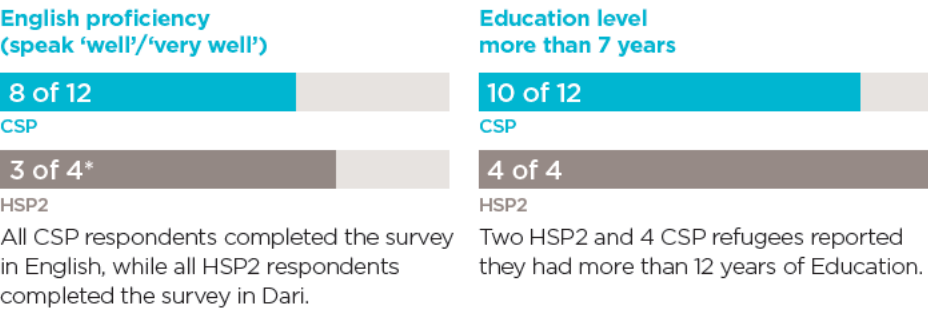




CSP and HSP2 refugees sample demographics

Key characteristics of the Arrival group 2 CSP refugees were used to find a comparison group in HSP. The key matching characteristics were, linked (know someone in Australia), aged 18-50 years, adequate English, family type, country of origin.

Both CSP and HSP2 survey respondents reported having high levels of English proficiency and years of education. However, CSP respondents were younger (9 of 12 under 35 years) compared to HSP2 (1 of 4 under 35 years).



2. How appropriate was the support from the Approved Proposing Organisations (APOs) to the Australian Supporters? (KEQ* 7)



APOs play a significant role in supporting the Australian Supporters throughout their sponsoring journey. Most of the Australian Supporters **received the support** they needed from the APO to enable them to settle their refugee family

Of the **8 Australian Supporters**:

- ✓ **7** reported that they needed **some or lots of support** from the APO
- ✓ **1** reported that they needed **no support** from the APO.

Of the **7 Australian Supporters who needed support**:

- ✓ **5** found the support they received from the APO was **always useful**
- ✓ **5** reported that the type of support they needed was **always available**.

*KEQ refers to Key Evaluation Question

3. What impact did participating in CSP have on the Australian Supporters? (KEQ 8)



Participating in CSP **increased** most Australian Supporters' **understanding of the settlement landscape** (e.g., opportunities, challenges, and support required to settle) (PL outcome 41*). However, some were **unsure whether their understanding of refugees' experiences** had increased (PL outcome 42)

Of the **7 Australian Supporters****, most reported that participating in CSP had increased their understanding **a lot** of the:

- ✓ **settlement/migrant services** (4), **cultural/religious groups** (5), and **local networks** (4) available to provide additional support to humanitarian entrant(s)
- ✓ **job** (5) and **educational opportunities** (4) for humanitarian entrant(s).

Of the **7 Australian Supporters****, most reported that participating in CSP had increased their understanding **'a little' or 'a lot'** of the:

- ✓ opportunities for humanitarian entrant(s) for **social integration** (6)
- ✓ **impact of immigration** (5) and the **positive contribution** (5) humanitarian entrants can make to a local community and Australian society.

Up to **half** of Australian Supporters responded that they **didn't know** if their understanding of refugees' experiences had increased as a result of participating in CSP. However, **4 of 7** felt they had gained a greater understanding (**'a little' to 'a lot'**) of the:

- ✓ **basic needs**, and the **specific needs** of humanitarian entrants based on their background (e.g., race, religion, ethnicity)
- ✓ **types of skills** humanitarian entrants bring into Australia
- ✓ **experience of humanitarian entrants** who come to Australia

*PL outcome refers to the outcome (and its associated placement number) depicted in the Program Logic (PL) developed for the CSP evaluation

**Of those who responded to the respective questions and includes those who responded 'Don't know'



Most Australian Supporters felt **fulfilled** from participating in the settlement program

(PL outcome 35)

Almost all Australian Supporters reported that, by providing support to the CSP refugee, they had:

- ✓ experienced a **sense of purpose** and **achievement** (6 of 7 respectively)
- ✓ the **skills and experience** to provide support (5 of 6) and been able to **meet the needs** of the humanitarian entrant(s) (7 of 7)
- ✓ experienced a stronger **sense of community** (7 of 7) and **had a positive influence** on the way others in their community treat humanitarian entrants (6 of 7).



Participating in CSP increased some Australian Supporters' **social networks**

(PL outcome 43)

Of the **8 Australian Supporters**:

- ✓ **4** had made friends with other **Australian Supporters**
- ✓ **5** had made friends with the **humanitarian entrant(s)**
- ✓ **3** had made **new friends in the community**.



Australian Supporters seemed to be **confident to provide settlement support** (PL outcome 39)

- ✓ The **7 Australian Supporters** who responded were **confident** in their ability to **cope with difficult tasks or problems** whilst supporting the refugee household (M=4.3 / 5).*
- ✓ **6 of 7 Australian Supporters** felt that they were **prepared for most of the demands** in providing support to the refugee household.



Australian Supporters found it **challenging to provide settlement support**

5 of 6 Australian Supporters found providing support **challenging**, however only **2 of 6** found it emotionally draining.

- ✓ Those who found it challenging, provided **6 or more hours of support** per week. The one person who neither agreed nor disagreed that it was challenging, provided 5 or less hours of support a week, and was sponsoring a family member*.

That said, **4 of 6** Australian Supporters felt the refugees:

- ✓ were **NOT** too dependent on them
- ✓ did **NOT** have unrealistic expectations about the support they could provide.

*Note, there were no patterns regarding the relationship of the Australian Supporter with the CSP refugee household and whether they found it challenging or not. Three Australian Supporters who were sponsoring the CSP refugee as a family member, found providing support challenging. As did the 2 supporters who sponsored a CSP refugee as either a community organisation or a non-family member.

*'M' refers to the mean or average

4. How appropriate was the support provided by the Australian Supporters to meet the needs of the refugees? (KEQ 6)



APOs also play a **significant role in supporting the CSP refugees** at various stages of the migration journey. Perceived indicators of success include **pre-arrival arrangements and connections with employers and community**

APOs spend a lot of time at the pre-application and pre-arrival stage to vet applicants and to prepare both CSP refugees and their Australian Supporters for their roles and responsibilities.

APOs attributed **high engagement from the Australian Supporters** to these vetting and preparation activities, which in turn supports better settlement outcomes for refugees.

Other factors that APOs felt contributed to successful outcomes for refugees included **well-connected Australian Supporters** who could set up a job or housing for refugees, as well as the **high qualifications and skill levels of CSP refugees**.



Compared to HSP2, CSP refugees reported receiving **slightly more hours of support**, and received **support for a range of activities**

CSP refugees received on average **6.3 hours of support** per week from their Australian Supporter in the previous 4 weeks, compared to HSP2 refugees who received an average of **4.5 hours** of support from their Settlement Support case worker.

CSP refugees received support for, on average, **7 settlement activities** from their Australian Supporter.

6 of 7 Australian Supporters reported that, in the previous 4 weeks, they had seen/talked to the CSP refugee(s) **at least once a week** to provide resources or support.

CSP refugees also **receive direct support from their APO** and CSP interviewees were positive about the support they received. For example, one CSP interviewee who volunteered at the APO, had a positive relationship with their APO and received information and explanations of processes or government services directly.



CSP refugees received satisfactory support to access **essential services**, (PL outcome 18) however, may face more structural barriers when accessing these services than HSP refugees more broadly

9 of 10 CSP refugees reported receiving **help to access essential services** (e.g., Medicare) from the Australian Supporter.

All 9 CSP refugees who received help reported they were **satisfied with the help** they received.

