

**Multiculturalism in Australia:
Enhancing Social Harmony and Equality of Opportunity**

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Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own account of my research and contains, as its main content, work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

Ali Hafidhi Hayes

22/07/2013

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Abstract

This dissertation assesses the efficacy of multicultural policy and argues in favour of such policies in the Australian context by an exploration of relevant literature and data. In 1972, multiculturalism ended the previous policies of assimilation and integration, and required that all members of society have equal rights to realise their potential while being able to maintain their culture. The Galbally Report (1978) identified the underlying principles of Australian multiculturalism and focussed on the equality of all members of Australian society to have equal access to programs and services.

There has been debate surrounding the effectiveness of multiculturalism and whether multiculturalism in Australia is an ideological policy vision or merely a description of society. This 'post-multicultural' period is a legacy of the previous Howard Government, which endures in the form of the present government's 'watered down' multicultural policy. Most post-multiculturalism literature describes multiculturalism as mainly a feel-good celebration of diversity which tends to ignore socioeconomic inequalities and can trivialise cultural differences. It has also been argued that multiculturalism can polarise society into ethnic and native groups.

Multiculturalism can be described as a state-based socio-political policy approach which responds to the ethnic diversification of a society and any potentially negative socio-political and economic consequences arising from increased ethnic diversity. Australia cannot return to being a uni-cultural society and therefore government policy and programs must continue to cater to the needs of an ethnically and culturally diverse society. In Australia's experience, having a multicultural policy, by working with ethnic diversity rather than enforcing social and cultural uniformity, has been more effective at fostering the wellbeing of individuals and social harmony. This dissertation adds a positive perspective to the discussion of multiculturalism in Australia. This dissertation also proposes a modification to the conceptual basis of multicultural policy development at the Commonwealth government level which will address concerns over any shortcomings of multiculturalism.

I dedicate this dissertation to someone I respect who motivates me to be the best that I can be and who always makes me smile.

Marizka Kowi, I dedicate this dissertation to you.

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1

Introduction

1.1 Aims and Structure of this Dissertation

This dissertation argues for the benefits of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is compatible with liberal democratic values (Habermas 1995, 845-850) and it is supported by the majority of Australians (Markus 2011, 92-94). Ethnic and cultural diversity is inevitable and, as illustrated by the failed assimilation policy, will not simply disappear. This dissertation also argues in support of multiculturalism because multicultural policy is the only viable policy to address the needs of minority groups, foster mutual understandings and respect between all Australians of diverse backgrounds (Kerkyasharian 2008, 27). This dissertation is comprised of five chapters, each addressing a certain aspect of multiculturalism with a strong focus on multiculturalism in Australia. The introduction discusses various definitions of 'multiculturalism', and the following three chapters discuss the attitudes towards multiculturalism in Australia, make an assessment of multiculturalism, and challenge criticisms of multiculturalism as an apparently failed policy. The final chapter will conclude the dissertation and provide suggestions for enhancing social harmony and equal opportunities with further development of our multicultural policy in Australia.

This dissertation acknowledges that multicultural policy needs to adapt to changing times as Australian society is vastly different from when the policy of multiculturalism was introduced in the early 1970s. Multiculturalism in Australia can be enhanced in order to maintain social harmony, and prevent marginalisation of the 'different' by locating multiculturalism within liberal democracy and exploring the concept of multicultural citizenship. This dissertation is written in literature review

style, and thus draws upon a range of existing data and literature on immigration, demographic trends, and multiculturalism in Australia.

1.2 Defining Multiculturalism

Defining multiculturalism is difficult as it has been interpreted in different ways by different people in different situations and times (Jupp 2011, 41). There are many varying definitions of the term 'multiculturalism', however these generally centre upon the premise that the ethnic diversification of a society, and any potentially negative socio-political and economic consequences arising from this increased ethnic diversity, ought to be addressed by government policy (Modood 2007, 7; Heywood 2003, 334). Also, as the term ends in 'ism', it would appear that multiculturalism is a socio-political ideology, much like liberalism and socialism are. In Australian social policy discourse, as inspired by the findings and recommendations of the Report on Migrant Services and Programs in 1978 (also known as the 'Galbally Report'), multiculturalism is a government policy intended to address the special needs of immigrants, and promote and ensure the continuity of ethnic identity and cultures (Jupp 2001) by establishing special programs and services for migrants and their families (Galbally 1978; Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2011). Multiculturalism is also intended to foster positive interaction and mutual understandings between people from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds. No subsequent review has achieved the same scope as the Galbally Report (Boese and Phillips 2011, 190).

The definition used for the purposes of this dissertation is inspired by the findings and determinations of the Galbally Report and also the Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism. The Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism provides valuable foundation for future developments of multicultural policy and this has been taken into consideration in this dissertation. Democratic pluralism is established by the Charter as an alternative to the cultural pluralism of early

multicultural policy in order to prevent the formation of potentially problematic identity politics which tends to emphasise the maintenance of cultures based on a static view of cultures. The Charter reinforces the purpose of Australian multiculturalism, which is to ensure social harmony and equality of opportunity. Citizenship is expanded to involve a sense of common citizenship which recognises the full participation of ethnic minority groups (Jayasuriya 2008, 27-30).

1.2.1 The Traditional Australian ('Galbally') Definition

The guiding principles set out in the Galbally Report in 1978 have never been officially abandoned (Jupp 2011, 42) and appear to form the basis for Australia's multicultural policies over the past decades. Therefore, according to the original basic principles of Australian multiculturalism: 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 social 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 (Galbally 1978, 4-5). The Galbally report, therefore, defines multiculturalism as a national responsibility to ensure that all individuals have equal rights to realise their full potential while being able to maintain their own culture.

1.2.2 A Post-Multicultural Definition

There is also another perspective on the definition of multiculturalism in the Australian context which avoids the acknowledgement of any government action which is intended to support notions

of cultural and ethnic continuity. This definition takes an almost begrudging attitude to the social-policy discourse definition of multiculturalism by describing it as merely a description of Australian society as being ethnically and culturally diverse (Boese and Phillips 2011, 190). This is a post-multicultural definition of multiculturalism as it does not require the state to consider the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of individuals in its social and immigration policy. Australian post-multiculturalism can be attributed to the conservative policies of the Howard Government, which lasted for more than a decade (Jupp 2011, 49). That government altered the multicultural and immigration policy discourse by abolishing certain specialised migrant services and research bodies, giving immigration policy a focus on English-speaking ability and worker skills, and utilising different terms in its description of Australian society, such as 'culturally and linguistically diverse' instead of 'ethnic' (Jupp 2011, 49). Funding for the immigration policy was also moved from welfare and education to border protection and the construction and use of expensive detention centres for people seeking asylum in Australia (Jupp 2011, 50). Despite nearly six years of Labor government, post-multiculturalism still endures in post-Howard multicultural policy (Boese and Philips 2011, 191-192; Jayasuriya 2008, 27).

1.3 Australia's Multicultural Policy Evolution: A Timeline

Australia's policies towards immigration and culture have evolved over time. The abolition of the White Australia Policy led to a period of multiculturalism which opened Australia to non-European immigration, acknowledged the right to maintain one's cultural and ethnic background, and recognised the special needs of immigrants in order to ensure equal opportunities for all Australians (Boese and Phillips 2011, 190-193). Post-multiculturalism is a term used to describe the current period of intense debate over the effectiveness and rationale for multiculturalism in the 21st century (Kymlicka 2010, 32-33; Hirst 1994, 1). The intense debate surrounding multiculturalism is occurring in many developed countries (Parekh 2006, 345-356; Modood 2007, 10-20), including Australia.

1.3.1 Assimilation 1947-1966

Multicultural policy in Australia was preceded by policies of assimilation and then integration, respectively (Tate 2009, 97; Jupp 2011, 41-52). The White Australia Policy ensured that the face of Australian society remained Caucasian. By 1947, immigration was more open to individuals from outside Britain, however the expansion of immigration was limited to people of European origin who were, mostly, Christians. As the new wave of immigrants were of European origin, the requirement of assimilation of migrants was seen to be unthreatened and it was expected that they would be quickly assimilated into Australian society. Policy was not based on social scientific analyses of immigration but was influenced by the negative impacts and ethnic segregation and conflict experienced in the United States and Britain. For example, the descendants of African slaves and Eastern-Europeans who migrated to America in the 19th century were alienated and blamed for the formation of ghettos and race riots in the United States, and the riots and discrimination in Britain were seen as a strong cause to maintain a White Australia (Jupp 2011, 44-45). Policy-makers expected that European migrants who looked similar to Australians would be able to quickly become Australians who would forget their original language and culture, and be grateful for the liberties and benefits of living in Australia (Hirst 1994, 1). However, the growing numbers of immigrants, particularly from Greek, Italian, and Maltese backgrounds, were sceptical of Australian patriotism (Hirst 1994, 1) and British imperialism. They supported trade unionism and provided increased electoral support for Labor, the political opposition, in major cities (Jupp 2011, 44-45). As many immigrants became a major part of Labor's support base, this then began to influence Labor's policy platform.

1.3.2 Integration 1966-1972

Many European migrants who had become citizens were dissatisfied with being required to assimilate into Australian society (Hirst 1994, 1), reinforcing the notion that ethnic diversity would not simply disappear. By the mid-1960s, the push to end White Australia was no longer limited to students and religious leaders. The retirement of Prime Minister Robert Menzies and opposition leader Arthur Calwell led to support for change in the national political leadership. Leaders such as Harold Holt and Gough Whitlam, along with many senior public servants, were supportive of change (Jupp 2011, 46). Despite increasing support to end assimilation and White Australia, there was strong resistance from groups which refused to acknowledge that Australia was changing and was no longer monocultural (Hirst 1994, 2). The Government, however, seemed determined to carry on with dismantling White Australia and the assimilation division of the Immigration Department, with the Assimilation division being replaced with an Integration division in 1964 (Jupp 2011, 46). Under the policy of integration, ethnicity and cultural backgrounds were considered in policy-making. Ethnic organisations, religions, and the speaking of foreign languages were also recognised as an entrenched part of contemporary Australian society (Clyne 2011, 54-60). However, many large ethnic organisations from the Greek and Italian communities were not given proper recognition. These groups found more support in trade unions, leading to radical change of the Labor Party under the new national leader, Gough Whitlam (Jupp 2011, 47-48; Jayasuriya 2008, 27-28). The policy of integration was a transition away from assimilation as diversity was accepted and taken into consideration by policy makers, while the expectation of 'Australian loyalty', English speaking ability, and citizenship remained.

1.3.3 Multiculturalism 1972-1996

In 1972, the newly elected Labor Government led by Gough Whitlam abolished the Immigration department as he believed it was racially discriminatory due to its continued commitment to White Australia (Jupp 2011, 47). The government also passed legislation making racial discrimination illegal under Commonwealth law. By 1978, multiculturalism had a 'charter' of sorts with clearly defined guiding principles, targets, and proposed methods to achieve those targets. This document is commonly known as the Galbally report, also known formally as 'Review of Migrant Services and Programs' (Galbally 1978). The Report determined that ethnic welfare organisations must receive government funding, community groups were to be consulted about their needs, and ethnic and linguistic diversity were not damaging to national unity (Galbally 1978, 4-5, 104). Successive governments have implemented a multicultural policy, and the guiding principles set out in the Galbally report have never been officially abandoned.

1.3.4 Post-Multiculturalism

The current period of debate surrounding the efficacy and rationale of multicultural policy, globally, has led to post-multiculturalism discourse (Kymlicka 2010, 32-33; Modood 2007, 10-20). Multiculturalism has been criticised as unsuitable for the 21st century, ineffective at fostering acculturation and social harmony, incompatible with the ideal of autonomy in democratic liberalism due to its collectivist nature, and having the potential of promoting illiberal cultures. Multiculturalism has also been credited for creating rampant political correctness in favour of truth and the unequal treatment of citizens due to special programs and funds being targeted towards minority groups and the maintenance of cultures (Modood 2007, 10-20; Parekh 2006, 244; Markus 2011, 94; Boese and Phillips 2011, 190-192; Macey 2009; Jupp 2001, 265-266). In Australia, a survey by Liu (2007, 767) indicated that the tendency for minorities to stick to their own culture was

comparable to the tendency of Anglo-Australians to hold onto their Anglo-Australian values. Although the Galbally Report's guiding principles have never been officially abandoned in Australia, the Howard Government significantly reformed Australia's multicultural policy. Some commentators, such as John William Tate (2009, 112), have argued that the actions of the Howard government symbolised a shift away from multiculturalism in Australia. John Howard is said to have barely used the 'm word' (multiculturalism) in interviews and policies (Tate 2009, 112; Errington and Van Onselen 2007, 222). He distanced himself from multiculturalism and in the final years of his government, he spoke of a 'core culture' which is supposed to bind the Australian nation together, therefore other cultures ought to blend with it, rather than the reverse (Tate 2009, 113).

