

The January changes to partner visas bring long awaited good news and the changes to bridging visas adds encouragement. Multiculturalism in its many forms is celebrated this month when we recognise the many benefits generations of migrants have brought to this country.

Family – Visas and Immigration

Removal of the discretionary Assurance of Support requirement from Partner visas

From 1 January 2012, the discretionary Assurance of Support (AoS) requirement was removed from Partner visas. This change means that an AoS **will not** be required for Partner visa applications made on or after 1 January 2012. The change also applies to Partner visa applications made but not finally determined by 1 January 2012.

This change affects the following visa subclasses:

- Partner temporary visa (subclass 309)
- Partner permanent visa (subclass 100)
- Partner temporary visa (subclass 820)
- Partner permanent visa (subclass 801)
- Prospective Marriage visa (subclass 300).

Any AoS that commenced prior to 1 January 2012 will still be enforced by the Department of Human Services.

We welcome this news and commend the Government for the timely changes to the discretionary Assurances of Support. It was always our view that it discriminated unfairly against poor people.

http://www.immi.gov.au/migrants/family/whats_new.htm

Change to processing location for Partner and Family migration applications in Pakistan or Afghanistan from 1 December 2011

From 1 December 2011, the Australian High Commission in Islamabad, Pakistan will process all new partner, child and family migration applications lodged by clients who live in Pakistan or Afghanistan (except for applications made by Afghan nationals).

Applications lodged before 1 December will continue to be processed by the Australian Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand until further notice. Should a case be transferred to the Islamabad office, you will be notified by your new case officer in the Islamabad office.

Note: Clients are encouraged to lodge their application directly with this office, however applications will continue to be accepted at their nearest immigration office.

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For further information about the Family Migration see:
[Family Migration – Questions and Answers](#) at:
http://www.immi.gov.au/migrants/family/whats_new.htm

Subclass 457 Applicants Holding Bridging A Visa – and Schedule 3

Some Bridging Visa A applicants (who have applied for a Subclass 485 visa) now wish to apply for a Subclass 457 visa.

If it has been more than 28 days since they last held a substantive visa, the matter of obtaining a Schedule 3 waiver arises.

DIAC has said that it will consider such requests for this waiver on a case by case basis, with a view to facilitating the grant of the Subclass 457 visa application if possible.

The Department's 457 Policy and Program Delivery section has issued a written statement outlining its policy on this matter as follows:

The purpose of the Schedule 3 criteria is to:

- encourage non-citizens who have a legitimate basis for remaining in Australia to apply for a further visa before their current substantive visa ceases;
- discourage non-citizens from remaining in Australia beyond the period of effect of their substantive visa; and
- prevent non-citizens from benefiting by remaining in Australia unlawfully, by possibly acquiring visa eligibility while remaining here without lawful permission.

Criteria 3004 (c) to (h) include subjective elements, which mean that:

- a decision on whether an applicant satisfies these criteria will not necessarily be clear cut or beyond dispute; and
- a decision maker will need to exercise judgment, assess all the circumstances of the applicant against the meaning and intention of the criteria, and form an opinion as to whether the criteria are satisfied.

The subjective elements reflect the policy underlying Schedule 3 (see The Purpose of Schedule 3 above) aimed at encouraging non-citizens to apply for further stay while they still hold a substantive visa.

Circumstances 'beyond the applicant's control'

Criterion 3004(c) requires the decision maker to be satisfied that the applicant became an illegal entrant or a person without a substantive visa because of factors beyond the applicant's control.

Two requirements must be satisfied:

- there must be factors that caused the applicant to become an illegal entrant or a person without a substantive visa; and
- those factors must have been beyond the applicant's control.

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Migration Institute of Australia Notice, Issue 2011.70 – 19 December 2011

Refugee inquiry to tackle backlog

The former attorney-general Michael Lavarch will conduct an independent review of the refugee and migration tribunals amid a backlog of cases and allegations that the process is being abused.

