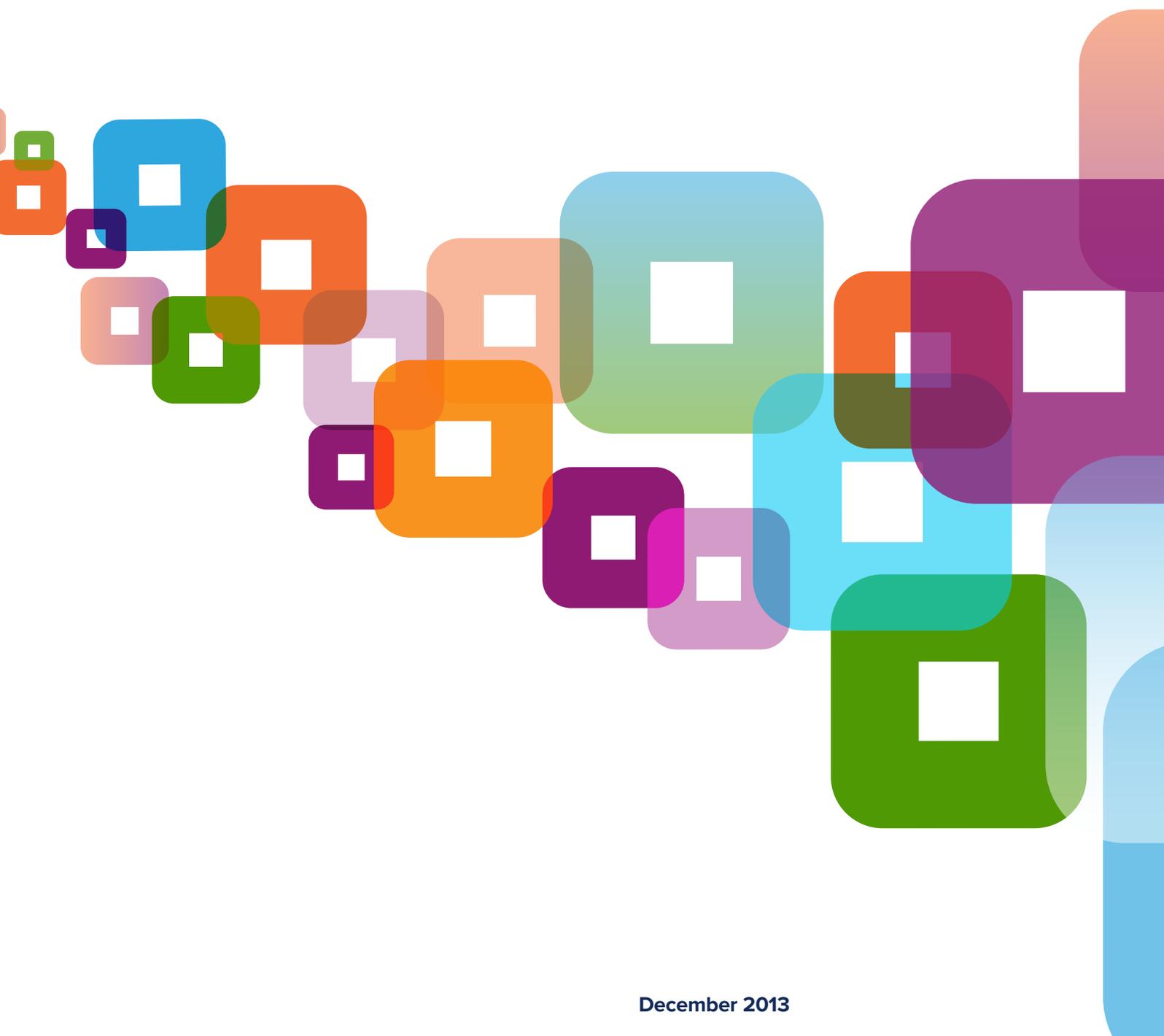




Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Local Government and Communities**  
Office of **Multicultural Interests**

# Strategic Plan 2014–18

Consultation Report



December 2013





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# Executive summary

**The Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) was established in 1991 in response to the growing cultural diversity of the State. Successive strategic plans have guided OMI's work. The current plan covered the period 2009–2013. OMI is now developing its new Strategic Plan 2014–18.**

Development of the strategic plan involved:

- release of a discussion paper and an invitation for written submissions
- two online surveys—one for the general public and the other for young people
- four consultation forums—one targeting representatives of culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities and non-government organisations, one for business and industry groups, one for young people and another with the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests Multicultural Advisory Council.

Approximately 190 organisations and individuals contributed to the consultation process.

A review of international and national literature to inform the development of the strategic plan identified the following three key issues which provided a focus for the consultation:

- Managing 'super diversity'—the need to address settlement needs of various migrant cohorts from an increasing number of countries, as well as second and third generation and established CaLD communities, and specific groups such as youth, seniors and people with disability

- Social cohesion—the challenge of ensuring all community members feel they belong, share a commitment to Australia, participate in education, training and employment and have the opportunity to contribute to civic and political life
- Economic and social benefits—the importance of promoting the benefits of cultural diversity and encouraging the business sector and wider community to value and maximise its potential, particularly within a global economy.

The review also sought feedback in relation to OMI's vision, work and priorities.

## Managing 'super diversity'

A range of settlement needs was identified for skilled migrants, humanitarian entrants and international students. For skilled migrants, these related to employment, access to information and support to deal with socio-cultural stressors and language support. For humanitarian entrants, nine key issues were identified: housing, employment, language (English language and access to interpreters), health, integration, settlement services, education, family support and transport. Settlement needs for international students included social inclusion (such as accessing support networks and services, and interaction with the wider community), housing, finance, life skills, English language skills and support both during and after studies.

Concerns were also raised regarding the level of support for people on protection visas and in community detention.



Many issues identified as longer term needs were similar: access to affordable and appropriate housing, employment and education, transport, ongoing English language training, and access to interpreters and translated information. Other issues were support for specific groups, such as new and emerging community groups, young people, seniors and people with disability, health, racism, engagement in culture and arts activities and access to complaint mechanisms.

The consultation also sought feedback in relation to issues facing second and third generation and established CaLD communities. The dominant issue related to social inclusion and full participation in society and the need to address racism, discrimination, negative media, misinformation and misperceptions that have an adverse impact on levels of integration and community acceptance. Other issues related to loss of English language proficiency in the ageing process, social isolation experienced by some women, particularly those who may not have had the opportunity to learn English, family challenges including intergenerational issues, ongoing issues relating to health and the need to increase levels of civic participation.

The consultation identified specific issues in relation to young people, people with disability, older people and carers as well as gender-based issues.

## **Social cohesion**

Feedback indicated that many people considered that there was a need to increase the feeling of belonging to the broader Australian community

among some groups. It was suggested that the basis for exclusion is generally considered to be visual difference, religion, language and custom.

Most people believe that achieving a sense of belonging requires a two-way process involving both members of CaLD communities and the wider community. It also requires both individual and institutional responses. Examples of individual actions were treating people with respect and being friendly. Institutional responses included improving the cultural sensitivity of mainstream agencies and encouraging intercultural interaction.

The consultation identified three key mechanisms to assist people to balance and embrace multiple identities: civic education and participation, individual and institutional cultural awareness, and promotion and celebration of cultural diversity.

Suggestions for ways to support culture maintenance related to access to resources and facilities, support for public events and cultural celebrations, formal and informal education, and public acknowledgement and promotion of cultural diversity through the media.

It was noted that, in order to meet their communities' needs, it was necessary for both CaLD community groups and mainstream organisations to develop skills and competencies, and for information, resources and infrastructure to be available.

## Economic and social benefits

The consultation identified education, media, public champions and events as ways to promote the benefits of cultural diversity. It was suggested promotion should focus on ‘humanising’ cultural diversity—through case studies, entertaining human interest stories and highlighting the achievements of individuals and groups. It was also suggested that promotion could include migrants’ work ethic, the income generated, business and industry benefits through the introduction of new products and services, and re-positioning attitudes and perceptions to cultural diversity by imagining what Australia would be like if migrants from so many parts of the world had not come here to live.

Two key suggestions emerged in relation to increasing the contributions made by CaLD communities:

- ▣ supporting migrants to settle, gain work and develop their skills to build their individual capacity
- ▣ capitalising on the economic and business opportunities offered by cultural diversity.

## OMI’s vision, work and priorities

The consultation outcomes indicated that OMI has an important role in proactively shaping a positive discourse on multiculturalism and promoting outcomes that help achieve the potential of multiculturalism in Western Australia. The current vision was generally considered comprehensive and few changes were suggested.

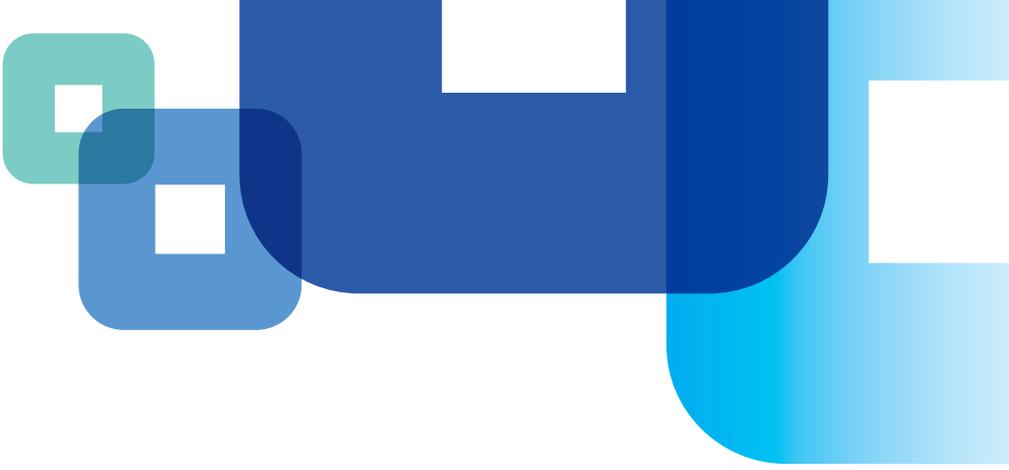
There was appreciation of the role OMI plays in advocating on behalf of Western Australia’s CaLD communities and encouraging agencies to be responsive to the needs of a culturally diverse society. It was considered that OMI has a role in:

- ▣ building the capacity of communities to maintain their cultures and address their diverse needs
- ▣ connecting diverse groups to encourage respect and understanding
- ▣ promoting the benefits of Western Australia’s cultural and linguistic diversity
- ▣ supporting the development of culturally inclusive policies, programs and services
- ▣ encouraging and facilitating participation by CaLD communities in social, economic, cultural and civic activities.

OMI’s role in these areas was seen as an ‘enabler’—providing information, advice, training and support, and encouraging and facilitating partnerships and collaboration between CaLD communities, government and non-government agencies and the wider community.

Importantly, the consultation suggested that young people consider multiculturalism to be part of an ideal Western Australia and that individuals and the State as a whole have much to benefit from its cultural diversity.

It is evident that achieving the full potential of multiculturalism requires strategies that include the whole community including business and industry groups, government agencies and the wider community, as well as CaLD communities.



# Background

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**The Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) was established in 1991 in response to the growing cultural diversity of the State. Successive strategic plans have guided OMI's work. The current plan covered the period 2009–2013. OMI is now developing its new Strategic Plan 2014–18.**

The 2011 Census indicated that almost one-third (31%) of the WA population was born overseas. Of these, 14 per cent were born in a non-main English speaking country. A quarter (25%) of Western Australians nominated a non-main English speaking country as their primary ancestry.

In 2011, 14.7 per cent of Western Australians spoke a language other than English at home (an increase from 12% in 2006). There was also an increase in the number of people identifying as: having no religion (23% to 26%), Buddhist (1.8% to 2.1%), Muslim (1.4% to 1.8%) and Hindu (0.4% to 0.9%).

In 2011, the top 10 non-main English speaking countries of birth were: India, Malaysia, Italy, the Philippines, China, Singapore, Vietnam, Germany and Indonesia.

The top 10 languages other than English spoken at home were: Italian, Mandarin, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Afrikaans, Indonesian, German, Tagalog and Spanish.

A review of international and national literature suggests that there have been three major themes dominating discussion of multiculturalism in recent years that are relevant to Western Australia:

- ▣ the emergence of 'super diversity'
- ▣ maintaining social cohesion
- ▣ maximising the economic and social benefits of cultural diversity.

