mapping social cohesion 2009

the scanlon foundation surveys
full report

Professor Andrew Markus
Jessica Arnup

Mapping Social Cohesion
The 2009 Scanlon Foundation Surveys

Professor Andrew Markus

Jessica Arnup

Faculty of Arts, Monash University

Acknowledgements

CONTENTS

Foreword

Mapping Social Cohesion 2009 is a report on the second round of an extremely important longitudinal survey of social cohesion in Australia, funded by the Scanlon Foundation, and directed by Professor Andrew Markus, of Monash University.

The project has been undertaken as a partnership between the Scanlon Foundation, the Australian Multicultural Foundation, and the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements.

The special strengths of the Scanlon social cohesion survey are two-fold. First, Professor Markus and his colleagues cover both the national and some selected local levels of Australia's population. And second, the longitudinal nature of the survey enables comparisons over times that are changing.

Of major importance, therefore, in this second survey is the perspective which it brings of social cohesion in Australia following the sudden 2008 downward shift in the fortunes of the international economy of which Australia is a part. The first survey was conducted after an extended period of sustained, steady growth and high employment, while the second was administered at a time of increasing immigration and far greater economic uncertainty, which was marked by dramatic fears of deeply recessionary conditions.

The second survey provides further evidence on levels of social justice, a sense of belonging and worth.

The changed economic and social circumstances and expectations about future prospects at the time of the second survey are a background to the comparative results and make them of particular significance for all concerned with social cohesion in Australia.

In deference to the sensitivity of interpretations of survey results such as these, the study's release will be accompanied by community round table meetings in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne, and briefings of policy makers in various agencies and departments.

As in the first part of the survey, so in the second, Professor Markus has conducted the research with consummate care, and has written up the results with extremely high standards of scholarship and balance. Professor Markus was ably assisted by Mr Darren Pennay and the Social Research Centre, which is associated with Monash University, and by Mr Bruce Smith of the Scanlon Foundation.

We wish therefore, to thank Professor Andrew Markus and his colleagues for their highly professional work, and the Scanlon Foundation for its generous sponsorship of this crucial, continuing survey.

Professor John Nieuwenhuysen AM
Director, Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements

Dr Hass Dellal OAM
Executive Director , Australian Multicultural Foundation

Executive summary

The second Scanlon Foundation social cohesion survey, conducted in June–July 2009, was completed by 3800 Australians aged 18 years and over. It comprised a national survey of 2000 respondents, stratified by geographic location, and six local surveys with a total of 1800 respondents.

Given the lack of systematic opinion polling in Australia, the 2009 Scanlon Foundation survey is the first public poll to provide detailed exploration of attitudes to immigration since late 2007.

The 2009 survey was conducted in a period of declining economic confidence, with predictions that Australia, along with all Western economies, would face the most severe challenges since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Despite the economic concerns, the Australian government maintained a large immigration program. During recessions in the 1980s and 1990s negative views of immigration had risen sharply; this experience raised the expectation that the 2009 survey would reveal a marked change in opinion since the optimistic times of 2007 when the first social cohesion survey was conducted.

Contrary to such expectation, the most compelling finding is the lack of change in attitudes to immigration between 2007 and 2009. Detailed cross-tabulated analysis of two key questions bearing on immigration disclosed that of 42 variables considered, statistically significant change was observed for only three, or 7% of variables.

Statistical analysis indicates that the best predictors of a negative attitude to immigration were age – 55+ years; education – trade or diploma level qualification; financial circumstances – struggling to pay bills or poor; country of birth – Australia, with both parents born in Australia; residence – outside of a capital city. Conversely, positive views were most likely to be held by those under the age of 34; with a University level qualification; financially well off; and of non-English-speaking background.

The 2007 survey provided evidence of a society that maintained a high level of positive outcomes, fostering a sense of belonging, social justice and worth. This continues to hold true in 2009. With the two data sets now available, a nominal index of social cohesion has been developed. This index points to marginal increase since 2007 in indicators of rejection, and marginal decline in sense of belonging and worth. But there is also indication of increased participation in political life and a heightened confidence in the federal government and its pursuit of social justice and equity.

To consider responses to specific questions:

- The overwhelming majority of Australians – 95% (96% in 2007) – express a strong sense of belonging;

- 92% (94%) take great pride in the Australian way of life;

- 93% (95%) believe that maintaining the Australian way of life and culture is important;

- 89% (89%) indicate that 'taking all things into consideration', they are happy with their lives;

- 82% (81%) agree that Australia 'is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life';

- 72% (73%) express satisfaction with their present financial situation.

The Scanlon Foundation survey, in addition to its national focus, undertakes simultaneous local surveys. This approach is based on the understanding that social cohesion operates not in the abstract, the realm of the 'nation', but at the community level, where people of different backgrounds and cultures make their lives. For this reason, surveys are conducted in areas of high immigrant concentration, in regions where the historical record indicates the potential for social tension is higher.

There is much that is positive when findings in areas of high immigrant concentration are compared with findings at the national level. These positive findings relate to happiness over the last twelve months, financial satisfaction, future expectations, sense of belonging, and views of economic opportunity. But there are also marked differences when views on the level of immigration, sense of safety, and trust are considered.

The greatest variation in the pattern of response occurs when the views of long-time Australians (those born in Australia, with both parents born in Australia) are considered. Thus:

- 35% of long-time Australians in areas of high immigrant concentration agree that most people can be trusted, compared to 55% of the same group in the national survey;

- 28% feel safe walking alone at night, compared to 62% in the national survey;

- 44% express concern about becoming a victim of crime, compared to 23% in the national survey.

Linked to sense of safety and fear of becoming a victim of crime, there is greater reported experience of discrimination in areas of high immigrant concentration.

Other findings indicate that one in ten Australians hold strongly negative views on issues related to immigration and cultural diversity, with a larger ambivalent group and higher negativity in some regions and amongst some birthplace groups.

These statistics point to local environments in which social cohesion is made more difficult to maintain.

Among the strongest attitudinal predictors of perception of cohesion in the local area is agreement with the proposition that neighbours are willing to help each other. **The challenge for the federal and state governments, local authorities and community organisations, is to devise and co-ordinate strategies to improve sense of neighbourly co-operation, safety and trust.** These include:

- Adequately funded projects for young people;

- Community empowerment, based on an approach which maximises local involvement in the development and implementation of projects;

- Universal programs that build sense of equity, trust and community;

- Tangible and meaningful day-to-day outcomes.

The magnitude of the task is indicated by the finding that those least supportive of immigration and cultural diversity include respondents with no or limited post-school qualifications and in difficult financial circumstances. There are no easy, quick-fix solutions. But in context of the currently planned on-going large immigration intake, there are urgent social cohesion issues requiring serious attention. Research indicates that **some similarly placed low status socio-economic regions do better than others**. There are lessons to be learned and applied.

The 2009 Scanlon Foundation survey has again underscored the major and ongoing achievements of Australian society – and the ongoing challenges to be faced to maintain social cohesion in the years ahead.

1   Project objectives

The Scanlon Foundation was established in June 2001 with a mission *'to support the creation of a larger cohesive Australian society'.* The Foundation believes that Australia's future prosperity depends on the ability to maintain social cohesion while significantly increasing population through immigration intakes which will involve greater cultural diversity than ever before. In other words, not only has migration been historically critical to Australia's population growth, this dependence is unlikely to diminish. One simple but critical question arising from this future scenario is whether in the next five decades 'Australia can repeat the immigration and social cohesion success story of the past five decades'?

In order to answer this question, the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements and the Australian Multicultural Foundation, with Scanlon Foundation funding, commissioned Professor Andrew Markus from Monash University to design and undertake a benchmark measure of social cohesion, with the aim of repeating the study every two years. The benchmark survey was undertaken in June-July 2007 by the Melbourne-based research company The Social Research Centre.

It is important to note that rather than look at social cohesion in the abstract, the benchmark survey was designed to examine it within the context of the social impact of a prolonged period of sustained and significant immigration intake. Towards this end, the focus was to establish a national measure of social cohesion and to underpin it with a series of comparative surveys undertaken in areas of high immigrant concentration, in regions where the historical record indicates the potential for social tension is higher.

The Foundation continues to create awareness and stimulate knowledge-based discussion about Australia's population growth and the relationship between immigration and social cohesion. Since the results of the benchmark survey were published, it has also initiated on-the-ground action programs designed to address factors which affect social cohesion in areas where the potential for tension is most evident.

The Foundation continues to provide significant funding towards on-going, independent, primary research which can continue the development of our knowledge about social cohesion. This work continues with the commissioning of the 2009 *Mapping Social Cohesion* surveys.

2   What is social cohesion?

A detailed discussion of conceptual approaches to the field of 'social cohesion' is provided in the report on the first (2007) Scanlon Foundation surveys.[1]

As a concept, social cohesion has a long tradition in academic enquiry. It is of fundamental importance when discussing the role of consensus and conflict in society. From the mid-1990s, interest in the dynamics of social cohesion grew amid concerns prompted by the impact of globalisation, economic change and fears fuelled by the 'war on terror'. There is, however, no agreed definition of social cohesion. Most current definitions dwell on intangibles, such as sense of belonging, attachment to the group, willingness to participate and to share outcomes. They include three common elements:

Shared vision: Most researchers maintain that social cohesion requires universal values, mutual respect and common aspirations or identity shared by their members.

A property of a group or community: Social cohesion tends to describe a well-functioning core group or community in which there are shared goals and responsibilities and a readiness to cooperate with the other members.

A process: Social cohesion is generally viewed not simply as an outcome, but as a continuous and seemingly never-ending process of achieving social harmony.

Differences in definition concern the factors that enhance (and erode) the process of communal harmony, and the relative weight attached to the operation of specific factors. The key factors are:

Economic: Levels of unemployment and poverty, income distribution, population mobility, health, life satisfaction and sense of security, and government responsiveness to issues of poverty and disadvantage.

Political: Levels of political participation and social involvement, including the extent of voluntarism, the development of social capital, understood in terms of networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and co-operation for mutual benefit.

Socio-cultural: Levels of consensus and divergence (homogeneity and heterogeneity) on issues of local and national significance.

The Scanlon Foundation surveys adopt an eclectic, wide ranging approach, influenced by the work of social scientists Jane Jenson and Paul Bernard, to incorporate five domains:

Belonging: Shared values, identification with Australia, trust.

Social justice and equity: Evaluation of national policies.

Participation: Voluntary work, political and cooperative involvement.

Acceptance and rejection, legitimacy: Experience of discrimination, attitudes towards minorities and newcomers.

Worth: Life satisfaction and happiness, future expectations.

---

[1] Andrew Markus and Arunachalam Dharmalingam, *Mapping Social Cohesion: The Scanlon Foundation Surveys* (Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements 2008). See also Andrew Markus and Liudmila Kirpitchenko, 'Conceptualising social cohesion', in James Jupp and John Nieuwenhuysen (eds), *Social Cohesion in Australia* (Melbourne 2007).

3 Scope and methodology

Most survey work undertaken in Australia aims to collect data at the national and state level; there are also specialised studies, which explore attitudes within localities or sub-groups. The Scanlon Foundation surveys are distinctive in seeking to explore attitudes in three dimensions: at the national level, within selected localities, and within sub-groups. These objectives are achieved through a sample size and sub-quotas sufficient to provide understanding of attitudes across and within the population, with particular attention to country of birth.

The design of the questionnaire gives attention to the potential risk of biasing results by presenting respondents with a narrow range of linked questions; the questionnaire adopted covers a broad range of issues and gives careful attention to the sequencing of questions. The range of questions also provides for considerations of patterns of response in the context of indicators of life satisfaction and future expectations. Questions from earlier survey work (where research has been reported with sufficient precision to enable benchmarking of findings) have been included to provide scope for establishing trends in public opinion over time.

The following discussion presents a summary of the detailed 'Social Cohesion Study Methodological Report' prepared by The Social Research Centre and available to researchers on request.

Scope and methodology

The first Scanlon Foundation social cohesion survey in June–August 2007 was completed by 3500 Australians aged 18 years and over. It comprised a national survey of 2000 respondents, stratified by geographic location, and five local surveys with a total of 1500 respondents, two each in Melbourne and Sydney and one in Brisbane, conducted in areas of high immigrant concentration. Each of the five local surveys comprised a sample of 300 respondents, with a sample boost in two of the areas to provide data on the views and experiences of immigrants from Middle Eastern countries.