The matter has become urgent as thousands more asylum seekers are set to be funnelled into the Refugee Review Tribunal as the separate system for assessing boat arrivals is scrapped.

In recent months, less than half of Refugee Review Tribunal cases (47 per cent) had been completed within the 90-day standard, while a third of Migration Review Tribunal cases were more than a year old. This is also due to the upsurge of applications by overseas students no longer eligible to lodge GSM visa applications due to recent changes.

The principal member of the tribunals, Denis O'Brien, had complained in the tribunals' annual report it would be a "significant challenge" for them to meet targets this year.

The migration tribunal deals with business, bridging visa and student visa refusals. Most cases lodged with the refugee tribunal - which only deals with plane arrivals - were from China, Fiji and India. There was a 31 per cent leap in new cases before the refugee tribunal and a 24 per cent increase in new cases before the migration tribunal last year.

Professor Lavarch is expected to report by the end of January 2012. The Immigration Minister, Chris Bowen, said: "This independent review will identify what changes could be made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of both the MRT and RRT."

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/refugee-inquiry-to-tackle-backlog-20111212-1orij.html>

Professional Year Evaluation Professionals and Other Skilled Migrants

In 2011-12, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship will be undertaking an evaluation of the Professional Year program. The Professional Year has been in operation since 2008 and is a structured development program, available to Engineers, Accountants and IT Professionals. The Professional Year may assist graduates to find employment and provides 5 points towards meeting the Points Based Skilled Migration pass mark.

The evaluation will assess if the Professional Year is achieving its original objectives and also identify potential improvements to the program. The evaluation is intended to be an open and transparent process. All key stakeholders who are involved in, or affected by the evaluation, including students and ex-students, will be given the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way.

More information about the Professional Year is available on the department's website. See [Professional Year](#) at:

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<http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/professional-year-evaluation.htm>

Further arrests in relation to Villawood disturbance

A further seven men have been charged in relation to the disturbance that occurred at the Villawood Immigration Detention Centre in April last year.

It will be alleged in court that the men were involved in a disturbance that led to the destruction of Commonwealth property, including buildings and office equipment. The men have been charged with the following State and Commonwealth Offences:

- Riot contrary to section 93B of the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW). The maximum penalty for this offence is 15 years imprisonment.
- Affray contrary to section 93C of the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW). The maximum penalty for this offence is 10 years imprisonment.
- Destroying property during public disorder contrary to section 195(2)(a) of the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW). The maximum penalty for this offence is 5 years imprisonment.
- Destroying property with fire during public disorder contrary to section 195(2)(b) of the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW). The maximum penalty for this offence is 10 years imprisonment.
- Destroying commonwealth property contrary to section 29 of the Crimes Act 1914 (Cth). The maximum penalty for this offence is 10 years imprisonment.

<http://www.afp.gov.au/media-centre/news/afp/2012/january/media-release-further-arrests-in-relation-to-villawood-disturbance.aspx>

Immigration edict leaves child humiliated at graduation ceremony

Preschool graduations are the latest rite of passage, with certificates and stage performances to mark the children's big event - but for Abinajan Rahavan, 4, graduation recently was a ritual humiliation.

The Immigration Department refused to let the Tamil boy take the stage with classmates for their performance, and stopped him sitting in the class photo.

The reason for this? Immigration detainees cannot be photographed in public. Despite attending the western Sydney school, the young asylum seeker was forced to "disappear" from the celebration, photographed by other families.

The Rahavan family are recognised refugees, but because the mother has a negative security assessment from ASIO, they live in indefinite detention at Villawood. Mr Rahavan is increasingly worried about the impact on his children aged 1, 4, and 7.

A department spokesman said the photograph rule existed to protect detainee privacy.

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<http://www.smh.com.au/national/immigration-edict-leaves-child-humiliated-at-graduation-ceremony-20111208-1olgd.html>

Investigations continue as immigration fraudster jailed

The Australian Government has continued its crackdown on migration-related fraud with a 33-month jail sentence handed down recently to an Australian man who produced false documents used in permanent residency applications.

