



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes:

No one teaches you to become an Australian

June 2018

Preamble

The Australian Government is pleased to respond to the recommendations of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration as set out in *No one teaches you to become an Australian: Report of the inquiry into migrant settlement outcomes* (the Inquiry).

The Australian Government notes the dissenting reports provided by Senators from the Australian Greens and the Australian Labor Party.

Australia is a successful and vibrant multicultural nation, with nearly half its population either born overseas or having at least one parent born overseas. The Australian Government is unwavering in its commitment to a multicultural Australia: one which celebrates and acknowledges the benefits that diversity brings – socially, economically and culturally.

On 20 March 2017, the Government launched its multicultural policy statement, *Multicultural Australia: United, Strong, Successful*. This statement identifies the Government's priorities and strategic directions that will guide programs and policies for the coming years, and is available online at www.dss.gov.au/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/australian-governments-multicultural-statement.

The Australian Government is committed to supporting the successful settlement of all migrants to Australia and is already addressing many of the recommendations. The Inquiry repeatedly heard how Australia is recognised as a world leader in providing settlement services. Australia also has one of the smallest discrepancies between locally born and overseas born unemployment rates in the OECD. We are one of the most successful and cohesive societies in the world.

Settlement is a complex process, and both settlement and mainstream support services are important to enable new arrivals to achieve full economic and social participation and to adjust to Australian society. Australia's approach to settlement is based on mutual benefits and responsibilities. The Australian community benefits as a whole both economically and socially from migration, which brings different skills, perspectives and knowledge. Migrants benefit from joining one of the world's most stable, democratic and welcoming societies.

The Australian Government acknowledges the significant work being done by government agencies across jurisdictions, service providers and other non-government organisations to support the settlement of migrants and refugees across Australia. The level of collaboration and co-operation achieved by these stakeholders contributes to Australia's successful settlement outcomes.

The Australian Government also takes its responsibility to protect the Australian community from the risk of harm from non-citizens very seriously. We are continuing to develop ways to ensure that people who migrate to Australia are not a risk to the safety of the Australian community.

Entering or remaining in Australia is a privilege, not a right. Every person who lives in Australia, whether that person is a non-citizen, a citizen by birth, or a citizen by application, must uphold and obey the law. If a person commits serious offences, they are accountable for their actions and are liable to be dealt with in accordance with Australian law.

The Australian Government thanks all those who were involved in the work of the Inquiry and delivery of the final report, in particular the members of the Committee and those organisations and individuals that contributed submissions.

| No. | Recommendation | Government Response |
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| 1 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth provide additional funding to expand the Community Hubs network nationally and to establish similar flexible settlement service programs.</p> | <p>Supported</p> <p>As part of the 2016-17 Budget, the Australian Government announced an additional investment of \$5.7 million over three years to expand the National Community Hubs Program – a program that helps migrants and humanitarian entrants connect with their communities to gain new skills, including English, to participate in Australian society.</p> <p>There are currently 61 Community Hubs in operation across NSW, Victoria and Queensland. In 2018, the Hubs will expand into South Australia. A decision on the location and the number of the Hubs will be made following the EOI process in the first quarter of 2018.</p> |
| 2 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Department of Social Services provide funding for a 'Neighbourhood Migrant Mothers' outreach program to meet with recently arrived migrant families in order to provide training in day care and the educational system, bilingual education, children's rights, preventative healthcare, sexual development and education, physical development, nutrition, addiction prevention, household safety, employment and relationships with the police.</p> | <p>Supported in principle</p> <p>The Government recognises the importance of the family in ensuring the wellbeing of individuals and communities. It invests heavily in improving family functioning through programs and services as well as benefits and payments.</p> <p>Community Hubs currently provide some of the services identified by the Committee as suitable for a 'Neighbourhood Migrant Mothers' program.</p> <p>Other matters identified as suitable for a 'Neighbourhood Migrant Mothers' outreach services are the province of state and territory governments and are being provided through alternative avenues.</p> |

3

The Committee recommends that the Australian Cultural Orientation Program provide at least 100 hours of Australian cultural training including civic and legal education to refugee and humanitarian entrants as well as other migrants who would benefit from this training.

