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Executive Summary

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, the aim of this project is to explore and contrast contemporary attitudes to immigration with perceptions of Australia’s immigration history and the impact of migration on Australia.

The release of this research, immediately preceding the Immigration Nation broadcast, leading up to Australia Day 2011, will seek to spark debate and commentary in a range of media platforms about Australian immigration, public opinion and diversity.

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 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. Two research techniques are used: the group discussion and the in-depth interview.
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.

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 includes findings from all phases of the research.

A note on language

Throughout this report the terms ‘assimilation’ and ‘assimilate’ are used frequently, both in direct quotes from participants in the qualitative phases of this research project as well as in general analysis. Both the terms ‘integrate’ and ‘assimilate’ were used in the questionnaire as part of the quantitative phase. The terms ‘assimilate’ and ‘assimilation’ have been used because, in general, this is the natural language of participants in over thirty years of Mackay-style groups. In addition, in the original qualitative research for this project, migrants often used the term ‘assimilate’ over other terms such as ‘integrate’.

Key findings

While three distinct methodologies were employed, strong thematic links were discovered across each of the research phases. The overwhelming sentiment was that 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.

The attitudinal segmentation conducted during the quantitative research phase revealed four roughly equal sized groups within the population: ‘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 views captured through the Mackay review and qualitative research phases demonstrated alignment with these segments. While review participants tended to align with ‘Fear of the foreign’, ‘On our terms’, and ‘Under no circumstances’ segments, the views of migrants captured through the qualitative research also were representative of three distinct segments: ‘Fear of the foreign’, ‘On our terms’, and ‘Room for More’.
Across all phases of the research, attitudes to immigration, immigrants, asylum seekers and multiculturalism were shown to be informed by a range of factors, including perceptions of: Australia’s resources; the strength of our economy and the availability of jobs; the population, sustainability and infrastructure needs for Australia’s future; and views about the value of multiculturalism to society and the Australian identity.

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, and that there is general acknowledgement that to some extent, migrants have enriched our way of life. 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”.

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. 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; one worrying trend in the last ten years has been the gradual demise in sympathy for asylum seekers. 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. Nevertheless, we typically consider ourselves to be highly tolerant of other cultures. 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.

The views of migrants of first – and second – generations 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. 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.
In terms of the role of the media, all phases of the research showed reasonable 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.

While certainly there are clear differences between the four segments found in the quantitative phase, yet the qualitative phase has shown that on some questions there is remarkable unanimity of opinion. 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.
Research Context

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 has long presented challenging content and a diversity of views on international issues and topics related to Australian diversity.

The need for research

SBS has undertaken several research projects in the past which have explored attitudes to multiculturalism in Australia (including ‘Living Diversity: Australia’s Multicultural Future’ in 2001 and ‘Connecting Diversity: Paradoxes of Multicultural Australia’ in 2006). SBS are now 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. The first of these programs, due to go to air in the last three weeks of January 2011 is ‘Immigration Nation: the Secret History of Us’. This three part documentary series will offer some revelatory new perspectives on Australian immigration history.

Research objectives

Overall, the aim of this project is to explore and contrast contemporary attitudes to immigration with perceptions of Australia’s immigration history and the impact of migration on Australia.

The release of this research, immediately preceding the Immigration Nation broadcast, leading up to Australia Day 2011, will seek to spark debate and commentary in a range of media platforms about Australian immigration, public opinion and diversity.

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.

A mixed methodology, which includes an online survey, in-depth interviews, and affinity mini-groups, was used to answer these research objectives. This report includes findings from all phases of the research.

**Quantitative Methodology**

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). For the purpose of this study, CALD status was defined using the following question: ‘Do you speak a language other than English at home?’ Respondents who indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home were defined as CALD and respondents who indicated that they did not speak a language other than English at home were defined as non-CALD.

For the main sample, non-interlocking quotas were placed on age, gender, location, and CALD status (15%) in an effort to ensure a nationally representative sample. Efforts were also made to sample widely for the CALD boost but data (i.e. age/gender/location breakdown for Australian CALD population) were not available to set firm quotas.

**Questionnaire development**

A survey questionnaire was developed by SBS and Ipsos, drawing on tools that had been used in previous similar research. This questionnaire, which was finalised on 14th October 2010, was fully piloted in-field.

**Fieldwork**

The online surveys were hosted and managed by I–view.

The research was conducted with adults aged over 18 years. As mentioned above, quotas were imposed for age, gender and location to ensure a nationally representative sample. Participants who qualified and completed the survey received an incentive of ‘e–points’ for their participation.
Fieldwork was conducted from 19\textsuperscript{th} to 29\textsuperscript{th} October 2010. The research was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the International Standard covering social and market research, AS ISO 20252.

Sample

The final unweighted sample breakdowns for the main sample and the CALD boost are shown in Table 1, below.

Table 1 Sample breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Main sample</th>
<th>Boost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24 years</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34 years</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44 years</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54 years</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64 years</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+ years</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW/ACT</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC/TAS</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA/NT</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural background</td>
<td>Language other than English spoken at home</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only English spoken at home</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATSI</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-ATSI</td>
<td>1058</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1081</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further demographic characteristics of the survey sample have been included in the accompanying data tables provided in the quantitative findings section of this report.

Weighting

The main sample was weighted by age, gender and location to match the Australian population. As the 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. This weight was calculated based on the latest population demographic statistics available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Please note that this weight was not applied during the attitudinal segmentation (i.e. during the factor and cluster analysis), but was applied for all analysis on the resulting segments.

Comparisons were also made between CALD (including the 15% CALD respondents in the main sample) and non-CALD respondents. Given that the demographic characteristics of CALD only and non-CALD only Australians is not well described, the data was not weighted for these analyses. For the same reason, the data was not weighted for comparisons between first- and second-generation immigrants.

The following table sets out the level of precision associated with all of the sample sizes for various survey groups described in the report, at a level of 95% confidence, for a result of 50% (intervals of precision are widest at this point, and become narrower for results that are more extreme in either direction). The confidence interval for the main sample is 3%. This means that if we find, for example, that 50% of the main sample thinks that the level of racism in Australia has not changed in the past five years, we can be 95% confident that between 47% and 53% of the population thinks that the level of racism has not changed.
Table 2 Relevant confidence intervals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample size (n)</th>
<th>Survey group</th>
<th>Level of precision of a statistic of 50% derived from a sample of this size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>249</td>
<td>Segment 1 ('Fear of the Foreign')</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>295</td>
<td>Segment 2 ('On our terms')</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301</td>
<td>Segment 3 ('Room for More')</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>236</td>
<td>Segment 4 ('Under no circumstances')</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1081</td>
<td>Main sample</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>452</td>
<td>CALD sample</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>923</td>
<td>Non-CALD sample</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>504</td>
<td>First-generation immigrants</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>303</td>
<td>Second-generation immigrants</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data analysis

All statistical analyses were conducted in-house, using SPSS and Q Research Software. Coding and editing of variables and statistical manipulations were conducted as appropriate.

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. For comparisons between the proportions of different groups of respondents (i.e. Segments, CALD status), groups were directly compared when there were two levels (i.e. comparing between CALD and non-CALD) and compared to the mean proportion when there were more than two levels (i.e. comparing among segments). For example, if the proportion of respondents who ‘agreed strongly’ with a statement was 50% for ‘Fear of the Foreign’, 60% for ‘On our terms’, 60% for ‘Room for More’, and 70% for ‘Under no circumstances’, the statistical test would determine whether each proportion was significantly higher or lower than the mean proportion (60%).

Significance testing has been applied throughout the report at the 95% confidence level, and adjustments have been made for multiple comparisons using the False Discovery Rate.
Qualitative Methodology

Review of The Ipsos Mackay Report

The review draws together insights from a wide range of sources from The Ipsos Mackay Report. These sources are based on qualitative research conducted by The Ipsos Mackay Report team over the past 25 years. For a full list of sources, please refer to the reference list at the end of this document.

In reviewing the last 25 years of reports, we have identified some consistent themes in Australian attitudes to immigration, immigrants, asylum seekers and multiculturalism. We have expressed these themes as ‘headlines’ and explained the headlines by reference to different reports, discussed chronologically under each section. Verbatim quotes (indented and italicised) are used throughout the document to illustrate the ways in which Australians have described or discussed attitudes to these issues.

The Ipsos Mackay Report is based on a 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. Two research techniques are used: the group discussion and the in-depth interview.

The research methodology follows the classical principles of non-directive research, and has three essential features, namely:

Groups used for the research are AFFINITY GROUPS – naturally occurring groups of friends, neighbours, workmates, etc.

Discussions are held in the NATURAL HABITAT of the groups – private homes, clubs, offices or wherever the members of a particular group feel most comfortable, in order to minimise the artificiality of the research process.

The asking of direct questions is avoided and the role of the researcher is essentially passive. Group members are encouraged to participate in SPONTANEOUS DISCUSSION of all aspects of the subject which happen to interest or concern them. No pre-conceptions are imposed on the scope or direction of the group discussions.

It is important to note that data generated by non-directive group discussions and interviews is essentially qualitative and anecdotal. Accordingly, no attempt has been made to quantify the findings of this research, nor to draw distinctions between majority and minority opinions. The fieldwork for all of the reports involved affinity group discussions and/or in-depth interviews with residents throughout Australia including metropolitan and regional areas.
Participants in The Ipsos Mackay Report research are recruited to avoid the extremes of wealth and poverty, in order to capture a representative view of Australian society. Except for specific reports on the topic of multiculturalism, we do not purposely recruit participants from migrant backgrounds.

**Qualitative Research**

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.

**Eye-witness depth interviews**

We targeted Australians from diverse migrant backgrounds aged 60+ who had personally experienced or witnessed successive waves of migration in their communities. We asked them to reflect on this experience in one-on-one eye-witness depth interviews.

The eye-witness depth interviews essentially revealed the oral history of each participant by delving into their experience and observations of not only their own personal attitudes but also the changing attitudes they have witnessed in their community, either towards their own migrant community or towards those of others.

We spoke to participants from a mix of strategically targeted migrant backgrounds, which reflected the course of Australia’s migrant history. This included depth interviews with participants from the following backgrounds: Chinese, Italian, Greek, Swedish, Lebanese and Iraqi.

**Community centre affinity mini-groups**

The community centre affinity mini-groups focused specifically on questions around multiculturalism and immigration in Australia today.

Groups used for this research were naturally existing affinity groups – already established groups of friends, neighbours or in this case, community groups. The use of existing social groups from the migrant community allowed us to harness the dynamics of spontaneous peer-group interaction and to ‘borrow’ the trust, honesty and frankness of these established relationships. We conducted mini-groups of four to five group participants. Group discussions centred on attitudes to multiculturalism and the migrant experience, with a focus on perceptions of life in Australia when participants first migrated to perceptions of what life is like now.

We targeted existing affinity groups of migrants via community centres and migrant resource centres to reflect post-war as well as more recent waves of migration. We spoke with groups from the following migrant backgrounds: Chinese, Vietnamese, Iranian, Indian, Sudanese and Chilean.
Quantitative Phase

This section includes findings relating to the following areas:

- Attitudes of the general public
- Results from the attitudinal segmentation
- Comparison of segments on key measures
- Comparison of CALD/Non-CALD on key measures
- Comparison of first- and second-generation immigrants on key measures

Attitudes of the general public

This section contains the attitudes and experiences of the general public (i.e. the main sample weighted to be nationally representative of the total population by age, gender, and location). The following measures are reported on: Perceptions of history, support for diversity, experience of discrimination, sense of belonging, perceived level of racial prejudice (compared to five and 30 years ago), and trust of the media.

Perceptions of history: Respondents 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. The results for the main sample (weighted to be nationally representative by age, gender, and location) on statements related to the history of immigration in Australia are shown in Figure 1, overleaf. Approximately eight out of every ten respondents (79%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statement: Generally speaking, Australia has always been generous to immigrants. In addition, more than half of respondents (59%) agreed or strongly agreed that, relative to other nations, Australia has always been generous to immigrants.
There was a lower level of agreement with the final two statements, with 39% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that Australia has a responsibility to accept refugees and 37% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that Australia has always been a world leader in racial equality. It should be noted that disagreement with the final statement was relatively low (19%), as 44% of respondents indicated ‘Neither agree nor disagree’.

Figure 1 General public perceptions of Australia’s immigration history

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)
Support for diversity: As mentioned above, respondents 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 2. Between 48% (All immigrants should be able to maintain their culture without prejudice or disadvantage) and 62% (Australia should be a multicultural society) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with each of these statements.

Figure 2 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)
Discrimination: Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had experienced discrimination based on their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion in the past 12 months. The results for the main sample (weighted to be nationally representative by age/gender/location) are shown in Figure 3. Thirteen percent of respondents indicated that they had experienced discrimination in the past twelve months, 84% indicated that they had not.

Figure 3 Experience of discrimination

Q. Have you experienced discrimination in the last 12 months because of your skin colour, ethnic origin or religion?
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)
Sense of belonging: Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they had a sense of belonging in Australia. The results for the main sample (weighted to be nationally representative by age/gender/location) are shown in Figure 4. Pleasingly, 79% of respondents indicated that they felt a sense of belonging ‘To a great extent’, and only 1% indicated ‘Not at all’.

Figure 4 Sense of belonging

Q: To what extent do you have a sense of belonging in Australia?
Total base: n=1081
Level of racial prejudice (compared to 5/30 years ago): Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought racial prejudice in Australia is more, less, or about the same as it was five years ago and 30 years ago. The results for the main sample (weighted to be nationally representative by age/gender/location) on both questions are shown in Figure 5.

The vast majority of respondents felt that racial prejudice had either increased or remained the same when compared to five years ago (89% of respondents of respondents selected ‘Much more now’, ‘More now’, or ‘About the same’). Only 9% of respondents felt that level of racial prejudice in Australia was less than it was five years ago.

In contrast, 32% of respondents felt that there has been a decrease in racial prejudice over the past 30 years. That being said, well over 50% of respondents (66%) felt that the level of level of racial prejudice had either increased or remained the same over the past 30 years.

Figure 5 Level of racial prejudice (compared with 5 and 30 years ago)
Trust of the media: Respondents 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 the main sample (weighted to be nationally representative by age/gender/location) are shown in Figure 6. Almost half of respondents (45%) indicated that they trust the media ‘Only slightly’. This was followed by ‘To a moderate extent’ which was selected by 28% of respondents and ‘Not at all’ which was selected by 23% of respondents.

Figure 6 Trust in information provided by the media

Q: To what extent do you trust the information you receive on immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers in the media?
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)
Results of the attitudinal segmentation

Segment overview

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.

The four cluster, traditional (i.e. factor analysis followed by cluster analysis) segmentation produced groups of respondents that were relatively equal in size (see Figure 7). The smallest segment, ‘Under no circumstances’, contained 22% of respondents while the largest segment, ‘Room for More’ contained 28% of respondents. A profile of each of these segments has been provided below.

Figure 7 Size of segments

- Under no circumstances: 22%
- Fear of the Foreign: 23%
- Room for More: 28%
- On our terms: 27%

Size of segments
CALD base: 158
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base: n=1081
The attitudinal segmentation produced two very clear segments: ‘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 respondents 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 respondents agreeing that ‘Immigrants should follow the conventions of Australian society’ and 90% of respondents agreeing that ‘Immigrants should know English before they are allowed to come to Australia’.

The ‘Room for More’ (i.e. accepting of all forms of immigration and cultural diversity) segment was the most pro-immigration and multiculturalism. Indeed, 79% of respondents 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 respondents 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 ‘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 respondents in this segment indicated they were worried about violence between ethnic groups in Australia. In addition, 76% of respondents 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 respondents agreeing that new immigrants should try harder to integrate with people outside their ethnic group.

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 respondents in this segment agree that immigrants have enriched the Australian way of life, 76% of respondents support the mandatory detention of asylum seekers.
In addition, 84% of respondents in this segment agreed that it is possible for immigrants to be proud of their heritage but still loyal to Australia, while 86% of respondents 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).

Predictors of segment membership

A Discriminant Analysis was performed to determine the strength of the relationship between the attitudinal battery and the resulting segments. The results of this analysis revealed that if all statements are included in the model, it successfully predicts segment membership for 91% of cases. A Step-Wise Discriminant Analysis was then performed to determine the best predictors of segment membership. The best predictor of segment membership was ‘Too many asylum seekers get accepted into Australia’. This was followed by ‘I support increased immigration when it benefits Australia’s economy’. The mean level of agreement of each segment on the top ten predictors of segment membership, which successfully predict 80% of cases, are shown in Figure 8, overleaf. Please note that agreement was measured on a zero to four point scale where zero is equal to strongly disagree, and 4 is equal to strongly agree.
Figure 8 Top ten predictors of segment membership

Mean level of agreement (out of a possible 4)
CALD base: 158
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base: n=1081
Profile of segment 1: ‘Fear of the foreign’

Attitudinal statements: The proportion of respondents in the ‘Fear of the foreign’ segment who agreed (i.e. sum of ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’) and disagreed (i.e. sum of ‘strongly disagree’ and ‘disagree’) with each attitudinal statement is shown in Table 3. Please note that here and in similar tables, the proportions do not sum to 100 as the proportion who selected ‘Neither agree nor disagree’ had not been included. The statements have been listed in descending order based on level of agreement.

Table 3 Agreement with attitudinal statements: ‘Fear of the foreign’ segment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generally speaking, Australia has always been generous to immigrants</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think new immigrants should try harder to integrate with people outside their ethnic group</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants should follow the conventions of Australian society</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry about violence between ethnic groups in Australia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m worried that some asylum seekers could be terrorists</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants should know English before they are allowed to come to Australia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should be a strict limit on the number of people coming into Australia, whether they come legally or illegally</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support immigration when it benefits Australia’s economy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative to other nations, Australia has taken more than its fair share of immigrants and refugees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism is a problem in Australia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants want to come to Australia to build a better future for their children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it’s possible for immigrants to be proud of their heritage and also loyal to Australia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many asylum seekers get accepted into Australia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants often want to stick to their values and impose their beliefs on other people</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry about the effect immigration will have on the Australian environment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry that migrant communities are changing the Australian way of life</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should encourage immigrants to move to regional and rural Australia rather than to the big cities on the coast</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees get too much financial assistance form the government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants don’t want to assimilate or mix with people outside their ethnic group</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large numbers of immigrants in a suburb or town brings crime and other problems</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia should be a multicultural society</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a strong sense of community among immigrants</td>
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<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia needs more skilled immigrants</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support the mandatory detention of asylum seekers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants from war-torn countries bring violence and tension to Australia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants have enriched the Australian way of life</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a lot of different ethnic groups in our society has a negative effect on our sense of identity and community</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia has always been a world leader in racial equality</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants only want to come to Australia to make money</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants make for a more interesting society</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All immigrants should be able to maintain their culture without prejudice or disadvantage</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asylum seekers bring diseases into Australia</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should accept immigrants even when they are from countries very different from Australia</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion should be a factor in deciding which immigrants are accepted into Australia</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia has a responsibility to accept refugees</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am ashamed about the way immigrants from some countries have been treated in Australia</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a person is granted refugee status in Australia, their family should be allowed to immigrate too</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia can accept more refugees without reducing my quality of life</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia should provide refugees with more support</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have the resources to support increased immigration</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support increased immigration</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most important issue facing Australia: Respondents were asked, in a completely open-ended fashion, to list the major problems facing Australia today. The top five coded responses for respondents in the ‘Fear of the Foreign’ segment are shown in Figure 9. Close to half (44%) of respondents 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 respondents in the ‘Fear of the Foreign’ segment.

Figure 9 Most important issue facing Australia: ‘Fear of the foreign’ segment

A sample of uncoded answers from respondents 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
Key demographic differences:

- Members of the ‘Fear of the foreign’ segment 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%).

- Members of the ‘Fear of the foreign’ segment were significantly less likely to be aged 35-44 (13%) when compared to the mean proportion in this age group (19%).

- Members of the ‘Fear of the foreign’ segment were significantly more likely to be aged 65+ (25%) when compared to the mean proportion in this age group (17%).

- Members of the ‘Fear of the foreign’ segment were 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%).

CALD profile: Fifteen percent of respondents in the ‘Fear of the foreign’ segment indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home. This is equivalent to the 15% who speak a language other than English at home, overall.
Profile of segment 2: ‘On our terms’

Attitudinal statements: The proportion of respondents in the ‘On our terms’ segment who agreed (i.e. sum of ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’) and disagreed (i.e. sum of ‘strongly disagree’ and disagree’) with each attitudinal statement is shown in Table 4. The statements have been listed in descending order based on level of agreement.