OMI sought feedback in relation to these issues in developing its Strategic Plan 2014–18.



# Promotion

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## **The opportunity to provide input into the strategic plan was promoted in several ways:**

- letters were sent to State Government and selected Australian Government agencies, and non-government organisations (NGOs)
- e-invitations to consultations were sent to selected business and industry groups
- email alerts were sent to ethnic organisations listed on the OMI database, State Government and selected Australian Government agencies, and NGOs
- the discussion paper and online surveys were advertised on the OMI website
- the Office for Youth sent emails and a consultation e-invitation to its networks and placed information on its Facebook page
- community service announcements were sent to local radio stations and diary items sent to community newspapers
- information was promoted to student networks through the University of Western Australia Facebook page and Guild E-newsletter, and to students at other WA universities through their student guilds and international student associations
- the Chamber of Commerce and Industry promoted the business consultation through its e-newsletter
- the Committee for Perth included information regarding the business consultation on its Facebook page
- promotional flyers were sent to selected libraries and State Government schools, and to various OMI networks.



# Respondents

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**Approximately 26 State Government agencies, eight local governments, 31 non-government organisations (NGOs), 14 community groups, 10 for-profit companies and 90 other individuals contributed to the consultation process. As a number of organisations were represented by more than one person, it is estimated that around 190 people were involved. A list of contributors through each consultation mechanism is provided in the appendix.**

## Written submissions

Twenty written submissions were received, from 12 State Government agencies, two local governments, five NGOs and one private company.

## General online survey

Eighty-one respondents completed the general online survey. Of these, 79 identified whether they were responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation. Of the 53 responding as an organisation, two-thirds provided the name of their organisation. Of these, 12 (33%) were State Government agencies, 12 (33%) were NGOs, four (11%) were local governments and eight (22%) were ethno-specific community organisations. Individuals were not asked to identify themselves.

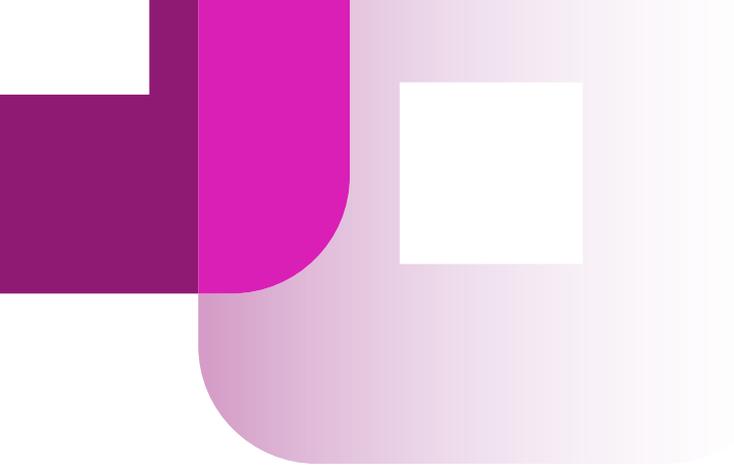
Age was the only demographic information requested. Nineteen of the 26 individuals (73%) provided this information. Nine (47%) were aged between 25 and 44 years. Six (32%) were aged over 65 years. One person (5%) was aged between 20 and 24 years.

## Youth online survey

Sixty-one respondents completed the youth online survey with the majority (85%) aged between 15 and 24 years. The majority (75%) were born in Australia and 16% in a non-English speaking country. Countries of birth included Pakistan, Iran, Poland, France, Zimbabwe and Tonga. Of the 14 people born outside Australia, five had lived in Australia for more than 10 years, three for between five and 10 years, three for between two and five years and three for less than two years.

Eighteen respondents (30%) indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home. Languages spoken were Arabic, Bengali, Dutch, Finnish, Hindi, Italian, Malay, Mandarin, Pashto, Persian, Polish, Punjabi, Serbo-Croatian, Tongan, Urdu, Yawuru and Zulu.

Respondents indicated multiple ancestries. Nearly 80 per cent identified English speaking ancestries—Australian (56%), English (44%), Scottish (18%), Irish (16%) and New Zealand (11%). The most common non-English speaking ancestry was Italian (11%), Indian (11%), Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (9%) and German (7%). Other ancestries were Armenian, Afghan, Chinese, Danish, French, Indonesian, Iranian, Malaysian, Polish, Pakistani, Spanish, Timorese, Tongan, Uzbek and Zimbabwean.



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## Consultation forums

Four consultation forums were held, facilitated by Ms Renu Burr from The Nexus Network. They attracted a total of 69 attendees:

- Ten people participated in the consultation with the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests' Multicultural Advisory Council at Dumas House, West Perth, on Monday 14 October 2013.
- Twenty-five people attended a consultation with business and industry groups at Central Institute of Technology, East Perth, on Wednesday 16 October 2013. Mr Ryan Buckland, Senior Economist, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Marion Fulker, Chief Executive Officer, Committee for Perth, made presentations. A copy of Ms Fulker's presentation, 'The role of migration in a bright future for Perth' is available on the Committee for Perth website: <http://www.committeeforperth.com.au/newsPresentationsSpeeches.html>.
- Fourteen people participated in a consultation for young people at the Northbridge Community Centre on Thursday 24 October 2013. Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator at the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka, made a short presentation.
- Eighteen people attended a community consultation at the Herb Graham Recreation Centre, Mirrabooka, on Saturday 26 October 2013.

Nine young people attended a supplementary youth consultation held with members of the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Youth Leadership Group on Friday 15 November 2013.



# Feedback

## SUPER DIVERSITY

Western Australia is now experiencing ‘super diversity.’ The cultural diversity of the population now comprises people who:

- entered through different migration programs
- came from an increasingly diverse range of countries
- are first, second or third generation Australians
- differ according to age, gender and (dis)ability.

More than two-thirds of permanent residents migrate to Western Australia through Australia’s Skilled Migration Program. The remainder enter through the Family Migration Stream and Humanitarian Program. Temporary migrants come as international students and short-term workers. The State also hosts asylum seekers in community detention or on bridging visas while their refugee status is determined, although the Australian Government is responsible for their support.

The source countries for each of the major migration streams are different, which adds to the State’s cultural diversity.

Increased diversity challenges government agencies to ensure that their policies and services respond to their changing client base and ensure that all residents are able to make economic, social, cultural and political contributions to the State. This relates not only to human service agencies but also to those planning and designing the State’s infrastructure.

The consultation sought feedback in relation to the:

- most important settlement needs of migrants to Western Australia in the first five years after arrival for permanent skilled migrants, temporary skilled migrants (for example, subclass 457 visa holders), humanitarian entrants and any other groups
- longer term needs of these groups
- main issues facing established CaLD communities (including second and third generations)
- issues facing particular groups, such as women, men, young people, seniors or those with disability.

## SETTLEMENT NEEDS

### Skilled migrants

The consultation identified a need to address a range of settlement issues that were common to both permanent and temporary skilled migrants. One of these was access to stable and affordable housing. Others were:

- employment issues
- access to information and networks
- language
- socio-cultural stressors.

#### 1. Employment issues

The consultation identified concerns regarding the extent to which skilled migrants gained ‘full and meaningful’ employment commensurate with their qualifications and skills. Concerns were also raised regarding the actions of some migration agents—particularly those who misrepresented migrants’



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skills and adversely affected their employment options once in Australia.

It was noted that lack of Australian work experience is a barrier to permanent skilled migrants obtaining work in their field of expertise. While volunteer work was one way to obtain this, it was thought that it could be constrained by legislation such as the *Fair Work Act* and WorkSafe requirements.

Concerns were raised regarding employers' lack of trust in qualifications and skills gained overseas. Concerns were also raised regarding the impact of this on a person's wellbeing, particularly given the additional socio-cultural stresses inherent in the migration and settlement process.

The value of a skilled migration program that enables migration to Australia on the basis of occupation but doesn't facilitate or support people's efforts to gain work in their profession was questioned.

The need for skilled migrants to be up-skilled to facilitate career progression was also identified, both to retain employees and to maximise their potential contribution.

Participants commented on a lack of cultural awareness among some employers, exploitation of 457 visa holders and the importance of access to complaints processes without fear of retribution (such as forced return to their country of origin). The need for clear and accessible support to protect temporary workers employment conditions was identified.

Suggestions to address some of these issues were:

- ▣ widespread promotion of the benefits of a diverse workforce and targeted promotion of migrants' skills to business
- ▣ specialised migrant employment services
- ▣ work experience opportunities—possibly facilitated by professional associations; or a HECS-type scheme through which government subsidises work experience
- ▣ cultural awareness training for employers including practical training prior to recruitment of 457 visa holders
- ▣ 'buddying' and mentoring programs to support workers
- ▣ provision of support for workers outside the workplace including facilitating connections between migrants and members of the wider community.

## 2. Access to information

Concerns were expressed regarding skilled migrants' access to information. Participants at the business and community consultation suggested that some employers exploit migrants' lack of knowledge about their rights and conditions of work. It was also suggested that some employers restrict employees' access to information in order to exploit them and that small business operators might not be aware of employee rights and employer responsibilities.



It was suggested that:

- ▣ information be centralised and advertised through a range of mechanisms such as social and ethnic media
- ▣ an effort should be made to increase employers' knowledge of their responsibilities and to ensure that employees understand their visa conditions.

A range of information was identified as important to facilitate settlement:

- ▣ employment rights—for example, in relation to superannuation, leave entitlements and redundancy/redeployment support
- ▣ visa conditions—for example, the right of a person who enters through an employer-sponsored visa stream to change their employer
- ▣ eligibility for government services such as Medicare and family assistance
- ▣ legal rights and responsibilities including taxation requirements
- ▣ English language training courses
- ▣ education and training pathways and overseas qualifications recognition processes
- ▣ occupational licensing or registration
- ▣ how to find a job
- ▣ housing, schools, child care, medical care and counselling services including:
  - ▣ the services that holders of various visas are eligible to access
  - ▣ assistance provided by employers as part of their obligations
- ▣ support available within the community including access to ethno-specific organisations.

### 3. Support to deal with socio-cultural stressors

The socioeconomic stressors that impact on migrants and the effect they have on migrants' wellbeing and productivity were highlighted.

These included:

- ▣ a sometimes hostile reception from the wider community, partly due to the asylum seeker debate
- ▣ separation from family
- ▣ restrictions on family resettlement
- ▣ low salaries and high costs of living resulting in limited disposable income
- ▣ expectations of remittances to families in their country of origin
- ▣ social isolation leading to poor mental health
- ▣ limited access to familiar food
- ▣ disruption within the family, for example, supporting the adjustment of spouses and children to a new environment.

It was noted that many employers are not aware of these stress factors and that there is limited support available to migrants. Concerns were raised that none of the three levels of government are taking responsibility for addressing these issues.

Suggestions to address some of these issues included:

- ▣ welcoming messages for skilled migrants
- ▣ a specific settlement support service for permanent and temporary skilled migrants and their families

- ▣ inductions to Australian life
- ▣ mentoring or ‘buddy’ programs
- ▣ links to religious and other community support networks and volunteering opportunities
- ▣ arts and cultural events to promote inclusion.

#### 4. Language support

It was noted that, while the majority of primary visa holders have an adequate level of English language proficiency (to meet visa and workplace requirements), this is not necessarily the case for their dependants. Key needs in relation to language were access to:

- ▣ affordable and accessible English language classes
- ▣ accredited and/or qualified interpreters—concerns were raised regarding the number of interpreters available in relevant languages and the availability of interpreting training in the State.

#### Humanitarian entrants

Nine key settlement needs for humanitarian entrants were identified. These related to housing, language, employment, health, education, family support, integration, settlement services and transport.

#### 1. Housing

Access to affordable, appropriate and stable housing was a key issue of concern, particularly given current high rental costs, the length of the waiting list for public housing, discrimination in the private housing market and the overcrowding resulting from shared housing (particularly in the case of large families). It was noted that lack of

appropriate accommodation can have negative health impacts.

Strategies suggested to address the issue were:

- ▣ an extended rental pathways program to assist those in transitional accommodation or those on the public housing waiting list
- ▣ increasing government housing assistance to match market rents
- ▣ capping rent, as is the case in the United Kingdom and Germany
- ▣ increasing public housing stock, particularly to accommodate larger families
- ▣ releasing more land for housing.