Carmine Amarante was identified as a facilitator of immigration fraud as part of a multi-jurisdictional investigation and was charged with offences in relation to forgery under the Criminal Code Act 1995.

“With assistance from the Australian Federal Police (AFP), search warrants were executed at the offender’s residence uncovering large quantities of evidence relating to the provision of false documents in applications for visas under the general skilled migration (GSM) program. This conviction should serve as a reminder to the community that the department and the courts will act swiftly against those who attempt to defraud our migration programs,” a Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) spokesperson said.

The offender produced 541 false documents which were subsequently lodged to Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) in support of skills assessment applications and the Victorian State Government as part of sponsorship applications, most of which resulted in a positive grant. The documents relate to 39 businesses based in Victoria and those complicit in the scam are being investigated by both DIAC and the AFP.

“Mr Amarante received payments of between \$1500 and \$2500 a document and 471 visa applications have been lodged with my department based on these false documents. With the new fraud provision changes earlier this year that allow applications to be refused where false or misleading information is provided to the department in association with visa applications, these applications can either be refused or cancelled,” the spokesperson said.

Applicants should also be aware DIAC is now increasingly using PIC 4020 to refuse applications where bogus documents are produced or false or misleading statements are made.

http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/media_releases/980/print

Indonesia eases fear of smuggling free-for-all

Indonesia has assured the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kevin Rudd, its relaxation of visa rules for citizens from countries that are a source of boat people coming to Australia will not give carte blanche to people smugglers.

Mr Rudd met his Indonesian counterpart, Marty Natalegawa, in Jakarta yesterday and people smuggling was discussed.

Last month the Indonesian government announced it was easing restriction on Sri Lankans and Bangladeshis attempting to travel to the country. It also signalled similar moves for Afghans and Pakistanis.

The two foreign ministers discussed the problem of Indonesian minors arrested for crewing people-smuggling vessels and ending up in Australian prisons.

Mr Natalegawa said processing of the juveniles was being sped up and more youths were being returned to Indonesia.

www.smh.com.au/national/indonesia-eases-fear-of-smuggling-freeforall-20120109-1prvj.html

AFP gives patrol boats to Indonesian Police

Minister for Home Affairs and Justice Brendan O'Connor recently presented three new high-speed patrol boats to the Indonesian National Police (INP) in Jakarta, enhancing the region's joint capability in the fight against people smuggling. The 16-metre aluminium hull boats are equipped for high-level surveillance and will be strategically placed by the INP across Indonesian waters to focus on deterring and intercepting people smuggling ventures. The boats were provided through a \$7.1 million grant to the Australian Federal Police (AFP) in July 2010, part of a new policy initiative to Enhancing Regional Law Enforcement Capability.

<http://www.ministerhomeaffairs.gov.au/mediareleases/pages/2011/fourth%20quarter/6-december-2011---afp-gives-patrol-boats-to-indonesian-police.aspx>

Boy refugees' treatment under fire in courts

The federal government has come under renewed judicial attack over the way it treats unaccompanied teenage asylum seekers.

A 17-year-old boy, who was hospitalised in Darwin after trying to hang himself from a double bunk bed, is at the centre of a challenge in the Federal Court to the prolonged detention of recognised refugees waiting for ASIO security clearance.

The High Court has meanwhile ruled that the Immigration Department was wrong to refuse to let an Afghan teenager, who arrived unaccompanied as a child in Australia, later bring his mother here.

There are 463 asylum seekers in immigration detention waiting for ASIO to complete security checks and more than 50 people with negative ASIO assessments that have condemned them to indefinite detention.

Lawyers for the boy, who has been detained for more than a year despite being granted refugee status in April, cannot be told whether ASIO has issued a negative security clearance or are still investigating his case.

