Multiculturalism: a review of Australian policy statements and recent debates in Australia and overseas

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Executive summary

- Multiculturalism has been a contested policy and concept since its introduction in Australia in the 1970s. While maintaining some core principles, in the three decades since its introduction, federal multicultural policy statements have evolved in response to changing government priorities and responses to the challenges facing Australian society. While Australian multicultural policy has its roots in government responses to the post-settlement issues facing migrants, through the 1980s and 1990s policy was articulated more broadly as an element of Australia’s nation building narratives. Today all Australian States and Territories have active policies and programs dealing with multiculturalism.

- Australia’s last federal multicultural policy statement was issued in 2003 and intended to apply until 2006, with no new federal multicultural policy statements being issued since. In the past ten years, at the national level multiculturalism has been subjected to criticism in public and political debate, with some expressions of support for earlier policies of assimilation and integration.

- Australian public and political debate about multiculturalism in the last decade has been significantly impacted upon by issues that have had international resonance. Chief among these has been concern about the global threat of terrorism and the challenges of ensuring social cohesion in societies characterised by ethno-cultural diversity. While these issues have manifested in different ways in immigrant-receiving countries in Europe, North America and in the United Kingdom in many cases public debates have questioned the limits of multiculturalism and governments have heightened their regulation of integration, citizenship and immigration.

- As global migration increases in scale and complexity Australia, like many countries in the world, will continue to be faced with the challenges of constructively engaging the policy frameworks it has established in building a multicultural society, while finding innovative approaches to deal with the increasingly complex nature of contemporary diversity.
## Contents

Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 1

Background .......................................................................................................................... 1

PART ONE ............................................................................................................................ 4

The evolution of multiculturalism as Australian Government policy .................................. 4

Australia’s multicultural policy statements ........................................................................ 7

  National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, 1989 ...................................................... 9
  New Agenda for Multicultural Australia, 1999 ............................................................... 12
  Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity—Upating the 1999 New Agenda for
  Multicultural Australia: Strategic directions for 2003-2006 ........................................ 14

Multicultural policy and the Labor Government after 2007 ............................................... 17

  The People of Australia: The Australian Multicultural Advisory Council's statement on
  cultural diversity and recommendations to government, 2010 ...................................... 18

State and territory multicultural policies ............................................................................ 20

  New South Wales ............................................................................................................... 20
  Victoria .............................................................................................................................. 22
  South Australia .................................................................................................................. 23
  Queensland ........................................................................................................................ 24
  Western Australia .............................................................................................................. 24
  Tasmania ............................................................................................................................ 25
  Northern Territory ............................................................................................................ 25
  Australian Capital Territory ............................................................................................... 26

PART TWO ............................................................................................................................ 27

Recent debates about multiculturalism ............................................................................... 27

  Australia ............................................................................................................................. 28
    Hansonism and the late 1990s ....................................................................................... 29
    Asylum seeker debates ................................................................................................. 30
    Post-September 11 .......................................................................................................... 31
  'Australian values' and the shift away from multiculturalism ........................................... 32
    Contemporary challenges ............................................................................................... 36
  North America .................................................................................................................... 39
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Introduction

From its genesis as a policy framework to respond to the needs of immigrants, multiculturalism became a concept that articulated the character of the growing ethno-cultural diversity of society in the latter decades of the twentieth century. Always contested, multiculturalism and the ethno-cultural diversity that it symbolises have become increasingly controversial and subject to scrutiny in response to the security and social challenges of the early twenty-first century. This paper provides an overview of Australia’s federal multicultural policies, briefly draws attention to state and territory multicultural policy frameworks, and reviews some key issues in recent public debates about multiculturalism in Australia and overseas, with a focus on post-immigration multiculturalism.

Part One of the paper reviews the evolution of Australia’s federal multicultural policies between their introduction in the 1970s up to the period of the 2010 federal election. It is largely descriptive and is intended to identify key policy statements and reports surrounding government policy statements.

Part Two of the paper highlights prominent issues in public debates about multiculturalism and ethno-cultural diversity through a review of relevant literature and media commentary. The discussion focuses on issues in public debates in the last ten years, because—while the challenges of the past decade may, in many cases, have roots in the policies, practices and issues of previous decades—the events and concerns catalysing public debate in the past decade have profoundly changed the way in which society has engaged with the concept of multiculturalism. While Part Two focuses in greatest detail on public discourse in Australia, it also touches, albeit briefly, upon issues facing some comparable immigrant-receiving countries in North America and Europe. Part Two broadens the discussion of multiculturalism beyond Australia in recognition of the fact that the issues, events, and even rhetoric, that have animated Australian debates about multiculturalism, particularly in the past ten years, transcend national borders and have reverberated in various forms in other parts of the world. While there continue to be significant differences amongst the countries discussed there are also some interesting parallels. As global migration increases in scale and complexity Australia is one among many nations that are faced with the challenges of responding effectively and imaginatively to the increasing diversity of contemporary societies.

The Appendices to the paper contain a list of key Australian Government statements and reports, key Australian multicultural institutions, state and territory government documents and websites, and a list of key references and resources used in the paper.

Background

Multiculturalism was a concept and policy devised to respond to the increasing ethno-cultural diversity of Australian society resulting from mass immigration in the decades following World War II, and the abandonment of racially restricted immigration policies in the 1960s, in a way that
Multiculturalism: a review of Australian policy statements and recent debates in Australia and overseas

overcame the limitations of previous approaches of assimilation and integration. Since the establishment of Australia's first Department of Immigration in 1945, the focus of government policy on immigrant settlement and public discourse about the resulting ethno-cultural diversity of society has fluctuated—shifting in emphasis from assimilation and integration to multiculturalism, and, in recent times, a return to assimilation and integration.

Assimilation policies of the 1940s and 1950s required new arrivals to learn English, adopt Australian cultural practices and become indistinguishable from the Australian-born population as quickly as possible. By the late 1960s, government policy had moved towards a policy of integration, reflecting a greater awareness of the difficulties faced by new migrants and an acceptance of the possibility that migrants could integrate successfully in Australian society without losing their national identities completely. Echoing developments in other immigrant-receiving countries, notably Canada, by the late 1970s there was a growing acceptance of broader expressions of cultural diversity or 'multiculturalism' within Australian society.

Over time the term 'multiculturalism' has come to refer to the demographic reality of cultural diversity, a set of policies and policy orientations, as well as a concept which articulates a normative ideal or ideals about society. Multiculturalism has served a variety of goals over the years, including, the pursuit of social justice, the recognition of identities and appreciation of diversity, the integration of migrants, nation-building, and attempts to achieve and maintain social cohesion.

From its inception, multiculturalism has been a contested policy and concept, both in Australia and overseas, with detractors often criticising it as a divisive policy and a concept that was allegedly lacking in substance and precision. Government and other services established under multicultural policies have played a significant role in facilitating the settlement of immigrants, and many elements of the service infrastructure have endured despite the controversy surrounding the concept. In the past decade or so, in Australia, as well as a number of prominent immigrant-receiving countries in North America and Europe, the concept of multiculturalism has come under criticism. In both public and government arenas, debate on the benefits of integration and assimilation has re-emerged.

Public discourse on the concept and policy of multiculturalism, and ethno-cultural diversity more broadly, have variously evolved in accordance with the particular historical and political foundations of the countries referred to in this paper. In the settler societies of Australia, the United States and Canada public discourse on multiculturalism is mediated by the particular settlement histories of each of those countries. A crucial element of cultural and race relations in each of those countries is the historical treatment of Indigenous peoples and their contemporary place and welfare in these

2. See, for example, B Galligan and W Roberts, Australian multiculturalism: its rise and demise, paper presented to the Australasian Political Studies Association Conference, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 29 September–1 October 2003, viewed 10 July 2010, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FIPUA6%22
societies. As recognised, for example in the Australian context by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), discussions on multiculturalism must necessarily include Indigenous Australians and include engagement with issues of reconciliation.\(^3\) However, as indicated in Part One of this paper, attempts to bring Indigenous issues within the rubric of multiculturalism in a policy context have been controversial.\(^4\) Some academic commentators caution that to conflate issues facing Indigenous Australians with those facing Australians of migrant background in this way not only fails to appreciate the origins and basis of multicultural policy in Australia, but also fails to recognise the unique consideration due to Indigenous peoples as the first peoples of the land.\(^5\) This paper is primarily concerned with issues of ethno-cultural diversity resulting from immigration, but recognises that no national conversation about multiculturalism is complete without the inclusion of Indigenous people and appreciation of the issues that they face.

While the policy of multiculturalism was first introduced in Australia at a federal level, Australian state and territory governments have subsequently developed their own multicultural policy frameworks. A significant proportion of multicultural policy development and implementation now occurs at the state and territory level and a great deal of work is also undertaken at the grassroots level, by community organisations and non-government organisations (NGOs).\(^6\) Part One briefly discusses multicultural policies at the state and territory level, with a focus on multicultural policy in NSW and Victoria. However, it is beyond the scope of the present paper to provide a detailed account of multicultural policy development and practice in each of the Australian states and territories, and the proliferation of multicultural initiatives at the grassroots level.


PART ONE

The evolution of multiculturalism as Australian Government policy

In 1945, the Curtin Government established Australia's first Department of Immigration in order to manage the post-war immigration of migrants and displaced persons. In the early post-war period, migrants and refugees were expected to assimilate and blend into the population as quickly as possible. The Government's assimilation policies were based on an assumption that this would not be difficult for new arrivals given time. Settlement assistance was limited to the provision of migrant hostels and some language tuition.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the focus on 'assimilation' was replaced by a focus on 'integration', and then on to 'multiculturalism' in recognition of the challenges facing migrants in settling into Australian society and acceptance that new arrivals may not want to lose their cultural identity. Building on the easing of racially restricted immigration in the 1960s a universal admissions policy and an end to White Australia were also announced in 1973. These developments gained legislative weight through the Commonwealth Parliament's enactment of the Racial Discrimination Act in 1975, which aimed to implement Australia's obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969) by prohibiting racial and other forms of discrimination.

Multiculturalism was first presented as the basis for migrant settlement, welfare and social-cultural policy in Australia in a 1973 speech entitled A Multi-Cultural Society for the Future, delivered by the Minister for Immigration under the Whitlam Government, Al Grassby. This was the first time the term 'multi-cultural society' was used in an official Australian Government policy statement. However, academic, Mark Lopez argues that multiculturalism had a precarious status as ministerial policy because Grassby had not attempted to change the Labor Party's immigration policy, and the

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policy direction outlined in his speech was not officially confirmed by the Whitlam Government or the Labor Party. Nevertheless, Lopez argues that by the end of 1973 four of the six state Migrant Taskforce Committees:

... had introduced a wide range of multiculturalist ideas, concepts and policies into the advisory system that the Minister had established to provide a reform agenda to address migrant settlement and welfare problems.

In a Liberal Party policy statement, *The Way Ahead*, released on 30 April 1974, then Opposition spokesperson for Labour and Immigration, Malcolm Fraser, also invoked the concept of multiculturalism:

... the Liberal and Country parties recognise that there is a need to overcome the complex problems confronting migrants, especially non-English speaking migrants, who already live in the multi-cultural society of today's Australia.

Lopez argues that by this point, Fraser, who took an interest in immigrant and ethnic affairs and was politically and morally predisposed to cultural pluralism, had adopted multiculturalism as a model on which to found migrant settlement and welfare policy. On 20 March 1974, Fraser became the first person to use the term ‘multi-cultural society’ in parliament. Despite criticising Grassby’s speech, *A Multi-Cultural Society for the Future*, for lacking substance, he characterised the ideological content as ‘essentially hopeful’. When he became Prime Minister in November 1975, Fraser’s support for the concept of multiculturalism, which was first promoted during the Whitlam Government, saw the establishment of a degree of bipartisan support for multiculturalism.

