
Chapter One: The Policy Context

Over six million migrants have come to Australia since the end of World War II. The settlement services available to them have evolved in response to the increasing diversity of the migrant intake, recommendations from associated government reports and broader social policies, from the assimilation policies of the post-war era to contemporary Australian multiculturalism and associated access and equity strategies.

In the contemporary policy framework, the mainstream services available to all Australians should be accessible to all migrants, including new arrivals. DIMIA's specialist settlement services have developed an increasing emphasis on early intervention and targeting of high needs groups among new arrivals in their early years of settlement. They have also been modified by recent trends in government policy towards partnership between the government, private and community sectors; a whole-of-government shift towards an outputs/outcomes framework; and changes in technology.

Introduction

Australia has been settled by successive waves of immigration. All Australian governments have been involved in the settlement of new arrivals in Australia. Australian settlement services have developed within a specific historical, cultural and policy context. This chapter examines Australia's immigration history, the impact of immigration on the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Australian population and the evolution of settlement services. It also explores the contemporary policy context for DIMIA-funded settlement services.

Pre-World War II

Settlement in Australia began with the flow of Aboriginal peoples over many thousands of years. European migration began in 1788, with the establishment of penal colonies and the arrival of free settlers.

Prior to the large-scale immigration following World War II, settlement assistance to new arrivals was variable and piecemeal. In the nineteenth century, Australian governments established assisted passage schemes to encourage selected free settlers, largely from Britain and Ireland. Some of these new arrivals

received initial government accommodation or were assisted by voluntary organisations, but many received no support at all.

The immigration of the nineteenth century resulted in a much more diverse population than had previously been the case. During the gold rushes of the 1850s, the influx of Chinese miners established a significant Asian presence in Australia for the first time. By the turn of the century, a number of other Asian groups, as well as Pacific Islanders, were resident in Australia. The latter part of the nineteenth century also saw increasing diversity in the origins of the European arrivals who were settling in Australia. By 1901, around 23% of the non-Aboriginal population were born overseas. Approximately 57.7% of the overseas-born originated from the United Kingdom and 21.5% from Ireland. Other birthplace countries of significance included Germany (4.5%), China (3.5%), New Zealand (3.0%) and Sweden (1.2%).¹

The *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* curtailed this diversity by implementing the White

¹ Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA), Statistics Section, *Immigration: Federation to Century's End, 1901-2000*, DIMA, Canberra, 2001, p.16.

Australia Policy and excluding non-European migrants. The two World Wars and the Great Depression also had a negative effect on overall levels of migration to Australia. By 1947, only 9.8% of the Australian population had been born overseas. The development of the post-World War II immigration program began to reverse this trend, as Australia once again began to accept migrants from a wide range of countries.

Post-World War II

Over six million migrants and humanitarian entrants have come to Australia since the end of World War II. The settlement services available to them have evolved in response to the increasing diversity of the immigration intake, recommendations from associated government reports and broader social policy. The most significant of these broader social policies have been:

- the assimilation policies of the post-war period from 1947;
- the integration phase from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s; and
- multiculturalism and associated access and equity strategies to the present day.

It is important to recognise that terms such as assimilation, integration and multiculturalism have a number of general meanings that are still in use today. The discussion below refers to the historically-specific, overarching social policies within which settlement services in Australia have operated.

Assimilation

In 1945, prompted by concerns regarding Australia's low birthrate and by strong demand for industrial labour, the Commonwealth Government established DIMIA in order to encourage and assist migration to Australia. Initially, the new immigration policies strongly favoured British migrants. However, a very large intake of non-

British European migrants began in 1947 under an agreement with the United Nations International Refugee Organisation. More than 170,000 European refugees arrived in Australia between 1947 and 1953, and this intake was followed by further waves of assisted European migration.²

This wave of post-World War II immigration saw a dramatic increase in the overseas-born population, from 9.8% of the Australian population in 1947 to 14.3% by 1954. For the first time, the proportion of Australians born in the United Kingdom declined to less than half of all Australians born overseas. As shown in table 1.1, there was a corresponding surge in the numbers of new arrivals from countries where English was not the main language. By 1954, migrants from countries other than the main English-speaking countries had risen to 44% of the overseas-born population: a significant increase from 20% in 1947. The major source countries at this time included Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland and the then Yugoslavia.³

The 'New Australians' of the assimilation period entered an Australia that was overwhelmingly Anglo-Australian in ethnicity and culture, and in which the immigration intake was shaped by the White Australia Policy. Under assimilation policy, new arrivals were expected to learn English, adopt existing cultural norms and become indistinguishable from the Australian-born population as rapidly as possible.⁴

² P Freeman and J Jupp, 'Comparing Immigration Policy in Australia and the United States', in P Freeman and J Jupp (eds), *Nations of Immigrants: Australia, the United States and International Migration*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1992, p. 5.