The boy, who cannot be named, was born in Kuwait and fled to Indonesia with his family when he was 13. Last year, he disobeyed his father, who wanted the family to wait for UNHCR resettlement together, and boarded a boat to Christmas Island alone.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/boy-refugees-treatment-under-fire-in-courts-20111214-1ouue.html>

ASIO silent on why teen refugee is being held

A bid to release a teenage refugee labelled a "security risk" by ASIO from indefinite detention will go to trial in the Federal Court, but the Commonwealth is refusing to divulge to the court the nature of the findings against Ali Abbas.

ASIO is not subject to judicial review, and Mr Abbas has been issued a letter stating he has no appeal rights because he has been deemed an "adverse security risk" by the intelligence agency.

At a directions hearing, Commonwealth lawyers said they had no intention of releasing any information about the ASIO security assessment of the 18-year-old during the trial. His lawyers haven't been told why Mr Abbas, a Bedouin from Kuwait who arrived in Australia by boat aged 16, has been blocked from a permanent visa, despite his refugee status.

The judge issued orders last month urging the Immigration Department to move Mr Abbas from an immigration detention centre in Melbourne into "a supportive residential or family-based environment" after hearing medical evidence of his repeated suicide attempts. But Mr Abbas, who has been in detention for more than a year, hasn't been moved.

www.smh.com.au/national/asio-silent-on-why-teen-refugee-is-being-held-20120113-1pzbk.html

Without hope, without reason

Legitimate refugees, including toddlers, are imprisoned indefinitely. Only ASIO knows why and it will tell no one, writes Kirsty Needham.

"I live like a dead man walking," says Suvenran Kathirdamathambi, or "Sutha", 32. "This is supposed to be the golden period in anyone's life - your 20s and 30s."

Sutha is married, but his wife lives alone in Sri Lanka, unable to tell anyone she has a husband who has spent 30 months locked up in Australia. The former paramedic sleeps in short spurts, sharing a room at Villawood detention centre with men who sporadically wake at different times, miss breakfast, smoke heavily, shun exercise and mope around under trees.

Sutha has been homeless since his father and two brothers were killed by the Sri Lankan army. His mother had to keep moving with her son, disrupting Sutha's education but surviving.

During the civil war, he worked for an international non-government organisation then fled with a huge wave of Tamil asylum seekers when the conflict ended. "I thought this country would give me protection."

A year ago, the Immigration Department did indeed tell Sutha it accepted he was a refugee. The same day, he was also told ASIO had labelled him an "adverse security risk", for reasons the agency has refused to explain.

"It was agonising," Sutha recalls, still unable to believe such a profound decision could be made after just one interview. The secretive ASIO ruling blocks him from setting foot in the suburban Sydney streets outside. "OK, we are safe, but it is a terrible life," he says.

Subjects cannot challenge ASIO decisions or even be given an explanation. A standard letter outlines five broad possible grounds: suspicion of espionage, sabotage, threats to defence, promotion of communal violence and border integrity. Their lawyers have no idea what they are charged with, let alone the federal politicians now examining the issue. Only once has the Immigration Department asked ASIO to rethink a verdict, and ASIO upheld its decision.

The Australian office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says it simply does not believe the ASIO decisions are warranted, and its own assessment has found the refugees don't reach "that serious level of threshold" that would exclude a person from refugee protection on security grounds under the refugee convention.

The UNHCR is urging the federal government to introduce some oversight to ASIO's decisions on refugees. It has provided details on how New Zealand, Canada and Britain allow a court or special advocate to review security assessments and give the subject a summary of the case against them. This is basic fairness, which can be balanced with national security and the need to protect classified information, says the UNHCR's regional representative, Richard Towle. The Administrative Appeals Tribunal could act in this role, UNHCR has suggested.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/without-hope-without-reason-20120113-1pzei.html>

Greens fight smuggling sentences

The Greens will lead a push to end mandatory five-year jail terms for Indonesian fishermen charged with people smuggling after crewing boats carrying asylum seekers to Australia.

The move comes as dozens of cases threaten to overwhelm the courts this year and the states are threatening a revolt over the mounting costs.