#### 2. Employment

Employment was recognised as a critical factor in successful settlement. The consultation identified a need for support to:

- ▣ find work, such as how to write a resume and how to look for and apply for a job
- ▣ gain recognition of qualifications and skills gained overseas
- ▣ develop training and skills to increase peoples’ job opportunities.

The submission from the Great Southern Development Commission suggested that case work assistance could be provided to match unskilled migrants with work. It was noted that opportunities appear to exist in seasonal agricultural work such as seeding, harvesting and tree planting as well as domestic and commercial gardening and cleaning.



### 3. Language

Language issues were also frequently raised. These related to English language training, interpreting services and the availability of information in appropriate formats, including translated information.

#### 3.1 English language training

Issues relating to English language training included the need for:

- conversational English language classes to facilitate communication in the workplace and in social settings
- entry-level English language training to support vocational education and training (VET) and other learning opportunities
- increased access to affordable childcare to enable women to attend English language classes
- delivery of English language classes according to individual need rather than predetermined hours, as is the case with the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)
- increased access to English language classes for people in community detention.

It was suggested that a structured, practical, English conversation program could be developed that could be run by volunteers in any organisation.

#### 3.2 Interpreting provision—supply and quality

Issues raised related to the provision of interpreters, the availability (supply) of interpreters and the availability of training to ensure quality service provision.

A number of concerns were raised in relation to the extent to which interpreters are provided in the health sector. Examples of comments were:

*... instances where hospital staff have relied on family members to translate information for the patient. This is inconsistent with WA Health's Language Services Policy which requires that a qualified interpreter be utilised to communicate clinical information to the patient or to the patient's carer.<sup>1</sup>*

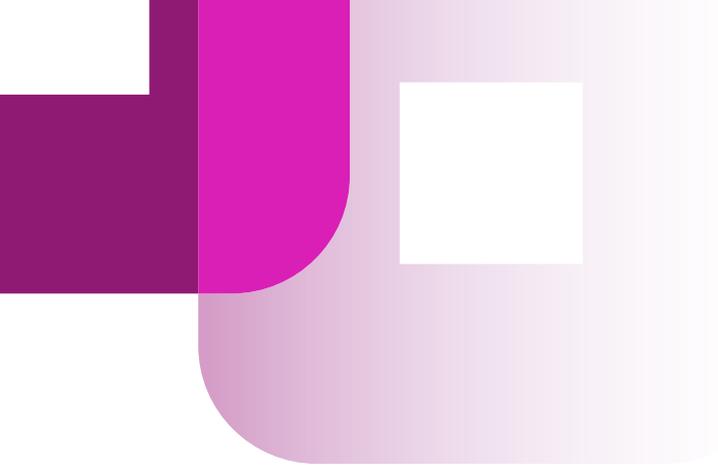
*Miscommunication between patients, their family carers and medical staff have been identified as a potential safety and quality issue, with even higher risks posed to patients who require the use of interpreters.<sup>2</sup>*

*The incidence of misunderstanding between clinicians and patients was significantly higher when family members were used as interpreters. Carers WA—written submission*

*... interpreters by medical and nursing/midwifery staff is about 30% leaving 70% of interactions unsupported by interpreters. Informed consent cannot be taking place in these episodes of care, not to mention distress and potential negative health outcomes due to lack of understanding between patient and carer. Community Midwifery WA—general online survey*

1 WA Health, 2011, Language Services Policy, <http://www.health.wa.gov.au/CircularsNew/attachments/606.pdf>

2 Iedema, R and Manidis, M, 2013, *Patient-Clinician Communication: An Overview of Relevant Research and Policy Literatures*, Sydney: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care and UTS Centre for Health Communication.



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Carers WA also highlighted the issue in relation to emergency situations, including ambulance services, and the need for medical staff to ensure that both the patient, their family and/or carers understand procedures.

A need to increase access to interpreters by general practitioners (GPs) and pharmacists was also highlighted.

It was noted that there is a need to increase people's knowledge about how to access and work with interpreters, including taking privacy and confidentiality into account in the selection of interpreters, particularly in small communities.

### **3.3 Interpreter supply and quality**

The availability of interpreters and access to interpreter training to ensure quality service provision was highlighted in written submissions and the business and community consultation. Issues raised included:

- the importance of well-trained interpreters—including availability of tertiary training, affordable professional development opportunities and training in specific fields such as health
- the need to address issues that may prevent people entering and remaining in the profession, including:
  - limited job security for interpreters—for example, changing interpreters' status from 'casual' or 'sessional' to 'part-time'; and career paths for those employed by agencies such as the Department of Health
  - improving remuneration levels to encourage more people to enter and stay in the profession.

## **4. Health**

A range of issues were raised in relation to health (including mental health and disability). These related to the need for:

- health literacy—not only access to health information but also strategies that raise awareness of the determinants of health and engage individuals and communities in activities that promote good health
- access to health services, particularly general practitioners (GPs) who bulk bill
- service 'hubs' to improve access to service provision and facilitate collaboration between providers
- cultural competency among health care professionals—including greater education and awareness among GPs and medical students regarding the physical and mental health conditions of refugees
- programs to avoid or overcome social isolation as this can contribute to mental illness
- support to deal with mental health issues including psycho-social adjustment and the effects of torture and/or trauma (this was raised as a concern in relation to both adults and young people).

## **5. Integration**

The need for support to integrate into Australian society was identified.

Edmund Rice Centre Youth Leadership Group members highlighted the challenges of the acculturation process for their communities, noting the isolation and conflicts that can result, together with a sense of 'not belonging'.



Members noted that it ‘takes time to adjust’ and that it is important to accept that this will happen but suggested that providing opportunities for people to get to know one another could ease the process.

Many contributors observed that integration is a two-way process and suggested that it is important both for people to be supported in the acculturation process and for the wider community to learn about the cultures of different groups and to accept and respect those from other cultures.

Other ideas to support integration included:

- education for new migrants regarding issues such as:
  - Australia’s laws and the justice system
  - Australian society—including the notion of equal rights for men and women, voting and democracy
  - appropriate parenting practices
- supporting communities to share their traditional culture with the wider community
- building relationships to avoid or reduce isolation, for example, through volunteering opportunities, mentoring or ‘buddy’ programs and links to relevant cultural, religious or other community groups
- assisting people from rural backgrounds adjust to life in an urban environment.

## 6. Settlement services

Responses to the question regarding the settlement needs of humanitarian entrants highlighted the heterogeneity of the group and the need for flexibility in service delivery and design

according to region of origin (including whether people come from an urban or rural background), levels of literacy and the nature of their refugee experience. Some generic service needs identified were:

- case management support including assistance to:
  - access housing and medical care and enrol students in schools
  - understand and access entitlements such as Medicare and family assistance
  - identify local agencies, including government and non-government services, understand their roles and the services they provide
  - learn life skills such as bill-paying, banking and use of domestic appliances
- counselling to help deal with the acculturation process including financial stressors, ‘culture shock’, separation from families who remain in the country of origin, and family issues.

Some participants raised concerns regarding current settlement services including:

- that the change from case management support provided by the Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program to the less intensive Settlement Grants Program should be a graduated process
- the need for flexibility in accessing complex case management—it was noted that many humanitarian entrants have exceptional needs that require access to multiple services and that some clients require more assistance than is currently provided by service delivery agencies.

Suggested solutions to these issues were:

- an extension of the HSS
- changing delivery of the SGP so that it is person-centred
- broadening access criteria for the Complex Case Support program.

## 7. Education

Issues relating to education included:

- concerns regarding the financial costs associated with school education
- the need to assist parents to support their children's education
- access and pathways to education for adults
- education for children of humanitarian entrants.

There were two aspects to the issue of education for children of humanitarian entrants. They were the need for:

- educational support for children once they have completed their term at an Intensive English Centre (IEC)
- opportunities for children and young people to explore and test their abilities.

The submission from North Metropolitan Health Service detailed issues relating to the educational needs of young people post-IEC:

*Currently in WA all young humanitarian entrants are offered one year supported intensive English acquisition, which may be increased to an extra 100 hours in some circumstances. Following this, students are placed in mainstream schools in classes corresponding to their chronological age rather than their actual level of development and ability.*

*Hakuta, Buttler and Witt (2000) conducted a study in four school districts in Canada and USA. Based on data from over 10,000 English as Second Language (ESL) students, they concluded that policy provisions of one-year programs of sheltered English were "widely unrealistic" (p 13). Their study also corroborates a body of research and evidence that demonstrates that in optimal circumstances it takes at least four to seven years to gain English proficiency and that this time should be extended considerably for disadvantaged children.*

*Teenage refugees, particularly those with substantial gaps in prior schooling are challenged to fulfil demands of our system including the capacity to speak and perform academically in competence with other native English speaking students. It is not surprising that teachers often find these students withdrawn, aggressive, unable to concentrate, anxious and hyperactive (Coelho 1998).*

*Students may also avoid social interaction for fear of exposing their inability to master the language, affecting their behaviours and their social inclusion. As noted by Cassity & Gow (2006) "The transition from an IEC to high school was perhaps the most troubling period since arriving in Australia ... It seems that successful IEC students often begin high school with great expectations but quickly find themselves unable to cope with the degree of academic "catching up" ... While smart they often do not have the foundation knowledge base (especially in relation to cultural literacy and analytical methods). This was particularly so for older students who made the transition from IEC to year 10.*



Concerns were raised at the community consultation that schools other than IECs lack resources to provide appropriate programs to CaLD young people and that more cross-cultural training and professional development for teachers is needed. It was suggested that two resources currently available in other States could be customised for use in Western Australia—‘Schools in for Refugees’ and ‘Opening the School Gate’.

However, members of the Edmund Rice Centre Youth Leadership Group expressed concerns that assumptions about their ability, based on their refugee backgrounds, could limit their potential in school and contributed to a sense that they were less worthy or less capable than their Australian-born counterparts.

It was suggested that it was important to provide opportunities for children and young people to ‘shine’ at a level higher than expected to dispel these notions and to encourage young people to explore and fulfil their potential.

## 8. Family support

It was noted that families as a whole often need support. Tensions may arise between spouses due to cultural differences in gender roles between Australia and the country of origin. Tensions may also arise between young people and their parents when Australian and traditional cultures conflict. Parenting styles may differ between Australia and a person’s country of origin. It was noted that parents sometimes fear involvement by the Department for Child Protection and Family Support.

While a lack of afterschool and holiday activities was identified, it was noted that this may be an

unfamiliar concept and that, since children already spent a large proportion of their day away from their families, scheduling more time away was disempowering for parents. This highlighted the importance of considering the needs of young people in the context of the family.

The need for family education programs, which bring all members of the family together, was identified.

## 9. Transport

It was noted that many families move to outer suburbs, which lack social and community infrastructure, and that the level of public transport services in these areas make access to services (including schools) difficult. Acquiring a driver’s licence can be a critical factor in securing employment and accessing services.

### International students

Participants raised the following issues regarding international students:

- social inclusion—including accessing support networks and services (such as the Council for International Students, the Department of Education Services), interacting with the wider community through access to community groups, and living with a sense of safety and respect
- housing—access to secure, quality accommodation and awareness of tenants’ rights and responsibilities
- finance—support to manage a high cost of living and education costs

- ▣ life skills—including understanding Australian laws and customs, how to access services including transport and medical services, avoiding ‘risky’ behaviours, dealing with separation from family and living without parental supervision or support
- ▣ protection from ‘scams’—particularly ‘rogue’ training organisations that attract students to short courses which do not provide them with the skills necessary to gain work
- ▣ English language verbal and comprehension levels among international student graduates which impact on their ability to successfully complete their qualification, gain work in their chosen field or achieve success in the workplace
- ▣ concerns that some tertiary institutions are not providing adequate support services
- ▣ lack of post-study settlement support
- ▣ lack of recognition and use of international students’ bilingual and bicultural skills.

Suggestions to address some of these issues were:

- ▣ liaison with the Department of Training and Workforce Development regarding how providers are being registered and monitored
- ▣ tertiary institutions providing counselling and other support services for students
- ▣ promotion of volunteering as a mechanism to implement skills learned, gain experience and make contacts to help find work
- ▣ ‘guide’ and ‘buddy’ programs.

## Other groups

Other groups identified were asylum seekers and people on protection visas. Concerns were raised that:

- ▣ asylum seekers do not receive a health care card and cannot access medication subsidies
- ▣ there is limited support for people on protection visas
- ▣ there is a potential long-term impact of Australian Government policies for people in community detention.

