



**Education
& Communities**

**Australian Parliament
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Submission No. 135**



Ms M Vamvakinou
Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
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Dear Ms Vamvakinou

The NSW Department of Education and Communities welcomes the opportunity to provide the attached submission to the Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia, being conducted by the Joint Standing Committee on Migration.

Questions concerning the submission should be directed to Ms Amanda Bourke, Relieving Manager of Multicultural Programs on telephone number 9244 5370, or by email: amanda.bourke@det.nsw.edu.au.

Senior officers of the department would also be available to meet with Committee members, if required.

I wish you well in the Committee's important deliberations concerning the role of multiculturalism in creating a socially just and cohesive society, one which also maximises the benefits of migration and cultural and linguistic diversity.

Yours sincerely

Pam Christie
**ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNITIES**

7 April 2011

**NSW Department of Education and Communities
Submission to the**

***Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia***

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Introduction

The NSW Department of Education and Communities (the Department) provides education and training services to over 1.4 million students through an extensive network of government schools, TAFE NSW Institutes and the Adult Migrant English Service. The Department is committed to ensuring that all its agencies promote community harmony and social inclusion through the range of programs and services it delivers to the people of NSW.

This submission addresses the following terms of reference of the Inquiry:

Multiculturalism, social inclusion and globalisation

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

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

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

Multiculturalism, social inclusion and globalisation

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

Understanding cultural diversity and valuing the multicultural nature of our society are keys to community harmony. Education is critical to achieving social inclusion and delivering equality of opportunity in society for all, including newly arrived migrants and to giving students the skills to relate their own values with the experience of others. Multicultural education policies, programs and services are the ways in which multiculturalism is enacted through schooling and post-school education. These programs and services support two of the key aims of the social inclusion agenda: to reduce disadvantage; and to increase social, civic and economic participation.

Reducing disadvantage

English language and literacy programs for newly arrived migrants

English language proficiency stands out as a key factor in determining ease of settlement of newly arrived migrants. Labour market success and economic wellbeing of immigrants is crucially dependent upon their ability to learn English well¹. Government schools, TAFE NSW and NSW AMES provide a range of English as a second language programs and courses designed to meet the needs of newly arrived migrants and jobseekers.

¹ Productivity Commission (2006) *Economic Impacts of Migration and Population Growth*, Position Paper, January: 153.

School education

NSW government schools enrol the largest number of ESL students across the country. In 2011 there are over 137,000 ESL learners (approximately 18 per cent of all students). Of these, 87,000 are receiving ESL tuition while another 50,000 are identified as ESL learners but do not receive specific ESL support. Each year, between 6,500 and 7,500 newly arrived students needing ESL support enrol, including between 1,000 and 1,500 refugees.

Funding to schools to allow teachers to address the English language learning needs of ESL students needs to be responsive to changes in immigration and settlement patterns. Funding for ESL also needs to reflect the evidence from research² which indicates that it takes up to 7 to 10 years for second language learners to acquire the language and literacy required to participate and achieve at school to a level commensurate with their class peers.

The issue of funding for ESL programs is of particular relevance in light of the Australian Government's *Review of Funding for Schooling* as the terms of reference include consideration of funding allocation mechanisms that address current barriers to educational achievement such as English language proficiency.

TAFE NSW and NSW Adult Migrant English Service (AMES)

TAFE NSW delivers a number of English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) courses, from basic to advanced, including courses through the *Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)* to eligible migrants and refugees. TAFE NSW also provides jobseekers with training so they can improve their English language, literacy and numeracy skills to gain employment through the *Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program*.

In responding to the needs of learners of English as a second language TAFE NSW customises the support services and learning programs provided to individual students and the communities they serve.

NSW AMES is primarily engaged in the delivery of English language tuition and related services to adult migrants and refugees to assist them to participate in the community, education and work. NSW AMES is the prime contractor and lead agency in the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) AMEP Consortium.

It is essential that funding reflective of the actual cost of the provision of quality ESOL course delivery continues to be provided to registered training organisations.