In a 1977 submission to the Australian Population and Immigration Council, entitled *Australia as a Multicultural Society*, the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council, appointed by the Fraser Government, articulated the first official definition of multiculturalism in an approach they called ‘cultural

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15. Ibid., p. 255.
pluralism’, based on the principles of social cohesion, equality of opportunity and cultural identity.\textsuperscript{21} The submission concluded:

In our view, an acceptance of the multicultural nature of Australian society implies that government and established institutions acknowledge the validity of ethnic cultures and respond in terms of ethnic beliefs, values and customs ... What we believe Australia should be working towards is not a oneness, but a unity, not a similarity, but a composite, not a melting pot but a voluntary bond of dissimilar people sharing a common political and institutional structure.\textsuperscript{22}

In the context of decreasing migration from European countries, and increased acceptance of refugees from South-East Asia, the Fraser Government announced the Review of Post-Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants on 31 August 1977 and asked Frank Galbally, a prominent Melbourne barrister, to be the Review chairperson. As Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser explained:

We established it in the light of our concern to ensure that the changing needs of migrants are being met as effectively as possible. We asked the Review to have regard to our Federalism policy and our objective of supporting the enterprise and dedication of community groups who provide programs and services to migrants ... we recognise the special needs which migrants, particularly the non-English speaking and the more recently arrived, have in settling here. It was for this reason we established the Review.\textsuperscript{23}

The Review was tasked with examining and reporting on the effectiveness of programs and services for migrants which were funded by the Commonwealth and provided by non-government organisations, and to identify areas of need. The resulting Galbally Report, presented to parliament by Malcolm Fraser in April 1978 and subsequently seen as a watershed in the development of multicultural policy, identified multiculturalism as a key concept for the future development of government immigration policy.\textsuperscript{24} The Galbally Report identified the right of all Australians to maintain their culture without fear of prejudice and identified the need to provide special services and programs for all migrants to ensure equality of access and provision.\textsuperscript{25} The Galbally Report provided a program of action based on the following guiding principles:

\begin{itemize}
\item Ibid., p. 14; J Jupp, \textit{From White Australia to Woomera}, op. cit., pp. 82–83.
\end{itemize}
Multiculturalism: a review of Australian policy statements and recent debates in Australia and overseas

(a) all members of our society must have equal opportunity to realise their full potential and must have equal access to programs and services;

(b) every person should be able to maintain his or her culture without prejudice or disadvantage and should be encouraged to understand and embrace other cultures;

(c) needs of migrants should, in general, be met by programs and services available to the whole community but special services and programs are necessary at present to ensure equality of access and provision;

(d) services and programs should be designed and operated in full consultation with clients, and self-help should be encouraged as much as possible with a view to helping migrants to become self-reliant quickly.\(^{26}\)

In his response to the Galbally Report, Prime Minister Fraser stated:

The Government agrees with the general conclusions of the Review. It agrees Australia is at a critical stage in developing a cohesive, united, multicultural nation. It agrees there is a need to change the direction of its services to migrants and that further steps to encourage multiculturalism are needed.\(^{27}\)

Australia's multicultural policy statements

In 1978, following the Galbally Report on the Review of Post-Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants, there was a shift in the government policy framework for responding to migrant settlement and resulting cultural and linguistic diversity, towards multiculturalism.\(^{28}\) Adoption of the recommendations of the Galbally Report by the Fraser Government led to the expansion of existing settlement services, such as English language teaching, on-arrival accommodation and orientation assistance, interpreting and translating services, assistance with overseas qualifications recognition, as well as the establishment of multicultural resource centres to enable ethnic communities and voluntary agencies to cater to the welfare needs of migrants.\(^{29}\)

Fraser also identified the broader societal goal of promoting multiculturalism as part of his Government's response to the Galbally Report:

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27. Commonwealth of Australia, 'Statement by the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser, April 1978', op. cit., p. 2.
29. Ibid, p. 29.
The Government accepts that it is now essential to give significant further encouragement to develop a multicultural attitude in Australian society. It will foster the retention of the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups and promote intercultural understanding.  

Recognising that education was a key element in achieving this goal, Fraser committed funding to the development of multicultural and community language education programs in schools. In addition, the Fraser Government established the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA) to engage in and commission research and to advise the Commonwealth on multicultural issues; extended ethnic radio services and grants to ethnic community organisations; and established the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS).  

State and territory governments also established Ethnic Affairs Commissions and Migrant Settlement Councils following the Galbally Report, with the 1980s as a whole being a decade which saw the significant consolidation of multicultural policies and institutions. In 1982 the Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs, published a policy paper entitled _Multiculturalism for all Australians_ in recognition of the 'widespread uncertainty in the public mind about the meaning of multiculturalism for Australian society'. The paper attempted to counter doubts about the relevance of multiculturalism to the nation as a whole by framing multiculturalism as 'much more than the provision of special services to minority ethnic groups' but rather a 'way of looking at Australian society' that 'involves living together with an awareness of cultural diversity'. The Council advocated a form of multiculturalism set in a cohesive society with a 'common commitment to social and national ideals'. The Council expanded the Ethnic Affairs Council's 1977 formulation of multiculturalism by adding a fourth principle to the principles of social cohesion, cultural identity and equality of opportunity and access: 'equal responsibility for, commitment to and participation in society'. The fourth principle was added to signify that while minority ethnic groups were expected to have a primary loyalty to Australia 'the success of multiculturalism in Australia relies on participation by all Australians'.

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32. See the section entitled 'State and territory multicultural policies' below. I am grateful to Dr. James Jupp for this point.
33. Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs (ACPEA), _Multiculturalism for all Australians—our developing nationhood_, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1982, p. 2. The ACPEA was formed in 1981 as a result of a merger between the Australian Population and Immigration Council, the Australian Refugee Council and the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council and was tasked with advising the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs on matters within his responsibility.
34. Ibid., p. 17.
35. Ibid, pp. 1, 2.
36. Ibid., p. 12.
37. Ibid, p. 25.
National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, 1989

The Hawke Labor Government introduced a number of cuts to government programs in the mid-1980s, including the abolition of the AIMA in 1986. However, the Hawke Government also introduced a number of new multicultural policy initiatives such as an Access and Equity Strategy to improve access to government services and programs by people of non-English speaking backgrounds, and the establishment of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC). Among the key developments of this period, recommendations from the 1986 Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services, chaired by Dr James Jupp, led to the establishment of the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to act as a central coordinating agency for multicultural policy. The Review Committee also advocated the strengthening and expansion of the Access and Equity Strategy, a recommendation which was in the same year endorsed in an AIMA report entitled Future Directions for Multiculturalism.

By the late 1980s Australia had a high migrant intake which included significant numbers of new arrivals from Asian and Middle-Eastern countries. It was in this context that in 1988 the Committee to Advise on Australia’s Immigration Policies, chaired by Dr Stephen FitzGerald, released its report entitled, Immigration: a Commitment to Australia, warning of a ‘clear and present need for urgent immigration reform’. Among its findings the Committee found that the philosophy of multiculturalism was not widely understood and the ‘ensuing uninformed debate’ was ‘damaging the cause it seeks to serve’:

Confusion and mistrust of multiculturalism, focussing on the suspicion that it drove immigration policy, was very broadly articulated. Many people, from a variety of occupational and cultural backgrounds, perceived it as divisive. The majority of these people also expressed concern about immigrants’ commitment to Australia and to Australian principles and institutions.

41. AIMA, Future Directions for Multiculturalism – Final report of the Council of AIMA, op. cit., p. 6.
43. Committee to Advise on Australia’s Immigration Policies, Immigration: a commitment to Australia (S FitzGerald, chair), Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1988, p. 1. The Committee was established to enquire into and report on Australia’s immigration policies, and reported to the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.
The FitzGerald Report argued that the need for a sharper economic focus in the selection of immigrants is the most central issue in immigration reform.\(^{45}\) The Report also suggested that the government needed to more strongly affirm Australian identity in order to render multiculturalism less threatening or divisive to the community.\(^{46}\)

In the same year the initial bipartisanship that had characterised the introduction of a multicultural framework was effectively broken when then Opposition Leader, John Howard, called for the abandonment of the term multiculturalism, and a focus on 'One Australia' that:

> respects our cultural diversity and acknowledges that we are drawn from many parts of the world but requires of all of us a loyalty to Australia at all times and to her institutions and her values and her traditions which transcends loyalty to any other set of values anywhere in the world.\(^{47}\)

Some of the issues raised in the FitzGerald Report were manifested in the Hawke Government's 1989 multicultural policy statement, the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*.\(^{48}\) The *National Agenda* sought to provide a clear definition of multicultural policy as 'a necessary response to the reality of Australia's cultural diversity'.\(^{49}\) While continuing to endorse the need to both respect cultural diversity and further assist new migrants to settle in the country, the *National Agenda* also expressed a commitment to economic efficiency, indicated that pluralism was limited by the need for 'an overriding and unifying commitment to Australia', and framed multiculturalism as applying to all Australians.\(^{50}\) The *National Agenda* defined the fundamental principles of multiculturalism based on three rights and three obligations:

- The right to cultural identity (expressing and sharing one's individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion); social justice (equality of treatment and opportunity, and the removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender or place of birth); and economic efficiency (the need to maintain, develop and utilise effectively the skills and talents of all Australians).

- The obligation to have an overriding and unifying commitment to Australia, to its interests and future first and foremost; to accept the basic structures and principles of Australia; and to accept that the right to express one's own culture and beliefs involves a reciprocal responsibility to accept the right of others to express their views and values.\(^{51}\)

\(^{45}\) Ibid.
\(^{46}\) Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies, *Immigration: a commitment to Australia*, op. cit., p. 11.
\(^{49}\) Ibid., pp. vii and xi.
\(^{50}\) G Tavan, *John Howard's multicultural paradox*, op. cit., p. 5.
The initiatives announced by the Hawke Government as part of the new policy included: the establishment of a National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition; expansion of the Government’s Access and Equity Strategy beyond immigrants to address all groups encountering racial, religious, cultural or linguistic barriers to accessing government services; continued and expanded support for English language teaching and second language learning; and a community relations campaign to address ethnic diversity and social cohesion issues. The *National Agenda* also committed to examining the desirability of an Australian Multiculturalism Act ‘to define the principles and, quite explicitly, to set the limits to multiculturalism’, and to provide a legislative basis for the Government’s Access and Equity strategy. Despite strong support from the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils (FECCA), parliamentary support for such an initiative looked unlikely and legislation was not pursued.

Academic, Gwenda Tavan, has described the years of the Hawke and Keating Labor Governments between 1986 and 1996 as being characterised by the expansion of multicultural programs, strong efforts to place multiculturalism within a nationalist narrative where cultural diversity and tolerance were part of Australian national identity, as well the strengthening of relationships between ethnic communities and the Commonwealth and state Labor governments. In addition to the creation of new bodies like the OMA and HREOC, this period also included the establishment of the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research (BIMPR) to conduct research to inform policymakers, and the establishment of the National Multicultural Advisory Council (NMAC) in July 1994 to advise on multicultural issues. As part of attempts in the *National Agenda* to expand multiculturalism beyond its focus on migrant settlement issues and articulate the relevance of multiculturalism for all Australians, government multicultural policies in this period also addressed issues concerning Indigenous Australians and the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians as part of the reconciliation process. However, the inclusion of Indigenous issues within the rubric of multicultural policy was controversial as Indigenous Australians wished to

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53. Ibid., x.
56. G Tavan, *John Howard’s multicultural paradox*, op. cit., p. 5. The Bureau for Immigration Research was established by the Hawke Government in 1989 in response to a recommendation of the FitzGerald Report. It was established to be an independent, professional research body within the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and reported to the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, J Jupp and M Kabala (eds), *The Politics of Australian Immigration*, Bureau of Immigration Research, Australian Government Publishing Service, Melbourne, 1993, p. 13. The NMAC was established by the Keating Government as an advisory body on multicultural policies to the Prime Minister and the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Multicultural Affairs. One of the first tasks of the NMAC was to review the implementation of the 1989 National Agenda and update the Agenda, NMAC, *Multicultural Australia: the next steps*, Volume 1, NMAC, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1995, p. v.
be recognised as having a special place in Australian society as the first peoples, and did not necessarily agree with being subsumed into the same category as other ethnic communities.\textsuperscript{58}

Despite the growth of multicultural programs in this period, the social justice objectives of multicultural policy were undermined by evidence of persisting structural inequalities and injustices facing particular migrant communities as well as enduring disadvantage faced by Indigenous Australians.\textsuperscript{59} The NMAC released a report entitled \textit{Multicultural Australia: the next steps} in June 1995, which attempted to go beyond the 1989 National Agenda to address the 'vision' that 'all Australians participate in the major public institutions and processes of society to the level of their capacity and interest and, where appropriate, these institutions and processes reflect the cultural diversity of society'.\textsuperscript{60} The Keating Government in its response to the NMAC Report articulated a 'Multicultural Compact' which set out to provide 'a clear, simple statement of the policy for the benefit of all Australians, and sets out the balance of rights and obligations between individuals and the community in a multicultural society'.\textsuperscript{61} The Compact echoed the \textit{National Agenda} of 1989 by characterising multicultural policy as including three dimensions: cultural identity, social justice and productive diversity.\textsuperscript{62} Among the initiatives announced by the Government in its response to the Report, the Government committed to 'increase the percentage of non-English speaking background and indigenous Commonwealth appointees on its boards and advisory boards, setting a target figure of 15% for the year 2000' to 'better reflect the cultural diversity of Australia and broaden participation in decision-making'.\textsuperscript{63} However, the defeat of the Keating Labor government in the 1996 federal election meant that this and other multicultural policy commitments were not implemented.\textsuperscript{64}