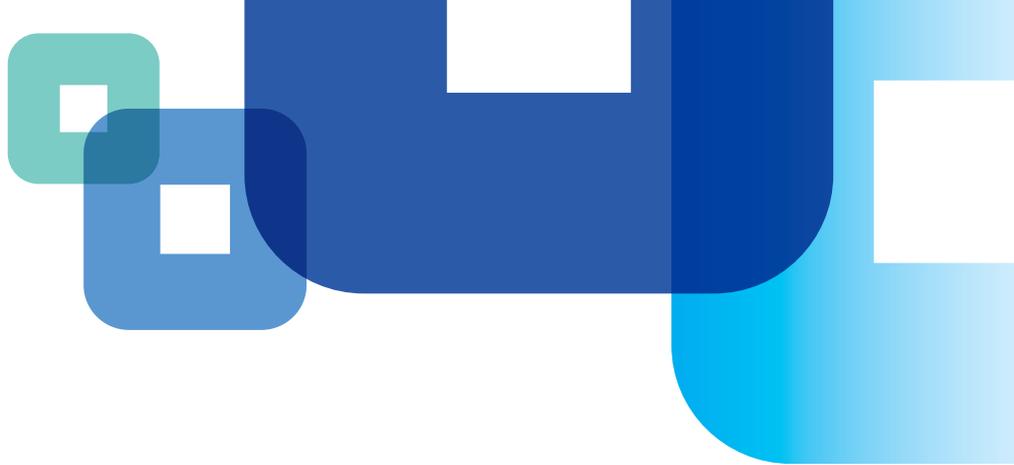
## LONGER TERM NEEDS

Several contributors noted that it should not be assumed that peoples’ needs alter significantly after five years. For example, for humanitarian entrants, the level of support required will differ according to educational background, exposure to torture and/or trauma, familiarity with services and systems (compared with the country of origin), the ease with which English language is learned and the extent to which people have gained confidence and competence in accessing services.

Needs also change with age and specific supports are required across key life stages—for children, teenagers, young adults, parents and seniors.

For many people, the longer term needs are similar to their short-term needs, including:

- ▣ securing affordable and appropriate housing
- ▣ access to long-term, sustainable employment and education opportunities to facilitate employment including bridging courses and apprenticeships and traineeships



- ▣ transport—particularly accessing public transport that is frequent and has direct routes to service delivery locations; and gaining a driver’s licence
- ▣ ongoing language support—it was noted that there is a high need for English language training beyond the AMEP and that many women do not access the AMEP due to childcare responsibilities
- ▣ accessing interpreters and translated information if English language proficiency levels remain low, particularly in health settings (including services delivered in the home)
- ▣ access to information, for example:
  - ▣ availability of relevant services
  - ▣ contacts for ethnic communities
  - ▣ rights-based training—for example, about the right to request an interpreter when receiving government services and the rights of people with disability
- ▣ support for specific groups such as:
  - ▣ new and emerging community groups
  - ▣ young people
  - ▣ ageing community members
  - ▣ people with disability
- ▣ ongoing preventative health education where needed
- ▣ access to culturally appropriate health services—Carers WA noted the importance of involving clients and carers in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of health services in accordance with the *Carers Recognition Act* 2004 and the principles detailed in the *Mental Health Bill 2013*. A number of suggestions were made in relation to actions that could be taken to address some of these issues including:
  - ▣ assisting Medicare Locals with the provision of information regarding CaLD communities
  - ▣ engaging with peak bodies representing community service providers to assist them to embed culturally appropriate and safe methods of engaging with individuals and their family carers regarding decision making and assessment in service provision
  - ▣ promoting increased employment of people from new and emerging communities in health care to ensure a source of bilingual/ bi-cultural workers
  - ▣ promoting the opportunity for people to develop a career as a medical interpreter
  - ▣ encouraging participation by CaLD peak bodies and communities in consultation processes conducted by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
  - ▣ clarifying with ambulance service providers their procedures for working with CaLD patients and their carers
  - ▣ supporting the Mental Health Commission and the Office of Mental Health to meet the standards of the WA Health Language Services Policy.

- access to complaint mechanisms—some people from CaLD backgrounds are less likely to be aware of, or to pursue, formal complaints processes<sup>3</sup> so that families are potentially denied access to recourse, and service providers do not have the opportunity to improve their service delivery as a result of responding to complaints. The submission from Carers WA noted that:

*The Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO) is the Western Australian agency to whom consumers **and carers** can take complaints about their treatment by health, aged care, mental health and disability services. In 2012–13, HaDSCO reported that 20 per cent of complaints received by health providers related to communication, while a further 32 per cent related to Access, Rights, respect and dignity.<sup>4</sup> From the published data, it is not apparent whether the complainants were from a CaLD background although it is possible this data may be available.*

It was suggested that OMI could engage with HaDSCO to promote its services to CaLD communities and strengthen research and data collection mechanisms.

3 Australian Human Rights Commission, 2012, Access and Equity: Inquiry into the responsiveness of Australian Government services to Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse population, AHRC, Sydney.

4 Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO), 2013, Annual Report 2012–2013, available <https://www.hadSCO.wa.gov.au/docs/reports/2012-13/HaDSCO-Annual-Report-print.pdf>

Other issues identified were:

- capacity building for communities—the importance of leadership training and support for communities and individuals to identify and advocate their needs and access necessary services and supports
- countering racism—concerns were raised regarding loopholes in racial vilification legislation that allowed racist articles and letters to be published in the media in the interests of ‘free speech’ and that there needed to be more positive media reporting in relation to multicultural issues
- access to and ongoing engagement in culture and arts activities and opportunities to develop the talents, practice and economic sustainability of creative individuals and organisations within CaLD communities.

The Great Southern Development Commission noted that research has been done on the factors that influence the retention of skilled migrants in regional areas and suggested that this could be collated and reviewed with recommendations made for regional communities and agencies to address the longer term needs of this group.

The majority of comments related to community integration and social inclusion:

- acceptance of cultural diversity by the wider community
- opportunities to engage with the wider community
- feeling part of the wider community while retaining cultural identity



- opportunities to make meaningful contributions to all aspects of life.

Comments included:

*A sense of welcome, belonging and acceptance into the broader Australian community.* Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees—general online survey

*Opportunity to resettle here and not be marginalised, ostracised, human rights respected, their culture better understood.* Shire of Wagin—general online survey

*... acceptance in to the community whilst retaining their own cultural identity and heritage; ongoing employment.* Bunbury Port Authority—general online survey

## **SECOND AND THIRD GENERATION AND ESTABLISHED CALD COMMUNITIES**

The dominant issue relating to second and third generation and established CaLD communities related to social inclusion and full participation in society. Concerns were raised regarding racism, discrimination, negative media, misinformation and misperceptions that have an adverse impact on levels of integration and social inclusion. It was also suggested that there is reluctance among some migrants to adapt to Australian customs.

Comments included:

*Bigotry of some Australians. Racism and discrimination faced in all areas of life leading to inequity of opportunity. Lack of understanding of their needs, culture and perspective.* Australian Red Cross WA—general online survey

*The ‘othering’ of CaLD communities fuelled by de-humanising and separating them from opportunities to be mainstream members of society.’* Individual respondent—general online survey

*Poor integration based often on language, the inability to free themselves of cultural beliefs and way of life that prevents them adapting to the local culture. Local people unable or unprepared to better appreciate differences between cultures.* Shire of Wagin—general online survey

*... Australians may fear what they’re not familiar with so may not be as open to migrants.* Shire of Augusta-Margaret River—general online survey

Strategies to address these issues included:

- providing opportunities for people to exchange information about their cultures
- enabling and supporting members of CaLD communities to maintain and share their culture
- increasing levels of cultural competency and awareness in the wider community
- providing support to CaLD communities to understand Australian laws and systems
- ongoing effort to combat race-based discrimination in areas such as employment, housing, health care, disability support services and education.

Other issues identified included:

- loss of English language proficiency as members of CaLD communities age, leading to increased demand for interpreters and a multilingual workforce

- ▣ social isolation experienced by some women, particularly older women who may not have had the opportunity to learn English
- ▣ family challenges including intergenerational conflict and dealing with the care needs of ageing family members
- ▣ ongoing needs in relation to health, particularly in 'ageing' CaLD communities, disability, education, training and employment
- ▣ a need to increase levels of civic participation—for example, the Western Australian Electoral Commission remarked on high levels of informal votes by CaLD communities and a need to increase communities' knowledge of their voting rights and responsibilities.

## ISSUES FACING PARTICULAR GROUPS

Groups identified with specific needs were young people, seniors, people with disability and carers. Issues were also identified in relation to gender.

### Young people

Feedback in relation to young people was predominantly gathered through the youth online survey and the two youth consultations. Issues were also raised in the general online survey and some written submissions.

#### 1. Youth online survey

Online survey respondents were asked to select the important needs of young people from CaLD backgrounds from a range of options. The most highly rated need was 'having a feeling of belonging' (47.1%), followed by 'education' (27.5%), 'living in a non-racist community' (13.7%) and 'getting a job' (7.8%). Two respondents suggested

alternative needs: 'finding a place in the wider community' and 'family needs'.

Respondents were subsequently asked to identify other needs from the same list. The most common need identified was 'getting a good education' (66%), followed by 'living in a non-racist community' (54%), 'getting a job' (50%) and 'having a feeling of belonging' (42%). Other needs related to the ability to integrate into the wider society, making friends, accessing appropriate support, 'being able to continue their cultural or religious commitments/observances without prejudice from others and within Australian laws' and 'feeling like they are a valued member of society and not separate or segregated because of cultural differences'.

Respondents were asked to select the most important issue facing young people from CaLD backgrounds from a range of options. The most commonly rated issues were 'employment' and 'racism' (each 21.6%) followed by 'education' (19.6%), 'mental health' (13.7%) and 'bullying' (11.8%). Other issues identified were 'religious discrimination', 'health', 'communication' and 'lack of respect'.

Respondents were asked to identify other issues they believed faced young people from CaLD backgrounds. The most commonly identified issue was 'education' (63.3%) followed by 'racism' (61.2%), 'bullying' (61.2%), 'employment' (53.1%), 'mental health' (44.9%) and 'health' (36.7%). Other issues identified were 'communication—verbal and non-verbal, especially if recently arrived', 'general security', 'lack of wider understanding of the



sociopolitical and environmental sphere in their new surroundings' and 'feeling stuck between own and "Australian" culture'.

Feedback from participants at the youth consultations provided more information in relation to issues facing young people. As was the case for the online survey, identity and belonging were key issues. Other issues were: family/intergenerational issues, acculturation, education, language, employment, and alcohol and other drugs.

### 1.1 Identity

Participants at the Northbridge youth consultation highlighted the challenges of maintaining the culture of their country of origin while feeling 'Australian'. While there was a strong desire to feel part of the general community, there was also concern that they might lose their traditions and heritage in the process of forming their new 'Australian' identity. Music and art featured strongly as ways to address this. Other ideas included:

- ▣ identifying role models in the community
- ▣ establishing a day of traditional performances
- ▣ marketing cultural events to mainstream as well as ethnic communities
- ▣ community events to bring people together and break down barriers.

### 1.2 Belonging

Concerns were raised at both youth consultations regarding bullying (including cyber bullying), racism, discrimination and the depression that sometimes resulted from these stressors.

Edmund Rice Centre Youth Leadership members described their personal experiences of racism and the role of stereotypes:

*... people treating you badly because you're different by colour, culture, nationality, accent etc. Also using stereotypes such as 'all black people like chicken', 'all Africans run fast', 'all like watermelon, like fighting/conflicts'.*

*People act like people are different.*

*People treat you bad because you have different colour skin and they say 'you're so black'.*

*Racism—because the western children are not used to having a multicultural country and also history plays a big role in that because in the days black people were looked down on by the white. Now in our days that has changed.*

Members also expressed concerns that teachers sometimes made assumptions regarding the abilities of African students that limited their participation at school. This could negatively impact students' self-esteem and self-confidence.

Suggestions to achieve a sense of belonging and address racism included:

- ▣ being part of a group—for example, through sports and volunteering
- ▣ raising awareness through cultural awareness training sessions and education
- ▣ mental, psychological and emotional support
- ▣ cultural awareness among the wider community including developing peoples' understanding of the historical background of different groups

- ▣ more varied cultural representation in the media, events and information provision
- ▣ links to the community and facilities—participants suggested that it would be helpful to have a database of cultural organisations readily available
- ▣ intercultural communication including sharing cultural events and providing opportunities to share stories
- ▣ celebrating similarities
- ▣ establishing a website and blog similar to the bullying website
- ▣ encouraging young people to raise incidents of bullying with their parents.