Refugee support programs

Refugees and humanitarian entrants have greater education and support needs than most other newly arrived migrants. Refugees have usually escaped from war or civil unrest, have often experienced trauma and in some cases torture, have lost family members and have often spent long periods, up to 20 years in some cases, in temporary refugee camps, with no education or health services.

As a result of these experiences, most children and young adults have had severely disrupted or no schooling prior to arrival in Australia, many have no literacy skills in their first language and need considerable support to adjust to formal education, learn English and reach the education levels of their class peers. Many exhibit a range of complex health problems including mental health issues from having experienced torture and/or trauma and may be suffering from post-traumatic stress, which can impact on their resettlement. In

² Collier, V.P. (1992b). A Synthesis of Studies Examining Long-Term Language Minority Student Data on Academic Achievement. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 16 (1-2), 187-212

addition to these issues refugee children and young adults are often acting as brokers for adult family members as they find long term accommodation, jobs and acquire English language skills.

Details of refugee support programs provided by the Department are outlined on page 6.

The needs of refugee students would best be served through the adoption of a whole of government (across Commonwealth, State and local governments) locational approach to meeting the diversity of challenges faced by refugees.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Australian Government continue to fund specialised and targeted programs and services which

- **assist newly arrived migrants develop English language skills**
- **adopt a joined-up locational approach to meet the education and support needs of refugees.**

Increasing social, civic and economic participation

Newly arrived migrants face a range of challenges in beginning a new life in Australia. Learning English as a second language is the most pressing and obvious challenge for those arriving with no or limited English language skills. In addition to learning English as a second language, migrants must negotiate the complex process of establishing a new home and integrating into the Australian way of life – often very different to the social and cultural practices in the countries they have come from. They must develop a sense of belonging without losing a sense of their cultural identity if they are not to be excluded from the benefits that civic participation in Australia’s democratic structures can bring to their overall life outcomes. Racism and exclusion have the potential to impact significantly on the successful settlement outcomes of migrants.

Multiculturalism is about inclusion and recognition. It recognises the right of all Australians to enjoy their cultural heritage (including language and religion) and the right to equal treatment and opportunities for everyone regardless of their backgrounds. Multiculturalism also aims to ensure maximum use of the skills and talents of all Australians to assist economic efficiency.

The release of Australia’s new *Multicultural Policy* provides a new opportunity for the Australian Government to articulate support for multiculturalism which allows individuals to retain their cultural heritage and share it with others as part of the evolving Australian identity.

It is essential that Australia’s education and training providers are supported by appropriate resources and policies to ensure that they are well equipped to promote social inclusion and increase the social, civic and economic participation of newly arrived migrants, including refugees in all aspects of Australian life.

To ensure ongoing relevance of multiculturalism within the Government’s social inclusion agenda there is also a need for ongoing research into the impact cultural practices have on learning. Such research needs to be underpinned by a thorough understanding of the changing demographics of cultural and linguistic diversity in NSW and the impact that this diversity has on the provision of education and training programs.

The cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of New South Wales is reflected in its students and staff. Approximately 30 per cent of all students in NSW government schools come from

language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE), both overseas and Australian born while approximately 6 per cent are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. These students speak over 80 different languages as their first language and hold a range of religious and spiritual beliefs. The number and percentage of students from LBOTE³ in NSW government schools has been increasing steadily over a number of years. Twenty-three per cent of TAFE NSW enrolments speak a language other than English at home.

The availability of information which allows disaggregation of data by background characteristics, particularly by language background other than English and English as a second language status, is essential for measuring and reporting progress towards reducing disadvantage and increasing the social, civic and economic participation and outcomes of newly arrived migrants.

In this regard it is acknowledged that the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity* is available for use. However following its release in 1999 as a *reference document*,⁴ knowledge concerning recommended questions, classifications, coding structures and output categories remains limited and requires updating to reflect required data needs of government agencies and researchers.