Table 4 Agreement with attitudinal statements: ‘On our terms’ segment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants should follow the conventions of Australian society</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think new immigrants should try harder to integrate with people outside their ethnic group</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally speaking, Australia has always been generous to immigrants</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should be a strict limit on the number of people coming into Australia, whether they come legally or illegally</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it’s possible for immigrants to be proud of their heritage and also loyal to Australia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants want to come to Australia to build a better future for their children</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry about violence between ethnic groups in Australia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants have enriched the Australian way of life</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support the mandatory detention of asylum seekers</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>We should encourage immigrants to move to regional and rural Australia rather than to the big cities on the coast</td>
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<td>I support immigration when it benefits Australia’s economy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigrants should know English before they are allowed to come to Australia</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m worried that some asylum seekers could be terrorists</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees get too much financial assistance form the government</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants often want to stick to their values and impose their beliefs on other people</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants make for a more interesting society</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia should be a multicultural society</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia needs more skilled immigrants</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many asylum seekers get accepted into Australia</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative to other nations, Australia has taken more than its fair share of immigrants and refugees</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants don’t want to assimilate or mix with people outside their ethnic group</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should accept immigrants even when they are from countries very different from Australia</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a strong sense of community among immigrants</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry that migrant communities are changing the Australian way of life</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia has always been a world leader in racial equality</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia has a responsibility to accept refugees</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants from war-torn countries bring violence and tension to Australia.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large numbers of immigrants in a suburb or town brings crime and other problems</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry about the effect immigration will have on the Australian environment</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism is a problem in Australia</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asylum seekers bring diseases into Australia</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia can accept more refugees without reducing my quality of life</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants only want to come to Australia to make money</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion should be a factor in deciding which immigrants are accepted into Australia</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a person is granted refugee status in Australia, their family should be allowed to immigrate too</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a lot of different ethnic groups in our society has a negative effect on our sense of identity and community</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have the resources to support increased immigration</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am ashamed about the way immigrants from some countries have been treated in Australia</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All immigrants should be able to maintain their culture without prejudice or disadvantage</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support increased immigration</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia should provide refugees with more support</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most important issue facing Australia: As mentioned previously, respondents were asked, in a completely open-ended fashion, to list the major problems facing Australia today. The top five coded responses for respondents in the ‘On our terms’ segment are shown in Figure 10. Thirty-one percent of respondents in the ‘On our terms’ segment reported at least one problem related to ‘immigration/refugees’. This was followed by ‘Environment’, which was mentioned by 25% of respondents.

Figure 10 Most important issue facing Australia: ‘On our terms’ segment

A sample of uncoded answers from respondents 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.
Key demographic differences:

- Members of the ‘On our terms’ segment 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).

- Members of the ‘On our terms’ segment were significantly more likely to be aged 55-64 (20%) when compared to the mean proportion in this age group (15%).

- Members of the ‘On our terms’ segment were 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).

- Members of the ‘On our terms’ segment were 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).

CALD profile: Thirteen percent of respondents in the ‘On our terms’ segment indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home. This is compared to 15% overall.
Profile of segment 3: ‘Room for More’

Attitudinal statements: The proportion of respondents in the ‘Room for More’ segment who agreed (i.e. sum of ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’) and disagreed (i.e. sum of ‘strongly disagree’ and disagree’) with each attitudinal statement is shown in Table 5. The statements have been listed in descending order based on level of agreement.

Table 5 Agreement with attitudinal statements: Room for More segment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants want to come to Australia to build a better future for their children</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it’s possible for immigrants to be proud of their heritage and also loyal to Australia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia should be a multicultural society</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants have enriched the Australian way of life</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants make for a more interesting society</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should accept immigrants even when they are from countries very different from Australia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism is a problem in Australia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a strong sense of community among immigrants</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am ashamed about the way immigrants from some countries have been treated in Australia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia can accept more refugees without reducing my quality of life</td>
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<td>I support immigration when it benefits Australia’s economy</td>
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<td>Australia should provide refugees with more support</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think new immigrants should try harder to integrate with people outside their ethnic group</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should be a strict limit on the number of people coming into Australia, whether they come legally or illegally</td>
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<td>I worry about violence between ethnic groups in Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigrants should know English before they are allowed to come to Australia</td>
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<td>I’m worried that some asylum seekers could be terrorists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigrants often want to stick to their values and impose their beliefs on other people</td>
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<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support the mandatory detention of asylum seekers</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many asylum seekers get accepted into Australia</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry that migrant communities are changing the Australian way of life</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants don’t want to assimilate or mix with people outside their ethnic group</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants only want to come to Australia to make money</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants from war-torn countries bring violence and tension to Australia.</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large numbers of immigrants in a suburb or town brings crime and other problems</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a lot of different ethnic groups in our society has a negative effect on our sense of identity and community</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion should be a factor in deciding which immigrants are accepted into Australia</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All immigrants should be able to maintain their culture without prejudice or disadvantage</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asylum seekers bring diseases into Australia                                  | 56       | 4     |

Most important issue facing Australia: Respondents were asked, in a completely open-ended fashion, to list the major problems facing Australia today. The top five coded responses for respondents in the ‘Room for More’ segment are shown in Figure 11, overleaf. Thirty-three percent of respondents 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 respondents in this segment.
Q. What do you think are the most important problems facing Australia today?
CALD base: n=66
Non-CALD base: n=235
Total base: n=301

A sample of uncoded answers from respondents 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.
Key demographic differences:

- Members of the 'Room for More’ segment 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).

- Members of the ‘Room for More’ segment were 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+).

- Members of the ‘Room for More’ segment were 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%).

- Members of the ‘Room for More’ segment were 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).

- Members of the ‘Room for More’ segment were 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).

- Members of the ‘Room for More’ segment were 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).

- Members of the ‘Room for More’ segment were 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%).

- Members of the ‘Room for More’ segment were 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%).

**CALD profile:** Twenty-two percent of respondents in the ‘Room for More’ segment indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home. This is compared to 15% overall.
Profile of segment 4: ‘Under no circumstances’

Attitudinal statements: The proportion of respondents in the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment who agreed (i.e. sum of ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’) and disagreed (i.e. sum of ‘strongly disagree’ and disagree’) with each attitudinal statement is shown in Table 6. The statements have been listed in descending order based on level of agreement.

Table 6 Agreement with attitudinal statements: ‘Under no circumstances’ segment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There should be a strict limit on the number of people coming into Australia, whether they come legally or illegally</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants should follow the conventions of Australian society</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants should know English before they are allowed to come to Australia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think new immigrants should try harder to integrate with people outside their ethnic group</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally speaking, Australia has always been generous to immigrants</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry about violence between ethnic groups in Australia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry that migrant communities are changing the Australian way of life</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many asylum seekers get accepted into Australia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees get too much financial assistance form the government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry about the effect immigration will have on the Australian environment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants don’t want to assimilate or mix with people outside their ethnic group</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative to other nations, Australia has taken more than its fair share of immigrants and refugees</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m worried that some asylum seekers could be terrorists</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants often want to stick to their values and impose their beliefs on other people</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants want to come to Australia to build a better future for their children</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support the mandatory detention of asylum seekers</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large numbers of immigrants in a suburb or town brings crime and other problems</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism is a problem in Australia</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it’s possible for immigrants to be proud of their heritage and also loyal to Australia</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants from war-torn countries bring violence and tension to Australia.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a lot of different ethnic groups in our society has a negative effect on our sense of identity and community</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a strong sense of community among immigrants</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New immigrants only want to come to Australia to make money</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should encourage immigrants to move to regional and rural Australia rather than to the big cities on the coast</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asylum seekers bring diseases into Australia</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All immigrants should be able to maintain their culture without prejudice or disadvantage</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion should be a factor in deciding which immigrants are accepted into Australia</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia should be a multicultural society</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants have enriched the Australian way of life</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia has always been a world leader in racial equality</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants make for a more interesting society</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should accept immigrants even when they are from countries very different from Australia</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support immigration when it benefits Australia's economy</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am ashamed about the way immigrants from some countries have been treated in Australia</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia has a responsibility to accept refugees</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia needs more skilled immigrants</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a person is granted refugee status in Australia, their family should be allowed to immigrate too</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia can accept more refugees without reducing my quality of life</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia should provide refugees with more support</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support increased immigration</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have the resources to support increased immigration</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most important issue facing Australia: Respondents were asked, in a completely open-ended fashion, to list the major problems facing Australia today. The top five coded responses for respondents in the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment are shown in Figure 12, overleaf. Almost half (42%) of respondents in the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment reported at least one problem related to ‘Immigration/Refugees’. This was followed by ‘Environment’, which was mentioned by 25% of respondents.
Q. What do you think are the most important problems facing Australia today?

CALD base: n=15
Non-CALD base: n=221
Total base: n=236

A sample of uncoded answers from respondents in the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment have been provided below:

- Not enough done to discourage illegal entry of boat people, also length of time it is taking to process these people.
- Amount of boat people the government are letting in! Also the amount of the aged pension and the cost of utilities.
- Illegal immigration, terrorism, multiculturalism, welfare dependency, Labor government.
- 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.
- Too many other nationality are taking over born Australian jobs. Indigenous people are still living as third world people in their own land especially in the Northern Territory remotes.
Too many black immigrants and refugees, overpopulation, no employment, housing and so on for aussies because of the above....

Key demographic differences:

- Members of the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were significantly less likely to be aged 65+ (11%) when compared to the mean proportion in this age group (17%).

- Members of the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were 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%).

- Members of the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were 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%).

- Members of the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were 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).

- Members of the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were significantly less likely to have a Postgraduate Degree (6%) when compared to the mean proportion that have postgraduate qualifications (11%).

- Members of the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were 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%).

- Members of the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were 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%).

- Members of the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were 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%).
• Members of the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were significantly less likely to report having grandparents born in a country where English is not the primary language (20%) when compared to the mean proportion that reported having grandparents born in a non English-speaking country (28%).

CALD profile: Seven percent of respondents in the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home. This is compared to 15% overall.
Comparison of segments on key measures

This section examines whether respondents from different segments responded differently on key measures. The following measures are reported on: Experience of discrimination, sense of belonging, perceived level of racial prejudice (compared to five and 30 years ago), and trust of the media.

**Discrimination:** Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had experienced discrimination based on their skin colour, ethnic origin, or religion in the past 12 months. The results for all segments are shown in Figure 13. Whether or not respondents had experienced discrimination in the last 12 months did not differ significantly depending on segment membership, with between 10% ('Room for More') and 15% ('Fear of the foreign') reporting that they had experienced discrimination.

**Figure 13 Experience of discrimination by segment**

Q. Have you experienced discrimination in the last 12 months because of your skin colour, ethnic origin or religion?
CALD base:158
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base:n=1081
Sense of belonging: Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they had a sense of belonging in Australia. The results for all segments are shown in Figure 14. The vast majority of respondents, regardless of segment membership, indicated that they felt a sense of belonging ‘To a great extent’ (71%-87%).

Respondents in the ‘On our terms’ segment were significantly more likely to select ‘To a great extent’ (87%) when compared to the mean proportion that reported ‘To a great extent’ (80%). Respondents in the ‘On our terms’ segment were also significantly less likely to select ‘Only slightly’ (0% compared to a mean proportion of 4%).

Respondents in the ‘Room for More’ segment were significantly more likely to select ‘Only slightly’ (7%) or ‘I’d rather not say’ (2%) when compared to the mean proportions that felt this way (4% and 1%, respectively). Respondents in the ‘Room for More’ segment were also significantly less likely to indicate ‘To a great extent’ (71% compared to a mean proportion of 80%).

Figure 14 Sense of belonging by segment

Q. To what extent do you have a sense of belonging in Australia?
CALD base: 158
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base: n=1081
Level of racial prejudice (compared with 5 years ago): Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought racial prejudice in Australia is more, less, or about the same as it was five years ago. The results for all segments are shown in Figure 15.

Respondents in the ‘Fear of the Foreign’ segment were significantly more likely to think that racial prejudice had increased (60% selected ‘Much more now’ or ‘More now’) when compared to the mean proportion that felt racial prejudice had increased (44% selected ‘Much more now’ or ‘More now’). Respondents in the ‘Fear of the Foreign’ segment were also significantly less likely to think that racial prejudice was ‘About the same’ (31% compared to a mean proportion of 45%).

Respondents in the ‘On our terms’ segment were significantly more likely to think that racial prejudice had decreased in the past five years (17% selected ‘Much less now’ or ‘Less now’) when compared to the mean proportion that felt this way (9% selected ‘Much less now’ or ‘Less now’). Respondents in this segment were also significantly less likely to think that the level of racial prejudices had remained the same (53% compared to a mean proportion of 46%) or had increased (29% selected ‘Much more now’ or ‘More now’, compared to a mean proportion of 43%).

Finally, respondents in the ‘Under no circumstances’ segment were significantly less likely to think that racial prejudice had decreased in the past five years (4%) when compared to the mean proportion (9%).

Figure 15 Level of racial prejudice (compared with 5 years ago) by segment

Q. Do you think the level of racial prejudice in Australia now is more, less or about the same as it was five years ago?
CALD base: 158
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base: n=1081
Level of racial prejudice (compared to 30 years ago): Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought racial prejudice in Australia is more, less, or about the same as it was thirty years ago. The results for all segments are shown in Figure 16.

Respondents in the ‘Fear of the Foreign’ and ‘Under no circumstances’ segments were significantly more likely to think that the level of racial prejudice had increased (56% and 53% respectively) and significantly less likely to think that racial prejudice had decreased (25% and 22% respectively) when compared to the mean proportions that felt this way (42% for ‘Much more now’ and ‘More now’ and 32% for ‘Much less now’ and ‘Less now’). Respondents in the ‘Fear of the Foreign’ segment were also significantly more likely to think that racial prejudice had remained ‘About the same’ (17%, compared to a mean proportion of 24%).

Respondents in the ‘On our terms’ and ‘Room for More’ segments were significantly less likely to think that the level of racial prejudice had decreased in the past 30 years (31% and 32%, respectively) when compared to the mean proportion that felt this way (42%).

Respondents in the ‘On our terms’ segment were also significantly more likely to think that racial prejudice had decreased (46%, compared to a mean proportion of 32%), while respondents in the ‘Room for More’ segment were also significantly more likely to select ‘About the same’ (33%, compared to a mean proportion of 24%) or ‘I’d rather not say’ (4%, compared to a mean proportion of 2%).

Figure 16 Level of racial prejudice (compared to 30 years ago) by segment

Q: From what you know or what you have heard, do you think the level of racial prejudice in Australia now is more, less or about the same as it was 30 years ago?
CALD base: 158
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base: n=1081
Trust of the media: Respondents 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 all segments are shown in Figure 17. Between 62% (‘Fear of the Foreign’) and 72% (‘Under no circumstances’) of respondents in each segment felt that they could trust the media reports ‘Only slightly’ or ‘Not at all’. Respondents in the ‘Fear of the Foreign’ segment were significantly more likely to indicate that they trusted media reports ‘To a great extent’ (5% compared to a mean proportion of 2%).

Figure 17 Trust of the media by segment

Q: To what extent do you trust the information you receive on immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers in the media?
CALD base: 158
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base: n=1081
Comparison of CALD/Non-CALD on key measures

The following section contains a comparison of CALD and non-CALD respondents on key measures. Please recall that CALD status was defined using the following question: ‘Do you speak a language other than English at home?’ Respondents who indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home were defined as CALD and respondents who indicated that they did not speak a language other than English at home were defined as non-CALD. Respondents were also asked to indicate the language that they spoke at home. A breakdown of unweighted responses has been provided in Table 7, below. Please note that only languages mentioned by more than 10 respondents have been included in this table.

Table 7 Languages spoken at home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (not specified further)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatian</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrikaans</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discrimination: As mentioned above, respondents were asked to indicate whether they had experienced discrimination based on their skin colour, ethnic origin, or religion in the past 12 months. The results for CALD respondents, non-CALD respondents, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 18, below. Please recall 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 respondents were significantly more likely than non-CALD respondents to indicate that they had been discriminated against in the last 12 months, with 23% of CALD respondents reporting discrimination compared to 11% of non-CALD respondents. Overall, 13% of respondents in the “total population” sample indicated that they had been discriminated against in the past 12 months.

Figure 18 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)
Sense of belonging: As mentioned previously, respondents 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 19. Between 61% (CALD) and 83% (non-CALD) of respondents indicated that they felt a sense of belonging ‘To a great extent’. Non-CALD respondents were significantly more likely to indicate ‘To a great extent’ (83%) when compared to CALD respondents (61%). Non-CALD respondents were also significantly less likely to select ‘To a moderate extent’ (13%) or ‘Only slightly’ (3%) when compared to CALD respondents (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 19  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
Level of racial prejudice (compared to 5 years ago): As mentioned previously, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought racial prejudice in Australia is more, less, or about the same as it was five years ago. The results for CALD respondents, non-CALD respondents, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 20, below. Opinions on changes in racial prejudice levels over the past five years did not differ significantly between CALD and non-CALD respondents, with 44% of CALD respondents and 45% of non-CALD respondents indicating that prejudice had increased. Overall, 43% of respondents in the ‘total population’ sample indicated that racial prejudice had increased in the past five years.

Figure 20 Level of racial prejudice (5 years) by CALD status

Q. Do you think the level of racial prejudice in Australia now is more, less or about the same as it was five years ago?
CALD base: 452
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)
Level of racial prejudice (compared to 30 years ago): As mentioned previously, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought racial prejudice in Australia is more, less, or about the same as it was thirty years ago. The results for CALD respondents, non-CALD respondents, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 21, below.

Although respondents were spread fairly evenly across the response categories, there was a slight tendency among CALD respondents toward thinking that racism had increased (38% ‘Much more now’/’More now’, compared to 34% ‘Much less now’/’Less now’). Non-CALD respondents were also more likely to feel that racism had increased rather than decreased (43% ‘Much more now’/’More now’, compared to 32% ‘Much less now’/’Less now’). Overall, the total population was more likely to feel that racism had increased rather than decreased (42% ‘Much more now’/’More now’, compared to 32% ‘Much less now’/’Less now’). CALD respondents were significantly more likely than non-CALD respondents to indicate ‘I’d rather not say’ (6% and 1%, respectively).

Figure 21 Level of racial prejudice (compared to 30 years ago) by CALD status

Q. From what you know or what you have heard, do you think the level of racial prejudice in Australia now is more, less or about the same as it was 30 years ago?
CALD base: 452
Non-CALD base: 923
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)
Trust of the media: As mentioned previously, respondents 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 respondents, non-CALD respondents, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 22, below. CALD respondents were significantly more likely than non-CALD respondents to indicate that they trusted media reports ‘To a moderate extent’ (25% and 37%, respectively). Non-CALD respondents were also significantly more likely than CALD respondents to indicate that they trusted media reports ‘Not at all’ (25% and 16%, respectively). Overall, almost half of respondents in the ‘total population’ sample indicated that they trusted media reports on immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers ‘Only slightly’.

Figure 22 Trust of the media by CALD status
Comparison of immigrants on key measures

The following section contains a comparison of first- and second-generation immigrants on key measures. For the purpose of this study, respondents were defined as first-generation immigrants if they indicated that they were born in a country other than Australia. Respondents who indicated that they were born in a country other than Australia were then asked to recall their country of birth. A breakdown of unweighted responses has been provided in Table 8, below. Please note that only countries mentioned by more than 10 respondents have been included in this table.

Table 8 Country of birth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of birth</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
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Respondents were defined as second-generation immigrants if they indicated that they were born in Australia but either their mother or father was born in a country other than Australia. Respondents who indicated that their mother/father was born in a country other than Australia were then asked to recall their mother/father’s country of birth. Breakdowns of unweighted responses have been provided in Table 9 (mother) and Table 10 (father), below. Please note that only countries mentioned by more than 10 respondents have been included in this table.
### Table 9 Mother’s country of birth

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Discrimination: As mentioned previously, respondents were asked to indicate whether they had experienced discrimination based on their skin colour, ethnic origin, or religion in the past 12 months. The results for first-generation immigrants, second-generation immigrants, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 23, below. The total population sample has again been weighted to be nationally representative by age/gender/location but no weights have been applied to the first- and second-generation groups. As the total sample contains members of both groups, significance testing will only be performed between the first- and second-generation groups.

First-generation immigrants were not significantly more likely than second-generation immigrants to have experienced discrimination in the past 12 months, with 17% of first-generation immigrants and 16% of second-generation immigrants indicating that they had experienced discrimination. Thirteen percent of the general population reported experiencing discrimination.

Figure 23 Experience of discrimination by first/second generation immigration

Q. Have you experienced discrimination in the last 12 months because of your skin colour, ethnic origin or religion?
1st generation base: 501
2nd generation: 303
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)
Sense of belonging: As mentioned previously, respondents 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 24, below. 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 24 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
Level of racial prejudice (compared to 5 years ago): As mentioned previously, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought racial prejudice in Australia is more, less, or about the same as it was five years ago. The results for first-generation immigrants, second-generation immigrants, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 25. Opinions on changes in racial prejudice levels over the past five years did not differ significantly between first- and second-generation immigrants, with 42% of first-generation immigrants and 47% of second-generation immigrants indicating that prejudice had increased. Overall, 43% of respondents in the ‘total population’ sample indicated that racial prejudice had increased in the past five years.