Under the Howard government, border protection became the primary focus of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, which was originally called the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. Detention centres were intended to be a deterrent, however it was an expensive and fruitless exercise as most of the detainees at Nauru were assessed and determined to be genuine refugees and allowed to settle in Australia (Jupp 2011, 50). Migrant Resource Centres were prevented from assisting asylum seekers, organisations who received government grants faced losing funds and loss of staff for criticising government policy, and the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) was forced to remain silent to retain its Immigration department funding. Specialised government bodies such as the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Immigration Research Bureau were abolished by the Howard government, and there was an emphasis placed on immigrants to integrate with 'mainstream' Australia. Immigration eligibility criteria were also modified to focus strongly on English-speaking ability and an understanding of 'Australian history and culture' (Jupp 2011, 49). The Citizenship Test introduced in 2006 is administered to citizenship applicants in order to 'formalise' the applicant's demonstrative ability to understand the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship, and knowledge of the English language (Tate 2009, 115). Although examining applicants on their understanding and commitment

to public laws and values would be consistent with the multicultural model, the test was relatively assimilationist as it expected new citizens to identify with the nation at a cultural level, thereby reaffirming that Anglo culture is constitutive of the national culture and way of life (Tate 2009, 115).

Currently, there is still a strong expectation among Anglo-Australians that immigrant minorities will integrate (Ang 2006, 7-9) or even assimilate (Tate 2009, 97), and so the revival of multiculturalism is important. The current government has returned to a policy more openly supportive of multiculturalism, and is consistent with the guiding principles of Australian multiculturalism as set out in the Galbally report, however the policy itself lacks the substance and funding to effectively execute the initiatives outlined within it. These factors have eroded multiculturalism in Australia and the current Labor government's approach is less vigorous than the multiculturalism of the 1980s and 1990s.

1.4 'Hard' and 'Soft' Multiculturalism

Multicultural policy can be understood in different ways, depending on how the policy is applied in a society. 'Soft multiculturalism' involves government promotion of mutual understandings and positive interaction between ethnic and cultural communities. Governments take culture and race into consideration, however they do not act simply to ensure the continued existence of cultures. Those who understand multiculturalism in the 'soft' sense believe that it is based on ideals that have long been held towards migrants, such as tolerance, acceptance, and a satisfaction in seeing migrants participating in Australian life (Hirst 1994, 2). Hard multiculturalism, however, does involve government intervention with the specific aim of maintaining and ensuring the continuity of minority cultures. The two approaches to dealing with ethnic and cultural diversity in a society have been described as opposites by Stjernfelt (2012, 49). While commentators such as Sheridan argue that public interest in multiculturalism has fallen (Sheridan 2011, 1), Markus (2011, 92) believes the

opposite is true. Markus (2011, 92) cites research that indicates strong support for multiculturalism. For example, 75% of Australians believe that new cultures and ideas improve society and the country and a majority of Australians support multiculturalism and multicultural policy. However, there is little support for hard multiculturalism which involves policy specifically designed to maintain cultures. In fact, only 33% of respondents in a survey supported 'hard multiculturalism' in 2009 (Markus 2011, 94). However, it should be noted that this is higher than the 16% support in 1995 (Markus 2011, 94-95).

1.5 A Rationale for Continued Multicultural Policy

Hirst (1994, 6) declares his support for multiculturalism as it is a 'celebration of old Australia' and its values of tolerance and 'a fair go', however he also says that multiculturalism has reduced the 'mainstream Australian society' to a mere ethnic group, Anglo-Celt, and denied its right to primacy (Hirst 1994, 2). Firstly, the use of a word such as mainstream in this context itself may connote an ethnicity-based separation between Anglo-Australians and the many ethnic minorities which have come to call Australia home. Secondly, arguing that multiculturalism denied Anglo-Celts their 'primacy' carries an almost imperialist tone, implying that Anglo-Celt culture is somehow more important. Hirst (1994, 4) also argues that while people do not believe that government policy determines the outcome of the economy or the employment rate, for example, they believe that it does determine the migration program. He believes this to be inconsistent, as immigrants do not face government policy but the people in Australia. Therefore according to Hirst, it is the structure, dynamics, and culture of the host society that will completely determine the outcome of the country's immigration program, not government policy.

This dissertation challenges Hirst's underestimation of the influence of government policy in shaping and leading the people of a country. Hirst's view also neglects the role of a liberal democratic

government to protect and serve the needs of the citizens who give a government the mandate to govern. Firstly, it is inaccurate to argue that people do not believe that governments influence the economy or employment rate as in every federal election campaign factors such as employment and the economy are campaign issues (Homes and Fernandes 2011, 10). The Coalition, for example, frequently claims that a Coalition budget would produce larger surpluses (Holmes and Fernandes 2011, 21). Secondly, it is the role of government to reflect the will of the people and protect the weak in a society. For example, The Department of Human Services is an Australian Commonwealth government department which provides support to individuals who require extra financial assistance or who are unemployed and seeking paid employment, to name just a few services (Department of Human Services 2012). Another example of government shaping society's values and protecting individuals are state government 'Don't Drink and Drive' campaigns and the 40km/h speed limit in school zones (Western Australia Police 2012). The notion that it is not the role of government to determine 'anything' is inconsistent with claims by political parties which claim to have the best economic and financial policy. It is also inconsistent with government action specially intended to reduce the road toll by encouraging individuals to consider the safety of themselves and others, for example. It would appear that the notion that government policy seems to have no influence over the experience of individuals, and that the masses do not believe in the role and influence of government, is inaccurate.

Kymlicka proposes an alternative system for thinking about the choices we face in a post-multiculturalism era. Most post-multiculturalism literature describes multiculturalism as mainly a feel-good celebration of diversity and accepting beliefs, customs, music and cuisines, for example (Kymlicka 2010, 33). According to Kymlicka, this is a caricature of multiculturalism which has attracted a lot of critique as it ignores economic and political inequalities. It can lead to the promotion of undesirable practices by only focussing on safe and inoffensive practices, thus potentially trivialising cultural difference. It can also lead to the notion that these groups are

somehow static and sealed, producing their own distinct practices, potentially reinforcing notions of 'us and them' in a society (Kymlicka 2010, 33-34). Finally, it can reinforce inequalities based on power and cultural restrictions, such as gender status, potentially imprisoning people who may wish to challenge the ideals of their minority community. Post-multiculturalists such as Hirst (1994, 1-6), Sheridan (2011, 1), and Young (2001, 1) seem to believe in the recognition of the flaws of multiculturalism and an emphasis on political participation and economic development, and an emphasis on human rights and individual liberty.

Despite the criticism of multiculturalism, however, there is strong support for multiculturalism and appreciation of cultural diversity (Markus 2011, 89-93; Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1095). Tolerance, equality, and individual freedom are all underpinned by human rights and are a requirement of multiculturalism. In Australia, multiculturalism emphasises contribution, participation, opportunity, respect, citizenship, and a unifying commitment to Australia (Kerkyasharian 2008, 27). These are values that democratic societies hold dear, therefore attacking them would be attacking these same democratic principles. An example is the recognition of indigenous rights and the rights of subnational groups (Kymlicka 2010, 46-47). The acceptance of difference, including ethnic, cultural, and religious difference, can only be achieved by multiculturalism. Muslims have a long history in Australia, with records showing that Muslim traders from Indonesia had made many voyages between Sulawesi Island and Australia in order to trade with the Australian Aboriginal community in the early 17th century (Fozdar et al. 2009, 207). Muslims in Australia today are linguistically and ethnically diverse, and the extent to which Muslims practice the tenets of their religion, and the particular Islamic school of thought that an individual Muslim may subscribe to, depends on many factors (Fozdar et al. 2009, 207). Some Muslims even consider being Muslim less as a religious identity but a cultural identity (Saeed 2004, 11). However, this is often neglected in portrayals of the Islamic community, and Muslims are often, incorrectly, spoken about as an ethnicity (Kerkyasharian 2008, 27). This misrepresentation often leads to ignorance and misunderstanding between

Australians and it is also dangerous as it provides a façade which potential extremists can hide behind.

There is no viable or credible alternative to multiculturalism. Factors such as perceived economic and social risks presented by immigration, however, do mean that multiculturalism will not be a smooth and linear process in most states (Kymlicka 2010, 47-48). Assimilation is also no longer viable as minorities today are more aware of their rights and are more connected to international networks. Just because there are obstacles to multiculturalism does not mean that there are any viable alternatives to it. In ethnically diverse societies, such as Australia, multiculturalism is the only policy which recognises rights to belief and culture, and actively fosters acceptance of difference in society (Kerkyasharian 2008, 27). This dissertation incorporates the varied definitions of multiculturalism as a description of Australian society, and a policy to ensure social harmony and equality of opportunity for every individual. The history, description and rationale for multiculturalism discussed in this chapter provide a basis for chapter two, which will explore the attitudes towards multiculturalism in Australia.

2

Attitudes to Multiculturalism in Australia

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses Australian attitudes towards multiculturalism and immigration. Research indicates that the majority of Anglo-Australians have a generally positive view of multiculturalism and immigration (Markus 2011, 93; Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1095). They recognise that immigration exposes Australia to new ideas and cultures, and enhances the economy by providing increased skilled labour (Markus 2011, 89-93; Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1095). Immigrants and minority groups also have a very positive view of multiculturalism (Liu 2007, 767). However, while the majority of Australians support multiculturalism, their support appears contingent upon the willingness of minorities to 'integrate' and that the government will not expend funds with the specific intention to maintain minority cultures (Markus 2011, 94). Despite these positive attitudes, many individuals from ethnically diverse backgrounds have experienced what they perceive to be ignorance, racism and prejudice (Ang 2006, 7-9). The media has been cited as a major influence on the attitudes towards minorities with negative media portrayals having a damaging effect on the social harmony that multiculturalism promotes (Ang 2006, 7).

In 2005, Western Australia launched a new multicultural charter as a response to the contemporary backlash against multiculturalism (Jayasuriya 2008, 28). Cultural pluralism, the theoretical basis of earlier approaches to multiculturalism, was replaced with democratic pluralism. It was hoped that this would prevent the formation of potentially problematic identity politics arising out of the assertion of difference by emphasising a new concept of citizenship which accommodates difference. While lingering negative attitudes towards immigrants and multiculturalism are a shortcoming of Australia's multicultural policy, the majority of Australians do support

multiculturalism when a commitment to Australia and its way of life is implied. Multiculturalism is also currently the only policy approach which can tackle the issues arising out of an ethnically diverse society with large immigrant communities (Kerkyasharian 2008, 27; Kymlicka 2010 47-48). Therefore, instead of repealing multicultural policy, enhanced social harmony and national unity could be achieved by allowing multiculturalism to adapt to changing social and technological phenomena.

2.2 Anglo-Australian Attitudes towards Immigration and Ethnic and Cultural Diversity

The following sub-chapter discusses the attitudes towards multiculturalism, immigration, and ethnic and cultural diversity in Australia. Research indicates that the majority of Australians support multiculturalism but also have mixed-feelings about multicultural policy and immigration (Liu 2007, 27; Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1095). This subchapter also explores possible causes for these attitudes.

