



UNITED MACEDONIAN DIASPORA  
ОБЕДИНЕТА МАКЕДОНСКА ДИЈАСПОРА

**Submission of the  
United Macedonian Diaspora (Australia)  
to the  
Parliament of Australia  
Joint Standing Committee on Migration  
Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia**

28 May 2011



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Ms. Maria Vamvakinou MP  
Chair, Joint Standing Committee on Migration  
PO Box 6021,  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms. Vamvakinou,

**Re: Submission to the Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia**

The United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) congratulates the Parliament of Australia Joint Standing Committee for Migration for initiating this timely and important *Inquiry into Multiculturalism* in Australia. The Australian Government, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders including diaspora communities and organisations, can ensure policies and programs are capable of delivering better social and economic outcomes.

The role of the Australian-Macedonian diaspora in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is focussed on partnerships. We aim to harness strong personal and professional relationships with political, cultural, research, academic, financial, media and other stakeholders in Australia and globally in support of the national interests, public image and international reputation of Australia and Macedonia.

For the last 100 years Macedonians have contributed to Australia's economic and social development. The community has helped Australia to develop closer economic, cultural, sporting and strategic links with Macedonia and Southeast Europe. This contribution has recently been celebrated and documented by Ben-Moshe and Pyke in *Survey of the Australian Macedonian Community and Links with Macedonia*, Centre for Strategic Economic Studies, Victoria University (2010).

Following in our tradition of contribution to Australian society, we welcome the opportunity to contribute to national, parliamentary and public policy debates and discourse on strengthening multiculturalism in our society. Our position is centred on continuous review and innovation of public policy and practices related to multiculturalism as essential for adapting policy and programs to reflect the needs of Australian society.

We look forward to reading the Committee's report and its social impact on stakeholders.

Yours sincerely

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## Executive Summary

The executive summary examines three key issues:

- The increasing importance of multiculturalism, citizenship, social inclusion, social innovation and diasporas to Australia and their necessity to be a higher priority for Australian policy makers, migrants, employers and service providers;
- The identification of key challenges facing Australian multiculturalism;
- A proposed direction to the Australian Government and Parliament to improve effectiveness of multicultural policies and programs for the benefit of stakeholders and the delivery of better economic and social outcomes.

*The increasing importance of multiculturalism, citizenship, social inclusion, social innovation and diasporas to Australia and their necessity to be a higher priority for Australian policy makers, migrants, employers and service providers.*

UMD defines policies concerning **multiculturalism** in Australia as a socially progressive and involving a whole-of-government approach. The outcomes of such policies should aim to nurture and celebrate cultural diversity and create a sustainable society based on shared values, a democratic framework governed by the rule of law, equal rights and responsibilities of all citizens irrespective of their cultural, religious, country of origin, linguistic and ethnic identity. UMD also supports the principles outlined in the *Multicultural Victoria Bill 2011*.

UMD defines **citizenship** as a process of multiculturalism allowing migrants to be formally recognised as equal citizens. This status then enables them to contribute to, and benefit from, the social and economic capital they co-create in Australian public life.

UMD defines **social inclusion** as public policy programs and projects for creating a system and a culture where all Australians enjoy high self-esteem, equality and access to programs that contribute to the advancement of Australian society. It is an attempt by the Australian Government to build a stronger and fairer nation through the social inclusion agenda. Social inclusion is about all Australians having the opportunity to participate fully in the economic and community life of the nation, recognising that some people need extra support to do this. Newly arrived migrants from developing countries and refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds are recognised as disadvantaged and eligible for social inclusion programs.

UMD defines **social innovation** as a culture of continuous improvement and/or transformational change of society and public policies. This improvement is based on new ideas, new voices, strategies, organisational capabilities and practices essential for achieving better social outcomes for Australia. Innovation is essential for keeping multiculturalism robust and relevant. Windrum (2008) describes that such improvements can take the form of service and service-delivery innovation, administrative, organisational, conceptual, policy innovation and systemic innovation. All these forms of innovation can improve the quality and social impact of Australia's multiculturalism.