Figure 25 Level of racial prejudice (compared to 5 years ago) by first/second generation immigration

Q. Do you think the level of racial prejudice in Australia now is more, less or about the same as it was five years ago?
1st generation base: 303
2nd generation: 504
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)
Level of racial prejudice (compared to 30 years ago): As mentioned previously, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought racial prejudice in Australia is more, less, or about the same as it was thirty years ago. The results for first-generation immigrants, second-generation immigrants, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 26. Thirty-nine percent of first-generation immigrants felt that racial prejudice had increased while 42% of second-generation immigrants felt that racial prejudice had increased. There was no significant difference between the responses of first-generation and second-generation immigrants on this question.

Figure 26 Level of racial prejudice (compared to 30 years ago) x first/second generation immigration

Q. From what you know or what you have heard, do you think the level of racial prejudice in Australia now is more, less or about the same as it was 30 years ago?

1st generation base: 303
2nd generation: 504
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)
Trust of the media: As mentioned previously, respondents 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 first-generation immigrants, second-generation immigrants, and a sample of the total population (including 15% CALD) are shown in Figure 27. First-generation immigrants were more likely, although not significantly so, to indicated that they trusted the media ‘To a moderate extent’ (37%) when compared to second-generation immigrants (28%).

Figure 27 Trust of the media x first/second generation immigration

Q. To what extent do you trust the information you receive on immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers in the media?
1st generation base: 501
2nd generation: 303
Total base: n=1081 (including 15% CALD)
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 respondents 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 Phase

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
Attitudes to immigration and multiculturalism across three decades

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.

In 1985, The Multiculture report concluded that the term ‘multiculturalism’ did not have widespread currency and that it carried strong connotations of transience; an experiment; a phase through which Australian society might pass.

Ten years later, such tentative attitudes had evaporated. The dominant view expressed in our 1995 report was that multiculturalism had changed Australian society forever, that these changes were irrevocable and that all this was ‘beyond our control’. A key theme in this report was that Australians (including immigrants who had become Australians) often felt as though multiculturalism was a concept or a theory that had been ‘preached’ but which had never been given the stamp of approval by the community at large. As one participant in that report put it:

Nobody asked me whether I wanted a multicultural Australia.

At this time, it was almost impossible to generalise about the Australian attitude to multiculturalism because Australians felt that they were adapting to this concept ‘on the run’. The 1995 Multiculturalism report revealed a vast array of attitudes not only towards multiculturalism, but towards the closely-related ideas of tolerance, immigration and assimilation.

Nevertheless, the general impression that emerged from the 1995 study was that the perceived disadvantages of multiculturalism (racial tension, fuelling of prejudices, creation of ethnic divisions, challenges to ‘our shared values’) outweighed the perceived advantages (evolution into a more interesting society, increased sophistication, greater diversity). It was certainly the case that participants in the study found it easier to speak of disadvantages than advantages, though it was also true that the strongest supporters of multiculturalism (who tended to be better-educated) were also the most articulate in their assessments.

This report showed that at one extreme, there were Australians that believed that we were creating ‘the best of all possible societies’, a place which was increasingly interesting, sophisticated and cosmopolitan.
I think multiculturalism is healthy. It makes people strive. Otherwise, we can get stale . . . we’d shrivel up and die.

Multiculturalism is really the only way. It’s an aspect of respecting the individual. No-one should have to discard what they grew up with. We should all pull together in as many different ways as we can . . .

Australia is a far better place now than it was thirty years ago. I’ll never forget what the Australians were like when I first arrived: brawls in the pub, six o’clock closing, and dancing in thongs and shorts. The Australian culture is still developing, but because of all the new people, it’s broadening its views of housing, dressing, social life …

At the other extreme, there was rejection of multiculturalism and undiluted racism. But more commonly this report showed that Australians exhibited a reluctant, resigned acceptance to changes in our society’s ethnic make-up. White Anglo-Saxon Australians often expressed a wistful yearning for a more ‘uniform’ society, but even they saw that the die had been cast and that they had to ‘make the best of it’. They accepted multiculturalism without being enthusiastic about it; they saw its advantages, without having sought them; they praised its effect on some aspects of Australian life while criticising others.

In other words, there was a great deal of variation in Australians’ attitudes on this subject and, in many cases, attitudes which appeared to be self-contradictory. Indeed, the conversations and discussions on which both the 1985 and 1995 studies were based were characterised by the extraordinary range of opinions expressed, and by attitudes which often seemed to off-set each other.

What also emerged in these reports was that while Australians liked to pride themselves, as individuals, on their absence of racism, racism was in fact ‘alive and well’ within the Australian community broadly; a fact some participants were bold enough to identify.

Australians are very racist. They say they are tolerant, but they are not. They object to other cultures talking in their own tongue. The average Australian isn’t open-minded at all.

Many of the criticisms of multiculturalism voiced in the 1995 study did seem to contain an element of racism, even where they were being presented as ‘rational’ points of view (such as in the control of disease, pressure on the welfare system or maintaining law and order).

I really think that immigrants have to be checked medically. TB is on the rage.

It’s the migrants who are ripping off the social security system for all they are worth. They know they can come here and go straight on the dole. They become expert at working the system.
I don't mind the Greeks and Italians, but the Asians all seem to congregate in their own little communities. That breeds racial tension, for sure.

Although several participants in the 1995 Multiculturalism study were prepared to describe themselves quite explicitly as ‘racists’, the more general position was that racism was unattractive and unacceptable … but also understandable.

People are going to have prejudices - there's no way we can escape from that. If people are uncomfortable about something, they say, ‘Oh I don't like it’ and it takes time to get used to the new thing. People have a right to their prejudices - as long as it doesn't hit you very hard, I can live with it.

Many of the attitudes reported in both the 1985 and 1995 study were symptoms of an ongoing accommodation to multiculturalism. Nevertheless, there were strong pockets of resistance to the concept, and a widespread feeling that ‘we are creating something we don't really understand’ (which, for some people, might turn out to be uncontrollable and destructive). Apart from the vague sense of threat to ‘our identity’, deeper concerns focused on the possibility that multiculturalism would turn out to mean ‘a series of sub-cultures’ or ‘ethnic ghettos’ and which, over time, could breed hostility and division.

However, 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).

As documented in the 1985 report *The Multiculture*, fear of the effects of migration on Australian society were not only based on the inevitable changes that would occur from the introduction of significant numbers of people from different ethnic backgrounds, but also on the widespread belief that migrants were actually setting out to change Australian values, attitudes and behaviour. There was very special resentment reserved for migrants who, having come to this country, acted as if they would like to change the way Australians think or act.

They're taking over the country. They come to live in our country and then they try to change it.

What gets up Australians' noses is that they upset the rhythm - waking Australia up from a deep sleep.

The ethnics are really taking over at St. Sebastian's. They are changing the church and a lot of Australians are pulling out because the migrants are the wrong kind of Catholic.

Underlying all such remarks was the quite widespread belief that migrants’ values were different from ‘our values’. Even if they were not necessarily judged to be inferior, the difference itself was thought to produce tension in Australian society and an inexorable shifting in the ethical status quo.

The 1995 *Multiculturalism* report echoed this concern. There was a troubling sense amongst the participants in that report that the impact of migrants’ ‘different’ values was contributing to the decline of already eroding values in Australian society. The growth of Asian and Muslim communities at the time was making it increasingly difficult to identify and define values that were seen as characteristically or quintessentially Australian.

We have this background based on the Christian ethic. How can anyone understand our music, art, literature or our laws without some background in the Christian religion? You have to understand Christianity to understand Australia.

We're losing our Australianess … whatever that is.
I think Australia is big enough to accept other cultures and the changes they bring . . . as long as the basic Australian standards don't change - the Christian family, giving people a fair go, and not the colour and race discrimination you get in other countries.

In 1995, there was a growing feeling that Australia was no longer culturally unique, and that the very concept of multiculturalism seemed to carry within it the idea of some distillation or fragmentation of the Australian value system.

We had a culture, and it's unique, and it's being diluted by all these little groups that are coming in.

Australia should be known as Australia, with its own independent culture. We shouldn't be known as bits and pieces from around the world. How do you get one culture out of that mixed bag that we've got? Too many cultures keeping their cultures going . . . that only makes it worse.

One aspect of this anxiety about changing identity was in relation to certain places transforming into enclaves, in which there was no longer room for 'Australians and their way of life'. Such localities had become so totally dominated by one or two ethnic groups that some participants reported the sensation of 'feeling like a stranger in your own country'.

We've got a mixture here and that's not too bad. But up in Cabramatta, you only see Vietnamese now - no-one else.

In Hercules Street, you're lucky to see an Australian. You become a stranger in your own country.

There's more migrants than Australians at our local school.

[See We worry about enclaves]

When people allowed their anxieties about multiculturalism free rein, they often expressed, as the greatest fear of all, the fear that 'white Anglos' would come to be treated as if they were just another racial group instead of the host community (or worse that they would be made to feel as if they were 'just another minority').

There's a kind of reverse discrimination going on. We have to be so tolerant and accommodating, but we don't expect the immigrants to act the same way. It's as if we are fitting in with them, rather than them fitting in with us.

I get pretty possessive about my own country. On the few times I have been approached by these racial gangs, I've thought, 'I'm being harassed in my own country' and that eats me.
I sometimes take a bus to Maroubra from the city, and I’m the only white sort of person on the bus. You do feel alienated. It’s a horrible feeling.

The threat to the Australian sense of identity and of being taken over was matched by the perceived threat to the Australian standard of living. In the 1985 report, the concern was expressed that one of the long term effects of multiculturalism would be the erosion of our material standard of living, particularly in the areas of employment and housing.

In the labour market, it was generally believed that migrants would accept wages and conditions which locals would regard as unacceptable. Being desperate for work, migrants were thought to be quite willing to reject union standards and to accept below-award wages and conditions.

My mother works in a shoe factory where there are Vietnamese who work through the tea break. My mother is scared that she will lose her job because the bosses like that. They never sit and gossip. They just get on with the job and even accept less pay.

They work harder than we do, which is fair enough in its way. But they don’t pay attention to the sort of conditions that we’ve established for ourselves over many years.

Of course employers love them - they are very willing to be exploited because they’ve often got two or three jobs going, and they’re saving like mad to get on their feet.

The same general feeling - that migrants would ‘put up with anything to get established’ - also applied to housing and accommodation. There was the general belief that migrants would tolerate substandard housing conditions, partly because ‘that’s what they’re used to’, and partly because of a broader strategy to be economical in order to set themselves up for the long-term.

The way whole families cram into accommodation meant for one or two people is really appalling. They are obviously doing it to save money until they can get properly established.

We feel that our standards are being lowered by the way they live. You wouldn’t share a house with your parents and brothers’ and sisters’ families.

One gets out of bed and another gets in. They share houses - whole families of them all in together. At the back of our house there’s a lot of them. I don’t really know how many live there. Why should we have to adjust to that?
Believing that many migrants would bring a quite different concept of housing standards from their home countries, Australians feared that the sheer volume of migration would have the inevitable effect of lowering the overall standard of housing in Australia.

In our suburb, property values have dropped by $20,000 in the past two years, and that’s because of what Vietnamese families are doing to the standard of the place. We had to get out before we lost any more money.

Property values in our district have tumbled, and that’s just because the Vietnamese have decided that they are going to take it over.

Anxiety about the effect of migration on Australian standards of living went beyond even the basic issues of employment and housing. There was also the fear that the general standard of behaviour of migrant groups was likely to be lower than acceptable standards in Australia. Migrant groups which attracted the most negative prejudices were often assumed to have an adverse effect on ‘law and order’ in Australia and would be responsible for a disproportionate amount of crime - especially crime involving personal violence.

We never used to have so many knifings and bombings.

We never used to have trouble at football matches until the New Australians got here and started attacking each other at the soccer.

It was not simply that people from non-Australian ethnic backgrounds were often assumed to be more ‘emotional’ and less stable than the typical Australian temperament; it was often believed that their apparently volatile and aggressive behaviour was due to deep-seated inter-racial tensions and political hatreds.

We’ve allowed the Croatian and the Slav populations to get out of hand, but how you solve the problem I don’t know. The government should make more of an effort, because we don’t want terrorist bombs in this country.

It doesn’t seem right that some of these people are bringing their political problems to Australia and carrying on with all their hatreds here. It’s nothing to do with us...

In sum, the general sentiment across reports over the last 25 years was that continuous ‘waves’ of migration (and the newest and most unfamiliar migrant groups) could threaten to alter Australian values and lifestyles 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.

In 1985, there was a widespread belief that the Australian government should have been exerting much tighter and more careful control over the rate and sources of immigration.

I think it’s time we closed the door to everyone except a few refugees.

I guess way back in the beginning we probably needed extra people, but not now. We’re being overran.

More of a trickle would be better. We seem to have a series of floods.

Five years later, as reported in the 1990 report The Australian Dream, the strong sentiment that ‘enough is enough’ was prevalent. While many participants were inclined to reflect on their history as hosts to waves of migrants with pride in generosity and tolerance, they were also inclined to believe the racial mix was now sufficiently diverse and that multiculturalism was significantly advanced.

We are quite multicultural enough, thank you very much.

I think that Australia probably doesn’t need to grow so fast. Why don’t we digest what we’ve got?

We have been very tolerant of multiculturalism, I reckon. But it is getting out of hand.

By 1995, with the recession clear in people’s memory, it was generally believed immigration should be called to a halt entirely until the economy could clearly absorb a fresh intake.

I’m not saying stop it forever ... I’m just saying we should pause and digest what we’ve got. I’m not sure how many people are coming in each year, but someone said that we are still bringing in enough migrants to fill a decent-sized town every year.

My impulse is to say, ‘enough’s enough’. We should be saying no for a while, until we try and get our own house in order. We needed immigration in the first place, to build up the country, but now it’s built. With the unemployment problem we have, Australia doesn’t need any more people.
The immigration debate continued into 1996. The Mind & Mood report in that year showed growing and continuing support for a severe limitation (or even a lid) to be put on Australia’s immigration intake.

*Personally, I’d like to see less immigration.*

*Couldn’t we just stop bringing migrants in, until the economy recovers? Aren’t we supposed to be in charge of our own destiny?*

*We should stop bringing them out for 10 years. Australia is in a slump with jobs. Look how much trouble our children are having getting a job.*

While the call for controlled immigration was strong and widespread, most Australians were generally uninformed about the level of current migration and on the basis on which migrants were brought into the country. Most acknowledged that they ‘don’t really know what the current immigration policy is’ and this lack of understanding was echoed across several reports over the 1980s and 1990s.

*What is the policy on immigration anyway?*

*I’m not exactly sure what the current frame of reference for our immigration policy is or how it works, what it prohibits or encourages.*

*I don’t know what the current level of immigration is, or what the restrictions are on particular countries. I don’t know if there is a current restriction based on qualifications.*

*I don’t know what the breakdown is now. I think it’s only about 10 per cent European.*

Nevertheless, the belief that Australia’s future prosperity hinges on control is one that has continued to hold currency with Australians over the past three decades.

In the 2009 report, entitled *The Future*, participants were asked to ponder their lives two, five and ten years into the future. While many were generally more positive about immigration than they had been in the 1980s and 1990s, their confidence hinged on their trust that Australia could control the process. Many felt immigration needed to be effectively managed in the future to ensure it strengthened rather than undermined Australia’s prosperity and culture.

*Multiculturalism is a good thing. But it has to be controlled.*

*You should control who comes in and only allow a certain number [of migrants]. We actually need trained people to do things. You only take refugees who you think will deliver a benefit.*
Similarly, the 2010 Future Focus report (conducted in conjunction with KPMG Australia) saw immigration and assimilation at the heart of discussions about the future of Australia. Some consumers expressed support for the positive and important contribution of migrants, past and present, and applauded the idea of more immigration in the future.

I think they have been a great addition to the Australian population. I am worried about any talk of winding back migration.

I am actually for immigration ... I see the positives. Skills, different people ...

However, these sentiments were, in general outweighed by concerns about the pace and nature of immigration and the social, cultural and economic toll of too much immigration, too soon.

Reducing immigration, that's good.

Even immigrants in the groups expressed anti-immigration sentiment.

I would like to see immigration cut ... now that I'm here.

A lot of foreigners. I'm not overly happy, even though I am one.

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. In The Multiculture study in 1985, there was a strong belief expressed that all migrants should be expected to rise to the challenge of rapid assimilation. 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.

Australians then believed that true assimilation demanded that migrants should also be prepared to ‘tone down’ or abandon their ethnic customs and traditions in favour of ‘the Australian way of life’. ‘Clinging’ to vestiges of national culture was seen as inconsistent with becoming a good Australian.

*My idea is that when you migrate, you should integrate and learn our customs.*

*They should be grateful to be here. Their culture should come second.*

*Those Turkish women, dressed from neck to knee ... why come to a new country and dress the same as the old country?*

Differences in behaviour, in dress, in speech, and in customs were often regarded as signs of reserve on the part of migrants almost as though any display of ethnic characteristics represented some rejection of Australia and some specific resistance to assimilation.

*Even buying food in a supermarket, you’ll find they buy their own food. They are just continuing the lifestyle they had in their own country.*

*They like living in congested areas in the inner city because that’s what they’re used to. They don’t like open space like we do.*

*She waves to me in the street and calls me ‘darling’. We wouldn’t do that.*

In the Multiculturalism study of 1995, this sentiment was echoed by those who felt strong resistance to any interpretation of multiculturalism that implied ethnic groups should be encouraged to preserve their ethnicity or insulate themselves from mainstream Australian culture.
The best immigrant is someone who has some education, who knows what's going on around them, can speak English, and someone who has respect for the people of Australia. You can't come into a country and keep your old ways. If I went to live in another country, I'd learn the language and try to fit in. A lot of older ones are still set in their culture after being here 30 years and I think that's wrong. They should at least make an effort.

The strongest arguments in favour of assimilation came from migrants who have become well-settled in Australia and who believe that, for them, assimilation was the key to making a success of their new lives.

The best migrants are those who want to integrate into our society.

When I came to Australia 35 years ago, it was a policy of assimilation.

Italians and Greeks . . . they blended in . . . they still tended to get together in their own areas, but they blended better ... 

Those involved in the 1995 Multiculturalism study made an important distinction between a ‘multiracial society’ and a ‘multicultural society’. Australians were proud of the extent to which their society had been built by different ethnic groups (though with a strong central core of ‘white Anglos’). Further, they liked the cosmopolitan features of Australian life which were, of course, a direct result of the influence of immigrants. Nevertheless, they believed that, in the end, every country should have ‘its own culture’.

I'm not saying that we don't like the influence of migrants. And I'm not saying that diversity is a bad thing. What I'm against is the idea of all these racial and ethnic groups being separate from each other, and preserving their own identity.

What very few Australians seemed to have considered were the problems of assimilation from the migrants' point of view. In the 1995 Multiculture report, occasional expressions of mild guilt suggested that Australians felt their own prejudices were somewhat unreasonable, but the much more general position seemed to be that assimilation was the responsibility of the migrant and that this responsibility flowed directly from the decision to come here in the first place.

Those who don't want to integrate just won't integrate. There's nothing you can do to make them feel part of Australia if their heart is still back in Italy.

Maybe we're not doing enough for them. Perhaps we should be putting them on courses where they can learn the culture as well as the language.

It's an individual thing. Some of them fit in very quickly, and some of them never fit in.
However, from the migrant’s perspective, becoming ‘Australianised’ was not half as easy as Aussies might wish. Further, deliberately shedding characteristics of one’s original nationality was neither attractive nor realistic. The migrant participants in the 1995 study agreed that the legal step of naturalisation was a formality rather than a conversion; it would often not reflect the true allegiance of the heart.

For many migrants - especially those who had come to Australia as adults - the question of ‘true nationality’ was highly emotional and confused. But the general conclusion to emerge was that, no matter where you may live, ‘you are always what you were born’.

*A piece of paper could not make me not be Italian.*

*I am very Italian and my children feel very Italian too. I didn’t come here of my own free will – I was brought here. I still feel like a guest in this country. On the other hand, people from the poor part of Italy – the south – feel very glad to be here.*

For Anglo-Australians in the 1995 *Multiculturalism* report, however, naturalisation was seen as the second prong of assimilation. They were inclined to think that naturalisation should be compulsory for any immigrants who were intending to settle permanently in Australia, particularly if they were going to make use of the social security system.

*I think after a certain period of time - maybe five years - they should have to become Australian citizens - and that means giving up their old citizenship. If they’re going to enjoy the benefits of this country – financial and otherwise - then they should be citizens of the country.*

*I can understand people wanting to retain links, but by and large, let them be Australian first.*

The picture was much more blurred in the case of migrants’ children who were born in Australia. Some children clearly claimed that they were fully Australian, whereas others continued to identify most strongly with their parents’ country of origin. Which of these two tendencies prevailed seemed to be largely a function of the attitudes and motivations of individual families. Factors influencing a family’s disposition to become Australian or remain ‘slashed’, that is, Italian-Australian, Lebanese-Australian, included the kind of welcome they felt they had received in Australia and, predictably, how attractive they found the Australian way of life as they came to understand it.