³ DIMA, *Immigration: Federation to Century's End, 1901-2000*.

⁴ S Castles, 'Australian Multiculturalism: Social Policy and Identity in a Changing Society', in Freeman and Jupp (eds), *Nations of Immigrants*, p. 185.

Table 1.1: Proportion of the overseas-born population from main English-speaking countries

	1901	1921	1933	1947	1954	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Overseas-born from main English-speaking countries (a)	713,895 83%	724,026 86%	770,666 85%	596,975 80%	721,815 56%	827,109 47%	1,224,204 48%	1,386,397 46%	1,538,149 42%	1,602,582 39%
Overseas-born from other countries (b)	143,681 17%	115,553 14%	132,607 15%	147,212 20%	564,651 44%	951,671 53%	1,355,114 52%	1,617,437 54%	2,150,979 58%	2,502,886 61%
Total overseas born	857,576	839,579	903,273	744,187	1,286,466	1,778,780	2,579,318	3,003,834	3,689,128	4,105,468

Source: Derived from Table 1: Birthplace of the Australian Population for Selected Censuses, DIMA, *Immigration: Federation to Century's End, 1901-2000*. Updated to include 2001 Census data C01_11. (a) Includes United Kingdom, Ireland, USA, New Zealand and South Africa. Canada was not included prior to 1961. (b) Includes all other birthplace countries.

During the assimilation period, the provision of settlement services was based on the view that most new arrivals would readily assimilate to the Australian way of life. Governments provided temporary accommodation for new arrivals in hostels and expected them to take whatever employment was available. Many were displaced persons from Eastern Europe who accepted bonded employment as either labourers or domestics in their first two years after arrival. From 1947, migrant hostels hosted adult English classes. From 1950, Good Neighbour Councils coordinated the efforts of volunteers in welcoming new arrivals and helping in their settlement.

In 1953, DIMIA became responsible for administering services aimed at increasing migrant assimilation such as English language teaching. However, aside from access to hostels and to English tuition, most new arrivals received very limited assistance during this period. They were also subject to discriminatory legislation that shaped their early settlement prospects. Migrants who were not British subjects were designated as aliens until they were able to take Australian citizenship. Their status as aliens limited their legal and political rights, their entry into particular occupations and their access to

social security benefits.⁵ It has been argued that Australia in the assimilation period had an essentially 'two-class' immigration program and settlement ideology. Under this system, British migrants were treated as the equals of the Australian-born, while non-British migrants were relegated to inferior positions in both the labour market and Australian society more generally.⁶ Nevertheless, a strong demand for unskilled labour enabled many new arrivals to establish themselves relatively successfully, even when they had limited English proficiency, education and job skills.

Integration

The policy of assimilation prevailed until the mid-1960s, despite the increasing diversity of the immigration intake. As shown in table 1.2, by the time of the 1961 Census, the proportion of migrants from the United Kingdom was continuing to decline and countries such as Italy, Germany, the

⁵ A Jordens, *Redefining Australians: Immigration, Citizenship and National Identity*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1995, pp. 7, 92, 114-116.

⁶ J Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land: Australia's Post-War Immigration*, second edition, Pluto Press, Sydney, 1991, p. 23.

Table 1.2: Top ten countries of birth for the overseas-born population at selected Censuses