UMD defines **diasporas** as social, economic, political, environmental networks. These global networks engage in impact-oriented activities to deliver favourable public policies, programs and projects that build the capacity of the communities and their former homeland to reach full potential in partnership with host societies and global institutions.

Multiculturalism, citizenship, social inclusion, social innovation and diasporas are of growing importance to Australian society in an interdependent world. They can accelerate and facilitate delivery of better outcomes for Australia. Without them Australia cannot achieve the goal of creating a cohesive, innovative, harmonious and sustainable society.

Despite the Australian government's recent recommitment to a multicultural policy, *The People of Australia, Australia's Multicultural Policy*, the effectiveness of delivery and social impact reporting of multicultural programs and budgets has not been scientifically calibrated or benchmarked with best practices in other parts of the world.

It is not clear who benefits from a multicultural Australia, nor is it certain about the conditions under which the programs work best. It is also uncertain as to the role of multiculturalism to social progress and the quality of life of social investors and service recipients. Closing the R&D and communication gaps in Australia's multiculturalism are the first practical steps to managing performance, value delivery and informing stakeholders.

UMD believes that multiculturalism in Australia can be advanced through:

- Citizenship
- Social inclusion
- Social innovation
- Broader stakeholder engagement
- Greater focus on the social and economic impact of multicultural programs
- Innovative models for delivering sustainable outcomes for social investors, service recipients, facilitators and other stakeholders,
- Capitalising on the social networks and resources of diasporas and diaspora organisations
- Applying the latest research from peer-reviewed journals to the development of policy

In summary, multiculturalism, citizenship, social inclusion, social innovation and diasporas, can deliver superior collective impact and must become an integral component of the management of Australia's multicultural future. There is definitely scope for improving the quality of life of newly arrived migrants and their communities through innovative multicultural policies and programs.

#### *Key challenges for Australian multiculturalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*

To maintain relevance into the future, Australia's multiculturalism policies must become stakeholder-focused, transparent, more effective and productive and more socially and culturally inclusive. The policies must be more receptive to ideas arising from new research and voices from diasporas. Consequentially, policy-makers collaborate and co-invest to become better positioned for collective impact in an interdependent world. There is a genuine need to not only inform the public, but also policy-makers alike, on the positive social impact of multiculturalism through widely-available and improved and communication methods.

Since the last major review of Australian multiculturalism in 1999, a number of trends and factors have emerged to drive significant change in beliefs, attitudes and policies towards migration and multiculturalism.

The domestic social and political environment in Australia is more conducive to understanding, measuring and scaling the impact of multiculturalism. Australian tax payers expect a greater return on social investment in multiculturalism. Australian society and policy makers seem to recognise the value of cultural diversity to the community and to the economy. This form of social capital needs to be managed strategically to achieve social progress and economic growth. Better social outcomes can be achieved through innovation and collaboration between government, the corporate sector, the social sector as well as diaspora communities.

The international strategic environment is rapidly changing. The world's population is increasing in low to medium income countries, placing pressure on them and on the developed world to find innovative solutions to pressing unmet social needs including sustainable development. Global warming and the disasters that are

linked to it, is posing major problems not only in the third world but also in the developed world as seen by the recent floods in Australia, Brazil, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. Global warming and rising sea levels are threatening entire coastal and island communities in our region and beyond. The recent nuclear disaster in Japan is putting pressure to migrate entire regions or communities to places like Australia.

Leaders meeting at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2011 highlighted a transition of power from the advanced world to emerging markets. The Western world is experiencing a slowdown and emerging markets are experiencing growth (Lally, 2011).

China and India have emerged as global economies with significant interdependence with Australia. Both China and India must be engaged as partners for co-investment in social innovation and shared value creation.

Australia can also make better use of its experience and success with managing cultural diversity with its neighbours in the Pacific. According to Callick (2011) Papua New Guinea is on the cusp of an extraordinary economic social and political transition, not seen since gaining independence from Australia in 1975. PNG's place and status in the Pacific is experiencing a historic transformation through population growth and development of its natural resources. The Solomon Islands, Fiji and other nations across the Pacific can be returned into an 'arch of stability' through more effective Australian development assistance, knowledge transfer and social innovation.