Consideration needs to be given to the introduction of nationally agreed technical standards for collecting and reporting cultural and linguistic diversity, including LBOTE and ESL status by states and territories. In addition, these new standards should be publically promulgated for use by researchers into multiculturalism and social inclusion.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Australian Government

- **work with state and territory governments to further refine and promulgate standards for collecting and reporting statistics on cultural and linguistic diversity**
- **undertake research into the ways conceptualisations of multiculturalism shape Australia's education and training systems and the delivery of specific programs under the label multicultural education.**

³ Students are considered to come from a language background other than English if they, or their mother/carer or father/carer, speak a language other than English in the home. Students from LBOTE include students born overseas as well as those born in Australia to families who speak another language in the home.

⁴
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/ABS@.nsf/66f306f503e529a5ca25697e0017661f/79fab04272992d54ca25697e0018febdlOpenDocument>

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

For newly-arrived children and young people, one of the first big struggles of their entry and integration into the Australian community starts in the school or college where they undertake their on-arrival English language tuition. Many arrive with differing experiences of education to those had by their Australian peers, or with limited or no formal education, and encounter barriers to access and success. Children and young peoples' abilities to cope – with structure and curriculum – are challenged by unfamiliarity with language and processes. Many new arrivals experience pressure from their families and themselves to succeed in education. This is despite their sometimes traumatic experiences pre-arrival and lack of understanding of how the education system works. The structural and interpersonal discrimination they face often causes them to leave the system altogether. To leave education early is a primary factor in a cycle of disadvantage.

Youth and race are two attributes that can also increase the risk of social exclusion. The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission in its report on the experiences of Australian Sudanese young people notes that 'a combination of these attributes – youth combined with new arrival status (in particular for refugees) – can increase the struggle for people trying to navigate Australian life as well as having a voice'⁵.

In order to better assist newly arrived children and young people succeed in education and training, consideration needs to be given to the nomination of centres of first settlement where intensive and tailored settlement and education support programs can be jointly provided. In designing such support programs, education and training systems should tailor individual learning programs brokering services from partner government, non-government and community agencies, as required. Such initiatives should build on current examples of innovative practice in school education and further education and training.

School education

As previously stated many refugee and humanitarian entrant students have experienced significant disruption to their education, or have had little or no schooling prior to enrolment in an Australian school. As a result, they face great challenges in education and training. Some refugee students make a successful transition from their initial intensive English program to high school and complete their senior schooling. However many refugee students, particularly those with low levels of literacy in their first language, struggle to acquire the language, literacy, cultural knowledge and concepts required to succeed across the high school curriculum. In addition, many refugee students have limited understanding of the range of education and employment options available.

In recognition of the need for ongoing support for refugee students, appropriate resourcing needs to be provided to schools to enable the implementation of a range of transition, homework, tutorial and mentoring support programs.

Information concerning current innovative approaches adopted by the Department to meeting the needs of refugee students is outlined below.

⁵ Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, *Rights of Passage: The experiences of Australian-Sudanese young people*, Melbourne, 2008, p. 10

PROGRAMS SUPPORTING REFUGEE STUDENTS AT SCHOOL

Refugee Transition Program in high schools

The Refugee Transition Program operates in a number of targeted schools with high refugee student enrolments to support refugee students in transition from intensive English programs into mainstream high school and to help them plan their transition from school to further education, training or employment. The program provides additional teacher time to assist refugee students to develop English language and literacy skills, study and learning skills, curriculum concepts, understanding of available educational and vocational pathways and school and workplace cultures and expectations in the Australian context. In-school support and professional learning for teachers is provided by regional Refugee Student Support Officers.

Schools may provide work readiness programs for students and employ bilingual school learning support officers to support refugee students in the classroom. The program is operating in 13 schools in 2011.

After School Program for Refugee Students

This program provides after school tuition, with bilingual support, for refugee students who have been in Australia for less than three years. The program supports students in their transition to high school and increases their understanding of the high school curriculum and its expectations. The program is operating in 10 schools and Intensive English Centres in 2011.