2.2.1 The Attitudes of Anglo-Australians

Bilodeau and Fadol (2011) conducted research into contemporary attitudes towards immigration in Australia, with a particular focus on the causes for those attitudes. According to survey data of Australians from an English-speaking background, presented in Bilodeau and Fadol (2011, 1095), nearly 42% of respondents believed that the number of immigrants who have entered Australia has been too high, with less than 14% believing that the number of immigrants allowed into Australia is too low. Nearly 26% believed that the number of immigrants allowed into Australia should be reduced in the future, in contrast to the mere 16% who disagree with this. Immigrants were also linked to increases in crime by just over 49% of respondents, while approximately 37% felt that immigrants take jobs away from Australians. These figures portray a negative view of immigrants

held by the majority of Australians, however it should be noted that the survey participants largely agreed that immigration is good for the economy. This apparent clash of attitudes is represented by nearly 54% of respondents believing that immigration has a positive effect on the economy, and just over 72% believing that immigrants make Australia more open to new ideas and cultures. The data presented in the table below shows the mixed attitudes towards immigration of Australians surveyed in Bilodeau and Fadol (2011).

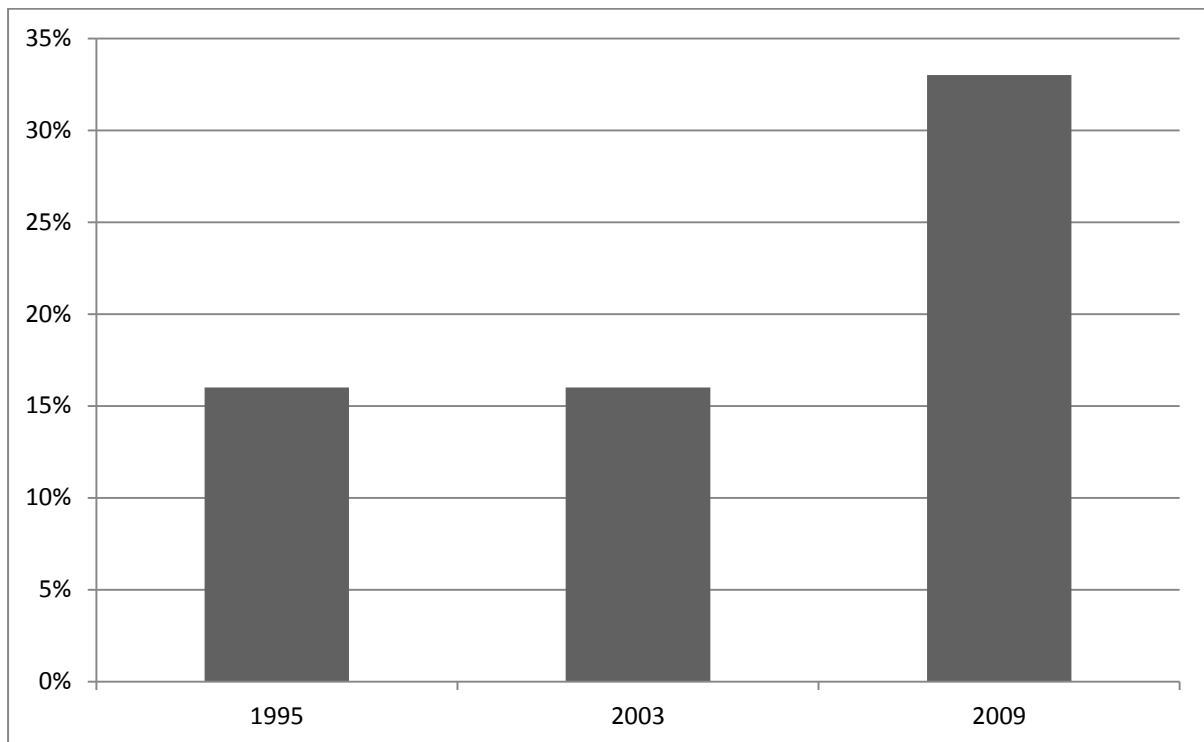
Figure 1: Attitudes towards Immigration (percentages)

Australians of English-Speaking Backgrounds	Reduced/ Too Far	Increased/ Not far enough	Total Number
The Number of immigrants allowed should be	45.6	15.9	4915
Equal Opportunities for immigrants have gone	34.3	11.9	4977
	Agree	Disagree	
Immigrants increase crime	49.1	22.9	4876
Immigrants take jobs from Australians	37.4	32.8	4875
Immigrants are good for the economy	53.6	14.4	4867
Immigrants make Australia more open to new ideas and cultures	74.2	7.0	4881

(Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1095)

According to Markus (2011), the majority of Australians feel positively about multiculturalism and cultural diversity. Support for multiculturalism in Australia has increased since the late 1980s. In 1988-89, AGB McNair surveyed over 1600 Australian citizens (ethnic background unspecified) with 77% of respondents agreeing to a statement that multiculturalism is necessary to foster social harmony in an ethnically diverse society (Markus 2011, 93-94, Murray 1999, 61). This figure has fluctuated in the intervening years, however when Australians were asked in a 2005 survey if they supported or opposed multicultural policy in Australia, 80% of respondents were supportive (Markus 2011, 93-94). These figures indicate a generally positive attitude towards multiculturalism and cultural diversity. However, support tends to drop when people perceive government action having the potential to separate society on grounds of ethnicity and culture. A survey in 2002 saw 52% of respondents support substantial cultural maintenance, opposed to the 48% who were against or equivocal (Markus 2011, 93-94). Suggestions of government action and funding intended specifically to maintain cultures are generally met with disapproval from the majority of Australians. However, it should be noted that support for cultural maintenance, or 'hard multiculturalism', has increased since 1995, particularly after 2003 (Markus 2011, 93-94). The following chart illustrates the trend.

Figure 2: Support for Government Assistance to Preserve Ethnic Minority Customs and Traditions



(Markus 2011, 94)

The above research indicates a mixed attitude among Anglo-Australian survey respondents towards immigration and multiculturalism. While Anglo-Australians are strongly supportive of ethnic and cultural diversity, some feel that immigration has reduced their employment opportunities and increased the crime rate. Anglo-Australians are also more likely to feel threatened by multiculturalism, but are more likely to support multiculturalism when it is related to integration of non-Anglo ethnic and cultural minority groups as opposed to their separation from the rest of Australian society (Liu 2007, 767). These mixed attitudes raise questions as to the causes of these attitudes – why do Anglo-Australians have mixed feelings about multiculturalism and immigration?

2.2.2 Factors Affecting Anglo-Australian Attitudes

Research conducted by Bilodeau and Fadol (2011, 1096-1100) indicates that the most significant single factor influencing attitudes towards immigration was the individual's perception of neighbouring Asian countries and their views on Australia-Asia relations. Therefore, people who are

strongly opposed to further development of diplomatic relations with Asia tend to feel more negatively towards immigration. This means that in Australia, attitudes towards immigration appears to be largely rooted in the perception held of neighbouring Asian countries (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1099). However, Australians are not equally opposed to all immigrant groups, with the largest opposition being felt towards Middle Eastern immigrants, and the lowest being towards Southern European and British immigrants. In the survey, 57% of respondents wanted to reduce the number of immigrants from the Middle East, 39% wanted to reduce the number of Asian immigrants, 18% wanted to reduce the number of Southern European immigrants, and only 14% wanted to reduce the number of immigrants from the United Kingdom (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1099). These perceptions of Asian countries is strongly affected by left-right wing ideologies, with people of a far right-wing ideology usually having a more negative perception of immigration than people of a far left-wing ideology (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1096).

Other factors include education, age, socioeconomic status and media portrayals of ethnic minorities, refugees and immigrants. Australians with a higher level of education tend to feel more positively towards immigration, with university degree holders showing the greatest support for immigration, and post-Year 10 leavers showing the least support as, generally, university education discourages the use of stereotypes and emphasises the value of cultural diversity (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1092). Research indicates that students in university tend to become more liberal, socially conscious, feminist, anti-male dominant and tolerant (Lottes and Kuriloff 1994). Gender and age also play modest roles in determining attitudes, with females and older individuals being slightly more supportive of immigration. The age factor is possibly due to the indifference that young people tend to have towards the rapid 'assimilation' of immigrants, and not necessarily due to a negative view of immigrants themselves (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1096; Markus 1999). Socioeconomic factors, particularly an individual's perception of his or her socioeconomic status, also influenced attitudes towards immigration. Individuals who are more insecure about their income and

employment tend to feel more threatened by the arrival of immigrants than people who perceive themselves as financially secure (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1100). The media also plays an important role in influencing attitudes towards immigrants and multiculturalism, with negative portrayals of minorities playing a part in fostering negative sentiments towards minorities (Multicultural Development Association 2011, 12; Ang 2006, 7).

2.3 Perspective of Minority Groups

Most people from non-Anglo minority communities have a positive opinion about multiculturalism. In 2007, 133 Asian immigrants were surveyed on their perspectives on multiculturalism and acculturation in an ethnically and culturally diverse society, with most respondents considering multiculturalism to be beneficial to society (Liu 2007, 761, 767). This is in contrast to a larger proportion of Anglo-Australians who considered multiculturalism to be a threat. While a large amount of negative attitudes to multiculturalism and immigration are associated with the perception that minorities do not sufficiently integrate into 'mainstream society', many immigrants feel that they are not given a fair opportunity to integrate due to residual ignorance and racism, which is partly due to negative portrayals of ethnic minorities in the media (Ang 2006, 7, 41-50). The media has often portrayed minorities as self-segregating communities which do not integrate, instead forming ethnic gangs and ghettos (Neighbour 2011, 1; Sheridan 2011, 1). However, while some communities do tend to 'stick to themselves' more than others, there is little evidence of ethnic ghettoisation occurring in Australia (Ang 2006, 18-20). As a result of residual ignorance and racism, many people from minority groups have experienced instances of prejudice and discrimination.

Below are several examples of individual youths from different minority groups in Australia who have experienced racism and prejudice. They confirm research that indicates that individuals are more likely to be victims of racism if they appear 'different' (Liu 2007, 764) and/or are of non-European background (Ang 2006, 22).

Case Study 1: Personal Accounts of Racial Discrimination

Kelly, a second-generation Australian from a Hong Kong background, went to a bar and heard someone say "I fucking hate Asian people". She expressed her anger about these sorts of racial slurs, however also noted that she does not encounter such racism very often.

Osama, is an Australian of Sudanese descent. He stated that he "...faces racism every day" due to his Sudanese background, and even his name. Osama also believes that his failure to get a job despite his accounting degree from TAFE is the result of racial discrimination, which he described as "...a racist way of seeing things".

Lena has a Russian background, and works as a customer service officer. As part of her job, she takes incoming calls and deals with enquiries, and some customers have complained. Lena said that "...some Australians do not have the patience and tolerance to ethnics with accent, which cost me my job, twice".

Margarita, of Spanish background, observed that racism is not necessarily one-way. While some Anglo-Australians have discriminated against immigrants and other minorities, some minority groups have also been racist towards Anglo-Australians.

(Ang 2006, 22-25)

The cases above suggest that there are negative sentiments felt towards migrants from a non-English speaking background. However, minority groups also recognise that while they may sometimes feel separate to 'mainstream Australia', tolerance and acceptance of diversity is increasingly becoming mainstream itself (Ang 2006, 23-25). Many young individuals from ethnically diverse backgrounds still consider Australia to be 'the lucky country' and, consistent with the positive view on multiculturalism held by many Anglo-Australians, consider multiculturalism as very valuable as it allows people to learn from each other (Ang 2006, 11-13). Research in Markus (2011, 89-93) also indicates a trend towards tolerance of minorities and realising the social and economic benefits of multiculturalism and immigration. Below are some examples of individuals from ethnically diverse backgrounds who feel that multiculturalism has a good influence on society.

Case Study 2: Positive Experiences of Multiculturalism

Christian, of Chilean background, said that he likes to think that there are not any Aussies and wogs but one Australia, regardless of ethnic background: "...multiculturalism is what makes Australia".

Mardi, from Brisbane, said that she thinks people are more accepting today and that they are more willing to learn about new cultures and passing these values on to their children allowing the next generation to also be more accepting of different cultures.

Multicultural humour is a sign of difference being taken in a more relaxed manner, and an ability to have a sense of fun about difference. A second-generation Australian of Fijian-Indian background stated that he does not mind when people in school would call him names as they were just having fun. However, there are times when some people might try to 'upset you', and so the line between fun and insulting someone is thin.