However, APOs described several barriers to ensuring CSP refugees have access to essential services. APOs perceived that CSP refugees are treated differently than HSP refugees by Australian Services when applying for Family Tax Benefit and Medicare (e.g., not being prioritised) which they view can cause significant hardship. Additionally, APOs described the difficulty of securing a Tax File Number (TFN) in a timely way which impacts applying for other services, such as the Family Tax Benefit.

Delays in receiving access to Medicare in particular, was described as problematic. Some APOs perceived that CSP refugees were avoiding seeking needed medical services while waiting for Medicare. One APO described an instance where an Australian Supporter was sent a significant medical bill for the child of the person they were supporting which caused significant distress.



Some CSP refugees did not receive required support to access **everyday essentials** from their Australian Supporter

(PL outcome 33)

Support to **access everyday essentials** was not received from Australian Supporters for about **half of the survey respondents**:

- ✓ **5 of 9** CSP refugees who needed it, received help from their supporter to get **essential items** (e.g., groceries, clothing).
- ✓ **4 of 9** CSP refugees who needed it, received help from their supporter to get **furniture or appliances**.
- ✓ **All** CSP refugees who received help, **were satisfied** with the help they received.

CSP interviewees reported they were **generally satisfied** with support to access everyday essentials, and this support seemed to come from **both their supporters and APO** case workers.

Most HSP2 interviewees were also satisfied, although one HSP2 participant described facing difficulty with affording food, rent, and bills as a single person, and their case worker advised they attend a food bank.



HSP2 and CSP refugees had mixed outcomes regarding **stable housing**, but some CSP refugees **received support** to access secure housing more quickly than HSP2 refugees

(PL outcome 28)

4 in 12 CSP refugees and **2 in 4 HSP2 refugees** were in **long-term housing**.

Of those in long-term housing, 2 out of 4 CSP refugees secured the housing in **1 week or less**. For both HSP2 refugees it took **1 month or more** to secure long-term housing.

All 12 CSP refugees were **satisfied** with their accommodation in relation to the:

- ✓ condition (e.g., cleanliness)
- ✓ closeness to shops
- ✓ safety of the home.

CSP interviewees reported securing housing more quickly with help from their Australian Supporters. Whereas HSP2 interviewees noted the lack of support, or having very little autonomy in looking for a house. For example, one HSP2 participant described that their case worker was seemingly insistent that they take the property they had found for them, despite the fact that they did not 'feel good' about it, and found it too expensive.



CSP and HSP2 refugees expressed a desire to receive a driver licence/own a car. Some CSP and HSP2 refugees reported receiving **support to learn to drive** and to **use public transport**

(PL outcome 30)

5 of 9 CSP refugees **hold an Australian driver licence** (P or L) and 4 CSP refugees received help with learning to drive from their Australian Supporter. One HSP2 refugee had an Australian driver licence.

- ✓ Of the CSP refugees without a licence, **1** received **support to learn how to drive**.

8 of 10 CSP refugees who needed it received **support to use public transport** from their Australian Supporter.

5 of 6 Australian Supporters helped the CSP refugee to **use public transport** or other transport methods.

4 of 6 Australian Supporters helped the CSP refugee with **learning to drive**.

One CSP interviewee described that every member of their family had obtained their learner permit with help from their Australian Supporter, and they had recently bought a car. Whereas one HSP2 interviewee reached out to their youth group to get driving lessons.

5. What early signs of social integration are we seeing compared to HSP? (KEQ 1)



CSP refugees were more able to draw on their **support networks** compared to HSP2 (PL outcome 15). However, while CSP refugees seem to find it easier to **make friends**, participants in both groups were still building their **social networks** (PL outcome 17)

6 of 10 CSP refugees agreed that it had been easy to **get help from others** in their local community compared to **1 of 3 HSP2 refugees**.

9 of 10 CSP refugees were able to **ask people in their day-to-day life for help** if they needed it (e.g., to look after children), compared to **2 of 3 HSP2 refugees**.

CSP refugees reported that they could ask for help from people in their cultural community and family members not living with them. Whereas HSP2 refugees relied on their Settlement Support case worker.

7 of 10 CSP refugees had found it easy to **make friends**, compared to **1 of 3 HSP2 refugees**.

6 of 10 CSP refugees and **2 of 3 HSP2 refugees** have participated in **leisure or sporting activities** with others in and outside their cultural and/or religious community.

CSP interviewees reportedly made connections via their Australian Supporters and existing contacts' networks, while HSP2 interviewees reportedly made new friends in their communities via e.g., TAFE and English classes.

Both groups expected that their social connections would increase as their English proficiency improved, and through future study and employment opportunities.



Both CSP and HSP2 refugees reported a **high sense of belonging** (PL outcome 19) however, were still building their level of **trust and connection** with their local community (PL outcome 11)

CSP and HSP2 refugees similarly reported **high feelings of belonging** (M=2.7 / 3 respectively).

7 of 10 CSP refugees felt **part of their community**, compared to **3 of 3 HSP2 refugees**.

9 of 10 CSP refugees felt **welcome in their community**, compared to **1 of 3 HSP2 refugees**.

Interview participants from both groups expressed a general level of trust and connection with the community, such as reporting Australians as friendly and welcoming.

While neither **CSP** nor **HSP2 refugees** described anything that had made them feel unwelcome in Australia:

✓ **CSP refugees** seem to **trust others** in their community slightly more (6 of 10) than HSP2 refugees (1 of 3),

✓ where as, **HSP2 refugees** seem to **feel more connected** to people in Australia (3 of 3) compared to CSP (6 of 10).

However, **6 of 7 Australian Supporters** found the community's acceptance of humanitarian entrants **challenging**, indicating that they may have different experiences or perceptions of the level of acceptance, compared to the CSP refugees.



CSP and HSP2 refugees similarly reported that their **cultural identity is respected** and valued by the local community (PL outcome 14)

7 of 10 CSP and **2 of 3 of HSP2 refugees** felt like their **culture is valued by others** in their local community.

None of the interview participants reported any discrimination. One HSP2 interviewee highlighted that they had experienced more extreme forms of discrimination prior to settling in Australia and, in comparison, saw Australia as embracing and respectful of their cultural identity.



CSP and HSP2 refugees experienced some challenges with **social and emotional wellbeing** (PL outcome 12). However, were able to draw on social supports to cope

Level of psychological distress* among CSP and HSP2 refugees were similar, with M=14 vs M=12 / 30, respectively, indicating '**moderate distress**' or '**moderate probable mental illness**'.

4 of 10 CSP refugees compared to 3 of 3 HSP2 refugees said that **physical or emotional health has impacted their work** (including housework).

All CSP and HSP2 refugees who required healthcare have received this (3 CSP; 2 HSP2 refugees).

Some CSP and HSP2 interviewees reported feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or depressed at times. However, they had benefited from the support of others to reduce loneliness, isolation, and tension. For CSP interviewees, this support mainly came from their Australian Supporters, whereas HSP2 interviewees drew on people in their new networks, such as classmates.



Both CSP and HSP2 refugees reported they **felt optimistic about their and their family's future** (PL outcome 13)

Levels of **optimism** were high among refugees, with **7 of 8 CSP refugees** and **3 of 3 HSP2 refugees** on average **feeling hopeful** about their future employment, finances, housing, children's future, and life in Australia in general.

Both CSP and HSP2 refugees shared their study and career aspirations in interviews, noting these aspirations are possible now that they are in Australia.

6. What early signs of economic integration are we seeing compared to HSP? (KEQ 2)



CSP refugees were more likely to be **participating in the workforce**, compared to HSP2 refugees, however both have intentions to work or study in the near future (PL outcome 24)

3 of 12 CSP refugees reported **working** in the previous 4 weeks compared to **no HSP2 refugees**. CSP refugees found this work directly with employers or through friends and family.

Of those who were not working:

✓ **5 CSP refugees** were **planning to work** in the next 12 months and 1 CSP refugee said they didn't know.