Birthplace	1901 Census		Birthplace	1921 Census	
	Number	%		Number	%
1. United Kingdom	495,074	57.7	1. United Kingdom	568,370	67.7
2. Ireland	184,085	21.5	2. Ireland	105,033	12.5
3. Germany	38,352	4.5	3. New Zealand	38,611	4.6
4. China	29,907	3.5	4. Germany	22,396	2.7
5. New Zealand	25,788	3.0	5. China	15,224	1.8
6. Sweden and Norway	9,863	1.2	6. Italy	8,135	1.0
7. India	7,637	0.9	7. India	6,918	0.8
8. USA	7,448	0.9	8. USA	6,604	0.8
9. Denmark	6,281	0.7	9. Denmark	6,002	0.7
10. Italy	5,678	0.7	10. South Africa	5,408	0.6
Top Ten Total	810,113	94.5	Top Ten Total	782,701	93.2
Other	47,463	5.5	Other	56,878	6.8
Total Overseas-Born	857,576	100.0	Total Overseas-Born	839,579	100.0
Birthplace	1947 Census		Birthplace	1961 Census	
	Number	%		Number:	%
1. United Kingdom	496,454	66.7	1. United Kingdom	718,345	40.4
2. Ireland	44,813	6.0	2. Italy	228,296	12.8
3. New Zealand	43,610	5.9	3. Germany	109,315	6.1
4. Italy	33,632	4.5	4. Netherlands	102,083	5.7
5. Germany	14,567	2.0	5. Greece	77,333	4.3
6. Greece	12,291	1.7	6. Poland	60,049	3.4
7. India and Sri Lanka (Ceylon)	8,160	1.1	7. Yugoslavia	49,776	2.8
8. Poland	6,573	0.9	8. New Zealand	47,011	2.6
9. China	6,404	0.9	9. Malta	39,337	2.2
10. USA	6,232	0.8	10. Ireland	37,057	2.1
Top Ten Total	672,736	90.4	Top Ten Total	1,468,602	82.6
Other	71,451	9.6	Other	310,178	17.4
Total Overseas-Born	744,187	100.0	Total Overseas-Born	1,778,780	100.0
Birthplace	1981 Census		Birthplace	2001 Census	
	Number	%		Number:	%
1. United Kingdom	1,086,625	36.2	1. United Kingdom	1,036,261	25.2
2. Italy	275,883	9.2	2. New Zealand	355,762	8.7
3. New Zealand	176,713	5.9	3. Italy	218,722	5.3
4. Yugoslavia	149,335	5.0	4. Viet Nam	154,818	3.8
5. Greece	146,625	4.9	5. China	142,807	3.5
6. Germany	110,758	3.7	6. Greece	116,431	2.8
7. Netherlands	96,044	3.2	7. Germany	108,214	2.6
8. Poland	59,441	2.0	8. Philippines	103,915	2.5
9. Malta	57,001	1.9	9. India	95,445	2.3
10. Lebanon	49,623	1.7	10. Netherlands	83,290	2.0
Top Ten Total	2,208,048	73.5	Top Ten Total	2,415,665	58.8
Other	795,786	26.5	Other	1,689,803	41.2
Total Overseas-Born	3,003,834	100.0	Total Overseas-Born	4,105,468	100.0

Netherlands, Greece, Poland, the then Yugoslavia and Malta were emerging as significant countries of birth. There were also significant intakes of arrivals from Soviet-bloc countries such as the then Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Latvia, the Soviet Union and Ukraine.

By the mid-1960s, inquiries into the general inequality experienced by people for whom English was not the first language, and their relative isolation from the wider Australian community, highlighted the limitations of assimilation policy. The 1966 Henderson Inquiry showed that they suffered from high poverty rates.⁷ Jerzy Zubrzycki's 1968 report, *The Questing Years*, found that they faced a range of difficulties with schooling and the workforce, non-recognition of overseas qualifications and housing.⁸

The 1973 report of the *Inquiry into the Departure of Settlers* focused attention on high migrant departure rates and the need to provide new arrivals with services in the initial settlement period if they were to stay and settle successfully.⁹ Other research suggested that exclusion from social security benefits and other discriminatory measures, including ineligibility for the aged pension, were resulting in less than 13% of eligible migrants taking Australian citizenship.¹⁰

Another important factor in the shift towards a policy of integration was the gradual removal of discrimination from within the immigration program. The White Australia Policy was modified from 1966 until its abolition in 1973. The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* outlawed discrimination based on race and ethnic origin. Equal treatment for migrants of any ethnic origin became official policy.

The Commonwealth Government abolished privileges for British settlers and shortened the qualifying period for Australian citizenship to three years of residence for all migrants.¹¹

By the late 1960s, government policy measures began to reflect a greater awareness of the diverse needs of the migrant population and of the settlement assistance that was required. This period is generally referred to as the integration period. Integration means to become part of the whole without necessarily losing a distinct identity. Integration policy recognised that the adjustments required for a successful immigration program should include adjustments by the host society.¹² There was increasing recognition that settlement was a more difficult process than had been originally envisaged, that it was unrealistic to

⁷ L Burnett, *Issues in Immigrant Settlement in Australia*, National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Macquarie University, Sydney, 1998, pp. 6-7.

⁸ J Zubrzycki, *The Questing Years*, AGPS, Canberra, 1968.

⁹ The Immigration Advisory Council Committee on Social Patterns (Chairman J Zubrzycki), *Inquiry into the Departure of Settlers*, AGPS, Canberra, 1973.