Refugee Action Support (RAS) Partnerships

The Refugee Action Support Partnerships are joint initiatives of the NSW Department of Education and Communities, the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation and a number of universities. University student tutors, usually as a component of their teaching practicum, provide after school tuition and in-school assistance to refugee students to develop their literacy skills and improve their participation and engagement in schooling. Partnerships have been established with University of Western Sydney, University of Sydney and Charles Sturt University. The program is operating in 24 schools in 2011.

Mentoring support

In 2011, The NSW Department of Education and Communities (Multicultural Programs Unit), in partnership with Macquarie University, is piloting a refugee mentoring program which provides university student mentors for high school students from refugee backgrounds.

The program aims to help refugee students to engage in school life, progress well in their studies and plan their transition to further education by developing study and research skills, awareness of school and university cultures in Australia and better understanding of educational pathways available. The program is operating in 5 schools in 2011.

In addition to the innovative approaches adopted by the Department to meet the needs of refugee students, the Department implements a range of education initiatives which promote tolerance and support community inclusion. In particular, the Department rejects racism in all its forms and is committed to ensuring that learning and working environments are harmonious and inclusive and allow students and staff to reach their full potential. To assist in achieving this, the Department's *Cultural Diversity and Community Relations Policy: Multicultural education in schools* and *Anti-Racism Policy* provide the framework for the development and implementation of programs that counter racism and promote tolerance and community harmony. Details of innovative approaches to countering racism and promoting social inclusion are provided overleaf.

MULTICULTURAL AND ANTI-RACISM EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Racism No way! <http://www.racismnoway.com.au/>

This website aims to assist Australian schools and education systems recognise and address racism in the learning environment. It provides a number of anti-racism resources for school communities including frameworks for assessing and planning anti-racism programs and fact sheets introducing Australia's main religious groups.

Cultural Exchange Program <http://www.culturalexchange.nsw.edu.au/>

The Cultural Exchange Program aims to support schools to exchange and learn from school communities different from their own. All NSW schools, both government and non-government, may use this website to register their interest in conducting a cultural exchange program and search for potential partner schools. Information and ideas on how to develop innovative cultural exchange programs are also included on this site.

Making Multicultural Australia <http://www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au/>

This website includes more than 3,000 pages of articles, research, teacher guides, lesson plans, audio interviews, video clips and Australian multicultural artworks. Its major purpose is to assist teachers in developing multicultural and anti-racist materials for use across the key learning areas.

Prejudice. No way! <http://www.prejudicenoway.com/> is a practical classroom teaching resource containing anti-prejudice activities for students in Years K-3. It aims to assist students to develop the values, skills and knowledge to enable them to respect and value themselves and others.

Cooling Conflicts <http://www.coolingconflicts.edu.au>

This program, developed in partnership with Griffith University, uses drama and peer teaching to teach students about conflict, in particular, cross-cultural conflict, how it escalates and how to intervene to reduce it so that they can become leaders in their schools and in their communities.

Identity, Culture and Conflict

This is a resource kit for the secondary school classroom, containing eight video segments and accompanying presenter's guide designed to stimulate productive discussion relating to issues of identity, culture and racism, including the nature of racism in educational settings, Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity and Reconciliation.

Challenging Racism

This kit of professional development activities supports the professional learning of school communities in regard to understanding racism, training for Anti-Racism Contact Officers and the planning and implementation of school-based anti-racism education projects.

Strengthening Community Harmony: Advice and resources for schools

The document provides a range of suggested strategies for schools in building and maintaining community harmony and how to respond in the event of community disharmony

Calendar for Cultural Diversity

With an accompanying teachers' handbook, the calendar provides details of major celebrations and events of Australia's diverse cultures and communities. Copies of the calendar and handbook are distributed to NSW government schools, government departments and community groups each year.

Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition

This annual competition provides an opportunity for students in Years 3-6 to develop public speaking skills while exploring issues related to community harmony and cultural diversity.