Supported in principle

The Australian Government provides cultural orientation to refugee and humanitarian entrants to help them build the skills and knowledge to transition to life in Australia.

The Australian Cultural Orientation Program (AUSCO) is a voluntary cultural orientation program provided to Refugee and Special Humanitarian Program visa holders over the age of five years, prior to their departure for Australia. AUSCO is not currently available to other visa stream entrants. AUSCO gives participants practical advice about the journey to Australia and the necessary tools to deal with initial settlement concerns. Its design as a short introductory course delivered over a period of up to five days (25 hours in total) is necessitated by the diverse backgrounds and personal circumstances of AUSCO participants and the pre-departure stress many experience, which makes retaining complex and/or new information challenging.

The settlement orientation messages provided to entrants offshore through AUSCO are reinforced in the onshore orientation component of the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP). The HSP has a particular focus on supporting humanitarian entrants to achieve positive outcomes regarding education, employment and English language learning as key drivers of social and economic wellbeing. Available to HSP clients aged 15 years and over, HSP Orientation develops participants' capacity and understanding across ten settlement topics identified as core competencies for successful settlement. These topics include:

- Australian Law
- Education
- Employment
- Settlement Services
- Family Functioning and Social Support
- Housing
- Health
- Money

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling at Home in Australia • Transport <p>HSP Orientation is delivered by HSP Service Providers through a combination of group sessions and real-life scenarios over the first 12-18 months of settlement. Participants complete HSP Orientation when they have demonstrated achievement against key outcomes within each topic. The key outcomes are written at three different levels of understanding - 'awareness', 'knowledge' and 'application' - to allow participants to retain knowledge and build their skills cumulatively over the course of the program.</p> |
| 4 | <p>The Committee recommends that the eligibility for the Adult Migration English Program be amended to allow greater flexibility through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> enabling all newly arrived migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds access to the AMEP; extending the registration and commencement times to two years; and completing tuition within ten years. | <p>Supported in principle</p> <p>a. The Government considers that the eligibility for AMEP is fit for purpose. All new migrants and humanitarian entrants holding permanent visas (and some temporary visa holders) are eligible to access the AMEP if they have less than Functional English. Eligibility for the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is set out in the Immigration (Education) Act 1971 and subordinate instruments. The types of visa holders that cannot access AMEP include tourists and students, or holders of visas that have an English language requirement. The Government continues to monitor the suitability of AMEP eligible temporary visa classes.</p> <p>b. and c. The time limits for registration, commencement and completion of AMEP tuition are outlined in the Immigration (Education) Act 1971. Extensions to these time limits are available under the Immigration (Education) Regulations 1992 on a case-by-case basis to provide flexibility for AMEP clients to access support when they need it. Legislated time limits may be extended to two and ten years upon application for persons over 18 years of age. In 2016-17, the department provided around 8,800 extensions to time limits for AMEP clients.</p> |

