



SESSION 4

FEB. 16, 2022

Small and mid-sized cities: Urban policies targetting migrants

Chair: Melissa Kelly, CERC Migration, Ryerson University

Migrant and refugee settlement in regional Australia: Multi-level policies and migrant agency,
Martina Boese, La Trobe University

International migration in contexts of population ageing, population loss and economic disparity: Comparing second-tier cities in Atlantic Canada and the U.S. Rust Belt,
Yolande Pottie-Sherman, Memorial University

Communities in the driver's seat: Insights from North America and Europe on migrant attraction and retention in small cities
Talia Stump, Multicultural New South Wales



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Migrant and refugee settlement in regional Australia: multi-level policies and migrant agency

Dr Martina Boese

CERC-Migration Annual Conference 2022 'Migration and the City'



Key questions and outline

- What are the risks of reducing (regional) migration policies to labour market instruments?
- What can migrants' experiences of regional settlement tell us about the limitations of current regional migration (and multiculturalism) policies?
- What if “successful settlement” is not understood as staying in one place but as an interplay of social and spatial mobility?

1. Policy context of regional migration and settlement

2. Migrant and refugee experiences of regional settlement

3. Migrant mobilities in the context of policy rationales

The Research

- **Resettling visible migrants and refugees in regional Australia (2009-2013)**
funded by the Australian Research Council, supported by the Victorian Multicultural Commission and the Municipal Association Victoria,
- Researchers: Prof Brian Galligan, Dr Millsom Henry-Waring, Dr Martina Boese, Melissa Phillips, The University of Melbourne
- **Migrant workers in Shepparton: intersections of social and spatial mobility (2016-17)**
funded by La Trobe University
- Researchers: Dr Martina Boese, Dr Anthony Moran and Dr Mark Mallman, La Trobe University
- **Migration, Work and Economic Development in the Sunraysia Mallee Region (2020-22)**
funded by La Trobe University
- Researchers: Assoc Prof Anthony Moran, Dr Martina Boese, La Trobe University and Dr Haydn Aarons, Australian Catholic University

1. Policy context of regional migration and settlement in Australia

Humanitarian Program

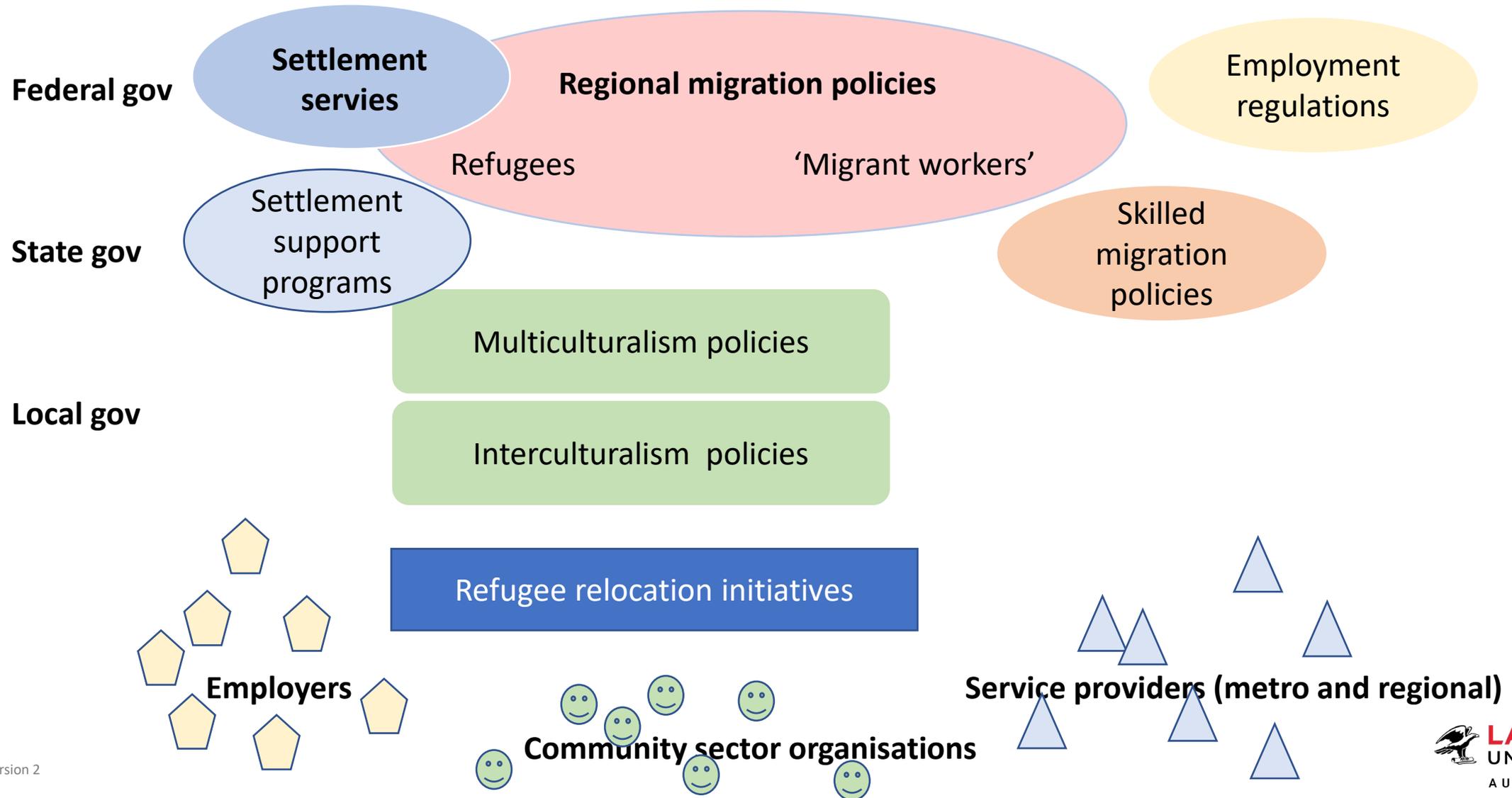
Visa program	Eligibility
Direct regional settlement	Unlinked refugees
Safe Haven Enterprise- (SHEV)-visa	Asylum seekers (applying onshore)