Harmony Day Poster Competition

Harmony Day is an annual event held on 21 March each year to mark the *International Day for the Elimination of Racism and Xenophobia*. As part of Harmony Day each year, B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation Commission Inc in conjunction with the Chinese Australia Forum conducts a poster competition open to students in all NSW schools. Consultation on the form and conduct of the competition occurs between officers from the Multicultural Programs Unit and B'nai B'rith. The Department also distributes information regarding the competition to all schools and is represented on the judging panel.

Together for Humanity <http://togetherforhumanity.org.au/>

This is an Australian multi-faith organisation that fights prejudice and hatred at its source with positive experiences of diversity. The *Together for Humanity Foundation* has extended the work of the *Goodness and Kindness* program and currently offers three programs for schools which focus on issues of diversity, cross-cultural understanding and identity.

TAFE NSW

TAFE NSW has a long history of responding to the needs of diverse cultural and linguistic background communities, including refugees. Programs developed for individuals and communities include those that address:

- pathways into specific industry sectors;
- English for speakers of other languages;
- additional language and learning support integrated into mainstream vocational programs;
- customised training programs addressing pre-employment, vocational training, work placement and employment issues;
- recognition of overseas skills;
- information technology skills for students with little exposure to computers and modern technology; and
- learning programs for students who have experienced little formal education in their countries of origin.

Two case studies are provided below which illustrate innovative approaches taken by TAFE NSW Institutes.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND AGRICULTURAL SKILLS TAFE NSW - WESTERN SYDNEY INSTITUTE

<p>Aim The aim of the program was to assist refugees/humanitarian entrants in Western Sydney develop knowledge, skills and familiarity with Australian agriculture and improve their vocational language skills and their chances of gaining employment in the agriculture industry.</p> <p>Description Participants were from Karen (Myanmar) and Liberian backgrounds.</p> <p>Students were enrolled in the Certificate II in Agriculture (Course No. 2452) and were provided with individual and group learning opportunities which enabled them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contextualise and embed English Language throughout all vocational subjects utilising the expertise of the English Language Teacher• Learn by doing with a large component of the course being delivered in the field enabling students to get hands on training.• Increase their vocational English skills in Agricultural terminology. <p>The Program was delivered at Richmond TAFE college.</p>	<p>Partnerships This program was developed in partnership with NSW Farmers Association, Nepean Migrant Access Settlement Services, Sydney West Area Health Service, Hawkesbury Harvest and Centrelink Multicultural services.</p> <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 13 students enrolled in the program and 8 students successfully completed.• 8 participants are planning to apply for further training• 7 participants went on to take up employment opportunities• All participants confirmed that the program had provided them with particular benefits as a result of their participation. <p>Factors Contributing to Success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selection of teachers with specialist knowledge, skills and abilities to work with educationally & socially disadvantaged high risk students• Integrated language skills• High practical component and field trips• Willingness and commitment of the students to learn and participate in all units.• Vocational teachers adapted greatly to meet the needs and learning styles of this group.
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**COMMUNITY WORKPLACE ORIENTATION
TAFE NSW - NORTH COAST INSTITUTE**

<p>Aim The aim of the program was the development of job seeking skills and awareness of Australian workplace culture and expectations.</p> <p>Description Students in this program were enrolled in the Statement of Attainment in Access to Work and Study (Course No. 9070).</p> <p>Participants were from an isolated rural community. They included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 refugees from the Congo • 2 migrants from Taiwan • 1 migrant each from Russia, Laos and Thailand. <p>The students were provided with individual and group learning opportunities which enabled them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in design of the program • develop skills in job seeking • prepare resumes using Word • investigate vocational options • undertake work orientation/work experience in an Australian workplace. <p>The program was delivered in the Presbyterian Church Hall at Mullumbimby. Strategies that underpinned the design and/or delivery of the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of ESL team teacher • delivery in the student's own community, overcoming isolation/transport issues • content negotiated with students. 	<p>Partnerships This program required partnerships with :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEC Multicultural Worker • Far North Coast Migrant Working Group • Presbyterian Church (venue) • Local employers (work orientation) • ACE Mullumbimby (computers) • General Education Murwillumbah (English language support). <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 students enrolled in the program • 11 participants indicated they were seeking work- either part-time or full time when they completed their studies • the role of employment services and registration was covered in the course content. • all participants confirmed that the program, as a result of their participation, provided them with an improved understanding of the Australian workplace, and the skills needed to obtain work. <p>Factors for success Factors that contributed to the program's success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students were involved in negotiating the course content • the course responded to an identified community need • the course was delivered locally • team teaching (English language support) • local partnerships underpinned the program • teacher had CALD background • where possible, work placements reflected students' qualifications and previous work experience
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Recommendations