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| 5 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Adult Migrant English Program amend its business model by focusing on English language competency to enable better community engagement and improved employment prospects; and supporting clients to access additional hours of tuition as necessary to reach that level.</p> | <p>Supported in principle</p> <p>The current 510 hour entitlement is legislated under the Immigration (Education) Act 1971. Additional tuition under the non-legislated AMEP sub-programs may provide up to 1,600 hours of English language tuition for eligible clients. The AMEP sub-programs are: the Special Preparatory Program (SPP) for humanitarian visa holders; AMEP Extend for clients who completed 500 hours of tuition without attaining Functional English; and Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET) to support clients to gain work experience. The AMEP provides significant support to clients within current funding restraints.</p> <p>From 1 July 2017, new contracts with AMEP service providers implemented reforms to the AMEP aimed at improving client participation, English language proficiency, and readiness for employment. In particular, the reforms introduced the Pre-employment English stream that provides English language tuition aimed at preparing AMEP clients for Australian workplaces.</p> |
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| 6 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Senior Officials Settlement Outcome Group produce an annual report on outcomes of the National Settlement Framework for consideration by the Council of Australian Governments.</p> | <p>Not Supported</p> <p>The National Settlement Framework has been developed in consultation with all state and territory governments. The Framework is a high level structural blueprint for the three tiers of government, federal, state and territory and local government, to work in partnership to effectively plan and deliver services that support the settlement of migrants and new arrivals in Australia.</p> <p>The Australian Government has established the Senior Officials Settlement Outcomes Group (SOSOG), an inter-governmental forum to consult and exchange information on a range of settlement-related issues. SOSOG is chaired by the Department of Social Services, and comprises representatives of federal departments, state and territory governments, and the Australian Local Government Association.</p> <p>In accordance with the National Settlement Framework, jurisdictions have reinvigorated Settlement Outcomes Planning Committees responsible for effective planning of settlement and support service. Jurisdictions report to SOSOG on how they are prioritising their efforts to suit their particular circumstances and resources.</p> <p>Formalising reporting and the production of an annual report would not be an efficient addition to the current arrangements and would be unlikely to have a practical impact on improving settlement outcomes.</p> <p>While SOSOG is not a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) auspiced body, significant strategic issues relating to national reform can be escalated to First Ministers for consideration regarding inclusion on the COAG agenda, if required.</p> |
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| 7 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Council of Australian Governments have oversight of the National Settlement Framework and that any reporting needs to be sent to the Council of Australian Governments for consideration at their meetings and that settlement service needs of all migrants be considered.</p> | <p>Not Supported</p> <p>As above, Australia has a strong history of collaboration between the three tiers of government. The Australian Government has established the Senior Officials Settlement Outcomes Group (SOSOG), an inter-governmental forum to consult and exchange information on a range of settlement-related issues, including settlement service needs of all migrants across various cohorts. SOSOG is an effective mechanism for governments to raise, discuss and address policy and operational issues related to settlement services and outcomes for new arrivals.</p> <p>As noted above, while SOSOG is not a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) auspiced body, significant strategic issues relating to national reform can be escalated to First Ministers for consideration regarding inclusion on the COAG agenda, if required. Formalising an oversight role for COAG in relation to the National Settlement Framework would not add proportionate value in improving the effectiveness of settlement services or the quality of settlement outcomes.</p> |
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| 8 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Jobactive program include an employment support service specifically designed for newly arrived and longer term migrants.</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>The Australian Government's employment services program <i>jobactive</i> was designed to be flexible to cater to the assessed needs of all job seekers, including newly arrived and longer term migrants to Australia.</p> <p>The Government is taking steps to provide better support for newly arrived refugees. The Budget 2018-19 included changes to the way employment services are delivered to streamline support for refugees. This measure will allow newly arrived refugees to focus on adjusting to life in Australia and enhancing their English language proficiency before entering <i>jobactive</i> to ensure that they get the right assistance at the right time. The Government also announced enhancements to support offered to migrants and refugees once they commence in <i>jobactive</i>, such as through post-placement support including mentoring and English language training once they are in a job, cultural awareness training for providers and flexible delivery of complementary programs to meet the specific needs of migrant and refugee job seekers.</p> <p>The Department of Jobs and Small Business will continue to consider the needs of this cohort in the development of the next employment services contract due to commence in June 2020.</p> |
| 9 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Government review support programs for newly arrived migrant youth such as the Youth Transition Support program with the view to examine the feasibility of extending these programs nationally.</p> | <p>Supported</p> <p>The Department of Social Services has commissioned an independent evaluation of the Youth Transition Support (YTS) pilot. The Government will consider the findings of the evaluation, along with other program specific material, in the first half of 2018 to determine whether YTS services should continue, including expansion to additional targeted locations. The YTS pilot program is undergoing review.</p> |

10

The Committee recommends that the Department of Health establish a Sport and Active Recreation Program to increase active participation by migrants in sport and recreation activities.

Supported in Principle

The Australian Government agrees in principle to support the intent of Recommendation 10 and is currently actioning this through existing programs and initiatives which are outlined below.

