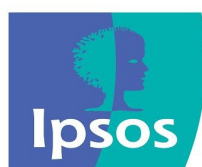


THE IPSOS MACKAY REPORT



SBS IMMIGRATION NATION

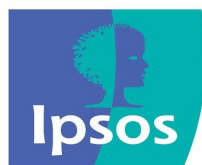


Ipsos-Eureka
Social Research Institute

THE IPSOS MACKAY REPORT



SBS IMMIGRATION NATION THOUGHT LEADERSHIP RESEARCH FINAL SUMMARY REPORT



Ipsos-Eureka
Social Research Institute

Contents

Background	1
Research objectives	1
Methodology	2
Quantitative findings	3
Quantitative conclusions	14
Qualitative findings	15
Preface to qualitative research phase	15
Review of <i>The Ipsos Mackay Report</i>	15
Review conclusions	19
Directed qualitative research	20
Qualitative conclusions	31
Overall Conclusions	32
Reference list	34

Background

SBS has a commitment to 'inspire all Australians to explore and appreciate our multicultural world and contribute to an inclusive society'. Part of the way SBS seeks to do this is 'to be a catalyst for the nation's conversations about multiculturalism and social inclusion'. SBS are seeking to extend this commitment into a broader set of public debates to establish SBS as a thought leader on cultural diversity. To achieve this, SBS has a suite of landmark, locally produced factual programs exploring elements of Australian multicultural society scheduled through 2011.

Research Objectives

Overall, this project aimed to explore and contrast contemporary attitudes to immigration with perceptions of Australia's immigration history and the impact of migration on Australia. In the past, SBS has undertaken several research projects which have examined attitudes to immigration and multiculturalism in Australia (including 'Living Diversity: Australia's Multicultural Future' in 2001 and 'Connecting Diversity: Paradoxes of Multicultural Australia' in 2006). The current research project will build and extend upon these existing studies.

Specifically, the research had the following objectives:

- Understand perceptions of how things have changed; gain an understanding of Australian attitudes to immigration over time and beliefs about the impact of migration on today's Australia.
- Determine awareness of and beliefs about Australia's immigration history, including some of the historical events included in the Immigration Nation series.
- Explore views on themes from the Immigration Nation series within the framework of a positive message: 'Look How Far We've Come'.
- Assess views on the international impact of Australia's approach to immigration and beliefs about the image of Australia in other nations.

Methodology

A mixed methodology, which included an online survey, in-depth interviews, and affinity mini-groups, was used to answer these research objectives.

An online survey measuring attitudes to immigration was conducted with n=1375 members of the general public aged 18 and over. The sample was split into a main sample (n=1081) and a CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) boost (n=294). The main sample was weighted by age, gender and location to match the Australian population. As the main sample was relatively representative in terms of CALD status (14.6% compared to 15% in the population), the data was not weighted by this variable. Attitudinal data was segmented using a traditional method: Factor Analysis followed by Cluster Analysis. Discriminant Analysis was used to examine the strength of the model.

A review of the last 25 years of *The Ipsos Mackay Report* was conducted, with a particular focus on themes of immigration, immigrants, asylum seekers and multiculturalism. The review draws together insights from a wide range of sources from *The Ipsos Mackay Report*. *The Ipsos Mackay Report* is based on a non-directive, qualitative methodology because the attitudes and values it explores do not lend themselves to the more formal, structured techniques of the statistical, questionnaire-based survey.

The directed qualitative research phase comprised two key qualitative research techniques – depth interviews and group discussions. The depth interviews took a historical view on immigration in Australia, whereas the group discussions uncovered the contemporary reality of immigration today.

It should be noted that *The Ipsos Mackay Report* does not typically include CALD participants and only two of the historical reports referred to in the review material (*The Multiculture 1985* and *Multiculturalism 1995*) reflect the perspective of migrant Australians. However, the directed qualitative research was specifically focused on participants from a CALD background. The directed qualitative research included depth interviews with participants from the following backgrounds: Chinese, Italian, Greek, Swedish, Lebanese and Iraqi; and groups of migrants from the following backgrounds: Chinese, Vietnamese, Iranian, Indian, Sudanese and Chilean.

This report briefly reports findings from all phases of the research.



Quantitative Findings

Key findings from the quantitative research phase are reported in the current section. Please note that this report is meant as overview only, and a summary of all survey results can be found in the full SBS Immigration Nation Thought Leadership Research Final Report. This section uses the survey results to provide answers to the following questions:

- How do the general public feel about Australia's immigration history?
- How do the general public feel about cultural diversity?
- Is there much variation in the attitudes of the general public?
- How much trust do Australians (including CALD and non-CALD) have in media reports on immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers?
- Are CALD Australians more likely to experience discrimination when compared to non-CALD Australians?
- Do CALD Australians have the same sense of belonging as non-CALD Australians?
- Do first-generation immigrants have the same sense of belonging as second-generation immigrants?

How do the general public feel about Australia's immigration history?

Survey participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of 41 statements about immigration, several of which were directly related to the history of immigration in Australia. Some key results for the general public (weighted to be nationally representative by age/gender/location) have been provided below:

- Approximately eight out of every 10 survey participants (79%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statement: 'Generally speaking, Australia has always been generous to immigrants'.
- More than half of survey participants (59%) agreed or strongly agreed that, relative to other nations, Australia has taken its fair share of immigrants and refugees.
- Thirty-nine percent of survey participants agreed or strongly agreed that Australia has a responsibility to accept refugees.
- Thirty-seven percent of survey participants agreed or strongly agreed that Australia has always been a world leader in racial equality. It should be noted that disagreement with this statement was relatively low (19%), as 44% of survey participants indicated 'Neither agree nor disagree'.

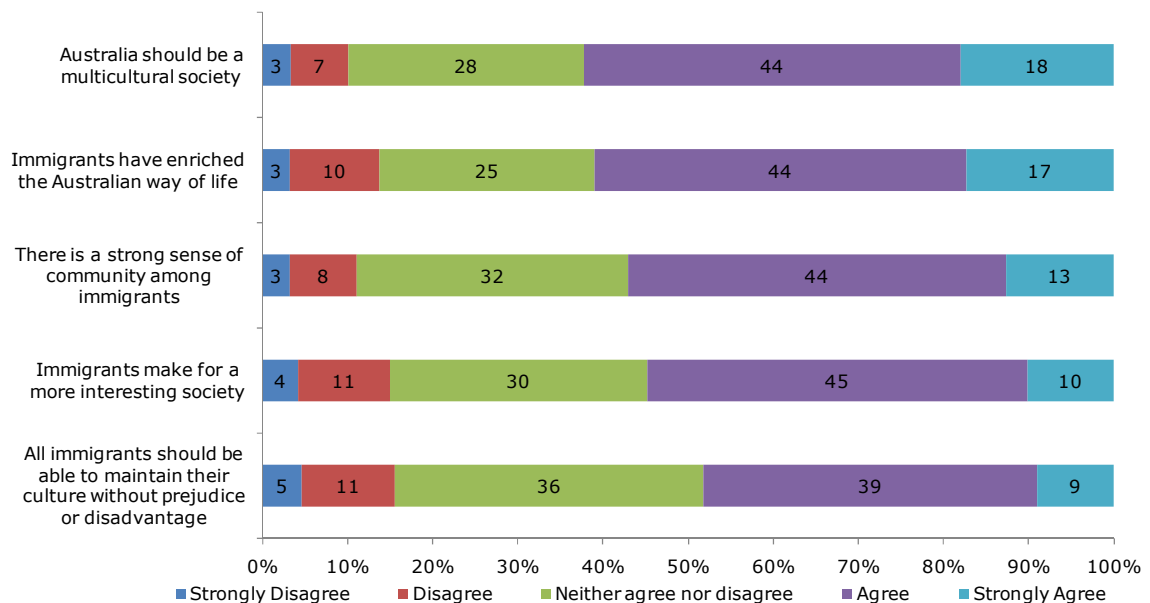


How do the general public feel about cultural diversity?

As mentioned above, survey participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about immigration. The results for the main sample (weighted to be nationally representative by age/gender/location) on statements related to support for diversity in Australia are shown in Figure 1, below. There was a consistently high level of support for cultural diversity, with between 48% (All immigrants should be able to maintain their culture without prejudice or disadvantage) and 62% (Australia should be a multicultural society) of survey participants agreed or strongly agreed with each of these statements.

Five percent of survey participants strongly disagreed that all immigrants should be able to maintain their culture without prejudice or disadvantage.