¹⁰ Jordens, *Redefining Australians*, p. 100.

¹¹ P Shergold, 'Australian Immigration Since 1973', in F Milne and P Shergold (eds), *The Great Immigration Debate*, Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia, Sydney, 1984, p. 16; G Sherrington, *Australia's Immigrants 1978-1988*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1990, p. 161; and Castles, 'Australian Multiculturalism', p. 186.

¹² D Cox, *Understanding Australian Settlement Services*, AGPS, Canberra, 1996, p. 7.

Table 1.2 Source: DIMA, *Immigration: Federation to Century's End 1901-2000*. Updated to include 2001 Census data - DIMIA *Birthplace and Related Data: 2001 Census C01_11*. Percentages have been rounded and this may result in some slight inconsistency in totals. (a) There may be slight differences between census figures in different tables in this report and between this report and those published elsewhere by both the ABS and DIMIA. These occur because of random adjustments made at the individual cell level by the ABS to avoid the risk of releasing identifiable information. These fine level adjustments result in slight differences in aggregated totals when using Census data provided by the ABS in different formats.

expect migrants to dissociate themselves from their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and that successful settlement of new arrivals required greater responsiveness to their needs.

As Australia accepted more migrants from countries other than the main English-speaking countries, governments acknowledged a need to expand language and other support services. DIMIA had already begun to employ accommodation and welfare officers based in the migrant hostels.¹³ It then introduced the Grants in Aid scheme to provide grants to volunteer organisations to provide welfare services for migrants. The Child Migrant Education Program was introduced in order to support migrant children in schools. In 1969, the Minister for Immigration established the Committee on Overseas Professional Qualifications to investigate the recognition of overseas qualifications.¹⁴ From the same year, migrants could attend full-time intensive English courses and receive a living allowance during their studies. From 1973, the Telephone Interpreter Service provided free interpreting assistance.¹⁵ On the whole, however, the Commonwealth Government looked to migrant community organisations to facilitate settlement within their communities through self-help programs.

Multiculturalism

The Galbally report

The shift away from integration policy towards multiculturalism is evident in the Galbally report of 1978. The Galbally report reviewed existing settlement services and outlined a detailed program of action based on four guiding principles:

“All members of our society must have equal opportunity to realise their full potential and must have equal access to programs and services;

Every person should be able to maintain

his or her culture without prejudice or disadvantage and should be encouraged to understand and embrace other cultures;

Needs of migrants should, in general, be met by programs and services available to the whole community but special services and programs are necessary at present to ensure equality of access and provision; and

Services and programs should be designed and operated in full consultation with clients, and self-help should be encouraged as much as possible with a view to helping migrants to become self-reliant quickly”.¹⁶

The context for the Galbally report was the general decline in migration from European countries from the peak period of the 1960s and the increased intake of South-East Asian refugees. The arrival of these refugees from 1975 had prompted an expansion of DIMIA-funded services for new arrivals based around the former migrant hostels.¹⁷ There had also been substantial growth in the number and influence of migrant community groups. Since the mid-1970s, ethnic community councils had been established in all States/Territories.

The period prior to the Galbally report had seen a broader incorporation of migrant issues into mainstream services. For instance, Regional Councils for Social Development,

¹³ D Cox, *Migration and Welfare: An Australian Perspective*, Prentice Hall, Sydney, 1987, p. 212.

¹⁴ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Community Affairs, *A Fair Go for All: Report on Migrant Access and Equity*, AGPS, Canberra, 1996, p. 9 and Cox, *Understanding Australian Settlement Services*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁵ Cox, *Migration and Welfare*, pp. 216, 233.

¹⁶ Review of Post-Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants (Chairman F Galbally), *Migrant Services and Programs*, AGPS, Canberra, 1978, p.4.

¹⁷ Cox, *Understanding Australian Settlement Services*, p. 9.

established in order to decentralise decision-making in welfare services, had included committees for dealing with migrant issues. The work of these committees had resulted in greater migrant access to invalid and widows' pensions, family health insurance, child care programs and housing.¹⁸

Adoption of the Galbally recommendations led to further development of settlement services and multicultural policies. Migrant hostels provided links to orientation programs. The Committee for the Allocation of Loan Funds to Refugees in Centres supplied interest-free loans to enable refugees to move from migrant hostels into private homes. The Community Refugee Settlement Scheme (CRSS), established in 1979, provided for much greater involvement in the settlement process by volunteers. Funding grants to ethnic communities and to community agencies providing settlement assistance approximately doubled in size.¹⁹ The AMEP expanded and the Multicultural Education Program was introduced into schools. The Commonwealth Government redirected public funding away from the Good Neighbour Councils to a more diverse range of migrant associations and to MRCs, which began to provide information and referral services and facilities for migrant community activities. This period also saw the creation of the Special Broadcasting Service.²⁰