The Australian Government invests and supports a number of sport and recreation initiatives that deliver interventions to the problems of inactivity as well as aim to increase social cohesion within communities across remote and rural areas as well as metropolitan centres. These include the Australian Sports Commissions (ASC) sport participation program delivered by individual National Sporting Organisations (NSOs), the Bachar Houli program, the Jim Stynes Scholarship Fund, Reclink, Play By the Rules and the Sporting Schools Program.

The Australian Government is considering additional sport and recreation programs that could contain elements for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including migrant communities.

National Sport Plan

The Australian Government is currently developing a National Sport Plan (NSP) which is due to be released in mid-2018. The NSP will articulate clear policy objectives in relation to sports participation; recreation and physical activity; high performance; and sports integrity.

The NSP has been informed by a multi-sectoral sport, health and public consultation process which focused on understanding Australia's expectations of the sports sector, including our goals for sporting and physical activity participation, cultural and public health outcomes.

Australian Sports Commission

The Australian Government invests in sports participation through the ASC. Funding is provided to NSOs to support grassroots participation in sport and encourages NSOs to provide products and programs that are inclusive for all Australians.

Sporting Schools Program

The Australian Government's Sporting Schools is a \$160 million program designed to help schools all across the country to increase children's participation in sport and to connect children with community sport (whilst also providing an intervention to address declining sport participation rates). Special circumstances (such as regional or remote school location) are considered as part of funding calculations.

Reclink

The Australian Government currently supports Reclink Australia, to provide structured team based and individual sport and recreation programs and opportunities for people aged 16-65 years experiencing high socio-economic disadvantage, high levels of youth unemployment, high levels of domestic and community violence, and low sport and recreation rates. Reclink's national program of activity is delivered in partnerships with communities in order to best target hard-to-reach population groups, including those in rural and remote locations.

Jim Stynes Scholarship Fund

The Jim Stynes Scholarship Fund assists young people to achieve their goals and fulfil their potential, and provides mentor support to scholarship recipients.

Bachar Houli

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| | | <p>The Bachar Houli Program is a mentoring and development initiative of the AFL implemented in 2013 with support from the Attorney General's Department. Participants undertake skill development sessions in areas of communication, decision making, resilience, identity and community values as well as being encouraged to engage in the local community and promote cultural and social inclusion. The overarching objective of the program is to promote engagement, participation and community leadership within the Islamic community through sport.</p> <p><u>Play By the Rules (PBTR)</u></p> <p>Play by the Rules (PBTR) provides information, resources, tools and free online training to increase the capacity and capability of administrators, coaches, officials, players, parents and spectators to assist them in preventing and dealing with discrimination, harassment, child safety, inclusion and integrity issues in sport.</p> <p><u>Football Federation Australia (FFA) Multicultural unit</u></p> <p>Announced in October 2017, the FFA is establishing a multicultural unit, and a new participation program that looks to engage with multicultural communities across Australia. The program, funded by the Department of Social Services, delivers the FFA's MiniRoos program (an introductory program that teaches children ages 4-11 fundamental football skills in a fun, engaging and inclusive environment) in multicultural communities in Western Sydney, with a focus on new arrivals.</p> |
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| 11 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Department of Social Services establish a pilot migrant youth mentoring program. The program should consider including experienced members of the sporting, arts and academic communities.</p> | <p>Supported in principle</p> <p>The Australian Government provides opportunities for innovative and youth-targeted programs through its grants rounds, such as the Youth Transition Support (YTS) pilot and Settlement Grants program. The Government currently funds a number of organisations that provide a range of projects and initiatives, including mentoring for refugee and multicultural youth.</p> <p>In response to the findings of the 2016 17 independent evaluation of the Settlement Grants program, the Department of Social Services has recently restructured the program. The enhanced program (titled the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS)) identifies youth as a key focus for the program and an area where clients would benefit from more individualised and tailored support.</p> |
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The Committee recommends that the Australian Government implement Recommendations 1 to 8 of the Senate Education and Employment References Committee report on the value of a justice reinvestment approach to criminal justice in Australia.