Migration Program

Visa program	Eligibility
Regional skilled permanent visas	Points-tested, partly employer-sponsored migrants, prior regional residency
Regional skilled temporary visas	Points-tested, partly (regional) employer-sponsored migrants
Working Holiday-visas	18-30 year nationals from select countries globally
Pacific Labour Mobility scheme	Employer-sponsored nationals from 10 Pacific Island states
Agricultural visa	Terms still to be confirmed
Temporary Graduate visas	Graduates from a regional educational institution



Governance of regional settlement and diversity



2. Refugee and migrant experiences : key challenges

Former refugees	(Labour) Migrants
	<u>Skilled visa holders (secondary)</u>
Blocked employment pathways	Career interruptions
Un- and underemployment	Un- and underemployment
Racism/ discrimination	Lacking access to employment services
Limited English language class offerings	Mobility compromises due to visa
Shortage of higher education and training opportunities	<u>Other labour migrants</u>
	Sector-specific risks of exploitation

Employment challenges

Employment, so that's a terrible issue for me, though my husband is happily involved in his career. I have to give priority for his job and for a technical person like me, finding a job in a regional area is [only] a daydream – jobs are available in metropolitan areas. So, he has to work in regional areas, I have to find jobs in metropolitan areas.

Skilled migrant

The employers can...take advantage of clients, so they get paid in cash, but they pay below award rate.... I've seen a few years back an agricultural programme for new arrivals and that was teaching pruning and picking, and doing base work placements on orchards. Then there was work offered from that, and that was really successful, but again that's still pigeonholing people to do that type of work. So you might have someone who's a doctor in their country picking fruit, crazy.

Refugee settlement worker

3. Migrant im/mobilities in the context of policies

Reasons for **MOVING ON**

- **Employment and education-aspirations and hopes**
 - To find better work elsewhere
 - To build on pre-migration career
 - To access better education and training opportunities
(either for themselves or their children)
- **Family and community connections**
 - To be closer to community resources and networks



In pursuit of
'successful settlement'

3. Migrant im/mobilities in the context of policies/ cont.

- Reasons for **STAYING DESPITE** challenges
- **Visa regulation**
 - skilled visa: tied to a regional area or to a regional employer
 - SHEV-visa: tied to regionally based work or training
- **Family context (incl gendered division of labour; gendered expectations regarding mobility agency)**
- **Existing co-ethnic or faith communities**
- **Welcoming communities**
- ... lacking hope that things turn out better elsewhere

Regulatory
restrictions

Family/ household/
lifecourse stage/
gender

community

Lived experience
over time

Key take away points

- Regional migration understood as labour supply-policy in horticulture → competition between different visa holders with varying vulnerability to exploitation
- Skilled migrants' dependencies on employer sponsors often accompanied by significant compromises (careers, employment conditions) within families
- Refugee resettlement and regional relocation cannot replace support for long-term skills development and employment pathways
- **Tension between short-term regional migration policies and long-term oriented multi/intercultural policies due to Insufficient coordination between economic and social outcomes of regional migration policies**
- **If 'successful settlement' is the aim of regional migration and settlement policies, secondary migration presents a part of rather than a failure of regional settlement policies**

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Thank you

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