The 2009 survey (conducted in June–July) adopted the same approach, with some minor modifications to improve data yield. The national survey with 2000 respondents was directly replicated. The local surveys in areas of high immigrant concentration were undertaken in four Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Melbourne and Sydney, with the Brisbane local survey being omitted. The four local surveys were stratified (as in 2007) to yield a 50:50 split of Australia and overseas-born respondents, but without the additional Middle East sample boost. These surveys were undertaken in the LGAs of Greater Dandenong and Hume in Melbourne, Fairfield and Bankstown in Sydney. These were the areas surveyed in 2007, with the exception of the substitution of Bankstown for Auburn to yield a larger sample base. The place of residence of respondents to the local surveys is indicated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Respondents to local surveys in areas of immigration concentration by Local Government Area and suburb

LGA	Suburb	Postcode	Respondents (number)
Fairfield	Smithfield, Wetherill	2164	33
	Fairfield	2165	52
	Cabramatta, Canley Vale	2166	62
	Prairiewood, Wakeley, Edensor Park	2176	85
	Other		71
	Total		**303**
Bankstown	Greenacre (shared with Strathfield LGA), Chullora, Mt Lewis	2190	135
	Bankstown	2200	155
	Other		14
	Total		**304**
Hume	Broadmeadows, Dallas, Jacana	3047	157
	Coolaroo, Meadow Heights	3048	120
	Other		23
	Total		**300**
Greater Dandenong	Springvale	3171	45
	Keysborough	3173	45
	Noble Park	3174	84
	Dandenong	3175	107
	Other		19
	Total		**300**

Two additional local area surveys, each with 300 respondents, were undertaken in 2009 to explore attitudes in outer-urban regions characterised by a high proportion (greater than 80%) of Australia-born residents. The areas surveyed were Sunbury in Melbourne and Engadine and neighbouring suburbs (Heathcote, Waterfall, Woronora) in Sydney, and the sample was restricted to Australia-born respondents.

The design of the questionnaire was informed by a review of international and Australian research and included questions used in earlier studies to enable identification of change over time. Interviews were conducted by telephone (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) in June and July 2009. In addition to English, respondents had the option of completing the survey in one of eight community languages; a total of 27 of the national questionnaires and 140 (8%) of the local questionnaires were completed in a language other than English.

Following a review of the 2007 questionnaire, 12 substantive and two demographic questions were deleted as they had proved to be of minimal use for analysis. In the 2009 questionnaire, ten new questions were added to a module dealing with neighbourhood, together with five additional demographic questions. The sequence of questions was not altered, with the new neighbourhood module added after the first five modules of the questionnaire. The 2009 questionnaire comprised 38 substantive and 24 demographic questions and took an average of 16 minutes to administer.

In-scope population and sampling technique

The in-scope population for the Scanlon Foundation Surveys (2007) was persons aged 18 years of age and over who were residents of private households in Australia. Data collection was by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI).

The sampling technique for the national benchmark survey and the random components of the local level surveys was Random Digit Dialling (RDD). Approach letters introducing the survey were mailed to households where randomly generated telephone numbers could be matched to an address in the Electronic White Pages (EWP).

Respondents were selected using the next birthday method and a range of strategies were adopted to maximise response, including repeated call-backs to establish contact (a 15-call protocol), the operation of a 1800 number by The Social Research Centre, and interviewing in languages other than English. Table 3.2 provides a summary of project statistics.

Table 3.2: Survey overview

Overview	National benchmark survey		Local level surveys	
	2007	**2009**	**2007**	**2009**
Interviews completed	2,012	2,019	1,141	1,813
Response rate	44%	51%	42%	43%
Start date	21 June	22 June	28 June	22 June
Finish date	1 August	31 July	18 August	31 July
Average interview length in minutes	15.3	16.0	16.5	16.0

Sample design: National survey

The 2009 National Survey was a repeat of the 2007 National Benchmarking Survey and used a random sampling methodology stratified by geographic location. The sample was stratified by state/territory, with a minimum quota of 200 interviews per state/territory to be achieved (i.e. a sub-total of 1,600 interviews). The remaining 400 interviews were allocated across the five most populous states (NSW, Vic, Qld, WA and SA) on a probability proportional to size basis. The interviews in each state were allocated to capital city/rest of state in proportion to the population. This approach ensured that the final sample composition was geographically representative of the Australian adult population while, at the same time, ensuring a sufficiently large sample in each state/territory to support analysis at that level.

Local level surveys

The local level surveys also used a stratified sample design, with 300 interviews per area.

Within the areas of Hume, Bankstown, Fairfield, and Greater Dandenong, a sub quota of 150 Australia-born and 150 overseas-born interviews was set and in Sunbury and Engadine all interviews were conducted with Australian-born persons. Table 3.3 shows the *a priori* stratification used for the local level surveys.

Table 3.3: Overview of geographic stratification for the local level surveys

Geographic strata	Minimum completed interviews	Sub-quota 1 Australia-born interviews	Sub-quota 2 (achieved ESB/NESB profile) Overseas-born interviews
Fairfield	300	150	150 (20/130)
Greater Dandenong	300	150	150 (21/128)
Bankstown	300	150	150 (16/134)
Hume	300	150	150 (9/140)
Engadine	300	300	0
Sunbury	300	300	0

Procedures for interviewing in languages other than English

Non-English-language interviewing was limited to the six most commonly spoken community languages nationally: Vietnamese, Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin), Italian, Greek, Arabic (including Lebanese) and Turkish.

Where the preferred language of interview of the selected sample member was identified as one of those for follow-up, initially these records were stockpiled until a reasonable workload for a bi-lingual interviewer was reached.

Where the preferred language could not be immediately identified, a call-back was made in the hope that another household member would then be available to assist with the request for interview. Where the preferred language was not one of the six target languages, the record was assigned the code 'language difficulty, no follow-up' and no further call attempts were made.

Bi-lingual interviewers attended a supplementary briefing where issues of cultural sensitivity and language 'pitch' were discussed. Annotated questionnaires (one for each target language) were prepared, with key words and concepts translated. Bi-lingual interviewers then read the questions from their hard-copy translated/annotated version of the questionnaire and recorded answers directly into the English language CATI script as normal. Table 3.4 shows the language of interview used in the surveys.

Table 3.4: Language of interview

Language	National benchmark study (unweighted)	Local level surveys (unweighted)
English	1,992	1,673
Cantonese	-	6
Mandarin	6	11
Vietnamese	7	54
Italian	8	17
Greek	5	4
Arabic (incl. Lebanese)	1	41
Turkish	-	7
Total	2,019	1,813
% of interviews in language other than English	1.3%	7.7%

Fieldwork quality control procedures

The questionnaire and survey methodology was approved by the Monash University ethics committee with oversight of research involving human participants (Project number 2007/0319). Ethical considerations for the social cohesion survey included:

- Ensuring informed consent;

- Ensuring the voluntary nature of participation was clearly understood;

- Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of respondent information.

In addition to formal agreements, The Social Research Centre is bound to adhere to ASMRO Privacy Principles and the AMSRS Code of Professional Behaviour.

All interviewers selected to work on the social cohesion survey attended a comprehensive briefing session that covered:

- Project background, objectives and procedures;

- All aspects of administering the survey questionnaire, including ethical and specific data quality issues;

- Overview of respondent liaison issues, including refusal avoidance techniques;

- Practice interviewing.

The briefing sessions were delivered by The Social Research Centre project manager and supervisory staff. A total of 62 interviewers were briefed.

Consistent with the 'specialist team' policy for the social cohesion survey, more than half of the interviewing (51%) was completed by 17 members of the interviewing team.

The in-field quality monitoring techniques applied to this project included:

- Validation of interviews in accordance with ISO Standard 20252;
- Maintenance of an "interviewer handout" document addressing respondent liaison issues and tips for refusal avoidance;
- Examination of verbatim responses to "other specify" questions;
- Monitoring (listening in) by the Social Research Centre project managers and departmental supervisors.

Call results

A total of 114,303 calls were placed to achieve 3,832 completed surveys. This equates to an interview every 29.8 calls and average of 3.6 calls per sample record. Final call results for all surveys indicate that an interview was achieved at just over one in ten calls (10.7%). Approximately half of the numbers (48.8%) were unusable. Just under one in five (17%) were unresolved at the end of the call cycle (non-contacts or unresolved appointments) and almost one in ten (18.9%) were identified as out of scope. Refusals were encountered at 14.6% of the numbers to which calls were initiated. Also of note is the high number of those 'out of scope' in the local-level survey (13%) compared to the national survey (3.3%). This is because of the screening process set up to filter out those who did not reside in the target areas.

Response analysis

For the purposes of this report, and to enable comparisons with 2007, the response rate has been defined as interviews as a proportion of interviews plus refusals. On this basis, the final overall response rate for the National Survey was 51%, a substantial improvement on the 2007 national survey response rate of 44% and, we would like to think, is reflective of advances made by the Social Research Centre in the use of refusal aversion techniques.

The *unadjusted* response rate for the local-level surveys, calculated as described above, was 35%. However, given that a proportion of contacts were out of scope as they were either not residents of the target location or did not fulfil other quota requirements (e.g. Australian/overseas-born) they were regarded as out of scope. Within household refusals it is not known whether or not they would have been eligible to participate in the survey, as these sample records did not undergo the screening process to determine eligibility. Therefore, an adjustment to the response rate needs to be made to take this into account.

The adjusted response rate was calculated by dividing the number of interviews by interviews plus eligible refusals interviews plus a proportion of those refusals of unknown eligibility. The proportion of refusals of unknown eligibility included in the denominator was calculated by dividing the number of interviews and eligible refusals by the number of interviews and eligible refusals and known out of scope records. Once this adjustment has been accounted for, the final response rate for the local level surveys is 43%. This is a very similar result to that achieved in 2007 (42%).

Achieved sample profile

Table 3.5 compares the achieved sample profile (using unweighted data) with that of the general population (based on 2006 Census data). It can be seen that there is a skew towards older people, females and tertiary educated respondents. These results are consistent with other like surveys conducted by the Social Research Centre. All of these factors were taken into account in the weighting procedure, discussed below.

Table 3.5: Sample profile – national benchmark survey

Category	Achieved sample profile (unweighted)	Australian population
Total (n)	2,019	15,051,981
Age group		
18–24 years	8%	12%
25–34 years	13%	18%
35–44 years	19%	20%
45–54 years	21%	18%
55–64 years	19%	15%
65 years or more	19%	18%
Gender		
Male	42%	49%
Female	58%	51%
Employment status		
Employed	60%	62%
Educational attainment		
Year 10 or below	24%	34%
Year 12 or equivalent	18%	20%
Trade or technical	25%	24%
University (Bachelor or postgraduate degree)	32%	21%
Australia/overseas-born		
Australia-born	75%	76%
Overseas-born	25%	24%

Age, gender and birthplace figures taken from ABS 2006 Census data. Employment status taken from ABS, July 2007, Labour Force publication and educational attainment taken from ABS, May 2006, Education and Work. Note that the latter two publications include Australians aged 15 years or more.

Table 3.6 summarises the achieved sample profile for each local area study against available population benchmarks.

Table 3.6: Sample profile – Local level surveys (based on unweighted data) [2]

Category	Fairfield		Greater Dandenong		Bankstown	
	Achieved profile	Population	Achieved profile	Population	Achieved profile	Population*
Total (n)	303	179,892	303	125,519	304	48,910
Age group						
18-24 years	16%	15%	13%	13%	15%	15%
25-34 years	12%	18%	15%	19%	16%	21%
35-44 years	19%	20%	18%	18%	19%	19%
45-54 years	21%	19%	15%	18%	15%	17%
55-64 years	15%	14%	20%	14%	13%	11%
65-74 years	11%	8%	14%	9%	13%	8%
75+ years	5%	7%	5%	9%	9%	8%
Gender						
Male	42%	50%	47%	50%	43%	49%
Female	58%	50%	53%	50%	57%	51%
Educational Attainment						
University (Bachelor or postgraduate degree)	17%	6%	25%	7%	23%	8%
	Hume		**Engadine**		**Sunbury**	
	Achieved profile	Population*	Achieved profile	Population	Achieved profile	Population
Total (n)	300	33,038	300	17,936	303	31,003
Age group						
18-24 years	14%	16%	6%	12%	15%	14%
25-34 years	17%	19%	9%	20%	11%	18%
35-44 years	20%	22%	19%	20%	20%	22%
45-54 years	21%	16%	14%	17%	22%	21%
55-64 years	14%	13%	27%	18%	16%	13%
65-74 years	10%	10%	14%	8%	10%	7%
75+ years	5%	5%	11%	5%	7%	6%
Gender						
Male	43%	50%	48%	50%	41%	49%
Female	57%	50%	52%	50%	59%	51%
Educational Attainment						
University (Bachelor or postgraduate degree)	15%	4%	21%	10%	21%	7%

*Population within region surveyed

---

[2] Age, gender, birth place and educational attainment figures taken from ABS 2006 Census data.

Weighting

The 2007 survey data for the National Survey was weighted by age and sex within each state using 2006 Census data. The local level surveys (random component) were weighted by age and sex within each area using 2006 Census data. A pre-weight was applied to the data set that aligned the proportion of overseas and Australia-born respondents to 2006 Census figures.

For the 2009 survey, a more complex weighting procedure was developed and the new weights were reapplied to the random components of the 2007 survey to allow for comparability of results.

A common problem with any 'social issues' survey is that people with a university education are generally more willing to participate and, as a result, tend to be *over-represented* in the final sample. There is evidence of this in the 2007 Social Cohesion survey where 27.5% of national survey respondents held a university degree. This is well above the ABS 2006 Census figure of 16.5% of the Australian population aged 18 years or over with a Bachelor's Degree or higher. Further, those of non-English-speaking background are typically *under-represented*. There are important considerations, as the attitudes of university graduates and those of non-English-speaking background are distinctive on many of the issues addressed in the survey, as discussed in the substantive discussion following.