✓ **2 HSP2 refugees** were **planning to work** in the next 12 months and another said they 'didn't know'.

CSP refugees reported a range of barriers to getting a job, the most common of these were **lack of Australian work experience, work experience more generally, or lack of suitable jobs**. For HSP2 refugees, the main barriers included **lack of skills or qualifications** more generally, and **transport**.

All CSP refugees and **HSP2 refugees** had either **studied or were intending to study** (other than English classes) in the next 12 months.

Considering work and study intentions combined, **11 of 12 CSP refugees** and **3 of 4 HSP2 refugees** were also either **currently working and/or intend to work and/or study** in the next 12 months.

All refugees indicated that at least one adult in their household who migrated with them were planning to undertake future work and/or study.

4 of 10 CSP refugees reported that they received help from their Australian Supporter **to apply for jobs or education opportunities**. All 4 were satisfied with the help they received.

4 of 6 Australian Supporters reported that they helped the CSP refugee(s) to **apply for suitable jobs or education opportunities**.

3 of 5 Australian Supporters reported that they helped the CSP refugee(s) to **get their existing qualifications recognised in Australia** (2 respondents noted that they didn't need to help the entrant with this task).

*Used K6 scale (see Kessler et al 2002¹) and AU Trinary cut-off scores (see Biddle, N., Gray, M., & Rehill, P. 2022²)

7. What early signs of integration in terms language acquisition are we seeing compared to HSP? (KEQ 3)



CSP and HSP2 refugees **intend to study English and some still require help from an interpreter**, despite both groups self-reporting high levels of English proficiency (PL outcome 26)

Three-quarters of CSP and HSP2 refugees reported **high levels of English proficiency**.

However, **5 of 10 CSP** and **1 of 3 HSP2 refugees** still required some **assistance from interpreters** outside the home.

For **both CSP and HSP2 refugees**, the most common way they **practiced their English** was through listening (e.g., radio), watching (e.g., TV) or reading English materials.

5 of 8 CSP refugees who needed it, got **help from their Australian Supporter** to practice their English.

4 of 6 Australian Supporters reported that they helped the CSP refugee(s) to **practice their English**.

2 of 12 CSP refugees had **studied English in the previous 4 weeks**, and **1 of 4 of the HSP2 refugees**, however 1 CSP and 2 HSP2 refugees **plan to study English in the next 12 months**.*

3 of 6 Australian Supporters had helped the CSP refugee(s) to **register for English language classes**.

*One CSP refugee did not plan to study English, and one HSP2 refugee did not know.

8. What early signs of self-sufficiency are we seeing compared to HSP? (KEQ 4)



Both CSP and HSP2 refugees were confident in their ability to be **self-sufficient**, either out of a desire to be independent or because it was quicker than waiting for support from others (PL outcome 32)

Levels of **confidence to do a range of tasks independently** such as finding a job, using public transport, or getting help from the police, was similarly high for CSP and HSP2 (M=2.8 / 3 for both).

CSP and HSP2 interviewees felt that they had **freedom and agency** to make choices about their lives, and both groups expressed a **desire to be independent**.

Both groups seemed to have become self-sufficient fairly quickly. One HSP2 participant noted that they hadn't needed to contact their Settlement Support case worker for some months. For some, self-sufficiency was considered more expedient and easier than asking for others' support. For example, one CSP interviewee recounted going to different stores asking if they need an employee, rather than asking others for help, and then having to wait.

9. What are APOs' perspectives of the CSP program?



APO participants were supportive of the CSP program but identified several concerns and opportunities for improvement

APO participants **voiced support for CSP** and felt that it was producing successful outcomes for CSP refugees. However, there were several gaps that APOs felt needed resolution, for example, slow access to essential services, including Family Tax Benefit and Medicare.

Some highlighted the need to establish a 'community of practice' where they could share common challenges and practice tips. A community of practice would also **allow them to identify common issues or structural barriers that may require group advocacy** to resolve, such as the challenges with Medicare that they were all struggling with.

To support this, some APO participants felt it necessary for the **Department** to enhance communication with APOs by **proactively facilitating opportunities where these common challenges could be raised and resolved**. Some recalled that the monthly meetings that used to be in place were ceased, as the program matured and "everyone [became] quite confident now, they know exactly what to do" (APO_2). However, they saw the need for such opportunities to be reinstated. Additionally, APOs felt it would be **beneficial if other relevant departments or entities (e.g., Services Australia) were included in such discussions**, as relevant, to resolve issues directly and more quickly.

There was also a need for **more timely communication about the program**, including about any changes or updates. This was demonstrated by the APOs' misunderstanding of CSP refugees' (in)eligibility for the Services Australia Refugee Service Offer (RSO). At the time of the focus group, APOs were unaware that Services Australia had identified and rectified discrepancies in their servicing of refugees, including over-servicing CSP refugees who were not eligible for the RSO. Instead, the APOs perceived this correction as a change to CSP refugees' eligibility for the RSO, which they felt was not communicated to them. Though it may have been a misconception, it serves as an example of information the APOs felt was not communicated to them in a timely fashion, and the need to ensure all are abreast of program specifics and requirements.

Though not directly related to the settlement processes, concerns were raised over **the cost of CSP**, double charging of CSP refugees (government fees and APO fees), and the program being perceived as a money-making venture. Similarly, APOs worried about the CSP being **too selective of eligible countries**, particularly when the humanitarian situations change so rapidly.

Some APO participants felt that the improvements to the program would be better informed by an evaluation that focused on CSP, rather than as part of the CRISP evaluation.

Overall, APO participants said that the CSP offered an alternative pathway to resettling refugees, and **diverse avenues for resettlement enabled diaspora communities to contribute in this regard**.

References

- ¹Kessler, R.C., Andrews, G., Colpe, L.J., Hiripi, E., Mroczek, D.K., Normand, S.L., Walters, E.E., Zaslavsky, A.M. (2002). Short screening scales to monitor population prevalences and trends in non-specific psychological distress. *Psychol Medicine*, 32(6), 959-76. doi: 10.1017/S0033291702006074. PMID: 12214795
- ²Biddle, N., Gray, M., & Rehill, P. (2022). *Mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 period in Australia*. ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods. <https://csrcm.cass.anu.edu.au/research/publications/mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-covid-19-period-australia/>

10. Key insights and recommendations



Key insight 1

According to APOs, CSP refugees experience structural barriers impacting the support they receive to access essential services. For example, it is proving challenging to quickly acquire Tax File Numbers (TFN) or Medicare for CSP refugees. This has implications for CSP refugees who cannot commence employment without their TFN, and also impacts program outcomes and APO key performance indicators.

Additionally, APOs felt that CSP refugees are treated differently than HSP refugees by Services Australia when applying for Family Tax Benefit and Medicare. This can cause significant financial hardship and poorer settlement outcomes.

Recommendation 1

Review processes across departments to identify blockages to providing timely support to access essential services for CSP refugees.



Key insight 2

Just under half of the CSP refugees indicated that despite needing help, they did not receive assistance from their Australian Supporter to access everyday essential items, like groceries or clothing, as well as items like furniture or appliances. Everyday essentials are key during the settlement process and difficulty in accessing these items can put additional strain on refugees. However, from the current data it is difficult to ascertain if refugees households are accessing support for everyday essentials outside their supporter network (e.g., through the APO, churches or organisations like Anglicare). Further investigation is needed to have a better understanding of the support they are getting to access everyday essential items.

Recommendation 2

For Arrival Group 3, it is recommended that those who needed help accessing everyday essentials, but did not receive it, are prioritised for an interview. Additional questions around why they didn't receive that support, and other sources of support they were able to access should be included in the interviews. For those in Arrival Group 2, the timepoint 2 interview can also be used. (See also recommendation 3).