It also follows criticism from 10 Australian judges and law and human rights bodies that the penalties target the wrong people, impose incredible hardship on those imprisoned and their families, and have no deterrent effect.

"The Parliament needs to send a message that the courts need to be concentrating on the big fry, the organisers of the people smuggling syndicates," Greens senator Sarah Hanson-Young said. She plans to introduce her bill when Parliament resumes in February.

"Mandatory sentences are a blight on our legal system and improperly prevent the effective use of judicial discretion in sentencing," said Managing Partner David Bitel.

www.smh.com.au/national/greens-fight-smuggling-sentences-20120118-1q6u7.html

Teen jailed for 13 years, but attack was 'not racist'

A Melbourne teenager who killed an Indian national, sparking international uproar, has been jailed for 13 years.

Relations between Australia and India were strained after the murder of accountancy graduate Nitin Garg in January last year, but in sentencing the 17-year-old killer yesterday, Supreme Court judge Paul Coghlan said the attack was not racist.

The killer, who cannot be named because of his age, and a friend were in Cruickshank Park, Yarraville, when Mr Garg walked through, talking on his mobile phone, on his way to work. The boy's friend, who pleaded guilty to being an accessory to murder, said to him, "That guy's phone looks nice", which prompted the killer to put a jumper over his face and take out a knife he had taken from home.

He demanded Mr Garg's phone. Mr Garg grabbed the boy, who then stabbed him in the abdomen. Mr Garg ran to his workplace, where he collapsed. He died at hospital in the early hours of the following morning.

High-ranking Indian politicians and diplomats condemned the assault as "an attack on humanity" and the crime was a flashpoint in a bitter row between Delhi and Melbourne over the safety of Indian students in Melbourne.

But Justice Coghlan said, "I am satisfied that Mr Garg was a completely random victim and it was his presence at the time and in the place while talking on his phone which made him a victim -not his race."

"It is yet another example of the proposition that in circumstances such as these there just are no winners. One able young man is dead and [another young man's] life is dramatically affected forevermore."

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/teen-jailed-for-13-years-but-attack-was-not-racist-20111222-1p78a.html>

Social Media and the Law

Facebook: a cunning litigator's best friend

No matter how many times you adjust the latest privacy setting on Facebook there is, ultimately, no such thing as privacy in social media.

That doesn't mean there is someone constantly looking over the virtual shoulders of the world's 800 million active Facebook users, or tracking the multitudes on Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, Flickr or other websites. But it does mean that anyone with good, legal cause is increasingly likely to be able to sift through the personal and often recklessly frank exchanges that fly across the social media landscape.

The vulnerability of Facebook and similar sites to hackers and to the aggregation of commercially valuable data to build consumer profiles is well documented. Less so is the right to legitimate inquiry rapidly being established through legal precedents in the courts here and overseas, turning social media websites into potential treasure troves of evidence.

Facebook was forced to simplify and tighten privacy options last year in response to growing concern over web companies selling personal information as well as the potential for cyberbullying or stalking. But privacy settings do not prevent a court permitting discovery or issuing a subpoena to retrieve information on a social media site.

Anyone facing litigation may now think to delete material on social media sites. But, just like shredding or burning paper documents, this may amount to contempt of court if the material is relevant to litigation. Social media websites can even be forced to provide evidence of the material being destroyed.

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/facebook-a-cunning-litigators-best-friend-20111129-1o4zn.html>

Multicultural Affairs

Arrival City - How the largest migration in history is reshaping our world Doug Sanders

A third of humanity is on the move. History's largest migration is creating new urban spaces that are this century's focal points of conflict and change — unseen centres of rapid change and dramatic activity that will reshape our cities and reconfigure our economies.

These **Arrival Cities** are where the next great economic and cultural boom will be born, or where the next explosion of violence will occur.

City of cultures

The "**arrival city**" is not so much the city as a whole but a ring of post-war suburbs, old enough to be a bit run-down but not old enough to be historic and charming, and usually far from the CBD.