Figure 1 General public support for diversity



Q. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about immigration in Australia. For each could you please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree.
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)

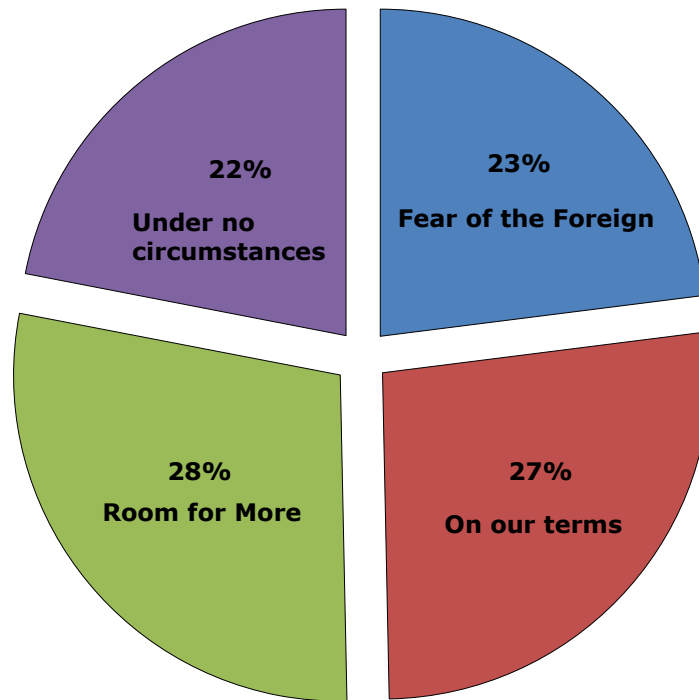
Is there much variation in the attitudes of the general public?

The section above includes a report on the way in which the general public responded to a series of statements related to the history of immigration and support for diversity. Moving beyond these top-level findings, we can analyse responses to these statements, and all other attitudinal statements included in the questionnaire, to identify patterns in the responses of individuals. This process is referred to as an attitudinal segmentation. In this case, the segmentation produced four distinct, relatively equal groups of survey participants (see Figure 2, overleaf). The smallest group, 'Under no circumstances', contained 22% of survey participants while the largest group,



'Room for more' contained 28% of survey participants. A brief profile of each of these segments has been provided below.

Figure 2 Size of segments



The attitudinal segmentation produced two very clear groups of survey participants: 'Under no circumstances' and 'Room for More'. The 'Under no circumstances' (i.e. does not support immigration under any circumstances) segment was characterised by a strong opposition to immigration, including immigration that might benefit Australia's economy. Indeed, only two survey participants of the 236 in this segment supported increased immigration. This segment was also characterised by a high level of concern about cultural difference, with 91% of survey participants agreeing that 'Immigrants should follow the conventions of Australian society' and 90% of survey participants agreeing that 'Immigrants should know English before they are allowed to come to Australia'.

The 'Under no circumstances' segment members were:

- Significantly less likely to be aged 65+ (11%) when compared to the mean proportion in this age group (17%).
- Significantly less likely to speak a language other than English at home (7%) when compared to the mean proportion that speak a language other than English at home (15%).
- Significantly more likely to be located in a non-metro area (40%) when compared to the mean proportion that live in non-metropolitan areas (32%).

- Significantly less likely to be retired (14%) and or a student (3%) when compared to the mean proportions in these employment categories (21% retired; 8% student).
- Significantly less likely to have a Postgraduate Degree (6%) when compared to the mean proportion that have postgraduate qualifications (11%).
- Significantly less likely to have been born in a country other than Australia (16%) when compared to the mean proportion that were born outside Australia (27%).
- Significantly less likely to report that their mother was born in a country other than Australia (28%) when compared to the mean proportion that reported that their mother was born outside Australia (38%).
- Significantly less likely to report that their father was born in a country other than Australia (34%) when compared to the mean proportion that reported that their father was born outside Australia (43%).

All survey participants were asked to indicate, in a completed open-ended fashion, what they thought was the most important issue facing Australia today. Forty-two percent of the 'Under no circumstances' segment responded with issues related to immigration or refugees.

A sample of uncoded answers from survey participants in the 'Under no circumstances' segment have been provided below:

Too many black immigrants and refugees, overpopulation, no employment, housing and so on for aussies because of the above....

Terrorism. Boat people coming in here and being allowed to stay. Politicians get too much money and superannuation

Far too many boat people arriving on our doorsteps, and there will be BIG problems down the tracks!!!!

Too much immigration and the immigrants bringing their problems here.

Too many Asians taking our jobs.

The 'Room for More' (i.e. room for more immigrants) segment was the most pro-immigration and multiculturalism. Indeed, 79% of survey participants in this segment agreed that 'Australia should be a multicultural society', 72% agreed that 'Immigrants have enriched the Australian way of life' and 69% agreed 'Immigrants make for a more interesting society'. In addition, only 1% of survey participants disagreed that 'Too many asylum seekers get accepted into Australia'. It should, however, be noted that this segment seems to be aware of problems and debates associated with cultural differences, with 62% of segment members acknowledging that 'Racism is a problem in Australia'. It should also be noted that this segment was not as



strong in its support of immigration/multiculturalism as the 'Under no circumstances' segment was in its opposition.

The 'Room for more' segment members were:

- Significantly more likely to be 18-24 (20%) or 25-34 (24%) when compared to the mean proportions in these age groups (11% 18-24; 23% 25-34).
- Significantly less likely to be aged 45-54 (14%) or 65+ (12%) when compared to the mean proportions in these age groups (18% 45-54; 17% 65+).
- Significantly more likely to speak a language other than English at home (22%) when compared to the mean proportion that speak a language other than English at home (15%).
- Significantly more likely to be a student (15%) and significantly less likely to be retired (13%) when compared to the mean proportions in these employment categories (8% student; 21% retired).
- Significantly more likely to have an Undergraduate Degree (25%) or a Postgraduate Degree (16%) as their highest level of education, when compared to the mean proportions with these levels of education (17% Undergraduate; 11% Postgraduate).
- Significantly less likely have only 'some secondary school education' (6%) or a Trade Qualification/Diploma (24%) when compared to the mean proportions with these levels of education (10% some secondary school; 31% Trade Qualification/Diploma).
- Significantly less likely to answer 'No' to the following question: Were you born in a country other than Australia? (66% compared to a mean proportion of 72%).
- Significantly less likely to answer 'No' to the following question: Was your mother born in a country other than Australia? (55% compared to a mean proportion of 61%).
- All survey participants were asked to indicate, in a completed open-ended fashion, what they thought was the most important issue facing Australia today. Forty-two percent of the 'Under no circumstances' segment responded with issues related to immigration or refugees.

With regard to the most important issue facing Australia, 33% of survey participants in the 'Room for More' segment reported at least one problem related to 'Environment'. This was followed by 'Housing/Cost of living/Personal finance', which was mentioned by 21% of respondents. Issues relating to immigration or refugees were mentioned by 19% of survey participants in this segment.



A sample of uncoded answers from survey participants in the 'Room for More' segment have been provided below:

Some people being racist

Climate change, racial hostility, poverty/disparity of wealth, lack of political leadership, the nature of foreign investment

Racism, xenophobia, drug and alcohol abuse, apathetic voters, the greedy nature of society, and so on and so on.

I think we are starting to forgot what makes this country so beautiful which is having so many beautiful cultures. We seem to becoming unaccepting of other people.

Covert racism, there is a lack of tolerance for different cultures and lack of leadership promoting a view of respect for all differences. Environmental concerns, we need to protect this planet for future generations.

Environment, racism, refugees not being allowed in.

The 'On our terms' (i.e. supportive of immigration, within reason) and 'Fear of the foreign' (i.e. scared/suspicious of cultural differences) segments were less clearly defined. The latter segment was pro-immigration that benefits Australia's economy (83% agree or strongly agree) but very worried about the effects of cultural differences. Ninety-two percent of survey participants in this segment indicated they were worried about violence between ethnic groups in Australia. In addition, 76% of survey participants agreed with each of the following statements: 'I worry about the effect immigration will have on the Australian environment' and 'I worry that migrant communities are changing the Australian way of life'. Not surprisingly, this segment was also pro-integration, with 92% of survey participants agreeing that new immigrants should try harder to integrate with people outside their ethnic group.

The 'Fear of the foreign' segment members were:

- Significantly more likely to indicate that their highest level of education was 'some secondary school' (16%) when compared to the mean proportion that had only 'some secondary school' (10%).
- Significantly less likely to be aged 35-44 (13%) when compared to the mean proportion in this age group (19%).
- Significantly more likely to be aged 65+ (25%) when compared to the mean proportion in this age group (17%).
- Significantly more likely to be retired (29%) and significantly less likely to be working full-time (29%) when compared to the mean proportion that were retired (21%) and working full-time (35%).



When asked about the most important issue facing Australia, Close to half (44%) of survey participants in the 'Fear of the Foreign' segment reported at least one problem related to 'immigration/refugees'. This was followed by 'housing/cost of living/personal finances', which was mentioned by 26% of survey participants in the 'Fear of the Foreign' segment.