\textbf{New Agenda for Multicultural Australia, 1999}

The Coalition Government that won the 1996 federal election was led by Prime Minister John Howard, who for many years had been a vocal critic of multiculturalism.\textsuperscript{65} The Howard Government abolished key agencies such as the OMA, and the BIMPR, restricted access to unemployment

\textsuperscript{58} G Tavan, \textit{John Howard’s multicultural paradox}, op. cit., p. 5
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., p. 4.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., iii.
\textsuperscript{64} J Jupp, \textit{From White Australia to Woomera}, op. cit., p. 90.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., p. 94. Andrew Jakubowicz characterises this period as signalling a dramatic change in the multicultural agenda, A Jakubowicz, \textit{Auditing multiculturalism: the Australian empire a generation after Galbally}, op cit., p. 6.
benefits and the Adult Migrant English Program to new migrants, and reduced funding and consultation of ethnic organisations as part of a broader package of public sector reforms.66

The 1996 election also brought Independent candidate, Pauline Hanson, into Federal Parliament on the strength of the largest swing in the election—19 per cent—in the former Labor seat of Oxley in the state of Queensland.67 Hanson was a controversial and provocative figure who garnered a great deal of public attention for, among other things, espousing views that were highly critical of what she perceived to be the special treatment afforded to Aboriginal Australians, and of multiculturalism.68

In the face of public criticism of multiculturalism, the NMAC, including new members appointed by the Howard Government in June 1997, called for leadership in defence of multiculturalism, in its May 1999 report, Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness.69 The Council’s new terms of reference were to 'develop a report which recommends on a policy and implementation framework for the next decade that is aimed at ensuring that cultural diversity is a unifying force for Australia'.70 In response to the NMAC’s report the Howard Government launched a new multicultural policy statement, A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia, in December 1999.71 At the NMAC’s recommendation the New Agenda adopted the term 'Australian multiculturalism' in recognition of the 'unique' way in which multiculturalism is implemented in reflection of 'Australia’s diverse heritage, history, democracy, culture and identity'.72 The Government also endorsed the principles of 'civic duty', 'cultural respect', 'social equity' and 'productive diversity' nominated by the NMAC as the foundations for multicultural policies based on the 'evolving values of Australian democracy and "citizenship"'.73 However, the Government did not implement the NMAC’s recommendations to provide greater funding for multicultural advocacy, increased diversity on public boards and agencies, or the creation of an independent central coordinating agency.74 The

67. J Jupp, From white Australia to Woomera, op. cit., p. 125. Hanson had previously been selected as a Liberal candidate for Oxley but was later disendorsed by the Liberal Party for her controversial views on services for Aboriginal Australians.
70. NMAC, Australian multiculturalism for a new century: towards inclusiveness, op. cit., p. ix.
72. NMAC, Australian multiculturalism for a new century: towards inclusiveness, op. cit., p. 5.
74. J Jupp, From White Australia to Woomera, op. cit., p. 95.

The *New Agenda* explicitly recognised that while Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, as Australia's 'First Peoples', 'provide a foundation for the cultural diversity of the nation, it is appropriate that their distinct needs and rights be reaffirmed and accorded separate consideration'.\footnote{Australian Government, *A new agenda for multicultural Australia*, op. cit., p. 5.} However, within three years of this policy statement being released in November 2001 the then Department of Reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs was incorporated within the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) as the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (OATSIA).\footnote{DIMIA, *Annual Report 2001–2002*, Canberra, 2002, p. 2, viewed 15 September 2010, http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/2001-02/intr.htm}


**Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity—Updating the 1999 New Agenda for Multicultural Australia: Strategic directions for 2003-2006**

Following a review of the CMA and the implementation of the *New Agenda*, in 2003, the Howard Government issued a new policy statement, *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity: Updating the 1999 New Agenda for Multicultural Australia: Strategic directions for 2003-2006*.\footnote{Department of Immigration and Citizenship confirmed that this policy was only stated to be in effect between 2003

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This new statement reaffirms the government’s commitment to promoting diversity, understanding and tolerance in all areas of endeavour. These actions are especially important given the tragic events of 11 September 2001 in the United States of America and 12 October 2002 in Bali and the changed global environment in which we live.  

The 1999 New Agenda was updated to reflect a strategic shift in focus to unity and social cohesion in response to issues arising out of the threat of terrorism, and led to the development of community management strategies to ‘manage existing and potential tensions’ surrounding events such as terrorist attacks and the 2003 war in Iraq. The principles underpinning the new policy statement were: responsibilities of all; respect for each person, fairness for each person, and benefits for all. The focus on terrorism and Islamic radicalism saw the creation of the Muslim Community Reference Group in September 2005, following the London bombings of 7 July, to ‘provide advice on how government and the Muslim communities can work together more effectively to address intolerance and achieve a more inclusive society’. Other initiatives included the development of a ‘National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security’ (National Action Plan) to ‘address extremism and the promotion of violence and intolerance in Australia’. As the renamed Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) put it:

> Supporting Australian Muslims to become more integrated and connected with the rest of the community, particularly in terms of jobs, educational attainment, and participation in community activities, is an important aspect of preventing extremism and violent ideologies gaining influence in Australia. 

Gwenda Tavan points out that as Australia’s immigrant intake, in both permanent and temporary categories, increased significantly between the late 1990s and 2005 overall funding for multicultural, citizenship and settlement programs also increased in the years surrounding the release of this policy. Following the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants undertaken by the whole of government Settlement Services Taskforce in 2003, the Howard Government announced that it would commit an additional $100.9 million to improve settlement and 2006, Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Immigration and Citizenship Portfolio, Budget Estimates, Hansard, 22 May 2007, p. 96, viewed 24 May 2010, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/estimate/10247/toc_pdf/5432-3.pdf?fileType=application%2Fpdf#search=%22estimate%2010247%22


83. Ibid.

services over four years to implement 20 of 61 recommendations made in the Review. In the 2003 policy statement, *United in Diversity*, the Minister for Citizenship and Multiculturalism, Gary Hardgrave, committed the Government to ‘furthering harmonious community relations, ensuring equity in the provision of government services and harnessing the economic benefits of diversity’. However, one critic of federal multicultural policy in this period, academic, Andrew Jakubowicz, argues that starting with the *New Agenda* of 1999, the original social justice aims of multicultural policy were replaced with more vague notions of equity, and that multicultural policies aimed to ‘celebrate low level and local cultural collaborations; assert national social priorities; assert the importance of a cohesive national identity; make economic profitability a priority; marketise services’ and recruit ethnic leaders with little influence or power.

While the Howard Government did not announce any new multicultural policies for the remainder of its term in office, in January 2007 the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) became known as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). This change removed the word ‘multiculturalism’ from the departmental title for the first time since 1996. The removal of the term ‘multiculturalism’ led to questions being asked about the government’s commitment to multiculturalism. Then Prime Minister, John Howard, stated that while the change did not mean that the term multiculturalism was defunct, it was made ‘in recognition of the obvious fact, and obvious belief on the part of the entire Australian community, that immigration should lead to citizenship’.

In 2007, DIAC officials offered this response when questioned about the removal of the word ‘multicultural’ from the Department’s title:

The government’s settlement and cultural diversity policy and programmes give effect to the four guiding principles of the Galbally report.

Under the policy, subject to the law, all Australians have the right to express their own culture and beliefs and have a reciprocal obligation to respect the right of others to do the same ...


89. P Ruddock (Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs), *Government committed to multicultural affairs*, media release, Canberra, 3 May 1996, [http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2F85V20%22](http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2F85V20%22)

Government funding for settlement services recognises the need for specific programmes, based on the principles of self-reliance and participation.\textsuperscript{91}

At the Senate Budget Estimates hearings of May 2007 DIAC Secretary, Andrew Metcalfe, stated that:

Ministers use the word integration more frequently now than they may have previously, but the department's responsibilities in administering programs have not changed.\textsuperscript{92}

He confirmed that multicultural and ethnic affairs continued to be within the Department's responsibilities under the relevant administrative arrangements orders and the Department continued to administer a number of cultural diversity programs, such as the 'Living in Harmony Program' and the 'National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security'.\textsuperscript{93}

**Multicultural policy and the Labor Government after 2007**

While in Opposition, Labor had given some indication of its policy direction on this issue. In response to the Howard Government's decision to dispense with the term 'multiculturalism' in the name of the Department of Immigration, the Labor Opposition proposed that it would establish two new offices in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to deal with issues of integration and multiculturalism, as well as citizenship. Opposition leader, Kim Beazley, stated:

Integration and multiculturalism must be recognised when we develop education and health policies, policies for the disabled, for the ageing, for workers, for children, and for mums and dads. And citizenship policies should reach all of us, not just migrants.\textsuperscript{94}

In 2007, the Labor Opposition welcomed the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's (HREOC) position paper on multiculturalism.\textsuperscript{95} The Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, Laurie

\textsuperscript{93}. Ibid. The National Action Plan was developed in consultation with the Muslim community and state and territory governments following the London bombings of July 2005.
\textsuperscript{94}. K Beazley (Leader of the Opposition) and A Hurley (Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs), *Labor’s practical plan for integration and multiculturalism*, media release, Canberra, 29 November 2006, viewed 13 July 2010, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2F23ML6%22

Earlier in its term in Opposition, the Labor Party declared it was 'firmly committed' to multiculturalism, see L Ferguson (Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs), *Australians stand up for multiculturalism on Harmony Day*,}
Ferguson, declared that 'Labor's vision for a multicultural society is consistent with HREOC's stated objectives of promoting understanding, respect and friendship among racial and ethnic groups in Australia and to combat prejudices that lead to racial discrimination'.

Early in its term in office the Rudd Labor Government announced it was broadly reviewing how best to foster and promote the benefits of cultural diversity in the Australian community, including through a review of the 'Living in Harmony' program which had been operating since 1998. The Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, Laurie Ferguson, stated the review of the 'Living in Harmony' program was intended to 'ensure that [it] meets the Australian Government's goal of developing a multicultural Australia in which everyone benefits from the diversity in our society'. In January 2009, Mr Ferguson launched the new 'Diverse Australia Program', which, as compared with the 'Living in Harmony Program', had 'an increased focus on addressing issues of intolerance', and aimed to 'empower a local response to issues of racism and intolerance'. In 2010, the Government announced the amalgamation of the previous 'Diverse Australia Program' and the 'National Action Plan' to form the 'Diversity and Social Cohesion Program'.

The People of Australia: The Australian Multicultural Advisory Council's statement on cultural diversity and recommendations to government, 2010

In December 2008, just over a year after coming into office, the Rudd Government announced the creation of the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council (AMAC). The Council was tasked with providing advice to the Government on 'practical approaches' to promoting social cohesion and overcoming racism and intolerance through positive engagement with diversity.

96. L Ferguson (Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs), Labor welcomes HREOC's multiculturalism position, op. cit.
97. L Ferguson, (Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services), A new lease of life for multicultural Australia, media release, Canberra, 8 February 2008, viewed 17 June 2010,
98. Ibid.
99. L Ferguson (Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services), New program brings diversity into focus, media release, Canberra, 28 January 2009, viewed 17 June 2010,
102. Ibid.
The AMAC's first statement to government, 'The people of Australia' noted the enduring reality and necessity of multiculturalism to Australia. It made recommendations to government on issues including the importance of ensuring equal access to services for all Australians, the need to tackle discrimination, prejudice and racism, and the need to provide opportunities to all members of Australia's population for participation in community life. The statement emphasised that government has a responsibility to 'maintain a just, inclusive and cohesive society.'

In welcoming this statement, the Minister for Immigration, Senator Chris Evans, stated: 'The government is committed to ensuring that future multicultural policy is based on participation and inclusion. It is a policy that is about all Australians and it should seek to benefit us all.'

At the time of the August 2010 election the Labor Government had not released a new policy on multiculturalism. Following the appointment of the new Gillard Labor minority Government on 14 September 2010, it was revealed that, further to the removal of the term 'multicultural affairs' from the title of the Immigration Department by the Howard Government in 2007, the Gillard Government has also removed the term from the title of the new Parliamentary Secretary assisting the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship. The Government reportedly indicated that the new Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Citizenship, Kate Lundy, had the same role as the previous Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, Laurie Ferguson. When questioned as to the absence of an Opposition spokesperson for multiculturalism, Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott stated:

I think that it’s important that we recognise the diversity of Australian society but these days on both sides of politics we tend to talk more in terms of citizenship and I’m happy to keep doing that. I think that it’s important that we acknowledge the diversity of Australia but I think it’s also important to focus on the unity of Australia and that’s what I want to do.