These are:

1. The committee recommends that the Commonwealth take a leading role in identifying the data required to implement a justice reinvestment approach and establish a national approach to the data collection of justice indicators.
2. The committee recommends that the Commonwealth make a commitment to sharing relevant data held by Commonwealth line agencies with justice reinvestment initiatives in other jurisdictions.
3. The committee recommends that the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments recognise the importance of long term, sustainable funding for programs including adequate provision for robust evaluation.
4. The committee recommends that the Commonwealth consider the establishment of a justice reinvestment clearinghouse to compile, disseminate, and promote research and program evaluation in all communities.
5. The committee recommends that the Commonwealth adopt a leadership role in supporting the implementation of justice reinvestment, through the Council of Australian Governments.
6. The committee recommends that the Commonwealth commit to the establishment of a trial of justice reinvestment in Australia in conjunction with the relevant states and territories, using a place-based approach, and that at least one remote Indigenous community be included as a site.
Further, the committee recommends that any trial actively involve local communities in the process, is conducted on the basis of rigorous justice mapping

Noted

The Australian Government response to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee report: Value of a justice reinvestment approach to criminal justice reinvestment in Australia was tabled on 17 October 2017. In summary, the response concludes the following.

Justice reinvestment is fundamentally about diverting funding from the corrections system into community-based crime prevention and community strengthening programs. It is an approach that saves government spending on corrections and related criminal justice measures and reinvests those savings into the community to improve public safety. The Commonwealth Government cannot effectively fund justice reinvestment projects because state and territory governments are solely responsible for managing corrections systems in Australia and are largely responsible for corrections budgets, with the exception of a small percentage of funding for federal offenders.

The elements that make up the criminal justice system, including prisons and in-prison rehabilitation services, are generally the responsibility of state and territory governments. Furthermore, the majority of offenders in the criminal justice system have committed offences under state and territory laws. As identified in the Minority report by Coalition Senators, the success of justice reinvestment therefore ultimately rests with the states and territories. The role of the Commonwealth Government is to support the states and territories to implement a justice reinvestment approach to funding programs. The Commonwealth Government's role also includes funding prevention programs to improve community safety, recognising that improvements in this area support a reduction in crime and may result in fewer people in prison. Examples of such programs include those under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, which allocates assets confiscated from criminals to crime prevention projects that will benefit the community, including security infrastructure and early intervention and diversion projects. The Commonwealth Government also provides funding for a range of activities to improve community safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS).

over a minimum time frame beyond the electoral cycle and be subject to a robust evaluation process.

7. The committee recommends that the Commonwealth provide funding for the trial of justice reinvestment in Australia.
8. The committee recommends that the Commonwealth, through the Standing Committee on Law and Justice, promote the establishment of an independent central coordinating body for justice reinvestment with the following roles:
 - provision of advice as to methodology regarding justice reinvestment;
 - identification of the national, consistent data required for effective implementation of justice reinvestment;
 - development of options for policy and initiatives to reduce levels of incarceration and identify potential savings for corrections budgets;
 - assistance with justice mapping for identification of place-based communities and identification of existing services and gaps in services required to reduce crime;
 - brokering agreements between stakeholders;
 - independent evaluation of programs and savings; and
 - monitoring reinvestment of savings in high stakes communities.

13

The Committee recommends that the Department of Immigration and Border Protection issue a notice to any visa holders who have committed a criminal offence that is heard before a magistrate or a court. The notice should contain advice that the visa holder's ability to apply to become an Australian citizen in the future may be jeopardised if they commit further offences.

Partially Supported

The Government partially supports recommendation 13 and will explore opportunities for providing appropriate reference material to states and territories, for distribution to affected visa holders. Implementation of a Commonwealth-led notification scheme is not considered practical, since the administration of criminal justice sits largely with state and territory governments.

When applying for visas, applicants are informed about Australia's character requirements as part of the application process and are advised that the provision of incorrect information may result in the cancellation of their visa. Further information regarding the character requirements, and the consequences of visa cancellation or refusal under section 501 of the *Migration Act 1958*, is publically available on the Department's website: <http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about/corporate/information/fact-sheets/79character>.