A sample of uncoded answers from survey participants in the 'Fear of the Foreign' segment has been provided below:

Migration not enough jobs governments that don't care about the people migrant that won't assimilate

Immigration without assimilation and understanding of Australian values. There is a moral responsibility to assist refugees; however, once they get here we do nothing for them. No counselling for those traumatised by violence, no assistance in understanding Australian culture and values. As a result of no assimilation assistance and education they end up alienated, marginalised and develop an intolerance of the very freedoms available to them.

Immigration and non English speaking people bringing disease. Te price of electricity

Assimilation of new people coming to live in Australia

Finally, the 'On our terms' segment was less worried about cultural differences than the 'Fear of the Foreign' segment, but very supportive of appropriate procedures. For example, while 79% of survey participants in this segment agree that immigrants have enriched the Australian way of life, 76% of survey participants support the mandatory detention of asylum seekers. In addition, 84% of survey participants in this segment agreed that it is possible for immigrants to be proud of their heritage but still loyal to Australia, while 86% of survey participants thought there should be strict limits placed on the number of people coming into Australia. That being said, only 33% strongly agreed that too many asylum seekers get accepted into Australia, a level of agreement that was second only to the 'Room for More' segment. Like the 'Fear of the Foreign' segment, the 'On our terms' segment was pro-immigration that benefits Australia's economy (74% agree or strongly agree) and skilled migration (66% agreed or strongly agreed).

The 'On our terms' segment members were:

- Significantly more likely to be male (56%) and significantly less likely to be female (44%) when compared to the mean proportions of each gender (49% male; 51% female).
- Significantly more likely to be aged 55-64 (20%) when compared to the mean proportion in this age group (15%).
- Significantly less likely to be aged 18-24 (6%) or 25-34 (10%) when compared to the mean proportions in these age groups (13% 18-24; 18% 25-34).



- Significantly more likely to be retired (29%) and significantly less likely to be a student (5%) when compared to the mean proportions in these employment categories (21% retired; 8% student).

Thirty-one percent of survey participants in the 'On our terms' segment reported that the most important issue facing Australians was related to 'immigration/refugees'. This was followed by environmental issues, which was mentioned by 25% of respondents.

A sample of uncoded answers from survey participants in the 'On our terms' segment have been provided below:

The increasing immigration problem as they are draining our economy they receive more govt funding and care than those that have spent their entire lives here paying taxes. No other country does this for immigrants so why the hell are we?

I think the boatpeople are an enormous problem. We have enough homeless people already and should have priority. Government should listen more to what the general population think. The war in Afghanistan is a big burden to our country and the loss of young Australians.

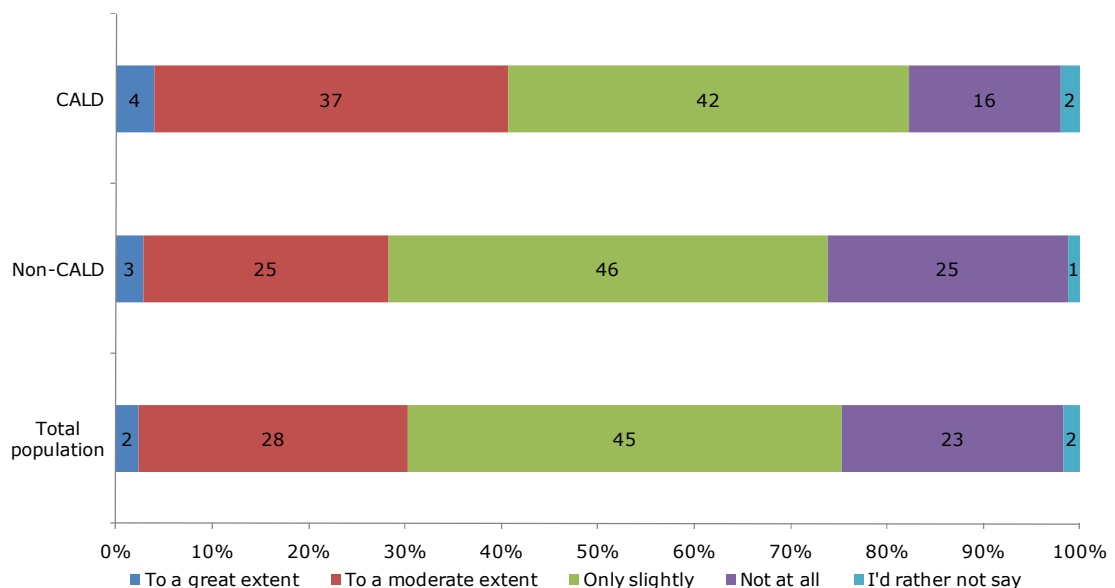
boat people - refugees should come through correct process govt spending - too much waste medical system - more money to be spent govt views on global warming and carbon tax - this is just a normal cycle.

Surge of boat people, overcrowding in prisons, not enough nurses and doctors to support hospital growth, global warming.

How much trust do Australians (including CALD and non-CALD) have in media reports on immigrants/refugees/ asylum seekers?

Survey participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they trusted the information they receive on immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers in the media. The results for CALD survey participants, non-CALD survey participants, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 3, below. CALD survey participants were significantly more likely than non-CALD participants to indicate that they trusted media reports 'To a moderate extent' (25% and 37%, respectively). Non-CALD survey participants were also significantly more likely than CALD survey participants to indicate that that they trusted media reports 'Not at all' (25% and 16%, respectively). Overall, almost half of survey participants in the 'total population' sample indicated that they trusted media reports on immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers 'Only slightly'.

Figure 3 Trust of the media by CALD status



Q. To what extent do you trust the information you receive on immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers in the media?
 CALD base: 452
 Non-CALD base: 923
 Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)

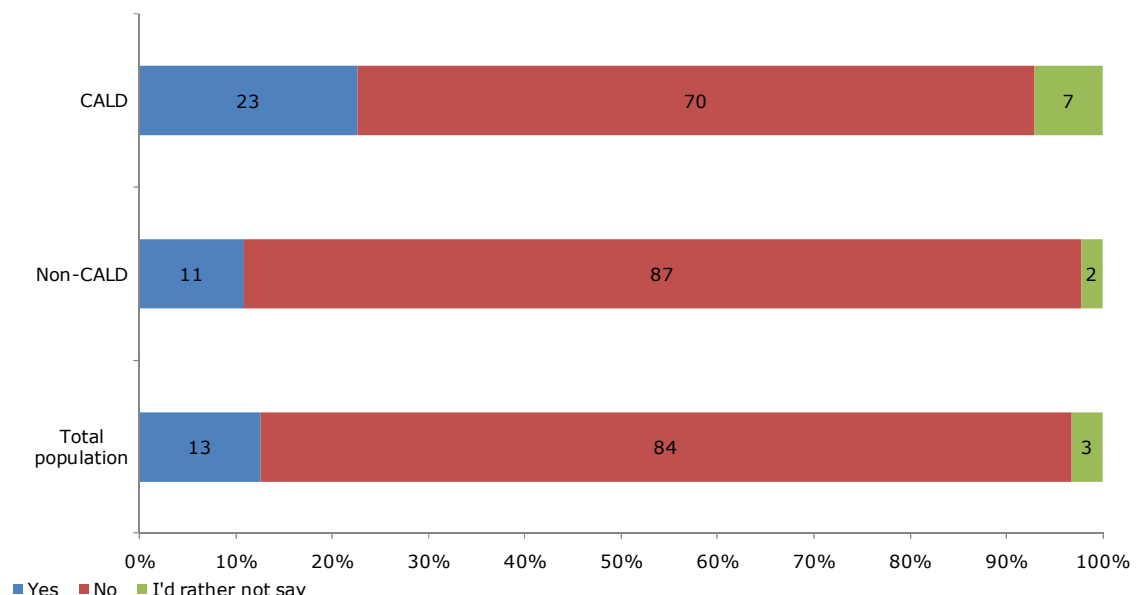
Are CALD Australians more likely to experience discrimination when compared to non-CALD Australians?

This section contains a comparison of CALD and non-CALD survey participants on the following measure: Have you experienced discrimination in the past 12 months because of your skin colour, ethnic origin, or religion? The results for CALD respondents, non-CALD respondents, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 4, below. Please note that the total population sample has been weighted to be nationally representative by age/gender/location/ but no weights have been applied to the CALD and non-CALD groups. As the total sample contains members of both groups, significance testing will only be performed between the CALD and non-CALD groups.

CALD status was defined using the following question: 'Do you speak a language other than English at home?' Survey participants who indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home were defined as CALD and survey participants who indicated that they did not speak a language other than English at home were defined as non-CALD.