While you will not see **arrival cities** depicted on postcards, paradoxically they are the most globally oriented parts of the metropolitan area. Saunders says their residents maintain close ties to their home countries by, for example, sending remittances to their families and villages.

While Sydney may not be drawing unskilled and rural migrants in the same numbers as other cities, in many ways it is already an "**arrival city**".

Saunders believes that Australia, like his native Canada, which adopted a similar white-collar bias in immigration policy, will ultimately have to admit more low-skilled migrants with rural and village backgrounds to fill a demand at the bottom end of the labour market.

"Whatever the politics, you might be able to stop it for four or five years at a go," he says, "but we need to be assuming there are going to be unskilled immigrants from a village background and they are going to be gathering in neighbourhoods with people from like backgrounds."

Saunders studied rural-to-urban immigration in 20 cities on five continents and found that, despite the rhetoric of anti-immigrant populists, the clustering of migrants into particular suburbs brings more benefits than problems because the neighbourhoods often become centres of economic activity. In short, ethnic "ghettos" are good.

"We have found, over and over, that immigration happens at the neighbourhood level," he says.

"This generally should be a positive thing because these networks of human contact are what make integration work. It seems like a paradox but the ethnically concentrated immigrant neighbourhood usually is a better pathway to integration than randomly scattering people throughout the city."

A study earlier this year, for example, for the state government agency Industry & Investment NSW, found that business worth hundreds of millions of dollars, the figure was impossible to quantify, could flow from harnessing "the innate entrepreneurial spirit" of the Arab community in Sydney's west.

"The **arrival city** is basically a machine designed to integrate people," Saunders says. "The people who move into it know how to make it work."

"They come in taking great risk and making a big investment by their standards, and they know what they want to make it."

Saunders says that such ethnic concentrations provide an immediate support network for new arrivals, helping them into cheap housing and, pretty quickly, into low-level jobs - cleaning, labouring, nursing-home care - that Anglo-Australians and the second generation of established migrant communities often spurn.

"An **arrival city** neighbourhood wants to succeed and people who come to it don't simply blow in or show up hoping to collect benefits."

Makka Krubally

In the early 1990s, Makka Krubally left his home in Koba Kunda, in the upper river region of Gambia, on the west coast of Africa. He was 24 with a good basic education but few prospects in a village of just 500 people, who relied entirely on farming for their sustenance.

So he made his way first to the Gambia's biggest city, Serekunda, then to Germany and, finally, in 1994, to Australia.

Seventeen years later, Krubally has degrees in commerce and finance and a job with one of Australia's biggest fund managers. He embodies the character of Sydney as an "**arrival city**" of ambitious, industrious immigrants.

Saunders writes that Sydney is on the cusp of this transition, a place where "the people renting the apartments and buying the houses and running the shops are mainly former villagers".

Krubally settled, and stayed, in Blacktown and now lives with his wife, Salimatou, and son in a modern apartment complex populated mostly by immigrants.

"You will find most of the Gambians and Senegalese here in Blacktown and around Parramatta, Bankstown and Chester Hill," says Krubally, the president of the African Communities Council of NSW. He sends about \$20,000 a year to his extended family in Gambia. "It is a lot of money but I work hard and I can support 20 people with that money," he says.

For the Krubally family, Blacktown has provided them with the first - and second - rung in their climb up the socio-economic ladder. Makka Krubally's first job was driving taxis to fund his TAFE, then university studies. His wife is studying nursing and he will soon complete a master's degree, his third tertiary qualification.

Among African immigrants to Sydney, Krubally was something of a pioneer. "I came here voluntarily and there were hardly any Africans, so I didn't have that mentoring," he recalls.

But as an "**arrival city**" has evolved in western Sydney, it has made immigration, and integration, a much smoother experience. "Now the network is there to help them," Krubally says. "You find Africans on trains and buses. You find them driving trains and buses. You find African doctors and lawyers. It makes it a lot easier to fit in."

