

Joint Standing Committee on Migration

Committee activities (inquiries and reports)

Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia

Terms of Reference

The Joint Standing Committee on Migration shall inquire into the economic, social and cultural impacts of migration in Australia and make recommendations to maximise the positive effects of migration. The inquiry shall examine and report on:

Multiculturalism, social inclusion and globalisation

1. The role of multiculturalism in the Federal Government's social inclusion agenda; and
2. The contribution of diaspora communities to Australia's relationships with Europe, the UK, Middle East and the immediate Asia-Pacific Region.

Settlement and participation

3. Innovative ideas for settlement programs for new migrants, including refugees, that support their full participation and integration into the broader Australian society; and
4. Incentives to promote long term settlement patterns that achieve greater social and economic benefits for Australian society as a whole.

National productive capacity

5. The role migration has played and contributes to building Australia's long term productive capacity;
6. The profile of skilled migration to Australia and the extent to which Australia is fully utilising the skills of all migrants; and
7. Potential government initiatives to better assist migrant communities establish business enterprises.

Media release: Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia

17 February 2011

The Parliament's Migration Committee launched an inquiry into multiculturalism in Australia today. Chair of the Committee, Maria Vamvakinou MP, welcomed the inquiry and the opportunity to hear directly from migrant communities.

"Australia is a diverse society - it is part of who we are as Australians both in the city and the bush. Some European leaders have suggested that multiculturalism has failed in Europe. The lessons from Europe are important, but multiculturalism in Australia and Australian society is quite different," Ms Vamvakinou said.

"Migration has brought enormous benefits to Australia, adding to the vibrancy of our society and increasing its productivity. We are a multicultural society but we need to stay in touch with the challenges that migrant communities face.

"It is timely to consider whether a new policy on multiculturalism is needed, and how to ensure the Government's social inclusion agenda also meets the needs of migrant communities. Australia's settlement programs, which play an important role in assisting new migrants integrate and participate fully in society, will also be scrutinised.

"As a society, we will all benefit from harnessing the skills, initiative and optimism of new migrants to this country. The inquiry will also look into how best to utilise the skills of migrants, and incentives to encourage entrepreneurship," she said

The Committee is interested in hearing directly from individuals, community leaders, the business community, support organisations and service providers.

The deadline for submissions is **Friday 8 April 2011**. Further information about the inquiry can be obtained from the Committee's website www.aph.gov.au/mig or from the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4560.