Australia would benefit from a partnership with the European Union. The EU is still the largest investor in the Australian service sector and is actively seeking to improve sustainability and cohesion through social innovation and better management of cultural diversity and multiculturalism. The EU and Australia should include collaboration in multicultural policies as part of the *Australia-EU Strategic Partnership Framework Agreement*. The EU has the largest research budget for social sciences in the world. Australia can exchange value with the EU by sharing its successful models, research and case studies on multiculturalism with policy, research, business and parliamentary institutions in Europe.

The technological revolution, especially the web 2.0, and other forms of communication are connecting Australia with the rest of the world. These technologies need to be harnessed to expand the reach and influence of Australian social innovation as well as to improve its impact through exchange of ideas, information and collaboration.

The volume of rigorous and relevant research on multiculturalism has grown significantly in the last two decades. This is forcing government and social investors and recipients to abandon out-dated models and practices in favour of evidence based high-impact development models and relationships.

In this context, Australia has an opportunity to rethink their theories of change and business models in order to deliver new and improved value from Australia's investment in multiculturalism. The inquiry into multiculturalism in 2011 is an ideal opportunity to closely examine the strategies, capabilities and budgets required for greater social and economic impact. Australia can lead through contributing research and narrative to solving pressing social innovation challenges in an interdependent and internet-connected world.

It is also a time to think about the workforce challenge in Australian organisations and how they can make better use of cultural diversity and social innovation for competitive advantage. New models of collaboration with government, industry, the social sector and diasporas are needed. Research from the Society for Knowledge Economics shows that organisations should adopt policies and practices that build leadership, culture and management capabilities across all workplaces as a means of lifting productivity.

## Proposed actions to the Australian Government and the Australian Parliament to improve effectiveness of Australia's multiculturalism and the delivery of better socio-economic outcomes

The Australian Government and the Australian Parliament can play an important role in significantly improving Australia's multiculturalism model capabilities and performance by:

- Commissioning a Multiculturalism Effectiveness Discussion Paper and Research Program;
- Holding debates on multiculturalism effectiveness in both houses of the Australian Parliament and in cities around Australia based on the 2011 Inquiry into Multiculturalism;
- Attracting co-investment from the private sector and the social sector in multiculturalism programs and projects;
- Allocating funding for the establishment of a Multiculturalism Effectiveness and Social Innovation Cooperative Research Centre involving leading research centres and stakeholders from Australia, the EU, the Asia Pacific, Africa and North America;
- Making multiculturalism, citizenship, social inclusion, social innovation and diasporas a high priority in Australian policy, programs and operations;
- Increasing the budget for Multiculturalism and the number of volunteers in Australia as a means of scaling the impact and getting more cost effective outcomes of multicultural projects.
- Requesting the Australian Public Service and the state public services to implement the recommendations of the Management Advisory Committee Report from 2010 *'Empowering Change: Fostering Innovation on the Australian Public Service.'*
- Continuously innovating or transforming the multiculturalism agenda and programs to reflect the changing needs of newer migrants intakes including refugees.
- Making multiculturalism programs and policies a bigger contributor to Australia's public diplomacy, soft power agenda, international image and reputation for social innovation.
- Significantly increasing the quality and scope of education and training programs in multiculturalism across all levels of education and training.
- Making funds available for specialist education, skills training and outcome oriented projects in social innovation and social impact targeting the Australian Public Service, state public services, service recipients and diasporas in Australia.
- Requesting all Government Departments and agencies with an international focus to incorporate a multiculturalism agenda in their strategic plans and performance reviews.
- Requesting Commonwealth and State departments and agencies to significantly upgrade their stakeholder engagement and communication strategies, resources and delivery capabilities in support of multiculturalism.

Please refer to the next section of this submission for a more detailed examination of specific recommendations that have been proposed in relation to the Terms of Reference.

## United Macedonian Diaspora responses to Terms of Reference

### **Multiculturalism, social inclusion and globalisation**

#### *1. The role of multiculturalism in the Federal Government's social inclusion agenda*

UMD believes that multiculturalism is closely connected to the Australian Government's social inclusion agenda in which all citizens have the opportunity to engage fully in the economic and social advancement of the nation. The social inclusion agenda is a whole of government initiative designed to give extra support to disadvantaged groups in society to co-create a stronger and fairer nation. Recent migrants and refugees fall into the category of disadvantaged people who need extra assistance to fully participate in nation building and social capital creation irrespective of their language, religion or cultural background.

