

VISION FOR A JUST AUSTRALIA



THE 2024 MIGRATION AMENDMENT BILL
Grants expanded powers for deportation and detention



Uniting Church in Australia
ASSEMBLY

Our vision

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We are a nation of diverse cultures, languages, faiths, ethnic groups and experiences.

We celebrate and value the strength of this diversity. We see this diversity reflected in our leaders, key decision makers, institutions, industry, sports, art and media.

We are a compassionate nation, where every person who seeks refuge here is treated fairly and made to feel welcome and safe according to the United Nations Refugee Conventions.

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Our Key Asks

Australia should work with Asia-Pacific nations and agencies to ensure refugees are safe, have access to services, and can rebuild their lives. The humanitarian intake must increase, and indefinite, mandatory detention—especially offshore processing—must end.

A revised Refugee Sponsorship Program should enable individuals and communities to support refugees alongside the existing humanitarian intake. Protection claims must be assessed fairly and promptly, with permanent protection granted to those found to be refugees. Legislative safeguards must prevent indefinite detention, especially for those unable to return to their home countries.

The Migration Amendment Bill 2024 should be reviewed in early 2025 to assess its impact. The government must promote human rights education and implement strategies against racial and religious discrimination. New permanent residents should immediately receive social security and basic protections, and asylum seekers must have access to support while awaiting status determination.



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State of the Nation

People seeking asylum in Australia face indefinite offshore detention, with over 200 refugees in PNG and Nauru left homeless and without support due to a dispute between the two governments.

The "fast-track" refugee assessment system created delays and hardship, though its abolition and the introduction of the Administrative Review Tribunal are positive steps. Temporary visas force refugees into ongoing uncertainty, limiting access to family reunion, services, and employment. The Resolution of Status Visa offers relief to some but not all.

The 2024 Migration Amendment Bill grants expanded powers for deportation and detention, violating human rights. The Uniting Church of Australia supports the Australian Human Rights Commission's concerns. Australia provides limited pathways for refugees in the Asia-Pacific, despite high displacement numbers. Discrimination and racism remain significant issues, with migrants facing employment barriers and social exclusion. Extended waiting periods for social services further marginalize new residents, creating systemic inequality.

Questions to ask

- What are your policies for fair asylum processing?
- How will you improve Australia's humanitarian intake?
- How will you combat racial and religious discrimination?
- What is your stance on waiting periods for new permanent residents?
- Will you support a review of the Migration Amendment Act 2024?
- Will you endorse the Australian Human Rights Commission's Anti-Racism Framework?