CALD survey participants were significantly more likely than non-CALD survey participants to indicate that they had been discriminated against in the last 12 months, with 23% of CALD survey participants reporting discrimination compared to 11% of non-CALD respondents. Overall, 13% of survey participants in the 'total population' sample indicated that they had been discriminated against in the past 12 months.

Figure 4 Experience of discrimination by CALD status

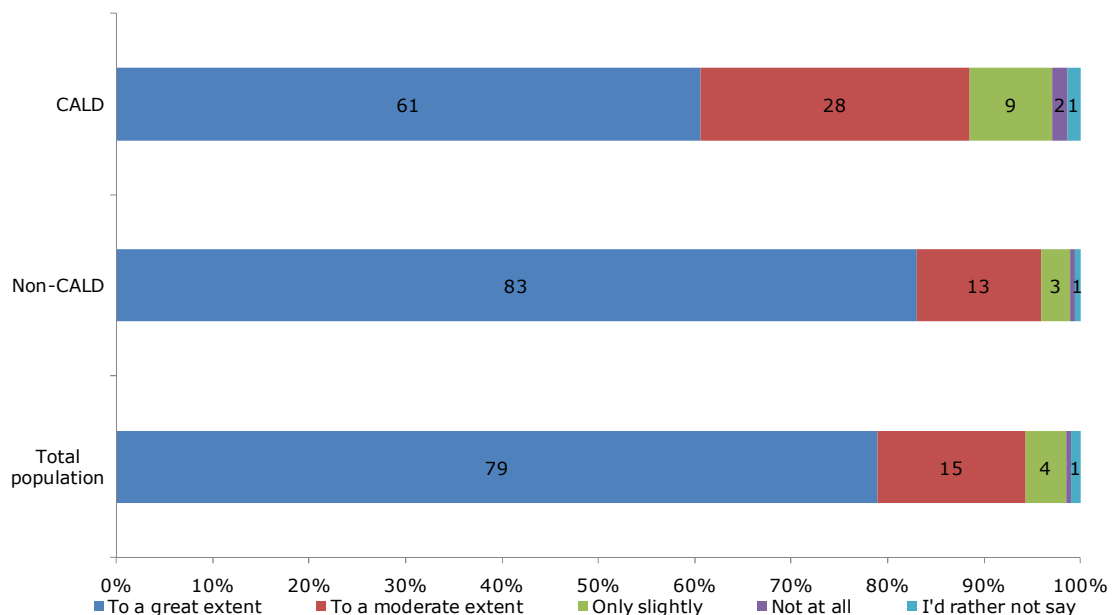


Q. Have you experienced discrimination in the last 12 months because of your skin colour, ethnic origin or religion?
CALD base: 452
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)

Do CALD Australians have the same sense of belonging as non-CALD Australians?

Survey participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they had a sense of belonging in Australia. The results for CALD respondents, non-CALD respondents, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 5, below. Between 61% (CALD) and 83% (non-CALD) of survey participants indicated that they felt a sense of belonging 'To a great extent'. Non-CALD survey participants were significantly more likely to indicate 'To a great extent' (83%) when compared to CALD survey participants (61%). Non-CALD survey participants were also significantly less likely to select 'To a moderate extent' (13%) or 'Only slightly' (3%) when compared to CALD survey participants (28% and 9% respectively). With regard to the total population, 79% of respondents, by far the largest proportion, indicated that they felt a sense of belonging 'To a great extent'.

Figure 5 Sense of belonging by CALD status



Q.To what extent do you have a sense of belonging in Australia?

CALD base: 452

Non-CALD base: 923

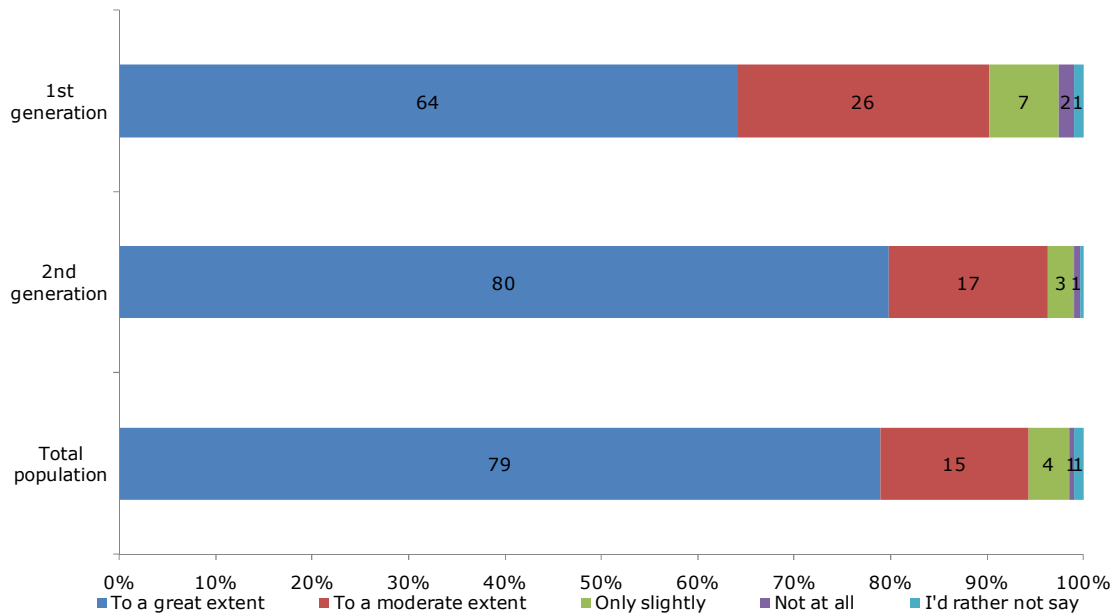
Total base:n=1081

Do first-generation immigrants have the same sense of belonging as second-generation immigrants?

Survey participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they had a sense of belonging in Australia. The results for first-generation immigrants, second-generation immigrants, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 6, overleaf. Second-generation immigrants were significantly more likely to indicate that they had a sense of belonging 'To a great extent' (80%) when compared to first-generation immigrants (64%). In contrast, first-generation immigrants were significantly more likely than second-generation immigrants to select 'To a moderate

extent' (26% compared to 17%) and 'Only slightly' (7% compared to 3%). The proportion of second-generation immigrants who indicated that they felt a sense of belonging 'To a great extent' was almost identical to the total population sample (79%).

Figure 6 Sense of belonging by first/second generation immigration



Q. To what extent do you have a sense of belonging in Australia?
 1st generation base: 501
 2nd generation: 301
 Total base: n=1081

Quantitative conclusions

A quantitative survey was conducted with members of the general public, including a CALD boost. The attitudes/experiences of the general public were examined, and comparisons were made based on CALD and immigration (i.e. first generations v second generation) status. Most notably, an attitudinal segmentation was conducted on the responses of survey participants to a series of statements about immigration and Australia's immigration history.

The results of the attitudinal segmentation revealed four distinct segments: 'Fear of the foreign', 'On our terms', 'Room for More' and 'Under no circumstances'. The first segment was characterised by concern about cultural differences, the second segment was characterised by support for appropriate procedures, the third segment was characterised by favourable attitudes to immigration and multiculturalism, while the final segment was characterised by an opposition to immigration and multiculturalism. The extent to which evidence of these segments was also found in the qualitative research is discussed both in the qualitative chapters and overall conclusions. This also includes an analysis of the results in the context of debates surrounding immigration and multiculturalism.



Qualitative Findings

Preface to Qualitative Research Phase

The qualitative phase of this research project involved two parts, the findings of which offer greater insight into the attitudes of the four segments outlined in the quantitative phase.

The first part of the qualitative phase was the comprehensive review of *The Ipsos Mackay Report* material. The review material is representative of views held by three of the four segments: **Fear of the Foreign, On Our Terms** and **Under No Circumstances**, views that frequently arise in *The Ipsos Mackay Report* research.

The second part of the qualitative phase was the qualitative depths and groups. While the aim of the depths and groups was different at the outset of the research, what we discovered was that there was enough overlap in the findings to present the insights thematically rather than in isolation. The findings highlight the complexity of the attitudes that exist within the four segments on questions of race, immigration and multiculturalism, and reflect a point of view not often captured in *The Ipsos Mackay Report* research: the voice of migrant Australians.

Review of *The Ipsos Mackay Report*

It's here to stay but we're constantly adjusting

Over the last three decades, it is clear that Australians have generally accepted that our society is (and will continue to be) ethnically diverse. That being said, Australians were constantly adjusting and evaluating these changes, in ways that often provoked anxiety, fear and other negative emotions. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, while there were symptoms of an ongoing accommodation to multiculturalism, strong pockets of resistance to the concept remained. Yet at whatever point on the spectrum of attitudes people found themselves to be, there was general recognition that multiculturalism was 'here to stay', for better or for worse.