A key difficulty in seeking to weight survey data via a conventional weighting matrix created from four different variables (for example, age – 4 categories; gender – 2 categories; state of residence – 8 categories; and educational attainment – 2 categories) is the level of population disaggregation that is required. In this case, the population would need to be disaggregated into 128 separate cells (that is, 4 x 2 x 8 x 2 = 128). Doing this to a relatively limited sample like that from the 2007 national survey (n=2,012) means that, on average, only about 16 respondents are present in each cell. This raises questions as to how well each of these small groups represents its segment of the population. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that only 27.5% of the sample is university graduates – for this group, the average cell size would only be around 9 people.

One way of getting around this problem is to use 'rim weighting'. This approach uses a form of least squares regression to provide an even distribution of results across the entire dataset while balancing categories such as age, gender, state and educational attainment to pre-determined totals. It weights the specified characteristics simultaneously and is constrained to disturb each variable as little as possible.

Table 3.7: National survey weighting matrix

Category	Rim weighting targets
Total population	19,855,288
Total population aged 18+ years (n)	15,051,981
State	
New South Wales	4,971,005
Victoria	3,774,563
Queensland	2,920,046
South Australia	1,170,169
Western Australia	1,471,816
Tasmania	361,975
Northern Territory	134,612
Canberra	247,765
Age by education group	
Uni, 18-34 years	888,290
Not uni, 18-34 years	3,649,170
Uni, 35-44 years	608,235
Not uni, 35-44 years	2,322,953
Uni, 45-54 years	517,301
Not uni, 45-54 years	2,239,225
Uni, 55+ years	467,557
Not uni, 55+ years	4,359,250
Gender	
Male	7,330,732
Female	7,721,249
Country of birth	
Australia/Overseas ESB	15,748,287
Overseas NESB	4,107,001

After a series of trials, using the rim weighting procedure was found to be viable, enabling the adjustment of the sample by university graduate status *and* birthplace (i.e. whether born in an English-speaking or non-English-speaking country) proved to be possible. This additional adjustment corrects for the under representation of persons from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) in the achieved sample. For the purposes of this exercise, those born in Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States have been classified as of English-speaking Background (ESB). The variables used for weighting of the national survey are indicated in Table 3.7. The trials indicated that while the attempt to optimise the use of weights provided for greater confidence in the survey findings, for the most part the impact of the new weighting approach was non-existent to slight (producing change within two percentage points –Table 3.8).

Table 3.8: Unweighted and weighted results compared, 2007 survey

Survey item	National sample			Greater Dandenong		
	Unweighted	2007 weights	New weights	Unweighted	2007 weights	New weights
Voted in an election in the last three years or so	87.8%	86.7%	85.1%	80.4%	79.7%	79.0%
Signed a petition in the last three years or so	60.1%	57.3%	55.1%	30.6%	30.4%	27.9%
Written or spoken to a federal or state Member of Parliament over the last three years or so	29.3%	25.0%	23.6%	15.0%	14.7%	13.4%
Joined a boycott of a product or company over the last three years or so	14.4%	14.3%	12.5%	7.3%	7.1%	6.5%
Attended a political meeting over the last three years or so	11.7%	10.5%	9.4%	5.6%	5.6%	4.8%

4   The survey context

The first social cohesion survey in 2007 was undertaken in an environment of sustained economic growth, high employment and a steadily increasing immigration intake. For over a decade, Australia's economy had experienced strong growth, with a marked decline in unemployment which, by 2006, had reached the lowest levels since the early 1970s. Unemployment as a proportion of the labour force averaged 7.2% in the 1980s, 8.6% in the 1990s, and 6.6% during 2000–02. In January 2005 it stood at 5.1%, in July 2007 (the time of the survey) at 4.3%.

By the time of the 2009 survey there was a marked deterioration in the economic environment. Financial commentators portrayed the Global Financial Crisis as posing the most severe economic challenge for industrialised economies since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The Australian government, in alignment with the policies adopted by G20 countries, invested heavily in measures to support the economy on the basis of deficit financing, while the Reserve Bank cut the prime lending rate to the lowest level in 40 years. In a climate of economic uncertainty there were projections of a significant increase in unemployment and at the time of the 2009 survey, unemployment had risen from a low of 4.3% in 2007 to 5.9%. Contrary to dire predictions, this was a relatively low level (for example, in the United States unemployment at the time was 9.5%). Further, Australia was one of a handful of industrialised countries to avoid a recession, defined as two consecutive terms of negative economic growth.

Immigration

Over the last ten years there has been significant change in the three components that determine net permanent annual immigration: permanent arrivals, conversion of temporary residency to permanent residency, and permanent departures. From June 1998 to June 2009 annual permanent arrivals almost doubled (from 84,200 to 158,000), while the number converting to permanent residency increased four-fold (from 15,100 to 66,600); permanent departures also increased substantially, from 35,200 to 81,100.

Growth has continued over the last two years, despite concerns over the economic outlook. Although the government signalled cuts to the intake in March 2009 (14% cut to the permanent skill intake for 2008–09) and a further cut in the May 2009 budget (6,900 places cut from the permanent skill intake for 2009–10), there was a small increase in the Family Program. Given that immigration was running at near-record levels in the months leading to the onset of the Global Financial Crisis, a very large program was maintained. Recent data indicates that the net change in permanent residents from immigration continued to increase in the 2008–09 financial year, to reach 143,600, up from 129,100 in 2007–08 (Figure 4.1, Table 4.1).

The main source countries contributing permanent additions to the population in the six months July–December 2008 were the United Kingdom (14.2%), New Zealand (11.7%), India (10.8%) and China (10.1%).

Statistics for permanent immigration only capture part of the magnitude of the current program. Since 1999-2000 the major element of net overseas immigration has been long-term (not permanent) population movement.

Business Long Stay visas were introduced in 1996 and cover both the primary applicant and his or her family. The number of visas issued in the subclass 457 category increased from 30,800 in 1997-98 to 111,000 in 2007-08. Other categories of long-stay arrivals include New Zealanders, students and working holiday makers.[3]

On 30 June 2009, there were 142,700 Temporary Business visa holders resident in Australia, 102,300 working holiday makers, 548,300 New Zealand citizens and 386,500 students, a total of 1,168,900 persons (Table 4.2). With two additional categories, an estimated 60,000 bridging visa holders and a substantive number of former students who have received a temporary visa (category 485), long-stay residents are likely to exceed 1.3 million.

---

[3] For discussion of change in Australia's immigration policy, see Andrew Markus, James Jupp and Peter McDonald, *Australia's Immigration Revolution*, Allen & Unwin, 2009.

Indicative of the extent of population movement in contemporary Australia – the context in which the Scanlon Foundation surveys were undertaken – in the areas of high immigrant concentration surveyed more than 10% of the resident overseas-born population arrived between 2001 and the 2006 census, with a peak of 19% in the LGA of Greater Dandenong.

Figure 4.1: Permanent arrivals (including onshore conversion) and departures 1998-2009
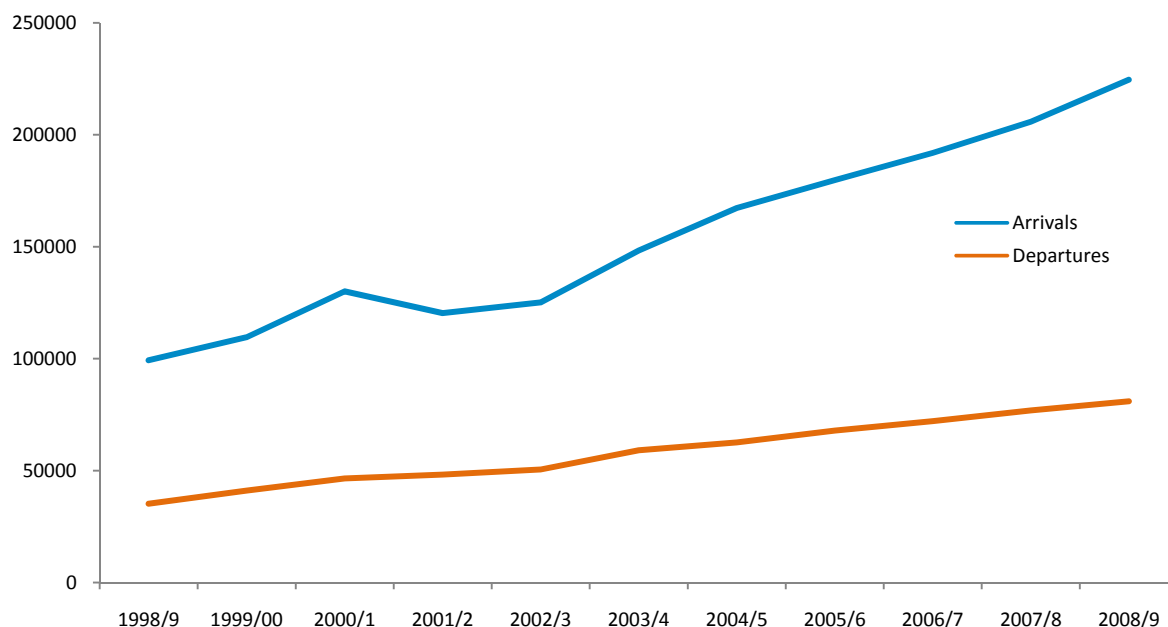
Table 4.1: Net change in permanent residents from immigration, 1998–2009 (000s)

Year	Permanent arrivals	Conversion onshore to permanent residence	Sub-total	Permanent departures	Net total
1998–99	84.2	15.1	99.3	35.2	64.1
1999–00	92.3	17.3	109.6	41.1	68.5
2000–01	107.4	22.7	130.1	46.5	83.6
2001–02	88.9	31.5	120.4	48.2	72.2
2002–03	93.9	31.3	125.2	50.5	74.7
2003–04	111.6	36.7	148.3	59.1	89.2
2004–05	123.4	43.9	167.3	62.6	104.7
2005–06	131.6	48.2	179.8	67.9	111.9
2006–07	140.1	51.8	191.9	72.1	119.8
2007–08	149.4	56.6	206.0	76.9	129.1
2008–09	158.0	66.6	224.6	81.0	143.6

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Immigration Update*; preliminary data for 2008-09

Table 4.2: Long-stay residents in Australia, selected visa categories, 2005-2009 (000s)

Year	Temporary Business Entry (457 visa)	Working Holiday Makers (417 visa)	New Zealand citizens	Students	Total
30 June 2005	62.7	57.7	448.8	192.8	762.0
30 June 2006	80.1	63.1	470.6	207.8	821.6
30 June 2007	104.0	74.5	504.4	248.5	931.4
30 June 2008	134.2	86.6	521.2	317.9	1059.9
30 June 2009	142.7	102.3	548.3	386.5	1168.9

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Immigration Update*

One additional and important element for understanding the survey context is the extent to which immigration and related issues engage public attention. The digitisation of newspaper archives makes possible searches of databases to provide an immediately accessible but necessarily approximate indication of attention to specific issues.

For the purposes of this analysis a search of *The Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald* databases was undertaken using the Access World News database and 'Publisher's Index items'. As a check on broad reliability, coverage in January 2007, January 2009 and January 2010 was undertaken for the term 'immigration', which covered a broad range of topics including asylum and refugees. A general reading of newspaper coverage indicated that the discussion of 'immigration' issues was at a high point in January 2010, with extensive coverage focused on the presence of Indian students in Australia and issues of racism. The quantitative analysis supported a qualitative reading of the media coverage. The count of items related to immigration in *The Age* showed an increase from 22 items in January 2007 to 24 items in January 2009 and 56 items in January 2010. Coverage in the *Sydney Morning Herald* for these months showed an increase from 10 to 20 to 42. A summary indication of the quantitative survey findings is provided in Table 4.3.

There are three main findings from this analysis.

First, there is some increase in attention to immigration issues between 2007 and 2009, from 165 to 202 in *The Age* and 150 to 206 in the *Sydney Morning Herald* for the eight month period January-August. In numerical terms the increase of 40-55 items over eight months is relatively small, though expressed as a percentage the change from a relatively small base is an increase of more than 20% in *The Age* and more than 35% in the *Sydney Morning Herald.* Of particular interest are the months of surveying, June-August in 2007 and June-July in 2009. While there was increase in coverage during June in both years, there was a marked decline in attention to immigration issues in the following two months.

Second, the coverage of issues related to the 'economy' increased at roughly the same proportion in *The Age* for the eight month period (25%) but at a markedly higher level (65%) in the *Sydney Morning Herald.*

Third, as would be expected, discussion of the 'economy' attracted much greater attention than immigration issues in both 2007 and 2009. Thus, the analysis shows around 200 items related to immigration in both papers in 2009, compared with 1500 items related to the economy in *The Age* and 1800 items in the *Sydney Morning Herald.* The percentage increase in the coverage of the economy thus indicates a markedly greater number of items in the papers analysed.