(Ang 2006, 22-25)

Many have also expressed the importance of integrating with people from other ethnic backgrounds (Ang 2006, 22-25). Research into intermarriage also confirms the integration of minority groups as a large proportion of marriages occurring in Australia were between couples from different birth countries and/or ethnic backgrounds (Khoo 2011, 104-105; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). Multiculturalism has been accepted by many Anglo-Australians and most individuals from minority groups have a strong desire to be a part of Australia. Multicultural policy in Australia has been successful in terms of social harmony and growing tolerance towards 'the different'. However, the instances of racial prejudice suggest that further development of multicultural policy in Australia, as well as a change in media portrayals of minority groups, may be beneficial for eliminating negative attitudes. The University of Western Sydney's 'Challenging Racism Project' surveyed over 12 500 people and found that nearly 20% of respondents felt insecure when with people from different ethnic backgrounds, and nearly 86% of respondents felt that something should be done to fight racism (Multicultural Development Association 2011, 12).

2.4 Enhancing Multiculturalism in Australia

The attitudes of the host society must also be considered in policy making as they can have a major influence on the acculturation experience (Liu 2007, 763). Not only do minorities develop acculturation strategies, but the host society also develops strategies. The acculturation strategies of the host is centred on whether or not they want immigrants to maintain their cultures and whether or not they even value interethnic relations (Liu 2007, 763). Multicultural policy could be developed in order to change the negative sentiments towards immigration and ethnic diversity as well as encourage communities which presently are seen to 'not integrate', to interact more with other ethnic groups. In 2008, Jayasuriya (2008, 27) commented on the unwillingness of the new federal Labor government in Canberra to engage with immigration policy issues relating to recruitment and

settlement. This resistance to address immigration recruitment and settlement policy is surprising as a shortage of skilled labour will severely limit Australia's economic growth.

From the 1970s, multiculturalism was based on cultural pluralism which emphasised the symbolic and specific needs of a culturally diverse influx of migrants. The acceptance of difference that cultural pluralist multicultural policy allowed for can lead to the formation of 'identity politics' which were, by the later 1990s in Australia, seen as potentially problematic (Jayasuriya 2008, 27). This was because identity politics tends to lead to an emphasis on maintaining cultures based on a static view of cultures. Citizenship was also only granted to individuals who were willing to abide by local social and political institutions, and this created a hazardous paradox: the assertion of difference (identity politics) while denying difference (universalism). The Government of Western Australia, during the premiership of Geoff Gallop, launched a new multicultural policy framework in 2005 (Office of Multicultural Interests 2004). The new policy document, the West Australian Charter of Multiculturalism, was designed to tackle potential problems with identity politics which can arise from cultural pluralism (Jayasuriya 2008, 28-29).

2.4.1 From Cultural Pluralism to Democratic Pluralism

The 'Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism' was based on a democratic pluralist model, in contrast to the cultural pluralism of earlier multicultural policies, and responds to the more recent backlash against multiculturalism. The charter reinforces the purpose of Australian multiculturalism, which is to ensure harmony and cohesion in society, while trying to restore public confidence in multiculturalism and support ethnic minority groups. The charter does this by redefining the understanding of Australian citizenship, expanding it to involve a sense of common citizenship which recognises the full participation of 'minority groups' – the charter refers to minority groups, not ethnic groups (Jayasuriya 2008, 29-30). Citizens enjoy a sense of shared belonging by virtue of their

common citizenship and membership of a political order, grounded in the liberal democratic ideals of tolerance, rule of law, and liberty. By revisiting the traditional notion of citizenship which no longer denies diversity, individuals hold a universal citizenship. Individuals, who have the right to recognition of their differences, share common membership of a sovereign moral and political community, not a cultural nation. This form of multiculturalism based on political, not cultural, pluralism may help restore confidence in multiculturalism and its intended positive impacts on Australian society.

2.4.2 Principles of the Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism

The Charter is based on four main principles, the first being civic values such as mutual respect and freedom under the socio-political and legal institutions under the rule of law. Fairness, the second principle of the Charter, aims to create public policy which is free from prejudice and discrimination. The third principle is equality of opportunity for all members of society to achieve their full potential in a society where everyone is equal before and under the law. Lastly, the Charter is also based on encouraging the full and fair participation of individuals and communities in society. By basing multicultural policy on democratic pluralism, the status and practice of citizenship can be utilised to ensure a fair, equitable, cohesive and harmonious society where difference is recognised and individuals feel a shared sense of community membership and shared civic culture. This Charter provides a rationale for multiculturalism and may address the concerns held by critics of multiculturalism.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

The survey data presented in this chapter indicates that Australians have a mixed positive attitude towards immigration and multiculturalism, yet tend to have less support for multicultural policy

which implies the allocation of public funds specifically for the maintenance of minority cultures. In Australia, democratic pluralism may form a more stable basis for multiculturalism as citizens will enjoy a sense of shared belonging by virtue of their common citizenship and membership of a political order, grounded in the liberal democratic ideals of tolerance, rule of law, and liberty. The Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism appears to promote a multiculturalism based on democratic pluralism and may help restore confidence in multiculturalism, as well as further enhance the social cohesion and harmony in Australia which multiculturalism has already fostered. An assessment of the successes and shortcomings of Australian multiculturalism will illustrate the need for further development of multicultural policy in Australia. An assessment of multiculturalism in Australia forms the following chapter.

3

Assessing Australian Multiculturalism

3.1 Introduction

Since the 1970s, multiculturalism has generally been successful in Australia (Kerkyasharian 2008, 26). The policy of multiculturalism, which is in direct contrast to assimilation, allows for the government to promote tolerance and social harmony. This is achieved by providing opportunities for cultural exchanges between ethnically and linguistically diverse communities, recognising the special needs of immigrant and minority groups in order to ensure equal access to services of all citizens, and recognising the right for individuals to maintain their cultural heritage (Galbally 1978, 4-5). There are, however, some shortcomings of multiculturalism in Australia which could be addressed by further developing multicultural policies. While there has been a recent backlash against multiculturalism in Australia, and around the world, there is no other policy that recognises the rights to belief and culture, and actively facilitates the acceptance of difference in a society (Kerkyasharian 2008, 27).

This chapter argues that, due to the present rate of societal diversification, overseas trade, and global mass media, multiculturalism is irreversible as a policy and as a description of an ethnically and culturally diverse Australian society. Assimilation is no longer a viable policy option as minorities are more aware of their rights and are more connected to international networks. Therefore, any shortcomings of multiculturalism could be addressed by adapting multicultural policy to the proliferation of modern mass communication and the changing demographics of Australian society. This chapter discusses the state of multiculturalism in Australia, highlighting the successes and

shortcomings of the policy. This chapter also argues for further development of multicultural policy, rather than its abandonment, in the context of Australian society and policy discourse.

3.2 Assessing Multiculturalism in Australia

This subchapter assesses multiculturalism in Australia in order to determine the success, or failure, of multicultural policy. The main argument of this subchapter is that while multicultural policy has some shortcomings, the achievements of multiculturalism are also very great. Instead of considering multiculturalism as a failed policy which must be abandoned, it may be more beneficial to the harmony and cohesion of Australian society if multiculturalism is enhanced by further developments at the policy level.

3.2.1 Strengths of Australian Multiculturalism

Since its beginning in the early 1970s, multiculturalism has been largely successful in Australia. The success of Australian multiculturalism can be illustrated by the positive interaction between ethnic communities, and the desire of immigrant and minority communities to 'integrate' with Australian society as a whole (Multicultural Development Association 2011, 9-10). For example, the Queensland Floods of 2011 caused significant damage to public infrastructure and private property, and the clean-up in the aftermath of the floods required a major effort. Many individuals from refugee communities in Brisbane were eager to assist in the clean-up effort, despite also being traumatised by the extent of the damage caused by the flooding. Over 100 volunteers had dedicated nearly 800 hours to cleaning up the flood-damaged area by sweeping out homes and properties, carrying heavy items, and providing food for the locals. Some of the refugees had come from authoritarian regimes where they were coerced into forced labour. These refugees had expressed to the Multicultural Development Association that they were grateful because in Australia they have a

choice (Multicultural Development Association 2011, 9-10). The effort that those refugee communities made did not go unnoticed or unappreciated, with many local residents expressing gratitude towards the refugees who helped them clean up their homes and properties. Some of the locals even had the opportunity to become acquainted with the refugee volunteers and have experienced a change in their perspective of refugees (Multicultural Development Association 2011, 9-10). By being so willing to assist the community in times of need, the refugee communities in Brisbane expressed a sense of belonging to the wider Australian community.

There is a perception that immigrant and minority groups do not integrate with 'mainstream Australia', instead 'sticking to themselves' (Liu 2007, 767; Ang 2006, 18-20). However, it is an inaccurate criticism of multiculturalism as minorities do integrate by utilising practical ways to show their support for the community (discussed above), and marrying people from other ethnic groups. Inter-marriage is a strong measure of ethnic intermixture as it mixes ethnic populations more effectively than other social processes (Price 1982, 100). Statistics indicate that 30% of marriages in the year 2007 occurred between individuals from different countries of birth (Khoo 2011, 107-108). Marriages between an immigrant and an Australian-born accounted for 23% of all marriages in 2007 (Khoo 2011, 107-108). Since the early 1990s, the proportion of marriages between Australian-born partners has decreased from 63.1% in 1991 to 55.8% in 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012). According to Khoo, inter-marriage allows for cultural barriers to be overcome when couples make decisions (Khoo 2011, 101-103), which leads to greater respect and eliminates ethnic segregation. Inter-marriage is both a product and reinforcement of multiculturalism, as inter-marriage is more likely in ethnically diverse (multicultural) societies, and at the same time multiculturalism is further reinforced by inter-marriage (Khoo 2011, 102). By inter-marrying, ethnic minority groups are being integrated with Australian society.

Research in Ang (2007, 23-25) and Markus (2011, 89-94) indicates that there is growing tolerance and positive interaction between individuals of different ethnic groups, including between Anglo-Australians and ethnic minorities. Although there are still instances of intercultural and interethnic tension in Australia, there is increased acceptance of cultural diversity. Some immigrants who were interviewed in Ang (2007, 23-24) expressed that they feel that Australians tend to be tolerant as, apart from the Indigenous peoples, they [Anglo-Australians] are descendants of immigrants themselves. The interview participants also commented that while everyone has their own prejudices, Australians have learnt to live with others and accept difference (Ang 2006, 24). There also appears to be a generational factor affecting the openness of individuals to new cultures. For example, an individual who was interviewed in Ang (2007, 24) said that younger people are more accepting of difference, and less likely to be discriminate, than their parents and that it is the job of the younger generation to educate their parents as they seem to be the source of racial bias and stereotypes.

While some research suggests that older generations of Anglo-Australians are also more likely to be negative towards immigrants than younger generations, research in Bilodeau and Fadol (2011, 1092) discovered that older generations are actually more accepting than previously thought. The importance of the pension system and the idea that immigrants are a burden to the host society are considered to be factors previously affecting the negative perceptions of immigrants held by older Australians. However, Bilodeau and Fadol's research shows that older generations are slightly more positively oriented towards immigration than younger generations, which is consistent with the indifference that young people tend to have towards the notion that immigrants need to rapidly 'assimilate' (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1092). Survey data in Markus (2011, 89-94,97) also illustrates a very positive scenario of an Australian society which actively supports immigration and multiculturalism. Support for multiculturalism has gradually increased since the early 1990s and has increased sharply since the early 2000s.

Multiculturalism benefits Australia's economy as a result of increased immigration. The proportion of skilled migrant visas granted to people from the United Kingdom, while still the largest single group, made up only 27% of the total skilled settlers in the year 2008. India, China and South Africa were significant contributors of skilled settlers in Australia, making up 16%, 11% and 6% of all skilled settlers in 2008, respectively (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012). Immigration counteracts Australia's ageing population and provides the country with a large number of skilled migrants thereby boosting the workforce (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 2012, 170-171). Immigration has played an important role in enhancing Australia's society and economy by addressing the demand for skilled labour and lifting the country's productive capabilities. In 2010, the Australian Treasury released its Intergenerational Report which stated that Australia needs to address the long-term effects of an ageing population by enhancing participation, productivity and population. A long-term projection in the report predicts that Australia's gross domestic product would reduce by 2% by the year 2050 if Australia's population growth rate reduced to 0.8% per year (Australia. The Treasury 2010, xv).