Key insight 3

The APOs and Australian Supporters together play a significant role in the settlement of CSP refugees. However, the support provided to CSP refugees by APOs compared to Australian Supporters varies by case. Therefore, the Australian Supporter survey may not be fit-for-purpose to obtain rigorous data concerning the level of support that CSP refugees are receiving, particularly as neither the Australian Supporter nor CSP surveys account for the support provided by APOs. Additionally, the current method means researchers have little control over the sample, and it is yielding a low response rate.

Recommendation 3

The pre- post- survey for Australian Supporters could be replaced with retrospective interviews with a small number of supporters from each Arrival Group. Additionally, a few questions could be included in the CSP surveys to understand the support CSP refugees received from APOs.



Key insight 4

APOs felt that some important program information does not always filter through to them from the Department in a timely way.

Recommendation 4

Review communication channels between the Department and APOs to strengthen mechanisms by which important changes are conveyed, including the expediency and timeliness of sharing information.



Key insight 5

APOs identified the need to establish a community of practice to identify common issues or structural barriers that may require group advocacy to resolve, as well as formal mechanisms or opportunities to communicate and resolve these challenges with the Department. Further, APOs felt it would be beneficial for other relevant departments to be engaged in discussions, to resolve common issues directly and more quickly.

Recommendation 5

The Department to consider encouraging APOs to establish a community of practice, and to work with the APOs to (re-)instate opportunities where common challenges can be identified and discussed. Further, the Department could explore the possibility of including other relevant departments in such discussions, particularly Services Australia.



Key insight 6

Response rates for CSP and HSP2 refugees remained low and the reporting of results and insights from the CSP and HSP2 refugee survey data have been constrained by the small number of respondents.

Following the recommendation in Snapshot Report 1, the CSP and HSP2 refugee survey will shift to a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) methodology with a select number of refugees, to improve the number of respondents. In addition, it is recommended that for Snapshot Report 3, cumulative data from the CSP and HSP2 refugee survey are analysed and presented.

Recommendation 6

Analyse and report on cumulative CSP and HSP2 refugee survey data in Snapshot Report 3.



The evaluation was undertaken by the Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland in collaboration with the Australian Institute for Family Studies

Citation: Povey, J., Burger, S-A., Young, C., O'Donnell, K., Lattz, M., Marshall, D., Maturi, J., Austerberry, S., San Martin Porter, M., Nuttall, G., Rioseco, P., Baxter, J., & Reddel, T. (2023) Community Support Program (CSP) Evaluation — Snapshot Report 2. Institute for Social Science Research, University of Queensland: Brisbane.

Acknowledgement

The Evaluation Team thanks all those who assisted in the preparation of this Report, including staff members of the Australian Department of Home Affairs, McNair, and the Approved Proposing Organisations. We would also like to thank the CSP and HSP refugees and the Australian Supporters who took the time to speak with us and share their rich and thoughtful feedback. We also acknowledge the contributions of the following colleagues who contributed their time and expertise to various aspects of the evaluation: Dr Rennie Lee, Elizabeth Kennedy, Noor Yousef, A/Prof Gerhard Hoffstaedter, Dr Martin O'Flaherty, Dr Nikita Sharma, Dr Iryna Kolesnikova, Asma Zulfiqar, Saeed Jaydarifard, Elahe Nikooharf Salehi, Melindy Bellotti, Stephanie Cook, Fran Donoso, and A/Prof Ben Edwards.

Institute for
Social Science Research

The University of Queensland
80 Meiers Road, Indooroopilly
Queensland 4068 Australia

T +61 7 3346 7471

E issr@uq.edu.au

issr.uq.edu.au

Community Support Program

Snapshot Report 3

April 2024



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1. Background

The 6-monthly Snapshot reports present interim findings from the Community Support Program (CSP) evaluation. The reports serve as a mechanism for The Department of Home Affairs to collect and report on integration outcomes within the evaluation period.

Snapshot report 3 presents the findings of data collected at timepoint 1¹ from CSP entrants who were invited to participate in the evaluation and their matched Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) entrants, who arrived in Australia between 24 August 2022 and 16 November 2024.

2. Methods and sample demographics

Key characteristics of the CSP entrants invited to participate in the evaluation were used to find a comparison group among HSP entrants. The key matching characteristics were: linked (know someone in Australia); aged 18–50 years; adequate English; family type; and country of origin.

A mixed-methods research design was employed as outlined below.

1. CSP entrants and the matched HSP entrants were invited to **complete a survey** at timepoint 1 using a multi-mode survey method:



All adult CSP entrants and their matched HSP entrants who arrived between 24 Aug 2022 and 17 Aug 2023 were invited to **complete the survey online**.



One member from every CSP household² and the matched HSP entrant, who arrived between 29 Aug and 16 Nov 2023 were invited to **complete the survey via Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI)**.³

2. A select number of CSP and HSP entrants who expressed their interest in the survey, were invited to **participate in a semi-structured in-depth interview**.

Analysis and reporting

Headline findings draw on both the quantitative and qualitative data to present triangulated results. Where data are from the in-depth interviews, results refer to **‘interviewees’**. For survey results, **significant differences** are indicated with an asterisk.



Sample data

Table 1 details the data included in Snapshot Report 3.

	Survey			Interview
	Online survey	CATI survey	Total	
CSP entrants	n=32 (~4%)*	n=29 (74%)	n=61	n=12 (100%)*
HSP entrants	n=20 (~3%)	n=27 (77%)	n=47	n=12 (100%)

Notes. a) Response rates are presented in brackets. For the online surveys these are approximates as, although it was intended that all eligible participants were to be sent an invitation to participate, it is unclear how many received these. b) Response rate for the interviews is based on the target number of interviews planned for the evaluation.



CSP and HSP entrants sample demographics

Overall, the demographic characteristics of CSP and the matched HSP entrants were similar.

English proficiency (listen, speak, read, write ‘well’ or ‘very well’)



Education level (more than 7 years of school)



Age (18–29 years)



Gender (Female)



Although about two-thirds of CSP and HSP entrants self-reported having higher levels of English proficiency, 51% of CSP entrants completed the survey in English (19% HSP). This aligned with CSP entrants self-reported **ability to speak English** ‘well’ or ‘very well’ (CSP=52%; HSP=46%). One-third of CSP (33%) and HSP (34%) entrants **had tertiary education**. Two-thirds (66%) of CSP entrants who completed the CATI survey were the **main applicant**. Sixty-one percent of CSP entrants who completed the online survey were the **main income earner** (53% HSP).⁴

¹ Timepoint 1 = 1–2 months after humanitarian entrants arrived in Australia. Note, the online survey method meant researchers had less control over when participants completed the survey. As a result, a few participants who completed the online survey did so more than 2 months after arriving in Australia.
² Household members were sampled to ensure similar representation of main applicants versus dependants, and gender.
³ Some minor changes were made to survey questions for CATI due to methodological changes and insights gained about CSP over the course of the evaluation.
⁴ Data on applicant status i.e., main or dependent applicant were only available for CSP entrants who completed the CATI survey. CSP and HSP entrants self-reported role in the household were only available for those who completed the online survey.

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3. How appropriate was the support provided by the Australian Supporters¹ to meet the needs of the entrants? (KEQ 6)²



Overall, compared to HSP, CSP entrants reported receiving **more hours of support** on average per week from their Australian Supporters and received support for **a range of settlement activities**. While there was variability in the level of support within both groups, when support from neither Australian Supporters nor APOs was forthcoming, CSP entrants felt there was no safety net which impacted their wellbeing

In addition to receiving support from their Approved Proposing Organisation (APO)³, on average, CSP entrants reported receiving a significantly* higher number of hours of support per week from their Australian Supporter (**M=11.44 hours**)⁴ than HSP entrants reported receiving from their Settlement Support caseworker (**M=2.41 hours**).

