

## **Ismail is a Kurd who was badly tortured.... .**

Ismail is from the Kurdish ethnic group and grew up in Turkey. Kurdish people form the largest ethnic and linguistic minority in Turkey and since the 1920's they have been deprived of their basic rights and freedoms by the Turkish government. Since the armed conflict between the Turkish government and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) began in 1984, more than 3000 Kurdish villages have been destroyed; over 370,000 people have been displaced and nearly 40,000 Kurds and Turks have lost their lives.

Ismail arrived in Australia on a student visa and sought out the CASE for Refugees office where he wanted assistance to apply for protection. Ismail, like his father, had suffered abuse from the authorities in Turkey on a number of occasions. During his high school years he was beaten and harassed numerous times, simply because he was a member of the Kurdish minority group. In one incident he was beaten around the head, face and body with a blunt instrument and sustained bone fractures and concussion and was then hospitalized.

Like many other Kurds his age he joined an opposition party and was subsequently arrested when on a march, taken for interrogation and then tortured. Ismail was also a conscientious objector because if he was called on to perform military service he would be required to fight members of the PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party). This meant he would be forced to fight against his friends and family and against the party that he believed would give the Kurds the rights and freedoms he sought.

CASE For Refugees assisted Ismail to apply for a Permanent Protection Visa (866) which, if granted, would allow him to remain in Australia. We also referred him to other agencies for financial advice and assistance, support and counseling.