The 'skills' group forms the largest part of Australia's migration program, providing the country with people of prime working age (25 to 44 years of age) who are highly skilled and work-motivated (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 2012, 170). The skills categories are directly linked to market considerations and supply skilled labour to Australian industry. These highly skilled migrants form nearly half of all migrants in Australia, trebling over the past ten years (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 2012, 172). The Department of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade stated in 2012 that the Australian economy is flexible, resilient and highly integrated with global and regional markets as a result of nearly three decades of structural and policy reforms (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 2012, 169). The table below lists the categories of skilled migrant visas, the number of those visas granted, and changes from year-to-year.

Figure 3: Skilled Stream Australian Visa Grants 2009 – 2011

Category	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Percentage Change (%)
Employer Sponsored	38 030	40 990	44 350	8.2
Skilled Australian Sponsored	10 500	3 690	9 120	147.2
Business Skills	7 400	6 790	7 800	14.9
Skilled Independent	44 590	37 320	36 170	-3.1
State/Territory Sponsored	14 060	18 890	16 180	-14.3
Distinguished Talent	200	200	130	-35.0
Total	114 777	107 868	113 730	5.6

(Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 2012, 172)

3.2.2 Shortcomings

There is an expectation that migrants and other ethnic minorities will integrate with Australian society, and support for multiculturalism and immigration tends to be contingent upon the ‘integration’ of these communities (Markus 2011, 95-96). There is still the notion that minorities do not integrate, instead sticking to their own communities (Ang 2006, 18). However, the integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities is in fact occurring due to factors such as intermarriage between individuals from different ethnic backgrounds and the contribution of migrants and refugees to Australian society and economy. There is also residual racism towards ethnic minorities despite the existence of Commonwealth and state legislation making racial discrimination illegal for several decades (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 2012, 190). Many Australians from ethnically diverse backgrounds believe to have been victims of racial discrimination at some point (Ang 2006,

21). Due to the lingering intolerance towards 'the different', and the perception that minorities tend not to integrate, there is sometimes animosity between Anglo-Australians and ethnic minority communities. For example, research by Liu (2007, 761-764) found that Anglo-Australians tend to view multiculturalism as a greater threat than do Asian, and other, ethnic minority groups in Australia. Refugees also suffer discrimination due to the prejudices held by some Australians, and there tends to be an origin-based inconsistency in the understanding of refugees. For example, European refugees are often viewed as supportive of democracy, whereas African refugees are often seen simply as subjects of underdevelopment (Sidhu and Taylor 2007, 285).

The discrimination and prejudice experienced by migrants and refugees from non-European backgrounds can be attributed to ignorance and the influence of the media. A strong sense of disengagement with news and current affairs is created among young Australians as a result of traditional one-way media reporting which conveys overwhelming negativity about ethnic, and other, minority groups (Ang 2006, 9). Negative portrayals of ethnic minorities also play a part in creating negative sentiments towards minority groups (Multicultural Development Association 2011, 12; Ang 2006, 7). For example, despite the lack of evidence to indicate any ethnic ghettoisation occurring in Australia, the media often portrays minorities as self-segregating communities which do not integrate and instead form ethnic gangs and ghetto communities (Ang 2006, 18-20). Ignorance and prejudice also deteriorates the value of government community services, with some service workers being ill-informed of the complexities of immigrant cultures. An example is the case of an immigrant woman's children being seized by Child Protection Services due to an apparently inadequate home environment. However, further investigation by the Multicultural Development Association (2011, 9) revealed that these 'inadequacies' were simply the mother's African hunter-gatherer culture's practice of obtaining fresh food on a daily basis and sleeping in close proximity to their youngest children for their safety. The ignorance and prejudice still present in Australian

society may be remedied by further development of multicultural policy and a positive change in media attitudes and reporting formats.

According to a Parliamentary Inquiry into Migration and Multiculturalism in Australia, barriers still exist for first and second generation non-English speaking background migrants and refugees attempting to enter the workforce (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 2012, 189-190). The difficulty of these individuals to gain long-term employment in their field of expertise is the result of workplace discrimination, unrecognised overseas qualifications, and the requirement of previous work experience in Australia (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 2012, 190-193). According to the Inquiry, migrants of culturally diverse backgrounds tend to suffer from poorer employment outcomes than native-born Australians and migrants from English-speaking backgrounds. Despite state and federal legislation designed to prevent such inequalities, for example the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 and the Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986, many immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds suffer workplace discrimination. However, the discrimination is not necessarily aimed directly at 'the different' and can often be systematic in nature. For example, if an employer were to review a number of applicants for a vacant position, he or she may not understand the qualifications and cultural background of an applicant. As a result, the employer may be unable to assess the ability of the applicant to 'fit into the workplace'. This then creates a disadvantage to migrants who come from other ethnic or linguistic backgrounds. In 2010, the Scanlon Report on Social Cohesion found that 14% of survey participants said that they had experienced discrimination of some form due to their skin colour or their ethnic or religious background (Markus 2010, 13, 17).

The Australian Government's Social Inclusion Priorities target jobless families, disadvantaged children, people with disability, the homeless, and the indigenous community. Although migrants and refugees are not specifically mentioned, they are recognised in government publications related

to the Social Inclusion Agenda as being highly likely to suffer transport difficulties and poorer health outcomes, yet multiculturalism is scarcely recognised in key policy agenda. The national statement on social inclusion, 'A Stronger, Fairer Australia', recognises that discrimination can be based on appearance, ethnicity and culture' (Boese and Phillips 2011, 192). There appears to be a need to reinforce mutual understandings and tolerance between Australians of all ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

According to Sidhu and Taylor (2007, 283-285), education policy does not adequately address the complex educational needs of refugee students and their families which arise from their migration experience and unique lived realities in their home country. Education policy which ignores the needs of certain migrant groups may lead to a lack of support from the education system (Sidhu and Taylor 2007, 294-297). In addition, due to the difficulties experienced by culturally and linguistically diverse migrants in gaining long-term employment in their field of expertise, parents may work for long hours with low pay which makes it difficult to find the time and resources to support their children in their education (Bitew and Ferguson 2010, 158, 161). Socioeconomic factors such as income distribution, employment, and social welfare ought to be considered in policy making (Kagitcibasi 2003, 148-149). A survey of Ethiopian parents and school students in Melbourne showed that the parents want their children to perform well in school (Bitew and Ferguson 2010, 149). However, while they valued education, they were limited in their ability to help their children with their homework tasks because many of them either did not understand the Australian education system and/or had jobs with relatively low pay and long hours, which limited the amount of time that parents could sit with and help their children to complete homework (Bitew and Ferguson 2010, 149).

3.3 The 'Irreversibility' of Multiculturalism

The cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity in Australia would make it difficult to return to a policy of assimilation. Minority groups are also aware of their rights and will not likely support the assimilationist policies of the past. Even Anglo-Australians show strong support for multiculturalism and immigration, with tolerance and appreciation of diversity becoming increasingly mainstream (Ang 2006, 9). Multiculturalism, and the associated cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity, will not disappear (Hirst 1994, 1; Markus 2011, 92-94; Khoo 2011, 104-105).

3.3.1 Diversity of Ancestry and Inter-marriage

Price (1982, 100) and Khoo (2011, 101) believe that inter-marriage is a very effective indicator of integration as it is the result of interaction of individuals from different ethnic and cultural groups, and also reinforces multiculturalism by encouraging inter-married partners to overcome ethnic barriers and inculcate ideals of tolerance and acceptance into the next generation of 'mixed background' Australians. According to the 2011 Australian Census, the proportion of marriages between two Australian-born partners has decreased from 63.1% in 1991, to 55.8% of marriages in the year 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012). Marriages between partners born in different birth-countries made up 31.6% of marriages in 2011, in contrast to 29% in 1991. While an individual's ancestry does not necessarily relate to his or her place of birth, it is important to consider the cultural group that they most closely identify with. It provides insight into the cultural background of Australians born locally, and those born overseas, when their ancestry differs from the country they were born in. More than 300 ancestries were identified in the 2011 Australian Census, the largest being English and Australian ancestries which comprised 36% and 35% of respondents, respectively. A majority of the major reported ancestries were European, while

Chinese and Indian ancestries stood at 4% and 2% of the population, respectively. Almost a third of respondents reported two ancestries, with second-generation Australians being more likely to report more than one ancestry (46%) as they continue to feel a connection to their parents' country of birth. The table below depicts the ten largest ancestries as reported in the 2011 Australian Census.

Figure 4: Largest Ancestry Groups in Australia

Ancestry	Proportion of Population (%)	Stated a Second Ancestry (%)
English	36.1	53.5
Australian	35.4	38.5
Irish	10.4	80.4
Scottish	8.9	78.3
Italian	4.6	44.3
German	4.5	75.4
Chinese	4.3	16.2
Indian	2.0	12.9
Greek	1.9	26.2
Dutch	1.7	55.1

(Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012)

3.3.2 Religious Diversity

Australia's cultural diversity also includes an array of religious beliefs that Australians affiliate with. While the majority of Australians affiliate with a Christian religion, this has decreased dramatically over the past century: from 96% in 1911, to 68% in 2001, to 61% in 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012). There have been increases in the number of Australians who report no religion, or a non-Christian religion. The number of people reporting a non-Christian religion accounts for 7.2% of

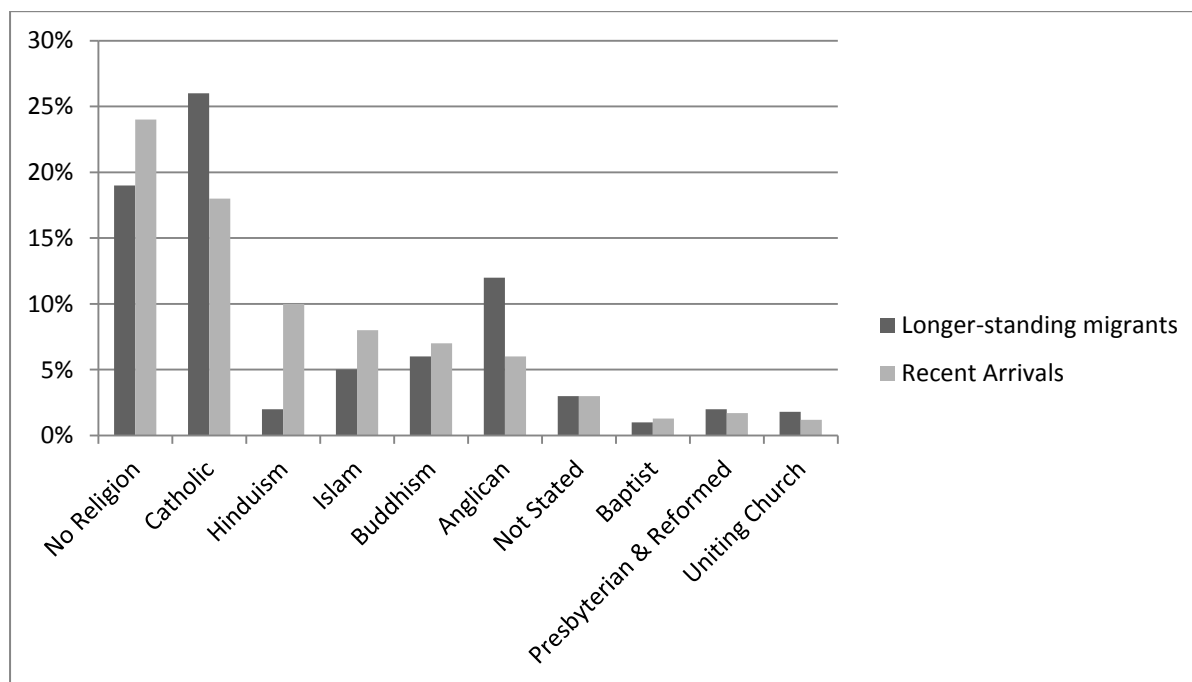
Australia's population, increasing from 0.9 million in 2001 to 1.5 million in 2011. Buddhism (2.5%), Islam (2.2%) and Hinduism (1.3%) were the most common non-Christian religions declared in 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012). Hinduism is currently reported to be the fastest growing religion in Australia, with a 189% increase since 2001, while Islam and Buddhism follow with 69% and 48% respective growth. Recent arrivals were less likely to report a Christian religion than longer-standing migrants. The first figure below illustrates the religious diversity in Australian society, and the second figure depicts the percentage of long-standing and recent migrants who affiliate with one of these religious beliefs.