### 1.3 Intergenerational issues

Participants at both youth consultations highlighted the tensions that could arise in families between young people and their parents, and the need to mediate between Australian and traditional cultures. Family dynamics could be further disrupted through young people being asked to interpret and translate for their elders.

Comments included:

*Parents wanting you to do things that are from your culture when you want to try something new.*

*Children mentality has changed compared to their parents which leads to a lot of conflict between the two groups. Parents want the children to get used to the western life and also their culture which can be hard.*

*Two different cultures. Choosing between lifestyles. Children have to choose and fit in.*

This issue was also raised at the Multicultural Advisory Council and community consultation and in the general online survey. Suggestions to address the issue included:

- ▣ programs for parents to help them find a balance between their traditional culture and the need for their children to find a place in society—such as parent/teen forums facilitated by an elder and conducted within the community
- ▣ programs to help young people understand their emotions during the teenage years
- ▣ counselling sessions between parents and children mediated by a third party.

### 1.4 Violence

Edmund Rice Centre Youth Leadership Group members expressed concerns about violence in their communities. This related to family/domestic violence and tribal conflicts.

Members raised concerns regarding family violence between husbands and wives, and between parents and children:

*In Africa men act like they own the women and they hit them whenever they want because in Africa they learn that their wife is their property. E.g, child abuse—some people pinch their child for discipline.*

The suggested strategy to address this was to raise awareness of Australian law among both men and women.



Concerns were also raised regarding conflicts between tribal factions within the African community:

*Tribes—gathering all turning against each other. Many tribes that gain more fights and they get familys [sic] from other States to come and join the fight. Weapons—people get hurt like they would get stabbed by the others and also peer pressure = popularity, involvement in fights.*

It was suggested that a way to address the issue would be to gather members of conflicting tribes together to discuss the issue—first the elders, to agree on a solution, and then a meeting with members of the two tribes with a mediator (it was suggested that this person be from government) to ‘talk it out’.

### **1.5 Language**

The ability to communicate and be understood was regarded as critical. Participants noted that sign and body language could overcome communication barriers but recognised that this could be fraught with misunderstandings. It was suggested there was a need to increase the number of English language classes available. One idea was for classes to be held with specific ethnic communities.

### **1.6 Employment**

Participants noted the difficulties many new migrants faced gaining employment in a new society. There was some concern that institutional discrimination could be a factor. Suggestions to maximise job opportunities included both individual and institutional responses. Individual

actions were: being clear about career goals, getting a good education, community service/ volunteering and undertaking training including short courses and apprenticeships.

Institutional actions were: mentor programs, specific youth-focused employment support and implementation of equal opportunity policies by employers.

The Western Australian Council of Social Services also highlighted the importance of alternative education pathways and implementation of evidence-based practices that improve employment outcomes for young people.

### **1.7 Alcohol and other drugs**

Participants were concerned about potential misuse of alcohol and other drugs. Suggestions to address this were:

- health promotion strategies—for example, through social media and schools
- talking about the issue with friends and family members
- addressing social isolation and encouraging young people to make friends and participate in sport, music and other arts activities and cultural events.

### **People with disability**

Issues raised in relation to people from CaLD backgrounds with disability were:

- limited research and data to enable agencies to identify and connect with CaLD people with disability or to guide the development of strategies and programs.

- ▣ lack of culturally appropriate services
- ▣ low rates of access to various disability support services due to:
  - ▣ stigma associated with disability in some cultures
  - ▣ language barriers
  - ▣ lack of information about available services.

Carers WA highlighted the importance of family carers given these issues.

It was also noted that, with the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, it would be vital for:

- ▣ individuals and their families to be confident and supported to advocate for an appropriate level of care
- ▣ providers, when assessing a person's eligibility for formal services, to be aware of the:
  - ▣ potential for people to underestimate the formal services they require
  - ▣ needs of newly arrived migrants and other specific cohorts and to undertake referrals to appropriate supports for both the person with disability and their carer
- ▣ access to information about relevant services to be shared and coordinated between relevant sectors and agencies
- ▣ advocates to participate in decision-making forums on behalf of CaLD consumers and carers and provide feedback to CaLD communities.

It was suggested that OMI could:

- ▣ engage with the Disability Services Commission and the National Disability Insurance Agency to ensure service providers are able to work in a culturally appropriate way with CaLD people with disability and, where appropriate, their family members in a caring role
- ▣ promote the availability of disability and carer services and supports to CaLD communities.

### Older people

Issues relating to older people were highlighted.

It was noted that, by 2021, more than 30 per cent of Australia's older population will have been born outside Australia.<sup>5</sup> Issues raised were the need for:

- ▣ culturally appropriate aged care services including residential care facilities and palliative care
- ▣ holistic support addressing transport, gender and cultural issues for older people
- ▣ interpreting services, particularly in health care environments
- ▣ intergenerational language gaps impacting on family relationships—it was suggested that cross-generational community centres might be a way of encouraging intergenerational understanding
- ▣ availability of age appropriate information in accessible formats
- ▣ isolation of older men—it was suggested that the concept of 'men's sheds' could be explored for this group.

<sup>5</sup> Department Health and Ageing, 2012, *National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy for People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.



It was suggested that OMI:

- engage with peak bodies to ensure staff providing community aged care and working in aged care accommodation facilities are able to provide culturally appropriate services to residents and to support CaLD carers during the transition of the older person from their home in the community to supported accommodation
- engage with relevant agencies to ensure the needs of the carers of older CaLD people are addressed in statewide strategies to support older Western Australians.

## Carers

Carers WA noted that the support provided by family carers of older people and people with disability is critical and raised concerns regarding carers' wellbeing. It was noted that the caring role can be isolating and demanding and that:

- adult carers are less likely to participate in paid employment
- young carers are less likely to complete their education.

To ensure that CaLD carers participate in social and economic activities, appropriate supports are required.

It was suggested that OMI:

- include data on the number of CaLD carers in statistical fact sheets and other research and reports to highlight their existence to government agencies and other service providers

- engage with the Carers Advisory Council and the Department of Local Government and Communities to ensure community awareness raising strategies designed to encourage community and self-identification of carers are appropriate to carers within CaLD communities
- provide advice regarding amendments to the *Carers Recognition Act 2004* to help address barriers to accessing services identified by CaLD carers.

## Gender

'Women' and 'men' were highlighted as groups that could experience particular issues. One that related to both was the cultural differences that can exist in relation to gender roles:

*There are particular issues fac[ing] men and women which relate to cultural differences in gender relationships between country of origin and Australia, some of which are about social norms, some of which are about protections and rights under the law.* Lotterywest—general online survey

*Women generally have different roles in Australia compared with women in refugee migrant communities. This I feel is a large issue. Maybe it is a subject for pre-embarkation and orientation so that women and men from humanitarian backgrounds will be better prepared to embrace the change in roles.* Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka—general online survey

Issues raised for men primarily related to mental health and self-esteem arising from changed gender roles and status in the family.



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Concerns were also raised that older men could become isolated—it was suggested that the concept of ‘men’s sheds’ could be explored for this group.

The main issue relating to women was social isolation. It was noted that some women may be actively discouraged from engaging with people outside the home or specific community. Some women may not have had the opportunity to attend English language classes and lack the language skills that facilitate:

- ▣ communication with people outside the community
- ▣ access to information—including in relation to pregnancy and maternity, legal rights and available services
- ▣ employment
- ▣ self-confidence, self-esteem and mental health.

Concerns were also expressed that:

- ▣ some Muslim women do not access medical care because a female practitioner is not available
- ▣ women are particularly vulnerable to domestic violence, especially those on spousal or 457 visas
- ▣ women who have been separated from children, partners and/or family members during periods of displacement may be emotionally vulnerable
- ▣ some women are discouraged from engaging in sports activities which may have social and health impacts.

## **SOCIAL COHESION**

A cohesive community is one where everyone:

- ▣ feels that they belong and are respected, accepted and included
- ▣ shares a commitment to Australia’s laws, rights and responsibilities
- ▣ can participate in education, training and employment
- ▣ has the opportunity to contribute to civic and political life and to have a say in decisions affecting them.

Social cohesion is achieved by developing peoples’ sense of belonging to a community, encouraging participation and combatting racism and discrimination.

The consultation invited responses in relation to:

- ▣ whether there is a need to increase the feeling of belonging to the broader Australian community among some groups and, if so, how this could be done
- ▣ how to support the maintenance of the unique cultures of Western Australia’s different communities
- ▣ how to assist people to balance their cultural identity with their connection to Australia
- ▣ how to assist CaLD community groups to meet the needs of their communities.



## BELONGING

The general online survey asked respondents whether they believed some people feel excluded from the broader Australian community because of their cultural background. All of the 34 respondents answered in the affirmative.

Respondents to the youth online survey were asked whether they believed some young people feel excluded from the broader Australian community because of their cultural background. Of the 51 respondents to this question, 80 per cent believed that some young people feel excluded 'often' (45.1%) or 'always' (35.1%).

The youth online survey provided reasons for a sense of exclusion, including:

- lack of understanding between groups about each other's cultures
- negative perceptions about certain groups based on stereotypes
- ongoing institutional discrimination.

Comments included:

*Most CALD youth come from territory unfamiliar to most Australians, who don't understand or appreciate their cultural background. Unless you have experienced the culture first hand you find your opinions based on the Media etc. The fact is people are scared of the unknown, if Australian youth and PARENTS become more educated about the other cultures they may treat them differently.*

*... because cultural stereotypes are not broken down amongst young people as much as we would like to think they are. There is still bullying because of*

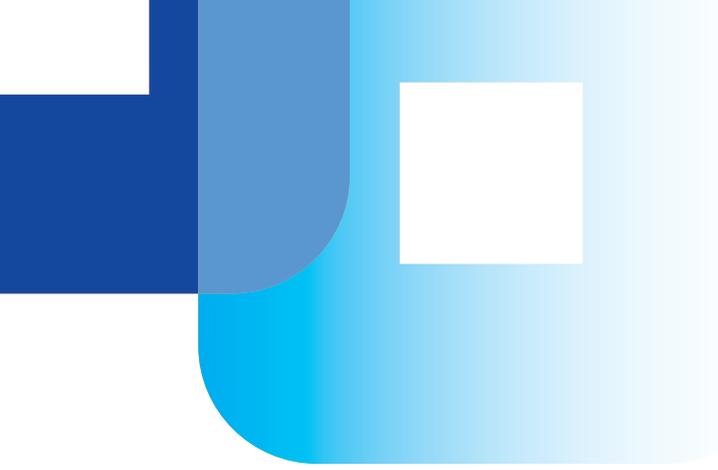
*cultural differences which comes from not understanding and being ignorant of other peoples' cultures. I don't think that is necessarily always at that fault of the individual, it comes down to cultural representations of different cultures in the media and how we have been brought up to look at these differences in our community.*

Youth online survey respondents were asked to identify the groups they believed were most likely to feel excluded. Groups most commonly identified were Asians, Muslims, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, and those with Middle Eastern or Arab, African or Indian backgrounds. The basis for exclusion was generally considered to be visual difference (such as skin colour and clothing), religion, language and custom (such as those who do not drink alcohol or those for whom it is natural to congregate in groups). Comments included:

*A lot of the groups that ancestry is tribal/nomadic because they congregate instinctively and pose a greater threat (which is an illusion, but because we are individual instinctively we don't understand and naturally feel threatened) which includes African, Asian and Middle Eastern cultures ...*

*... anyone who is clearly not white. Regardless of how long your family has lived in Australia and how many generations Australian you are, unless you're white you are assumed to be a recent immigrant and therefore not 'Australian'. AaTSI people have the special spot of being definitively 'Australian', and yet reviled for being so.*

Feedback from all consultation mechanisms indicated that most people believe that achieving a sense of belonging requires a two-way process



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involving both migrants and members of the wider community. This requires both individual and institutional responses. At the institutional level, this requires increasing the cultural sensitivity of mainstream services and at the individual level, enhancing intercultural interaction and understanding. This was encapsulated in the Health Consumers Council submission which noted:

*... as long as an environment is seen as alien and unfriendly people will not feel they belong. In terms of health care, its provision must be accommodating of non-western cultures including, for example, engaging with family members, providing education about service provision in a western context including legalities; medical staff and students require opportunities to develop cultural competence and the ethos of medical practice must recognise and respond to the diversity now existing in WA.*

*In a general sense there needs to be far greater education of the mainstream WA community re migration. As long as politics and media support each other in demonising those seeking asylum, and are allowed to continue to do so, it will be very difficult for people from some backgrounds to feel they are welcomed in this country. Likewise as long as there is no factual publicity around the skills, resilience and positive attributes of migrants (whether they have entered as refugees, asylum seekers or economic migrants) from CaLD backgrounds the general public, for the most part, takes on the political and media perceptions conveyed to them making a sense of belonging increasingly difficult to muster. Therefore a change in political and media commentary is required.*

Written and online submissions also highlighted the importance of strategies to develop an environment that is welcoming of cultural difference and facilitates connectedness and understanding between individuals and groups.

