



Australian Government
Department of Social Services



Humanitarian Settlement Services

Regional Profile #7
Wodonga, Victoria

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DSS wishes to express its thanks to St Vincent De Paul and the Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga Inc for compiling this material.

While every care has been taken, DSS makes no guarantees that the information provided is up to date.

For further information on the Humanitarian Settlement Services programme see:
Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS)

About Wodonga

Wodonga is one of regional Victoria's leading cities and services around 170 000 people in the region. The city has a population of 36 432 people, a birth rate of 2.7 children per couple and a growing number of young people under 25 years of age.

The increasing number of young people should continue and will provide employers with a secure future employment base.



Service providers

Humanitarian Settlement Service (HSS) services provided in the region focus on helping refugees to gain access to mainstream services such as Centrelink, Medicare, banks, general and specialist health and medical services, English language tuition, training and employment, in addition to links to the community and community organisations.

The Riverina Consortium members St Vincent de Paul and the Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga Inc. provide settlement services within the Riverina region on behalf of the Department of Social Services (DSS). The region includes the cities of Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Albury and Wodonga.

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a Catholic organisation that offers a 'hand up' to people in need. Members visit people in their homes or meet with them at the Care & Support Centre to assess their individual needs and provide support. The goal is not to provide long term support but to help individuals and families with short-term solutions and help with issues stopping them from gaining long-term stability.

Assistance can include:

- providing furniture, clothing & household goods
- giving food parcels or vouchers
- support with paying bills such as electricity, water, phone and rent
- financial counselling

Members focus on compassion and understanding and recognising the different needs of individuals. Services provided include:

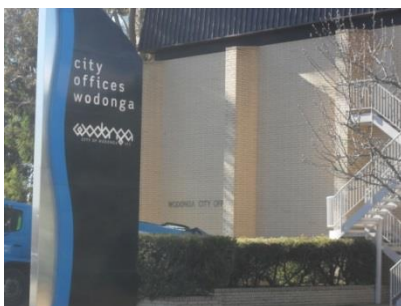
- Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) - Riverina Consortium
- Care & Support Centre, High Street, Wodonga
- Centre of Charity, High Street, Wodonga

The Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga Inc (MCWW) helps with settlement issues and provides advocacy, information and referrals for clients to main stream service providers.

Under the HSS programme, the MCWW provides:

- needs assessment and case management plans
- reception for new arrivals
- property inductions and orientation
- help registering with Medicare, Centrelink, banks and schools or higher education facilities
- health services
- youth sub plans
- help finding safe and affordable accommodation

The MCWW office is located in Manns Lane Wodonga and two full time case workers cover the Albury-Wodonga region.



City offices of Wodonga

Accommodation

Average rents for housing in Wodonga (as at September 2012) are:

- three bedroom house: \$220-\$330 per week
- two bedroom unit/flat: \$190-\$250 per week
- one bedroom unit/flat: \$135-\$175 per week

Housing is usually found close to the Central Business District (CBD), and easily accessible to public transport. It is chosen based on how much clients can pay from their Centrelink allowance.

Education

TAFE Space Wodonga offers:

- English as a Second Language classes for new arrivals
- Settlement Programme, part of a new arrivals course which includes:
 - Preliminary English and Certificate 1, 2 and 3 in Spoken and Written English, and
 - computer courses

One student is currently attending the Outdoor Work course - forklift, truck, excavating, use of chemicals and WH&S. Students need to have a drivers licence to do this course.

The following courses are most popular with new arrivals, noting that proficient English is needed:

- aged care
- child care
- hospitality
- horticulture

Approximately 40 students currently attend at different levels.

The Albury Wodonga Community College in High Street, Wodonga provides the following nationally accredited Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) courses:

- Preliminary Spoken and Written English
- Certificate 1, 2 and 3 in Spoken and Written English.

Classes are held Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.30am - 3.00pm. Approximately 32 new arrivals currently attend these classes.

Wodonga TAFE offers the following bridging courses:

- Certificate 2 in Community Services
- Certificate 1 in Retail
- Certificate 1 in Vocational Preparation

Bridging courses are also available at La Trobe University.

Health Services

Specialist refugee health services can be found at:

- various doctors surgeries
- community health service facilities
- after hours services offered at the hospital
- several bulk billing clinics
- Hume Medicare Local

Employment Opportunities

The major employment opportunities for new arrivals include education, nursing, fencing industry, laundry, local council, aged care and community services.

Male and female members of the Bhutanese community have been accredited as interpreters.

There are no special arrangements for childcare or transport to work.

jobactive providers in the local area are:

- Sureway Wodonga
- Workways Wodonga
- Worktrainers Wodonga
- Personnel Group Wodonga

A welcoming community

The Riverina Consortia has a strong, well established volunteer programme and the local council is very supportive of new arrivals.

Other support:

- Centrelink, 430 Wilson Street, Albury, has a Multicultural Services Officer
- local libraries provide free computer access and resources in other languages
- church groups such as St Stephens Uniting Church are very supportive of new arrivals.



Wodonga