CSP entrants also received support for, on average, **9 settlement activities**⁵ from their Australian Supporter such as accessing essential services and learning to drive, compared to an average of 5 settlement activities⁶ that HSP entrants received support for from their Settlement Support caseworker.

Both CSP and HSP interviewees described the initial settlement period as a large adjustment requiring a lot of support to gain access to the essential services they need, familiarise themselves with the neighbourhood, make health appointments, and learn transport routes. Broadly, both CSP and HSP interviewees were satisfied with the support they received. CSP interviewees seemed to receive both formal and informal support through their Australian Supporters and APOs, compared to HSP who predominantly received support for formal activities from their Settlement Support caseworker(s). However, the level of support received from all sources varied for both CSP and HSP interviewees.

For CSP interviewees, the level and type of support received from Australian Supporters seemed to vary depending on who their Australian Supporter was. For example, most of those who were sponsored through family had close relationships, which facilitated a high level of support for formal activities (such as accessing essential services and housing) and informal activities (such as using transport and making friends). Whereas those sponsored by organisations or community groups mostly received support for more formal activities only.

While most CSP interviewees spoke of receiving support from their APOs, the frequency and quality also varied. For the minority who were already struggling to gain support from their Australian Supporter, having minimal support from APOs too, meant these CSP entrants felt particularly isolated and that they had no safety net (such as access to Government income support) which impacted their wellbeing considerably. This variability in support, i.e., from Settlement Support caseworkers, and the need to rely on Australian friends and family when this support was not forthcoming, was similar for HSP interviewees. However, HSP interviewees did not have the same restrictions on the resources available to them (such as Government income support), which may have alleviated some of their concerns slightly more compared to CSP entrants.

¹ Throughout the report, support received by Australian Supporters for CSP entrants is compared to support received from Settlement Support caseworkers for HSP entrants.

² KEQ refers to key evaluation question.

³ APOs play a significant role in supporting the CSP refugees at various stages of the migration journey, along with their Australian Supporters. The support provided by APOs, including the number of hours, was not captured in the timepoint 1 survey. These data will be available from the timepoint 2 survey results.

⁴ 'M' refers to the mean or average.

⁵ Throughout the report, **significant differences are indicated with an asterisk**. The threshold for statistical significance was a p value of less than 0.05.

⁶ Index of 12 survey items that incorporates a range of settlement activities that are relevant to all humanitarian entrants, e.g., excludes questions related to getting support to enrol children in school.

⁶ Only HSP entrants who completed the CATI survey were asked questions about the support they received for settlement activities from the Settlement Support caseworker (n=27).



Compared to HSP, CSP entrants who needed it, were more likely to receive support to access **everyday essentials** (PL 33)¹ and **essential services** (PL 18) from their Australian Supporter

Compared to HSP, CSP entrants who needed it, were more likely to receive support from their Australian Supporter to access:

essential everyday items (e.g., groceries, clothing or smart phones)*



furniture or appliances*



essential services (e.g., bank, Medicare).*



However, more HSP entrants received help from their Settlement Support caseworker to **book and/or attend a doctor or medical appointment**, compared to CSP entrants.



APO workers usually also assisted with linking CSP entrants to essential services including Medicare. However, there were widespread delays in receiving Medicare, with many CSP interviewees sharing that they had been waiting for months after lodging their application, which delayed their ability to receive subsidised healthcare. In contrast, almost all HSP interviewees shared that they received adequate support from their Settlement Support caseworkers to gain access to essential services, including Centrelink and Medicare, and did not report any delays with accessing these services.

¹ PL = Program Logic, and refers to the outcome (and it's associated placement number) depicted in the Program Logic (PL) developed for the CSP evaluation.



Over two-fifths of CSP and HSP entrants had **secured long-term housing**. However, CSP entrants secured housing more quickly than HSP entrants facilitated by their Australian Supporter (PL 28)

The same percentage of CSP and HSP entrants were in **long-term housing**.



However, CSP entrants who had secured long-term housing did so more quickly, compared to HSP.

1 week or less



1 month or longer



Of those who needed support, CSP entrants were more likely* **to receive support** from their Australian Supporter to secure long-term accommodation, compared to HSP.



HSP entrants were more likely to have **no confidence** to apply for long-term accommodation without help from others, compared to CSP.



For CSP interviewees who had secured long-term accommodation, relatives and close connections were usually instrumental in the process, often acting as interpreter and broker between the CSP household and real estate agents. For those who had not yet moved out, financial barriers were the main issue described. Relatives and close connections, and sometimes community connections (e.g., church), assisted with supplying used household goods to those entrants who were living in longer-term accommodation.

For HSP interviewees, housing was a particular concern. Many HSP interviewees described instances where the case worker responsible for supporting them with housing, were unresponsive or did not help to find accommodation within the timeframe that they had to leave their temporary accommodation. Those without sources of informal support had to rely on whatever was allocated to them, which was not always appropriate or desirable housing. For instance, some HSP interviewees felt that they were too far from shops, schools and TAFE, and some women had safety concerns regarding their accommodation. Only one HSP interviewee mentioned that their Settlement Support caseworker had facilitated receiving furniture.

Of those not in long-term accommodation, most CSP entrants were **living with family** in their home.



Whereas HSP entrants were more likely to be living in a **hotel/motel/other short-stay** accommodation such as AirBnB.



CSP entrants were **more satisfied with their accommodation**, compared to HSP, in relation to the:

condition (e.g., cleanliness)



suitability for their family.*



However, HSP entrants were more satisfied with the **closeness to public transport**.



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HSP entrants were more confident to use **public transport**, whereas CSP entrants were more likely to have someone in the **household hold a driver licence and/or own a car**

(PL 30)

Of those who needed it, CSP were more likely* to receive **support to use public transport**.



However, HSP entrants were more likely to have **'a lot' of confidence to use public transport without the help of others**.¹



12% CSP entrants held an **Australian driver licence** (O or P), compared to no (0%) HSP entrants. However, about one-third of CSP and HSP entrants respectively, **held a learner licence**.



CSP entrants were also more likely to have **someone else in their household with a driver licence**, compared to HSP.



34% of CSP entrants reported that they, or someone in their household, **owned a car**, compared to 15% of HSP entrants.

Of those who did not own a car, **all CSP and HSP entrants** expressed a **desire or need to own a car**.

Relatives and close connections played a large role in supporting CSP interviewees with transportation. In the initial stage, they would often drive them around, or assist with navigating public transportation. Many CSP interviewees had obtained a learner licence, and some had access to a car that they were learning to drive in, or that someone in their household could drive if they had a valid licence that was transferred. CSP interviewees were more likely to report they got help and instruction for using public transportation and driving, and had less barriers in learning to drive. In comparison, while many HSP interviewees had also applied for their learner licence or for their licence to be translated with Settlement Support caseworker support, they were less likely to have informal support to practice their driving. As such, they faced additional barriers, such as costly driving lessons.

¹ Twelve percent (12%) of CSP entrants 'didn't know' if they were confident to use public transport (3% HSP).

4. What early signs of English language acquisition are there, compared to HSP? (KEQ 3)



Despite reporting high levels of English language proficiency overall, many CSP and HSP entrants were less confident in their **ability to speak English** and required interpreting assistance, mostly receiving this support from informal sources (PL 27)

About two-thirds of CSP and HSP entrants reported being able to understand, speak, read, and write **English ‘well’ or ‘very well’**.



However, fewer CSP and HSP entrants reported being able to **speak English ‘well’ or ‘very well’**.



As such, some CSP and HSP entrants required **interpreting assistance** outside the home, though a larger percentage of HSP required this support.



Of those who required assistance, about half **‘always’ received help** when they needed it.¹



The level of English proficiency of interviewees ranged from complete beginner, to mostly proficient but still having issues with comprehension of accents and language nuances.