The Australian Government should invest in research and policy innovation in order to calibrate and strengthen both multiculturalism and the social inclusion agenda for greater collective impact. Social progress can be made when we have an accurate understanding and measurements of the strength of connections between multiculturalism and social inclusion and the conditions under which they yield optimal outcomes for stakeholders.

UMD is aware that in 2009 the Australian Social Inclusion Board endorsed a Measurement and Reporting Framework for Social Inclusion. We believe that a similar framework should be developed to calibrate and report on multiculturalism effectiveness.

#### *2. The contribution of diaspora communities to Australia's relations with the world*

The relationship between diasporas and development has been widely recognised in the research literature (Merz, B. *et al* 2007) as well as by major institutions such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Union and AusAid.

UMD has recently proposed to Australia's Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd to support the staging of a *Global Diaspora Forum: Diasporas, Diplomacy and Development* in Australia modelled on the highly successful *The Secretary's Global Diaspora Forum* held in Washington D.C from 17-19 May 2011. [www.diasporaalliance.org](http://www.diasporaalliance.org)

The event in Washington D.C. was organised by the Secretary of State's Office for Global Partnerships in collaboration with the US Agency for International Development (USAid) and the Migration Policy Institute. The goal of the event was to:

- Recognise and celebrate the contribution of diaspora communities to America's relations with their countries of origin or ancestry;
- Foster diaspora centric partnership models;
- Encourage intra-diaspora collaboration and learning.

The event was widely welcomed by many diasporas and diaspora organisations in the United States of America. The United Macedonian Diaspora ran a session on *Diasporas and Development in Southeast Europe*. [www.umdiaspora.org](http://www.umdiaspora.org)

We believe that a similar event should be organised in Australia in 2012 under the leadership of Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd and should include DFAT, AusAid, Australian University research centres and all interested diaspora organisations. The United Macedonian Diaspora has indicated its readiness to be part of the event organising committee.

UMD believes that all diaspora communities play positive and significant roles in strengthening and deepening Australia's relations with the world. UMD would like to see diasporas formally recognised as legitimate stakeholders in the creation and delivery of Australian foreign policy and global engagement. Funding must be made available for high-impact projects that strengthen links between Australia and the rest of the world. The current Councils or Institute at DFAT do not cover Europe, the Pacific and other parts of the world and are underfunded. Diasporas can close the significant diplomatic deficit that exists in DFAT and other government departments that are active in international relations.

Increasing the impact of diasporas on Australia's position in the world requires not only a whole of government approach but collaborative partnerships with the private and the social sector. There is greater need for co-investment, collaboration and partnerships with all stakeholders. It must be recognised that the responsibility for enhancing and strengthening Australia's relations with the world cannot rest with DFAT alone. Australia's diasporas must be utilised more often and in more imaginative ways, than currently exists, in support of Australia's image and engagement with the world.

### **Settlement and participation**

#### *3. Innovative ideas for settlement programs for new migrants including refugees that support their full participation and integration into broader Australian society*

UMD believes that there are vast opportunities for improving settlement programs for new migrants through innovation of planning, organising, leadership and performance management of programs involving all relevant stakeholders in addition to public servants and policy experts.

Settlement program planning and delivery agencies need to articulate their theory of change and report on their impact. They need to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of their services with recipients, employers and facilitators. New voices, scales and new evidence based solutions should be used to improve the quality and socio-economic impact of settlement programs. Effective settlement programs can have a significant impact on the lives of new migrants and refugees by increasing their capabilities to learn and integrate into existing and new services and processes. They can also improve the competitiveness of Australian industry and supply much needed human capital to work in mining, resources and other sectors.