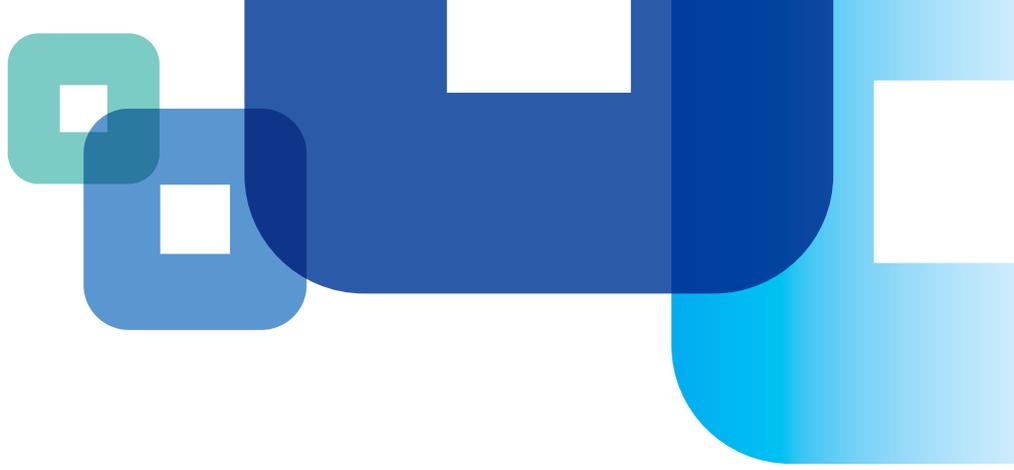
Suggestions for developing a welcoming environment included:

- individual actions such as smiling and saying ‘hello’, treating people with respect and learning some basic greetings in other languages to facilitate interaction from people from different cultural groups
- institutional mechanisms such as:
  - improving the cultural sensitivity of mainstream agencies, including increasing collaboration between CaLD and mainstream organisations to ensure community input into the design and delivery of programs and services
  - introducing policies or legislation requiring government agencies to introduce and implement cultural inclusion plans.

Comments included:

*Australian community can be more welcoming of diverse communities—need to promote the benefits/awareness of integration. Need for positive stories. This is where sport can be used as a vehicle to promote community connectedness and can be applied across cultures. Department of Sport and Recreation—general online survey*

*Education is vital. We have a rather racist culture and we desperately need a good public education program to address our misconceptions and fears about people from other cultures. Community Midwifery—general online survey*



*Government needs to understand the value of and recognise and accommodate cultural diversity of people through active engagement and inclusion by encouraging a strong sense of identity in communities as well as putting in place effective policies and parliamentary acts that combat racism and discrimination.* Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre—written submission

Suggested strategies to facilitate intercultural interaction and understanding included:

- ▣ education—community education programs targeting all segments of the community including business and formal education (from pre-school to tertiary)
- ▣ formal and informal sport and recreation activities
- ▣ arts and cultural events including music and dance events
- ▣ informal events and gatherings—such as ‘encounter days’, morning teas, playgroup, church and neighbourhood activities, and workplace functions
- ▣ inclusion of members of the wider community in cultural celebrations and active engagement of CaLD communities in ‘mainstream’ events such as Australia Day and Melbourne Cup events
- ▣ volunteering and mentoring
- ▣ organised interfaith and intercultural events
- ▣ support for programs undertaken by NGOs that bring individuals, families and communities together with members of the wider community and help develop the skills that enable newly arrived migrants to acculturate, such as the It Takes a Village program (delivered by Save the Children).

Participants at the community consultation suggested that it would also be helpful for governments and other organisations to:

- ▣ publicly recognise the contribution made by migrants to society and the economy
- ▣ recognise support services and programs targeting migrants as an integral part of an immigration program
- ▣ involve communities in organising events—taking into account the risk of ‘consultation fatigue’
- ▣ encourage participation by communities in volunteering outside their communities.

The submission from North Metropolitan Health Service suggested adopting the set of interventions agreed by the Committee of Ministers of the European Union (Recommendation CM/Rec (2011) 1:

1. *Create diverse and improved opportunities for public interaction (including provision of public space).*
2. *Improve skills for interaction among participants.*
3. *Develop improved processes to support and promote positive interactions, including generating wider involvement and providing training for those involved in promoting and enabling this work.*
4. *Promote recognition of migrants’ positive contributions.*
5. *Empower migrants’ participation (and define clearly what they are participating in).*
6. *Consider how existing policies can promote or inhibit interaction while providing flexible, tailored services.*

7. *Ensure that policy makers and practitioners recognise and respect the complexity of diversity when seeking to enable migrants' involvement in wider society, especially when involving them in developing policies, services and interventions.*
8. *Develop policies which make the most of the potential arising from the multiple aspects and/or dimensions of everyone's identity, and which allow for these to change and adapt over time.*
9. *Build stronger networks across diverse groups based on multiple connections and affiliations, both for the public and for practitioners.*

## MAINTAINING CULTURE

Suggestions for ways to support the maintenance of the unique cultures of Western Australia's different communities related to:

- ▣ access to facilities—appropriate and safe spaces and venues for cultural meetings and activities, and places to interact and showcase cultures to the wider community
- ▣ support for public events such as cultural celebrations, festivals and celebratory events—for example, Karen New Year, Eid Al Adhar and Harmony Week
- ▣ access to resources—including funding, training in leadership, organisational and marketing skills
- ▣ promotion of the benefits of cultural diversity, particularly through the media
- ▣ formal and community education:
  - ▣ building community acceptance of and respect for different cultures including through school education and public

acknowledgement of the contributions made by people from CaLD backgrounds

- ▣ educating and supporting CaLD communities regarding Australian culture, traditions and laws
- ▣ support for language programs.

## EMBRACING MULTIPLE IDENTITIES

The consultation identified three key mechanisms to assist people to balance and embrace multiple identities:

- ▣ civic education and participation
- ▣ individual and institutional cultural awareness
- ▣ promotion and celebration of cultural diversity.

### Civic education and participation

It was suggested that pre- and post-arrival education for migrants regarding Australian culture, traditions and law is an important foundation for integration. It was noted that information needs to be provided in accessible formats and delivered in settings conducive to learning and understanding.

It was also suggested that transitional or 'pathway' programs, such as the Edmund Rice Lions program, were useful as a means of supporting groups to maintain their cultural identity while exposing participants to new opportunities within the broader community.

Ongoing civic education and participation was also considered important, for example, encouraging engagement of people from CaLD backgrounds in the electoral process as both voters and candidates.



## Individual and institutional cultural awareness

Development of an environment supportive of cultural diversity was also considered important and involved:

- promoting acceptance and understanding of different cultures, recognising the strengths of different cultures and traditions, and acknowledging similarities as well as differences
- accommodating difference through culturally competent service delivery and culturally appropriate programs.

Typical comments included:

*People need to feel included in this society and frequently they do not due to social exclusion, racism, the fact that service provision and infrastructure here is geared towards such things as nuclear families, that when people wear traditional clothes they can be stared at and mocked. More effort needs to be made to educate the wider community, we need to move away from the notion that only CaLD communities require education in order to accommodate their ability to balance their identity with life here.* Health Consumers Council—written submission

*By giving people ‘permission’ to hold onto their multiple cultural identities, through acceptance by the Australian community ... not dictating that people must ‘balance’ their identities; give them the support, and confidence to navigate this according to their own context.* City of Bunbury—written submission

*Encourage all government agencies to provide cultural diversity training for all staff, for example Diverse WA ... [and] to translate and use interpreters.* Department of Transport—general online survey

## Promotion and celebration of cultural diversity

Celebration of diversity and encouraging pride in people’s different cultural traditions was also considered important. This related to the active promotion of cultural celebrations and public acknowledgement of the contributions made by individual migrants and migration in general.

## BUILDING CAPACITY

It was noted that, in order to meet needs, it was necessary for both CaLD community groups and mainstream organisations to develop skills and competencies and for information, resources and infrastructure to be available.

## Training and support for members of community organisations

Training and support related to formal mechanisms such as training in leadership, governance, and organisational skills and informal mechanisms such as mentoring:

*Mentoring. Leadership training and development. Governance training including grant writing. These need to be done over a sustained period rather than one off events. Maybe a trial system where experienced agencies can be assigned to one particular migrant group to provide mentoring and support.* Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka—general online survey



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The need for training and support for community leaders was highlighted in a number of written submissions, online survey responses and at the community consultation. It was noted that, beyond providing practical leadership within their communities, leaders had the potential to act as, and often fulfilled the role of, ‘cultural champions’ in the context of the wider community and also provided role models for other community members:

*Leaders are often left to carry the load leading to exhaustion and frustration. They also spend their own money on such things as petrol and therefore require more support financially, physically and emotionally.* Health Consumers Council—written submission

### Information, resources and infrastructure

Information, support and infrastructure were identified as ways to assist the building of capacity. This included:

- information about available services and organisations
- places to meet and resources to enable them to demonstrate their culture
- facilitating links between groups and organisations
- access to funding opportunities to:
  - develop skills
  - support access to and/or provision of services such as housing, financial support, employment, education, health and childcare
  - celebrate cultural events and engage in cultural activities.

### Culturally responsive services

For mainstream organisations, the consultation highlighted the need to:

- establish and/or strengthen links with CaLD community groups
- involve CaLD community groups in decision-making processes and the identification of needs, issues and solutions.

Partnerships and collaboration were highlighted:

*CaLD groups are experts in their own experience and this is valuable. However, they may not be experts in navigating Australian systems. Needs are best met when this cultural expertise is partnered with the systemic expertise of social services to deliver culturally appropriate services which best meet the specific needs.* Lotterywest—general online survey



## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

The Western Australian Government recognises the social, economic and cultural contributions made by many thousands of migrants to Australia over a long period and supports and promotes cultural diversity as one of the State's greatest assets. The consultation sought feedback regarding:

- ways to promote the benefits of diversity to the wider community, including industry and business
- how to increase the opportunities for people from CaLD backgrounds to contribute to the State's economic development.

## RECOGNISING THE BENEFITS

The youth online survey asked respondents to indicate whether or not they believed multiculturalism is part of an ideal WA. All but one of the 42 respondents to the question believed that this was the case. Comments included:

*Australia was developed through multiculturalism—First there were aborigines and then came the rest.*

*... multicultural communities are less ignorant, more harmonious and far more interesting. We're all in this together.*

*I believe a place with many cultures is a wonderful place—just have to open up the closed minds about it to keep it peaceful for everyone!*

*Because the alternative would be devastating, economically, socially and morally.*

Youth consultation participants were asked to identify the benefits of a multicultural society. They identified different food, music and art, different perspectives and views and a more vibrant and interesting society.

However, only two of the 14 participants (14%) believed that people are generally aware of the positive things about a multicultural society. It was suggested that this could depend on whether a person knew someone from a different background.

This was tested to some extent through the youth online survey. While the discussion paper and general online survey outlined some of the economic and social benefits, the youth online survey did not. The survey therefore provided an indication of this level of awareness.