Despite acknowledging ongoing challenges in understanding accents and conversations, many CSP interviewees expressed confidence in their ability to communicate effectively as they continue to learn. CSP interviewees also described utilising Google translate to understand emails and writing letters. They tended to use their Australian Supporters or informal networks to interpret for them if needed rather than using formal interpreters, for example to set up essential services or education, or attend medical appointments. Some CSP interviewees spoke about the limitations of using formal interpreting services, including time delays, or being unable to source interpreters that could understand their regional dialects.

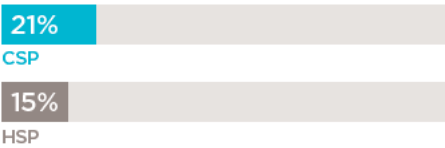
HSP interviewees struggled with independent communication and often relied on their Settlement Support caseworkers, interpreters, and any supportive family or friends, to bridge the language gap in completing everyday tasks, like enrolling for essential services, understanding documents, becoming acquainted with the community, and attending appointments. The interviews also revealed parents’ dependence on their children for English communication.

¹Only 7% of CSP and HSP entrants respectively, reportedly never received help when they needed it.
² Includes those who responded they require interpreting support ‘some of the time,’ ‘most of the time,’ and ‘all the time’.



Though **few had studied English** since arriving in Australia, most CSP and HSP entrants intended to study English in the next 12 months, particularly to improve their employment opportunities and social integration (PL 26)

Few CSP or HSP entrants had **studied English** since arriving in Australia.



However, most CSP and HSP entrants **planned to study English** in the following 12 months.



About two-thirds of CSP and HSP entrants who needed it, received **support to register for English classes** from their Australian Supporter or Settlement Support caseworker, respectively.



Both CSP and HSP entrants predominantly **practiced their English** by watching video content (e.g., TV, movies, YouTube).



However, CSP entrants also had more opportunity to practice their English with **family and friends**.



CSP and HSP interviewees expressed a goal to master English to enhance their quality of life and opportunities in Australia. They highlighted their initial difficulties faced due to limited English proficiency, which included barriers to social and economic integration. As such, they were focused on improving English language acquisition particularly for employment, as the majority cited English language proficiency as a primary barrier to employment. For CSP interviewees, efforts to improve language skills ranged from formal courses at TAFE to self-study, with support from family, friends, and Australian Supporters. Though HSP interviewees also planned to study English at TAFE, they tended to report less opportunities to practice skills in informal settings, as they had fewer social networks in Australia. HSP interviewees residing in areas without a migrant community with a shared language expressed greater motivation to advance their English proficiency, particularly as they felt socially isolated which was intensified by language barriers.

5. What early signs of social integration are there, compared to HSP? (KEQ 1)



Compared to HSP, more CSP entrants (and their children) found it **easy to make friends** (PL 17) and were more able to **ask for help** from people in their local community if they needed it (PL 15). Though both groups were still building their **broader support network** beyond family, sponsors, or caseworkers

CSP entrants were more likely* to have found it **easy to make friends** with people in their local community with **different cultural backgrounds** to them, compared to HSP.



CSP entrants were more likely to have **participated in leisure or sporting activities** with others in and outside their cultural and/or religious community, compared to HSP.



77% of CSP entrants reported that they **spent time with their Australian Supporter socially** at least once a week, such as sharing a meal or going to the park, indicating these relationships were informal and flexible (PL 16).

While CSP and HSP entrants with children similarly reported that their **children had found it easy to settle into school**,



CSP entrants were more likely to report that their children had found it **easy to make friends at school**.



However, 36% of HSP entrants reported that they 'dont know' if their children had found it easy to make friends at school (10% CSP).

CSP entrants were more likely* to agree that it had been **easy to get help from others** in their local community, compared to HSP.



Only one CSP and 3 HSP entrants reported that they **could not ask for help from others in their day-to-day life** (i.e., who do not live with them), if they needed it. Both CSP and HSP entrants most commonly reported they could ask their Australian Supporter (59%) or Settlement Support caseworker (60%), respectively, for help with, for example, looking after children or taking them to the doctor, if they needed it. Family members not living with them was the second most frequently cited source of support (CSP 34%; HSP 23%).

This was echoed in the in-depth interviews, where both CSP and HSP interviewees reported that they relied on their Australian Supporters or Settlement Support caseworkers respectively, to build their support networks. Though, CSP interviewees generally expressed comfortable and familial bonds with their Australian Supporters, which was less formal than the relationship HSP interviewees had with their Settlement Support caseworkers. Further, levels of English proficiency seemed to facilitate CSP interviewees social integration more, compared to HSP interviewees who struggled with feelings of isolation and difficulties in establishing connections within the community owing to language barriers.

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CSP entrants were more likely to report a **high sense of belonging** (PL 19) and to be **building trust** and connection with their local community. Whereas HSP entrants felt more connected to people in Australia more broadly (PL 11). Both groups felt their **culture was valued** by others in their local community (PL 14)

On average, CSP entrants reported a **higher sense of belonging**¹ compared to HSP, although HSP entrants sense of belonging was also high (M=2.85 v M=2.65 /3).*

Compared to HSP, CSP entrants were more likely to:

feel welcome in their local community*



feel **part of their local community**.*



CSP entrants were more likely than HSP entrants to:

trust others in their local community



find it easy to settle in Australia.*



Whereas, HSP entrants were more likely* to **feel connected to people in Australia** more broadly, compared to CSP.



Overall, CSP and HSP entrants felt their **culture is valued** by others in their local community.



Both CSP and HSP interviewees experienced a strong sense of belonging in Australia due to the warm reception, acts of kindness, and hospitality they received, emphasising the welcoming nature of Australian society which eased their transition. CSP and HSP interviewees appreciated the newfound acceptance and respect, contrasting it with past experiences of discrimination in other countries and/or circumstances. They highlighted Australian society's emphasis on human dignity and equality, fostering a sense of belonging irrespective of nationality or ethnicity. Despite initial worries, interviewees in both groups stressed their feeling of belonging and acceptance in Australia.

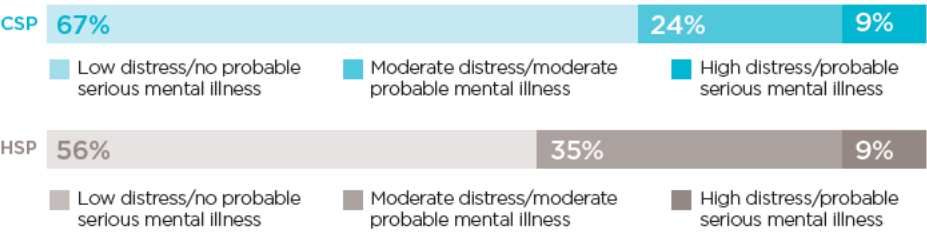
¹Index of 8 survey items that measure sense of belonging, for example, 'feeling welcome in the local community' and 'feeling part of the local community'. Measured on a scale: 1='Disagree'; 2='Neither'; 3='Agree'.



The majority of CSP and HSP entrants had **low levels of distress** or mental ill health, and few felt this impacted their day-to-day lives significantly (PL 12). However, HSP entrants seemed to be struggling with social and emotional wellbeing more, particularly feelings of social isolation

On average, levels of psychological distress¹ among CSP and HSP entrants were similar, with M=10.01 vs M=11.30/ 30, respectively, indicating **low distress/no probable serious mental illness**.

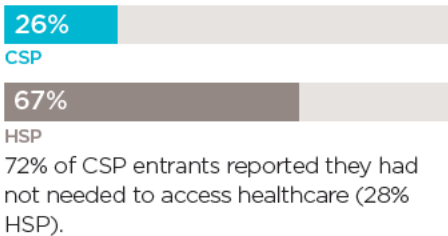
However, some HSP and, to a lesser extent, CSP entrants were considered as having **moderate or high mental distress**.²



The percentage of CSP and HSP entrants who reported that physical or emotional **health had impacted their work** (including housework) 'a little' or 'a lot' was similar.