Figure 5: Religious Diversity in Australia

Religion	Australian Population (%)	Proportion Born Overseas (%)
A Christian Religion	61.1	22.9
Non-Christian	7.2	67
Buddhism	2.5	69.4
Islam	2.2	61.5
Hinduism	1.3	84.3
Judaism	0.5	48.9
Other non-Christian	0.8	57.2
No Religion	22.3	22.5
Total	100	26.1

(Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012)

Figure 6: Australia’s Major Religions and Longer-standing and Recently Arrived Migrants



(Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012)

3.3.3 Linguistic Diversity

While Australia is linguistically diverse, English is spoken very well by the majority of individuals who speak a language other than English in the home. In 2011, while 81% of Australians spoke only English at home, only 2% did not speak any English at all in the home. Mandarin, Italian, Arabic, Cantonese and Greek were the most common languages, other than English, to be spoken in the home (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012). The following table shows the ten most-spoken languages in Australia, the proportion of the population (over 5 years of age) who speak that language, and the proportion of those people who can also speak English very well.

Figure 7: Top 10 Languages Spoken in the Home

Language Spoken at Home	Proportion of Total Population (%)	Proportion who Speak English very well (%)	Proportion born in Australia (%)
English Only	80.7	-	83.8
Mandarin	1.7	37.5	9.0
Italian	1.5	62.1	43.2
Arabic	1.4	61.9	38.5
Cantonese	1.3	26.4	19.9
Greek	1.3	65.0	54.1
Vietnamese	1.2	39.5	27.9
Spanish	0.6	62.1	21.9
Hindi	0.5	80.2	9.8
Tagalog	0.4	66.9	5.9

(Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012)

3.4 Conclusion

Australia is diverse in terms of the ancestry groups, religious beliefs, spoken languages, culture and ethnicity of its people. The diversity of Australian society is so extensive that it cannot simply disappear or for ‘the different’ to be assimilated. Anglo-Celtic culture can no longer claim primacy over other cultures as minorities are unlikely to assimilate as they are more aware of their rights and have expressed their dissatisfaction with assimilation policies in the past (Kymlicka 2010, 47-48; Hirst 1994, 1-6). Multiculturalism has been largely successful in Australia, fostering tolerance and mutual understanding between people from all ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious groups. However, the backlash against multiculturalism may highlight some aspects of multicultural policy which need to be addressed. This is not to say that multiculturalism has failed and should be abandoned. The problems faced by ethnic minority groups, such as barriers to employment or racism, can be

addressed by adapting multicultural policy to the changing needs of Australian society. Multiculturalism is scarcely recognised directly in Australia's Social Inclusion Agenda and key policy areas, which is inconsistent with a large amount of government literature which acknowledges the difficulties faced by new immigrants and minority groups (Boese and Phillips 2011, 192).

The majority of Australians believe that multiculturalism is good for Australia and that immigration helps to boost the country's economy by providing the labour market with necessary skills (Markus 2011, 89-94). The support of Australians, however, is contingent upon the requirement that individuals are committed to an 'Australian way of life' and integrate, and minority groups do not segregate themselves from society (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1090). The notion that minorities do not integrate may be the result of some groups not integrating and also the negative portrayal of minorities in the media (Ang 2006, 9, 13-17). The backlash against multiculturalism, largely due to the perception that multiculturalism segregates society on the basis of ethnicity and culture, could be addressed by a more dynamic policy approach to disadvantaged communities, such as new immigrants and minority ethnic groups, and multicultural policy established on the theoretical basis of democratic pluralism.

The Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism may be the next step in an evolving approach to multiculturalism which tackles concerns of non-integration by inhibiting the formation of 'identity politics' which occurs when 'difference' is asserted (Jayasuriya 2008, 27-30). The Charter emphasises a new concept of citizenship which accommodates difference within the liberal democratic articulation of citizenship. The Charter reinforces the purpose of Australian multiculturalism as a policy to ensure social harmony and cohesion, while restoring public confidence in multiculturalism. A sense of common citizenship is created, which recognises the participation of all Australians, including minority groups (who are not classed as 'ethnic groups'). A sense of shared belonging between Australians would be created due to their common citizenship of a political order grounded

in the ideals of tolerance, rule of law, and liberty – a liberal democracy. Individuals, of course, have the right to recognition of their differences and share a membership of a moral and political community, not a nation of one ‘culture’. Democratic pluralism may help restore public confidence in multiculturalism and its positive impacts on society. Multiculturalism is currently the only policy which can tackle issues arising out of an ethnically diverse society with large communities of immigrants (Kymlicka 2010, 47-48; Kerkyasharian 2008, 27). The following chapter will counter criticisms made of multiculturalism by considering its success and potential in ensuring social harmony and equality of opportunity.

4

Challenging the Critics

4.1 Introduction

This chapter debates the theoretical critique of multiculturalism and its apparent incompatibility with liberalism. This chapter also challenges the claimed real-world failures of multiculturalism. It has been argued that multiculturalism, including multiculturalism in Australia, is a failed policy (Modood 2007; Sheridan 2011; Kymlicka 2010, 32-47) which can lead to the promotion of cultures apparently incompatible with the dominant values of liberalism and the non-integration of immigrant and refugee communities. Multiculturalism has been criticised at a theoretical level as being incompatible with liberal democracy as liberalism demands the right to individualism and freedom whereas multiculturalism would imply embeddedness in a community (Habermas 1995, 845-850; Cohen-Almagor 2001, 81). Critics argue that multiculturalism can lead to the promotion of ethnic-separation, non-integration of minority groups, and religious terrorism (Modood 2007; Sheridan 2011, 1).

4.2 Multiculturalism and Liberalism

If multiculturalism and liberalism are incompatible, it is because the former denotes a maintained embeddedness within a cultural community whereas liberalism is synonymous with liberty and autonomy from such communities (Brown 2000, 130; Habermas 1995, 849-850). This would mean that in a liberal democratic state, such as Australia, these two ideologies cannot operate in harmony because the autonomy of liberalism seems to challenge cultural embeddedness because such embeddedness challenges the notion of autonomy. It is, however, possible for these two ideologies

to operate in relative harmony if a broader and more flexible reading of multiculturalism and liberalism is made. If liberty is bestowed upon individuals, it would be a violation of that liberty to prevent individuals from forming groups and being given the choice to remain within or leave these groups at their own free will (Habermas 1995, 850). This dissertation supports a liberal state that supports ideals of multiculturalism and a focus on individual liberty and the harm principle. However, state intervention does not need to be prohibited in a liberal state (Cohen-Almagor 2001, 81-82).

The apparent incompatibilities between liberalism and multiculturalism can be addressed by emphasising the individual's right to choose to remain in a cultural group, or to leave it (Habermas 1995, 850). Liberalism advocates equal individual rights and the ability for individuals to pursue their life goals and project (Heywood 2003, 25-30, 58). Multiculturalism is derived from communitarianism, which also acknowledges equal rights of individuals, however also recognises that the state may need to act in matters of cultural and ethnic groups and the maintenance of such groups (Habermas 1995, 850). While liberalism places greater emphasis on the autonomy of individuals, it is certainly possible to reconcile the two ideologies in the liberal state by making a more flexible reading of the liberal and communitarian-based multicultural approach when dealing with ethnic and cultural groups. The provisions for supporting minority cultures can be found in liberal tenets such as individual rights and cultural membership (Habermas 1995, 850; Heywood 2003, 58). While it can be argued that it is inconsistent with liberalism for states to guarantee the existence of cultures, liberalism allows for the continued existence of cultures based on the individual's right to choose his or her membership and support of their native cultural traditions. Members of a cultural group who are convinced of their culture's inherent value may choose to reproduce these beliefs and practices (Habermas 1995, 850-852). This reading of liberalism would mean that while it is not an obligation for the state to ensure the continued existence of cultures,

collective membership rights may still be granted based on the right of the individual to choose what groups he or she wishes to belong.

4.3 Integration of Ethnic Minorities

Critics such as Kenan Malik, Greg Sheridan, and the late Hugo Young have argued that because multiculturalism emphasises 'difference', it leads to ethnic and cultural segregation of society (Modood 2007, 10-11; Sheridan 2011, 1; Young 2001). Therefore, ethnic separation can be averted if governments do not separate communities into 'native' and 'ethnic' in the way that multiculturalism apparently does, and while immigration should not be prejudiced against culture, according to Sheridan (2011, 1), it needs to consider skills and ability to integrate. However, cases of ethnic segregation and ethnic violence, the 2005 Cronulla Beach riots being the only major case in recent history (Jupp 2006, 699; Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1090), is the result of an underdeveloped multicultural policy and approach and not multiculturalism itself. The riots saw predominantly young white Australian men attacking Arabs, asserting that they were protecting Australian values and women from the [Arab] 'enemies within' (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1090). This, for critics, illustrates that Australians accept a multiculturalism that merely celebrates ethnic food and dance, and support immigration only if migrants adopt a strong commitment to the Australian way of life (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1090). However, in the case of the Cronulla riots, they only occurred after nearly a decade of a conservative government which had largely dismantled the multicultural policy, and its social infrastructure, developed by previous governments (Jupp 2006, 701; Jupp 2011, 41-52). Multicultural affairs were transferred from the 'Prime Minister and Cabinet' to Immigration, funding was only granted to organisations exercising the government's approach to immigration and ethnicity, specialised government bodies such as the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Immigration Research Bureau were abolished, limited funding was made available for multicultural

affairs, and focus moved towards English-speaking ability and understanding of Australian history and culture in immigration eligibility criteria (Jupp 2011, 49-50).

The approach taken by the Howard Government eroded multiculturalism in Australia and, despite a revival of multiculturalism at the policy level, the current Labor government's approach is less vigorous than the multiculturalism of the 1980s and 1990s (Jupp 2011, 49-52). The current multicultural policy document lacks substance, it does not clearly state the amount of public funds that have been committed to multiculturalism, and the policy itself lacks funding (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2011; Jupp 2011, 52). Budget Paper Number 2 for the 2011-2012 period declares that 4.7 million dollars has been dedicated to the (five) multicultural policy initiatives over five years, which would leave an average of only 235 thousand dollars per national initiative, per year (Commonwealth of Australia 2011, Budget Measures 2011-2012 Paper Number 2 2011, 265). A shortage of funds could lead to a lack of skilled creative community development practitioners, for example, thereby preventing the government's multicultural policy initiatives from being fully implemented. As a result, the policy's aims of enhancing social harmony and equality of opportunity may remain unrealised.

Due to the controversial nature of multiculturalism and immigration, the present government has cautiously returned to a watered-down multiculturalism, maintaining expectations of minority groups to 'integrate' and become a part of mainstream society (Jupp 2011, 52). A better developed and funded approach to multiculturalism is necessary in order to assist immigrants and ethnic minorities to more easily integrate into Australian society while maintaining and sharing their cultures. An example of an underdeveloped multicultural policy is provided below.

Case Study 3: Further Development of Multiculturalism Needed

Following a reported domestic dispute where police had notified Child Safety Services due to concerns over the safety of the couple's children, officers from Child Safety visited the home and were concerned about the lack of food supplies and essential items such as beds for the children.

The mother of the children contacted a community organisation to express that her children sleep together in the parents room as they are scared of being lonely and that in their culture it is common for children to sleep near their parents so they can look after their children, especially before reaching five years of age. The lack of food supplies was, according to the mother, a consequence of her family's African hunter-gatherer origin where they prefer to obtain and prepare fresh food on a daily basis.

(Multicultural Development Association 2011, 9)

In the above case, it is not necessarily that multiculturalism in Australia is failing, but that more development is required at the policy level to eliminate ignorance and prejudice so that community workers and public servants are better trained in understanding the ethnic and cultural context of the individuals they are intended to support.