Immigration challenges our identity

One pervasive view over the last 30 years has been that migrants were welcomed to Australia as long as they quickly and enthusiastically embraced 'the Australian way of life and its values'. Such a view was engendered by a broader anxiety that increased ethnic diversity would naturally mean a distortion, diminishment or outright loss of 'Australian identity' (which was itself rarely defined clearly or uniformly) and could threaten to alter Australian values, lifestyles and standards of living in largely negative ways.



How many come and how many should come?

A persistent concern regarding immigration has been the sheer numbers of migrants coming to this country and how many should come in the future. In addition, as with attitudes to multiculturalism itself, there has been the perception that official immigration policy is at odds with community sentiment. While many participants acknowledged their basic ignorance of the policy frameworks for immigration set by government, this did not stop the prevailing sentiment that the numbers of migrants allowed into Australia were too high. Past and current sentiment continues to favour maintaining or reducing existing levels and tightly controlling future numbers of arrivals.

Assimilation is crucial (but how easy is it?)

Assimilation of migrants into 'the mainstream' has long been regarded as the key to a harmonious society. Any tardiness in the assimilation process was seen as enhancing the possibility of a takeover of Australian culture; the persistence of ethnic minorities with their own language, traditions and culture was seen as a divisive factor in national life which should be minimised in every way possible. However, from the migrant's perspective, becoming 'Australianised' was not half as easy as Aussies might wish. Ultimately, while anxiety about the impact of immigration on Australian society continues, it seems inevitable that many will continue to stress the importance of rapid and almost complete assimilation when it comes to migrants.

We worry about enclaves

The idea of ethnic enclaves is one that has and continues to cause concern for Australians – they were offended by any suggestion of ethnic ghettos arising from immigrants' own desire to band together and their seemingly strong commitment to keep themselves remote from Australian society. The underlying concern was that strongly entrenched ethnic communities would create divisions within the broader Australian society and these divisions would 'set the scene for friction'.

We worry about ethnic tension and violence

Some participants who expressed concerns about migrant enclaves were also fearful that with enclaves would come greater inter-racial tension and the potential for violent crime. In the 1980s, Turks and Yugoslavs in particular were associated with acts of violence and aggression. By the 1990s, there was a growing fear of crime and violence in the community which was largely regarded as a direct link to an increase in Asian immigration. As the focus has shifted to Muslim immigration in the 2000s, concerns about Muslim ethnic groups have increased. Such attitudes were expressed with increasing vehemence over this period. There appeared to be a new sense of 'liberation' in making racist remarks and in identifying particular ethnic groups as 'reasons' to be less tolerant.

We worry about the pressure on our resources

A key driver of continuing concern or resistance to increased immigration has been the widespread belief that an influx of immigrants was bound to create a drain on the Australian economy in terms of employment and financial resources, as well as what was regarded as abuse of the welfare and taxation systems. By the late 2000s, concerns were expressed about the strain population growth would place on our food and water resources and there was speculation about this worsening in the future.

Language is the key

Mastery of the English language was seen as the crucial first step in the assimilation process – especially for immigrants from South-East Asia who were considered 'more obviously different' from the host community than previous waves of immigrants from Europe. Indeed, participants in multiple studies on the topic of multiculturalism proposed that a basic knowledge of English should be a pre-requisite for migration into Australia, or at the very least the first and most fundamental requirement imposed on immigrants. On the question of language, participants in our research seem to be more hard-line than on any other issue, arguing consistently that anyone who intends to make Australia their home should learn to speak the Australian language - if not before they get here, then as a matter of the highest priority after their arrival.

Recent arrivals are the ones that concern us

What has become clear across several studies on the subject of multiculturalism is that Australians typically hold the strongest reservations towards the most recently arrived group of migrants. Reservations towards that particular group are also heightened if they are visibly different in appearance and culture. Resentment of newcomers runs deep, until they prove themselves willing to become integrated with the local community, and to adopt customs (and especially language) which are clearly Australian. The passage of time is consequently the factor most likely to lead to acceptance of ethnic minorities.

Do migrants work too hard?

It was almost universally acknowledged that "ethnic" migrants (of all nationalities) were highly industrious. Not only did they work very hard, but they were prepared to do work which many Australians (and British migrants) might find unacceptable. However, as Australians increasingly see themselves as being 'overworked', this criticism of migrants' over-enthusiasm for work loses some of its sting. What people really seem to be saying is that migrants exhibit a greater determination to work hard, simply because there is more at stake for them. Whatever insecurities Australians might feel in the context of contemporary social change, the insecurity of the new settler is infinitely greater.



But we need skilled migrants

In the 1980s, there was a generally disapproving view of skilled migration policies. However, by 1990 this had shifted to the view that migration should be restricted to those 'who will be an asset to the country', and that Australia should be much more assertive in its immigration policy. This view has continued to resonate throughout the 2000s. There was a growing appreciation of the skills shortage and relatively low birth rate in Australia and consequently a recognition of the importance of attracting skilled migrants to this country.

We should accept legitimate refugees

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, it was generally conceded that Australia had a responsibility to accept genuine refugees. However, widespread doubts were expressed about what 'genuine' really meant and whether refugee status could easily be established. Compassion for refugees was often tempered by suspicion about what constituted a 'real' refugee and there were many shades of opinion on the subject. Fears about not being able to hold back projected 'floods of illegals' has continued to grow, along with a certain degree of hostility towards those described as 'boat people' and the ethics of 'accepting them' into the country. There has always been contrasting views about how Australia should treat refugees, albeit the levels of compassion for refugees seem to have diminished over the last 10 years.

We love what immigration has done for our food culture

When Australians attempted to describe the positive contribution made by migrants to the Australian way of life, they generally seized on food as the most tangible and laudable benefit. Although Australians also conceded that migrants have brought different customs and traditions with them to Australia, it was really only their food which was thought to have 'infiltrated' the Australian way of life. Food was the most obvious symbol of the multiculturalism and reflections on the positive impact of immigration tended to focus on the pleasurable, visible and almost universal effects of the changes to our diet and food choices.

We are more tolerant now and we are more tolerant than others

In 1985, Australians appeared to believe that Australian society had become far more tolerant towards migrants than was the case in the previous generation. To some extent, they believed that this tolerance had been fostered at an official level (through government policy and government agencies) and to some extent they believed it was simply the inevitable result of the passage of time. However, the riots in Sydney's Cronulla in 2006 brought to a boil a situation that some believed 'had been simmering for years' and triggered discussion of racism and tolerance that extended way beyond 'the Shire.' Ultimately, the dominant view over the last three decades is that while racism still exists in Australia, Australians are more tolerant than they used to be and more accepting and less racist than people from other cultures.



Can personal relationships with migrants be a catalyst for change?

Predictably, anxieties about multiculturalism were often broken down by close, personal contact with individuals and families from migrant backgrounds – in the neighbourhood, at school, in the workplace and through the process of courtship and marriage. In such contexts, members of the host community could make intimate and enduring contacts with migrants, which would often overturn their prejudices and stereotypes. Whereas ‘migrants’, en masse, could be the subject of quite strong negative prejudice, personal encounters with individual migrants could lead to more accepting, more sympathetic attitudes which could finally lead to an understanding of migrants as individual human beings, rather than oddities.

Children are the great hope

In the mid-1990s, both migrants and non-migrants believed that the children who were now being born would simply accept the ethnic diversity of Australian society as ‘the way we are’ and expressed the hope that Australian children would become more tolerant and that the children of immigrants would more readily integrate with Australian society. This hope resonated and more than 10 years later, there was a sense from parents that young people today were more accepting and less racist largely due to the influence of a different cultural and social environment.

Review conclusions

In his 1995 report on multiculturalism, Hugh Mackay attributed anxious and outright negative attitudes to migrants as, in part, a consequence of a very human response to rapid social change. To quote from that report:

All change is disturbing; change which involves the probability of a re-shaping of the very character of our society is profoundly disturbing. Even those Australians who are inclined to be tolerant of ethnic groups, and to express ‘enlightened’ views about our migration policy, comment that ‘the status quo’ has definitely and irrevocably been upset. The more general view is that, not only has the status quo been upset, but that Australians have suffered a series of ‘culture shocks’ since World War II and that the extent and pattern of migration carries the very real danger of the destruction, by ‘takeover’, of the Australian culture itself.

Reviewing three decades of Mackay reports shows that the same concerns about the impact of immigration on Australia society arise with startling regularity. This is despite the fact that our worst fears about what migrants might do when they come here are rarely realised. As Hugh Mackay wrote in his 1995 report, ‘quite clearly, Australians are always inclined to resist and resent migrants - especially when they come from non-traditional countries of origin’.