<http://arrivalcity.net/>

<http://www.katherinetimes.com.au/news/national/national/general/city-of-cultures/2402371.aspx>

Clusters work well to propel migrants to success

Western Sydney is on the brink of becoming a major "**arrival city**" - a magnet for immigrants from rural areas of developing countries - says an expert in migration and urban policy.

The Canadian writer Doug Saunders coined the term in his book *Arrival City: How the Largest Migration in History is Reshaping Our World*, identifying a ring of Sydney suburbs as part of the world-wide migration of people from the country to the city, especially since mid 2010, when more than 50 per cent of the world's population became urban dwellers.

"The classic examples are the little Italys and Chinatowns of the postwar years," Saunders told the Herald. "They were ethnically clustered, very intensely. Small businesses and factories formed at the backs of houses around them and those became sources of initial capital, which were used to buy up housing to finance the university education of the children from those neighbourhoods and to push people into the main economy."

A cluttered two-room office above a grocer in Blacktown has become one of the busiest places in western Sydney. Every week more than 100 new migrants come through the Philippine-Australian Community Services Inc., seeking help to find jobs and rental housing and to enrol their children in school.

Nelia Sumcad, who runs the resettlement service, says that by congregating, initially in Blacktown, Filipinos quickly become self sufficient. "When you come to a foreign country, you look for something familiar," she said. "That helps the stability of the family and [through the informal network] helps with basic things - your Medicare card, your tax file number, schools for your kids."

Within a year or two, most Filipinos have established economic roots in the area, moved out of rented flats and townhouses and bought houses in surrounding suburbs such as Marayong, Quakers Hill and Rooty Hill. Saunders says that rural, often poor economic migrants tend to be most motivated and successful.

www.smh.com.au/nsw/clusters-work-well-to-propel-migrants-to-success--study-20111222-1p6zf.html

Pacific destiny on different shore

Moala and Mele Manoa are sitting on their tapa - a brightly coloured, intricately decorated rug made from the skin of a hibiscus plant - playing with their infant daughter, Kulia. To roll out the tapa on the back porch of their home in Cabramatta reminds the couple of their roots in Tonga.

Moala, 38, moved to Sydney in 1996 to study theology, intending to return as a minister in the Free Wesleyan (Methodist) Church of Tonga. But he stayed, working for CSR Gyprock before becoming a youth worker with the 1500-member Tongan Parish of the Uniting Church.

Life in his Tongan town of around 2000 people had many attractions - little stress, plentiful food, an almost pristine environment. "But it was really hard to find a job that would give you a future," he said.

So he followed a pattern that was established in the 1970s, and which intensified in the 1980s, and moved to Australia, and to the "**arrival city**" suburbs of Sydney's west.

Mele, 30, came to Sydney as a teenager and trained as a baker. Her memories of Tonga are fond - but realistic. "Life there is average," she said. "You're not really poor, you have enough to eat, but it's mostly just getting by."

Osai Faiva, general secretary of the Tongan Parish, said, "When we come to Australia, we look for something that is familiar to us, so the church is the first thing we turn to. That is why the church plays a very important role in maintaining Tongan language and culture."

For new arrivals, the church is not only a place of worship but a central point where Tongans exchange news about their homeland and, sometimes, network for jobs. "The links between the Tongan community in Australia and Tonga are very strong," says Faiva, "that's why we remit a very significant part of our income to support the remaining relatives at home."

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/pacific-destiny-on-different-shore-20111222-1p739.html>

Acceptance the key to a successful National Anti-Racism Partnership

Race Discrimination Commissioner, Dr Helen Szoke called for tolerance and diversity as she prepared to lead the first public consultation of the National Anti-Racism Partnership Strategy.

The Australian Human Rights Commission and FECCA (Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia) co-hosted this forum on the 16th of November in Adelaide.

Dr Szoke said the forum provided an important opportunity for all people from different ethnic backgrounds to strongly support the policy of multiculturalism in this country.