In some migrants’ homes, strong nationalistic propaganda was obviously maintained as part of a deliberate policy of keeping the children in tune with their national origins.
Some of my friends consider me Australian, some consider me Italian. If you ask me, I don’t know. In a competition between Australia and Italy, I go for Italy. But if it was between Australia and anywhere else, I’d go for Australia.

I hope that my children will eventually consider themselves Australians.

My children are very proud to be Italian but, at the same time, they believe Australia is the best country in the world.

It doesn’t matter what you want ... you'll never be accepted here – not deep down. Even after 30 years I feel that, and I'm sure my kids will too. You can never grow up feeling Australian. That's why we stick to our own Greek community.

In sum, 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

As mentioned previously, the idea of ethnic enclaves is one that has and continues to cause concern for Australians. In the Multiculture study of 1985, Australians were offended by any suggestion of ethnic ghettos arising from immigrants’ own desire to band together. Migrant families in the 1985 study were often accused of being ‘clannish’ and some national groups were thought to be very strongly committed to keeping themselves remote from Australian society. Australians were partly surprised and partly indignant that such barriers between ethnic groups and mainstream Australian society should be erected by the migrants themselves! Australians believed that if any gulf was to be maintained between “them and us”, then it should be a gulf of Australian design.

If there are going to be barriers, they ought to be erected by us.

My daughter has been invited to a naming day. It's very rare for outsiders to be invited in.

The ones who are born here are sent back to Greece to learn Greek and find a husband. We’re not good enough for them.

The tendency of migrant groups to congregate in specific locations was of particular concern.

If they are all going to live together in one suburb, what hope have they got of assimilating with the rest of us?

Springvale is now Chingvale. You can’t tell me that they are trying to integrate. They shouldn’t be allowed to settle in the one area and speak their own tongue.

The 1995 Multiculturalism study echoed the same sentiment.

They should strive a lot harder to mingle, and not have all these little communities everywhere.

They are creating little social ghettos ... look at Cabramatta.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Vietnamese migrants were regarded as more likely than any other ethnic group to band together and to form into communities which were virtually isolated from the mainstream of Australian life.
By the 2000s, Muslim immigration was under the spotlight. In the 2010 Future Focus study, concerns about more Muslim immigrants generated by mention of ‘Arab enclaves’ in one of the scenarios drafted as stimulus material were particularly intense. Many consumers felt that enclaves were already forming in some parts of Australia and saw this as evidence that some ‘new Australians’ were refusing to assimilate.

Is this going to lead to racial tension, with the enclaves?

Enclaves – that’s a red flag! We need people to assimilate!

Well, it looks like they’re making their own little communities anyway. So are they therefore isolating themselves from Australia.

However there was some recognition that it is human nature to want to be amongst people of similar culture, especially when one moves to a foreign country.

I've lived in the United States for an extended period, with the option to stay on, and I lived in an Australian ghetto. There was no language barrier, but we kept our customs running, including the type of meals we ate. We didn’t really attempt to assimilate. So I don’t think it's reasonable to force other people to do that... they will mix as they feel a need.

It's natural ... you can’t stop the Italians coming together.

If we went to the bloody Philippines, we’d stick together, wouldn’t we?

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’.

A lot of these gangs are racial, you know. When you let people develop as a little racial group, you find they are all too ready to pick on other racial groups. That has never been part of the Australian way of life...

When migrants stay in their own little groups, it creates friction. It would be better if they were integrated.

The family reunion scheme is part of the problem, if you ask me. Once one person gets here, we are encouraging them to bring their sisters and their cousins and their aunts... parents might be one thing, but it can easily get out of hand, and then you have another ghetto being set up.
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 1985 report *The Multiculture*, Turks and Yugoslavs in particular (and, to a lesser extent, the Lebanese) were regarded by some as having rather volatile personalities which led them to ‘boil over’, and to be associated with acts of violence and aggression.

> There’s a Yugoslav near here who’s quite mental and a lot of them are like him. If you go anywhere near his house - even park outside on the street - I’ve known him to come out with a knife. They’ve had the police to him a couple of times.

> Turks are all knife happy.

> I’d be watching Turkish migration very carefully - they are too volatile and too violent. When there are Turks around, you’re not so keen on going out at night.

There was also the view that other migrants brought political conflict to Australia and fermented disorder here by continuing their political struggles. In *The Multiculture* study there were comments that conflicts between Croatians and Serbians, for example, were quite rife in certain parts of Australia and to have introduced an unwelcome note of political extremism into a moderate and peaceful political culture.

> I’m sure they’ve got a lot of genuine grievances back in Yugoslavia, but it’s really nothing to do with us and they should leave all that behind when they come here.

Indeed, it was a quite widely-held view among participants across various studies that migrants from politically unstable countries where ‘violence is part of the way of life’ should be screened very carefully before being allowed into Australia.

> We don’t want to end up like Lebanon.

By 1998, as reported in *Mind & Mood*, there was a growing fear of crime and violence in the community. Every report of violent assault was taken as ‘further proof that Australia is experiencing a rise in violent crime’ and, in the opinion of many people in this study, that this was directly linked to an increase in Asian immigration.
The amount of crime might not have increased, but it’s publicised a lot more and it’s a lot more violent. There are more guns and knives ... I’m terrified of knives.

Don’t tell me there isn’t a crime wave. You hear too many stories to ignore. There is no way I would go out by myself at night. It’s not worth the risk.

As the focus has shifted to Muslim immigration over recent years, concerns about Muslim ethnic groups have increased. In Mind & Mood 2003, there was evidence that in Sydney, anti-Lebanese prejudice in particular was rife.

I was attacked by three Lebanese men, just out here in the street, who left me brain-damaged. The Lebanese run the streets behind Kings Cross. It’s like the Mafia, and it’s bred criminality in the Lebanese community. But you still can’t pre-judge anyone - there are bad people in every community and every race.

The thing that scares me more than drugs is the bashing that occurs with boys now. My son’s been bashed twice in the past 12 months. Is this a cultural thing that’s happening? There seems to be a lot of people in our country who don’t value life. I’m not saying you don’t get Aussies who are bad, but if you find out who’s behind a bashing, it’s probably not an Ausie. The majority of the really violent crimes around here are done by either Lebanese or Tongans. They’ve brought all their problems with them.

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 shouldn’t just let anyone come in here and walk all over us. They can bring their own culture with them, but they don’t have to impose it on us. And if they are coming to Australia to live, they should make some attempt to be assimilated into our culture. Why else did they come here?
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 documented in the 1988 *Being Australian* study, participants were resentful towards Asian migrants in particular for what was regarded as their abuse on the welfare and taxation systems, and for taking jobs which might otherwise have gone to Australians (or, similarly, places in educational institutions ahead of Australian students).

> If we’ve got such an employment problem, why do we want all these extra people?

> They come here and make a packet and send half of it home to their relatives. We are not benefiting from that.

> They are on to every welfare lurk you can think of.

The *Multiculturalism* report of 1995 showed the same concerns regarding what was perceived to be Australia’s overly generous provision of social security support and migrants’ exploitation of the system.

> So many go on the dole as soon as they arrive, and I don’t think that’s right. The government is too lenient. We’d get nothing if we went overseas [to their countries]. . . not a brass razoo.

> Let’s say you wanted to go over and join your mate in France. You can’t speak a word of French and you can’t qualify for work because you can’t get a work permit. We should do the same as the French - and the Americans and the Japanese. In England, you can’t walk in and get a job. It’s become a social security issue.

> The word must be out in Asia - you can come down here and be paid not to work! What a joke!

By 1998, the debate regarding the impact of immigration on employment continued to rage, with many polarised opinions emerging. The *Mind & Mood* report in that year revealed on the one hand, there were those who believed that it made no sense at all to bring more people into the country when there were not enough jobs available for those who were already here.

> I think it’s very unfair to bring migrants of any nationality into this country while so many of our young people are unemployed.
Immigrants may have added to our country in the past, but we’ve got too many now. We can’t cope. Look at the employment situation, for a start.

The trouble with immigrants is that they go straight on unemployment benefits as soon as they arrive. And before long, they’re living in a house a damned sight better than the one I’ve just paid off after 30-odd years.

On the other hand, there were those who believed immigration served to stimulate the economy by generating demand for housing, food, clothes, motor vehicles, etc.

By 2009, as reported in The Future, participants were expressing unease about increasing population growth in Australia via immigration and the pressure such growth would put on infrastructure and natural resources. Without appropriate planning and policies, they considered the consequences for our quality of life would be dire in the future.

Woman 1: Look how small we are compared to other countries.
Woman 2: But look at Sydney now. The traffic, the expensive houses. There is not going to be enough room.

It’s also got to do with the population and how much Australia is going to grow. If it does grow people will be less tolerant.

In contrast to this, some participants recognised that it was important to populate Australia to ensure a tax base for future services. Others were more philosophical about what they considered to be the inevitable change in the size and nature of Australia’s future population.

We have to fill the country up. We’ll never fill it up with the Brits and the Irish.

We are part of Asia. We can’t be predominately white forever.

What do they say? We’ll be 50 million by 2050? We’re going to get all refugees to build up our population.

Regardless of immigrants coming in, some participants asked questions about ‘where might they live’, expressing the view that less populous or resource rich areas of Australia should provide future homes for future migrants.

Man 1: If they weren’t Asians, we’d have to find someone else.
Man 2: Get them to live inland rather than at the coast line where everyone wants to live.
We can handle the population growth but it’s not what you do with the population, it’s where you put them. I think we’ve got it wrong. There’s plenty of room and water in the Northern Territory. Adelaide couldn’t handle much more.

Indeed, concerns were expressed about the strain population growth would place on our food and water resources. There was speculation about this worsening in the future.

**Man 1:** Way into the future, food is going to become a major issue around the joint. How we going to feed everyone, with more population growth?

**Man 2:** In terms of natural resources, putting pressure on food supplies in the next 10 years could cause conflicts in certain areas.

With the production costs of food in Australia, before too long we’ll be a net importer of food from places like China where they will grow their vegetables using human excrement as the fertilizer. That’s ridiculous.
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.

I’d like them to speak English. That used to be a requirement.

*If they are not going to speak our language, how can they call themselves Australian?*

I don’t care if they preserve their own culture in some ways, but they must be prepared to speak English.

Flowing directly from this view was the heightened sense of racial intolerance which Australians feel whenever they were confronted by someone whose English was not perfect (let alone competent).

*It’s hard to understand them on the phone ... I don’t even try to understand them.*

*My husband works in the GIO, and so many of them don’t understand what the forms are. He gets sick of them because they fill out the wrong thing all the time.*

As documented in the 1988 *Being Australian* report, the failure of any migrant (but especially Asians) to learn to speak English was regarded as a blatant indication of their desire to ‘continue in their own way’. Australians seemed increasingly angry about migrants who conversed in their own language, as though this represented a rejection of Australian language and culture.

*They won’t leave their culture back home. Why did they come here, if they are not prepared to learn the language and act like Australians?*

*Sometimes at the beach it’s hard to hear a word of English spoken.*

Whilst there was some acknowledgement of the difficulty of learning a foreign language (and that this difficulty increased with age), Australians were very critical of migrants who never managed to conquer the language barrier. Parents who simply relied on their children to act as interpreters for them received the harshest criticism.
The kids have to mature quicker if they speak English, but their parents don’t. They’ve got to take Mum to the doctor to explain what’s wrong with her, and go to the bank, or even to court. It’s really hard on the kids, and the parents should make a bit more of an effort.

An Italian builder comes in with his son or daughter to the bank and they fill in the forms. He may be a fantastic builder, but he can’t write English ... though I bet if you wrote in the wrong amount he’d soon tell you!

Such criticism was often based on the belief that migrants very quickly learned the Australian monetary system and that this indicated an ability to come to grips with the language much more quickly than generally happens. Indeed, it was sometimes believed that migrants’ failure to speak English stemmed from obstinacy rather than inability, that ‘they understand more than they let on’ and that their shift from English to their own tongue was often strategic.

You go into a room and they’re talking Australian. They switch to their own language when you come in ... you assume they are talking about you.

I think you’d be surprised at the number who can speak English, but who prefer to speak their own language. They have a tremendous advantage on me, because I can’t understand a word they’re saying, but they can understand me.

Very few participants in this study acknowledged the psychological pressures that might make migrants want to maintain fluency in their own language; such participants tended to be those who had travelled overseas or who had considered the possibility of living in a foreign country.

I can imagine why they do it – it’s for security.

If we went over there, we’d probably be looking out for someone who spoke the same language as us.

You’ve got to experience the other side of the coin to really understand.

However despite desires for instant assimilation, the clash of cultures and the difficulties of learning the English language were so stark that rapid assimilation felt impossible to most migrants. They agreed with the sentiment that language was the greatest single barrier to integration.

When I first came to Australia, all I wanted to do was fit in. A common language is very important. I object if other people speak another language while I am in hearing.
I tell my friends - learn English. It is very rude to speak Italian once you are here. There was also a perception that it would result in difficulties in terms of employment and perhaps enhance already existing discrimination.

Speaking English is a must. If you want the benefits of the new country, you’ve got to work at learning the language.

You suffer much less discrimination on the job if you can learn English quickly.

Even today, it still rankles with some that migrants do not appear to be learning English rapidly enough. In the 2010 Mind & Mood April report, some participants expressed an appreciation for diversity, while others continued to feel threatened and offended at hearing foreign tongues in their own country.

I hate being on the trams and not being able to understand what people are saying.

People need to learn how to speak English as soon as possible. A nation can’t be strong if there are too many languages. How will people communicate?

When you see the [university] students graduating, they’re mostly overseas students talking in their own language. They’re saying one, two, three in Cantonese, not English.

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.

There is nothing remarkable about the fact that a host community will always tend to be rather nervous about the arrival of “outsiders” in its midst. Once people have achieved tribal connections with each other, thereby creating a classic in-group, the tendency always exists to remain aloof from – or even hostile towards – people who are perceived as being part of an out-group.

Predictably, participants believed that the ethnic groups who had assimilated most readily into Australian society were those with the longest history of migration. British migrants were, of course, seen as being the easiest to integrate (simply because they are ‘just like us’).

Italians and Greeks were singled out as generally the most ‘Australianised’ of the non-British migrant groups. This was generally attributed to the long history of Italian and Greek migration, as well as to the fact that, being European, Italians and Greeks were never as ‘alien’ as some other national groups may appear.

At the other end of the scale, Vietnamese migrants have suffered a double penalty: in the 1985 study they were the newest arrivals and therefore the object of the freshest prejudices; and their difference in appearance (especially skin colour) made them appear to be much less easily assimilated into Australian society than European migrants. At this time, anti-Asian prejudice was at its most virulent in the case of Vietnamese.

I’d like to know what the real facts are about Asian migration, but you only have to look around you to see that they are coming here in droves.

Even the Greeks and Italians wouldn’t have assimilated as well as they have if they had different colour skin or if they looked as different from us as the Vietnamese do.

However, participants were often at pains to point out that their feelings about recently-arrived Asian migrants (especially Vietnamese) contrasted sharply with their feelings about long-established Asian migrants (particularly Chinese who have been here for many generations).
Some of the Chinese have been here longer than we have and no-one worries about them being here.

Some Chinese migrants have become totally Australianised and they even speak with an Aussie accent.

For migrants who themselves have been the target of racism in the past, the question remained: are we treating today’s new migrants in the same way that we have treated migrants in the past? One group of first-generation Italian migrants in the 2010 Mind & Mood October report passionately debated this question.

**Man 1:** When we first came here, you didn’t like to be called a dago. You didn’t like to be picked on. I know I had bad experiences. When I was riding my bike down the street and an Australian guy yelled at me ‘Go back to your country, go back you wog, you dago’. He had a go at me and hit me in the eye. I went berserk ‘cos I was a little dago from Italy. It’s happened to us.

**Man 2:** But I’m sure 50 years later, I don’t think it’s like how you were treated 50 years ago … it was a different time. Today we don’t treat those Muslims the same way you were treated 50 years ago.

**Man 1:** If you have a look at this table around here, that’s exactly how they’re getting treated. I can sense it.

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?

As outlined in the 1985 *The Multiculture* report, 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.

It was a widespread stereotype that immigrants ‘work harder than the rest of us’. Older participants in the *Multiculturalism* study remember having said this about post-war immigrants from Italy and Greece, and it was certainly a widely held view about Asian immigrants.

It was often assumed that immigrants ‘work so hard’ because they were determined to make their way in a new country.

A lot of people think migrants come over here and take jobs and careers from Australians, but I think they work extra hard and come over with more intelligence than some of the people here.

The fact that we have a lot of immigrants here contributes to unemployment because a lot of immigrants are prepared to work and a lot of Australians aren’t. Immigrants have their stores open twenty four hours a day, whereas Australians won’t serve you five minutes after closing time.

People come here and are prepared to work to do well for their families ... they will do the jobs no-one else wants to do, and work the hours no-one else wants to work, and Australians possibly resent that. People who don’t speak English don’t have much option but to do these menial jobs and work long hours ...

The migrants in *The Multiculture* study were acutely conscious of the importance of performing well at work in order to gain the approval of Australians and in order to establish contact with the Australian community. Work was seen as a place where the Australian language, Australian customs and Australian attitudes could be more easily absorbed than elsewhere. As one man in that study put it:

Work is where you have your most contact with pure Australians, so we’re careful to do more than is expected of us.

Migrants believed that they were much more likely to be accepted in the work environment if they were the only non-Australian in a work group. They recognised that if they ‘gang up’ with others of their own nationality, an ‘us and them’ mentality would quickly develop.
When you're part of a group of people of one nationality, that's when Australians start to resent you.

Migrants noted that Australians seemed to have very different attitudes to work from their own. They were inclined to be rather defensive about the Australian accusation that they were taking jobs away from Australians: although they denied that this is true, they did believe that they were prepared to work harder than Australians are.

I worked at a lot of different places, and the attitude of the people was more or less the same at all of them. I was accused of taking Australians' jobs, but I couldn't work that out because jobs seemed to be quite plentiful.

You got in trouble if you worked hard.

Based on the views of those immigrants who participated in the Multiculturalism study, it was clear that work was, indeed, regarded as the single most important means of overcoming the fundamental insecurity of moving to a new country.

The job is important. The money is important, but so is the friendship, and learning the language and getting yourself established. We bought a house, then we moved to a better house. We could not have done any of these things if we had stayed in the village back home. Of course it was hard, but we were willing to work hard ..."

Sometimes, I don't think Australians realise what a wonderful country they have got here. If they knew, they might be prepared to work harder to keep it the way it is. When we came here, we knew we had to work hard to get ourselves established in a new country. And now we have done it. We are very proud, and we are very proud to call ourselves Australians.

Such attitudes are, of course, complex, because they reflect some Australians' own attitudes to work. 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 1985 The Multiculture report, participants were for the most part disapproving of skilled migration policies.

Immigration has to be far more balanced than it has been to date. So far it’s gone for people who are super-qualified. In all my travelling around, the number of times I’ve gone to a hospital and found an Indian or a Chinese or some other bloody doctor, rather than an Australian doctor ...

However, by 1990 as reported in The Australian Dream, 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.

Why don't we take a leaf out of some other countries' books? We seem to just let anyone come in here, as if we are desperate for more people.

By 1995, participants in the Multiculturalism report showed greater interest in knowing more about the qualifications required to be accepted as an immigrant. At this point, there was widespread support for the idea that migrants should be qualified on the basis of the skills they would bring to Australia, or the wealth they could contribute.

I think we have to be more selective, and choose people who are going to contribute in some way. Not necessarily academic people ... we don’t want to add to unemployment, so we should only have those with a definite prospect of a job.

We should only allow in those with specialised skills who can help our country. Not just scummy people who live off the government. We can be choosy now, with unemployment so high.

Immigration should be tied in with housing and the financial state of the country. They should be able to find jobs and support themselves.

Several years later, this view has continued to resonate. In Mind & Mood 2008, many participants recognised that, due to our relatively small population and current skills shortage, the economy required a healthy stream of workers from other countries.

We need them though, don’t we?

The IT industry is full of third world country people – Asians, Indians, which is great for us.
I’ve just sponsored two South Africans to come over, electricians. Alex brought over 25 Korean welders to finish his job over here for up north last week. It begs the question, is immigration good for Australia? There’s an argument that every migrant that comes here takes a job from an Australian, but then there’s also the argument that every immigrant that comes out here creates four jobs.

An important distinction was made between skilled and unskilled labour in the Future Focus report of 2010, with skilled labour considered important and unskilled labour perceived as a drain on scarce resources..

Wouldn’t it also mean tightening up immigration, not letting any Joe Blow come in? People who are skilled and would help Australia. Like back in the ‘80s, or the ‘60s when all the Greeks and Italians came in. They were awesome, they were like painters and plumbers and got all the electrical trades going and stuff like that. That’s when the building trade boomed. Why not go back to that?