#### *4. Incentives to promote long term settlement patterns that achieve greater social and economic benefits for Australian society as a whole.*

UMD believes that prospective and new migrants should be given a range of incentives in order to strengthen the Australian economy. The incentives can be financial, tax, educational, health, housing, employment, environmental, cultural and citizenship related and should aim to close the gaps Australian workforce in urban, regional and remote areas. Greater incentives should be given to migrants who are flexible and prepared to live in high-demand areas. Rollins (2011) has noted that the Australian mining industry has just announced a \$90 billion project spree and will need close to 100,000 extra employees.

Surveys should be conducted with prospective and new migrants as well as with employers to establish which incentives would have the greatest positive impact. A literature review could aid in establishing the current best practice in terms of incentives that promotes long-term settlement patterns.



Australia can refer to successful settlement incentives applied in foreign nations. Israel, for example, assists highly skilled migrants from Russia. As a result, the Israeli economy enjoyed a significant positive impact from the transfer of entrepreneurial skills from Russia.

Australia can achieve better settlement outcomes through outsourcing the delivery of social and human services and policy objectives to professionally managed, economically-significant not-for-profit organisations in Australia. The social economy, and its contribution to civil engagement and community well-being needs to be recognised and incorporated into government statistics.

*5. The role migration has played and contributes to building Australia's long term productive capacity.*

UMD believes in the necessity of commissioning an international comparative study on the role migration in order to build Australia's long-term productive capacity. UMD would recommend to the Australian Government to commission:

- a literature review on the role of migration to building Australia's long term productive capacity;
- a series of case studies exploring the long-term contributions of each diaspora in Australia. For example, Macedonians have been building Australia's long term productive capacity through various waves of migration dating back well over 100 years ago. This contribution needs to be documented and celebrated.

*6. The profile of skilled migrants to Australian and the extent to which Australia is fully utilising the skills of all migrants*

UMD believes that mapping the profile of skilled migrants to Australia and the extent to which Australia is utilising the skills of all migrants are two very important research questions requiring rigorous scrutiny.

Australia does not appear to be fully utilising the skills of all its migrants for a number of reasons. First, the Australian economy has been described as a two-speed economy. The booming mining and energy sectors, operating in remote areas, seem to have urgent demands for highly skilled workers and managers for multi-billion dollar projects. It is apparent that they prefer to import skilled workers from India, China and the Philippines rather than train and employ migrants who are based in Australia.

Furthermore, other sectors of the economy are experiencing a decline as is evidenced by the loss of jobs in manufacturing, retail, etc. Australian call centres are filled by highly skilled and overqualified migrants and international student with undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Business and engineering graduates can not find suitable employment. Australian hospitals and clinics, especially in regional and rural areas, are experiencing skills shortages at a time when a large number of overseas-trained doctors, dentists, pharmacists and nurses devote years to attaining qualifications recognised in Australia in order to secure suitable employment.

Fostering innovation in Australian employment, forward planning for high priority sectors of the economy and education and training is imperative to close the gap between the needs of employers and employees. This can lead to positive and significant improvements to address the demand for jobs and assist education and training institutions to facilitate people including migrants to find employment.

Partnerships with diasporas, not for profit organisations, civil society groups, research centres, corporations and agencies should be made a greater priority. These stakeholders are well-placed to provide input in the quest for finding innovative solutions to refine the scope, reach and impact of Australia's productivity enhancement programs.

## 7. Potential government initiatives to better assist migrant communities establish business enterprises.

UMD would recommend to the Australian Government to commission the following studies:

- an international comparative study of government initiatives that effectively assist migrants to establish business enterprises in Australia, UK, Canada, Singapore, USA, Israel, Germany, Sweden.
- a strategic review of the effectiveness of existing Australian government initiatives to assist entrepreneurship and establishment of business enterprises by migrants.

UMD believes there is scope to harness the power of the whole of government, whereby each government department or agency with an economic agenda can and should assist migrants to establish business and social enterprises.

UMD is also of the view that the private and the corporate sectors can act as significant facilitators and mentors for migrant entrepreneurs. The private sector can work with Government in the creation of a capital market for social impact. Investors should have the option of purchasing equity into social businesses that work on poverty elimination or environmental improvement projects. They should also be encouraged to make low interest loans to not-for profit organisations working to achieve Millennium Development Goals. A partnership between government, the private sector and diasporas can to create a social stock exchange and social impact bonds.

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