

**Joint Standing Committee on Migration****Chair: Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP****Deputy Chair: Mrs Louise Markus MP**

New report on migration and multiculturalism in Australia

Australia is a vibrant multicultural society according to the findings of the Migration Committee report tabled in the Parliament today. The report received bi-partisan support and made 32 recommendations after receiving over 500 submissions and holding 27 public hearings over a two year period.

The report found that Australian multiculturalism is a success story, and stands as a good example to the world on how to build a cohesive society.

Chair of the Migration Committee Maria Vamvakinou said: "immigration and settlement in Australia has always been a nation building exercise. The committee believes that access to Australian citizenship has been at the heart of the success and cohesion of Australian society. Settlement is a long term and intergenerational process, and we need a whole of government approach and better coordination between all three tiers of Australian government".

The committee's recommendations include: rebuilding Australia's research capacity in this field, especially in qualitative research; factoring cultural and linguistic diversity into the Government's Social Inclusion Agenda, greater flexibility in English language training and support for micro enterprises, especially for women. The Committee found Job Services Australia needs to improve its delivery of services to people of diverse backgrounds, including refugees.

Deputy Chair Louise Markus said the committee welcomed meeting people at the grass roots where business and local communities were collaborating to improve relationships, and build skills and opportunities for people from different backgrounds.

"In Dandenong, the South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance is bringing employers and young refugees together; the National Australia Bank's *African Inclusion Program* is exemplary; and social enterprises, like The Studio, are inspirational. These initiatives deserve special mention and prove that cooperation, cross-cultural awareness, and commitment provide tangible results," Mrs Markus said.

Mrs Markus said there was "no doubt that immigration has enriched the social, economic and cultural life of our country".

Ms Vamvakinou said every society is dynamic and open to the influences of globalisation, wars, and economic crises. We are a resilient society and well placed to meet these challenges.

A copy of the report and 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. All submissions to the inquiry are published on the committee's website.

MEDIA CONTACTS

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Background: Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4560