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104. C Evans (Minister for Immigration and Citizenship) and L Ferguson (Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services), *Multicultural policy to speak to all Australians*, media release, Canberra, 30 April 2010, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FL6MW6%22


107. P Karvelas, 'Multiculturalism departs stage left from job’s title', op. cit.

108. T Abbott (Leader of the Opposition), *Transcript of joint press conference: Sydney: 14 September 2010: Announcement of Coalition Shadow Ministry; parliamentary reforms; speaker’s role*, media release, Sydney, 14 September 2010,
The Gillard Government has met with criticism from the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils (FECCA) for the removal of the term ‘multiculturalism’, with Council spokesperson, Pino Migliorino, indicating that ‘there is a great deal of community concern about this’.\textsuperscript{109}

**State and territory multicultural policies**

All Australian states and territories currently have policies and bodies dealing with multiculturalism.\textsuperscript{110} While all Australian state and territory governments had established bodies or agencies dealing with issues of cultural diversity by the 1990s, jurisdictions vary in their approaches and the nature of their multicultural policy structures, ranging from legislatively enshrined principles, statutory bodies and mandatory reporting requirements to declaratory policy statements.\textsuperscript{111} This section focuses on NSW and Victoria as the most populous jurisdictions, which contain the majority of Australia’s migrant communities and have the longest standing multicultural policy frameworks.\textsuperscript{112}

**New South Wales**

Multicultural policy in NSW is administered by the Community Relations Commission for a multicultural NSW (CRC), formerly known as the Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW.\textsuperscript{113} The NSW

\textsuperscript{109} P Karvelas, ‘Multiculturalism departs stage left from job’s title’, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{110} For a table detailing the comparative multicultural governance structures across all Australian state, territory and Commonwealth jurisdictions as it was in 2008 see Community Relations Commission for a multicultural NSW (CRC), 25 years of EAPS: Review of EAPS operation in NSW, NSW Government, March 2009, p. 67, viewed 21 September 2010, \url{http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/11349/25_years_of_EAPS.pdf} In addition to government bodies and policies, all states and territories also have non-government organisations such as Ethnic Communities Councils or Multicultural Councils at the state, and in some cases at regional levels, see Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils (FECCA), Membership contact list, FECCA website, viewed 1 October 2010, \url{http://www.fecca.org.au/members.cfm} The first Ethnic Communities’ Council was established in Victoria in 1974, as ‘an institutional base, outside government, from which they would seek to influence government policy’. Lopez argues that ‘[t]he establishment of the Ethnic Communities’ Council of Victoria is one of the most significant events in the progress of multiculturalism. It had a profound impact on how multiculturalists were able to present themselves and their demands to governments, ethnic groups and the general public; and on the way governments, ethnic groups and the general public perceived multiculturalists and their goals, principles, values and policies’, M Lopez, The origins of multiculturalism in Australian politics 1945–1975, op. cit., pp. 347–348. The Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils (FECCA) is the national peak body representing ethnic communities councils and continues to be outspoken on issues of multiculturalism. See the FECCA website for information on FECCA’s policies, statements and publications, FECCA, Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia, FECCA website, 2010, viewed 1 October 2010, \url{http://www.fecca.org.au/}


\textsuperscript{112} CRC, 25 years of EAPS: Review of EAPS operation in NSW, op. cit., p. 35.

\textsuperscript{113} For further information about NSW multicultural policies and programs see the CRC website, viewed 21 September 2010, \url{http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au/home}
Ethnic Affairs Commission was established as a permanent government authority in December 1979 as the first such body in Australia in response to a recommendation of the *Participation Report* of 1978. The *Participation Report* was written by the Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW—a statutory body established under the *Ethnic Affairs Commission Act* 1976 (NSW) and commencing in May 1977 to investigate and report on the functions and constitution of a permanent Commission and on ethnic affairs. The Report introduced multiculturalism to the NSW policy context as a concept that went beyond the preservation of cultural heritage and emphasised the need to ensure access and equity and to provide the opportunity for cultural and linguistic groups to participate fully in the social, economic and political system of NSW.

**NSW multicultural policy has a legislative basis in the *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000* (NSW), which requires NSW public authorities to implement the principles of multiculturalism contained in the Act.** The Act was drafted in 2000 in response to the prevailing debate about the concept of multiculturalism and when passed into legislation made NSW the first Australian jurisdiction to enshrine multicultural principles in legislation. The principles of multiculturalism enshrined in the Act are implemented through the Multicultural Policies and Services Program (MPSP). The MPSP, previously known as the Ethnic Affairs Priorities (EAPS) Program was first established in 1983 by the Wran State Government in recognition of the need to include cultural diversity policies in the delivery of mainstream government services, and was the basis for multicultural policy implementation in the NSW public sector for the following 25 years, enjoying bipartisan support throughout that period.

The 2000 Act expanded the range of public authorities to which multicultural service delivery obligations applied to include state-owned corporations and local government authorities in recognition of the critical role of local governments in delivering services to the community. The policy framework established by the Act also expanded the concept of multiculturalism beyond its

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117. Ibid., p. 11.


primary concern with access and equity issues to also act as ‘a force in maintaining community harmony, strengthening commerce and business and underpinning social and economic capacity building’.  

A review of the EAPS program undertaken in 2008 found that, as compared with other Australian jurisdictions as well as countries with comparable multicultural frameworks, namely, Canada, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, the NSW multicultural policy framework was the most effective example of multicultural governance that they reviewed internationally and within Australia.  

**Victoria**

Victorian multicultural policy is administered by the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC), formerly known as the Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission. Victoria’s first Ethnic Affairs Commission was established as an independent statutory authority in 1983, following the publication of the 1983 Access and Equity report on the development of Victoria’s ethnic affairs policies, by the Review Group to the Minister of Ethnic Affairs. The main recommendations of the report were concerned with the establishment of a new Ethnic Affairs Commission to, among other functions, assist government and community organisations to achieve greater equity and participation in the delivery of mainstream services and in the distribution of resources. The VMC was created ten years later following the passage of the *Victorian Multicultural Commission Act 1993* (Vic) by the Kennett Government.  


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121. Ibid., p.12.  
125. Ibid., pp. 2–3.  
On 14 March 2009 the Victorian Government launched a new multicultural policy statement, *All of us: Victoria’s multicultural policy*, following a consultation process focused on the themes of advancing equality by supporting the human rights of all Victorians, supporting cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, fostering unity and promoting community harmony and boosting economic advantage.¹²⁹ The Victorian multicultural policy framework also includes the *Multicultural Communications Policy, A Fairer Victoria: Progress and Next Steps* (2006) and the *Global Skills for Victoria 2008-2011* skilled migration strategy.¹³⁰ The Multicultural Communications policy commits Victorian Government departments to developing appropriate communications strategy for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, while *A Fairer Victoria* requires departments to develop Cultural Diversity Plans to enhance the provision of culturally sensitive services to all Victorian communities.

**South Australia**

South Australia’s multicultural policy is administered by Multicultural South Australia (MSA), which encompasses the 15 member South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission (SAMEAC).¹³¹ The SAMEAC was established under the *South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission Act 1980* (SA) and its primary functions are to raise awareness and understanding about ethnic diversity in South Australia, and to advise government and public authorities about multiculturalism and ethnic affairs.¹³² When it initially began operating in June 1981 the SAMEAC was primarily concerned with migrant settlement and welfare issues. Following the publication of the Totaro Report in 1983 the Commission was increased in size from eight to 11 members, and its functions broadened to allow the Commission a stronger role in ethnic rights advocacy and strengthen its advisory role.¹³³ Further amendments to the Act in 1989 increased the size of the Commission to 15 members and provided a legislative basis for the establishment of multiculturalism as a public policy.
Queensland

Queensland’s multicultural policy framework is administered by Multicultural Affairs Queensland (MAQ), which sits within the Department of Communities. Queensland introduced its first multicultural policy in 1993, with subsequent policies being introduced by different State governments in 1996, 1998 and 2004. The Queensland Government is currently reviewing its 2004 multicultural policy statement, Multicultural Queensland—making a world of difference, ‘to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to the state’s changing needs’. Among other issues, the review is investigating the possibility of enacting legislation to affirm the state’s multicultural principles. MAQ anticipates the publication of a new policy and a report outlining the outcomes of community consultations carried out as part of the review to be published by late 2010.

Western Australia

Multicultural affairs in Western Australia are coordinated by the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) within the Department of Local Government. The Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism, endorsed by the Cabinet as State Government policy in October 2004, expresses the State Government’s commitment to the principles of multiculturalism—civic values, fairness, equality and participation. The Charter articulates multiculturalism as a form of ‘democratic pluralism’ that is not concerned with ethnic minorities, but rather focuses on achieving social cohesion with justice and equity for all citizens. Following a consultation process initiated in November 2008, in 2009 the Western Australian Government launched the OMI Strategic Plan for

134. See the MAQ website for further information about Queensland multicultural policies and programs, MAQ website, viewed 22 September 2010, http://www.multicultural.qld.gov.au/
137. Ibid., p. 12.
Multiculturalism: a review of Australian policy statements and recent debates in Australia and overseas

2009–2013, to achieve the objectives of full participation for CALD communities, equity, and promoting the benefits of Western Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity.\(^{141}\)

Tasmania

Tasmania’s multicultural policy is coordinated by Multicultural Tasmania, an agency located within the Department of Premier and Cabinet.\(^{142}\) Tasmania’s multicultural policy, launched in 2001, affirms the Government’s commitment to a set of multicultural principles to maximise the potential of multiculturalism for all Tasmanians and to assist in strengthening societal cohesion and harmony.\(^{143}\) Tasmania’s multicultural policy contains an 'Action Plan' to achieve the policy’s objectives of increasing the share of migrants coming to Tasmania, improving the retention of migrants once they have come to Tasmania, improving access to Government services and improving understanding of the value and benefits of multiculturalism.\(^{144}\) While Tasmania does not have a statutory multicultural body, the Tasmanian Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs was established in 1992 to advise the Tasmanian Government on policies and strategies to do with multiculturalism.\(^{145}\)

Northern Territory

Multicultural policy in the Northern Territory is coordinated by the Office of Multicultural Affairs within the Department of the Chief Minister.\(^{146}\) The Northern Territory introduced the Territory’s first multicultural policy statement for migrant and ethnic Territorians, *Building on the Territory’s Diversity*, in February 2005.\(^{147}\) The policy expresses the Government’s commitment to multiculturalism and sets out the principles of valuing diversity, fair access, encouraging participation and mutual respect.

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144. Ibid., 2–3.
146. For further information about multicultural policy and programs in the Northern Territory please refer to the Department of the Chief Minister’s ‘Multicultural Affairs’ website, viewed 23 September 2010, [http://www.dcm.nt.gov.au/strong_community/a_great_place_to_live_and_work/multicultural_affairs](http://www.dcm.nt.gov.au/strong_community/a_great_place_to_live_and_work/multicultural_affairs)
Multiculturalism: a review of Australian policy statements and recent debates in Australia and overseas

Australian Capital Territory

Multicultural policy within the Australian Capital Territory is coordinated by the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) in the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services. The ACT Government launched a new ACT Multicultural Strategy 2010–2013, building on the ACT Multicultural Strategy 2006–2009. The focus areas of the ACT Strategy are languages, children and young people, older people and aged care, women, refugees, asylum seekers and humanitarian entrants, intercultural harmony and religious acceptance. The ACT Strategy makes specific reference to the ACT’s Indigenous heritage and affirms the Government’s commitment to the implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service delivery framework. The Strategy also commits ACT Government agencies to reporting against actions and key performance indicators in the strategy each financial year. Like Victoria, the ACT’s multicultural policy is supported by the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT), the first legislative bill of rights to be enacted in Australia.

150. Ibid., p. 19.
151. Ibid., p. 9.
152. Ibid., p. 22.
153. Ibid, 16.
PART TWO

Recent debates about multiculturalism

• In the last ten years Australia, like a number of comparable countries in Europe and North America, has experienced public anxiety about the perceived threat to social cohesion from increasing ethno-cultural diversity. Particularly in Australia and Europe much of this anxiety arose from the conflation of security issues and broader issues concerning the integration of immigrant communities. These anxieties gave rise to debates about whether policies of multiculturalism were inhibiting integration and social cohesion and in fact contributing to segregation.

• Many of the issues that have animated recent public debates about multiculturalism evoke broader conceptual tensions and challenges raised by the concept and praxis of multiculturalism that have engaged theorists for a number of decades. Most of these issues, such as the interaction between particular cultural practices and human rights discourses, the place of religion in the public sphere, the growth of religious extremism, or the persistence of inequalities faced by minority groups, relate to broader concerns about the meaning and relevance of culture, the parameters of multiculturalism within secular liberal democracies, the distribution of opportunities, resources and power in multicultural societies, and the construction of narratives.