Get the mixture right – we can’t be a free-for-all. Let’s attract the best to Australia.

There was also some anxiety about the economic and social impact of ‘temporary workers’. Would they contribute enough to the domestic economy and our society? Would their desire to work for minimum wage undermine the wages and conditions of permanent residents?

If they’re talking about a strong flow of temporary workers, they’ll take their money and go. Opportunists. There’s no money being put back in the country. It will all go back overseas.

I’m not sure about the strong flows of Pacific Islanders and South East Asia. How are they going to police that? Temporary workers. I don’t like the idea of that. They come here and then stay beyond their visas.

Ultimately, participants recognised that a skills shortage would cause significant problems in the future.

I suppose the skills shortages is a big worry. There will be areas without certain skills. That will be a big downfall.

In sum, with a growing appreciation of the skills shortage in Australia and our relatively low birth rate has come 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 both in The Multiculture and Multiculturalism reports 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. Some participants were supportive of refugees and clearly opposed to the policy of mandatory detention.

If people are going to cram onto boats and starve to get here, they must need to get away from where they are and start a new life. They are just as deserving as anyone else ... I don’t think they should be sent back, or kept in detention.

I have trouble thinking about what we should do about refugees. It’s probably not economically sustainable to let all of them stay, but if I was a refugee who managed to get to Australia and then got turned back ... God! After all you’ve been through ...

I feel very much for those in places like concentration camps near Darwin, waiting to get in. You can’t send people back to places that aren’t safe.

However even those who were supportive in principle had other doubts.

I think we should accept some refugees, because you like to think that if you were in that position yourself, and you needed somewhere to go ... but it’s a problem knowing who’s a genuine refugee and who’s just using it as a cover [to get in].

I don’t agree with the boat people. I think that initially a lot of them were refugees - desperate - with terrible stories - but not so much now. But I still don’t believe in them staying in Port Hedland for years ... we should quicken up the process of assessing them and send them home if they are not genuine.

It’s a conflict. Compassion is part of our Christian belief, but where does that finish? Half of me says, ‘The poor boat people’, but how many do we allow to come in? When do we say we can’t keep being compassionate because our country has enormous problems of its own?
The Mind & Mood report of 1996 showed that while there remained great compassion for refugees who had to cope with appalling conditions to get here, there were also signs of completely unsympathetic attitudes.

Send the boat people back where they came from, or blow them out of the water before they even get here.

They should blow the boats up when they’re on their way over, because more and more are coming.

Nevertheless, some expressed sympathy not only for the plight of refugees but, indeed, for the whole process of immigration, for the immigrants themselves.

You don’t realise how good you’ve got it until you see the way some of these people have had to live.

Just imagine what it would be like if you had to go to another country and try to start your life all over again. I think we can afford to be a bit more tolerant.

In the 2002 Mind & Mood study, anxieties about invasion from dispossessed people to the North was reinforced by constant media reports about ‘the illegals’. For some, this source of threat was real, immediate and frightening.

Don’t you think everyone’s attitudes to migrants changed a little after September 11? Because there’s a little thought back in there, ‘Who are we letting in? We can’t find work for our own, much less all these new people, and the government is spending millions on them. They should be sent back on the first plane.’

Up until the last 20 years, the majority of our immigrants would have been Christians, but now we’re getting a mix of religions, and there’s more tension.

Such comments served to fuel existing prejudices and reinforce anti-immigration sentiment.

They’re letting just about anyone in now, to take our jobs.

With all the different races that are coming here now, you start to feel inferior in your own country.

These boat people are lower-class citizens. They go on the pension straight away.

We should be picking the brightest and best of those four thousand refugees, the ones we need and send the rest off. It’s survival of the fittest.
The thought of ‘the boat people’ also served to spark debate about Australia’s population policy and about how many people were needed to sustain Australia’s security and prosperity.

I have concerns about the low birth-rate here because of what's happening in the rest of the world. We need a population explosion. I feel it's like a vacuum in Australia. The numbers make me feel very nervous. We can't expect to keep living like this. It's naive to think so. It will be corrected by someone else if we don't correct it and take charge of it.

Tides always turn. It's against nature to live in idyllic circumstances forever. If we accept these refugees and look after them, it will pay off in the long run.

In the future, we'll need an army to defend our space.

Fears about not being able to hold back projected ‘floods of illegals’ has continued to grow, as evidenced in the 2009 The Future report. Participants in this study showed a certain degree of hostility towards those described as ‘boat people’ and the ethics of ‘accepting them’ into the country.

**Man 1:** And then you’ve got these boatload people coming in. Bringing in disease.

**Man 2:** And going straight to Centrelink. You take the humanitarian stance, but you end up wearing it.

I personally believe that every country should have control of the people that come in. All these boat people, we’re having trouble for no good reason. They should send them back to Sri Lanka in two minutes.

I was living in Melbourne and Pip was involved with a lot of Afghans. What happens is part of a family come in and live here and it’s all legit. But then their friends want to come by any means. They’ll sneak in the back way if they can.

In sum, 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 in the 1985 Multiculture study, they generally seized on food as the most tangible and laudable benefit.

Thank God for Lygon Street!

Cuisine is better as a result of migration. Imagine being stuck with steak and two veg forever.

One thing you can’t help noticing is the different sorts of food that come from the ethnic people. Once upon a time we didn’t eat zucchini or button squash. Their food is all in our shops, and we’re starting to eat some of it.

There’s no doubt our eating habits have changed. We’ve probably got better diets now - that’s one way we’ve benefited from multiculturalism.

In the 1988 Being Australian report, an appreciation for the cultural enrichment which migration brought to Australia (particularly regarding the introduction of new food to the country) was also mentioned.

The Greeks and Italians have given us a lot of new types of food. These days, a snack often means a pizza. It will soon be the same with Asians ... they will make their mark. Look at all the Thai restaurants springing up. And Vietnamese, as well.

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. Occasional comments were made in praise of migrants’ contribution to ‘our culture’ or to ‘the arts’. But, for most, such contributions were either invisible or unappreciated, whereas pizzas, pasta, and Greek, Lebanese and Asian dishes had all made a significant impact on the Australian diet. Food was the most obvious symbol of the multicultural.

As documented in the Multiculturalism report of 1995, even the most vociferous critics of multiculturalism at the time were inclined to concede that greater ‘ethnic influence’ on the Australian diet had generally been a good thing.

Remember when all we used to eat was chops and sausages with potato and peas? A salad meant lettuce and tomato, with a bit of tinned beetroot. Look how different it is today!
With multiculturalism, you find out a lot about other cultures. I've got to like all different food ... Indian, Italian, Chinese and even Japanese.

Australians are eating a lot more Asian than they used to. They used to be scared it was rabbit.

You go down to the Food Court now and there are so many types of food there: Lebanese, Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Malaysian, Indian ... When we were teenagers, there was only a choice of fish and chips or hamburgers.

Clearly, some felt that they had become more accommodating in their attitudes towards migrants and multiculturalism as a direct consequence of experimenting with and mastering ethnic food.

I used to feel that it was really mysterious when I went into the Chinese grocer in Ashfield. Then I did a course, and now I know what everything is . . . it makes a huge difference.

Of course, no attitude was absolutely universal and attitudes to food were no exception.

I've got something against the food. The smell of Indian food knocks you over . . .

In sum, when participants reflected on the positive impact of immigration on their own lives and society in general, they 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.

    My father used to call them 'reffos' and 'Baits'.

    The generation we grew up in is more tolerant than my father's generation. He grew up in a small country town and he's the biggest bigot under the sun.

    In 20 years, all these separate cultures will have mixed ...

    There’s more of a conscious effort these days to instil tolerance.

    Our parents didn’t want to know ... they had shocking slang names for the different races ... these days, the kids at school don’t give anyone a hard time.

Participants in The Multiculture study readily acknowledged that they and their parents had been far more racially prejudiced in the past than in the present. However, they often forgave themselves such prejudice by referring to prejudice between ethnic groups which, they claimed, was often far more virulent and nasty than their own prejudices.

    Greeks don’t like inter-marriage with Italians. We think they are all the same, but they’re not.

    If you think we’re racist, you should hear what some of the Europeans say about Asians.

    Wogs call wogs ‘wogs’.

The evidence of The Multiculture study suggests that active prejudice in the past may well have abated, but it had certainly not been replaced by genuine tolerance. Rather, it had been replaced by a kind of ‘passive prejudice’: whilst many would not condone persecution of migrants, they were certainly not disposed to be as generous or accommodating to them as towards fellow ‘Australians’. The impression to emerge was of a somewhat uneasy co-existence rather than genuine tolerance arising from actual assimilation.
Yet, paradoxically, participants described themselves as, by nature, tolerant, easy going, relaxed and accepting. They believed that it was part of the Australian character to accept people at face value and not to make judgements on the basis of race, colour or creed. The reality was clearly different from this, yet participants were quite capable of basking in the self-description of ‘tolerant’.

Compared with most other races and most other countries, I think we are a really tolerant lot.

We’re much more tolerant of religious groups in Australia than in other parts of the world.

We don’t have the bigotry of the UK or India.

Religion is a non-issue here, that’s why we accept all these strange sects and cults.

We’re remarkably tolerant - we don’t go round desecrating churches.

However, the riots in Sydney’s Cronulla brought to a boil a situation that some participants in the 2006 Mind & Mood study said ‘had been simmering for years’ and triggered discussion of racism and tolerance that extended way beyond ‘the Shire.’ Some participants spoke of ‘an undercurrent of racism in Australian society’; some believed that the flare-up was the product of too much tolerance rather than too little; some wondered whether the police were at fault for ‘turning a blind eye’ to ethnic gangs for years and for ignoring excessive drinking ‘on the day.’.

Australians do have this underlying racism but people won’t talk about it.

We’re racist but were also tolerant, perhaps too tolerant. That’s how it all came about. You can only see it happening for so long and just stand by and not do anything until you get jack of it.

They’re applying their values and it’s not measuring up to our rules. They are welcome to their cultural beliefs but they can’t treat women as second class citizens and stuff like that.

Some people, watching the Cronulla riots with horror from other parts of Australia criticised the Federal government for appearing to give tacit approval and even encouragement to racist elements in the community.
The Tampa incident really legitimised racism in this country. From that time it’s been okay to speak out against other races. Before that people might have had an opinion about other races, but you kept it in your back pocket. Now it’s almost okay to be racist; it’s like the government’s given you permission.

It’s all been pretty laid back – until now. Now we have comments from people like Peter Costello targeting Muslims. You get the impression that the government would prefer to have a monoculture.

Some Australians believe that ‘multiculturalism’ has been more successful and harmonious in Melbourne than in Sydney.

It’s a real shame. You don’t want to get to the point where the cops have got to be rough to have law and order. How do you fix it? How do you get the community together and sort all that crap out? It’s about taking responsibility, you know. I have got a friend from Melbourne and he says in Melbourne there is no segregation. It’s a real mixture of cultures down there. Like you know how we have Leichhardt for the Italians, Maroubra for the Greeks, Cabramatta for the Vietnamese, Fairfield for Latinos whereas in Melbourne they’re all mixed in. They don’t have issues like that because there is no massive Aussie group, there is no massive ethnic group. They’re just all over the shop.

By 2010, as documented in Mind & Mood April, racism was a persistent tension. Media reports of several incidents of allegedly racist acts of violence against Australia’s Indian community again brought issues of race, multiculturalism and immigration to the fore. Nevertheless, compared with the perceived ethnic tensions of other nations, Australians still prided themselves on living in a more tolerant and welcoming society.

Australians are very generous about the way we welcome people into our community. We embrace them. We are just fantastic. We really look after them. Maybe too generous.

**Woman 1:** My kids play football with a whole lot of refugee kids. And my kids look at them and just see them as kids. But there are kids that still see them as different.

**Woman 2:** It’s the parents!

Some participants were inclined to blame the media for inflammatory reporting of incidents involving Indians – reporting that they gave distorted accounts of events in an attempt to portray Australians as racist..

**Woman 1:** What about the media? Are they blowing it all up? All these incidents seem unrelated.

**Woman 2:** The media are terrible.
They interviewed Indians on the television and they said they didn’t find Australia to be a racist country.

I know this is going to sound racist but I hate it how every time an Indian scratches himself, that an Australian, a white person is accused of doing it. The Indian Press are saying that with this guy that killed the little boy, the Australian police are setting him up. I mean that’s ridiculous.

Those Indians complaining they get bashed. More Australians get bashed every day than Indians.

Participants were also questioning ‘How much more can we tolerate?’ A long-held fear of difference and social division was escalating into outright resentment that Australia’s institutions, systems and traditions were under threat. There was a perception the status quo was being challenged and the cultural integrity of the ‘Anglo’ was at risk of domination. Fearful their own culture, beliefs and traditions could be marginalised, participants wondered just how much more acceptance and accommodation of ‘otherness’ would be required.

Man 1: It was open day at Lakemba Mosque on the weekend. Did anyone go?
Man 2: I heard they were suggesting they bring in Sharia law here.
Man 3: Imagine us going there asking they introduce some form of an English justice system. It’s all one way.

I don’t like people that come here expecting that we should have to conform to how they are. Whilst I have a respect for a country when I go over there, like if I go to Turkey you have to dress conservatively, I find it hard to take when people come to Australia, very pleased to have you like rock out, but it needs to be reciprocated.

In sum, the dominant view over the last three decades is that while racism still exists in Australia, Australians are more tolerant that they used to be and more accepting and less racist that people from other cultures.
Can personal relationships with migrants be a catalyst for change?

The 1985 study *The Multiculture* found that, predictably, anxieties about multiculturalism were often broken down by close, personal contact with individuals and families from migrant backgrounds – in the neighbourhood, at school (see *Children are the great hope*), in the workplace (see *Do migrants work too hard*) 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.

> It depends on the individual. I’ve met a lot of them, and I think the way you treat them is how they’ll treat you.

> If you make friends with them, you have a friend for life.

> We have a Chinese doctor who’s lovely and kind to the old people.

> I do get upset by them in groups, but I’m quite good mates with a few individuals. After a while, you don’t notice that they are ethnic.

In the neighbourhood, participants in *The Multiculture* study asserted that their theoretical position was that they were perfectly prepared to face the prospect of migrants as neighbours. Indeed, those who had experienced the arrival of ‘ethnic’ neighbours often claimed that they turned out to be very good neighbours, ‘once you get to know them’. In ones and twos, migrant neighbours were often seen to be a pleasant surprise.

> We have a good Italian family as neighbours. They are an asset to the country.

> We have Chinese and Italian neighbours. Nicer people you couldn’t meet.

> The Korean family across the road - she always gives me Christmas presents and she loves our kids. Always waves to them. You get good and bad, the same as everyone else. I’ve got fantastic migrant neighbours who were really good to Mum and me.

Nevertheless, there was a predisposition to assume that a significant influx of one racial group into a street or suburb was very likely to lower the tone of that suburb (and its property values) (see above on enclaves).
When it came to being ‘neighbourly’, migrants were highly sensitive to the attitudes of Australian neighbours. They believed that whenever they moved in next door to Australian neighbours, they were bound to encounter initial prejudice, and even hostility.

_Our next door neighbour hates us - I don’t know why._

Migrants appeared to be very sensitive about whether their friendships with Australians were, in fact, genuine or merely polite. Certainly, in social contexts, they expected to encounter prejudice and were very pleased and relieved when it was either mild or absent.

The issue of personal relationships between Australians and migrants (most notably in the case of inter-marriage) was often regarded as the ‘acid test’ of the real prospects for a multicultural Australia. Faced with the prospect of a family member developing a close relationship with someone from another culture, most ‘old Australians’ seemed prepared to adopt a ‘wait-and-see’ attitude but with definite signs of reserve. Although ‘the quality of the relationship’ was generally mentioned as being a more important factor than nationality, there was often a clear underlying assumption that the best prospect for a close, romantic relationship, would be with someone from one’s own culture.

_It’s hard to know until it happens to you._

_If you were really in love, you’d do it._

_I’d like to think it wouldn’t worry me. That it might even enrich our family._

_You’re unlikely to fall for someone who’s just off the boat - but possibly someone who’s been here a while._

One factor thought likely to militate against inter-marriage between Australians and some ethnic group was the wide gap between customs relating to courtship and marriage. Australians (particularly men) were thought to be rather impatient with the more ritualised and romanticised approach to courtship and marriage which was characteristic of many European ethnic groups, and this was thought likely to lessen their chances of marrying into a migrant family. Australian impatience with ‘foreign’ courtship customs extended, predictably, to the view that ethnic groups ought to conform more closely to Australian practices once they had come here to live. Indeed, customs relating to courtship and marriage were often regarded as a significant symptom of the way in which migrant communities held themselves aloof from mainstream Australian culture.

_Their children sometimes rebel against the idea of arranged marriages. They want to be like us._
I know an Italian girl who’s only allowed out if a chaperone goes along.

In Yugoslav families, the second daughter is not allowed to go out with boys until the first daughter is married or engaged.

A friend of Angie’s has Greek parents and even though she’s a fifth year medical student, she wouldn’t let Alan tow her car home for her until she checked with her father first.

Yugoslav men are so slimy … always wanting to hold your hand and saying they love you.

In The Multiculture study, there were mixed reports of the results of inter-cultural marriages which had already taken place. Some people claimed to have observed serious difficulties within these marriages as ‘proof’ that inter-marriage between Australians and migrants was bound to create problems.

Our girls are attracted to Egyptian men. They’re very good looking and the Aussie men are too much at the pub. They're very attentive until they get married, and after that the wife walks 10 paces behind.

I think it was a mistake for my niece to marry an Indonesian. She met him while she was on holiday over there and he had lived quite a primitive life.

Others, however, were quite optimistic about the potential for the success of inter-cultural marriages, in spite of the general assumption that some ‘culture shock’ will be suffered.

My sister married an Italian. He was an outcast at first, but now the family accepts him.

I’d be happy to go round any time to the in-laws’ for a Japanese meal.

Attitudes towards courtship and marriage between Australians and migrants captured much of the complexity of attitudes towards the whole concept of the multiculture. Repeatedly, participants in this study struggled to express tolerant and accommodating attitudes towards the prospect of someone from another culture entering their families as a marriage prospect or partner. Yet, at a deep level, emotional reservations persisted.

Certainly, the general principle of inter-marriage was easier to accept than the specific possibility of ‘having it happen to me or someone in my family’. Yet, as in so many other areas of life, actual experience of the event tempers the attitude towards it.

I still hate the idea of inter-marriage. My sister’s grandson is marrying an Asian girl. She’s a nice girl, but my sister can’t stand the idea.
The next generation might accept it, but it's harder for our generation.

In the future, everyone will marry everyone else. We won't be here.

As might be expected, older Australians had less flexible attitudes on this point. But, as the foregoing comments suggest, even they accept the inevitability of marriage patterns gradually changing to reflect multicultural realities.

On the subject of marriage, the migrants in this study had little to say beyond the repeated suggestion that it is ‘more natural’ to marry someone of similar cultural background. Nevertheless, several references were made to the reluctance of Australians to be prepared to show interest in marrying people from ethnic backgrounds: again, this was often regarded as ‘natural’, even if a bit sad.

Among Greeks and Italians, it was clear that problems associated with schooling and with courtship were receding. Older Greek or Italian migrants reported that their own experience in school was very much worse than their children’s, and that active racial prejudice against them in the 40s and 50s was now nothing more than a distant memory. Such accounts confirmed the view of Australians that ‘the multiculture’ was an evolving reality, whether they liked it or not.
Children are the great hope

In 1985, the shock of having ‘aliens’ in their midst had quite significantly diminished for participants in The Multiculture study, in spite of widespread anxiety about the long-term effects of immigration on Australian society and in spite of very sharply focused anxiety about the rate of Asian immigration at the time. Each identifiable ‘wave’ of immigration seemed to need a complete generation to pass before any emotional acceptance could really develop.

*People used to stare at New Australians 30 years ago. Now we’re more used to them.*

*We used to sling off at Italians and Greeks but now we’re used to them. My son goes to school with their sons.*

Particularly in the case of Greeks and Italians, participants acknowledged that many of them had become excellent Australian citizens who had not created the disruptions to Australian life which were previously feared. Repeatedly, references were made to the feeling of resistance to new or unfamiliar migrants; those who had been here for a generation or more appeared to lose their ‘foreignness’.

*If their kids marry Aussies, they’ll bring up their kids in the Aussie way. In one generation, they change to an Aussie.*

*Generally speaking, by the time you get to the second generation - especially with Italians and Greeks – the kids are really Australians. It’s a funny thing how the environment seems to change people.*

Participants in the Multiculturalism study regarded the assimilation of migrants as not only desirable, but ultimately inevitable and they looked to ‘future generations’ for the outcome.

*It's all very well for us now ... it will be interesting to see what happens in another couple of generations – or even with our children. I suspect that there will be a lot more assimilation and integration - even if that isn't the official line.*

Many participants in that study expressed sympathy for the children of migrant families who were, inevitably, ‘caught between two cultures’.