4.3.1 Refugee Volunteers

Multiculturalism has also been accused of creating ethnic and cultural groups that are somehow static and sealed (Parekh 2006, 349; Kymlicka 2010, 32-47), producing their own distinct practices, potentially reinforcing notions of 'us and them' in a society. Despite claims that multiculturalism has

led to ethnic segregation and non-integration, many migrants and refugees often show their motivation to become a part of the Australian community by adopting Australian values and contributing to their new country. They often feel a desire to 'give back' to the community, with the Multiculturalism Development Association (2011, 6-8) estimating that nearly one third of overseas-born Australians participate in some form of formal volunteer work, for example. There is also evidence that many Australians have witnessed and appreciate the effort made by refugees to become active participants in the Australian community. The case study below illustrates a growing positive relationship between Australians from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Case Study 4: Refugee Volunteers during the 2011 Queensland Floods

In the aftermath of the 2011 Queensland Floods, refugee communities in Brisbane were eager to assist in the clean-up. Despite being, themselves, traumatised by the severe damage caused by the floods, 120 volunteers from nine refugee communities had dedicated nearly 780 hours to the clean-up by sweeping out homes, carrying furniture and even providing food supplies for their local communities. A BBQ sausage sizzle was held in a local park where over 200 volunteers were provided with food and drink. Helping fellow members of the community is a practical way for many refugees to show their support for their local community. Twenty Burmese volunteers, who were at different stages of their refugee resettlement, worked all day barely taking breaks. They expressed their intention to continue working all day if necessary. They expressed gratitude for being given the freedom to choose to work, in contrast to being forced into labour in their home country. Many members of the community expressed their gratitude toward the refugee communities for their effort. One couple, whose property suffered heavy damage due to the floods, said that their opinions about refugees had changed entirely after witnessing the motivation of refugee communities to help others, and being able to talk with the refugees about their experiences.

(Multicultural Development Association 2011, 8-10)

4.3.2 Intermarriage as an Indicator of Integration

A renowned Australian demographer, Charles Price, described intermarriage as the best measure of ethnic intermixture as it mixes ethnic populations more effectively than any other social process (Price 1982, 100). According to Khoo (2011, 101), intermarriage between individuals from Anglo and immigrant or ethnic groups is a powerful indicator of integration in a multicultural society. Marriage is a major life event which leads to starting a family and bearing children and intermarriage indicates an erosion of ethnic and cultural barriers because it results from interaction between people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Partners who come from different ethnic backgrounds are likely to share similar values and bear children who will be of multi-ethnic origin, thus affecting the cultural identities of future generations. Interethnic interaction occurs in multicultural societies such as Australia, where individuals from different ethnicities are given the opportunity to meet each other at places such as the education system, workplace, and social and community activities. A society which grants equal opportunities to all its citizens, regardless of ethnic background, will create these opportunities for ethnically diverse individuals to interact.

Case Study 5: Australian Intermarriage Statistics

Australian statistics from 2007 indicate that 30% of marriages in that year occurred between partners from different birth-countries - 23% being between an immigrant and an Australian-born. More recent figures confirm that the proportion of marriages between two partners born in Australia has been decreasing since 1991, with the decrease being from 63.1% in 1991 to 55.8% in 2011. Marriages between individuals born in different countries comprised 31.6% of marriages in 2011. This is contrast to 29% in the year 1991.

(Khoo 2011; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012)

According to the 'intermarriage indicates integration' notion, the case study above suggests that multiculturalism and integration has progressed and will continue to affect the country's cultural and social make-up in the future, consistent with the Australian Multicultural Policy document's acknowledgement that Australia will always be a multicultural nation. Multiculturalism is a positive policy approach which has been reinforced by intermarriage, as intermarried couples tend to overcome cultural barriers when making decisions (Khoo 2011, 101-103). This fosters greater respect and eliminates segregation between different cultural groups - multiculturalism. People from different backgrounds tend to mix more in culturally diverse countries, which creates opportunities for intermarriage (Khoo 2011, 101-103). Complimentarily, multiculturalism is also advanced by intermarriage. Looking at increases in intermarriage, multiculturalism is not only a positive policy but is an inevitable future of our society.

4.4 Promotion of Illiberal Cultures

It has been argued that multiculturalism can lead to the promotion of undesirable practices or, as described by Kymlicka (2010, 32-47), the 'Disneyfication' of cultural difference by only focussing on safe and inoffensive practices, thus potentially trivialising cultural differences (Kymlicka 2010, 32-47). Multiculturalism can imprison people who may wish to challenge the ideals of their minority community as it reinforces inequalities based on power and cultural restrictions, such as gender status (Kymlicka 2010, 32-47). Critics claim that multiculturalism is a flawed policy (Parekh 2006, 350; Kymlicka 2010, 32-47; Modood 2007, 10-14), and that it would be foolish for the present Australian government to return to the multicultural policy approach of the 1980s and 1990s (Sheridan 2011, 1).

Despite being opposed to racism, anti-immigration and anti-Muslim sentiments, critics such as Brian Barry have 'racialised' multiculturalism, ignoring the positive aspects of multiculturalism by focussing

on undesirable practices such as genital mutilation and forced marriages despite these practices being unrepresentative of the majority of individuals from most ethnic minorities (Parekh 2006, 350-352). Further, according to Barry, almost all demands made under multiculturalism can be attributed to non-Christian religious groups (Parekh 2006, 352). The above claims are merely a scare campaign based on major inaccuracies. Firstly, appraising ethnic minority communities and cultures by focussing on the undesirable practices of a small number of those communities is unfair. It would be similar to a Muslim who condemns the Western world as a people of sexual perverts and child abusers simply because some of the people in these societies have been found guilty of such crimes. Secondly, the claim that multicultural demands usually come from non-Christian religions is untrue. Christian groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses and the Amish in the United States advocate the teaching of creationism in schools (Parekh 2006, 350-352). Critics such as Barry also neglect that there are many non-Anglo individuals who are Christian, including indigenous Australians, immigrants, and converts from other religions. For example, 61.1% of Australians affiliate with a Christian religious denomination and 22.9% of people who affiliate themselves with a Christian religion were born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012). The argument that multiculturalism is a threat to a liberal democracy is merely a scare campaign born from paranoia based on unsound logic and a fear of the undesirable practices of a very small few.

As discussed in 4.2, multiculturalism can operate within the liberal state if individual rights to choose cultural membership are granted. Individuals will be less likely to become imprisoned within a cultural group and its traditions if the state's multicultural policy is designed to provide for individuals who wish to preserve their culture to choose to be members of cultural groups, but not necessarily enforce the continued existence of cultures at the policy level (Habermas 1995, 850-852). Groups which restrict the liberty of its members, however, are in violation of the individual liberties bestowed upon all individuals under democratic liberalism and there is much debate as to how the state should act regarding clashes between group rights and individual rights (Cohen-

Almagor 2001, 81). It can be argued that it would be merely an expansion of liberal principles to be tolerant to cultural groups that have seemingly illiberal philosophies (Cohen-Almagor 2001, 82-82). A distinction can be made between a culture that causes individuals to harm themselves alone, and a culture that causes individuals to harm others. As long as individual rights and freedom of choice is protected, multiculturalism and liberalism can operate in relative harmony. Increased immigration, an ethnically diverse population, and mass communication have made individuals and minority groups much more aware of their rights (Kymlicka 2010, 46-47). Therefore in Australia, there is no other viable alternative to multiculturalism as it is no longer possible to expect minority groups to assimilate.

4.5 Concerns about Religious Terrorism

Sheridan believes that taking Australian citizenship would not suddenly transform a person into an Australian. While not condemning all Muslims, he believes denying Islam being a factor in the spread of anti-Islamic sentiments in Western countries is also foolish, as the acts of terror committed in the name of Islam have not been committed under any other major religion. This dissertation challenges Sheridan's position on the relationship between multiculturalism and terrorism and the underlying role of Islam in the terrible atrocities committed by 'Islamic terrorists'. In the case of Australia, there have been no terrorist attacks. The Bali Bombings of 2002 took the lives of a number of Australians relatively close to home, however Australians were not the specific target of the attack (Jupp 2006, 699). Despite not being directly targeted by terrorist attacks, Australians felt that they were in the line of fire when societies similar to Australia were victims of 'Islamist terrorism' (Jupp 2006, 699). Sheridan believes that anti-Islamic sentiment is caused by acts of terror, committed in the name of Islam, that have never been committed under any other religion (Sheridan 2011, 1). For Sheridan, a denial of the role of Islam in these acts is foolish. However, terrorism is not itself an all-encompassing ideology but a political strategy and a choice from a range of options (Cinar 2009, 93).

Religion is used as a means for individuals who are inclined to utilise terrorism to justify their decisions. Not only can religion be used to legitimate such violence, but so can secular ideologies and philosophy. Religion is not directly a cause of terrorism or political radicalism, however they are simply a way for individuals to frame a struggle in terms that potential recruits will understand and which will be less understood or empathised by their targets.

There are clear links between political systems and terrorism, suggesting that terrorism is a product of political systems whose problems need to be rectified in order to eliminate terrorism. Terrorism is a desperate response of groups with growing numbers of people who feel powerless and feel compelled to challenge the power and resource distribution established under the current international system (Cinar 2009, 97). Government policy needs to address the needs of all its citizens and treat individuals equally. Inequality, marginalisation, and alienation cause dissatisfaction and provide an impetus for individuals who feel they have been treated unfairly to take potentially violent action. Terrorists are therefore political actors who see themselves as defending the weak against the strong who violate morality. Interviews with terrorists have revealed a common frustration – for them the current international system is unjust and being part of a larger more powerful movement helps promise them victory. John Esposito explained that political and economic grievances are usually the primary causes of terrorism, and religion is then used as a means to legitimate and mobilise the movement. For example, religion would not have been enough to drive the Buddhist movement implicated in the Tokyo nerve gas incident in 1995 to take the action it did (Cinar 2009, 111). Terrorism may be the means used in the name of an ideology, however the ideology itself is not terrorism. For example, despite that some terrorists claim to be Muslims, there are millions of Muslims who find terrorism abhorrent. The minority should not be seen as representative of their religion and its followers.

4.6 Conclusion

It may appear that multiculturalism is at odds with liberalism due to the apparent clash between collective and individual rights recognised by each 'ideology', respectively. Multiculturalism, which is derived from communitarianism, implies a maintained embeddedness within a cultural community, in contrast to the liberty and autonomy from such communities advocated by liberalism (Brown 2000, 130; Habermas 1995, 849-850). However, multiculturalism can be located within liberalism, specifically an individual's right to choose to remain within or leave a cultural group (Habermas 1995, 850). It would be a violation of individual liberty in a democratic liberal state to prohibit them from forming or joining groups (Habermas 1995, 850). Non-Anglo immigrant and minority groups are in fact integrating with Australian society through social mechanisms such as intermarriage and by contributing to the wellbeing of their communities.

The promotion of illiberal cultures is said to be a flaw of multiculturalism, and individuals may find themselves imprisoned within the traditions of their cultural group. However, if the rights of individuals to choose their cultural membership are ensured in a democratic liberal state, individuals are less likely to become imprisoned within the traditions of a cultural group (Habermas 1995, 850-852). The argument that multiculturalism also opens the way for religious terrorism is the result of misunderstanding the concept of terrorism itself. Terrorism is a political strategy chosen from a range of options and is not an all-encompassing ideology (Cinar 2009, 93). While religion may be used as a means for these political actors to justify their decisions, secular ideologies and philosophies can also be used to justify acts of terror. Government policy which addresses the needs of all its citizens equitably may neutralise the justification made by terrorists who utilise violence in order to advance their political agenda. Terrorism may be the means used in the name of an ideology, however the ideology itself is not terrorism. Multiculturalism has bestowed Australia with numerous social and economic benefits, and these benefits could be expanded upon if multicultural

policy were to be more responsive to the changing needs of all Australians. That is not to say that multiculturalism has failed but that it has largely been successful in Australia and has further potential in consolidating continued social inclusion, harmony and cohesion.