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155. See for example, the results of a study on attitudes towards Muslims in Britain, France, Germany, Spain and the United States, which found that security concerns are the strongest driver of negative attitudes towards Muslims across all five countries, R Wike and B Grim, ‘Western views towards Muslims: evidence from a 2006 cross-national survey’, International Journal of Public Opinion Research, vol. 22, no. 1, 2010, pp. 18–21.


157. While it is not within the scope of this paper to undertake an exposition of the complex conceptual debates about multiculturalism that have flourished in academia for many decades, by way of illustration some prominent theorists who have engaged in conceptual debates in this field include: internationally, Will Kymlicka, Charles Taylor, Iris Marion Young, Joseph Carens, Nancy Fraser, Seyla Ben-Habib, Amy Gutman, Susan Okin, Nira Yuval-Davis, Ayalet Shachar, Judith Butler, Anne Phillips, Nathan Glazer, Michael Walzer, Brian Barry, Bikhu Parekh, Tariq Modood, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, Stuart Hall, James Tully, Ralph Grillo, Paul Gilroy, Jurgen Habermas, Christian Joppke, Peter Kivisto, Catherine Withol de Wenden, Steven Vertovec; and within Australia, political scientists, sociologists and anthropologists such as Jean Martin, Jerzy Zubrzycki, James Jupp, Andrew Jakubowicz, Chandran Kukathas, Stephen Castles, Bob Birrell, Lauchlan Chipman, Frank Knopfelmacher, Geoffrey Partington, Ghassan Hage, Brian Galligan, Winsome Roberts, John Kane, Barry Hindess and Geoffrey Brahm Levey, and historians such as Geoffrey Blainey, Miriam Dixon and John Hirst.
of nationhood and national belonging. The following is a brief discussion of recent public debates about multiculturalism in Australia and a selection of countries in Europe and North America that draws on media commentary as well as the work of prominent researchers and academics writing in this field.

**Australia**

Historically, multiculturalism in Australia has been contested both as a concept and policy framework.²⁺³ Mark Lopez, in his study of the origins of multiculturalism in Australia, argues that even amongst supporters of multiculturalism there was divergence between the approaches advocated by various schools of multicultural thought, classified by Lopez as including 'cultural pluralism', 'welfare multiculturalism', 'ethnic rights multiculturalism', and 'ethnic structural pluralism'.³⁻ Many conservative politicians and commentators in the 1980s echoed historian Geoffrey Blainey's view that multiculturalism encouraged 'ethnic tribalism,' and evidence emerged that there was confusion and resentment about aspects of the policy of multiculturalism among the general public, despite official attempts to characterise it as encompassing all Australians.⁴⁻⁶ Conservative criticism in the 1980s, raised a number of issues, including: the cost of grants to ethnic organisations and the influence of ethnic lobbies; multiculturalism as a divisive policy; cultural relativism; the alleged stifling of debate and the fostering of 'political correctness' encouraged by bipartisanship on multiculturalism; and support for multiculturalism being limited to an 'elite' of tertiary educated people and ethnic lobby groups.⁵⁻⁶ Around the time of the Bicentenary of European settlement in 1988 in particular, conservative criticism was concerned with preserving constructions of Australian nationhood and Australian culture which critics perceived as being undermined by multiculturalism.⁶⁻⁷

Lopez argues that by the mid-1990s some earlier proponents of multiculturalism such as Jerzy Zubrzycki and Sir James Gobbo, were engaging in 'post-multicultural' theorising by suggesting that

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²⁻³ For explanations of these various schools of multicultural thought and an indication of the various individuals who supported each school please refer to Lopez's detailed study, M Lopez, *The origins of multiculturalism in Australian politics 1945–1975*, op. cit., pp. 447–448


'multiculturalism' should be replaced with 'cultural diversity' as multiculturalism was a 'self-conscious' term that should no longer be necessary and had outlived its purpose. Other commentators, such as Chandran Kukathas, adopted a theoretical position—self-described as classical liberal—to argue that multiculturalism was merely one aspect of pluralism, and that public institutions should be 'neutral' and concerned with ensuring tolerance and respect for individual rights and freedoms rather than enabling the interests of collective groups in society.

**Hansonism and the late 1990s**

Some have argued that debates about multiculturalism in Australia have often been racialised—that is, mediated through ethnic and racial categories of perception—and had the effect of questioning whether certain sectors of the Australian population were incompatible with, or posed a threat to, Australian society. For example, in the 1980s and 1990s increases in Asian migration fuelled claims of an imminent 'Asian invasion', a theme which featured prominently in the rhetoric of Pauline Hanson and the One Nation Party in their rise to public attention in the 1996 and 1998 federal elections. Upon her entry into Federal Parliament, Hanson was outspoken on what she perceived to be undue concessions to 'industries' 'servicing Aboriginals, multiculturalists and a host of other minority groups', evoking fears of 'separatism' and arguing that, '[t]o survive in peace and harmony, united and strong, we must have one people, one nation, one flag'. In her first speech to Federal Parliament, Hanson stated:

> Immigration and multiculturalism are issues that this government is trying to address, but for far too long ordinary Australians have been kept out of any debate by the major parties. I and most Australians want our immigration policy radically reviewed and that of multiculturalism abolished. I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians ... They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate. Of course, I will be called racist but, if I can invite whom I want into my home, then I should have the right to have a say in who comes into my country. A truly multicultural country can never be strong or united.

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163. M Lopez, *The origins of multiculturalism in Australian politics 1945–1975*, op. cit., pp. 447–448. Lopez also identifies others who theorise across various schools of multicultural thought to advance notions of 'democratic pluralism' (Jayasuriya), post-nationalist 'civic pluralism' (Kalantzis), and 'citizenship for a multicultural society' (Theophanus).


Hanson and the One Nation party, formed in 1997 and led by Hanson, drew much of its support from Queensland, but reached the height of its national popularity in the 1998 federal election.\(^{168}\) In the words of academic, James Jupp, One Nation became ‘the most successful party in Australian history to campaign on a program of limiting immigration and abolishing multiculturalism, Aboriginal reconciliation and a humane refugee policy’, and in the process made a significant impact on the tone and direction of public debate on such issues.\(^{169}\) Jupp argues that Hanson’s views were in large part echoing sentiments from conservative critiques of multiculturalism in the preceding 15 years—including from John Howard prior to entering into office—and that Hanson’s populist rhetoric continued to resonate in debates and policy developments, such as those concerning asylum seekers and refugees, years after her departure from federal politics.\(^{170}\)

**Asylum seeker debates**

Between the late 1990s and 2001 anxieties around ‘foreigners’ and threats to the national community coalesced around the issues of so called ‘ethnic gang rapes’ and the arrival of, predominantly Muslim, asylum seekers on boats off the coast of Australia.\(^{171}\) Between 1999 and 2002 there was a sharp increase in the number of asylum seekers attempting to reach Australia by boat.\(^{172}\) Unlike previous waves of asylum seekers arriving by boat who were largely from the Asian region, the majority of asylum seekers arriving in this period were primarily Muslims from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran.\(^{173}\) Mounting media and political rhetoric evoking historical fears of invasion to portray the purported ‘flood’ of ‘boat people’ as a threat to the nation’s sovereignty and security culminated in the ‘Tampa crisis’ of late August 2001.\(^{174}\) After deploying Special Air Services (SAS) personnel on the afternoon of 29 August 2001 to board and seize control of the ship, MV Tampa, which was carrying 438, mainly Afghan asylum seekers who had been rescued at sea, Prime Minister Howard made the following statement to Federal Parliament in defence of the Government’s decision to prevent the vessel from reaching Australian shores:

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Every nation has the right to effectively control its borders and to decide who comes here and under what circumstances, and Australia has no intention of surrendering or compromising that right ... The problem does lie in the ease of entry of many people from Middle Eastern and other countries to neighbouring countries of Indonesia and their relative ease of transfer to Indonesia and then through Indonesia onto boats and down to Australia. Something has to be done to stop that flow of humanity.  

Post-September 11

The September 2001 terrorist attacks in the US and the attendant spectre of global terrorism significantly compounded existing concerns about national security and brought many latent anxieties about multiculturalism to a head. The confluence of national security concerns related to the threat of terrorism and the politicisation of asylum seeker issues, as epitomised in the Tampa crisis of August 2001, as well as the 'children overboard' affair in October, proved pivotal to the outcome of the November 2001 federal election, with border protection being the central theme in the Howard Government’s successful re-election campaign. Echoing themes in populist media, in a radio interview of 13 September the Defence Minister, Peter Reith drew a link between terrorism and asylum seekers, suggesting that border protection was fundamental to ensuring that boat arrivals did not become a 'pipeline for terrorists'. More broadly, some media and political commentary sought to link terrorism with Islam, raised questions about the supposedly divided loyalties of Australia’s immigrant population and called upon Arab and Muslim Australians, in particular, to demonstrate their loyalty to Australia.


P Costello (Treasurer), Worth promoting, worth defending: Australian citizenship, what it means and how to nurture
Key international events following the September 2001 terrorist attacks, such as the war in Iraq, the 2002 Bali bombings and 2005 London bombings, played a role in shaping public attitudes towards ethnic and cultural diversity and towards parts of the Australian population. For example, a study conducted by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) in 2004, found that in the aftermath of these events many Arab and Muslim Australians, as well as some other minority groups, were subjected to heightened acts of prejudice, vilification and violence, that left them feeling isolated and fearful.

'Australian values' and the shift away from multiculturalism

The Howard Government’s last policy statement on multiculturalism, released in 2003, was framed in the context of prevailing security concerns about the threat of terrorism. Entitled United in Diversity, the statement focused on the need to foster ‘national unity’, seemingly in reaction to apprehensions about the perceived threats of diversity. Stating that ‘the key to national unity is citizenship’, in the following year the Government undertook to revise the process for acquiring Australian citizenship and in so doing initiated a debate on the values that citizens were expected to subscribe to as a precondition of belonging in the national community. In an echo of the security concerns informing its multiculturalism policy, the Government stated that ‘there are threats to Australia and our way of life in the post-9/11 era’ and that the articulation of a ‘coherent set of national values’ will ‘help protect Australia in these uncertain times'. Central to the Howard Government's reform of citizenship laws was the introduction of a new citizenship test, focused on

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185. Ibid.
ensuring ‘cohesion and integration’.\(^{186}\) The debate about ‘Australian values’ and citizenship gave voice to existing anxieties about the commitment of portions of the Australian population to the ‘core values’ of Australian society.\(^{187}\)

In the broader global and national climate of insecurity and ambivalence towards ethno-cultural diversity, in December 2005 news of the now notorious Cronulla riots confronted national and international audiences with reports of alcohol-fuelled violence against people of ‘Middle-Eastern appearance’ by demonstrators clad in Australian flags, and violent reprisal attacks that followed.\(^{188}\) These events—largely originating in localised grievances and tensions—constituted a relatively rare manifestation of ethnically-charged violence that lent further fuel to debates about the role of multiculturalism in the management of cultural diversity in Australia.\(^{189}\)

Amidst mounting public anxiety about the management of ethno-cultural diversity the term ‘multiculturalism’ itself attracted considerable ambivalence, even hostility from some political leaders. As the culmination of years of criticism of multiculturalism among some conservative politicians, members of the Howard Government suggested it was an outdated or ‘redundant’ term.\(^{190}\) Then Prime Minister, John Howard, advocated a shift away from multiculturalism and back

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186. J Howard (Prime Minister) and A Robb (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship), Transcript of the Prime Minister the Hon John Howard MP: joint press conference with Mr Andrew Robb, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Phillip Street, Sydney, media release, Canberra, 11 December 2006, viewed 10 June 2010, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22library%2Fjrnart%2FJTQK6%22

187. See J Gordon and J Topsfield, ‘Our values or go home: Costello’, op. cit.


...
to a focus on integration or assimilation. In a 2007 radio interview Prime Minister Howard said that he unapologetically used the term assimilation in the context of 'Muslim assimilation':

Well there's every reason to try and assimilate, and I unapologetically use that word, a section of the community, a tiny minority of whose members have caused concern and after all once somebody's become a citizen of this country the best thing we can do is to absorb them into the mainstream.

In the immediate aftermath of the events at Cronulla in 2005 a number of community building initiatives were established to heal the fissures exposed by the incident. Amongst the debates that ensued in the following months and years, academic, Jock Collins, offered this assessment:

... inter-ethnic relations in Australian cities are surprisingly strong and ... social cohesion is the norm in Sydney, with the Cronulla riots the aberration. Despite this sobering fact, the Cronulla riots are serious enough to remind governments of the responsibilities of managing cultural diversity and resisting racist undercurrents.