There was also a substantial growth in advisory institutions. The Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs and its successor, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, provided policy advice to the Commonwealth on multicultural issues. State/Territory governments established Ethnic Affairs Commissions in order to ensure that services were accessible to people of diverse backgrounds.²¹ From 1978, Migrant Settlement Councils were established in each State/Territory in order to coordinate the activities of government and voluntary bodies involved in the provision of settlement services.

Multiculturalism since Galbally

The term multicultural is often used to refer to the contemporary reality that Australia now has a very culturally and linguistically diverse population. This diversity has continued to increase since the time of the Galbally report.

Australia had particularly high migration intakes in the late 1980s, with a large number of new arrivals originating from Asian and Middle-Eastern countries. The 1991 Census showed that the proportion of the Australian population born overseas had increased to approximately 22% of the total population and that around 58% of the overseas-born were from countries other than the main English-speaking countries (see table 1.1). Asian countries such as China, Viet Nam and the Philippines had joined the top ten countries of birth for the overseas-born population. The 2001 Census showed that approximately 23% of Australia's population was born overseas and that a further 20% had at least one parent born overseas. Migrants from the United Kingdom still constituted the largest proportion of the overseas-born population. However, this proportion had declined to around 25%, while China, India and the Philippines had emerged as prominent birthplace countries (see table 1.2).

Table 1.3 illustrates the ever-increasing diversity of the population by showing the changes in birthplace countries for the overseas-born population between 1996 and 2001. During this five-year period, the

¹⁸ Castles, 'Australian Multiculturalism', p. 186.

¹⁹ Cox, *Migration and Welfare*, pp. 212-213, 228, 239.

²⁰ J Jupp, 'Immigration Settlement Policy in Australia', in Freeman and Jupp (eds), *Nations of Immigrants*, p. 133 and Castles, 'Australian Multiculturalism', p. 187.

²¹ Castles, 'Australian Multiculturalism', p. 188.

Table 1.3: Changes in birthplaces for the overseas-born population, 1996-2001

Top ten largest increases in birthplaces since 1996 (a)				Top ten largest decreases in birthplaces since 1996(b)					
No.	Birthplace (c)	1996 Census	2001(d) Census	Increase %	No.	Birthplace (c)	1996 Census	2001(d) Census	Decrease %
1	Sudan	2,397	4,911	104.9	1	Latvia	8,040	6,701	-16.7
2	Afghanistan	5,826	11,264	93.3	2	Estonia	2,839	2,397	-15.6
3	Somalia	2,045	3,726	82.2	3	Lithuania	4,222	3,689	-12.6
4	Bangladesh	5,063	9,077	79.3	4	Poland	65,119	58,093	-10.8
5	Iraq	14,027	24,819	76.9	5	Portugal	17,135	15,407	-10.1
6	Nepal	1,483	2,605	75.7	6	Hungary	25,301	22,759	-10.0
7	Norway	2,594	4,349	67.7	7	Italy	238,216	218,722	-8.2
8	Colombia	2,682	4,322	61.1	8	Greece	126,524	116,431	-8.0
9	Cook Islands	2,997	4,685	56.3	9	Malta	50,871	46,978	-7.7
10	Ethiopia	2,341	3,574	52.7	10	Spain	13,592	12,651	-6.9

Source: Tables on page 2, DIMIA, *Birthplace and Related Data: 2001 Census, Australia*, 2002 (a) Population of over 1,000 persons in 2001. (b) Population of over 1,000 persons in 1996. (c) The republics that made up the former Yugoslavia in the 1996 Census have been omitted as the increases in population for these republics are not true increases due to the republics being understated in 1996. (d) There may be slight differences between Census figures in different tables in this report and between this report and those published elsewhere by both the ABS and DIMIA. These occur because of random adjustments made at the individual cell level by the ABS to avoid the risk of releasing identifiable information. These fine level adjustments result in slight differences in aggregated totals when using Census data provided by the ABS in different formats.

highest growth rates occurred in birthplace countries such as Sudan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Bangladesh and Iraq. The largest decreases occurred for birthplace countries such as Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland.