Table 4.3: Quantitative analysis, immigration and economic issues, *The Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald,* 2007, 2009

Month	Immigration issues *The Age*		Immigration issues *SMH*		Economic issues *The Age*		Economic issues *SMH*	
	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009
January-February	54	52	29	47	227	431	159	427
March-April	46	72	30	72	351	445	251	530
May-June	22	60	25	59	339	448	352	483
July-August	43	18	66	28	291	182	342	374
Total	165	202	150	206	1,208	1,506	1,104	1,814

Source: *Access World News,* 'Publisher's Index items'.

5   Ethnic diversity in the Australian population

At the 2006 census, 23.9% of the Australian population was born overseas. In the capital cities, the largest proportion of overseas-born resided in Sydney (34.5%), followed by Perth (33.7%), Melbourne (31.0%), Adelaide (25.1%), Brisbane (23.2%) and Hobart (12.8%). The proportion of overseas-born in the mainland capitals is unevenly spread, with concentrations above 50% in some LGAs. In Melbourne, the largest concentrations of overseas-born are located in the central, south-eastern and western regions of the city; in Sydney they are located in the central and western regions. The extent of diversity is evident in the profiles (drawn from the 2006 census) of the four high immigrant concentration LGAs in which local surveys were undertaken for this study.

Greater Dandenong (LGA, Victoria)

Located in the south-east of Melbourne (over 30 km from the CBD), in 2006 the Estimated Resident Population of Greater Dandenong was 130,800 (135,240 in June 2008). Greater Dandenong claims to be the most culturally and linguistically diverse LGA in Victoria with some 150 national groups. The median weekly individual income is the second lowest of the four immigration localities surveyed ($342, compared with $481 for the Melbourne statistical region). The proportion born overseas has risen from 38% in 1991 to 56% in 2006, with an overseas-born concentration in the 80%-100% range in parts of the LGA, the highest for local areas studied. 82% of the population has one or both parents born overseas. 19% of the overseas-born population (10% of the total population) arrived since January 2001. 62% of the residents speak a language other than English in their homes. 31% of the overseas-born (totalling 19,900) speak English 'not well' or 'not at all'. 10% of the population speak Vietnamese and 4% Khmer. The largest non-Christian religious affiliations are Buddhism (15%) and Islam (8%).

Hume (LGA, Victoria)

Located north-west of Melbourne (some 20 km from the CBD), Hume is in one of Australia's fastest growth regions. In 2006 the Estimated Resident Population was 153,700 (162,260 in June 2008). The median individual weekly income is $403, the highest of immigrant areas surveyed in Melbourne and Sydney. The overseas-born proportion is relatively low (31%) amongst the areas surveyed, but there are overseas-born concentrations in the 45%-61% range in the south-eastern parts of the LGA that were the focus of surveying. Members of over 130 national groups have made their homes in the region. 64% of the population has one or both parents born overseas. 14% of the overseas-born population (4% of the total population) arrived since January 2001. 42% of the residents speak a language other than English in their homes, and 24% of the overseas-born speak English 'not well' or 'not at all'. Hume has Melbourne's largest proportion of residents of Middle East origin; 8% of the population speaks Turkish and 6% Arabic. The largest non-Christian religious affiliation is Islam (13%).

Bankstown (LGA, New South Wales)

Bankstown is located south-west of Sydney (some 20 km from the CBD). In June 2006 the Estimated Resident Population was 176,800 (182,200 in June 2008). The median individual weekly income is $372. The overseas-born make up 36% of the population, with highest concentrations in the 56%-76% range. Almost three-quarters (73%) of the residents have one or both parents born overseas. 12% of the overseas-born and 4% of the total population arrived in Australia since January 2001. 57% speak a language other than English in the home and of the overseas-born 29% speak English 'not well' or 'not at all'. 19% of the population speak Arabic and 8% Vietnamese. The largest non-Christian religious affiliations is Islam (15%).

Fairfield (LGA, New South Wales)

Located in the outer-western region of Sydney (over 30 km from the CBD, some 10 km west of Auburn), Fairfield is one of the largest LGAs with an Estimated Resident Population in 2006 of 186,400 (190,660 in June 2008). Fairfield has the lowest median individual weekly income of the local areas surveyed ($319). 55% of the population is overseas-born, in parts of the LGA in the range 69-81%. 87% of the population has one or both parents born overseas. 11% of the overseas-born population (5.8% of the total population) arrived since January 2001. The 2001 census indicated that of the overseas-born, 95% were from a non-English-speaking country. 73% speak a language other than English in their homes. 32% of the overseas-born (totalling 29,930) speak English 'not well' or 'not at all'. 17% of the population speak Vietnamese, 6% Arabic, 6% Assyrian and 6% Cantonese. The largest non-Christian religious affiliation is Buddhism (22%)

The two outer-urban localities surveyed were selected on the basis of their high proportion of Australia-born residents:

Engadine (Suburb, New South Wales)

Located south-west of Sydney (33 km from the CBD), the suburb of Engadine had a population 17,940 at the 2006 census. Over 93% of those living in Engadine speak only English in the home; 84% of the population is Australia-born, a further 4% are from England and 1% from NZ. The most common religious affiliation is Roman Catholic (32%) followed by Anglican (29%). Of those in the labour force, only 3% were unemployed in 2006, well below the Australian level of 5% The median individual weekly income was $597, significantly higher that the Australian median of $466.

Sunbury (Suburb, Victoria)

Located north-west of Melbourne (over 40 km from the CBD), Sunbury had a population of 31,000 in 2006. As in Engadine, a large majority of the population (80%) is Australia-born, followed by 5% from England and 1% from New Zealand. 90% speak only English in the home, the other most common languages are indicative of earlier (post-war) immigration intakes, including those born in Italy (1.2%), Greece (0.5%) and Malta (0.4%). The median individual weekly income is $514, some $50 above the Australian average. The most common religious affiliation is Roman Catholic (34%).

Table 5.1: Surveyed local regions, selected characteristics

Category	Greater Dandenong (LGA)	Hume (LGA)	Bankstown (LGA)	Fairfield (LGA)	Engadine (Suburb)	Sunbury (Suburb)
Population (2008 EPR)	135,240	162,260	182,200	190,660	17,940	31,000
Median Individual weekly income	$342	$403	$372	$319	$597	$514
Overseas-born	56%	31%	36%	55%	16%	20%
Speak language other than English in the home	62%	42%	57%	73%	7%	10%
Non-Christian religious affiliation (>5%)	Buddhism (15%) Islam (8%)	Islam (13%)	Islam (15%)	Buddhism (22%)	None	None

Map 5.1

People Born Overseas
As a percentage of the total population
Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
Greater Dandenong (C) (Local Government Area) by Census Collection District

Per cent

- 80 - 101
- 63 - 80
- 53 - 63
- 29 - 53
- 0 - 29
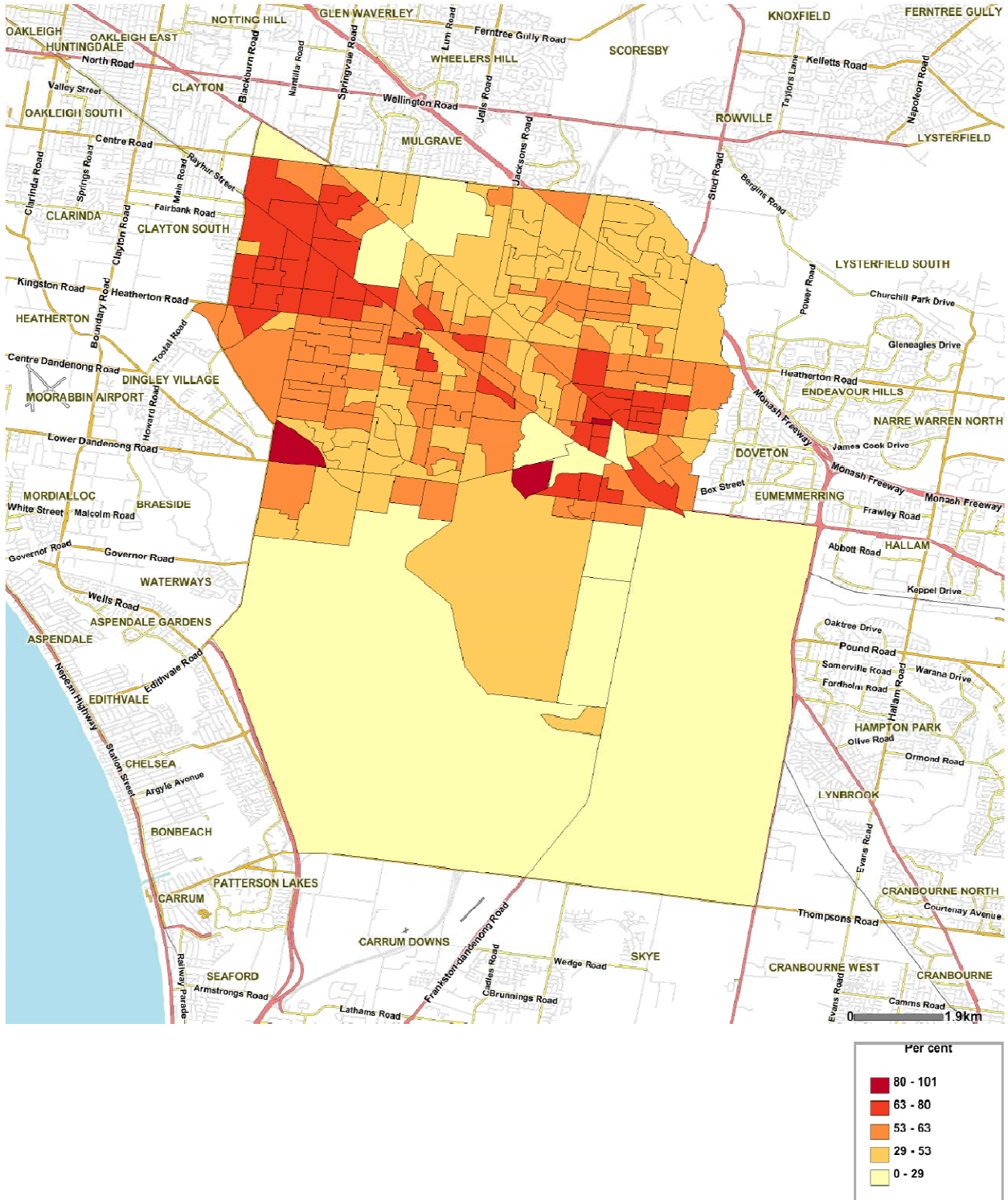
Map 5.2

People Born Overseas
As a percentage of the total population
Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
Hume (C) (Local Government Area) by Census Collection District
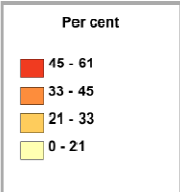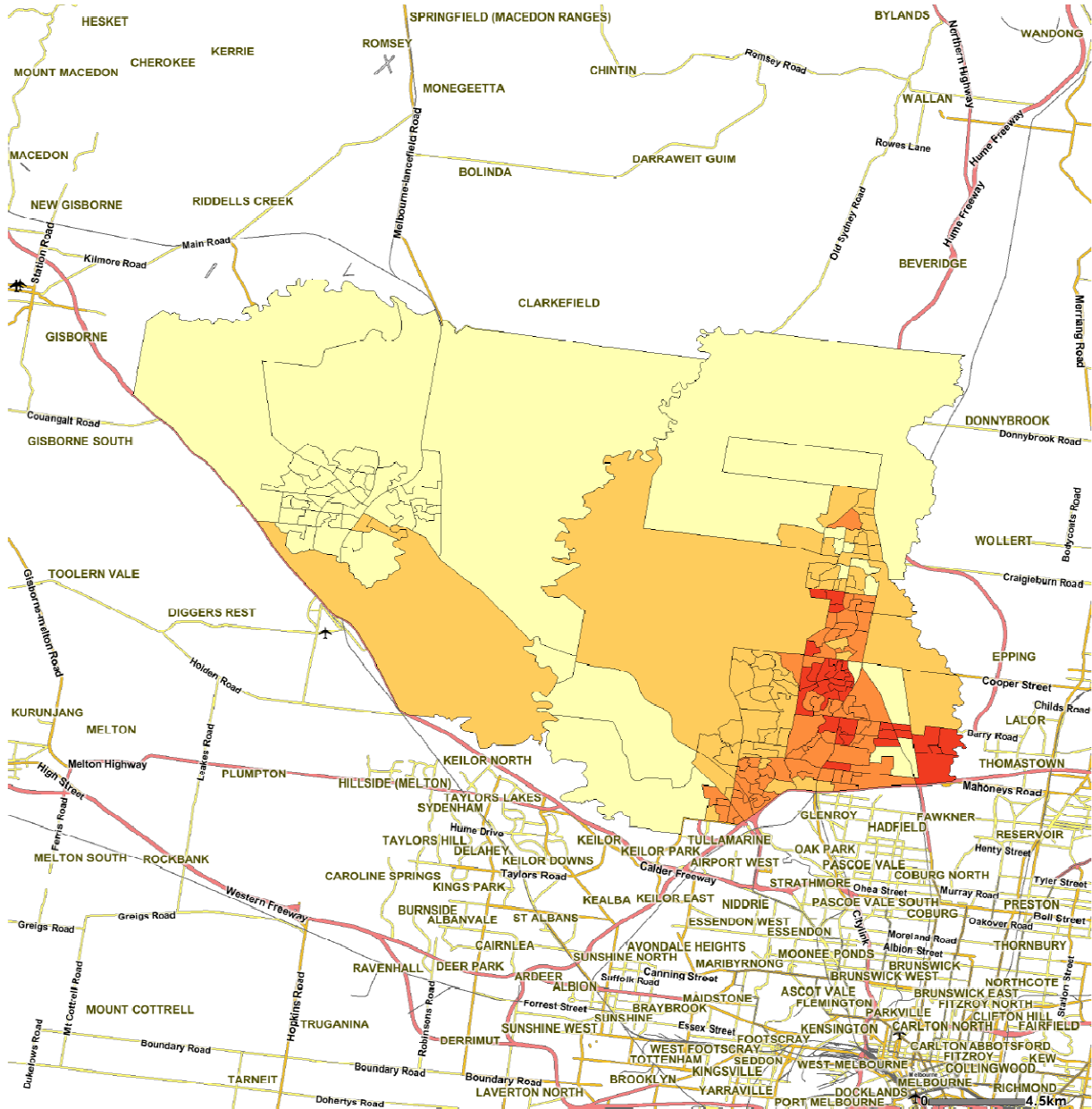
Per cent