Information is also publicly available to prospective Australian citizens on the requirement to demonstrate that they are of 'good character' as part of the citizenship application and assessment process. This includes a requirement to provide penal clearance certificates for each country that they have resided in for more than 90 days. Good character covers the 'enduring moral qualities of a person' and whether they are likely to uphold and obey the laws of Australia, and other commitments they make through the Australian Citizenship Pledge. Information on the process for acquiring Australian citizenship is available on the Department's website: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Citi/Appl/What-documents-do-you-need/good-character-and-offences>

14

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth provide funding to the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission for the express purpose of collecting data on the visa status of offenders for inclusion on their national database and the National Criminal Intelligence System.

Supported in principle

The National Criminal Intelligence System (NCIS) will give Australia's intelligence agencies and front-line law enforcement a national and unified picture of criminal activity.

On 30 June 2015, the Government announced \$9.8 million of funding from the Confiscated Assets Account under the *Proceeds of Crime Act 2002* (POC Act) for a two-year NCIS Pilot Program. Commencing in July 2017, the Government provided a further \$9.8 million of funding over two years under the POC Act for the National Information Connectivity and Security Trial. The trial is building on the work of the NCIS Pilot Program and lays the foundation for future connectivity between partner systems and the ACIC's intelligence and operational systems.

As part of the 2018-19 Budget, the Government invested an initial \$59 million over four years to enable the Commonwealth and States joint build of NCIS.

If fully developed, NCIS will provide a federated intelligence and information sharing platform for collaboration and intelligence sharing with partners. This will include common and improved analytical tools, near real-time monitoring, deconfliction, alerts and indicators, and effective management tools to support activities such as tasking and reporting. The aim is to satisfy common, critical needs of intelligence analysts, investigators, front line officers and community policing stakeholders.

The feasibility of collecting data on the visa status of offenders for inclusion on NCIS is subject to further security, connectivity, cultural, legislative and privacy considerations.

15

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government amend the Migration Act 1958 requiring the mandatory cancellation of visas for offenders aged between 16 and 18 years who have been convicted of a serious violent offence, such as car jacking's or serious assaults. If legislation is amended, this should be accompanied by a caveat that no retrospective liability is thereby created.

Noted

The Australian Government takes its responsibility to protect the Australian community from risk of harm from non-citizens very seriously. Every person who lives in Australia, whether that person is a non-citizen, a citizen by birth, or a citizen by application, must uphold and obey the law. If a person commits serious offences, they are accountable for their actions and are liable to be dealt with in accordance with Australian law.

All non-citizens who wish to enter or remain in Australia must satisfy the character requirements in section 501 of the Migration Act 1958 (the Act). If a person does not pass the character requirements the Act provides for discretionary refusal and cancellation powers, and a mandatory cancellation power. The character provisions in the Act apply equally to all non-citizens, including minors, who hold, or apply for a visa, allowing them entry and stay in Australia.

Under the Migration Act non-citizens convicted of a serious violent offence, such as car jacking's or serious assault, would be referred for character cancellation. Non-citizens convicted of these types of crimes would likely fail the character test and as a result have their visa cancelled. Where the conviction results in a term of imprisonment for 12 months or more the non-citizen will be subject to mandatory cancellation provisions. If a person's visa is cancelled while they are in Australia, then the person is removed as soon as reasonably practicable.

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| 16 | <p>The Committee is also recommending that anyone over 18 years of age who has been convicted of a serious violent offence which is prescribed, such as serious assaults, aggravated burglary, sexual offences and possession of child pornography, have their visa cancelled under section 501 of the Migration Act 1958.</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>All non-citizens seeking to enter and stay in Australia must meet the criteria for the visa they have applied for and satisfy the character requirements set out in section 501 of the Migration Act 1958.</p> <p>A person fails the character test if, for example, they have a substantial criminal record, they have been convicted or found guilty of sexually based offences involving a child including possession of child pornography (even if the person was discharged without conviction), or there is a risk that the person may engage in criminal conduct.</p> <p>If a person fails the character test then their visa application may be refused, or if they hold a visa, it can be cancelled. If a person's visa is cancelled while they are in Australia, then the person is removed as soon as reasonably practicable.</p> |
| 17 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Government establish a community designed and led crisis service which includes a hotline and online information portal for family or community members who are concerned about someone vulnerable to extremist views.</p> | <p>Supported</p> <p>The Commonwealth supported the NSW Government in forming the Step Together advice and support service to provide information, advice and support referrals to families and communities who are concerned about someone vulnerable to extremist views.</p> <p>Over 240 community members and other stakeholders were consulted on the design of the service. This helpline is not a reporting service and is separate from counter-terrorism and police agencies.</p> <p>The Australian Government is actively working to establish and iterate a national help service that would incorporate further community consultation and apply any lessons learned from the existing Step Together service and any similar sorts of services.</p> |