HSP entrants were more likely* to have **accessed healthcare**, having attended a medical appointment or going to the hospital if they needed to, compared to CSP entrants.



Both the CSP and HSP interviewees reported challenges related to social and emotional wellbeing. However, these difficulties seemed to be more pronounced for HSP interviewees, particularly in terms of isolation, loneliness, and anxiety, which were exacerbated by a lack of familiarity with their surroundings and the absence of a support network. Though CSP interviewees also reported feelings of loneliness and worry, this was somewhat buffered by their Australian Supporter(s) when they had close or familial bonds. That said, a few CSP interviewees expressed significant concerns related to financial security. The absence of access to Government income support for the initial year was a source of anxiety, and the survey results indicated that 70% of CSP entrants who needed it had received money from their Australian Supporter. These financial stressors were a concern, but also a strong motivator to actively seek job opportunities.



Both CSP and HSP entrants reported they **felt optimistic** about their and their family's future (PL 13)

Both CSP and HSP entrants **felt hopeful** about future employment, finances, housing, their children's future, and life in Australia in general (M=2.97 vs M=2.93 / 3 respectively).

In particular, 100% of CSP and HSP entrants who had children, were **hopeful about their children's future**.

CSP and HSP interviewees expressed diverse future aspirations encompassing education, career advancement, family, and financial stability. Overall, their goals revolved around establishing a secure and fulfilling life for themselves and their families in their new environment. However, CSP interviewees seemed to have greater confidence and direction, possibly due to their existing social networks facilitating their transition. Whereas, HSP interviewees were less clear, focusing more on their immediate needs.

¹Used K6 scale (see Kessler, R.C., Andrews, G., Colpe, L.J., Hiripi, E., Mroczek, D.K., Normand, S.L., Walters, E.E., & Zaslavsky, A.M. (2002). Short screening scales to monitor population prevalences and trends in non-specific psychological distress. *Psychol Medicine*, 32(6), 959–76. doi: 10.1017/S0033291702006074. PMID: 12214795)

Used AU Trinary cut-off scores (see Biddle, N., Gray, M., & Rehill, P. (2022). *Mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 period in Australia*. ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods. <https://csrcm.cass.anu.edu.au/research/publications/mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-covid-19-period-australia>)

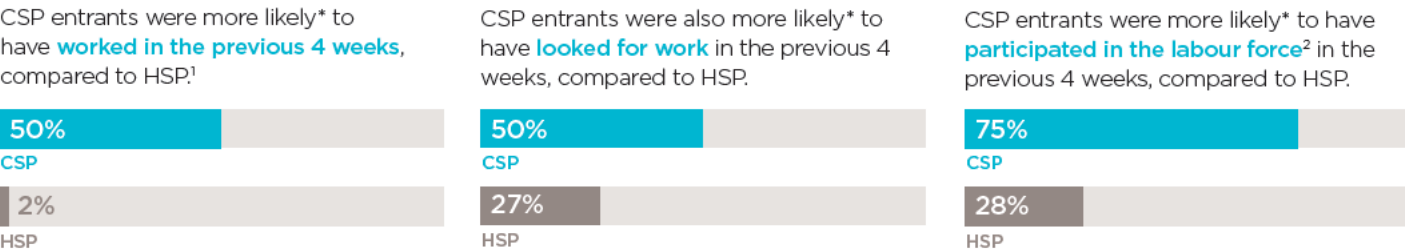
²Entrants with a sum score of 11-18 are categorised as experiencing moderate psychological distress. These entrants are likely to be struggling with mental distress and in need of mental health support, but are not at risk of clinical levels of mental health problems like those in the more serious category (scores of 19 or more). See Prochaska, J., Sung, H-Y., Max, W., Shi, Y., & Ong, M. (2012). Validity study of the K6 scales as a measure of moderate mental distress based on mental health treatment need and utilization." *International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research*, 21(2): 88–97

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6. What early signs of economic integration are there, compared to HSP? (KEQ 2)



CSP entrants were more likely to be **participating in the labour force**, compared to HSP (PL 24). Male CSP entrants were more likely to be working, compared to females, possibly because males were more likely to be the main applicant or main income earner



Both CSP and HSP interviewees expressed a strong desire to be economically independent and work towards better employment opportunities. Beyond financial obligations, entrants held deeply rooted aspirations to work diligently for the betterment of their families' future. Both groups were open to working in roles that do not necessarily align with their long-term aspirations, based on what opportunities are available to them. As previously noted, CSP interviewees were particularly motivated to acquire paid employment quickly to alleviate their financial concerns. Some also indicated a need to repay for example, the loan they took for the CSP visa. CSP interviewees' support networks and level of English seemed to put them in better stead for being in employment, compared to HSP interviewees who still needed to improve their English (even to fulfil roles that required low levels of English), and struggled with navigating systems by themselves.

Of the CSP entrants who had worked

More than three-quarters had worked **35 hours or more per week**, the equivalent of working full time.



CSP entrants predominantly **found this work through**:

- family and friends (43%)
- their Australian Supporter (37%)
- directly from employers (27%).

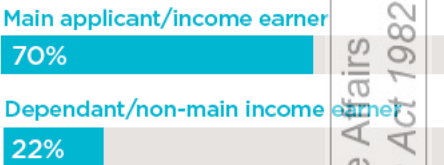
Analyses of the demographic characteristics of those CSP entrants who had worked compared to those who had not worked, showed that **male CSP entrants** were more likely* to have **worked in the previous 4 weeks**, compared to female CSP entrants.



Excluding gender differences, no other significant differences were observed when examining other demographic characteristics.³

The difference between male and female CSP entrants could be because **male CSP entrants** were more likely* to be **the main visa applicant or main income earner**.^{4,5}

Furthermore, CSP entrants who were the **main applicant or income earner** were more likely* to have **worked in the previous 4 weeks** (compared to dependent applicants or non-main income earners).



It is perhaps unsurprising then, that male CSP entrants were more likely to have worked than females.

No other significant differences between male and female CSP entrants were observed when examining other demographics characteristics.⁶

¹ In addition, CSP entrants were significantly more likely to report that another adult in the household had worked in the previous 4 weeks (CSP 23% v 0% HSP).

² Includes entrants reporting that they had worked and/or looked for work in previous 4 weeks. I.e., entrants who had worked may also have looked for work.

³ There was no significant association between whether CSP entrants had worked or not and their: age; highest level of education; level of English language proficiency; nor whether they had children under the age of 18 years.

⁴ Data on applicant status i.e., main or dependent applicant that were only available for CSP entrants who completed the CATI survey, was combined with CSP entrants' self-reported role in the household for those who completed the online survey. This was categorised into main income earner or non-main income earner, which included all other self-reported roles in the household, such as primary carer.

⁵ 83% of male CSP entrants were the main visa applicant or main income earner, compared to 36% of female CSP entrants (significant).

⁶ There were no significant differences between male and female CSP entrants and their highest level of education, nor whether they intended to work in the next 12 months. Additionally, whether CSP entrants had children or not was not associated with whether they had worked, for male nor female CSP entrants.

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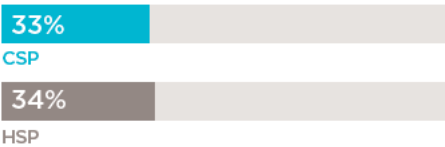
Both CSP and HSP entrants **intended to work** in the following 12 months and were **improving their job readiness** (PL 21) through having their qualifications recognised and/or through future study

Of those not working, most CSP and HSP entrants **intended to work** in the following 12 months.¹



CSP and HSP entrants reported a range of barriers to work, though the most common of these for both groups were **lack of Australian work experience** and **transport**. CSP entrants additionally cited **English proficiency** as a barrier to work.