*Certain ethnic groups come to Australia because of trouble at home. I have a friend from Yugoslavia and the family’s very torn. Her daughters are trying to have a quieter, more stable life and her sons are back in Yugoslavia fighting.*

*It must be very hard to be brought up in Australia and still have traditions.*
It was often imagined that the children of immigrants must experience difficult tensions between the desire to be part of the host community and, at the same time, the desire to respect their parents’ culture and traditions.

My neighbour is Turkish and she is going to marry a Turkish boy. Everyone is really happy ... previously, she had to hide when she went out with non-Turkish men.

One bloke bashed up his daughter because she refused an arranged marriage.

The children of Lebanese people we know won’t answer their parents if they speak in Lebanese. The girl and boy would never marry Lebanese. It all depends on the family.

Even those people who harboured strong reservations about the desirability of Muslim immigrants nevertheless felt some sympathy for the children (especially the daughters) of Muslim families.

Muslim girls can’t go swimming except in all their clothes. Those girls must sit there and feel out of it.

There was a girl at the sports carnival who was in a full-length tracksuit with a towel on her head, trying to do the long jump. The others were half-naked.

A friend of my daughter’s can’t go to a sleep-over party. Her brother can go anywhere. It’s hard for her ... she has to find excuses for not staying over. She was allowed to come to our party, but had to leave at 10 o’clock.

Among both migrants and non-migrants who participated in the Multiculturalism study, it was commonly believed that children of primary school age appeared to be virtually free of racial awareness (let alone racial prejudice) but that, with the onset of puberty and the graduation to secondary school, things changed..

Shannon is very racist since high school. He’s terrible. He used to mix in primary, but he doesn’t now.

It all changes at high school. They’re racist ... all races stick together.

Looking to the future, however, both migrants and non-migrants believed that ‘things will work out’ and that the children who were now being born would simply accept the ethnic diversity of Australian society as ‘the way we are’. (To some extent, such expectations were based on the assumption that assimilation would take place!) The hope was that Australian children would become more tolerant and that - perhaps even more importantly - the children of immigrants would be much more interested in integrating with Australian society than their parents were assumed to be.
Kids in Australia are more accepting of other people, regardless of colour, because it's so much the norm to see different races.

It’s good for children growing up to see people from different nationalities. I like the views of the younger generation - accepting everyone, regardless of their origins.

A couple of my son’s friends have married boat girls, and it's working out fine. They’re all very happy with each other. They’re all good citizens.

Not all parents, however, shared this rosy view. Indeed, some of the migrant mothers in the study complained that, under the influence of multiculturalism, their children were actually resisting the push towards assimilation.

I have tried to bring my daughter up as if she is an Australian. She knows I came from Yugoslavia, but I have tried to put all that behind me. I’m not having much luck with her; she is telling everyone that she is a Serb!

My daughter seems intent on being Italian. I say to her, ‘You not Italian ... you’re Australian’. But she is determined to be Italian. If she knew what she had left behind, she would not be so keen. We have a very happy life here ... it has been a big success.

More than 10 years later, in the 2008 Mind & Mood study, participants believed children were far less likely to be intolerant, even aware, of difference, ethnic or otherwise than their parents. 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.

In my kids’ primary school there are disabled kids, kids with autism ... with Down Syndrome, … [with] missing limbs, the whole lot. Kids don’t get strung up about them being different. Kids don’t get hung up because the kid next to them has a veil or something like that. More often or not the kid will go up and say ‘why have you got a veil’, and the kid will go ‘it is a part of my religion’, the kids ‘oh okay’.

My kids have been brought up in the school environment where there is about just about every race you could possibly imagine in the classroom. Whereas when I was at school ... most kids were Australians ... and then you had the occasional Italian kid. ... We are a product of our upbringing, no doubt about it. But I think our kids are far more racially tolerant than what we are.
**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.
Qualitative Research Findings

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.

For the two women from Italy and Greece, poverty was given as the reason to leave their country of origin.

**Italian Woman:** For a better life, a better future. Forty or fifty years ago, there was a lot of poverty. If the farms were going fine, you were doing fine. One year where the oranges get damaged or the olives get damaged, and there was too much rain, you would get yourself into death, you know.

**Greek Woman:** My parents came out here because they were very poor, they were poor and they needed to work and they needed to start a life.

The poor quality of life and lack of viable opportunities in Hong Kong were cited as the main reasons for departure for the parents of the group of men from China.

**Chinese Man 1:** Mum said Hong Kong was too busy, too crowded. She was looking for a new lease, a new break.
**Chinese Man 2:** From the stories I’ve heard from my mum, the main reason for coming here was that back in Hong Kong, it was just really hard for women back then to get ahead. So she really saw a lot of opportunity here.
**Chinese Man 3:** It was a new start for our family.

For the older man born in Malaysia and then living in Singapore, there were few creative opportunities available as well as heavy-handed government and a one-party state. It wasn’t so much poverty that drove the decision to immigrate, as the desire for a more varied and interesting society.

**Chinese Man:** There is no future [in Singapore] for you if you want to do music … anything that’s more creative and artistic or on the aesthetic side, you don’t have much choice there. If you want to voice your opinion or if you want to say something politically, you have to join the political party.
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.

The Iraqi man left his country of origin in 1950 with his parents and siblings as part of a mass exodus of Jews from Iraq to the newly formed state of Israel.

**Iraqi Man:** We all started after the immigration of the Jewish community from Iraq in 1950. That is after the establishment of the state of Israel. The reason for that immigration, which was a mass immigration, was that in 1941 at the height of the Nazi advance in Northern Africa ... there was a coup d'état ... a massacre of Jews ... then there was another wave; there was no massacre but at the time the government started to be very anti-Jewish ... it was very difficult.

The Sudanese women all had similar stories of war and death driving them from their native land. For these women, the decision to leave their country was forced upon them.

**Sudanese Woman:** In Sudan, because of the war, there are diseases and not the medicine to give people or good food to keep people healthy. That’s why my mother passed away last month. I came here in Australia with just my children and left my mother there with no one to look after her. I have no husband because my husband is dead. No one decided to come to Australia. We just came here because of the war. Nobody left our country without reason.

Similarly, conflicts in Vietnam and Lebanon forced the families of the older woman from Lebanon and the parents of the young Vietnamese women’s group to flee their home countries.

**Lebanese Woman:** I was born in Lebanon. It was a nice country until the war broke out obviously.

**Vietnamese Woman:** From conversations with them [parents], they left because of the war. It was really tough. They wanted to leave and find a better place. They just packed and left.

For two Iranian men, systemic religious discrimination in their country of origin led them to seek a better life elsewhere.

**Iranian Man 1:** We were having problems with the government.

**Iranian Man 2:** He’s Baha’i and in Iran if you are Baha’i, you can’t do anything. You can’t work in an office, you can’t study in uni. Too much problems.
Iranian Man 1: I went to university and finished my degree, but the government didn’t give me my degree because I am Baha’i. Two years ago my father was in jail because he is Baha’i. Just for religion. I couldn’t call him for six months.

Iranian Man 2: Seriously, in my country, there is seven Baha’i is going to jail for nothing. Just for religion. Because you are Baha’i, you go to jail. That’s it. I worked in the Army. For the first three months, they didn’t know I was Baha’i. When they found out about my religion, I was demoted.

Adventure

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

For the Swedish woman, it was an act of defiance against her family and the need for independence.

Swedish Woman: Well, I was tossing up with the idea of moving to Canada anyway, so I was going to leave Sweden under any circumstances. It was family rebellion, probably being the youngest, probably feeling a bit hemmed in, wanting to stand on my two feet.

The Chilean men were the first in their families to set out and explore new horizons and better work opportunities globally.

Chilean Man 1: I am the first person from my family to go away, to immigrate.

Chilean Man 2: We came here thinking I want to improve my English or get better work, so we really think to improve ourselves. So to get better job, better knowledge.

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. Often the choice to immigrate to Australia was a choice made when other possible options were excluded, rather than the country of first preference.

Many participants in this research sought out English-speaking nations as their preferred countries to immigrate to. Many ruled out European nations due to the added difficulty of learning a European language.

*Iranian Man:* Some of my friends lived [in Australia] and one of the advantages is that they speak English here. I have many friends who live in Europe and they have some problems because of the language, for example, in Germany or France.

Of the possible English-speaking nations they could choose from the United States was deemed almost impossible to gain entry to and Canada was often ruled out due to its cold climate. The United Kingdom was another option immigrants considered, although the way of life in Australia was seen to be preferable. New Zealand was considered too small and remote to be a viable option and thus by a process of elimination, Australia was selected.

Apart from this selection by exclusion, Australia was also perceived to have many benefits which added to its appeal to immigrants. For some, Australia was seen as a welcoming and multicultural nation.

*Iranian Man:* It’s a multicultural country. For example, in Australia it’s like Canada and the United States. There are many people and they are not originally from there. Some years ago they came and they lived. I think living in these kinds of countries is maybe easier than countries for example like Germany.

*Chinese Man 1:* I think there was a lot more opportunity here [in Australia], than say the US and Canada at the time. I think Gough Whitlam was also in power back then and he was going, ‘immigration, yes, let everyone in, welcome!’

*Chinese Man 2:* My dad was a big fan of the Whitlam government. That’s why he named me Gough.

The higher quality of life in Australia was also a positive factor, particularly in terms of welfare and opportunities. Australia was seen as the ‘land of opportunity’ more so than the United States.
**Sudanese Woman:** I have some friends here, before I came, who told me about Australia. They told me, ‘You have to come to Australia for the kids, Australia is better for the kids.’ That is why we came here. If not, I would have joined my people, my family in America. But I came here according to what my friend told me about Australian history, that Australia is a nice place, you can get an education for yourself and for your kids. It’s a safe country with a lot of people. You can feel free.

**Chinese Man:** I think Australia was a better choice, compared to everywhere else. Malaysia was quite hard, my mum and dad were killing themselves over there. Like just working long hours and I think mum was saying she was getting paid, like $30, in Malaysian dollars, for the month, for a calendar month. So if you worked 30 days or 31 days, you would still only get $30. Which back then was about three to one, so it would be like $10 in Aussie dollars. Yeah, I think Australia was just better.

**Lebanese Woman:** I think my parents made that decision. … He knew a family who came out here I think five years prior to him and they were telling him like there was a lot of work available and Australia is a nice place to live and all that …

**Chilean Man:** Australia gives you any possibility … In Chile, it’s not a bad country but here, when you get up in the morning, you can’t see the problems. It’s like, in Chile you’re limited, but here you’re not limited, you can live good. If you work, you can live good. So that is a big difference.

**Iraqi Man:** I had to decide whether to go back to Israel or to go to America and work with my brother … or to come to Australia where my wife’s parents came immediately after the Second World War in ‘46. It was much more attractive to me than the other: my brother’s offer that I work with him in America. I didn’t like the way of life in America at all.

Some chose to move to Australia due to the presence of family and friends here.

**Italian Woman:** My mum never wanted to go to America, otherwise my mum would have been in America as a young girl [because her parents were there], but she never wanted to go, so when all these problems started, we undersold some of the properties [in Italy] and we came to Australia … My mother had a sister here, well she’s got a sister; she’s still alive and she had two brothers in Adelaide.

**Indian Woman:** My first preference was the UK, because my good friend was studying there, but then my parents suggested I come here, would be much easier for me because my brother was here. And it certainly was much easier for me.
**Chilean Man:** My partner, she’s from here, she said to me do you want to come see my country and meet my family, it’s a beautiful land …

For others, the attraction of a milder climate contributed to their decision.

**Iranian Man:** As an Iranian, or as a foreigner, you don’t have many choices. The only countries you can immigrate to are Australia, United States and Canada, and maybe New Zealand. Immigrating to the United States as a skilled migrant I think for an Iranian it is near to impossible. New Zealand is a very small country. So there are two choices - Australia and Canada. And I think between these two countries, you have to choose the better for your situation and your kind of job. And of course the weather in Canada is terrible.

Some immigrants made multiple visa applications and accepted the first to come through.

**Greek Woman:** ... it was either they went on to Germany or to Australia and when they put their papers in, they got the go-ahead to come to Australia and they came out here.

For refugees seeking protection visas, any safe country was acceptable.

**Sudanese Woman:** We are Sudanese. We have big problems in our Sudan. We choose many countries. There is America, Canada, Finland, everywhere. You have the right to choose wherever you want to go as a safe place. We choose Australia because it is a safe country and a big country, which can take people.

The proximity to their home country was a pull factor for some Asian immigrants.

**Chinese Man:** When we were in school we learnt about Australia more than we learn about the geography of England and that it’s an open country and very friendly. Here again, I came here twice and I saw how nice it was and the children going to school, that it’s free and there’s choice and there are facilities for any kinds of whims and fancies that you want to do. Even if you don’t want to do anything, you can do that too. So we thought Australia being close by and any time we want to go back for a visit for our relatives, we could do that within eight hours or so.

In sum, 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. It could be built around 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.

Vietnamese Woman: When my parents came here we actually had help from an Aussie family. They became our godparents. They took us in and gave us money and helped my dad find a job. So dad never said anything about having problems at all with racism. They were Catholic as well.

Italian Woman: It wasn’t that bad [when they first arrived], because we were welcomed by my auntie and we lived with my auntie for the first six months … once we moved out of her house … my mum would say, ‘It will get better. It’s hard … but we’ll be okay, you see, things will change’ which they did. We met a lot of other Italians. There were quite a few Italians in our street also, which we’ve become very good friends. They had children so life started becoming easier.

Chinese Man: We actually spent our first Christmas in Geelong. We couldn’t pronounce it: Geelong. ‘Where is this place – Geelong?’ So the strong connecting link were our friends who were from the same community, like schools or a Boy Scout group and we knew each other very well and we spoke the same language; we shared a common culture. The second strong point is the church. Because we’re Catholic, we go to the church and the church community always welcomed newcomers. We can still remember that somebody who we’d never met before invited us to a house for a BBQ simply because we looked new and we looked different: ‘Come to the house for a BBQ.’
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.

**Iranian Man 1:** Another negative experience in Australia is I think some immigrants with low population of origin, usually they are isolated from the other society and they couldn’t get involved in and become friends with Australians or the other cultures who already have more experience in Australia. This is a problem.

**Iranian Man 2:** For immigrants from a background that has numerous people here, like Indian or Chinese people, they have less problems because they have good relationships and good networking with each other. And in this way they can easily settle themselves, they get familiar with the Australian organisations, cultures and everything they need. They can easily find jobs with their friends and people of their same nationality.

**Lebanese Woman:** I felt sad because I was leaving all my cousins behind, and we did. We came out here and we just had that family that my family knew. We had no uncles, no aunts, nobody. Nobody, so it was rough. Yes, especially [for] my mum. My mum found that very, very hard. Like no English background, it was like - if she heard someone speaking Arabic, it was like she found gold. She was really happy because I don’t think there was that many Lebanese people back in the ’70s as what there is now.

**Chilean Man 1:** I’m very happy to be here, but I miss my friends, my family.

**Chilean Man 2:** We have a different culture, we are more tactile, affectionate. And the street culture, if you see someone you hug, you kiss, where here you just hand shake, that’s it. So I feel like, oh, it’s so cold.

**Chilean Man 3:** Because I live here alone, I don’t have nothing here, only myself, so sometimes I go through depression, because it’s so difficult to make friends.

It was universally agreed among all participants that learning English was the crucial first step in the assimilation process [see Breakout Box: Advice to the new migrant].

**Iranian Man:** If you come here and you can’t speak English, it is difficult. But when you can speak English, everything is good. First problem in Australia is language. If you fix your language, that’s it. You don’t have any problems. You can do anything. The gate is open, you can do anything. It’s up to you.
Assimilation was also seen to be easier if people already in the adopted country had some understanding or knowledge about the places where migrants came from. An educated public was thought to be very important by migrants, and some complained that Australians had incorrect or ignorant ideas about their culture and the countries they had come from.

**Greek Woman:** ... and things change, because there are a lot of restaurants, a lot of Australian people started to travel, a lot of Australian people started to like Europe ... once their knowledge and attitude started to change, you started to feel like you were like them, it was okay, you belonged here, it was all right.

The workplace was seen as an important place to foster personal relationships with established Australians, particularly for new migrants who had found it difficult to form friendships elsewhere.

**Indian Woman:** My fiancée has lots of Australian friends here, through work. He’s a citizen now and so it’s been really nice for me.

**Chilean Man:** I’ve met some people through dancing classes, and you can meet people through work ... but even at work or a bar, people just smile and that’s all, but if you do something with classes or a sport, it’s very easy to meet someone.

While all migrants saw the need for assimilation, older migrants emphasised it more. Indeed there were more likely to worry about new migrant groups forming enclaves and ghettos (albeit some younger migrants also shared this view).

**Swedish Woman:** I don’t have anything against them having clubs and shops that cater for their special things but not a whole suburb because I think that causes problems as well.

**Chinese Man:** But then there’s the Chinese community, then the Vietnamese community and then you’ve got your Malay community, they’re all mostly sort of separate. They don’t intermingle a great deal.

**Indian Woman:** Because we are not moving to the Western suburbs there will be a lot of Indians, and professional Indians ... so there will be lots of similar, like-minded people. And maybe that would make it easier for children, with school and so on. But then my question was, well what’s the point of living here, you know? You might as well go back.
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.

**Greek Woman:** Now these (Asian) kids had no family, they lived with several other kids, they were putting themselves through education... they did stick together, and I don’t blame them because they needed to be understood, because we couldn’t all understand them, but I was always very kind with them because of what we went through. They were very close, they were close because they came into a strange country, a country where they didn’t know the language ... They’re educated here, they have positions so they don’t have that need, so they’ve sort of broken away.

**Indian Woman:** When I was studying there was lots of Indian students there, lots of people from my region, so I felt very comfortable there ... in the work environment it’s a mix; some people are really supportive and some are not.

Nevertheless, some immigrants stressed the importance of leaving behind any cultural baggage from their home country.

**Iraqi Man:** No one should have the right to behave in Australia as a temporary resident until he develops something else ... and certainly no one should behave in Australia as if he was still in his native country, and no one should be allowed to behave in a way that is detrimental to the freedom and civil liberties of others. Not adapt their fundamental beliefs, no, but to adapt their conduct; to be consonant with the fundamental interest of the country as a whole. In other words, you cannot come here and align yourself with an enemy of the country.

**Lebanese Woman:** Also learn to accept the Australian way, because I think that’s very important too, because – how am I going to say it? I think it’s good to bring a lot of your traditions and stuff with you, but I don’t think, to push it upon other people, I don’t think that’s right. So we should also respect the Australian way. I think also Australia – I’m going probably a bit too far – should not allow also so much freedom of – I’m going to sound racist - I don’t think they should allow people to dress the way they want to dress because that’s the way it was in their country. Yeah, because if you are in their country you are expected to dress their way.
Swedish Woman: But what I think is really bad is when migrants come here and try to force their ideas and beliefs onto Australians who live here; I think that is really bad. That is what is so sad, you know, they don’t even try to adjust.

Ultimately, the key factor to greater tolerance and acceptance was seen to be the passage of time, as was indicated in The Ipsos Mackay Report review.

Swedish Woman: They have come from Vietnam and set up another Vietnam in Springvale ... and I think it probably might have been the same when the Italians and Greeks came in the ‘60s. And then perhaps the generation that was born here ... they want to mix with all of the Australian friends ...

Chilean Man: Many Chilean people came here in the ‘70s, and organised many festivals in the first 15 years or so ... now Australian people love Chile, like with the Italians you know, now Australian people love the Italian food, love the Italian culture, now many people love Chile too.

In sum, 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.
BREAKOUT BOX: 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.

**Swedish Woman:** Study English before you come. I’ve got a neighbour, she comes from Italy, she’s slightly younger than I am, she’s been here almost as long as I have and she can barely speak English and it isolates her ... I think language is very important, probably the most important aspect.

**Chilean Man:** Language is the most important; language is the key... If we want to learn the new culture, the first thing we have to do is know the language.

**Sudanese Woman:** If you don’t know how to speak English, you will never find a job.

**Lebanese Woman:** Learn English. Go to English classes, learn English because it’s going to be a struggle ... if they don’t have that.

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.

**Greek Woman:** I would tell them that they need to have family out here, some sort of family that they can lean on and no, I wouldn’t tell them to come out here on their own.

**Swedish Woman:** That’s one hard thing here, because I have got no family, there is nobody you can say ‘do you remember?’ to because there is nobody here who had lived through my childhood and I think that is one of the hardest things with migrating without any family to another country, wherever you go.

While language was the first and most important hurdle for new migrants, the next was making the effort to form connections and integrate with the local people and community.

**Chinese Man:** So if you have the language ... the first barrier is broken. The next thing – adaptation, assimilation through the church group or through the school group or through the support group that is near the neighbourhood: these are all very good means. Make friends with the butcher, make friends with the [people who run the] grocery shop because they are always very friendly and you ask them, ‘I’m trying to get this thing. You know where I can get it?’ They will stop everything and tell you. In fact they will hold your hands and bring you there. Learn the language, engage, assimilate and adapt. Don’t say, ‘Ah, because I can’t get chilli out here, therefore it’s a hopeless place.’ That’s wrong.
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.