- 45 - 61
- 33 - 45
- 21 - 33
- 0 - 21

© Copyright Commonwealth of Australia & PSMA Australia 2007

Map 5.3

People Born Overseas
As a percentage of the total population
Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
Bankstown (C) (Local Government Area) by Census Collection District

Per cent

- 56 - 76
- 46 - 56
- 37 - 46
- 26 - 37
- 10 - 26

© Copyright Commonwealth of Australia & PSMA Australia 2007

Map 5.4

Australian Bureau of Statistics

People Born Overseas
As a percentage of the total population
Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
Fairfield (C) (Local Government Area) by Census Collection District
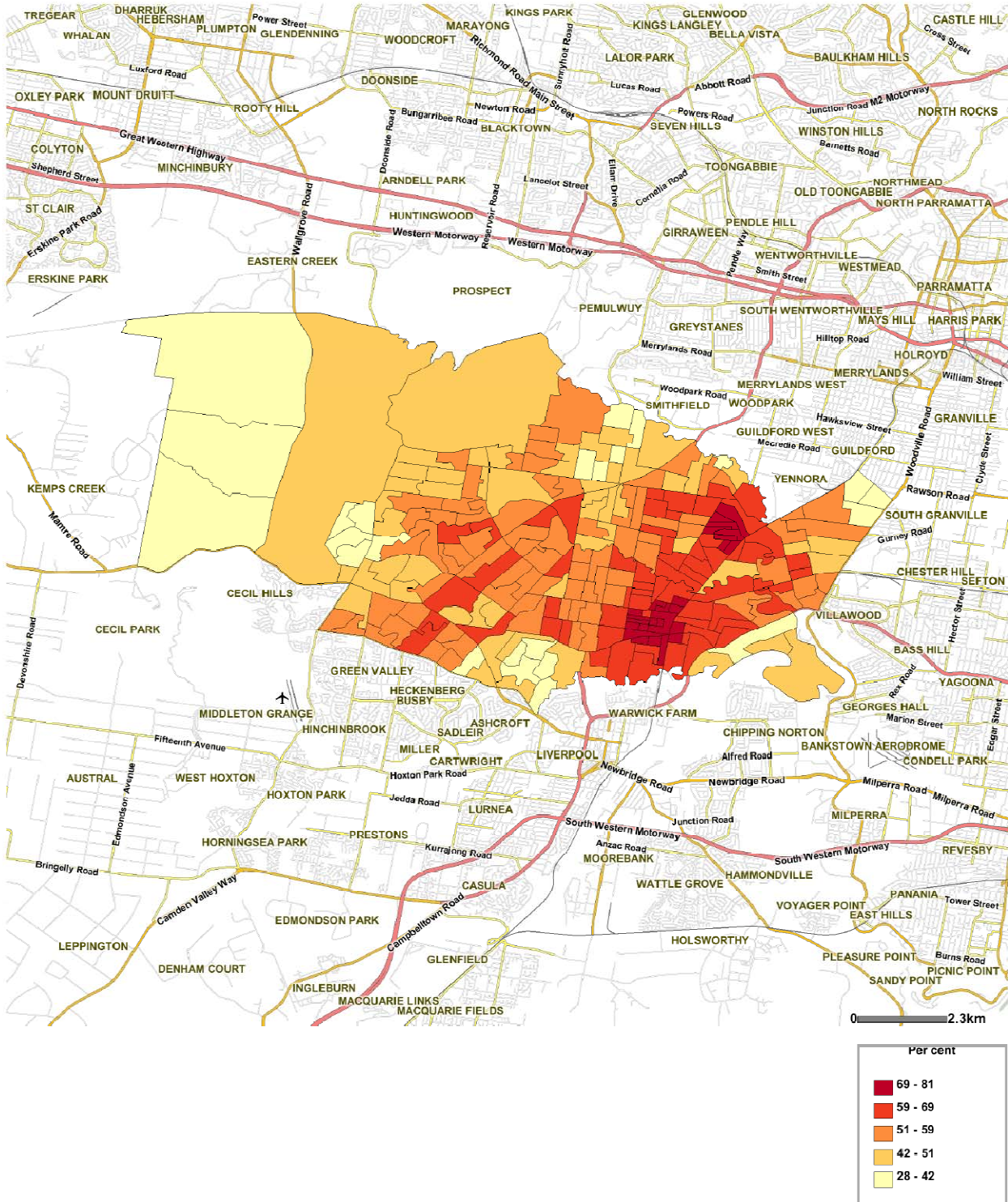
Per cent

- 69 - 81
- 59 - 69
- 51 - 59
- 42 - 51
- 28 - 42

0   2.3km

© Copyright Commonwealth of Australia & PSMA Australia 2007

Map 5.5

Australian Bureau of Statistics

People Born Overseas
As a percentage of the total population
Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
Engadine (State Suburb) by Census Collection District
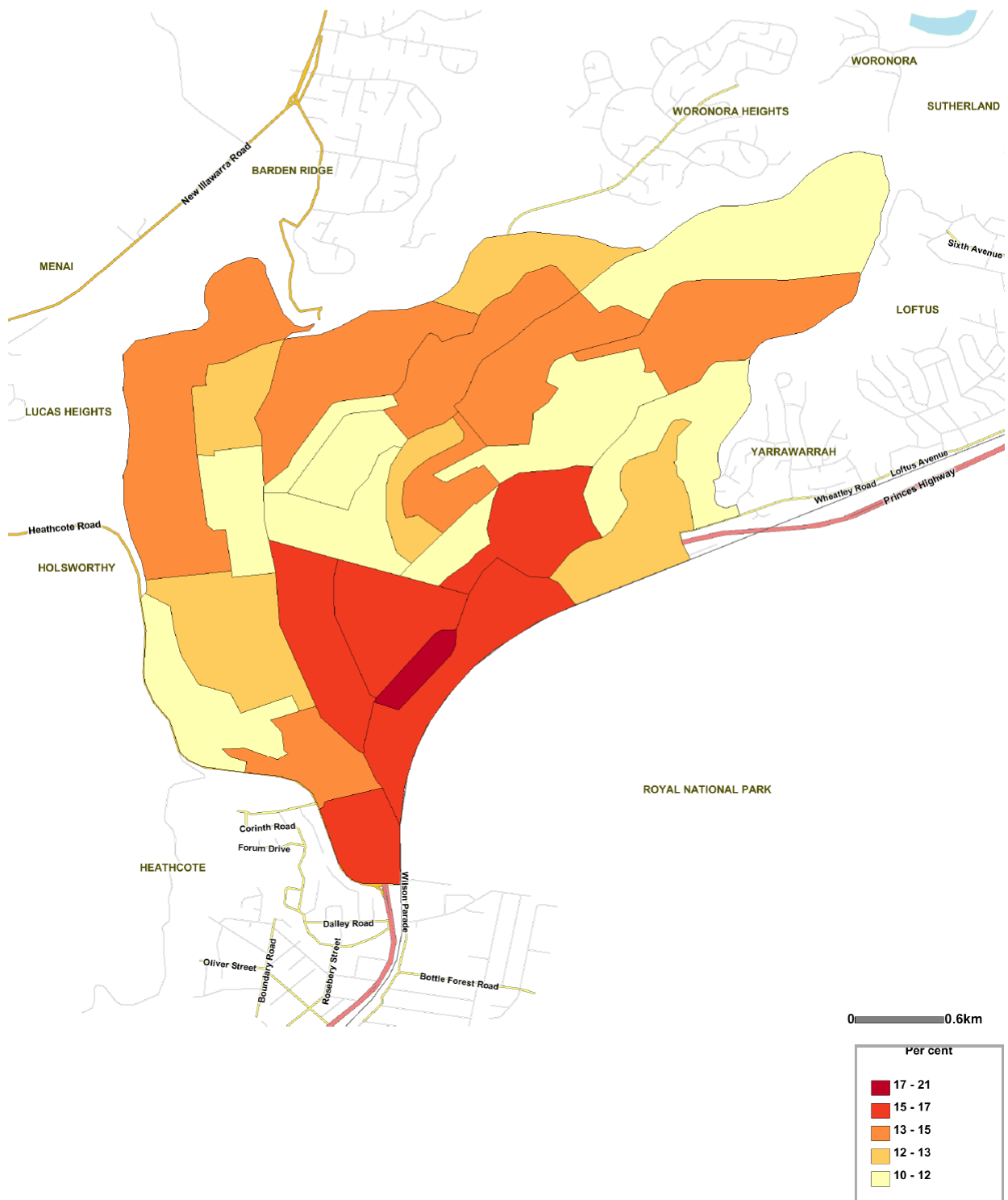
Per cent

■	17 - 21
■	15 - 17
■	13 - 15
■	12 - 13
■	10 - 12

© Copyright Commonwealth of Australia & PSMA Australia 2007

Map 5.6

Australian Bureau of Statistics

People Born Overseas
As a percentage of the total population
Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
Sunbury (State Suburb) by Census Collection District

NEW GISBORNE

Main Road

Kilmore Road

Riddell Road

RIDDELLS CREEK

CLARKEFIELD

GISBORNE

Melbourne-lancefield Road

Couangalt Road

GISBORNE SOUTH

WILDWOOD

Gellies Road

DIGGERS REST

Calder Freeway Calder Freeway

BULLA

TOOLERN VALE

SUNBURY

Sunbury Road

Plimpton Road

Welcome Road

Diggers Rest-cofmadai Road

0   1.6km

Per cent

- 20 - 24
- 17 - 20
- 15 - 17
- 13 - 15
- 9 - 13
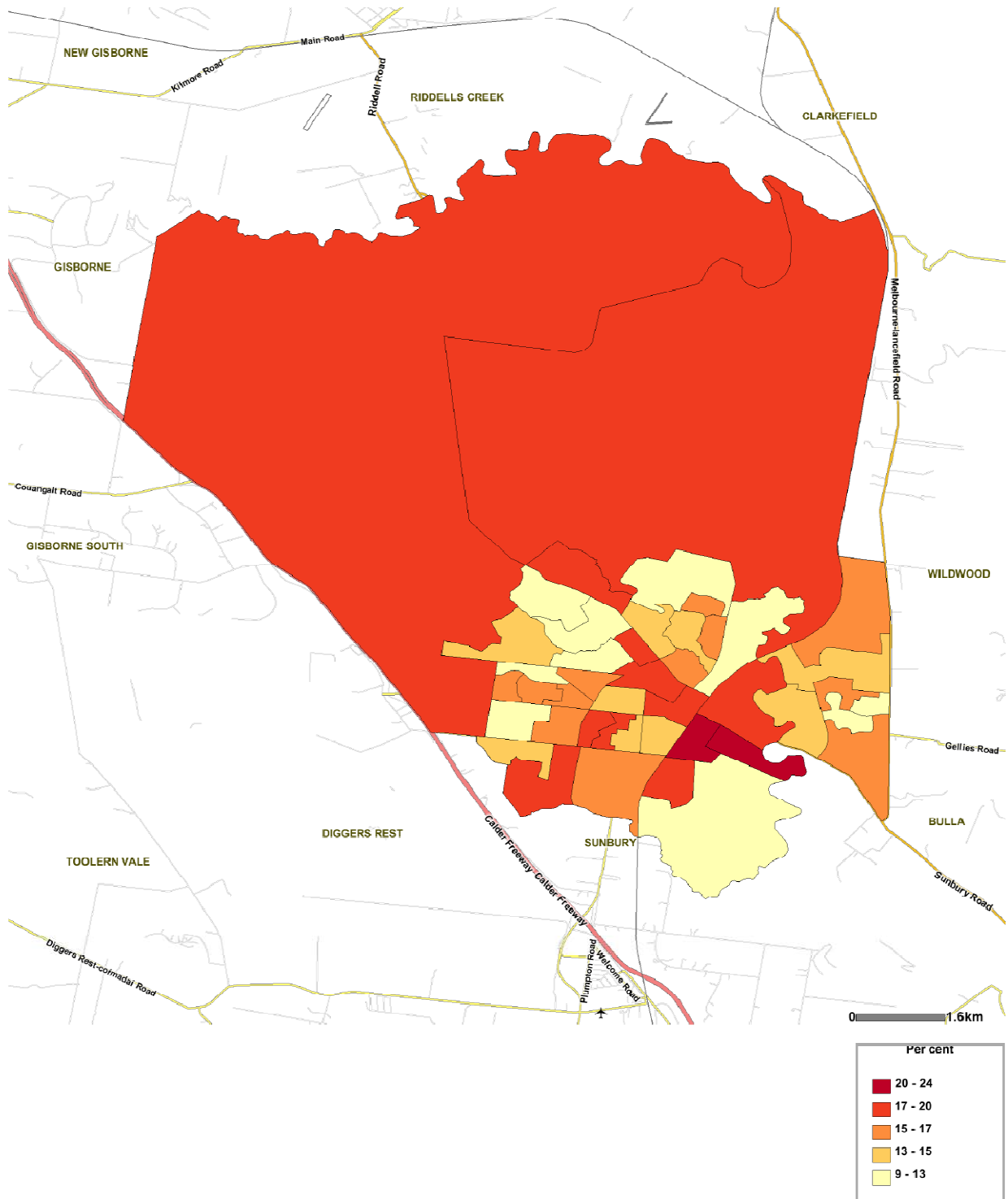
© Copyright Commonwealth of Australia & PSMA Australia 2007