It is recommended that

- **Consideration be given to the nomination of locations of first settlement where intensive and tailored settlement and education and training support programs can be provided**
- **Schools be adequately resourced to enable the implementation of personalised transition, homework, tutorial and mentoring programs for refugee students and, where appropriate, brokering support from government and non-government funded agencies and volunteers**
- **National anti-racism partnership and strategy acknowledge the role schools can play in eradicating expressions of racism and challenging the attitudes that allow them to emerge.**

National productive capacity

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

Overseas migration plays a crucial part in NSW's social, economic and cultural development. With 26.5 per cent of the population overseas-born, New South Wales has the second highest share of migrants nationally.

Migrants have been particularly important to the growth of Sydney, as most settle in the Sydney metropolitan area. In the 25 years to 2006, 38 per cent of migrants to Australia settled in the Sydney statistical division, compared to its share of the national population of 21 per cent, a disproportionate pattern which reflects Sydney's global city economic role and changing types of international migration.

This global city role is in part the result of Sydney's importance as an Asian-Pacific regional centre, and is supported by the strong presence of Asian-born people living in the city. Chinese-born migrants alone account for over 2 per cent of the NSW population, much higher than for Australia as a whole (1.3 per cent).

In 2006, there were 1,307,400 people born overseas in the Sydney statistical division, 32 per cent of the total population.

Migrants make a crucial contribution to population stability and growth

New South Wales is getting older, with fertility rates lower and family size smaller than in previous decades. In the future there will be fewer working age adults to support the non-working population. While in 2009 there were four workers for every retired person, by 2025 it is expected that there will be 2.9 workers for every retired person. In this context, migrant intake plays a key role in maintaining NSW's population levels.

Net overseas migration⁶ is the biggest contributor to population growth in New South Wales, contributing 89,500 people in 2008-2009 compared to just under 50,000 people added through natural increase⁷. This net surplus comes despite the net loss of some 10,000 Australian citizens who emigrated that year, and also helps balance the nearly 20,000 people which represented NSW's net loss to inter-state migration.

As people arriving have a lower median age (26.5 years) than those leaving (29.5 years) migration also slows population ageing in New South Wales⁸.

Temporary migrants play a key role

The largest contribution to net overseas migration in 2007-2008 was from people on temporary visas as opposed to people settling on permanent visas or from New Zealand.

Skilled temporary residents make a major contribution to Australia, bringing with them new ideas, international contacts and access to cutting edge technologies and business practice.

Temporary migrants (students, people on working holiday visas and business long-stay visas) made up 78 per cent of net overseas migration in 2007-2008⁹ adding 68,400 people in

⁶ Net overseas migration is the net gain of migrants arriving less emigrants departing.

⁷ ABS (2010) *Migration, Australia, 2008-09*, Catalogue no. 3412.0, Table 2.2

⁸ ABS (2010) *Migration, Australia, 2008-09*, Catalogue no. 3412.0

⁹ ABS (2010) *NSW State and Regional Indicators*, Cat no. 1338.1, Jun 2010.

that year. Among temporary migrants, the biggest group was students accounting for some two-thirds of temporary migrants to New South Wales.

This in turn reflects the strength of NSW's educational services industry. It is estimated that around half of international students become permanent migrants to Australia.

International students – a key driver of economic prosperity

The international student segment of the education industry is of growing importance to the NSW economy. Education-related services are NSW's second largest export earner, after coal, and the State's largest services export, providing about \$6 billion into the NSW economy in 2008–2009¹⁰.