**Chinese Man:** By the second year, [Australia was definitely home]. By then we had bought our first house in North Balwyn. By then we were sure that we weren’t going back, and to surrender the citizenship was a big deal because that was a big decision.

**Greek Woman:** I do, of course I do [identify as an Australian] – I grew up here.

**Iraqi Man:** Oh yes, I mean I ... I firmly feel and act as such [as an Australian], and I do not think any other place in the world is equal to Australia. I really don’t, and ... I have been to quite a lot of places.

**Chinese Man (2nd gen):** I do consider myself more Australian than Chinese.

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).

**Indian Woman 1:** No [I don’t feel I’m Australian], but I think my husband does, and I quite like that about him.

**Indian Woman 2:** It’s not that we’re saying this is not our country, because this is our home now, but we don’t feel that oneness here, there’s not that connection there.

**Chilean Man 1:** When you get here, you’re ready, you say, ‘Okay, this is my home now’. My home in my heart is there, but I live here, so what am I going to do?

**Chilean Man 2:** Sometimes I say, ‘Yeah, I’m Australian’ and sometimes I say, ‘No, I’m from Chile’.

**Chilean Man 3:** I’m not a permanent resident here so I feel like I’m from nowhere.

The Indian women who had had unwelcoming experiences in Australia were beginning to question whether they had a home at all.

**Indian Woman 1:** Socially it’s been very good, except for sometimes there are incidents that make you feel like home is India, and not here. Like when the whole racist attacks started ... At first we said, ‘Oh, it’s just the media talking it up’ because our parents were worried, but then you face it yourself and you start thinking about, ‘Oh my god, what century are we living in?’
... I thought, if I’m not going to be accepted, then maybe this is not my home ... You want to live here, belonging to the place, thinking of it as home, and then when things like this happen that’s when it really hits you, that okay, maybe I don’t belong.

**Indian Woman 2:** Sometimes I wonder if it was the right decision, coming here. I don’t know the answer to that ... but if we went back home [to India], could we even adjust? Probably not ... And India’s changed now too, and it’s not what we remember ... So we’re kind of homeless now ...  

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.

**Swedish Woman:** No, I will never be Australian ... Sweden will always be home, though I’m an Australian citizen ... I must admit that when I’m here, I say I’m going home to Sweden, but when I’m in Sweden, I’m going home to Australia.

**Italian Woman:** I don’t want to go back [to Italy] anymore. I’m going because my husband wants to go ... I want to go other places in the world. I’m over it. You go there and they think you come from America and everybody whinges. No, it doesn’t feel like home anymore. This is my home. I leave Sydney and I swear to you when I hit Sydney airport, I go, ‘Thank God, I’m home.’ I’m so happy to be home. It doesn’t matter where I go, you know. I just love coming back home. This is my home now.

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.

**Sudanese Woman:** Australians look at us as if we don’t have a country. But we do have a country. We are from Southern Sudan and we want to be in our own country, our own land. We still don’t have that. Because of the war, we cannot be there.

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

**Chilean Man 1:** I really feel like I’m Australian so I would like to get citizenship.

**Chilean Man 2:** Yes, it’s a goal.

**Chilean Man 1:** Home is in my heart, but physically, home is here.
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.

**Indian Woman 1:** I think we are more Indian now than when we came here.

**Indian Woman 2:** Absolutely.

**Indian Woman 3:** All of us Indians, we do come together, and we are more traditional here because we want to hold onto those roots, so we overdo it.

**Indian Woman 2:** And when we go back, we are doing our festivals more traditionally here than they are at home. And they’re doing Halloween and stuff! We never did Halloween.

**Indian Woman 3:** Yes! Everyone is celebrating Halloween back in India.

**Greek Woman:** Of course you want to know, of course you want your children to be educated about who you are, who your grandfather is, where you came from, how your grandparents came out here, how they struggled, what they built for you; you want to know that, you want your kids to know that.

**Swedish Woman:** ... my heritage is very important, but I have also adopted a lot of Australian – I’m probably more Swedish than a Swede living in Sweden today because they’ve sort of streamlined their Swedish life but I’ve also adopted a lot of this laid-back attitude in Australia.

**Chinese Man 1:** I’m in this culture that has these great traditions, and yet I can’t even speak the language. So it’s like you celebrate Chinese New Year and you celebrate prosperity and all this stuff and you want to have a conversation with someone and you can’t. I feel like I’m stuck in the middle. I’m not Australian yet I’m not Chinese as well. To me, I’m more Australian than I am Chinese because I speak perfect English.

**Chinese Man 2:** You speak English a lot better than a lot of Australians.

**Chinese Man 1:** Exactly. But I feel like I’ve missed on a lot of things growing up – basically my understanding of the Chinese culture.
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.

**Italian Woman:** The schools [in the ‘50s] are not like now. They used to call us wogs, they didn’t accept our food. People play with you only if you buy them ice cream. They won’t let you play basketball. There was a lot of racism when I came to Australia; it was very sad. I remember I used to cry every single day of the week. I didn’t want to go to school … even the Italians, they were here like from Australia; they were born here. Everybody stuck up for the Australians and the people who spoke English. It was really bad, it was really bad. At school, all the girls were bitches, absolutely. You had to bend backwards to be accepted.

**Lebanese Woman:** My dad told us that were going to be called [wogs], so he kind of tried to prepare us. ‘If they call you wogs, call them convicts.’ … Always there were problems because we were different to them. You know, you say a word and it comes out wrong or something, then they make fun of you, they pick on you, and say, ‘Go home you bloody wogs, what are you doing here?’

**Chinese Man [2nd gen]:** Start from early childhood, being some of the first Asian families in the area, all the kids looked at you differently. They did the racist thing because they learnt from their parents.

Racist stereotypes continued to upset and offend some migrants.

**Swedish Woman:** What really irritated me because it was just in the time when Sweden had all these sex films and things and they said, ‘Swedish girl, love, love, love’ and I was surprised I didn’t hit anybody. That was just disgusting. That was just so disgusting.

**Vietnamese Woman:** [People assume] we eat dog … They think we are in gangs, into drugs.

**Indian Woman:** There’s a stereotype when you talk about Indians. There’s a certain picture and a mindset that is there … that we all come from slums and we all have these fights, and that’s what the young generation think.

Recent arrivals to Australia also reported that racial discrimination was alive and well, recounting incidents of racism they had experienced first-hand.
**Iranian Man:** When some Australian people find that I am not originally Aussie, usually they turn their face, like when I am doing shopping. Last month, a lady approached me to ask for an address and when I started explaining, she understood from my accent I am not originally from here and she turned her face and walked away, in a disrespectful manner.

**Indian Woman:** We were abused in our apartment building and another time when we were at paint ball, all of us. But when we reported it they said, ‘Unless they assault you we can’t do anything’, which is just ridiculous. Do I really have to wait for somebody to hurt me for that action to be taken? The worst thing happened a few weeks back, I was leaving my studio, and a group of guys in an SUV, they all had their shirts off and were drinking beers. And suddenly I heard a screech and they just jumped out of their cars and surrounded me, and were saying, ‘Do you want a five dollar curry’ and other things I couldn’t understand … I was totally shocked, I thought, ‘Is this really happening to me?’ And other people just walked past, and they didn’t stop, they just walked past.

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.

**Greek Woman:** There was a real big thing about the wogs, and we were always intimidated and always in fear ... we were wogs everywhere we went, we were just wogs. Anywhere, you could be sitting anywhere, you could be looking and they would say, ‘What are you staring at, you fucking wog?’ Everyone was rough and it was all about picking on the wogs, you know. There was a lot of fighting, there was a lot of animosity, there was a lot of, ‘Go back to your fucking countries, the wogs have come out here, they’ve taken all our jobs and we’ve got nowhere to work and it’s because of them.’

**Vietnamese Woman:** It was more racist back then for us. Now the Muslims get picked on.

The discriminatory views of those who had been on the receiving end in the past was not lost on this particular Greek woman, who expressed anger that new migrants were being treated in the very same way by people who had suffered discrimination in the past.
**Greek Woman:** From everyone. Even from Greeks... Who the hell do they think they are? What about when we came out here? I say to them, 'When you came out here, did you forget what we went through?' It's exactly what they did to us when we came out here and now we're doing it to them.

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.

**Chilean Man:** Some people are very, very friendly, and some people not at all. It’s part of life, because in other countries it’s exactly the same.

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.

**Chinese Man 1:** I think there might be certain areas where there would be a lot more hatred, and then places like Newcastle, Sydney and Melbourne that are very accepting.

**Chinese Man 2:** In Sydney or Melbourne or those kinds of environments, that just wouldn’t happen. People would just treat you as any other Australian.

**Chinese Man 1:** It’s like a regional, country-bumpkin type of thing. It would be even worse, further out. There’s less Asian people.

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).

**Chinese Man:** Australia was warm, friendly and nothing suspicious about people of a different race and as far as I’m concerned, ever since we came here I have never experienced any racial discrimination, even in my work. My job requires me to go to all of the universities in Australia and New Zealand and to knock on the doors and talk to all the lecturers for whom I may have the product to sell. I thought because of my look and because of the way I speak maybe, I should face some kind of dislike or discrimination or prejudice. None at all, simply because my profession and their profession are as such that they don’t have room for that. They don’t think about that sort of thing, but if I was to do something else like a road site or a restaurant or something, I may have. If I was to drive a taxi perhaps, if I was to hock something from town to town, I may have the experience.
Certain ethnic groups felt they encountered more racial discrimination than others.

Lebanese Woman: Because of [my kids] looks they’re still judged as Arabs ... Like when something happens that someone gets shot or killed and Arabs automatically they’re judged. And they say like you know, ‘Mum just because you’ve got dark hair or whatever, automatically you get looked at as though you’re a thug or something.’ You can’t change it, you just talk to them about it and this is how it is because some idiots went and did something wrong and then you’re all labelled, even though my kids are not Lebanese background. I didn’t marry a Lebanese.

Iranian Man: Maybe because of some Lebanese or some Arabic people have created some problems or some issues, but now some Australians have the same attitudes or the same behaviour with other Middle Eastern people. I was driving in a car one day and the car next to me was saying something and when I rolled the window down they asked me where I was from and when I said Middle East, he started swearing and insulting me. I don’t know what it is but it feels like Australia has become more racist now.

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.

Sudanese Woman: If the government say we don’t want you, we don’t like you, that is what we call racism. If the community don’t like us, we say that is racism. But the community likes us. Personal issues, that is not a racist for us. Maybe someone sees me, and he doesn’t like me because I am black. Or if I see you and I don’t like you because of the way you look. That is not a racist. That is a personal thing. There is no racism in Australia. If there were racism in Australia, we would not be here. We would not be here. There is no racism in Australia. The personal things that is everywhere, even in our country, in Africa.

However, some migrants did feel that passive racism existed in Australia via racist profiling by the police, airport security and even some aspects of the government.

Iranian Man: I think some cops are racist. My friend is a Muslim, and on his number plate is ‘Allah’, God’s name. And when the cops see that, there are too many defects on his car and he gets stopped. For nothing. Some cops, they see a black head, you’re pulled over. My car and my friend’s car is the same. But my friend, he is Aussie. I am Iranian. My friend, he doesn’t get pulled over because he is Aussie. But me, I get pulled over because I have a black head.
**Vietnamese Woman:** When we go through the international airport, my partner is Asian and he has tattoos and he is always detained. You get stereotyped. Especially at the airport if you are coming back from an Asian country.

**Greek Woman:** We still have a lot of racism and I think that comes from our government who doesn’t educate enough. Does the government do anything about helping them get jobs even? What do they do? They just let them in here like loose cannons … so, it’s different ways of working and allowing racism to live. We’re a multicultural country, the government has got to … teach people.

Others felt that while racism seemed to be ‘ebbing’ rather than ‘flowing’, it was nevertheless a slow and not entirely progressive process.

**Chinese Man:** I think it’s getting better, but Australia is in some ways a little bit behind and being dragged kicking and screaming as well in some respects. Some people don’t want to change the current way of life.

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 worst 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.

**Greek Woman:** [My father] worked at GMH for many, many years and he said we were fearful for our jobs because we always kept our heads down, worked very hard because people were not – not everybody was kind, he said. My mother ... she went to job to job because the factories – there were lots of factories there ... she said, 'I couldn't lift my hands anymore because it was so hard, it was a hard job'. So they worked very, very hard; very, very hard.

**Iraqi Man:** I'd never been in business before ... it was the first time. I've done very, very well with that business ... This is why so many people do so well for themselves in my view and as a result to the community and to the whole country, because the more people who feel at ease in their lives and happy with their lives and they are productive etcetera. That's what makes the country as a whole a very attractive place to live.

**Iranian Man:** I think Australia is a good place for immigrants ... it is very organised, tidy, green and friendly people and environment. But if they can’t find a job people usually get involved in a very hard situation.

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.

**Chinese Man:** [New waves migrants] have taken up the jobs that others don’t want to do. It’s cyclical, you know. When the Vietnamese took the jobs that no one else wants to do, then they become established and when the Chinese came from China, they also took all the jobs that others don’t want to do, like sweeping in the supermarket for example .... So there is no proof or there is no foundation to say that they have actually taken over their jobs. In fact, their qualifications are not recognised, so they couldn’t have become doctors straightaway. They couldn’t have become mechanics because their qualifications were not recognised. They couldn’t have become welders because whatever experience they had was not recognised. In my case, I was fortunate enough that I was in a publishing firm ... So I have not robbed anybody of somebody’s job. I took over a job when there was a vacancy in Melbourne.

**Indian Woman:** The immigration process makes you feel like you’re taking something away from the country, when you’re actually not, you’re actually giving something to the country.
Greek Woman: We used to do all the dirty things then, the dirty jobs. That’s what they do now, the poor things (referring to new Asian migrants) ... people knock the Asians, they shouldn’t. They put a lot of money into this country ... Jesus Christ they spend their money in our country and we’re very lucky to have that so they shouldn’t be knocking.

Indian Woman: We do pay our taxes after all.

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.

Iraqi Man: I mean, I had no requests from the governments for any assistance or anything like that. These are the sorts of people we need in this country - people who can use their initiative, take some risk and have the mentality of ‘one has to build one’s own future and not rely on a provider’, be that a government or any other institution such as a church or whatever. Those are the people who do succeed.

Italian Woman: I’ve got a 38 year old daughter and my husband and I have never been on the dole, and we have never had children on the dole; they’ve got to work. It doesn’t matter if you last three months in a job. You might meet somebody in those three months and find something better.

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.

Chinese Man: [Australia needs] more migrants who are willing to give, rather than someone that comes here and then like says, ‘Let’s go to Centrelink and get a pension payment right now.’ If it comes to that type of migration, I’ll be against that.

Greek Woman: Where are the futures for these people? They’ve put them in the commission flats, they live in there, they don’t speak English, they don’t have jobs, they can’t have jobs, there are not jobs left because young kids can’t get jobs. What are they doing? What’s the purpose? What are they going to do with these people? What’s the future for these people in the country?

Vietnamese Woman 1: They should expand elsewhere. They can come here but in the rural areas.
Vietnamese Woman 2: We are already pretty full here. Trying to find jobs and houses. They are probably willing to do cheap cash in hand jobs and we will lose out.

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).

Chilean Man1: It’s hard because you’re a top professional in Chile, and when you come here you’re a cleaner or something, something you’ve never done in your life, so that’s hard.

Chilean Man 2: Yes but any experience with the work makes you stronger, makes you stronger and stronger …

Chilean Man 1: It’s hard at the beginning, but then you see you cheque it’s like $200 for a week. When I got my first cheque I was so happy you know, and I started to calculate in Chilean pesos, and it was a lot!

However, skilled migrants who were struggling to find paid work in their profession were beginning to question whether there truly was a skills shortage.

Iranian Man 1: It is not a problem for every Iranian, not the ones who came here 30 years ago. It is for the people who came here more recently, who came here in the last two years, who have not found a job in their skills.

Iranian Man 2: The government has stated there is a skills shortage. But there are many people with the same skills who are unemployed here. Many people are coming here but they have to investigate how many people are needed for that skill and which skills are the priorities.

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.

Sudanese Woman: An Australian lady told me that she thinks Sudanese don’t like to work. And she said, I look for work but we can’t find a job, there are no jobs. Even if they gave us a job to clean the streets, we have no problem, we will clean the streets. No one likes staying at home doing nothing and waiting for the Centrelink money. That’s embarrassing. We really need a job and we really want to work for it.

While they were grateful for the assistance, finding paid work was central to their sense of legitimacy in Australia.
Sudanese Woman: I met with two men and they asked me if I was working. I said no. He asked me if I knew where I get this money from. I said I know. I said I got this money from you, those who are working. People get tax from you, and give to the government and government give it to us. And then he asked me how long I was going to stay on Centrelink. When I came here I didn’t know about Centrelink. I came here and I knew I had to work, to get money for myself. But I am still continuing to look for work now. I know how to clean I know how to do everything; they can give us a cleaning job. Because we need to pay back the money we got from Centrelink. But how can we pay this money back? Me, now, today, I want to get a job. In Africa, they give a chance. Someone who doesn’t have a good education, they give her cleaning. But in Australia, what can we do? We don’t have anything to do. We need government to help us to give us the chance to get a job.

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.

Sudanese Woman: We are really, really very confused. There are people who don’t want to accept us to work. They push us to get a job, but they don’t show us how can we get a job. If you go to Job Find, they tell you to come tomorrow. If you don’t come tomorrow, the Centrelink cut your money. If you go to Centrelink they send you to Job Network. Job Network they don’t want to give you a job. They are really just playing us like a ball, in-between. But we are human beings. 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. Only one woman in the group had managed to secure a part-time position.

Sudanese Woman: A few years ago, I went to Coffs Harbour to pick berries. I go there, for two years, to pick blueberries. I stay there for six months. It’s very hard. I leave my husband and baby to go to Coffs Harbour. But in Newcastle, there are no jobs.

Sudanese Woman: I am working as a childcare worker. I’ve been working for the past year. I got the job because I worked with kids since I was 17, I worked with [The Sudanese] Lost Boys [Association of Australia] for many years, for eight years. More than that, from Ethiopia to Kenya. But the problem in Newcastle is there are so many ladies looking for jobs. So many young boys looking for a job. So we don’t know why, some people have jobs, like me I have a job. Maybe I am lucky to have a job, the reason, I don’t know. Everyone as a Sudanese, or African or other refugees, we need to have a job. Because we came here to have a job. To have a job, to have your children. To have a job to pay back the government or Centrelink allowance.
The women also lamented the lack of job opportunities for their teenage children.

**Sudanese Woman:** Our kids, they can speak English. But some people don’t want to give them a job, not like the Australian young kids who can get a job. The Sudanese young people look for a part time job but the [employers] don’t give to them. I don’t know why.

**Sudanese Woman:** When you finish Year 12, in Australia, from what I know, the kids get a job quickly. Like shopping centres or McDonalds, whatever. Australian children. But for our kids, they don’t accept them. I got two boys now, they are looking. They are trying to fill the forms to apply, they didn’t accept them. He finished Year 12 and he was applying at Woolworths and other places like that. It’s good for them, to learn how to work. But I don’t know where we can go. Because us women, the adults, we don’t have a job. And the kids, they don’t have a job and the people are talking like we are eating the money from them and think we don’t want to get the job. That is embarrassing, because we really are very hard workers. We Sudanese, we work very hard. They have to give us a chance, give us a job, to see us. We are not coming here to eat the money, to stay at home. No. We are coming here for education and to get the work.

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 …

**Iranian Man:** That is the problem, the media doesn’t portray or show, for instance in different shows the broadcasters, radio hosts, commentators, they are not from different cultures. They are purely, originally Aussie people.

… stereotypical portrayals on television shows …

**Vietnamese Woman:** You watch Border Security and there is an Asian guy detained. You think drugs.

… and a limited view of their culture.

**Indian Woman:** Any documentary you see on India it’s always about child labour and slums. It’s very rare to see something positive on screen that you feel proud to be Indian.

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.

**Greek Woman:** It's changed because of what happened with that ‘Wogs Out of Work’ [comedy stage show] thing; that was the biggest turnaround for the Greeks. They were accepted immediately; we were accepted.

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.

**Iraqi Man:** [on people understanding where he’s come from] No, I don’t think they do. Generally, no I don’t think they do, and that is reflected in the way the press projects things. And you'll see part of the press has a much better understanding than other parts of the press ...

Media reports on race-related incidents were seen as subjective, polarising and exaggerated.

**Chinese Man 1:** I think [media reporting on race] is very subjective. Media wants to grab the emotion of the audience and they will use words or they’ll embellish something to bring up emotions.

**Chinese Man 2:** They want ratings, first and foremost. And they will use any headline to get it.
**Chinese Man 3:** I think the media can be really polarised, there can be extreme cases. I'm trying to think if there are any racial incidents where it was really objective. It's almost can you find one?