5

Conclusion

5.1 The Success of Australian Multiculturalism

While some Anglo-Australians feel negatively towards non-European immigrants, there is growing tolerance (Markus 2011 89-94; Ang 2006, 23-25). The interaction between Anglo-Australians and ethnically and linguistically diverse individuals is largely positive and many individuals from these ethnic minority groups feel that tolerance and acceptance of diversity has become increasingly mainstream (Ang 2006, 23-25). Most Australians feel positively about multiculturalism and cultural diversity, and support has been growing since the late 1980s, with 80% of respondents supportive of multicultural policy in a 2005 survey in Markus (2011, 93-94). Most people from non-Anglo minority communities also have a positive opinion about multiculturalism. In 2007, 133 Asian immigrants were surveyed on their perspectives on multiculturalism and acculturation in an ethnically and culturally diverse society, with most respondents considering multiculturalism to be beneficial to society (Liu 2007, 761, 767).

Many people from ethnic minority groups have expressed their desire to integrate with people from other ethnic backgrounds (Ang 2006, 11-13). While some communities tend to 'stick to themselves' more than some other communities, there is a lack of evidence to prove that ethnic ghettoisation occurs in Australia (Ang 2006, 18-20). The youth of many ethnic minority groups consider Australia to be a lucky country, and they consider multiculturalism as valuable in allowing people to learn from one another (Ang 2006, 11-13). Inter-marriage is an outcome of this tendency for Australians to integrate and interact with one another, irrespective of their cultural or linguistic background. The proportion of marriages which occur between individuals from different birth countries has been

increasing in Australia and confirms the gradual and enhanced integration of minority groups into the greater Australian society (Khoo 2011, 104-105; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011).

Multiculturalism has led to an immigration policy which allows for a large number of skilled migrants to temporarily or permanently reside in Australia. These migrants address the high demand for labour and management skills in Australia's growing economy. Immigration in Australia is dominated by migrants with specialised skills in demand, accounting for nearly half of all migrants. Immigration is also counteracting the rate at which Australia's population is ageing, which is an important factor according to the Treasury Department (Australia. The Treasury 2010, xv). The Treasury's prediction of a 2% fall in Gross Domestic Product by 2050 if population growth were to reduce by a seemingly insignificant 0.8% highlights the importance of immigration in Australia. Economically, multiculturalism has brought significant benefits through creating global economic links and relationships, developing export markets, enhancing creativity and innovation by creating access to cultural perspectives and diverse skills, producing new goods and services and promoting economic growth. Australia has been largely successful in providing employment, home ownership, health and educational opportunities, and many new Australians have secured employment and home ownership thus also giving their children better opportunities. The Australian culture of 'the fair go' is evident in Australia's multicultural society. Migrants contribute to Australia's economic growth, and many also engage in unpaid volunteer work. The idea of 'giving back' to the community is strong among many migrant communities with Volunteering Australia estimating that nearly 30% of individuals born overseas participate in formal volunteering (Multicultural Development Association 2012, 8-9).

5.2 Further Policy-Level Developments to Enhance Multiculturalism

Although there have been shortcomings of multiculturalism in Australia, this dissertation argues that the successes of multiculturalism warrant further development of multicultural policy rather than its abandonment. The main obstacles that Australian multiculturalism still needs to overcome are the remaining negative attitudes towards 'the different', socioeconomic and political barriers faced by migrants and their communities, and misunderstandings of multiculturalism in the Australian context. Research in Liu indicates that people are more likely to be discriminated against if they appear different and/or come from a non-European background (Liu 2007, 764). Bilodeau and Fadol's survey of Anglo-Australians found that over 40% of respondents believe that immigration in Australia is too high, with over a quarter of respondents agreeing that immigration should be reduced (Bilodeau and Fadol 2011, 1095). Many of the participants in the above survey also made a connection between increased immigration and increased crime. The findings of Liu (2007) and Bilodeau and Fadol (2011) indicate that there are still some sections of society which are less tolerant towards other people who appear or sound different than themselves.

The recently published report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Migration and Multiculturalism in Australia is consistent with the above research, citing the employment disadvantages faced by migrants and some individuals from a non-English speaking background (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 2012, 190-193). According to the Inquiry, the various legislative instruments designed to prevent racial discrimination are not necessarily effective in every situation, with migrants from culturally diverse backgrounds suffering poorer employment outcomes than Australians from an English-speaking background. The State of Western Australia's Charter of Multiculturalism also recognises that the disagreement over the definition of multiculturalism also causes tension in Australian society, with some people still believing that multiculturalism is only about minorities and is designed to afford special treatment to certain minority groups (Western

Australia. Department of Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs 2004, 5). According to the Charter, a clear definition of multiculturalism needs to be established in the Western Australian context in order to ameliorate the negative attitudes towards multiculturalism resulting from a perception of inequality in favour of minorities. More also needs to be done to eliminate ignorance about other cultures and to foster openness to other people and their cultures (Multicultural Development Association 2012).

This dissertation proposes that the Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism provides a strong foundation for the further development of multicultural policy in Australia. Through its conceptual understanding of multiculturalism as democratic pluralism, the Charter establishes multiculturalism as a policy which is concerned with the needs of all the people of Australia. The Charter aims to create a society of respect and equality of opportunity where individuals share a sense of common membership of a socio-political community (Western Australia. Department of Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs 2004). Education may also be a useful agent for changing any remaining negativity towards non-English speaking background migrants and minority groups.

Currently, multiculturalism is inadequately acknowledged in the Social Inclusion Agenda, and Australia's Multicultural Policy lacks substance and funding to enhance social cohesion and fulfil policy initiatives. The socioeconomic and political disadvantages faced by many migrants and minority groups indicate that there is a need for stronger links between the Social Inclusion Agenda, the multicultural policy, and other key policy areas in terms of multiculturalism and ensuring equality of opportunities for all Australians. By addressing the shortcomings of multiculturalism in Australia, it may be possible to ensure social harmony and equality of opportunity for every individual in Australia.

5.3 Lessons from the Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism

The Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism envisions 'A society in which respect for mutual difference is accompanied by equality of opportunity within a framework of democratic citizenship' (Western Australia. Department of Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs 2004, 5). The Charter recognises the challenges posed by the concept of multiculturalism, such as the range of definitions that are associated with multiculturalism. Other challenges posed by the concept of multiculturalism include the perception that multiculturalism is only concerned with certain cultural or ethnic groups and the notion that multiculturalism leads to special treatment of certain minority groups. The Charter also recognises that the 'hard' understanding of multiculturalism, the lack of recognition of the unique status of the Aboriginal community, and the belief by some in society that societal unity is only possible with cultural uniformity have also posed challenges for multiculturalism. There is also a lack of appreciation that the needs of indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities may be different. Conceptually, multiculturalism has posed challenges for our society and the Charter recognises these challenges and attempts to propose solutions to enhance multiculturalism at the policy level in order to restore lost public confidence and support. The Charter's purpose is to acknowledge linguistic, religious and ethnic diversity and to promote the democratic participation of all Western Australians in an inclusive society.

The Charter states that '...democratic pluralism recognises difference as a hallmark of democracy, both at an institutional and individual level' (Western Australia. Department of Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs 2004, 2). According to the Charter, by taking into account the varying needs that arise from democratic pluralism, it is necessary to adopt varied approaches to ensure that every individual can participate fully in society. Citizenship is articulated as a status which bestows rights and responsibilities upon individuals, and a practice which refers to the rules that govern relationships between every individual and their relationship with the state. Structural barriers, such

as socioeconomic and cultural barriers, can inhibit the practice of citizenship. The Charter is intended to facilitate a cohesive and inclusive society which is based on mutual respect between groups and individuals, the removal of barriers which inhibit participation, and the acknowledgement of difference while emphasising a sense of community membership and common civic culture. An important aspect of the Charter is also the recognition of the rights and responsibilities of Aboriginal people as the first peoples of Western Australia. According to the Charter, despite that formal citizenship gives individuals certain rights, it does not guarantee that those rights will be exercised by every individual. The Charter aims to ensure that every individual is aware of their rights as citizens.

5.4 The Future of a Multicultural Australian Society

The Howard Government's approach to multiculturalism and immigration led to a notion that multiculturalism in Australia was dead. That government had distanced itself from multiculturalism by reduced multicultural programmes, abolishing key immigrant research bodies and even renaming the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to omit the term 'multiculturalism' from its title (Clyne and Jupp 2011, 191; Jupp 2011). Overseas by 2005, elections in Canada and New Zealand led to governments less sympathetic to multiculturalism and two of Britain's representatives to the European Union had influenced the British government to express similar concerns about multiculturalism. Islamic fundamentalism became a major concern and had the effect of distorting public opinions and official debate on multiculturalism. Although critics were already arguing in 2005 that multiculturalism in Australia had ended, the state and territory governments were Labor-controlled and continued a strong commitment to multiculturalism.

Despite shifts in power at the regional government level in Australia, Labor was elected to government in 2007 which saw a return to a more overt multicultural policy. The return to multiculturalism, however, has been considered as being less vigorous, lacking substance and

funding, than the multicultural policies prior to the Howard Era. The restoration of the Federal ministry portfolio of Multicultural Affairs has been criticised by political commentator Mark Lopez as being symbolic rather than substantial, as multiculturalism is so embedded in government policies that it is virtually impossible to remove it anyway (Hall 2012). Nevertheless, the 2011 launch of the new Australian multicultural policy and the restoration of the office of Minister for Multicultural Affairs in 2012, the first time this portfolio has existed since it was abolished by Howard in 2007, signifies a more overt commitment to multicultural Australia at the Commonwealth level.

The diversity present in Australian society means that multiculturalism will not disappear. The Commonwealth Government cannot dictate cultural variety, use of languages and associations of Australians, as well as those who wish to retain links with their homeland and/or relatives outside Australia. The practise of religions is also protected in Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act (Cth) s.116. Acculturation of ethnic minorities is occurring, and is inevitable, as a result of intermarriage between people from different backgrounds as well as shifts away from using languages other than English over generations. This acculturation is not assimilation, however, as acculturation refers to shifts in language use and affiliation with country of residence instead of origin. While acculturation will occur over generations, the diversity of society will continue and will provide a continued rationale for multiculturalism.

Religion can have the effect of causing individuals to marry within their religious community, though this also does not necessarily mean that partners will be of the same ethnicity. For example, 2011 Census data has shown that many Australians who affiliate with a Christian religion are in fact migrants. Australian laws are not specifically based on Christian principles, however they may sometimes embody such principles. There is frequent reference to 'Judeo-Christian' ethic and heritage in social discourse, however there is little reference to other faiths that make up the diverse Australian society. An example is the Muslim community who subscribe to the Judeo ethics of the

Old Testament (Fozdar et al. 2009, 204; Clyne and Jupp 2011, 195) and believe that their religion is derived from the same Abrahamic roots as the Jewish and Christian faiths. Islam is a non-Christian religion, yet it is considered an article of faith for Muslims to believe in what are considered to be holy books (the Torah, Bible and Psalms); and the Judeo-Christian prophets including Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (British Broadcasting Corporation 2011; Qur'an 2:136, 3:3). In fact, Jesus is mentioned by name five times more often in the Qur'an than Muhammad, while Christians are described as being the 'nearest in affection' to Muslims (Qur'an 5:82). However, critics who talk of Islamic fundamentalism and warn against the dangers of increased Muslim migration are unlikely to discuss the commonalities in beliefs and values between Islam and other religions. Post-multiculturalism discourse, such as a focus on the threat of Islamic fundamentalism, detracts from the widely accepted and practiced attributes of most Australian citizens, such as adhering to the rule of law, democratic processes, and gender equality.

The failure of anti-multiculturalism figure Pauline Hanson (Fozdar et al. 2009, 207) to return to Parliament in 2007, having garnered merely 4.19% of first-preference Senate votes in Queensland, may indicate that Australians are increasingly becoming tolerant and open to 'the different' (Australian Electoral Commission 2007). The so called 'post multicultural' era exists due to concerns about multiculturalism yet in Australia multicultural policy appears to be experiencing a rejuvenation as a result of changes in governments and policy initiatives. However, more can be done to realise the full potential of multiculturalism to ensure continued social harmony and the guarantee of equality of opportunity. The Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism provides a strong basis for making key policy agenda responsive to the needs of all Australians, including minorities, and restore public confidence in multiculturalism. An adoption of the Charter at the Commonwealth Government level may ensure that key policy agenda fosters the full participation and equal opportunity of all the people of Australia.

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