As at May 2010, there were some 170,000 international student enrolments in this State. Of total Australian enrolments, New South Wales had the largest proportion of international students enrolled in the tertiary education sector accounting for 38 per cent of total enrolments.

Access Economics found that in 2007-2008 New South Wales accrued the largest share of value from Australia's overall educational export services, at \$4.8 billion or (39 per cent). Calculations are based on each jurisdiction's share of the total export in education-related services, as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)¹¹.

A recent study by Tourism Research Australia found that for every two formal students, one friend or relative visits Australia during the student's stay. To the NSW economy, the contribution from this group of visitors in 2007-2008 was \$122 million in value-added, comprising labour income of \$122 million or 39 per cent and (Gross Operating Surplus) of \$53 million¹².

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

Migrants currently make up a large proportion of NSW's workforce-aged population. In 2007 around 31 per cent of NSW residents aged over 15 years were overseas born. Around 50 per cent of migrants are in the prime working age population of 25-54 years, compared to only 39 per cent of those born here. These migrants have similar educational profiles to the Australian born, with nearly half holding a non-school qualification of which 57 per cent held a bachelor's degree or higher.

Among some age cohorts, there is a considerable gap between the educational profile of migrants and those born locally. For example, in 2006 some 46 per cent of males born from non-English speaking countries aged 25-34 years had bachelor degrees or above, compared with 20 per cent of Australian-born men in the same age group¹³.

¹⁰ NSW Innovation Council (2010) *NSW Business Sector Growth Plan*, p. 51

¹¹ Access Economics (2009) *The Australian education sector and the economic contribution of international students*, report for ACPET, p. 8.

¹² Access Economics (2009) *The Australian education sector and the economic contribution of international students*, report for ACPET, p. 12.

¹³ NATSEM (2010) *Calling Australia home: The characteristics and contributions of Australian migrants*, AMP/NATSEM Income and wealth report no. 27, p. 9. This is national data.

Migrants in the labour force – an under-utilised resource

There is, however, evidence that migrants' skills are not being as well utilised as possible and that, as in previous decades, migrants from non-English speaking countries are less well integrated into the workforce than others.

Of migrants settling in New South Wales in 2004, less than half (49 per cent) with a certificate level qualification had their qualification recognised in Australia, and only slightly more (60 per cent) of those with a university qualification had this qualification recognised. This is a national problem. An Australia-wide ABS survey of recent migrants (arrived since 1997) found that just over one-third (34 per cent) of those with a non-school qualification on arrival had their overseas qualifications recognised in Australia¹⁴.

In New South Wales, 57 per cent of migrants aged 15 years and over were employed in 2007¹⁵, compared to 63 per cent of those born in Australia. Just 54 per cent of migrants from non-English speaking countries were employed.

Other indicators of workforce engagement (participation, unemployment and underemployment rates and hours worked) show a similar pattern – less engagement by migrants, especially those from non-English speaking countries¹⁶.

Some groups (for example, migrants from North Africa and the Middle East) continue to experience severe disadvantage. In 2007, Lebanese migrants in New South Wales had twice the unemployment rate of Australian-born people and a participation rate 20 percentage points lower (45 per cent compared to 66 per cent).¹⁷

Once in the workforce, there is continuing evidence that the valuable qualifications held by people who migrate to Australia are not translating fully into productive practice in the workplace. A significant proportion of migrants are employed in low or medium skilled jobs where the potential to use the knowledge they have acquired is limited.

The National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM) reports that while some 19 per cent of Australian-born tertiary educated people aged 35-54 years are working in a low or medium skilled occupation, some 38 per cent of migrants from non-English speaking countries are doing so. Similar differences are apparent in the 25-34 years age group.¹⁸

The figures below shows the different experiences of well-educated Australian-born and migrant groups in terms of unemployment and the skill level of their jobs.