6 The logic and consistency of public opinion

A simplistic reading of survey results considers findings against the yardstick of a majority – whether 50% or more respondents endorse a specific proposition, and the extent of variation above or below the 50% mark. The approach adopted in this study is grounded in an understanding of the logic of public opinion, the types of questions that elicit near consensus (whether positive or negative) and those that divide opinion. Survey results are interpreted within three categories:

> Strong positive – above 70%;
> Polarised or divided opinion – in the range 30% - 70%;
> Strong negative – below 30%.

The greatest change between surveys is expected within the category of polarised or divided opinion. In the following analysis, results from the 2009 survey are considered alongside those from 2007.

Further, in the data analysis presented, the main focus is on patterns of response to types of questions and on a broad perspective which includes life experience: personal finances, level of happiness and future expectations. An overly narrow approach concerned with a few specific questions runs the risk of misrepresenting and misinterpreting what are necessarily questions of interest to those undertaking surveys but may be of passing or little interest to respondents. Consideration of magnitude or strength of opinion is vital to interpretation of survey results.

Strong positive

General questions relating to national life and levels of personal satisfaction elicited the high levels of positive response that are evident in Australian surveys over the last 20 years. In terms of **identification with Australia:** the overwhelming majority of Australians – 95% (96% in 2007) – express a strong 'sense of belonging', 92% (94%) take 'pride in the Australian way of life', and 93% (95%) believe that 'maintaining the Australian way of life and culture is important'.

In terms of **life satisfaction issues,** 89% (89%) indicate that 'taking all things into consideration', they are happy with their life, while 82% (85%) expect their lives to be the same or improved in three to four years' time; 72% (73%) express satisfaction with their present financial situation (24% indicated dissatisfaction in 2009 and 24% in 2007). In terms of **equality of opportunity**, 82% (81%) agree that Australia 'is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life'. When **immigration is considered in terms of broad principle**, there is a high level of positive sentiment. Thus, in response to the proposition that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger', 68% (67%) agree while 27% (26%) disagree.

Strong negative

Questions related to policies that are seen to advantage minorities reveal the highest level of disagreement or opposition. This strongly negative response is inherent in the questions posed, for majority opinion rarely supports special benefits or advantages for minorities. Thus government assistance to ethnic minorities to **maintain their customs and traditions** is seen as of benefit to select minorities, not as of national benefit, as indicated by the finding that 33% (32%) support such assistance, but 60% (62%) oppose it. The majority also consider that the distribution of income in Australian society is inequitable. When presented with the proposition that 'the gap between those with high incomes and those with low incomes is too large', 71% agree (down from 77% in 2007); only a small minority of 22% (18%) disagree.

Figure 6.1: Patterns of response, selected questions
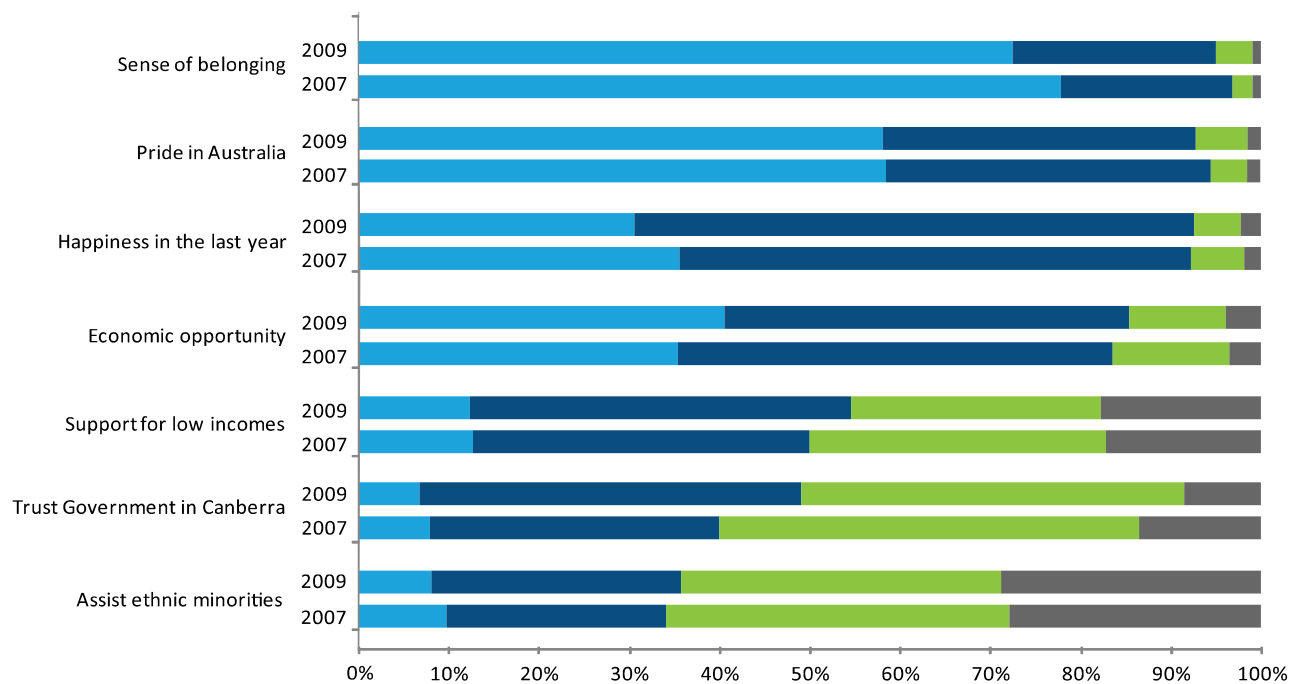
Questions: •To what extent do you have a sense of belonging in Australia? Great, moderate, slight, not at all; •To what extent do you take pride in the Australian way of life and culture? Great, moderate, slight, not at all; •Taking all things into consideration, would you say that over the last year you have been… Very happy, happy, not happy, very unhappy; • Australia is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree; • People living on low incomes in Australia receive enough financial support from the government. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree; • How often do you think the government in Canberra can be trusted to do the right thing for the Australian people? Almost always, most of the time, only some of the time, almost never; • Ethnic minorities in Australia should be given Australian government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree.

Divided opinion

Questions dealing with politicised issues elicited divided responses, in the 30–70% range, mirroring the division evident in support for the major political parties, and may undergo significant shift over time, reflecting the changing political fortunes of political parties and the linked attitude to specific policies.

In 2009 there was a higher level of support than in 2007 for government policy and for outcomes in the realm of social justice. Thus, in relation to **specific social justice issues:** 57% (52%) agree that 'Australia has an excellent government school system', 33% (36%) disagree; in 2007 opinion was evenly divided (46%: 45%) on whether government financial support to those on low incomes is adequate, in 2009 the majority (50%: 41%) agreed that income support is adequate.

In relation to **confidence in government,** almost half of respondents (48%) have confidence that the federal government will 'almost always' or 'most times' do what is right for the Australian people, compared with four out of ten respondents (39%) in 2007.

With regard to current immigration policy, 45% (41%) consider that the current intake is 'about right', a further 10% (12%) consider it to be 'too low'; a substantial minority 37% (36%) think the intake is 'too high'.

7 Long-term trends: trust, pride, financial satisfaction, minorities

The key to interpreting survey findings is the context of results – without context it is as though we were asked to find our way around an unfamiliar city without a map. Findings of earlier Australian surveys provide a map for interpreting results, affording the means to locate long-terms trends. Re-administration of the 2007 survey has enabled short-term trends to be understood at a level of precision rarely available in Australian social science research.

Trust

The 2007 survey indicated an increased level of trust in fellow Australians. A question relating to trust has been posed in identical terms in five surveys, with respondents given the options that most people 'can be trusted', that one 'can't be too careful', or that it is not possible to answer. For the first time, the 2007 survey indicated majority endorsement of the proposition that most can be trusted – a marked change since 2003. The 2009 survey replicated the 2007 finding (Figure 7.1). Also evident in the 2009 survey was an increased level of trust in the Australian government.

Sense of pride

Consideration of sense of pride in being Australian indicates a level of consistency above 90% (Figure 7.2).

Personal finances

Questions relating to financial satisfaction have been asked using different wording and scales of measurement. While allowance needs to be made for these differences, a large measure of consistency is indicated when the strongest level of financial satisfaction is considered ('very satisfied') between 1981 and 2007, with a marginal decline in 2009 (20% in 1981, 18% in 1995, 18% in 2007 and 15% in 2009). There has, however, been marked change in the second category, those indicating that they were 'satisfied', which registered 41% in 1981, 35% in 1995, a markedly higher 57% in 2007, a finding replicated in 2009 (Figure 7.3).

Assistance to ethnic minorities

One of the most striking findings denoting shift in opinion relates to the issue of government support to ethnic minorities to maintain their customs and traditions. While still a minority viewpoint at slightly over 30%, the 2007 survey indicated a doubling of support from findings recorded in 1995 and 2003. The 2009 survey again replicated the 2007 finding (Figure 7.4).