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| 18 | <p>The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth pursue on the Council of Australian Governments on Counter-Terrorism agenda the need for an intervention order regime for individuals who are at risk of violent extremism.</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>Existing early intervention programs for individuals at risk of radicalisation to violent extremism rely on participants agreeing to participate. However, the majority of individuals identified currently participate willingly in a program, so an intervention order would only be necessary in a small minority of cases.</p> <p>The Commonwealth considers that intergovernmental fora, such as Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee, are best placed to examine best approaches to dealing with the small number of individuals who do not consent to voluntary intervention but who pose a risk of radicalising to violent extremism. For example, one option could be reviewing the existing control order regime. We also note that the Victorian Government Expert Panel on Terrorism and Violent Extremism Prevention and Response Powers Report 2 sets out a recommendation to create a Support and Engagement Order as a mechanism whereby courts can order an individual to participate and comply with an appropriate support and engagement plan.</p> <p>If it is determined that mandatory intervention is a legitimate tool to address this identified gap, a national approach will be important to avoid any inconsistencies between jurisdictions and consider legislative challenges.</p> |
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The Government also notes the recommendations in the dissenting report from the Australian Greens:

| No. | Recommendation | Government Response |
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| 1 | That there be no changes to the Migration Act that would allow for the deportation of juveniles, or to provide for the detention of juveniles for the purposes of later deportation. | <p>Noted</p> <p>In 2016 the Australian Government delivered on its promise that no minors would be in onshore detention. The Australian Government remains committed to this promise.</p> <p>As a matter of policy children, and where possible their families, will not be detained in an immigration detention centre, and if detention is required it will only be used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time. In the event that a child is detained, departmental officers must minimise the impact of detention by using an appropriate detention accommodation.</p> <p>The Child Protection Panel (the Panel) provides independent advice to the Department of Home Affairs on issues pertaining to child wellbeing and identifies strategies to improve processes, practice, policy and cultural norms around child well-being. The Department of Home Affairs has responded positively to the Panel's recommendations and the Department's Child Safeguarding Framework has now been finalised.</p> <p>The Australian Government takes Australia's international obligations seriously. In line with these obligations the Australian Government is required to ensure that removals do not arbitrarily interfere with the family unit and that the best interests of the child or children are treated as a primary consideration in removal planning of a family. It is also departmental policy that every effort should be made to coordinate the removal of a family unit at the same time and, where possible, from and to the same locations. However, where the right to family unity and the rights of the child are weighed against other serious considerations, the individual circumstances may justify the separation of the family.</p> |