Multiculturalism as a policy summarises the ways in which Australia addresses the challenges and opportunities of its diversity. Multicultural policy, influenced by changing economic and social contexts, has undergone reformulation by successive governments since the Galbally report was adopted.

Since 1989, Commonwealth governments have increasingly emphasised the economic benefits of multicultural policy, and especially the competitive advantages of a diverse

Australian population in a rapidly globalising economy. The *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, adopted in 1989, included three principles for multicultural policy:

- **Cultural Identity:** the right of all Australians, within carefully defined limits, to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion;
- **Social Justice:** the right to equality of treatment and opportunity, and the removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender or place of birth;
- **Economic Efficiency:** the need to maintain, develop and utilise effectively

the skills and talents of all Australians, regardless of background.²²

The *National Agenda* also extended the policy of multiculturalism to refer to cultural diversity more broadly, including the diversity represented by Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

More recently, there has been an increasing emphasis on civic values, and on Australian citizenship as a unifying symbol in a culturally and linguistically diverse nation. The principles for multiculturalism, now referred to as 'Australian multiculturalism', were redefined in the 1999 *New Agenda for Multicultural Australia* to include:

- **civic duty**, which obliges all Australians to support the structures and principles of Australian society which guarantee us our freedom and equality and enable diversity in our society to flourish;
- **cultural respect**, which, subject to the law, gives all Australians the right to express their own culture and beliefs and obliges them to accept the right of others to do the same;
- **social equity**, which entitles all Australians to equality of treatment and opportunity so that they are able to contribute to the social, political and economic life of Australia, free from discrimination, including on the grounds of race, culture, religion, language, location, gender or place of birth; and
- **productive diversity**, which maximises for all Australians the significant cultural, social and economic dividends arising from the diversity of our population.²³

These key principles remain the cornerstone of the Governments' new multicultural policy statement (released in the 2003-2004 Budget context) entitled *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity*. An important recent development has been a greater degree of differentiation

between multicultural policy and settlement services. The 1999 report of the National Multicultural Advisory Council noted that settlement strategies arise directly as a consequence of immigration while multicultural strategies arise from Australia's cultural diversity irrespective of the size or nature of the immigration program in any given year.²⁴ At the same time, however, there is recognition that settlement services help to support multicultural principles and have an important role in maintaining a successful and harmonious multicultural Australia.

Access and equity

The Galbally report established the broad policy context for the provision of settlement services to migrants in Australia. Subsequent enquiries affirmed the guiding principles of the Galbally report. They concluded that settlement services should be confined to the specific, mostly on-arrival needs of new migrants, while general needs should be met by community or mainstream services through the deliberate introduction of access and equity measures.

In 1986, the Jupp report re-emphasised that successful settlement by non-English speaking migrants required not only individual change by migrants but also change by Australia as the host society in order to adjust to the resulting cultural diversity. It made a number of recommendations for an appropriate government settlement strategy, framed within the context of broader access and equity policy, including:

²² Office of Multicultural Affairs, *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, AGPS, Canberra, 1989, p. 14.

²³ DIMA, *New Agenda for Multicultural Australia*, DIMA, Canberra, 1999, p. 8.

²⁴ The National Multicultural Advisory Council (Chairman N Roach, AO), *Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness*, AGPS, Canberra, 1999, p. 26.

- measures to equip people born overseas and their families with the basic resources they need to function effectively and on an equitable basis in Australia;
- measures to achieve institutional change, so as to ensure that the organisations which make decisions about programs and services, and implement them, do so in an equitable manner.²⁵

In 1988, the Fitzgerald report recommended that, in the context of access and equity policy, settlement services should be limited to two years after arrival and that longer-resident migrants should become the responsibility of other services.²⁶ While the Commonwealth Government did not accept the restriction of settlement services to the first two years after arrival, it welcomed the general principle that settlement services should focus on the needs of the most recent arrivals and that implementation of access and equity measures should see longer-term needs addressed by mainstream services.

A history of the further development of access and equity policy is available in chapter six of this report - Mainstream Services.

As a result of the development of access and equity policy, DIMIA-funded settlement services now operate within the context of an overarching policy of mainstreaming of government services. Under access and equity principles, the mainstream services available to all Australians should be accessible to migrants and humanitarian entrants, including new arrivals. Where new arrivals have service needs that they share with the general population, such as housing or employment, they can approach mainstream agencies for assistance. DIMIA-funded services are increasingly directed towards meeting on-arrival needs specific to the migration experience, such as information about life in Australia, English language classes and interpreting services. In this context, DIMIA-

funded settlement services represent a specific and limited investment in supporting new arrivals in their early years of settlement.