Figure 7.1: Most people can be trusted
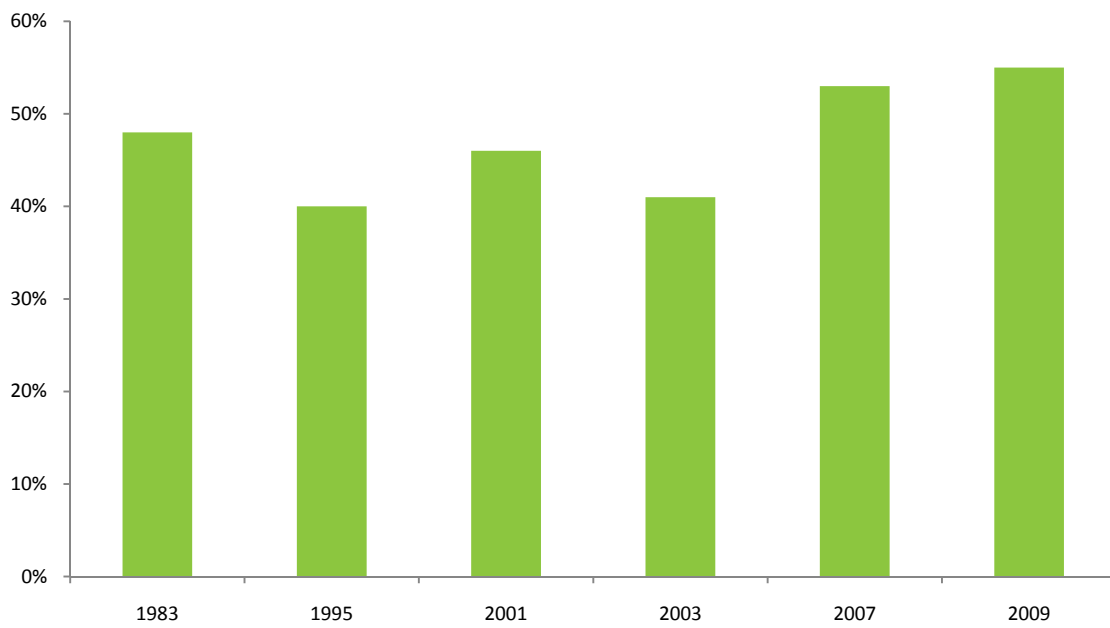
Figure 7.2: Pride in Australian nationality, way of life and culture
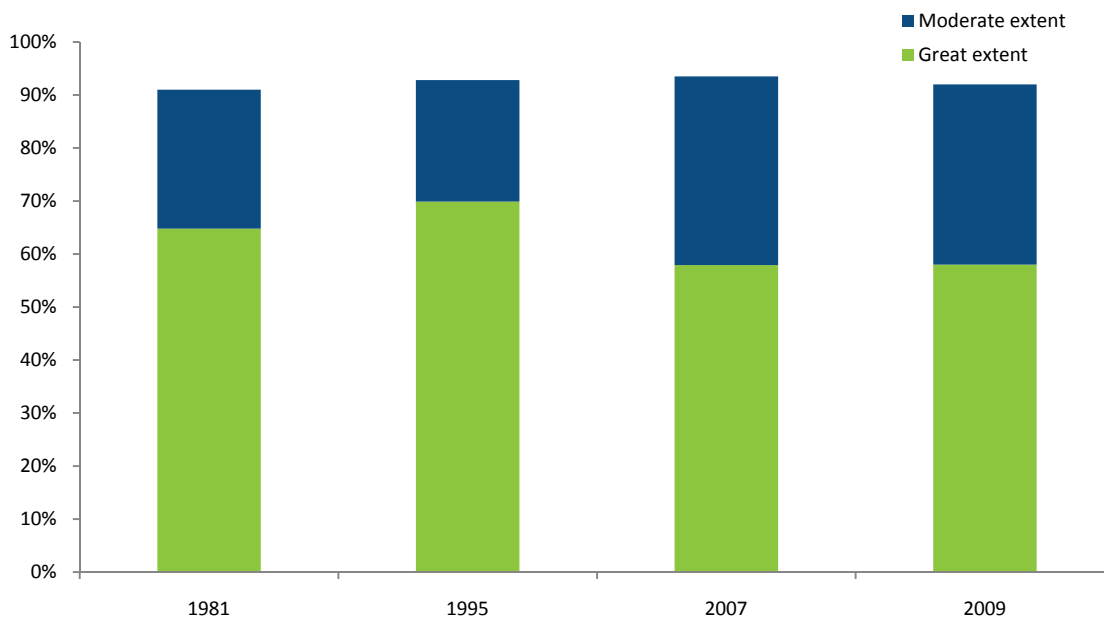
Figure 7.3: Financial satisfaction
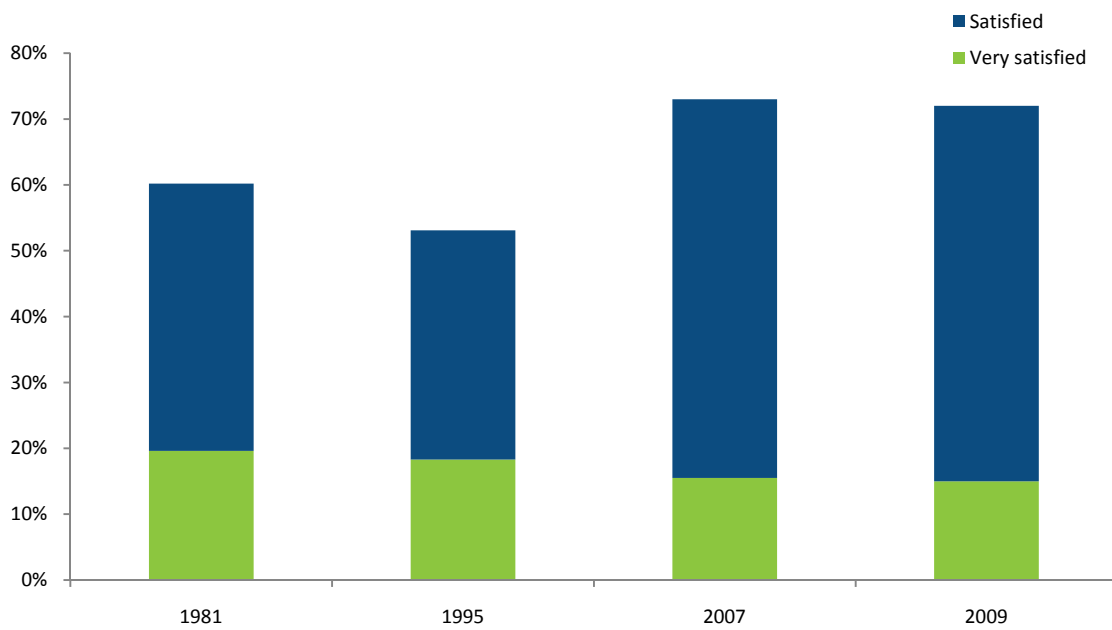
Figure 7.4: Agreement with the proposition that ethnic minorities in Australia should be given government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions
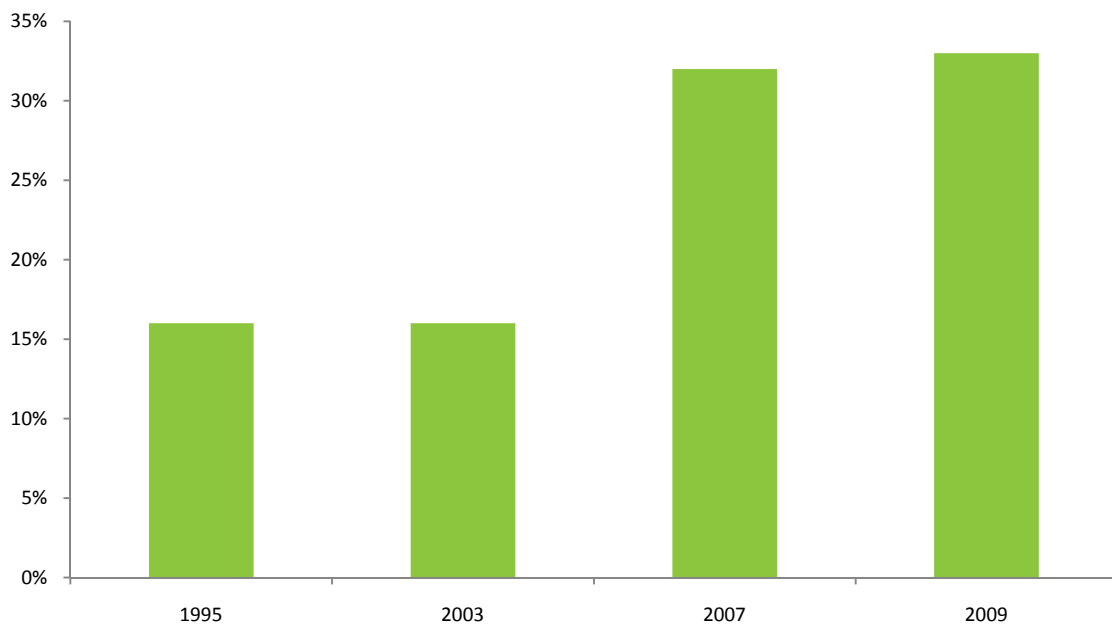
8   Long-term trends: immigration

Questions related to the immigration intake have been a staple of polling for over 50 years and provide the most reliable basis for precise understanding of trends in public opinion. These questions produce the most volatile results, ranging across the 30–70% range which characterises politicised issues. Whereas in the mid-1990s a large majority (over 70% at its peak) considered that the intake was 'too high', surveys since 1998 indicate a significant and consistent shift in opinion, such that opposition to the intake has become the minority viewpoint and for eight years the level of those considering the intake to be 'about right' or 'too low' has been in the range 54–57%.

In the context of the economic concerns of the past two years and the rise in unemployment, increased negative attitude to immigration was expected given the long-term pattern of public opinion. Long-run survey findings indicate that attitudes to immigration are closely correlated with trends in unemployment; a secondary correlation is with the politicisation of immigration issues, as indicated by the impact of the debate over the supposed 'Asianisation' of Australia in the mid-1980s, the public controversies of 1988–89 and the rise to national prominence of Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party in the period 1996–98. These patterns are indicated by Figure 8.1

The 2009 data, however, does not indicate that this shift to greater negativity has occurred – a finding supported by an *Age*/Nielsen poll in November 2009, which found that some 43% of respondents considered the intake to be 'too high'. While this is a marginally higher proportion than in the Scanlon Foundation poll conducted in June-July 2009, it is noteworthy that in interpreting the *Age*/Nielsen finding, the pollster noted that 'the numbers are little changed from 2001'.[4]

Table 8.1: 'What do you think of the number of immigrants accepted into Australia at present?'*

Year	Too high	About right/ too few
1996	62%	32%
1997	64%	28%
2001	41%	54%
2002	41%	54%
2003	37%	57%
2005	39%	56%
2007*	36%	53%
2009*	37%	55%

*All respondents to the national survey for 2007 and 2009, employing new weight for 2007. If the respondent base is confined to Australian citizens only, in 2007, 37% considered the intake to be 'too high', 52% 'about right' or 'too few'; the relative proportions for 2009 were 39% and 54%.

---

[4] *The Age,* 10 November 2009.

Figure 8.1: Proportion of respondents indicating that the immigration intake is 'too high', 1974–2009
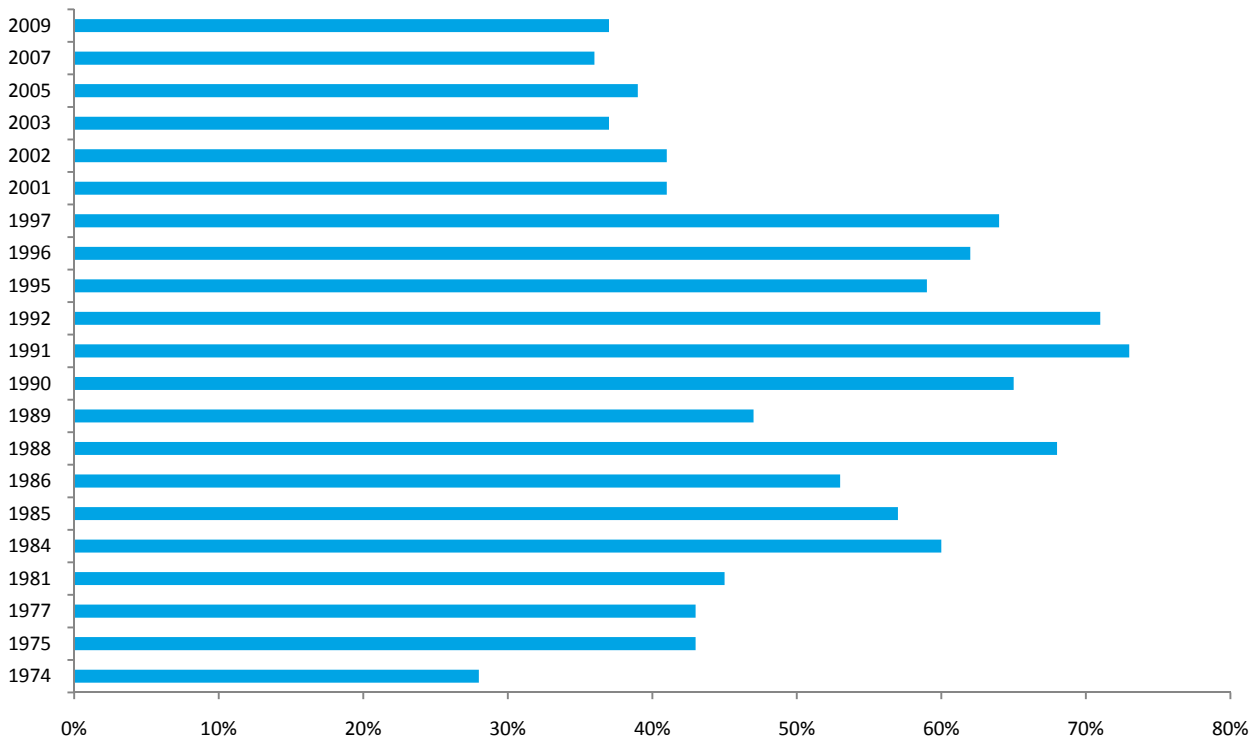
Figure 8.2: Correlation between unemployment and those of the view that the immigration intake is 'too high', 1974–2009
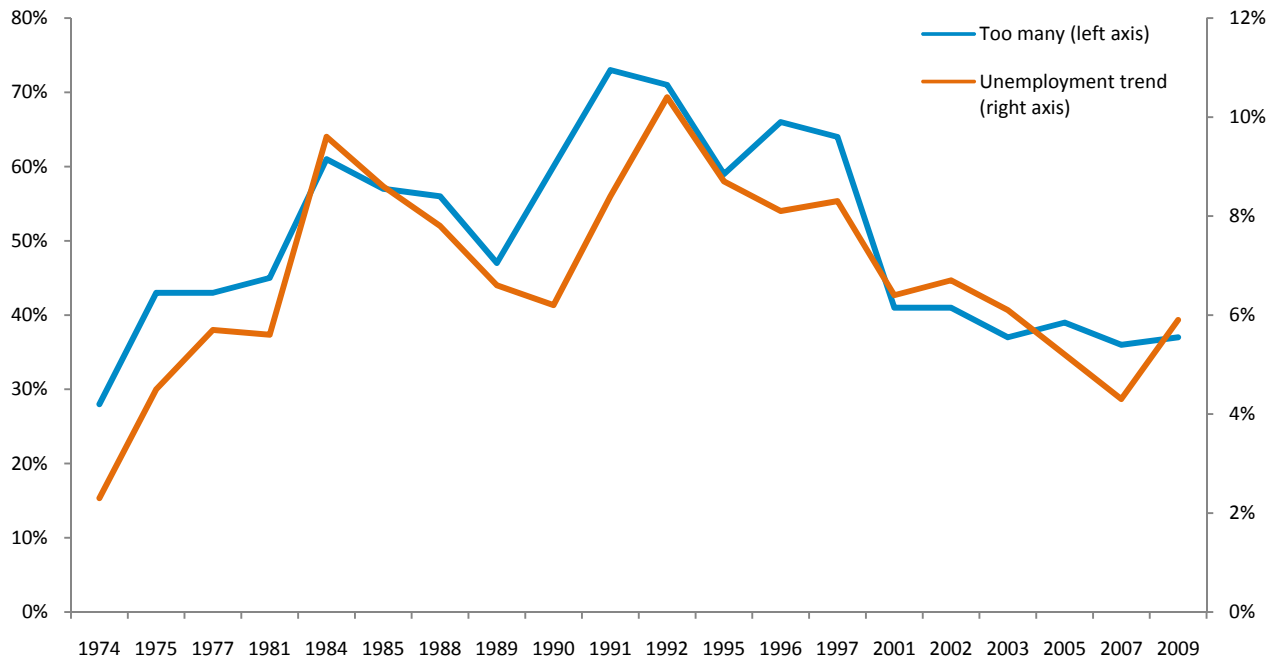
Several factors may explain the finding that there was little shift in opinion between the 2007 and 2009 surveys. One possibility is that there is a perception that the immigration intake has been reduced and hence the issue is of little immediate concern. Media reports at the time of the May 2009 budget and earlier indicated that a cut to the intake had been made; indeed, there were some reports that the intake was to be 'slashed'. The 2009 survey included a question on perception of the intake. Only 8% of respondents to the national survey were of the view that immigration has decreased over the last 12 months, 27% considered that it remained unchanged and the majority view was that it had increased.