One worrying trend in the last ten years has been the gradual but obvious demise in sympathy for asylum seekers. While support for skilled migrants has risen (spurred in part by a recognition of our ageing population, relatively low birth rate and skills shortages in some sectors), suspicion of 'boat people' has risen (especially since September 11). While in the 1980s and early 1990s it was common for people to support the need to accept legitimate refugees, yet they were opposed to migrants who would come here to take 'Aussie jobs'. Now with concern about unemployment low, Australians are more likely to say we need skilled migrants and not queue jumpers who will be reliant on welfare from the government.

A review of the past thirty years is not all bleak reading. Resistance to particular ethnic groups clearly and quickly breaks down over time, often within a generation or two. Yesterday's immigrant troublemaker and ethnic ghetto becomes tomorrow's model, well assimilated citizen living in a gastro-tourist destination. Australians are not blind to how past migrants have enriched our society and made it stronger, more prosperous and more interesting, bringing the best of the world to our shores. The worry is always that this enviable pattern won't continue into the future. And yet the overwhelming belief among Australians from all kinds of backgrounds is that the next generation is the great hope and that young generations are more comfortable with difference and more adaptable to change. As the first section of this report put it, multiculturalism is here to stay; the key is how we adjust and adapt to its challenges and its opportunities.

Directed Qualitative Research

Background profiles

The qualitative research comprised six depth interviews and six affinity group discussions, held in Sydney, Melbourne and Newcastle. Outlined below is a summary profile of each depth and group. This gives an overview of the unique circumstances and life experiences of the participants, which clearly shaped their attitudes to the issues discussed in the research.

Depth interviews

Iraqi Male, late 70s

Born in Iraq, he is a Jewish man who immigrated with his parents and siblings to Israel in 1951 due to anti-Semitism in Iraq (including a massacre of Jews in 1947). For six years he worked for the Israeli government with Palestinians as he speaks many Arabic dialects. He moved to London where he married and had two children and travelled extensively for work. He immigrated to Australia in 1968 to work with his father in an importing business. Living in Melbourne, he has three adult children, practices as a lawyer and has been an active member of the Jewish community.



Greek Female, 50s

Born in a village in Northern Greece, she was three when she immigrated by boat with her parents and twin sister in 1964. The family settled in inner Melbourne and her parents worked in local factories. While she and her sister learnt English after moving to Melbourne and at school, her parents still don't speak much English. She travelled to Greece in the 80s as a young woman, and married and lived there for several years. She had a son in Greece, but then left her husband and returned to Australia with her son after a few years. She lives in inner Melbourne with her son, who is 20 years old and who speaks both English and some Greek.

Swedish Female, 60s

Born in Sweden, she married an Austrian man in her early 20s and immigrated to Australia with him in 1968, as her husband had previously lived in Australia and wanted to return. She moved to Melbourne and worked in secretarial roles. She has three children, all adults, and is now divorced. She also has grandchildren in Australia. She returns to Sweden regularly for visits and remains close with family and friends there.

Chinese Male, early 70s

Born in Malaysia, he moved to Singapore as a young boy and was educated in a Catholic school there. He and his wife and young daughters (aged 10 and seven years old) came to Australia after the fall of Saigon, settled in Melbourne and then moved to Sydney some time after that. He now resides in Chatswood. They have lived in Australia for 33 years and speak a variety of languages. He spoke English well before migrating to Australia. Both of his daughters married Caucasian Australians. He has five grandchildren.

Italian Female, early 50s

Born in Italy, in the small region of Calabria, she came to Australia with her family at the age of 13; she is the middle child of three sisters. She has lived in Australia for 43 years and is a former small businesswoman. She currently lives in Greenacre. She is married; her husband was originally from Rome. They have grown children and young grandchildren.

Lebanese Female, early 50s

Born in Lebanon, she moved to Australia at the age of 10 with her mother and three siblings. Her parents separated; she does not know her father or his whereabouts. She currently lives in Fairfield Heights. She married a Syrian man but is now divorced. She has four children under the age of 18.

Group discussions

Iranian Males, mid 20s and 30s

A group of young men living in the Western suburbs of Sydney, who have been in Australia between one month and six years. Two were religious refugees who came to Australia with their parent/s, two came to Australia on skilled migrant visas and one came on a student visa with his wife. Many were struggling to find paid work.



Sudanese Females, late 20s and 30s

A group of Sudanese women living in Newcastle who arrived in Australia from 2003 onwards on protection visas as refugees of war. All have children (some with up to eight dependent children), all are on Centrelink welfare payments and all are attending TAFE courses to learn English or attain work qualifications (i.e. cleaning certificate). Only one woman had found paid work and was working part-time as a childcare worker. The other women were all looking for menial work such as fruit picking, cooking or cleaning.

Chinese Males, late 20s to early 30s

A group of second-generation Australian-born Chinese men living in Newcastle. Their parents were born overseas, in Hong Kong or Malaysia, who all migrated to Australia in the early 1970s during the Whitlam government. All were educated in Australia and were working in full time jobs. None were married or had children.

Chilean Males, 20s to 30s

A group of Chilean-born men living in inner Melbourne. They all immigrated as skilled migrants or students and are the first members of their families to have departed Chile to immigrate. Two were married and two were single. They had been in Australia between one and three years; one had previously lived in Canada prior to immigrating to Australia. They were generally working in relatively menial jobs whilst updating their qualifications and seeking work.

Indian Females, 20s

A group of women born in India who immigrated to Australia as skilled migrants or students and had fluent English; one had immigrated on a spousal visa and had less-fluent English. Most had immigrated in the last two or three years, although one had immigrated nine years ago. All were married or engaged and preparing to buy property and start families in the next few years, many of them in the western suburbs of Melbourne. One worked as a traditional Indian dancer, two worked in IT firms and one worked at a service station.

Vietnamese Females, early to mid 20s

A group of young, mostly Australian-born women living in Cabramatta. All their parents were born in Vietnam, all are of Catholic background. One owned and ran a bakery on the Central Coast; one lived at home and worked as a waitress; one was engaged with a young child and was studying law; one worked for an insurance company and one was a stay-at-home single mum with two children aged under three who was looking to go back to work.

Reasons to leave

While reasons to leave their country of origin were highly personal and varied for each participant in this research, most fell within three key overarching areas: poverty of opportunity, threat to life and adventure.

Poverty of opportunity

The spectrum within this area varied greatly from the grinding poverty that some participants suffered in their home country, to those who had limited opportunities in their own country and were seeking to attain a better quality of life. All were seeking a fresh start and better opportunities for both work and education.

Threat to life

Political or religious unrest, persecution and threat of war were strong motivators for some participants to leave their country of origin. In this context, leaving their country was not an active choice but rather the only way they could survive.

Adventure

The thrill of adventure, a desire to explore what the world had to offer, was another reason some participants left their home countries.

In sum, there were both push and pull factors at work in migrants' decision to leave their country of origin; the context in which that 'decision' to leave was made clearly impacted on the migrant experience and their ability to connect with their adopted home, as is further explained later in this report.

Reasons for Australia

Australia was considered to be one of only a handful of desirable destinations by the migrants who participated in this research. While Australia was not necessarily the first and obvious choice for the migrants in this research, its status as a safe, prosperous, diverse, English speaking country with good weather proved important in the decision making process for many. Another important factor was the presence of family and friends, the feeling that a like-minded community already existed in your new home, making the migration process easier, an issue which will be discussed later in this report.

Attitudes to assimilation vs isolation

As addressed in the review of *The Ipsos Mackay Report*, there is a strong public perception that if a multicultural society is to function properly then new Australians must commit themselves to the task of assimilation. However, as this phase of the research clearly shows, in many cases it is not so easy to achieve.

Participants in this research reported feeling varying levels of isolation since arriving in Australia. What is clear from their stories is that there are several early mechanisms of engagement which can either enable them to better assimilate into Australian society or work to drive them into greater isolation.



The presence of already established family or community in Australia greatly assisted immigrants in retaining the threads of continuity in their lives, by linking what they had left behind in their country of origin to what they had come to build in Australia. This community could be built upon a network of family or friends or neighbours, a particular congregation or more broadly a network based on racial background. It was this platform of connectedness that helped immigrants with the process of assimilation. It provided some security and familiarity as they adapted to their new environment.

Immigrants who did not have any kind of foundation or support network in Australia were those who felt increasingly isolated and disconnected from the broader society around them. Assimilation seemed a daunting task from such a position of isolation.

While all migrants saw the need for assimilation, older migrants emphasised it more and were more likely to worry about new migrant groups forming enclaves and ghettos (albeit some younger migrants also shared this view). Migrants who had experienced greater discrimination tended to be more understanding of migrant communities wanting to stay together. These migrants suggested that assimilation 'goes both ways' in that it requires open-mindedness from both Australians and migrants in order to achieve acceptance. Another critical factor was respect, and this too needed to be reciprocal. However, as indicated in *The Ipsos Mackay Report* review, the key factor to greater tolerance and acceptance was ultimately seen to be the passage of time.