Of the 49 respondents to the question, all but one considered that cultural diversity offered benefits. Respondents considered that these included diversity of ideas and expertise, a positive work ethic, filling jobs, links with the world, new business and a demand for services (such as housing, education, hospitality and tourism). Comments included:

*A collection of different ideas, thoughts and personalities. Creating a more diverse and imaginative work force.*

*Better understanding of global business and networks. Opportunities for new investment. New skills come to Australia.*

*Better customer relations for international trading. A diverse perspective in business*

*practices and community/economic development. The broader the knowledge base the more resource you have to collect information and make an informed decision.*

The same response was given in relation to the social benefits of diversity with only one respondent believing there were none. While benefits such as diversity of food, fashion, restaurants, cultural events and businesses were identified, many respondents identified less tangible benefits:

*A more socially intelligent and aware community ...*

*... being more accepting of other cultures and people. This helps because it enables more social behaviour. I believe if acceptance of cultural diversity was true in Australia there would be less crime, anti-social behaviour and our community would ultimately feel safer. You wouldn't judge someone or be suspicious of someone just because they didn't look the same as you or speak the same first language.*

*Culturally diverse communities are less ignorant communities, more compassionate and understanding. There is greater perspective in everything from ideas, planning, education, customs, celebrations, food. The question is how doesn't it benefit us, what is the negative impact? ... If we are open minded there isn't a negative impact at all.*

## **PROMOTING THE BENEFITS**

The consultation identified education, media, public champions and events as ways to promote the benefits of cultural diversity.

## **Education**

Promotion through education programs had two components:

- ▣ incorporating relevant information in education curriculum and programs at primary, secondary and tertiary level
- ▣ community education through seminars, information sessions and written material.

## **Media**

Participants at the business consultation strongly advocated use of mainstream media to promote the benefits of cultural diversity. It was suggested that negative media regarding asylum seekers had had a negative impact on the public's perception of cultural diversity generally. This was supported by general online survey and youth online survey respondents.

It was suggested that the media could promote the benefits through:

- ▣ case studies—for example, of migrants who have overcome barriers to achieve success
- ▣ profiles of businesses that have benefited from a culturally diverse workforce
- ▣ reporting on the outcomes of successful programs conducted by NGOs and community groups.

Connecting leaders of community groups to the media to act as positive advocates for their communities was also suggested.



## Public champions

It was suggested that high-profile people in business and the community could become advocates for the benefits of cultural diversity. This could include role models such as the 2013 Young Australian of the Year, Akrim Azimi, and influential entrepreneurs.

## Events

Events such as Harmony Week, business and industry expos, and arts and culture events were identified as opportunities to connect people, spread positive messages and counter negative perceptions.

*Harmony day and other such events. However those of us born elsewhere need to understand that Australian people like their traditions such as Australia Day which should be seen as a day for all people living in Australia.* Youth online survey respondent

*By introducing a media campaign promoting Cultural Diversity which could include an OMI “Jobs Information Day” specifically relating to the Australian workplace and some of the specific skills that could be of benefit.* Department of Agriculture and Food—written submission

The importance of visibility through the media at these events was also highlighted:

*Large-scale community events, with wide media coverage (but not patronising or ‘special-ising’ as is often the case with youth events and other minority-focused events).* Youth online survey respondent

*There needs to be greater investment in CaLD events and positive collaborative*

*cultural experiences that are supported by the mainstream media to encourage greater acceptance of diversity and the vibrancy of the migrant cultural contributions.* Kulcha Multicultural Arts of WA—general online survey

Business consultation participants suggested that Harmony Week, in particular, be reviewed in relation to:

- ▣ branding—it was suggested that the name may have negative connotations; that is, imply that there is currently disharmony
- ▣ increasing the number of Harmony Week events
- ▣ broadening the concept beyond just one week
- ▣ integrating cultural diversity in more mainstream events.

## WHAT SHOULD BE PROMOTED?

The consultation also provided suggestions regarding the focus for promotion. These were:

- ▣ the importance of ‘humanising’ cultural diversity—for example through case studies, entertaining human interest stories and highlighting the contributions and achievements of individuals who migrated to Australia, as well as collective achievements (such as the building of the Snowy Mountain Scheme)
- ▣ highlighting migrants’ work ethic and the different skill sets and perspectives they bring, including bilingual and bi-cultural skills
- ▣ the income generated, for example, through the international student market

- ▣ the benefits experienced by business and industry through the introduction of new products and services, tourism and increased consumer demand
- ▣ re-positioning attitudes and perceptions of cultural diversity by imagining what Australia would be like if migrants had not come here to live.

## **INCREASING CALD CONTRIBUTIONS**

The consultation revealed two themes in relation to ways to increase the contributions made by CaLD communities:

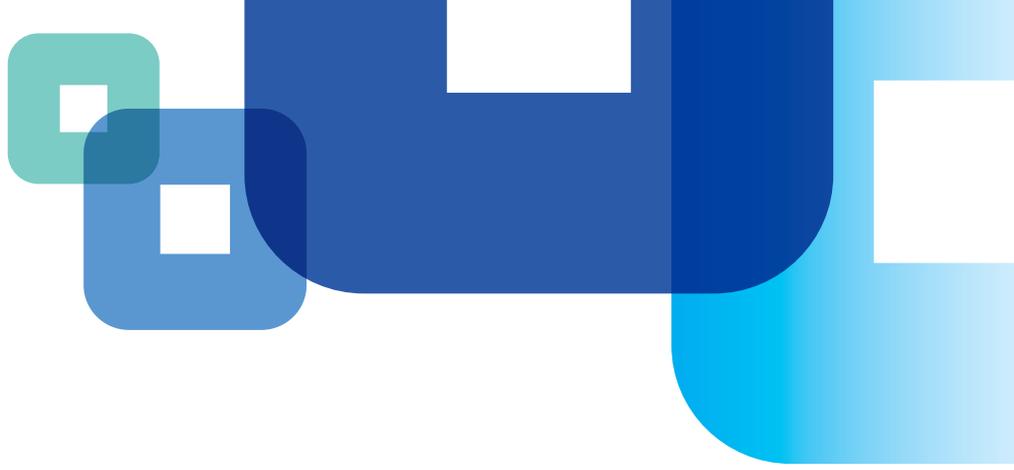
- ▣ supporting migrants to settle, gain work and develop their skills to build their individual capacity to contribute
- ▣ capitalising on the opportunities offered by cultural diversity to generate business.

Support for migrants related to responding to settlement needs and employment support. These have been detailed previously.

Suggested ways to capitalise on the opportunities offered by cultural diversity included:

- ▣ building on migrants' entrepreneurial attributes through support for migrant small business development—for example, through the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme
- ▣ sourcing workers from countries closer to Australia, such as Indonesia, to meet the needs of the hospitality industry
- ▣ marketing arts and cultural events to engage a more diverse audience

- ▣ increasing the international student market by reducing the cost of education for international students
- ▣ building country of origin links to generate overseas markets
- ▣ identifying creative market opportunities based on the unique elements of different cultures
- ▣ encouraging migrants to settle in rural and regional areas to meet occupational and skills shortages and identifying and implementing strategies to encourage settlement and retention in these areas.



## OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL INTERESTS' PLAN

The consultation invited comment in relation to OMI's vision, work and priorities.

### OMI'S VISION

OMI's current vision is for an inclusive and cohesive society which draws on its cultural and linguistic diversity to enhance the social, economic and cultural development of the State. The consultation sought feedback about how the vision might be improved.

The current vision was generally considered comprehensive. Few suggestions for improvement were made. Concepts suggested for inclusion were health (including mental health and wellbeing) and civic development. One agency suggested that reference be made to intrinsic values such as 'dignity' and 'respect' and another that the Charter of Multiculturalism be reflected in OMI's vision.

Suggestions more relevant to OMI's role related to the importance of advocacy, consultation, promotion of cultural diversity in the media and contact with the community.

One general online survey respondent suggested disbanding OMI in favour of multicultural officers placed in senior levels in government agencies.

### OMI'S WORK

OMI's role is to assist the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests and the State Government in achieving the full potential of

multiculturalism. The consultation sought feedback in relation to projects that OMI should continue, stop or start doing.

The consultation revealed support for OMI to continue its current work.

The two online surveys asked respondents to rate the relative importance of examples of OMI's projects and activities. In both surveys, the majority of respondents rated each example 'very important' or 'important'. The results indicated none should cease.

Suggested activities that OMI could consider were to:

- promote the benefits of cultural and linguistic diversity and change negative perceptions by increasing cultural awareness among media outlets, business and industry and the general community
- provide support for community leaders by providing them with the skills and opportunities to educate and train other members of their communities and linking them with appropriate mentors
- connect more with communities in their local settings, particularly those communities that are less connected than others
- facilitate connections between ethnic communities and other services (such as those delivered by government and non-government organisations) and the wider community
- address specific issues such as mental health and intergenerational issues and those facing specific groups such as young people, older

people and women who are victims of domestic violence

- involve the business community in promoting multiculturalism and inclusive practices
- verify information about what members of the community want through consultation and to ensure that OMI's programs are appropriate to the needs of different groups within the community
- promote workforce diversity
- work with local governments to promote CaLD representation and to develop local diversity plans
- market OMI's role.

## OMI'S PRIORITIES

The consultation invited feedback on how OMI could achieve the full potential of multiculturalism. Feedback was primarily gained through written submissions, the general online survey and consultations with the Multicultural Advisory Council and business and industry groups.

Focus areas were:

- promoting OMI and the benefits of multiculturalism
- capacity building and empowering communities
- building respect and understanding through intercultural interaction
- developing culturally inclusive programs and services

- increasing access and participation for CaLD community members in social, civic (including political), cultural and economic activities
- promoting the use of inclusive terminology.

## Promoting OMI and the benefits of cultural diversity

It was suggested that OMI focus on promoting the benefits of cultural diversity, particularly through the media. This included creating, promoting and supporting opportunities to recognise the positive contributions of CaLD community members.

It was also suggested that more effort needs to be made to promote OMI's role and work—to business and industry, schools and the wider community.

Comments included:

*Provide community education on the benefits of multiculturalism. Disability Services Commission—general online survey*

*Promote multiculturalism as integral to WA, and that it is necessary to embed multicultural practices in government/community/business rather than address it as a separate issue. Individual respondent—general online survey*

*Change the views of those who equate multiculturalism with invasion, isolation and terrorism ... provide a positive forum for the open discussion of the benefits of multiculturalism. Develop community networks to promote multiculturalism and guide community groups (CaLD and also Anglo-Saxon) to avoid pitfalls associated with the isolation of one particular culture. Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees—general online survey*



## Empowering communities

Providing support for CaLD communities and their leaders was considered important. This included leadership training, mentoring, providing funding for projects and events, access to facilities and resources, and the provision of information.

## Building intercultural understanding

A dominant theme was developing respect and understanding between cultures, particularly through activities and events that bring people together. This included encouraging community groups to share their events with the wider community and build intercultural friendships.

*... provide funding to Kulcha Multicultural Arts of WA to help us provide more effective services and assistance to CaLD artists and the culturally diverse arts sector. Using arts as a positive vehicle to connect culturally diverse communities to the wider community is a powerful catalyst. It encourages inclusivity and self-expression of identity, it builds cultural appreciation, respect and understanding and leads to greater acceptance and social cohesion. Kulcha Multicultural Arts of WA—general online survey*

*Keep doing what you have been doing so well. Get more money out of Govt to implement some of the ideas mentioned previously especially the need for a team to work in the community to provide more informed education of the wider community regarding cultural diversity etc. Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka—general online survey*

*Provide some examples of really successful programs that have helped people from different cultures. Continue funding for*

*multicultural events. Seek to understand the extremist [sic] cultures that we fear so much and provide advice on how to deal with them. Shire of Augusta-Margaret River—general online survey*

## Developing culturally inclusive programs and services

While it was noted that a range of culturally appropriate programs and services exist, more needs to be done by some government and non-government agencies. It was suggested that this requires:

- ensuring consultation with people from CaLD backgrounds in the development of policies, programs and services and their participation in all levels of decision making
- increasing the cultural competency of staff
- improving access to accredited or qualified interpreters.

Comments included:

*... have stronger influence on state government and enforce their need to be accountable. Promote and provide support to government and non-government organisations to recognise multiculturalism in policies and practices. Department of Sport and Recreation—general online survey*

*To guarantee equal access to services migrants need to be able to express themselves in their own language. To do so they need qualified interpreters. There is a great need for quality training for interpreters, especially for new and emerging languages. Individual respondent—general online survey*

*Encourage, recognise and support programs that support the education and wellbeing of its clients, especially those providing support to women and children (the most vulnerable of the immigrant population). Save the Children Australia—general online survey*

Partnerships between mainstream organisations and CaLD communities were encouraged. Comments included:

*Actively support partnerships between mainstream organisations and CaLD communities which go beyond what they are funded to deliver, to engage and involve CaLD communities. Lotterywest—general online survey*

*Develop collective impact projects which draw together CaLD communities, all sectors and creates partnerships with government and not-for-profit agencies. Individual respondent—general online survey*

Some contributors expressed strong support for the Equal Opportunity Commission's substantive equality program in advocating and implementing culturally sensitive programs.