¹⁴ ABS (2008), *Labour force and other characteristics of recent migrants, Australia, 2007*, Cat no. 6250.0

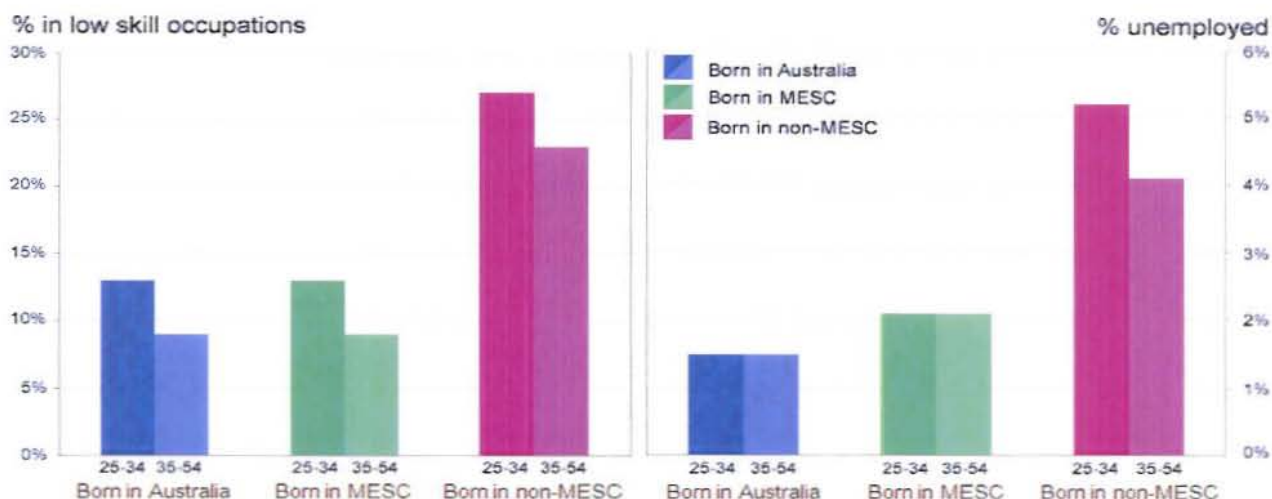
¹⁵ DEEWR (2007) *Migrants in the NSW Labour Market* NSW Labour Economics Office, December 2007.

¹⁶ Although immigrant women from a non-English speaking country have significantly lower participation rates than other groups, those that are working are more likely to work full-time (65 per cent compared to 54 per cent for Australian-born women).

¹⁷ DEEWR (2007) *Migrants in the NSW Labour Market* NSW Labour Economics Office, December 2007.

¹⁸ NATSEM (2010) *Calling Australia home: The characteristics and contributions of Australian migrants*, AMP/NATSEM Income and wealth report no. 27, p. 9.

Degree qualified people aged 25-54 working in low skill occupations or unemployed, 2006



MESC = Main English speaking countries - Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, UK, US and South Africa.

Low skilled occupations are based on 2-digit ANZSCO groups.

Adapted from AMP/NATSEM (2010) *Calling Australia Home: The characteristics and contributions of Australian migrants*.

Data sources: ABS 2006 Census and HILDA Wave 8.

It is clear that migrants continue to face labour market barriers in Australia, and that these relate to more than language (most recently arrived permanent migrants have good English proficiency). An ABS survey reported by NATSEM indicates that the key barriers recent migrants report in obtaining their first job include lack of Australian work experience, language difficulties, lack of local networks and skills and qualifications not being recognised¹⁹.

In the next ten years, the NSW economy is expected to grow by 30 per cent, adding an extra 470,000 workers. Many more highly skilled workers will be needed in health, professional services and construction, in addition to tackling more persistent skill shortages and building the skills base for emerging areas.

Highly educated migrants clearly have the potential to assist New South Wales in meeting these challenges. However, the evidence regarding their employment experiences suggests that additional efforts to ensure their successful integration into the workforce is needed to ensure this potential is realised.

¹⁹ NATSEM (2010) *Calling Australia home: The characteristics and contributions of Australian migrants*, AMP/NATSEM Income and wealth report no. 27, p. 20.