The emphasis placed on assimilation among the migrants involved in this research was strong; indeed many of the sentiments on this issue echoed the comments from 'non-migrant' Australians in the Mackay review. However it is clear that the participants had a more complex understanding of the various barriers to 'assimilation'. Indeed, having an 'enclave' already in existence in Australia seems to have helped many migrants adapt in the challenging early stages of settling in Australia.

Advice to the new migrant

As noted in *The Ipsos Mackay Report* review, learning English was seen to be the key to assimilation. For migrants in this research, 'learn English' was the most critical piece of advice any migrant would give to a prospective migrant, and this was expressed by both long-standing and newer migrants alike. Another important piece of advice offered to prospective migrants was to come with family, or some kind of support network, rather than on your own and finally the importance of making the effort to form connections and integrate with the local people and community.

Is Australia home?

The question of identity and whether Australia was considered 'home' was predominately a function of time; long standing migrants and those who were born in Australia for the most part identified themselves as being 'Australian' and definitively called Australia home. More recent arrivals to the country had a more fluid sense of identity and where 'home' was (particularly those who had only lived in Australia for a very short period of time).

Whether Australia was 'home' was also a factor of how migrants felt about their country of origin or their options of return. For those who could conceivably go back to their home country and be welcomed (or safe), some felt torn between two countries, while others had fully embraced Australia as home. Those who were forced to leave their countries and did not have the choice to go back without risk to their personal safety inextricably felt a greater sense of connection to and yearning for their homeland, in large part because they could not return.

Citizenship for some newer migrants was considered to be a defining moment, and that once achieved, would mark their 'Australian-ness'.

Many migrants, old and new, felt that it was important to retain their cultural heritage, and some felt they had clung to their ethnic identity more fiercely than they would have had they not come to Australia. This was largely due to a sense of nostalgia and wanting to feel connected to their country of origin as well as not wanting to lose their original identity entirely.

Experience with racism, past and present

Experiences of racism varied greatly and were highly personal across the depths and groups. For older first-generation migrants as well as some younger second-generation migrants, encounters of racism often began at school.

Racist stereotypes continued to upset and offend some migrants and recent arrivals to Australia also reported that racial discrimination was alive and well, recounting incidents of racism they had experienced first-hand.

Interestingly, the current experience of the Indian community in Melbourne closely mirrors the experience of the Greek community more than 40 years ago. As reported in *The Ipsos Mackay Report* review, recent arrivals caused greater concern than migrants with a long history in Australia. Forty years ago, Greeks, Italians and other post-war migrants were the primary target of racism; today the focus has shifted to more recently arrived ethnic groups.

Migrants' views on whether Australia as a country was racist or not also varied. Those who had experienced racism first-hand were inclined to believe there was a racist element in society, although it was noted that there were good and bad people in every society.



There was an acknowledgement by some migrants that there was a city and regional divide – with racism perceived to be worse in regional and particularly rural country areas. The level of racism in Australia was also perceived to vary according to context and the circumstances in which migrants found themselves. Some had favourable experiences due to their profession and the people they encountered (or did not encounter).

Ultimately, none of the migrants who participated in this research could claim unequivocally that Australia was a racist nation. While it certainly did exist in various manifestations, it was seen to occur on an individual and personal level, rather than a collective or community level. Racism was not considered to be 'institutionalised' in Australia and that was an important distinction for those who had experienced this level of racism in their home countries. Others felt that while racism seemed to be 'ebbing' rather than 'flowing', it was nevertheless a slow and not entirely progressive process.

In sum, while many participants had experienced subtle or not so subtle racism, past and present, the overwhelming view was that Australia was a country that wasn't racist but contained a racist element. That being said, there were anxieties about whether racism was getting worse now and concerns about perceived racism from authority figures such as police and airport security.

Attitudes to welfare and work

Work played an important role for all migrants who participated in this research. For many, the opportunity to work was the very reason they had come to Australia. Finding a job and working hard was central to legitimising their presence here.

Some migrants were particularly defensive about the notion that they had come to Australia and had 'taken' jobs, claiming instead that they were doing the kind of work no one else wanted to do and they were contributing to the country's prosperity by working. Many were also equally defensive when it came to the issue of welfare. They did not want to be seen as a drain on the economy and were quick to make it clear that they themselves had never relied on welfare.

There were mixed views on the subject of asylum seekers, mirroring in many ways the views canvassed in the Mackay review. While many migrants acknowledged a sense of humanitarian obligation to accept them, asylum seekers were nevertheless viewed with increasing suspicion. They were generally regarded as less equipped to succeed in Australia due to factors such as language difficulties, lack of skill or education and, most importantly, a perceived unwillingness to work. As such, there were seen to cause a significant drain on the resources and economy of the nation.

On the other hand, skilled immigration was viewed as a boon to the economy and many migrants felt that it should continue as long as there was work in Australia for new migrants (regardless of whether it was skilled work or not). However, skilled migrants who were struggling to find paid work in their profession were beginning to question whether there truly was a skills shortage.

Counterpoint: Sudanese women on welfare

The group of Sudanese women in Newcastle were acutely conscious of how they were perceived when it came to work and welfare. They were quick to defend their position and express their embarrassment as well as their frustration. While they were grateful for the assistance, finding paid work was central to their sense of legitimacy in Australia. All the women in the group were looking for paid work and expressed deep frustration at the difficulties they had encountered and the lack of any real support to secure a job. They expressed a willingness to do any kind of unskilled work, albeit with the knowledge that there were a scarce number of jobs available to those seeking work. They also lamented the lack of job opportunities for their teenage children.

In sum, the emphasis by migrants on working hard, paying your taxes and avoiding welfare matches, and indeed exceeds, the emphasis placed on these things by the wider community (as evidenced in *The Ipsos Mackay Report* review).

Media

Most migrants felt that there was a lack of prominent or accurate representation in the media of their own experience and their own culture. This included the lack of foreign faces in the news, stereotypical portrayals on television shows and a limited view of their culture. Depictions of migrant cultures in mainstream popular culture were felt to reflect and consequently legitimise that culture – by becoming less foreign and more familiar, and gradually entering the mainstream consciousness.

These views on media were aligned with migrants' more general views towards the limited amount they felt that Australians knew about other cultures and global politics. In addition, media reports on race-related incidents were seen as subjective, polarising and exaggerated. Ultimately, participants believed the media could improve its reporting of race and ethnic issues and provide a more representative range of on-screen stories and talent.

Attitudes to multiculturalism

In discussions about the term 'multiculturalism', the basic definition was described simply as 'many different cultures'. In this regard, most migrants agreed that Australia, by definition, was a multicultural society.

For some, there was a higher level of multiculturalism, which went beyond a society made up of different ethnic groups but was highly functional and fostered respect, learning and equality between cultures. This higher level of multiculturalism was often considered an ideal, and not always a reality.

As discussed previously, many felt that assimilation was necessary for multiculturalism to function harmoniously and yet there was a strong desire to retain certain aspects of their original culture and heritage. While Australia was basically regarded as a functional multicultural society, the question of true and deep acceptance of difference remained.

In sum, there was less antagonism to the term 'multiculturalism' among participants in this research than there often is traditional Mackay-style groups. Migrants recognised that while the term might refer 'to many cultures living in one place', there was a higher meaning of the term, namely a society in which people from different cultures are respected and enthusiastically accepted. There was a recognition then that some parts of our society were more multicultural than others.

Attitudes to government policy on immigration

Overall, there was very little knowledge or awareness of past government policy on immigration. Even older migrants were generally unaware of the 'White Australia' policy and subsequent 'Multiculturalism' policies of past Australian governments, with the exception of one Chinese migrant.

When it came to current government policy on immigration, many felt it was ambiguous and constantly changing. Some newer migrants commented on how rigorous the process was and most migrants felt immigration policy should be determined by economic needs and many showed strong support for skilled migration. On the other hand, some felt that there needed to be more emphasis on helping those migrants who were already here to adjust, and educating Australians so that they would be more accepting of those already here, before introducing more new migrants.

As previously mentioned, most felt immigration should be based predominately on economic needs; however there was some recognition that immigration policy should take into account humanitarian concerns. This compassion was overwhelmed by concern about the perceived strain that asylum seekers place on the government and taxpayers, as well as the perceived threat of terrorists or people who did not have Australia's best interests at heart arriving as humanitarian entrants.

The uncertainty around the genuine nature of some humanitarian entrants also fuelled the debate on asylum seekers. Asylum seekers who come via boat were viewed the most harshly and accused of making matters worse for all immigrants. Those who had come to Australia as asylum seekers themselves expressed confusion around what the policy was for others still seeking asylum – particularly members of their own family still living in their country of origin.