The National Integrated Settlement Strategy

This division of responsibility between DIMIA and mainstream services for meeting migrant needs relies on the accessibility of mainstream services to their culturally and linguistically diverse clientele and on coordination of mainstream and DIMIA-funded services.

In 1991, the Commonwealth Government established the National Integrated Settlement Strategy (NISS) in order to encourage cross-portfolio cooperation in improving coordination and planning of services, and to achieve access and equity objectives. NISS was based on a number of underlying assumptions founded in access and equity principles:

- migrants, as an important part of the Australian community, are entitled to benefit from the same services as the rest of the community. This can be through the provision of specific settlement services or by measures to ensure that mainstream or general services are accessible to them;
- the responsibility for providing and ensuring access to these services belongs to the wider community rather than to an individual portfolio; and

²⁵ The Committee for Stage 1 of the Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services (Chairman J Jupp), *Don't Settle For Less*, AGPS, Canberra, 1986, p. 326.

²⁶ The Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies (Chairman S Fitzgerald), *Immigration: A Commitment to Australia*, AGPS, Canberra, 1988, p. 61.

²⁷ DIMA, *The National Integrated Settlement Strategy: The Way Ahead*, August 1994, unpublished, p. 3.

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- recognising this, responsible agencies need to participate in settlement planning processes.²⁷

NISS was intended to operate as a framework for linking and improving services at the local, regional, State/Territory and national levels. It was also intended to clarify who is responsible for providing services, encourage coordination of service delivery, and enable targeting of resources to avoid gaps and duplications. NISS is discussed in greater detail in chapter seven of this report - Settlement Planning.

The Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society

In 1998, the Commonwealth Government launched the *Charter for Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* as a framework for best practice in culturally responsive service delivery. The *Charter* represented a concerted attempt to move away from access and equity as an 'add on' to government services and towards building cultural diversity considerations into the core processes of government service delivery.

Since 1998, therefore, the *Charter* has been the primary instrument for implementing access and equity principles. The *Charter* provides a nationally consistent framework for delivering government-funded services in a way that is sensitive and responsive to the language and cultural needs of all Australians. The *Charter* applies not only to mainstream services provided by government but also to services funded by government and provided by community-based organisations or the private sector. It outlines a range of principles that agencies should take into account in the planning, delivery, evaluation and outcomes reporting of mainstream services. These principles include access, equity, communication, responsiveness, effectiveness,

efficiency and accountability. They are discussed in more detail in chapter six of this report - Mainstream Services.

Recent developments within DIMIA-funded settlement services

Early intervention and needs-based targeting

Since the 1990s, DIMIA-funded settlement services have been more closely targeted at high needs groups among new arrivals, generally within their first five years of settlement. DIMIA recognises that early access to settlement services, and targeted assistance to gain access to mainstream services, enables these arrivals to move towards full and active participation in Australian society as soon as possible.

The increasing emphasis on early intervention and needs-based targeting within DIMIA-funded services is part of a wider trend within government policy. There is a growing consensus within Australian social policy that, by intervening early to address emerging social issues, government agencies can improve overall outcomes and make downstream savings by reducing later expenditure on entrenched social problems. Targeting interventions towards those most in need helps to manage demand for services and ensure that interventions are appropriate to the level of need.

The increased targeting of DIMIA-funded services towards those most in need is evident in the greater emphasis, since 1997, on the role of sponsors in supporting family stream migrants. In 1997, the Commonwealth Government introduced a two-year waiting period for new arrivals for most social security benefits. Humanitarian entrants were exempted from the waiting period, which primarily affects skilled and

family stream migrants. As a result, DIMIA tightened requirements for sponsors to support people that they brought to Australia, including provision of accommodation and financial assistance as required. Family stream migrants are, therefore, not generally targeted within DIMIA-funded services unless they have low levels of English proficiency. Data from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA) shows that 96% of the most recent sponsored migrants, overwhelmingly family stream migrants, have received help from their sponsors.²⁸

Finally, changes in the balance of Australia's Migration Program towards migrants who are less likely to require specialised settlement services has led to greater targeting within DIMIA-funded settlement services. Skilled stream migrants, who now make up over half of the Migration Program, are increasingly likely to have high-level English language skills and educational qualifications, occupations in high demand in the labour market, and Australian qualifications. Data from the LSIA suggests that the introduction of the two-year waiting period for social security benefits may be leading prospective migrants to consider their employment prospects very carefully. In effect, this data suggests that the migration intake has shifted towards migrants who are able to find employment relatively quickly. Where these migrants have service needs, they require less assistance to gain access to mainstream services.²⁹

Humanitarian entrants, however, are selected on the basis of their need and eligibility for protection, rather than their skills and English proficiency. They can require significant support on arrival and may have a continuing need for assistance from both the government and community sectors for some time.