**Chinese Man 1:** I think with reporting of race issues, they probably in some respects, they do give all the details, but there's always an angle to it, they're trying to skew it to a particular way.

**Chinese Man 2:** There is no unbiased news, well none that's easy to find. You have to find one that’s biased towards one way and one that’s biased towards the other way and see where they sort of match up.

**Indian Woman 1:** Lots of people at home, they ask us to come back all the time, they think it’s really bad here. It’s been exaggerated, no doubt.

In sum, 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.

Vietnamese Woman: Different people … a mixed society.

Chilean Man: At the airport, waiting to see Australian people, I see people from any place on Earth! So really, Australia is like a little world in only one country. It’s beautiful. I like that.

Iraqi Man: Variety is the rainbow of life. It’s beautiful to have variety of everything, in everything, but it must be a rainbow; a unifying thing, and you have all these colours within it. But not to have variety which is taking over all other colours or disparaging any other colour, things like that.

Chinese Man 1: It just means many races, many cultures. Many different cultures from all over the world.
Chinese Man 2: Multiculturalism does exist, but it doesn’t exist in equal parts all over the country. I think it exists very well in places like Melbourne, where they’ve had Asian immigrants a lot earlier than the rest of the country, further out in the sticks I don’t think it exists as much as it should.

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.

Iranian Man: For me I understand that multiculturalism is different people with different cultures who can live easily together and work together and there wasn’t any difference between any culture or any advantages, like jobs and benefits of the government and other sorts of things.

Lebanese Woman: Getting to know more about other people’s backgrounds and traditions and learning to accept them, you know, for how they are … like with their customs. For example, my neighbour just across from me just over there, their son passed away on the weekend. He drowned. Yeah, terrible. Our custom is when someone dies they’re not really in the mood for cooking, so I cooked for them. That’s not their custom so they were surprised when I walked in with food. ‘Thank you, thank you so much, you shouldn’t have troubled yourself’ and I explained to her, ‘This is our custom, this is what we do.’ This is our custom; she thought it was very nice. Their custom is that they have a beer and I don’t know, probably think about the happy times they had with them. Different ways, but you learn to accept that everyone is different; not everyone is the same.
This higher level of multiculturalism was often considered an ideal, and not always a reality.

**Vietnamese Woman:** It’s good – you learn different things from different people. How similar or how different we are. But there are down sides. Disagreements.

**Chinese Man 1:** I think multiculturalism is a welcoming term. Don’t you?  
**Chinese Man 2:** I’d like to think it is, I’d like to hope it is. I don’t know if everyone feels the same way.

**Chinese Man 3:** I mean you would say that Australia is multicultural. There are many cultures here in Australia. But that’s not to say that they all get along or there’s no racial tension. I’d say some parts of Australia are more multicultural than others.

**Chinese Man 2:** And that is leaving religion completely out of the topic as well!

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.

**Chilean Man:** It’s been really difficult, you know. trying to observe another culture, an Australian culture, it’s really difficult … we are trying to adjust to our new life.

**Sudanese Woman:** Whether we like it or not, we have to follow the rules of Australian culture. It’s a must. But we are still talking to our kids about our culture. Every year we have cultural dancing, to show them our culture. We don’t want to let them forget about our culture. Maybe in two or three generations’ time they will forget that, because they are in Australia. But this generation, now, we are talking to them about our culture. Not the next generation, they will be Australian.

**Iranian Man:** Many people from different cultures and different civilisations are here and there is a mix of cultures. A new, modern culture. I think because of this maybe there are some problems. For example, last week I saw some old people who had to stand on the train while young people were sitting. But in Iranian culture, I think one of the good points about our culture is that you should respect older people.

Ultimately, while many felt Australia was basically a functional multicultural society, the question of true and deep acceptance of difference remained.

**Indian Woman:** When you go out, especially when we have our festivals and traditional dress, the way people look at you, you know it’s not accepted. You do feel a little bit threatened.
**Chinese Man:** Alongside multiculturalism you would have to differentiate - is it acceptance or is it tolerance of the races? As in they both mean different things. Tolerance means you’re putting up with it. You might not like it, but you’re putting up with it. Acceptance is you’re welcoming it into the way you are.

One older migrant in particular lamented the setbacks to multicultural policy he had witnessed during his lifetime.

**Chinese Man:** I thought in the ‘70s the debates on the multiculturalism, the multicultural policy were genuine debates on trying to be multicultural in every sense of the word, meaning to say embodying people from all races and all cultures and all languages and all creeds. Al Grassby with the big tie. He was a strong promoter of that, and that sort of debate was – both side of the parties were debating on this issue very genuinely and strongly and with the best of intention and to make it work, but sad to say that that issue or that policy has been hijacked to become a fear issue or a racially motivated issue or depriving some sector of the population from the others as an issue. Of course, Pauline Hanson didn’t make things very easy. She makes general statements like the Aborigines have been specially treated and are doing nothing so all of our resources are being wasted on them and then she would make issues of the Vietnamese coming here and taking all the jobs. So every now and again if something like Pauline Hanson comes up, it will gain a momentum, it will have followers and multiculturalism or multicultural policy takes a funny twist. It was no longer what it was intended to be but rather it was utilised for some purpose, some agenda.

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 part 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.

Chinese Man: Whittam and Malcolm Fraser, they sort of opened the door wider. When I was in school I learned that Australia had this thing called the ‘White Australia’ policy. My teacher said, ‘This country is a wonderful country with rolling plains and big and everything is huge and plenty of land and plenty of sheep, plenty of cattle and a big continent.’ Except for this ‘White’ policy, so who could come in? My friends who were Eurasians, if they could prove that they were 51% European, they could come in. So the door was half open. Even though there was a Colombo plan in place, the Colombo plan was already in place in 1950, 1951 and the door wasn’t open to anybody who wanted to come here unless you could prove that you were 51% European in origin. So Eurasians who could prove that their forebears were from somewhere in Europe, anywhere in Europe or England, fine. If you could prove your name was Smith or Rodriguez, fine, or De Sousa – okay. But if your surname was Tan or Chin or Wong … so that door was half open but when Whitlam came to form government, he opened a door widest and took away … I think the ‘White Australia’ policy was dismantled in 1962, 1960-something and Whitlam came to form government and had a better, wider outlook and he went straight to China to make first contact. Anyway when Malcolm Fraser became Prime Minister, he opened the door much wider. He welcomed the Vietnamese refugees.

When it came to current government policy on immigration, many felt it was ambiguous and constantly changing.

Indian Woman 1: The PR [permanent resident] rules keep changing, so it’s very hard to make plans because the rules keep changing.

Indian Woman 2: One thing we saw in the whole federal election was that things were changing, and we were not going to be welcome here as we once were, and the jobs and student places that were for us, they want these to go to Australians now. It was like, ‘Oh, you’re not needed around here now’.

Iranian Man 1: I think there are many changes to the rules of immigration this year.

Iranian Man 2: The problem is the government changes the rules every year. People that come here now come under different rules than when I came. The field of study that I was in was in the needed list, but now that field is gone, it’s not in the list anymore. It’s changing so now I am disadvantaged.
Some newer migrants commented on how rigorous the process was.

**Chilean Man 1:** When you come it there’s lots of forms, lots of information. That’s a good thing, because then you know that only special people are coming here…

**Chilean Man 2:** But the first step is money, it’s very expensive to come here.

**Chilean Man 3:** Australia is hard, it’s pretty hard, harder than New Zealand even.

**Iranian Man:** The processing times for some kinds of visas are, I think, very long, and because of this people try to find another way. For example, the permanent residency visa, the processing time is three years or more. And three years is a very long time and so people try to come here as a refugee or a student.

Most migrants felt immigration policy should be determined by economic needs and many showed strong support for skilled migration.

**Chinese Man 1:** I’m remember reading something on the immigration policy which said we want to have this many from this area of the world and this many from this area … what should it matter where they come from? Look at what they have to offer. What kind of workforce does Australia want to let in? And they’re not looking at the skills, as much as where the people come from. As well as whether they are being persecuted or suffering some injustice.

**Chinese Man 2:** I think giving is what the government wants. They don’t want people coming in and taking away.

**Indian Woman:** People who are skilled migrants, people like us who’ve actually studied here, and on our own money, we haven’t taken any money, and we’ve actually skilled ourselves where we can easily find jobs, and we’ve invested our money and we invest our skills into the society. So I think Australia gets a lot of benefit especially from skilled migrants.

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.

**Indian Woman 1:** I was really surprised by how much the younger generation didn’t know about India. They ask things like, ‘Do you have cars in India?’ It’s just a ridiculous question.

**Indian Woman 2:** Older people are more appreciative of our culture.

**Indian Woman 1:** I think that before they [bring more migrants in] there needs to be a change in attitude. So things are going to go from bad to worse, but if there’s an attitude change especially with the youth that it’s not just ‘you’ and ‘me’, it’s ‘ours’, and together we can make it one. And then there’s a point in getting more people in, and getting more infrastructure and so on to cope with it.
Indian Woman 2: I completely agree, because otherwise society won't cope and the problems will get worse. So you have to fix the problems first because we're clearly not ready now.

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.

Chinese Man 1: [The government] are in a bind. They want to be tough but at the same time they want to be humane.

Chinese Man 2: Obviously people who are escaping persecution, we have a responsibility to help them.

Indian Woman: There's a social responsibility we have to refugees no matter where they come from

As mentioned above, 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.

Chinese Man 1: Immigration, I'm a bit of a fence sitter on this. I believe I see all the angles and they all have merit. Because I see the economic side of things. A refugee's freedom, in my opinion, is not free. Because the taxpayer has to pay for it. We all work and we pay a certain amount of tax.

Chinese Man 2: You kind of get bummed out 'cos they are trying to get a free ride into the country instead of going through the proper channels.

Chinese Man 1: I believe a person should be rewarded for doing things the right way. Unfortunately, the government doesn't know what the right way is. The economic side of things, the taxpayer gets the bill at the end of the day and when you're diverting all of that money to one thing, you are taking it away from something else. There's only so much social security that Australia can give, there's only so much medical healthcare they can give.

Chilean Man 1: I know there's a big, big problem at the moment with the refugee situation ...

Chilean Man 2: If refugees are coming, it's harder for people who are coming for the study or the work ...

Chilean Man 3: Because if more refugees come then the Australian people have to pay more taxes ...

Chilean Man 1: The government needs to invest a lot of money for the refugees, for the education and so on.

Chilean Man 2: And if dangerous people are coming here, they're going to come as refugees.
Indian Woman: … but in terms of what Australia gets out of it compared to what the immigrants get out of it; the refugees I think are not skilled enough or do not have the broader knowledge of what the culture is, or English, they cannot become one with the culture straight away.

The uncertainty around the genuine nature of some humanitarian entrants also fuelled the debate on asylum seekers.

Iranian Man 1: We should make a difference between real refugees and some people who pretend to be refugees. They cheat and use the advantages of the refugees and because of this the Australian government maybe more strict. It is very hard for the Australian government to find the reality. Because of the people who cheat, it makes the situation harder for the people who are telling the truth.

Iranian Man 2: They should investigate more to accept real refugees, not just anyone who claims that they have a problem with the government.

Asylum seekers who come via boat were viewed the most harshly and accused of making matters worse for all immigrants.

Chinese Man: They come here for a better way of life, but they are trying to push in. It’s true. The boat people, from Sri Lanka, from anywhere. They get on a boat and they think oh Australia will help us, we’ll be let into the country for free, they’ll get a job and blah blah blah. But they completely ignore all the paperwork and red tape. The ones that push in are the ones that give immigrants a bad name. Immigrants aren’t bad people, but they are made out to be because they’ve been typecast and all the publicity is not helping.

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.

Sudanese Woman: For two or three years now, the migration has stopped from Sudan. We don’t know why. There are no more people coming, it’s stopped but we still have problems in Sudan. Some of us still have family in Sudan. Some have kids who were lost years ago. They need to find their kids and bring them here. Some have mothers in Sudan and there is no one to look after the mothers back home.

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.

**Chilean Man:** If you manage your economics in very good ways then I think yeah, why not, you could take many more migrants.

Given the sheer size of the country, those who held this view felt there was plenty of room for more to come.

**Iraqi Man:** I do believe that any bona fide applicant to come to Australia, especially those whose qualifications are needed in Australia, should be given opportunity to come. We have and are blessed with enormous space and riches as a country and that can cater for quite a number of multiples of the current population of Australia.

**Chinese Man:** They’re complaining about having too many immigrants, and there’s like, what, 21 million people in the country? Which is less than 10% of the US population in an area of land bigger than the US? I really don’t understand why they think Australia is over-populated.

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.

**Indian Woman:** Now with the ageing population there’s obviously more people over 60 than there are in their 20s, so if we didn’t have immigrants we wouldn’t be able to support society … there’s more burden on the society if there’s no immigration.

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.

**Iranian Man:** The government does not have any programs to help [skilled] migrants. There are many government organisations in Australia for finding a job and helping migrants. But after one and a half years I haven’t found an organisation. It means there is no program in the first stage after coming to Australia to introduce migrants and help them network or find any solutions.
**Chinese Man 1:** They don’t have a problem about where we are going to put them, there’s plenty of space. It’s just what they’re going to do with them once they’ve got them there. We’ve just got them in sort of holding cells at the moment. Instead of coming up with programs to educate them about Australia and potentially programs to get them to do work. But then there’s the issue of ‘are they going to take our jobs’ which is pretty much the main argument I hear from anyone who is against immigration. ‘They’re taking our jobs!’

**Chinese Man 2:** Definitely if we want to take more asylum seekers, it’s going to need the support of communities, that’s for sure. Otherwise, with no community to support them they are going to be left to their own devices.

**Chinese Man 1:** That’s why you have closed off communities, like a whole group of Chinese or Vietnamese or whatever race, huddled together in a small group and keeping to themselves. It might be race-based, it might be religion-based, it might be politically-based. But they all huddle together and they shut themselves away from the world because no one wants to integrate them.

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.

**Sudanese Woman 1:** It’s hard when your kids reach 15 years, they have to start in high school which is not acceptable for our kids. In Sudan, they did school in Arabic language. Because when you learn a different language, in English, you should start from the beginning. But in Australia, there is nothing like that. That problem affected us with our kids. Some of our kids now, which is why they are on the streets.

**Sudanese Woman 2:** Our kids, when they are 15 years, they have to be in Year Nine or Year 10. But they don’t know anything. They don’t know English. But they are forced to be there [in school]. They don’t want to be in TAFE because they think that TAFE is for adults, because we, their mothers, go to TAFE. They don’t want to go to TAFE with us. So that is why they end up on the street. We really do not know what we can do. We hope now that the small kids they can continue school that they start in kindergarten here and they can follow.

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?
**Chinese Man:** Well no one wants to live in the inner parts of Australia. Everyone wants to stay by the coast. You know, there was just recently, Western Australia just caused a big uproar because all of a sudden they were going to dump a detention centre right there without any consultation or anything. You had people saying, ‘If they come here, I’ll feel unsafe’. But it’s like, where else would you put them? There’s one group that says, ‘No we don’t want them’. Then there are people who want to be more humane … but then where are we going to put them?

**Vietnamese Woman 1:** I think the government should expand in the country areas. They are friendlier there.

**Vietnamese Woman 2:** They aren’t friendly in the Central Coast!

The issue of the job scarcity, particularly in skilled work, was cause for some to believe there should be a halt in population growth.

**Greek Woman:** Well in those days there were jobs, there was work. You could walk out of here and go anywhere and there was a job for you.

**Swedish Woman:** I think a lot of highly skilled migrants that come here are never fully utilised … People coming here with massive experience and high education and sort of doing the dishes at McDonald’s. It’s terrible.

**Iranian Man:** I don’t know, maybe the economic system has changed, but I think there is no suitable relation between the skilled migrants and finding a job here. You cannot easily find a job because for most of the job maybe you are over-qualified because for example if you want to pass the requirements for having a permanent residency, you should have four years experience and a Bachelor or higher degree. But if you want to work here, they tell you that you are over-qualified because you have four years experience. I think if the government is offering these kinds of visas, they need to have potential jobs in their country. But many people are changing their career here.

Concerns about the perceived lack of infrastructure in Australia were a strong factor in the argument against greater population growth.

**Chinese Man:** That’s the big word, infrastructure. The Australian government needs to focus more on the local infrastructure. That’s why China is the superpower that it is at the moment because everything we buy is made in China. Australia is outsourcing everything and getting overseas help so when they fall over, we fall over. As opposed to putting our money back into the local community. If they did that, then there would be more opportunities to put immigrants into a job and we’d have less Australians feeling like they are taking our jobs because government would be making more and more jobs all the time ‘cos they are supporting infrastructure.
Vietnamese Woman: I don’t know if we are capable of having more people. Unless they are going to do something about public transports because everyone wants to be near transport and shops and schools ... more jobs are towards the city or Parramatta.

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.

**Chinese Man**: I would say [my daughter’s] experience has been richer. They’re actually sort of richer than ours. We came with the baggage. They had none ... they were children, we put them in school, they mix up with all the kids at the school, they moved up from one school to another up to the university level and make friends with them.

**Vietnamese Woman 1**: My parents tell us how lucky we are. **Vietnamese Woman 2**: Every time we have dinner they tell us how fortunate we are. **Vietnamese Woman 1**: Especially when you start to complain about something, they tell us, you have it better than we had it at your age. **Vietnamese Woman 2**: They had to start from scratch. We got everything so they say we should appreciate it more.

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**Sudanese Woman**: We need our children to have an education. That is our first priority. That is why we are here. So we need our children to have an education, to have a safe life, to be safe, to be healthy.

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.

**Iraqi Man**: No I don’t think they have any feeling at all of being migrants. They’re Australians for everything absolutely. Oh, they are aware of [their heritage] but I never imposed any of it on them. I treat them as totally independent. They married whom they wished, when they wished. They chose their own careers as they wished.

**Greek Woman**: Of course you want to know, of course you want your children to be educated about who you are, who your grandfather is, where you came from, how your grandparents were when they came out here, how they struggled, what they built for you; you want to know that, you want your kids to know that.

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.
Chilean Man: If I have children here, I have my country here because here is where my family is, but also my country from where I’m born. So my children will have to learn Spanish, because their father is Spanish … so they have mix, and I think that is very good.

Indian Woman 1: Sometimes I worry we’re making a mistake, building a home here, because I think, what about the kids, you know? That’s something we’re talking about a lot right now.
Indian Woman 2: But I think if they are born and brought up here they will follow the Australian traditions, so I don’t think they will have it difficult …
Indian Woman 1: It’s going to be a problem for us … at the end of it, you have to move out to the world outside and hope they have the right values … because living here we cannot control our children’s lives, whereas in India now, my mother can still tell me what to do! So we have to start adjusting and changing our mindsets to make it easier on the kids.

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.

Chinese Man: You grow up feeling like you don’t really fit in - definitely there is a bit of that, especially in Newcastle, because there isn’t as big a Chinese community, as say Sydney or Melbourne. I have met a lot of Chinese born Australians or Australian born Chinese in Sydney and they’ve essentially just grown up in that kind of environment and there was no difference, whereas here in Newcastle, we’re really at the front. Being Aussie born, you sometimes feel like you don’t belong in either camp. You don’t feel like you belong in the fully Chinese or fully Australian, you’re sort of stuck in the middle and then neither side really wants to fully accept you sometimes.

Lebanese Woman: My eldest, he says, ‘I’m an Aussie’ even though he doesn’t look it, but that’s what he says, but my youngest of my sons, he’s always drawing the Lebanese flag and I say, ‘Hey, you’re not only Lebanese – you’re half-half’ and he’s like, ‘No, I’m a Lebo.’ I don’t know. [My daughter] thinks she’s an Aussie. I don’t think she thinks, ‘I’m Lebanese.’

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.

Vietnamese Woman: I find sometimes our parents except us to be like them when they were back in Vietnam. They try to bring us up as if we were still there, being strict. I find it hard. Back in high school friends were allowed to do stuff and we weren’t and I never understood why. It frustrated me. Sometimes I would think, I don’t want to be Vietnamese. The rules are too hard.
**Chinese Man:** There are a lot of Chinese traditions that my mum hasn’t let go of. The responsibilities she expects of her children. Of how we respect elders in the Chinese community, how you respect your parents and so on and so forth. That mentality of respecting your relatives.

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.

**Sudanese Woman:** When we came here, Mum has money. Dad has money. The kids have money. When the kids reach 16 and go off with their Australian friends, by that time they can claim their own money from Centrelink. That’s when a lot of kids don’t want to finish their school. They love money, it’s the first time they have money and the first time they have freedom. They run away from home. That is what is happening in our community. It is going to affect all Sudanese because we are going to lose all our kids because of this Centrelink. Australian kids don’t run away, they are still with their mothers and they still go to school. But our kids don’t go to school, they don’t follow the rules and now they are going to lose our culture and they are going to lose Australian culture. They are in between.

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 that 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 different 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 reasonable 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 gropes towards something different, has a great deal to be said for it.
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