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| 2 | <p>The Australian Government should publicly recognise the need for greater support and investment in the inclusion of young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds, and reject the harmful media stereotyping that fosters their exclusion from our community.</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>The Australian Government recognises that young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds face a range of issues including lack of English language proficiency, disrupted education, a lack of local networks, health issues and trauma. It also recognises that sometimes these issues persist past the initial settlement, and like other vulnerable cohorts, these young people may require additional support to make life transitions. That said, many young people in this cohort also demonstrate significant resilience and resourcefulness and contribute meaningfully to the community. As befits the complexity of the issue, the Australian Government is responding in a variety of ways.</p> <p>In March 2017, the Prime Minister released the Australian Government's Multicultural Statement, which outlines that Australians are not defined by race, religion or culture, but by shared values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law and equality of opportunity – a 'fair go' and sets out our vision for embracing diversity, emphasising our unique national identity and the importance of being an integrated and united people. Under the Statement, the strategic directions and priorities for multicultural policy in this country are to: encourage economic and social participation of new arrivals, harness the advantages of our diversity and shared national interest and continue to build harmonious and socially cohesive communities. The statement promotes the principle of mutual respect, acceptance and understanding.</p> <p>The Australian Government funds the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) not-for-profit advocacy organisation that provides advice to government, capacity building to those working with young people, and supports the development of young people's leadership and advocacy skills. It has representatives in each State and Territory to facilitate a national approach to youth settlement</p> <p>Other specific initiatives that support the integration of young people from humanitarian entrant and vulnerable migrant backgrounds include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Humanitarian Support Program (which assists settlement in the first 6-18 months) now ensures that every humanitarian entrant now has an individualised case plan, whereas previously case plans were developed for the family unit, which will support their integration; • The Strong and Resilient Communities program (previously the Strengthening Communities program which funds a range of social |
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| | | <p>cohesion and resilience projects directed at children and youth under 18 years;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Youth Transition Support (YTS) pilot, which builds capability and resilience amongst young humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants aged 15 to 24 years of age to stay engaged in education and make successful transitions to employment. Using a holistic, place-based delivery model, YTS focuses on four components - employment, education, sports and vocational opportunities. The pilot is being delivered by six services providers across 16 local government areas in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. • The National Anti-Racism Partnership Strategy and its associated campaign, Racism. It Stops With Me. The Strategy seeks to provide a clear understanding of what racism is, how it can be prevented and reduced and empower communities and individuals to take action to prevent and reduce racism and to seek redress when it occurs. As part of this two community service announcements (CSAs) were produced and aired between 5 October and 5 December 2017. The CSAs aimed to highlight casual or everyday racism, and bystander responses to racism. • The Harmony Art Collective (funded in 2017) which engages Australians aged 15-24 years, in particular young migrants, in positive discussion around identity and belonging. Renowned street artists delivered the first phase of the nationwide campaign through a series of eight workshops, during which the young attendees completed two panels of art reflecting their communities' identity. The Harmony Art Collective helps young Australian migrants share their stories, inspire others with their cultures, develop deeper connections with their communities, and promote cultural understanding. It has provided inspirational role models for young people and promotes pride in community and identity. <p>These programs are being monitored and evaluated to ensure that programs are able to adapt and evolve as required.</p> <p>In addition, the Australian Government has established the Senior Officials Settlement Outcomes Group (SOSOG), an inter-governmental forum to consult and exchange information on a range of settlement and related issues, including those relating to young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds. States, Territories and Local Governments administer a large</p> |
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| | | range of programs aimed at integration and social inclusion, and this forum provides further opportunities to learn about what works. |
| 3 | The Australian Government should increase the level of funding available to refugee community-based organisations within the Settlement Grants Program, and as part of the implementation of the National Settlement Framework, identify ways to improve engagement with, and support of, refugee community-based organisations. | <p>Supported in principle</p> <p>The Australian Government acknowledges the important role that ethno-specific community organisations play in delivering settlement outcomes, facilitating engagement and integration and building longer-term sustainability.</p> <p>In response to the findings of the 2016-17 independent evaluation of the Settlement Grants program, the Department of Social Services has recently restructured the program. The enhanced program (titled the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS)) includes a separate Community Capacity Building component. Organisations have been invited to apply, in a competitive open selection round, to deliver a range of community-based activities (further detail on these is available in the SETS Grant Opportunity Guidelines available on the Department's website).</p> |
| 4 | The Australian Government should support a whole-of-government and longer term approach to multicultural policy by developing a national legislative framework on multiculturalism underpinned by a Federal Multicultural Act. | <p>Noted</p> <p>The Australian Government's multicultural statement <i>Multicultural Australia: United, Strong, Successful</i> supports a whole-of-government long term approach to multicultural policy based on our shared values, which are founded on respect, equality and freedom.</p> <p>It is worth noting that both the 2013 Joint Standing Committee on Migration's <i>Inquiry into Migration and Multiculturalism</i> as well as the Access and Equity Inquiry of 2012 considered this matter, but did not advocate for national legislation.</p> |