In contrast with much of the public and political rhetoric of the time, two national studies about multicultural Australia, commissioned by SBS and published in 2002 and 2006, found that there was an overwhelmingly positive response to Australia's cultural diversity among a majority of the
participants. The findings of these studies suggested that public concerns about multiculturalism contrasted with and distorted the lived experience of intercultural relations in Australia. While the studies revealed that the majority of participants broadly supported multiculturalism they also highlighted a high degree of ambivalence, in that participants experienced varying levels of comfort with diversity, and varying levels of belonging in Australia based on their experience of cultural diversity and where they were situated in relation to politically and culturally constructed narratives of Australian identity.

James Jupp points out that Australian multicultural policies have always been premised on the supremacy of existing institutions and values and the primacy of the English language, while placing less emphasis on cultural maintenance beyond the immigrant generation, unlike the Canadian model of multiculturalism. However in the context of contemporary ambivalence about ethno-cultural diversity, the shift away from multiculturalism and towards a focus on 'Australian values' has met with criticism for excluding and marginalising the contributions and voices of many Australians, including those of migrant background. Many critics have spoken out in support of multicultural Australia.
multiculturalism, including the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's Acting Race Discrimination Commissioner, who in 2007 criticised the reluctance of the government to affirm its commitment to the policy of multiculturalism and declared his endorsement of multiculturalism as a policy framework and a set of norms which support the ideals of a democratic society. 200

Contemporary challenges

Gwenda Tavan highlights that there is an inherent paradox in the fact that the concept of multiculturalism, which was introduced in response to increases in the size and diversity of Australia's migrant intake, was being incrementally marginalised during a decade of marked increases in Australia's migrant intake. 201 Changes to the immigration policy under the Howard government saw the expansion of permanent skilled migration and, notably, temporary migration, through business entrants and international students. 202 James Jupp, Andrew Markus and Peter McDonald argue that, while the Howard government 'oversaw revolutionary change in immigration', it 'avoided public discussion of the extent of change in immigration' and, in retreating from and 'running down the institutions of multiculturalism' it 'refused to meet the anti-immigration forces head on'. 203 While the Rudd Government's decision to create the AMAC in late 2008 was touted as signifying the return of the word 'multiculturalism' to Australia's public and political discourse, some academic commentators pointed to a continued reluctance to use the term itself among key political


201. G Tavan, John Howard's multicultural paradox, op. cit., p. 8. See also, J Masanauskas, 'New word of the day' op. cit.
leaders, such as the Prime Minister, and minimal policy changes under the Rudd government indicating the low priority attached to multiculturalism.204

However, evidence suggests that new challenges continue to emerge from changes to Australia's migrant intake and the resulting growth of new and emerging communities.205 At the height of the Howard Government's shift away from the term multiculturalism, attention was drawn to the need to provide adequate settlement support to African migrants in order to ensure that the community settled into the Australian community.206 In June 2010, the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) published the results of a three-year study on African Australians and their experiences of social inclusion and human rights in Australia.207 The study revealed that many African Australians, particularly those who have migrated to Australia within approximately the last 15 years, 'experience widespread direct and indirect racism as part of their daily lives', in a range of areas from employment, to housing, education, health services and their connection with the justice system.208 The study found that these experiences acted as barriers to settlement and inclusion.209 After a decade of exponential growth in the numbers of international students entering Australia, in 2009, reports of violence against Indian international students provoked protests in Melbourne and Sydney and triggered reviews of a range of issues affecting international students amidst debates about the role of racism in the attacks.210 At the end of August 2010, the United Nations Committee

204. Y Narushima, 'Mixing pot is back in multicultural Australia,' op. cit and A Markus, J Jupp and P McDonald, Australia's immigration revolution, op. cit., p. 155; C Slade, 'Shifting landscapes of citizenship', in C Slade and M Mollering (eds), From migrant to citizen: testing language, testing culture, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2010, p. 16.
205. J Jupp, 'Defining new and emerging communities', Australian Mosaic, issue 24, March 2010, pp. 10–12; G Innes, 'New and emerging communities, accessing their rights', Australian Mosaic, issue 24, March 2010, p. 406; W Chau, 'International students: are they a new and emerging community?', Australian Mosaic, issue 24, March 2010, pp. 17–18. For example, the Victorian Government's multicultural policy recognises the changing nature of needs and expectations arising from the increase in transient migrant groups, such as international students and temporary skilled migrants, VMC, All of us: Victoria's multicultural policy, op. cit., p. 12.
on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN CERD) in its response to Australia's fifteenth to seventeenth periodic reports to the Committee drew particular attention to the multiple forms of discrimination experienced by some Indigenous Australians, African Australians, Muslim Australians, international students and asylum seekers. In its concluding observations the Committee encouraged Australia to 'develop and implement an updated comprehensive multicultural policy that reflects its increasingly ethnically and culturally diverse society', and recommended that Australia strengthen the race and cultural dimensions of its Social Inclusion Agenda. These examples suggest that the changing nature of migration to Australia, and resulting changes in Australian society pose new challenges that necessitate a renewed engagement with discourses of diversity and pluralism.

In its first statement on Australia's multicultural future, the AMAC stated the following in relation to the importance of including multiculturalism in the nation's political vernacular:

The multicultural character of Australia is central to the Australian story. Governments should tell this story. Our political leaders should have no difficulty in presenting 'multicultural Australia' as an important part of the 'national identity' they frequently invoke. They should consider stressing Australia's cultural diversity on more occasions than explicitly multicultural ones: and when they do this, they should add that as well as diversity, multiculturalism brings innovation, ideas, skills, energy and achievement and makes us richer in all kinds of ways, including our 'identity'...The Australian Government should consider mechanisms to promote an inclusive view of multicultural Australia.

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Appearing before the UN CERD, the Australian Human Rights Commission (previously known as the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC)), consistent with its position in the past, strongly recommended 'the development of multicultural policy, based on extensive community consultation, and a broad definition of multicultural community to include people from refugee backgrounds, newly arrived migrants, international students, temporary and seasonal migrant workers, and established ethnic communities', G Innes (Race Discrimination Commissioner), Commissioner appears before CERD Committee at the UN, op. cit.


It remains to be seen whether and how the current and future Australian governments will engage with the concept of multiculturalism in responding to the evolving nature of Australian society.

North America

Canada was the first country to pioneer a formal policy of multiculturalism in the 1970s—a policy which came to be subsequently appropriated by a number of other countries, including Australia. Language and culture had long been highly contested issues in Canada, with separatist movements in Quebec after 1945 leading to the adoption of an official policy of bilingualism. Markus, Jupp and McDonald note that unlike Australia, Canada’s long history of immigration led to the establishment of a range of immigrant communities, such as Germans and Ukrainians in the prairies, and even Chinese, Indians and Japanese on the West Coast, despite the introduction of a 'White Canada' policy in the 1920s. While European immigration was clearly privileged up to the 1960s, the removal of racially discriminatory selection criteria in 1967 produced significant changes in the ethnic composition of Canadian society. In 1971 the Canadian government pioneered the introduction of an official policy of multiculturalism, aimed at maintaining ethnic languages and cultures and combating racism. The 1971 policy also confirmed the rights of Canadian Aboriginal people and confirmed the status of Canada's two official languages. Canadian multiculturalism was given a constitutional and legislative basis, with support for ethnic diversity being enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, and the passing of the federal Multiculturalism Act in 1988. Multiculturalism, 'as a value and national symbol, one that is entrenched in the Constitution and given practical expression through federal and provincial legislation' has been characterised as being central to Canadian democracy.

However, as elsewhere, multiculturalism has been a contested policy in Canada, with supporters arguing that it promotes the integration of immigrants, and a sense of belonging and national pride, and detractors arguing that it promotes balkanization and overly emphasises differences between groups. Public opinion towards multiculturalism became more ambivalent in the 1980s, and in the

217. A Markus, J Jupp and P McDonald, Australia’s immigration revolution, op. cit., p. 94.
219. Ibid.
221. I Bloemraad, 'Citizenship in the United States and Canada', Canadian Diversity, vol. 6, no. 4, Fall 2008, p. 132.
late 1990s and into 2000 Canadian governments began cutting back funding to multiculturalism and scaled back the provision of settlement services. Irrespective of this, academic, Will Kymlicka argues that the results of recent research 'provide strong evidence that multiculturalism in Canada promotes integration and citizenship, both through its effect on attitudes, self-understanding and identity at the individual level and through its effect on institutions at the social level', and indeed that, 'immigrants to Canada and visible or religious minorities fare better than most, if not all, other Western democracies'. However, another Canadian academic, Jeffrey Reitz also argues that there is evidence to suggest that 'persistent diversity' has the potential to both 'promote and slow' the process of integration, pointing to a need for multicultural policy to 'consider ways to establish stronger exchanges among Canada’s cultural communities'. Markus, Jupp and McDonald point to the manifestly bicultural nature of Canada, the existence of established immigrant communities, and the existence of treaties with Canada’s First Nations peoples as conditions that were conducive to the introduction of multiculturalism in Canada. The historical context for the introduction of multiculturalism may well have a bearing on the relatively high levels of support for multiculturalism in Canada, with the current conservative Harper Government also continuing to express its support for the policy.

While being one of the most multicultural societies in the world the United States (US) is relatively idiosyncratic and not easily comparable to other immigrant-receiving societies as relations between ethno-cultural groups and the resulting public debates are products of a complex and turbulent history of race relations, and complex political and legal structures. The US has experienced many centuries of immigration, with mass immigration to the US occurring until the 1920s. Following a period of restricted immigration of Europeans and Canadians for permanent residency, and Mexicans for temporary work, between the 1920s and 1960s, national origin quotas were abolished in 1965. As a result, by the 1990s European immigrants constituted 15 percent of ‘legal’ immigration to the US, while Asians constituted 31 per cent, and Africans 4 per cent. However, contemporary immigration to the United States is dominated by Latino immigration, largely from Mexico.

While, unlike Canada, the US recognises the existence of cultural pluralism and ethnic diversity, it does not formally subscribe to a policy of multiculturalism as it is not perceived to be the role of the

226. J Reitz, ‘Getting past “yes” or “no”: our debate over multiculturalism needs more nuance’, op. cit.
227. A Markus, J Jupp and P McDonald, Australia’s immigration revolution, op. cit., p. 94.
229. I am grateful to Dr. James Jupp for this point.
state to intervene in matters of social justice or the maintenance of ethnic cultures. Academic, Cara Wong, highlights that the idea of the 'melting pot' has symbolised the diversity of American society to the American people since the eighteenth century. She argues that despite enduring popular and institutional ambivalence towards the treatment of diversity in public, the steady rates of immigration to the US and the resulting growth in ethnic and racial diversity mean that '[s]heer demographics portend multiculturalism in fact if not in policies'.

Academic, Tariq Modood, argues that in the US the concept of multiculturalism was most commonly associated with progressive political movements concerned with addressing inequalities of power, resources and opportunities, such as those persisting as a result of historical experiences like slavery, through the positive assertion of identity and difference. Irrespective of the official absence of a multicultural policy, following the civil rights movement of the 1960s, a range of equal opportunity, anti-discrimination and affirmative action measures, as well as targeted social service and educational measures that are aimed at addressing issues facing minority groups have been developed at the local level. However, Castles and Miller note that 'commitment to equal opportunities and anti-poverty measures declined from the 1980s, leading to increased inequality and impoverishment of minorities', while compounding enduring disparities in income, employment rates, social conditions and education between blacks and whites.

The impact of September 11 and contemporary debates

Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001, in both the US and Canada, as in a number of other liberal democracies with large immigrant populations, issues of immigration and ethnic diversity became conflated with issues of national and international security. As a result, it was reported that 'Canadian immigrants, citizens of visible minority and/or Muslim background have raised a number of concerns regarding the treatment they received in the hands of immigration officials and security agents after September 11'. However, Will Kymlicka points to cross-national polling results to argue that 'compared to other countries, Canada has been less affected by the global surge in anti-Muslim sentiments and by the resulting polarisation'. In the US there was a

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236. Ibid., p. 249.