### Increasing participation

It was suggested that OMI has a role in increasing participation for CaLD community members in all aspects of life—social, civic, cultural and economic. This included:

- addressing the needs of particular cohorts, such as children, women, people with disability and seniors
- increasing participation in employment (including addressing the recognition of overseas qualifications and skills)

- encouraging greater participation in civic activities (for example, as voters, local government councillors and in formal volunteering).

Suggestions were also made for the introduction of legislation, policies or plans to encourage the adoption of multicultural principles, particularly by State and local government agencies.

### Inclusive terminology

There was discussion at the consultation with the Multicultural Advisory Council and business and industry groups regarding the impact of terminology on perceptions of multiculturalism. Multicultural Advisory Council members agreed that, while inclusion, cohesion and integration were key concepts to underpin OMI's work, the term 'CaLD' could undermine achievement of these objectives.

While the label is useful to guide resource allocation, it was noted that language is a powerful messenger and that inclusive language is critical.

Business and industry consultation participants suggested that OMI could develop a 'signpost' for multiculturalism—a recognisable brand that promotes it as a positive concept. It was also noted that use of the term 'multicultural' could also contribute to cultural divisiveness. It was suggested that consideration be given to ways to reconceptualise 'multicultural' as 'mainstream'.



# Conclusion

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**The consultation outcomes indicate that OMI has an important role in proactively shaping a positive discourse on multiculturalism and promoting outcomes that help achieve the potential of multiculturalism in Western Australia.**

To achieve the full potential of multiculturalism requires strategies that include the whole community including business and industry groups, government and non-government agencies and the wider community, as well as CaLD communities. The use of inclusive language is an important part of this.

There was appreciation of the role OMI plays in advocating on behalf of Western Australia's CaLD communities and encouraging agencies to be responsive to the needs of a culturally diverse society.

It was considered that OMI has a role in:

- building the capacity of communities to maintain their cultures and address their diverse needs
- connecting diverse groups to encourage respect and understanding
- promoting the benefits of Western Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity
- supporting the development of culturally inclusive policies, programs and services
- encouraging and facilitating participation by CaLD communities in social, economic, cultural and civic activities.

The consultation suggests that OMI's role in these areas would be as an 'enabler'—providing information, advice, training and support, and encouraging and facilitating partnerships and collaboration between CaLD communities, government and non-government agencies and the wider community.





# Appendix: List of contributors

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## Written submissions

Carers WA	Department of Transport
City of Bunbury	Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre
City of Greater Geraldton	Extra Edge Community Services
Commissioner for Children and Young People	Great Southern Development Commission
Department of Aboriginal Affairs	Health Consumers Council
Department of Agriculture and Food	North Metropolitan Health Service
Department of Culture and the Arts	Ombudsman Western Australia
Department of Education	OnCall Interpreters
Department of Finance	Western Australian Council of Social Services
Department of Mines and Petroleum	
Department of Training and Workforce Development	

## Multicultural Advisory Council consultation forum

Hon Dr Mike Nahan MLA	Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests (introduction only)
Ms Natasha Cheung	Policy Advisor, Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests
Ms Mara Basanovic	Chief Executive Officer, Volunteering WA
Mr Ting Chen	Vice President, Chung Wah Association
Ms Andrea Creado	Director, Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Centre
Mr Bob Cronin	Editor, <i>The West Australian</i>
Ms Eleni Evangel MLA	Member for Perth
Mr Dante Maribbay	President, Damayang Filipino Inc
Dr Anh Nguyen	President, Vietnamese Community in Western Australia—WA Chapter Inc
Dr Casta Tangaraza	President, African Women's Council of Australia
Mr Sammy Yap	President, Chung Wah Association

## Business and industry consultation forum

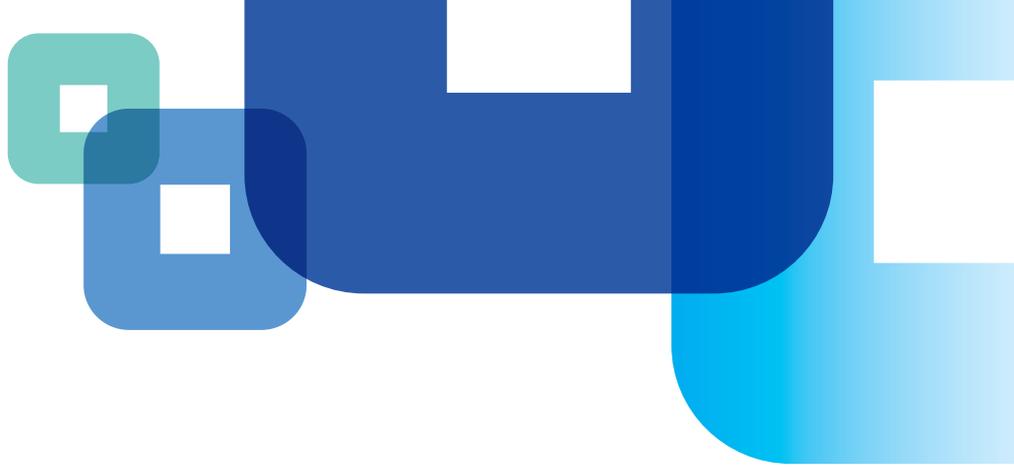
Australian Broadcasting Corporation  
AEG Ogden  
Artrage  
Australia Indonesia Business Council  
Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency  
Building and Construction Industry Training Council  
Buzz Dance Theatre  
Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA  
City of Stirling  
Commonwealth Bank  
Culturally Make a Difference  
Electrical, Utilities and Public Administration  
Training Council Inc  
Engineers Australia  
ENI Australia  
Kulcha Multicultural Arts of WA  
National Accreditation Authority for Translators and  
Interpreters  
OnCall Interpreters and Translators  
SkillHire  
The Strategist Group  
The University of Western Australia Business School  
Translators International  
West Australian Ballet

## Youth consultation forum

Sarah Cairns	City of Stirling
Mina Mitric	Churchlands Senior High School
Gbogbah Tarr	Communicare
Nichole August	Communicare
Bella Ndayikeze	Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka
Joe Moniodis	Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka (presentation only)
Salah Alex	Kuku Youth Association
Dominic Bojo	Kuku Youth Association
Loburu Henry	Kuku Youth Association
Benet Ladu	Kuku Youth Association
Patrick Mayeriko	Kuku Youth Association
Mondi Samuel	Kuku Youth Association
Losuk Sworo	Kuku Youth Association
Vik Jeyakumar	Youth Affairs Council of WA
Peter Ajang	West Australian Football Commission

## Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Youth Leadership Group

Florence Adokorac  
Joyce Ageno  
Brenda Amito  
Scovia Anzoa  
Ajak Athoi  
Fortunato Inaperani  
Lucy Lamonio  
Monica Makuach  
Nyajima Mayar



## Mirrabooka consultation forum

Australian Asian Association  
Chin Community Association  
City of Stirling  
City of Wanneroo  
Congolese Community of WA  
Equal Opportunity Commission  
Health Consumer's Council  
Mercycare  
Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre  
National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters  
Pakistan community  
The Smith Family  
UMBRELLA Multicultural Community Care Services Inc  
University of Western Australia Business School  
Western Australian Museum

## General online survey responses—organisations only

### Community

African Communities Council of Australia  
Anywaa Community  
Buddhism & Australia  
Hindu Association of WA  
Malaysian Art and Cultural Club WA  
Vietnamese Catholic Community in WA  
Western Australia Multicultural Association

## Non-government

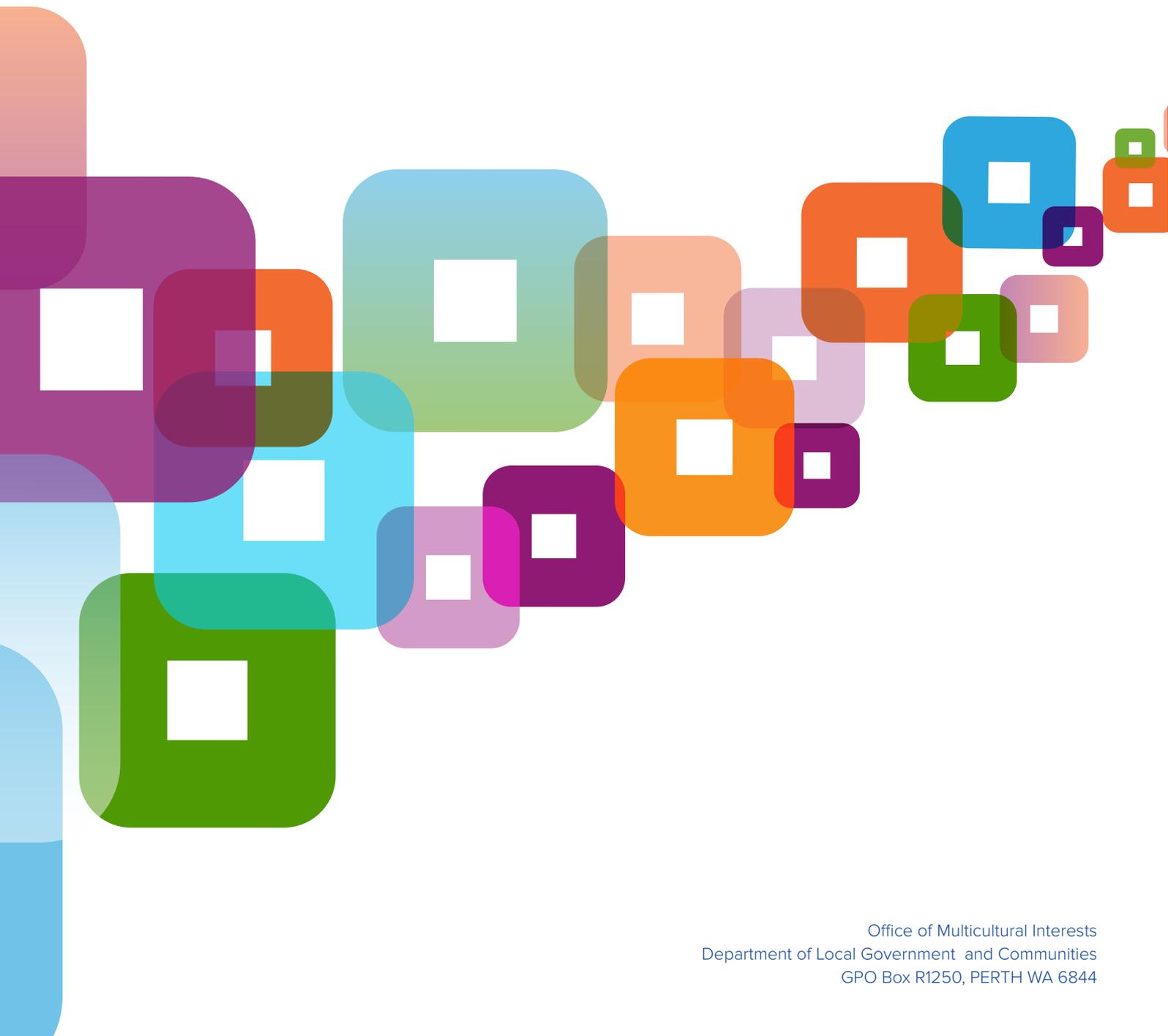
Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors  
Alzheimer's Australia WA  
Australian Red Cross WA  
Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees  
Community Midwifery WA  
Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka  
Kulcha Multicultural Arts of WA  
Rainbow Coast Neighbourhood Centre  
Save the Children Australia  
Tom Price Youth Support Association  
Volunteering WA

## Local government

City of Rockingham  
Shire of Augusta-Margaret River  
Shire of Wagin  
Town of Cambridge

## State Government

Bunbury Port Authority  
Department of Agriculture and Food WA  
Department of Corrective Services  
Department of Sport and Recreation  
Department of Transport  
Department of Parks and Wildlife  
Disability Services Commission  
Equal Opportunity Commission of WA  
Kojonup District High School  
Lotterywest  
Pilbara Institute  
Western Australian Museum  
Water Corporation  
Western Australian Electoral Commission



Office of Multicultural Interests  
Department of Local Government and Communities  
GPO Box R1250, PERTH WA 6844