In sum, there seems to be similar levels of ignorance and confusion about government policy on immigration (past and present) in the migrant community as there is in the broader community. Similar concerns about asylum seekers arose as well.

Attitudes to population growth

Attitudes to population growth were inextricably linked with views on the strength of the economy and the level of resources available in Australia. Those who felt that Australia had sufficient resources and a robust economy tended to be in favour of growing the population and supported the notion of a 'big' Australia. Given the sheer size of the country, those who held this view felt there was plenty of room for more to come.

Some newer migrants referred to the ageing population and the need to increase the skilled working population in order to support the growing ageing population. However, many agreed that for a growing population to thrive, new migrants – and asylum seekers especially – needed adequate support from government to help establish their new lives in Australia.

For the Sudanese community, not only do they require support for the adult population [as outlined in **Sudanese women on welfare**], but a way to help transition their children into the Australian education system.

On the other hand, those who felt that Australia did not have the resources or a strong enough economy to support increased population growth were more measured in their views and believed that significant government planning was required before Australia could consider increased immigration. The issue of space was a key concern in what was perceived to be already crowded cities and coastal areas. It raised the question: where will all the new migrants live?

The issue of the job scarcity, particularly in skilled work, was cause for some to believe there should be a halt in population growth. Concerns about the perceived lack of infrastructure in Australia were a strong factor in the argument against greater population growth.

In sum, the views of participants on population growth were in keeping with broader community views. While some believed our geography and economy can accommodate increased migration, the overwhelming concern was that our infrastructure, cities and resources are not equipped with further increases.



The next generation

As addressed in *The Ipsos Mackay Report* review, children were generally considered the hope for the future. Many of the participants in this research echoed this sentiment and spoke of the sacrifices they had made for the sake and future of their children. Many had pinned high hopes on the next generation.

Migrant parents struggled with the question of how to raise their children and what values to instil in them. While some were content that their Australian-born children and grandchildren identified as 'Australian', others were concerned about the next generation retaining knowledge of their original heritage.

Newer migrants who did not yet have children in Australia were conflicted about how to raise their prospective offspring and to protect their cultural identity. There was some anxiety that their children might not embrace their ethnic heritage, and yet they also acknowledged that having children in Australia would encourage them as parents to change and adapt, in part to make their children's lives easier.

The children of migrants faced the challenge of growing up in the midst of two cultures. As a result, some reported feeling an ambiguous sense of identity. The children of migrants also had to negotiate the expectations of their parents, which were often rooted in the original ethnic culture. At times, this did not resonate with their new life in Australia.

The new financial and personal freedom children in the Sudanese community had come to enjoy in Australia was a cause for concern for their parents, who feared it was jeopardising the bright future they had envisioned for their children.

In sum, as with parents of any ethnicity, all the hopes and fears were concentrated on their children, something the children themselves were keenly aware of.

Qualitative conclusions

The broader aim of the qualitative phase of this research was to see if attitudes of first and second generation migrants on issues related to immigration and multiculturalism differed markedly from those of the broader community (as evidenced in *The Ipsos Mackay Report* review).

It seems these two communities have more in common than not in terms of their understanding about and attitudes to government policy, asylum seekers and population growth, for example. In addition, their views about the importance of assimilation, of learning the English language, of the need for new migrants to work hard and stay off welfare share much in common with broader public sentiment.

And yet migrants' understanding of these issues was obviously informed by personal, and often painful, experiences with migration to and assimilation into our nation. For those whose 'decision' to leave their own country was provoked by war and for those who remain isolated from even a partial involvement with our wider society, the migrant experience has been – and continues to be – particularly difficult. Participants in this part of the research were more likely to feel as if there were racist elements in our society and that the media failed to accurately reflect the migrant experience. Their understanding of multiculturalism and the barriers to assimilation were complex and well considered. However in the final analysis, the differences in attitudes did not outweigh the similarities, including the belief that the hope for greater social and racial harmony lay with the next generation.

Overall conclusions

The quantitative phase of this research project produced an attitudinal segmentation that roughly divided the respondent group of 1000 plus into four equally sized groups. This may seem to invite the conclusion that the Australian population is divided on questions of immigration, multiculturalism and asylum seekers. Certainly there are clear differences between these four segments and yet the qualitative phase has shown that on some questions there is remarkable unanimity of opinion.

We can say there is general support for the *idea* that Australia should remain multicultural and that migrants have added to our society in positive ways (particularly in terms of food and greater cultural and society diversity). Support, especially in the 'On our terms' segment, for immigration that enhances economic prosperity remains relatively strong. Australians appear to hold firm beliefs that, by international standards, we are a nation that has been generous to migrants. To a significant degree, the qualitative component shows migrants themselves agree with this assessment. All aspects of the research reflect the emphasis placed by Australians, regardless of migrant background, on assimilation as crucial to ensuring our multicultural society is highly functional and harmonious. In this respect learning the English language is seen as key.

However, in at least three of the four segments anxieties and concerns about the impact of immigration on our society now and into the future were significant and numerous. In relation to current or increased levels of immigration, there was reservation (in the 'On our terms'), fear (in 'Fear of the foreign') and outright opposition ('Under no circumstances'). The qualitative research shows that the drivers of opposition are relatively predictable and reflect concerns about our cultural identity, social cohesion, economic prosperity and (more recently) environmental sustainability.

All aspects of this research has shown that currently there is only moderate support for the idea that Australia should accept the current or increased numbers of asylum seekers (39% of respondents in the quantitative phase agreeing or strongly agreeing that Australia has a responsibility to accept refugees). Indeed, the Mackay review shows that in fact support for asylum seekers has declined as support for skilled migrants has increased. Interestingly, the top predictor of segment membership was response to the statement 'Too many asylum seekers get accepted into Australia'. It seems that a respondent's attitude to asylum seekers is indicative of their broader philosophy about immigration, ethnic difference and multiculturalism.

The quantitative phase shows that 13% of respondents reported that they had experienced racial discrimination in the last twelve months. However the percentage was higher – 23% - among CALD respondents. Both the review and particularly the qualitative research component uncovered stories of subtle and extreme examples of racism. In terms of perception about racism in Australian society it is a situation of 'two steps forward, one step back'. The qualitative research shows that migrants from European and some Asian backgrounds feel that racism directed towards their ethnic groups had diminished over time. However there was also a perception that general levels of racial intolerance have increased in recent times. The notion that racism is worse now than it has been previously was mirrored in the quantitative phase (with no significant difference in attitude between CALD and non-CALD respondents). This may, in part, be seen as a natural bi-product of increasing ethnic diversity in our society – more ethnic subgroups equals more racial tension.

In terms of the role of the media, all phases of the research showed reasonably low levels of trust in the information gleaned by media about immigration, asylum seekers and migrants in general (with some differences between CALD and non-CALD respondents). Respondents in the qualitative phase in particular criticised media bias and the lack of 'different faces' on television screens.

A review of three decades of *The Ipsos Mackay Report* shows that in Australian's attitudes about migrants consistent themes emerge. We accept the fact of multiculturalism (some of us grudgingly) and yet we are constantly striving and struggling to adapt to its challenges and its opportunities. As Donald Horne argued in his famous book in *The Lucky Country* (1964), we have always been an immigrant country working hard to craft an overarching identity:

Australia has managed to be an immigrant country for most of its history without even thinking about it. ... The old belief that Australia swallows its migrants whole and does not change as a result of their digestion no longer seems true. It is true that children of most migrants cease to be Europeans but in the process somewhere Australians are also ceasing to be 'Australians'. It is normal liberal though to wish to see old national minority cultures preserved, though integrated, but what now seems to be the Australian way, in which both old and new grope towards something different, has a great deal to be said for it.

Reference List

- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (1985), *The Multiculture*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (1988), *Being Australian*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (1990), *The Australian Dream*
- Hugh Mackay, (1993), *Reinventing Australia*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (1995), *Multiculturalism*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (1996), *Mind & Mood*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (1997), *Mind & Mood*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (1998), *Mind & Mood*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2001), *Mind & Mood*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2002), *Mind & Mood*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2003), *Mind & Mood*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2006), *Mind & Mood*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2008), *Mind & Mood*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2008), *Our Community*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2009), *Mind & Mood*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2009), *Mind & Mood Update*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2009), *The Future*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2010), *Mind & Mood April*
- The Ipsos Mackay Report, (2010), *Mind & Mood October*
- Ipsos and KPMG, (2010), *Future Focus*



Nobody's Unpredictable

Ipsos Australia

Level 13, 168 Walker Street North Sydney NSW AUSTRALIA 2060

Telephone +61 (02) 9900 5100 Facsimile +61 (02) 9954 0284

www.ipsos.com.au