One-third of CSP and HSP entrants held **post-school qualifications** that could potentially be recognised in Australia.²



Of those with post-school qualifications that could potentially be recognised in Australia, three-quarters were either in **the process of, or intended** to have these **qualifications assessed**.³



Few CSP and HSP entrants had done **job training or studied** something other than English since arriving in Australia.



Of the CSP entrants who had done job training or study, most had participated in or completed an apprenticeship/traineeship or work experience placements.

The majority of CSP and HSP entrants **intended to study something other than English** in the next 12 months (regardless of whether they had worked already).



¹ Seven percent (n=2) of CSP entrants and 11% (n=5) of HSP entrants said did not intend to work in the next 12 months, the remainder were unsure.
² Post-school qualifications includes trade or technical qualification beyond school, and university degree.
³ Percentages include 2 CSP and HSP entrants respectively, who already had their qualifications assessed and recognised.

7. What early signs of self-sufficiency are there, compared to HSP? (KEQ 4)

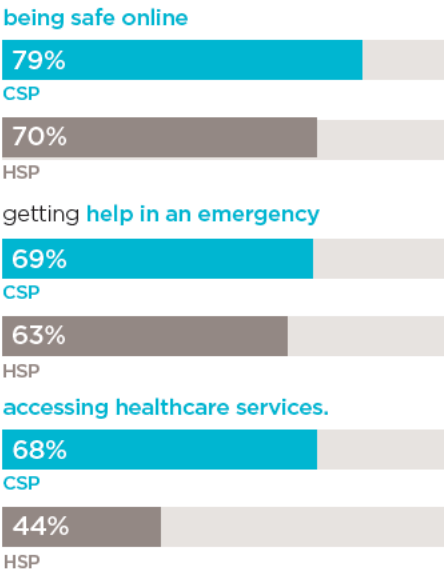


CSP and HSP entrants were somewhat confident in their ability to be **self-sufficient** (PL 32), though for some this was out of necessity which may have **limited their choice and control** (PL 31)

Level of **confidence to perform a range of tasks independently**, such as accessing essential services, or using public transport was similar for CSP entrants compared to HSP overall, with M=2.44 and M=2.23 / 3 respectively.¹

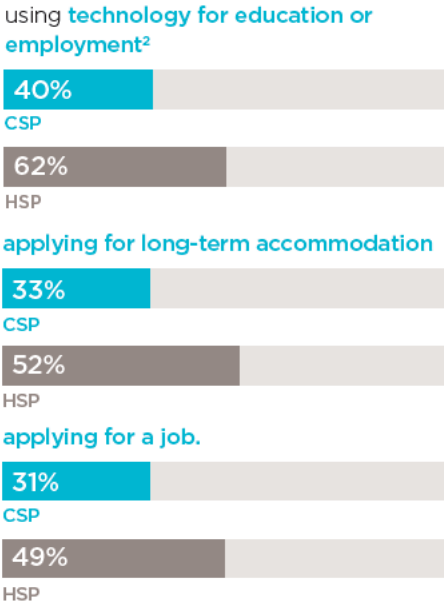
Tasks most confident to perform

The top 3 activities that the largest percentage of CSP entrants reported having **'a lot of confidence'** to perform independently were:



Tasks no confidence to perform

The 3 activities that the largest percentage of CSP entrants reported **'no confidence'** in performing independently, were:



Both CSP and HSP interviewees expressed a strong desire to be independent, rooted in a sense of personal agency and self-sufficiency. Though this seemed to manifest differently within and between the groups, based on the level of support received and financial security. CSP interviewees, who received support from their Australian Supporters, leveraged their social networks for employment and housing, thereby enhancing early autonomy. However, a minority received limited instrumental support, particularly when their Australian Supporter was viewed as too busy to help with everyday tasks. This left some CSP interviewees feeling vulnerable and being self-sufficient out of necessity, which negatively impacted their wellbeing. HSP interviewees relied more on formal services and their Settlement Support caseworker(s) which were often slower, resulting in HSP interviewees doing things independently out of necessity. Furthermore, the support HSP interviewees received was often perceived as generic, rather than tailored to their individual needs or aspirations which meant they had less control or choice. For example, HSP interviewees described accepting accommodation because it was their only option, rather than having choice to find somewhere more suitable.

Financial insecurity and concerns also impacted both CSP and HSP interviewees' ability to have choice and control. Though the source of financial concerns were different for CSP and HSP interviewees, both seemed to prioritise short-term needs, such as covering basic living costs, over long-term goals, such as enrolling in study. This reportedly hindered their ability to assert control over their lives, exacerbating stress and anxiety, and inhibited their opportunities for advancement and thus independence.

¹ An index of 12 survey items. Entrants were asked to rate their level of confidence on a scale of 1-3: 1='no confidence'; 2='a little confidence'; 3='a lot of confidence'. 'Do not know' and 'not applicable' were also provided as response options. Those who selected 'not applicable' were excluded from percentage calculations.

² Only asked to entrants who completed the CATI survey.

8. Upcoming

Snapshot Report 3 drew on data from the timepoint 1 survey data and interviews with CSP and HSP entrants. Future reports will include the following additional data:



Timepoint 2 survey data from CSP and HSP entrants

CSP and HSP entrants are asked to complete a follow-up survey 10–11 months after arriving in Australia to assess any changes over time. In addition to questions already asked in the timepoint 1 survey, the timepoint 2 survey includes questions about the number of hours and type of support CSP entrants received from their APO.



Timepoint 2 interviews with CSP and HSP entrants

CSP and HSP entrants who participated in an in-depth interview at timepoint 1, will be invited to participate in an interview at timepoint 2.



Interviews with Australian Supporters

Australian Supporters who sponsored CSP entrants will be invited to participate in an in-depth interview. Initially, Australian Supporters will be sampled from those who sponsored CSP entrants who arrived after 29 August 2023 and participated in the CATI survey. If sufficient numbers are not reached, these criteria will be expanded to include Australian Supporters whose CSP entrant did not get invited to participate in the CATI survey, but still arrived after 29 August 2023. Australian Supporters will be invited to participate in the interview approximately 9 months after the CSP entrant arrived in Australia. The results from these data may only be available for the final report.



The evaluation was undertaken by the Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland in collaboration with the Australian Institute for Family Studies

Citation: Povey, J., Burger, S-A., Austerberry, S., Marshall, D., Zulfiqar, A., Nuttall, G., San Martin Porter, M., Lee, R., Young, C., Baxter, J., Reddel, T., & Edwards, B. (2024) Community Support Program (CSP) Evaluation — Snapshot Report 3. Institute for Social Science Research, University of Queensland: Brisbane.

Acknowledgement

The Evaluation Team thanks all those who assisted in the preparation of this Report, including staff members of the Australian Department of Home Affairs, McNair, and the Approved Proposing Organisations. We would also like to thank the CSP and HSP entrants who took the time to speak with us and share their rich and thoughtful feedback. We also acknowledge the contributions of the following colleagues who contributed their time and expertise to various aspects of the evaluation: Miguel Lattz, Dr Jennifer Maturi, Noor Yousef, Elizabeth Kennedy, Dr Pilar Rioseco, Dr Karlee O'Donnell, A/Prof Gerhard Hoffstaedter, Dr Martin O'Flaherty, Dr Nikita Sharma, Dr Iryna Kolesnikova, Saeed Jaydarifard, Elahe Nikooharf Salehi, Melindy Bellotti, Stephanie Cook, and Fran Denoso Rivas.

Institute for
Social Science Research

The University of Queensland
80 Meiers Road, Indooroopilly
Queensland 4068 Australia

T +61 7 3346 7471

E issr@uq.edu.au

issr.uq.edu.au