While skilled stream migrants generally require less assistance than previously, this is not the case for humanitarian entrants and,

as noted above, for some family stream migrants who have low levels of English proficiency. For instance, the demands of the contemporary Australian labour market for workers with high levels of education, skill and English proficiency have made it more difficult for new arrivals who do not have these characteristics to find employment. Low levels of English proficiency can also make basic settlement tasks such as understanding their new environment more difficult. DIMIA provides support for these arrivals in the form of English language tuition, translating and interpreting services and information and referral services. For this reason, DIMIA-funded services target support towards humanitarian entrants and family stream migrants with low English proficiency.

In 1994, James Jupp observed a general lack of distinction between the needs of humanitarian entrants and other migrants in Australian settlement policy and advocated a greater focus on specialised refugee support.³⁰ Since 2000, DIMIA's IHSS has provided a suite of specialised, on-arrival services for humanitarian entrants. These services include accommodation and household formation support, torture and trauma counselling, and individual assistance to gain access to government and community services. These services are provided in recognition of the high and often multiple needs of humanitarian entrants and of the benefits of early intervention. The IHSS is

²⁸ S Richardson, L Miller-Lewis, P Ngo & D Ilsey, *The Settlement Experiences of New Migrants: Report to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs*, National Institute of Labour Studies, Adelaide, 2002, p. 35.

²⁹ S Richardson, F Robertson & D Ilsey, *The Labour Force Experience of New Migrants: Report to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs*, National Institute of Labour Studies, Adelaide, 2001, p. 11.

³⁰ J Jupp, *Exile or Refugee? The Settlement of Refugee, Humanitarian and Displaced Immigrants*, AGPS, Canberra, 1994, p. 78.

discussed in detail in chapter eight of this report - The Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy.

Other changes to settlement services

DIMIA-funded settlement services have been influenced by a range of trends within broader social policy. For instance, there has been a trend within Australian social policy away from direction and control by government and towards partnership between government and the private and community sectors. Overall, there is increasing recognition that government alone cannot solve all of the social policy challenges faced by the community and that government agencies should facilitate voluntary action and the development of self-reliance by providing appropriate tools and incentives.

There has also been a whole-of-government shift towards an outputs/outcomes framework. This framework requires government agencies to fund more specifically identified outcomes and associated outputs. It is also associated with other significant changes in public management such as competitive contracting and tendering, contestability, market testing, and benchmarking. A number of agencies have adopted the purchaser/provider model of service delivery. As the National Commission of Audit report of 1996 stated,

... where the government wishes to provide access to a particular service for a group of clients, it should be a purchaser rather than a provider of services. (A purchaser/provider relationship is one in which the purchaser is the party who decides what will be produced, and the provider is the party who delivers the agreed outputs and outcomes.) By separating and clarifying these roles, accountability is enhanced, conflicts of interest are minimised (for example, the referee is not on one of the teams) and the principles of contestability can be embedded...³¹

For DIMIA-funded settlement services, the outputs/outcomes framework has brought a greater emphasis on specifying the services to be provided. In some cases, DIMIA has turned to purchasing services such as the AMEP, TIS and the services provided under the IHSS. Other services have been modified by a stronger focus on outputs and associated performance and accountability measures.

In addition, DIMIA's settlement services have been shaped by more specific policy changes. For example, the delivery of the AMEP has been influenced by changes in broader language and literacy policy. Changes in technology have also had a significant impact on the delivery of settlement services. TIS has benefited from increasingly sophisticated telephony systems. Settlement information provided by DIMIA is now available on the Internet. These and other changes are discussed in further detail in relation to each service type in chapters eight to thirteen of this report.

Conclusion

Settlement policy has undergone a number of important changes as immigration programs have led to an increasingly diverse Australian society. In particular, DIMIA-funded services have developed in response to the growing diversity of the migrant intake and to broader shifts within government policy. They have also evolved over time to become more closely targeted at new arrivals most in need of assistance. Early access to appropriate settlement services enables new arrivals to move towards active economic and social participation in Australian society as self-reliant and valued members. It is the most appropriate mechanisms for providing these services that the following chapters of this report seek to outline and address.

³¹ National Commission of Audit, *Report to the Commonwealth Government*, AGPS, Canberra, 1996, p. 13.