"Implicit in this, is a recognition that multiculturalism benefits all – that an investment in settlement services and cultural diversity is an investment in social cohesion" said Dr Szoke. As part of the federal government's new multicultural policy, the National Anti-Racism Partnership will bring together key government agencies and non-governmental organisations to discuss how to confront racist attitudes in Australia. "It is astonishing, of course, that race should remain such a hot button issue in a society that has so long considered itself multicultural" said Dr Szoke.

Strategies and ideas heard at the forum will be collated for consideration by the Partnership members as they design the National Anti-Racism Strategy.

Dr Szoke said that multiculturalism, as a norm, had been missing from the Australian landscape for over a decade. She called on leaders from the public service and politics to seize the opportunity to implement the Government's new multicultural policy, *The People of Australia*.

"We must harness the momentum that has been ignited by the policy – fuelling it in such a way that it becomes self-propelling, so that we do not lose the impetus again."

"Much of what the government does often affects people from diverse communities in ways that impact on them in a discriminatory manner, so it is important that we adopt cultural sensitivity when we formulate the rules and policies of our organisations ... We only have to look at the devastation that was wreaked on this nation's first peoples to understand what happens when language, history and custom is denied, that grief is passed down through generations and results in the tragic loss of strength and self," Dr Szoke said.

"We really need to understand that each new group of migrants has a different set of challenges, opportunities and contributions that they are going to make to Australia and we need to be smart in terms of how we respond to that. By nurturing custom, history and language, we only make that contribution stronger."

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2011/104_11.html

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2011/108_11.html

People of Australia Ambassadors

Prime Minister Julia Gillard recently congratulated 40 Australians who have been recognised for their outstanding work in building strong and cohesive local communities.

The 40 local champions have been independently selected as the new People of Australia Ambassadors following hundreds of nominations from the public. Australians were encouraged to nominate inspirational people who have helped to build bridges, promote inclusion and strengthen ties in their communities.

The Prime Minister and Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs Kate Lundy were joined by football champion and new Ambassador Harry O'Brien, who is actively involved in the AFL's own Multicultural Program and engaged in a variety of community projects.

The Ambassador program is a key initiative of the Government's multicultural policy, *The People of Australia*, announced last year. The new Ambassadors will be able to provide advice to Government and the Australian Multicultural Council.

The Ambassadors have been recognised for the real impact they are having on the lives of many Australians - from bringing kids together through sport, to helping small business owners from diverse backgrounds get up and running.

<http://www.pm.gov.au/press-office/people-australia-ambassadors>

What makes multiculturalism great is mutual respect

Less than a month ago, millions of Australians celebrated our national day. Among the most enthusiastic participants were our newest Australian citizens. Thirteen thousand people enthusiastically took the pledge of commitment to this nation.

To some, multiculturalism is simply a diverse population, and a non-discriminatory immigration policy. These are the foundations of Australian multiculturalism, but it consists of much more.

Firstly, our multiculturalism is underpinned by respect for traditional Australian values. Those who arrive in Australia are invited to continue to celebrate their cultures within a broader culture of freedom but, more importantly, with respect. However, if there is any inconsistency between these values and individual freedom and the rule of law, then these Australian values win out. They must.

Ours is citizenship-based; to enjoy the full benefits of Australian society, it is necessary to take a pledge of commitment.

Australia's postwar immigration policy was originally driven by economic imperatives, but governments came to recognise the benefits of inviting full community participation by our immigrant populations in return for a respect for, and embracing of, the cultures and customs they brought with them. ... This seems to underline the benefits of the Australian approach ... We have tried to instil a sense of belonging in Australia while encouraging the participation of all people.

Multiculturalism is about inviting every individual member of society to be everything they can be and supporting each new arrival in overcoming whatever obstacles they face as they adjust to a new country and society and allowing them to flourish as individuals.

Chris Bowen is the Minister for Immigration. This is an edited version of a speech he delivered recently at the Sydney Institute.

www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/what-makes-multiculturalism-great-is-mutual-respect-20110216-1awik.html

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