'substantial increase in xenophobia against all foreigners, but particularly toward those who look as though their origins are Middle Eastern'. 239 However, academic, David Leal argues that 'US public opinion has not turned against the Islamic religion or Middle Eastern immigrants in the manner of some other Western nations'. Rather, he argues, 'the practical effects of reaction to 9/11 have been felt mainly by Latinos and persons at the US-Mexico border'. 240

Latinos, including people from Mexico, South and Central America and the Caribbean, have long had to navigate the politics of race in the US and have been viewed as being different to the previous generations of easily assimilated European immigrant communities. 241 As the fastest growing demographic group in the US, it has been argued that the Latino population is the central focus of discussions of immigration and social cohesion in the US. 242 Leal argues that there is growing evidence of Latino residential and education segregation and discrimination against Latinos in the US. 243

Furthermore, in 2007, it was estimated that approximately 59 per cent of the 11.8 million unauthorised migrants in the US were Mexican immigrants. 244 Unauthorised migration has been a politically contentious issue since the 1980s. 245 Some critics have argued that the terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001 have been used as a pretext for imposing tighter immigration controls that have had a negative impact on Latinos, including through growing forcible deportations, increased fortification of the US-Mexico border and growing state and local enforcement of the federal immigration law. 246 Despite this, evidence indicates that Latinos indeed share many of the political and cultural values of other Americans, including a desire to assimilate into American society,
suggesting that, despite initial tensions, in the long term Latinos may become a central part of American society.  

National identity and multiculturalism have been characterised as 'perennial issues' in Canada that have become particularly 'thorny' 'in light of broader international concerns about terrorism, security and the successful integration of Muslim immigrants in Western liberal democracies'. Anxieties surrounding identity and the treatment of ethnic minorities have assumed particular salience in the Francophone province of Quebec, where public debates, such as that surrounding the 'reasonable accommodation' of cultural differences and incidents of civil disturbance have to some extent mirrored developments and attitudes that have become ascendant across the Atlantic in Europe. Will Kymlicka argues that despite purported fears of a 'European-style' retreat from multiculturalism occurring in Canada, much of the disaffection with multiculturalism has been largely restricted to Quebec: 

No other province has had the same explosive debate about religious accommodations, or the same attempt to win votes by appealing to anti-immigrant views, or the same calls for abandoning multiculturalism policies... This is not surprising, since multiculturalism has always been less popular in Quebec than in other provinces, largely due to Québécois’ perception of themselves as a vulnerable minority within the anglophone sea of North America... and partly

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because the anti-multiculturalist debates in France have more resonance in Quebec than in the rest of the country.\textsuperscript{250}

Kymlicka argues that comparisons of Canadian multiculturalism with other parts of the world, such as Europe, are misleading and recent research suggests that there is no evidence to justify a retreat from multiculturalism in Canada.\textsuperscript{251} Rather, he argues, the most urgent issues in Canadian multiculturalism are: 'multicultural preparedness' for issues presented by religious diversity; a debate about the role of the media in multiculturalism, and the promotion of responsible journalism; the relationship between multiculturalism and bilingualism and the Francophone presence, and the Aboriginal rights of the First Nations; and, the declining economic performance of recent immigrants.\textsuperscript{252}

**Europe and the United Kingdom**

Unlike traditional countries of immigration, such as Australia, Canada or the United States, which encouraged immigration and permanent settlement, and where immigration has been a central part of the nation-building process, immigration has historically played a different role in most European countries. Academics, Stephen Castles and Mark Miller note:

Virtually all of Northern and Western Europe became areas of labour immigration and subsequent settlement after 1945. Since the 1980s, Southern European states like Greece, Italy and Spain, which for a long time were zones of emigration, have become immigration areas. Today Central and Eastern European states, particularly Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, are becoming immigration lands.\textsuperscript{253}

Migration has been the key contributor to demographic change in many European countries, through both direct increases as a result of immigration and the natural increase of populations of immigrant origin. By 2006, it was estimated that almost two thirds of immigrants in Britain, the Netherlands and France were from non-European countries.\textsuperscript{254}

**Approaches to migrant integration**

At a regional level European Union policy on dealing with ethnic and cultural diversity resulting from immigration is explicitly focused on integration rather than multiculturalism. The European

\textsuperscript{250} W Kymlicka, *The current state of multiculturalism in Canada and research themes on Canadian multiculturalism 2008–2010*, op. cit., pp. 16–17. As Reitz points out, Quebec’s preference for a provincial policy of ‘inter-culturalisme’ reflects the political origins of the policy of multiculturalism in Canada, coming as it did in the wake of a resurgence in Quebec nationalism in the 1960s, J Reitz, ‘Getting past "yes" or "no": our debate over multiculturalism needs more nuance’, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{251} Ibid., pp. 13–17.

\textsuperscript{252} Ibid., pp. 18–21.

\textsuperscript{253} S Castles and M Miller, *The age of migration: international population movements in the modern world*, op. cit., p. 8.

Commission agreed to an integration framework in 2005 called *A common agenda for integration: framework for the integration of third-country nationals in the European Union*. Individual states in Europe approach ethnic and cultural diversity in a variety of ways that are mediated by the historical, political and institutional contexts of the states concerned.

Between the 1970s and 1990s the United Kingdom (UK), the Netherlands, and Sweden, came to adopt approaches that recognised multiculturalism and ethnic diversity. In addition to experiencing immigration, particularly from its former colonies, for generations, sustained levels of net immigration to the UK dating from the mid to late 1990s, including dramatic increases in immigration from Eastern Europe following the expansion of the European Union in 2004, have increased the relative size of the UK’s ethnic minorities. The UK has traditionally adopted a multicultural approach to the integration of immigrants and minorities based on a ‘race relations’ framework. The Netherlands, responding to significant changes in the ethnic and cultural composition of Dutch society as a result of immigration from its colonies and from the Mediterranean, was, as academics Vermeulen and De Vries have described it, ‘proud to call itself a multicultural society, based on communication and compromise rather than on conflict and confrontation’. Sweden has implemented a policy of ethnic and cultural pluralism since the mid 1970s, based on the principles of equality, freedom of choice and partnership.

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259. B Vermeulen and K De Vries, ‘Citizenship in the Netherlands, changing policies and concepts’, *Canadian Diversity*, vol. 6, no. 4, Fall 2008, p. 86.

In contrast to countries which explicitly recognise and endorse cultural pluralism, France has traditionally adopted an assimilationist model, rooted in French republican ideology which rejects institutional recognition of cultural or group differences in the public sphere.  

Other European countries, including those which adopted 'guestworker' models in the post World War II period such as Germany, Austria and Switzerland, as well as Scandinavian countries like Denmark, have only recently come to see themselves as countries of immigration. Germany, a country that has among the highest immigration rates in Europe, had until the late 1990s maintained that it was 'not a country of immigration'. At the national level multiculturalism was rejected as being a threat to national unity. Official denial of its status as a country of immigrant settlement and lack of integration policies over a number of decades led to the exclusion and marginalisation of migrants and their descendents in German society. In spite of the rejection of multiculturalism at the national level, some local government authorities responded to the reality of ethnic diversity and the presence of migrant communities with the result that 'local provision of special social and education services for minorities is widespread'. In recent years Germany has moved to deal with the consequences of the permanent settlement of migrants and the resulting emergence of a multiethnic society by developing political consensus on the need for integration measures supported by the state.

The 'crisis of integration'

By the beginning of the twenty-first century many European states appeared to be undergoing a so called 'crisis of integration' as governments became concerned about the socio-cultural integration of immigrants, particularly those of Muslim background. The presence of sizeable Muslim minorities in a number of European countries, fears of the growth of Islamic extremism and the perpetration of violent or terrorist acts in some societies were key factors catalysing the
concentration of public attention on issues of integration and social cohesion in Europe and the UK. Immigrants and ethnic diversity were arguably more profoundly influenced by economic circumstances and the ascendance of negative attitudes towards the impact of immigration. In a number of countries, notably in countries with significant migrant populations such as the UK, France and the Netherlands, resistance to diversity resulting from immigration, and issues of social cohesion saw far-right nationalist groups gaining political traction and policies of multiculturalism and integration being subjected to criticism and scrutiny.

The results of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) of 2003 revealed that in a number of European countries, including the UK, Germany, Norway and the Netherlands, over 70 per cent of respondents tended to come out in favour of strictly controlled or reduced immigration. Surveys revealed that in a number of European countries there was a correlation between the deterioration of a country’s economic situation and the ascendance of negative attitudes towards the impact of immigration. While economic circumstances invariably had an impact, attitudes towards immigrants and ethnic diversity were arguably more profoundly influenced by cultural and political factors, manifested in attitudes reflecting a certain conservatism, an attachment to a certain idea of national identity, or in extreme cases xenophobic feelings towards immigrants.

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269. I am grateful to Dr James Jupp for this point. A cross-national study of public opinion found that the perception of the existence of extremism in the Muslim community and concomitant security threats were the key factor behind negative views of Muslims, R Wike and B Grim, ‘Western views towards Muslims: evidence from a 2006 cross-national survey’, op. cit., p. 21.
274. Ibid., p. 125.
In an international security environment that was concerned with the rise of Islamic extremism and the threat of terrorism, events such as the London bombings of 2005 and the Madrid train bombings of 2004 were—in the context of broader issues about the parameters of diversity, and the place of religion in secular liberal democracies—seen as 'evidence of the incompatibility of Muslim values with modern European societies'. However, concerns about the place of Muslim communities in Europe and the UK are not limited to relatively recent fears about the growth of extremism, but are also related to more far-reaching and deep-seated issues of socioeconomic and ethnic marginalisation facing Muslim minorities as well as other immigrant communities. Both the United Kingdom and France have at various times in recent decades experienced civil unrest which was symptomatic of the socioeconomic and ethnic exclusion of immigrant minorities.

Between May and July 2001 racial tensions in the cities of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in Northern England spilled into what was described in press reports as the 'worst rioting' in the UK in recent years. Reports into the riots found that a myriad of factors including segregation between communities, failure to address racial divisions and a need for regeneration, infrastructure and measures to tackle deprivation, had led to disenfranchisement, including of second generation youth of migrant background. The riots, followed by the terrorist attacks of September 2001 in the US, the Madrid bombings of 2004 and culminating with the London bombings of July 2005, drove sustained criticism of multiculturalism and led to a shift in Britain's policy approach from multiculturalism to integration, with a focus on 'community cohesion' at a local level.

While the community cohesion agenda was later expanded to deal with the impact of dramatic increases in migration from Eastern Europe following the expansion of the EU in 2004, the initial drivers of the community cohesion agenda—the riots of 2001 and the threat of terrorism—were both centred on second-generation youth of immigrant background rather than new migrants. The emergence of terrorism as a security issue led particularly to a focus on the integration of Britain's Muslim communities, including issues of persistent inequality and discrimination faced by British Muslims. The Home Office acknowledged that 'links between social deprivation and

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275. S Castles and M Miller, *The age of migration: international population movements in the modern world*, op. cit., p. 275. The results of a study on attitudes to Muslims in Britain, France, Germany, Spain and the United States found that security concerns are the primary driver of negative views towards Muslims and that even concerns about cultural threats ultimately feed security concerns: 'It is not so much a perception that Islam is incompatible with Western society that leads to negativity, as it is the perception that extremism exists within the community of Muslims', R Wike and B Grim, 'Western views towards Muslims: evidence from a 2006 cross-national survey', op. cit., p. 21.


278. Ibid., p. 263.


280. S Spencer, 'Citizenship: the UK experience', *Canadian Diversity*, vol. 6, no. 4, Fall 2008, p. 126.
The 2005 riots were not the first riots motivated by issues emanating from the disenfranchisement of French youth of immigrant background to occur in French cities, and were followed by further riots in late 2007. Many young people of immigrant background in France are said to face 'high unemployment, low chances of social ascension and discrimination'. The 2005 riots focused public attention on the issue of ethnic discrimination and high unemployment rates among migrants as they were considered by many the proof that the French model had failed because the official rejection of ethnic identities could not help to prevent discrimination on these grounds. The 2005 riots were not the first riots motivated by issues emanating from the disenfranchisement of French youth of immigrant background to occur in French cities, and were followed by further riots in late 2007.


284. Ibid.

In the Netherlands—a country seen as 'the European bastion of toleration and multiculturalism through the second half of the twentieth century'—by the beginning of the twenty-first century there was a perception that integration policies for minorities had failed, that multiculturalism was a threat to social cohesion and the Muslim minority in particular posed a problem for Dutch society.\(^{286}\)

Public debates about the integration of immigrants, and Muslim immigrants in particular, were further sustained by the deaths of populist right-wing politician Pym Fortuyn and controversial film maker Theo van Gogh (the former at the hands of an animal rights activist, and the latter at the hands of a second-generation Dutch-Moroccan extremist).\(^{287}\) After years of agitation on issues to do with immigration the Dutch elections of June 2010 saw far-right nationalist politician Geert Wilders and his Freedom Party (PVV) unexpectedly finishing with the third highest number of seats (24).\(^{288}\) Wilders, who pledged to 'end the Islamisation of the Netherlands', including by ending immigration from Muslim countries, and banning mosques and the Koran, is being tried for inciting racial hatred against Muslims.\(^{289}\) Court proceedings against Wilders commenced on 4 October 2010, just days after Wilders won concessions from the incoming Dutch minority government on a number of the PVV's key policy platforms.\(^{290}\)

A number of European countries, including the Netherlands, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Austria and Denmark, responded to the challenges presented by immigrant integration by introducing more restrictive immigration and citizenship measures.\(^{291}\) Some argued that the aim of introducing tighter measures was to exclude security risks and target Islamic groups in particular.\(^{292}\) In many cases such measures forged a nexus between integration, and immigration and citizenship by imposing mandatory civic integration programmes and tests as a prerequisite for the acquisition of residential or citizenship status within the receiving country.\(^{293}\) In the Netherlands, it has been argued that both immigration and integration were made more restrictive, under the assumption

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287. Ibid., p. 87; J Klaver, 'Dutch approaches to citizenship: from multiculturalism to shared citizenship', *Canadian Diversity*, vol. 6, no. 4, Fall 2008, pp. 91 and 94.


289. Ibid.


293. S Carrera, 'A comparison of integration programmes in the EU: trends and weaknesses', op. cit., p. 1. France, the UK and the Netherlands, for example, also introduced integration measures as a condition for entry, that are imposed on migrants prior to their departure from their country of origin.
that restrictive policies are necessary to ensure successful integration. As academic, Dora Kostakopoulou, puts it:

In official discourses at the national and, increasingly at European levels, civic integration is presented as the required antidote to the alleged failures of multiculturalism and the alleged creation of parallel worlds within societies owing to increasing ethnic and cultural heterogeneity.

However, critics have questioned whether restrictive and more onerous sanctions-based legal and policy measures are in fact counterproductive for achieving integration and social cohesion, as they can further compound the marginalisation of immigrant communities and have a deleterious impact on their sense of belonging. In a study comparing integration programs in the European Union (EU), Sergio Carrera argues that the trend towards mandatory integration in the EU masks a form of mandatory assimilation or acculturation. Moreover, mandatory integration measures have a discriminatory dimension in that they often target and have more severe consequences for poorer immigrants who rely on state support, with the result that they effectively face greater obstacles to successfully integrating than those who are financially secure and not reliant on support from receiving states. Carrera argues that integration has become a 'juridical, policy-oriented and institutional tool of control' through which nation states determine the parameters for inclusion and exclusion:

The social conflicts from which some EU member states are currently suffering represent a direct expression of opposition to a conservative notion of 'we' and a homogenous and anchored

294. B Vermeulen and K De Vries, 'Citizenship in the Netherlands, changing policies and concepts', op. cit., p. 88. Similarly, in the UK and Germany, whereas naturalisation ‘used to be perceived as a means for integration’ naturalisation has been recast as ‘the finalisation of a completed integration process’, R van Oers, ‘Citizenship tests in the Netherlands, Germany and the UK’, in R van Oers, E Erbsoll, D Kostakopoulou (eds), A re-definition of belonging? Language and integration tests in Europe, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Leiden, 2010, pp. 51 and 82. See also, OECD, International Migration Outlook, op. cit., pp. 73 and 76.


298. Ibid., p. 11.
'national identity'. They are also an intense reaction towards restrictive immigration, citizenship and integration policies and discourses.399

Attempts to defend national identity have also manifested in controversial and highly politicised public debates about restricting symbolic expressions of diversity, with recent debates being largely preoccupied with symbols of Muslim cultures. In November 2009 the Swiss people overwhelmingly voted in favour of a proposal from the far-right Swiss People’s Party (SVP) to introduce a national ban on the construction of minarets on mosques.300 The success of the referendum was seen as reflecting fears of Islamic fundamentalism among the Swiss population. A number of European countries, including Belgium, France, Italy and Spain, have in recent months moved towards legislating to ban the full-body covering garment, known as the burqa, which is worn by a relatively small minority of Muslim women in Europe.301 In other European countries, such as the Netherlands, Germany, Norway and Denmark, voices have been raised at various times in support of a ban on the burqa, but governments have been restrained by legal concerns, including that such bans may infringe individual human rights.302 Debates about these issues related to broader concerns about the extent to which particular religious and cultural practices, seen by some as infringing upon human rights or the principles of liberal democratic societies, such as secularism and gender equality, could be tolerated in liberal democracies, and the extent to which states characterised by ethno-cultural and religious heterogeneity are willing to extend their national identity to encompass minorities.

Critics argue that debates about the symbols of Islam detract public attention from the 'real issues' facing Muslim communities, including, racism, educational outcomes of young people, and broader

299. Ibid., p. 19.


indices of integration. Anthropologist, Ruth Mandel, posits that preoccupation with the veil and proposed bans in European countries ‘are a symbol...touchstones for more substantial debates on whether and how those still seen as outsiders fit into mainstream European society’. Indeed, Sergio Carrera argues, ‘[m]any EU states need to go through a painful process of readjusting their own conceptualisation of their perceived national identities and values from one that emphasises a mythical national unity to one that is heterogeneous, diverse and multicultural’. In a sign of the challenges which will continue to face European countries as a result of increasing migration, Jean-Pierre Liegeois responded to the controversy that greeted France’s decision to dismantle Roma camps and deport Roma people of Romanian origin in late August 2010, stating that the Roma are a ‘model’ whose treatment has ‘repercussions for all other minorities and for every population’. Liegeois argues:

Europe is currently hallmarked by greater mobility of its populations, for many different reasons, and by the emergence of minorities. Every state needs to learn to take an intercultural approach to dealing with the multicultural society which is developing.

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304. R Minder, ‘Spain’s senate vows to ban the burqa’, op. cit.


Conclusion

Multiculturalism was a policy introduced in Australia to deal with the settlement needs of migrant communities and was conceived as a means of recognising the preservation of cultural identities and achieving social justice and social cohesion. However, in 30 years of the policy’s existence at various levels of government, both in Australia and overseas, the policy and concept of multiculturalism have undergone considerable debate and change in both governmental and academic discourses. Irrespective of debates and changing political and community perceptions of the term 'multiculturalism', societies have inexorably become more diverse in that period, with the result that, as recognised by the NSW Community Relations Commission, in March 2010, the need for the government services and programs established under policies of multiculturalism has not diminished, but is only expected to increase.307

Globally, migration is a growing and increasingly complex phenomenon as people are moving and forging connections between countries in rapidly evolving ways.308 In the context of the growing scale and changing nature of migration there is merit in considering the role that multiculturalism has played in meeting the needs of a diverse population and mediating cultural relations in Australia. In considering the utility of a concept and policy like multiculturalism questions arise as to whether it can be further developed, or whether there is a need to find new concepts in the national vernacular to articulate the contemporary nature of diversity and change in Australian society.

In order to understand the impact of multiculturalism on Australian society and to assess the ongoing relevance and potential of multiculturalism for dealing with contemporary challenges there is a need for clarification in public debate of the nature and basis of multiculturalism as it was appropriated and developed in Australia. As government policy in Australia, multiculturalism was primarily concerned with cultural and linguistic diversity; while recognising the need to cater to the linguistic needs of ethnic communities, unlike Canada, multiculturalism in Australia was always premised on the supremacy of the English language; and it was premised on the supremacy of existing institutions and the rule of law.309

As Australian Government policy articulated the relevance of multiculturalism to all Australians in the 1980s, multiculturalism began to grow beyond its origins as an element of settlement policy to become a pillar of Australia’s nation-building narratives. While programs and services under policies of multiculturalism have been serving migrants entering Australia from different parts of the world for decades, today there are multiple generations of Australians of various cultural backgrounds who have grown up in societies marked by diversity, and growing global connectedness, and who as a

309. I am grateful to Dr. James Jupp for points raised in this paragraph and key points made elsewhere in the conclusion.
result have increasingly complex claims of identity and belonging. Can the concept of multiculturalism contribute to expanding the capacity of Australian identity narratives to encompass multiple forms of belonging? Does multiculturalism have a role to play in enabling the demographic diversity of the Australian community to be represented and reflected in cultural, institutional and governmental structures of Australian society? Do the experiences of other countries illuminate the role that discursive narratives of multiculturalism play in articulating and increasing acceptance of, and engagement with, multicultural realities?

Many of the issues faced by multicultural societies today transcend national borders and raise broader questions about how liberal democracies are to respond to the challenges of diversity. As a concept and policy that was originally concerned primarily with linguistic and cultural diversity both in Australia and overseas, how can multiculturalism deal with growing religious diversity and the issues raised by religious expression, often mediated by cultural practices, in secular liberal democratic spaces? Does multiculturalism have a role to play in addressing enduring social inequalities and the challenges faced by minority communities in diverse societies such as Australia and elsewhere? What is the role of the media and educational institutions in contributing to understanding across differences in multicultural societies?

Public discourse has played a central role in shaping the way that Australians have come to view multiculturalism as a concept and policy. In the context of increasing diversity, the question remains as to how multiculturalism can be meaningfully engaged with, and whether such engagement can contribute to the development of new concepts that can enable more productive public discourses about the challenges and transformations resulting from increasing diversity.
Appendix 1: Key Australian Government statements and reports


• 2007: J Howard (Prime Minister), *Transcript of the Prime Minister The Hon John Howard MP, Press Conference, Parliament House, Canberra*, media release, Canberra, 23 January 2007, viewed 18 August 2010, [http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FYR0M6%22](http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FYR0M6%22)


• C Evans (Minister for Immigration and Citizenship) and L Ferguson (Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services), *Multicultural policy to speak to all Australians*, media release, Canberra, 30 April 2010, viewed 17 August 2010, [http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FL6MW6%22](http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FL6MW6%22)


Appendix 2: Key Australian Government multicultural institutions

- **Australian Institute for Multicultural Affairs (AIMA):** In 1979, the Fraser Government established the AIMA under the *Australian Institute for Multicultural Affairs Act 1979* (Cth) (*AIMA Act*), in response to the Galbally Report recommendation for the establishment of an institute to provide advice and information on multiculturalism. The AIMA was abolished and the *AIMA Act* repealed by the Hawke Labor Government in 1986.  

- **Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA):** The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) was established in 1987 within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, in response to a recommendation arising from the Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services in 1986. In 1996 OMA was absorbed into the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

- **National Multicultural Advisory Council (NMAC):** The NMAC was established in 1994 by the Keating Government for a term of three years. In 1997 the Howard government revised the membership of the council and allocated new terms of reference for a further three years. The NMAC lapsed in 2006 and was not reappointed by the Howard Government.  

- **Council for Multicultural Australia (CMA):** In July 2000, the Howard government established the CMA to assist in implementing the 1999 ‘New Agenda for Multicultural Australia’ policy and to promote the relevance of multiculturalism to all Australians. On 30 June 2006, the CMA completed its term with the understanding that it would be replaced by a new body in 2007.  

- **Australian Multicultural Advisory Council (AMAC):** The Rudd Labor Government announced the creation of the AMAC on 17 December 2008. Under its terms of reference the 16 member Council is to provide advice to the Minister for Immigration and the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services on: social cohesion issues relating to cultural and religious diversity; overcoming intolerance and racism in Australia; communicating the social and economic benefits of Australia’s cultural diversity to the broad community; and the social and civic participation of migrants in Australian society. In April 2010, the AMAC released its statement of advice to government, entitled ‘The people of Australia: The Australian Multicultural Advisory Council’s statement on cultural diversity and recommendations to government’. In June 2010, the AMAC was reappointed by the Government for a second term from 1 July 2010 until 30 June 2012.

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313. Y Narushima, *Mixing pot is back in multicultural Australia*, op. cit.


316. C Evans (Minister for Immigration and Citizenship), and L Ferguson (Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services), *Multicultural body reappointed for second term*, media release, Canberra, 22 June 2010, viewed 12 July 2010, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/ParlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FIW2X6%22
Appendix 3: State and territory government websites and reports

NSW


Victoria


South Australia


Multiculturalism: a review of Australian policy statements and recent debates in Australia and overseas


Queensland


Tasmania


Western Australia


Northern Territory

Department of the Chief Minister (Northern Territory): http://www.dcm.nt.gov.au/strong_community/a_great_place_to_live_and_work/multicultural_affairs

Multiculturalism: a review of Australian policy statements and recent debates in Australia and overseas


Australian Capital Territory


Appendix 4: Key references and resources


• Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), COMPAS website, 2010, viewed 20 September 2010, http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/home/


• International Metropolis Project, International Metropolis Project website, 22 July 2010, viewed 20 August 2010, http://international.metropolis.net/index_e.html


• U Segal, D Elliot and N Mayadas (eds), Migration worldwide: policies, practices, and trends, Oxford University Press, New York, 2010.