Table 8.2: 'To the best of your knowledge, immigration into Australia in the last 12 months has…':

Increased	50%
Decreased	8%
Remained unchanged	27%
Don't know	16%
N (unweighted)	2,019

Given this finding, it seems that the interplay of five factors explains the continuing high level of support for immigration. These all point to the limited impact of the economic downturn and the lack of connection in the outlook of respondents between economic issues and immigration.

1. Belief in the value of immigration continues to be widely held across the community; thus when asked for their response to the proposition that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger', 68% (67% in 2007) of respondents agreed while 27% (26%) disagreed.

2. Up to the time of the 2009 survey (June–July) the impact of the global economic crisis had been limited in Australia, a point highlighted by comparison with previous economic downturns. The level of unemployment increased by 1.6% between July 2007 and July 2009, to 5.9% of the workforce; this compares with an increase from 6.3% to 9.9% in the early 1990s and from 5.9% to 10.7% in the early 1980s.

Table 8.3: Level of unemployment, 1981–83, 1990–93, 2007–09

Period	Low	High	Change
Jan. 1981 – July 1983	5.9%	10.7%	+4.8%
Jan. 1990 – Sept. 1993	6.3%	9.9%	+3.6%
July 2007 – July 2009	4.3%	5.9%	+1.6%

Labour force data indicates that impact of the economic downturn has not been felt evenly across the population, with the loss of jobs almost wholly concentrated among the 15–24 age group. Comparison of the 2007 and 2009 surveys by age group, however, indicates only a marginal increase in negativity amongst this group, with the most marked increase amongst those aged above 64 (Table 8.4).

3. Respondents do not indicate a marked increase in concern for their economic circumstances; thus, when asked 'how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present financial situation', in 2007, 73% indicated that they were satisfied, 24% that they were dissatisfied; the findings for 2009 were almost identical: 72% satisfied, 24% dissatisfied.

4. The 2009 survey indicates an increased level of confidence in the government and its policies, a confidence that is reflected in the attitude to immigration. Amongst the large proportion indicating that they would likely vote for Labour if an election was held on the day they were interviewed for the survey, only 34% considered that the immigration intake was 'too high', compared with 46% of those likely to vote Liberal, 61% National and 25% Green.

5. Immigration issues (unlike the issue of people arriving by boat to seek asylum) have not become politicised; there was almost no partisan debate over immigration in the 12 months preceding the 2009 survey.

Table 8.4: 'What do you think of the number of immigrants accepted into Australia at present? Would you say it is…' Response: 'too high', cross-tabulated by age

Survey	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65–74	75+	Total
2007	35%	28%	35%	35%	40%	47%	44%	36%
2009	38%	29%	31%	37%	38%	55%	52%	37%
N 2007 / 2009 (unweighted)	216 / 166	385 / 264	387 / 389	362 / 415	301 / 418	211 / 351	121 / 140	1984 / 2003

9   Community involvement

Reported behaviour and experience

As well as listening to what survey respondents tell us about attitudes, we also need to consider what is reported with regard to social involvement and interaction. To what extent do people involve themselves in political life, to what extent in community activities through voluntary work? Research indicates that the extent to which individuals show trust and engage in co-operative activities – the level of 'social capital' – is directly related to the harmonious operation of their communities. Of particular interest is the concept of 'bridging capital' as developed by the American political scientist Robert Putnam, which is concerned with the linkages and networks established between members of socially heterogeneous groups. Also of importance is the extent of negative interaction, such as the experience of discrimination, which may hinder contact between members of different social groups and lead to alienation from the wider society.

Trust

As already noted, the 2009 survey replicated the 2007 finding of a relatively high level of agreement with the proposition that 'most people can be trusted' – 55% in 2009, 53% in 2007. The significance of this finding for cohesion at the community level is lessened, however, by marked variation by economic status. As the work of Putnam indicates, the level of social capital is lower in socio-economically depressed communities, and in communities which are ethnically diverse, issues explored in the last part of this report.

Active community participation

A substantial proportion of the population is actively involved in community life and politics. The 2009 survey provided a broad definition of voluntary work:

> The next questions are about unpaid voluntary work. By this I mean any unpaid help you give to the community in which you live, or to an organisation or group to which you belong. It could be to a school, a sporting club, the elderly, a religious group or people who have recently arrived to settle in Australia. Have you done any unpaid voluntary work of this kind in the last 12 months?

Almost one in two respondents (48%) indicated that they had undertaken such voluntary work in the last 12 months: 25% of all respondents indicated involvement in voluntary work at least once per week, higher than the 17% in 2007 when the question on voluntary work was asked without a definition of the term.

With regard to political participation, there is a consistent indication of some increase in political involvement since 2007. Over the last three years, 87% of respondents (85% in 2007) had voted in an election and 56% (55%) had signed a petition. A much smaller (but increased) proportion was engaged in action requiring deliberate choice and initiative. Over the past three years, 27% (24%) had written or spoken to a Member of Parliament; 14% (12%) had participated in a boycott; 13% (13%) had attended a protest; 11% (9%) had attended a political meeting; and 6% (5%) had participated in a strike.

The national survey indicated that of those in employment, 58% agree that 'most people can be trusted' while 37% agree that 'you can't be too careful in dealing with people'. For those who are unemployed, the proportions are almost the inverse: 38% agree that most can be trusted and 60% that you can't be too careful. Of those who describe themselves as 'prosperous', 78% agree that most can be trusted, 66% of those self-described as 'living very comfortably', 58% of those 'living reasonably comfortably', and 44% of those 'just getting along'.

Figure 9.1: Personal trust cross-tabulated with self-described socio-economic status

Legend:
- You can't be too careful
- Most people can be trusted
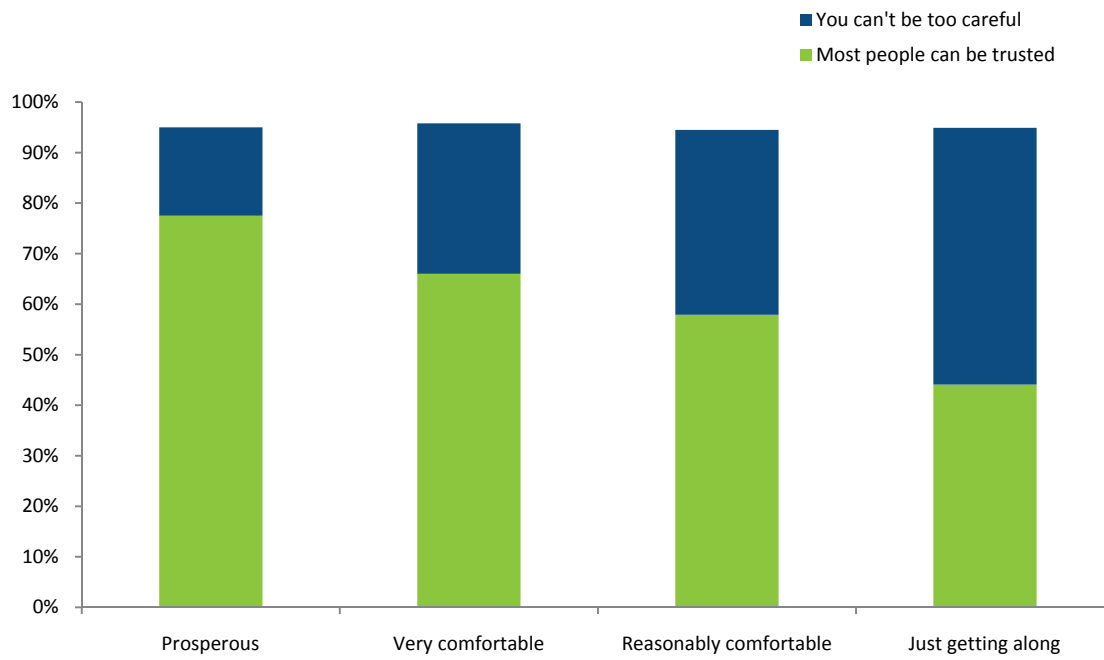
10 Future expectations

When asked to consider their future prospects, 82% (85% in 2007) expected that their lives would be the same or improved in three or four years, 12% (11%) that their lives would be a little worse or much worse. But when asked about the future of today's children, only 54% (52%) of respondents expected that the children's lives would remain the same as their own or would be improved – a substantial minority of 42% (43%) thought that their children's lives would be worse. When asked for their reasons, there was a broad range of response. The most common references were to cost of living and housing (27%), low moral standards and materialistic lifestyle (23%), environmental problems – pollution and climate change (22%), crime and drugs (22%), government issues (13%), the prospect of unemployment and poor working conditions (11%) (Figure 10.1). As in 2007, there were very few references to the traditional fear of war or to terrorism.

Figure 10.1: Reasons specified by those who consider that the lives of children will be worse than for today's generation; six most common categories of response
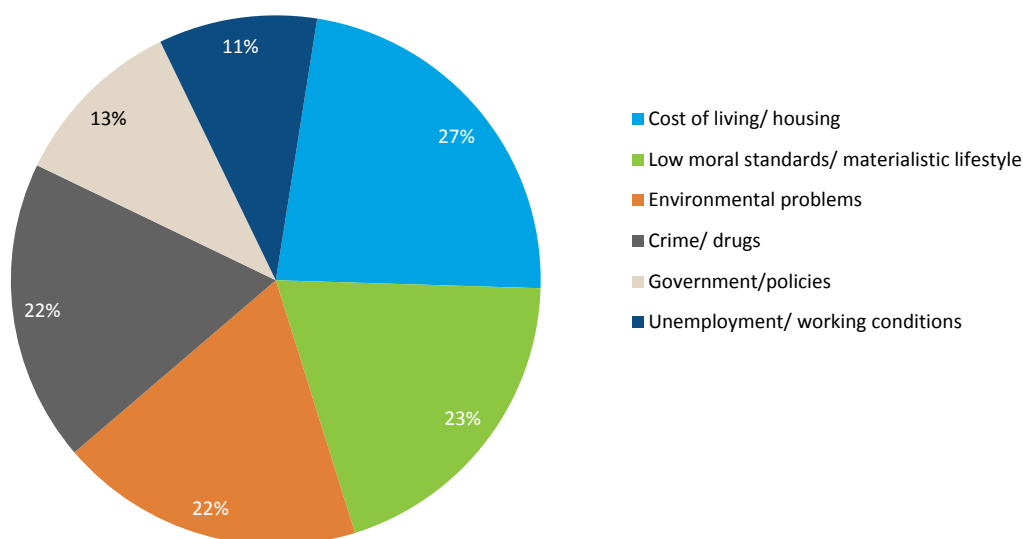
Percentage does not total to 100% as respondents could give multiple responses.

11 Variables of geography, gender, education, age and birthplace

Analysis of the distribution of opinion across a range of variables helps identify where and among whom social cohesion may be threatened. Analysis of the national survey considered differences in opinion with regard to the variables of region of residence, gender, level of education and qualification, age, birthplace of respondents and of their parents. There is no uniform pattern of response across the full range of questions in the survey, but with regard to immigration and settlement issues, the lowest level of support for government policy was found among people with no qualifications or trade-level qualifications and people aged over 65. Variation is illustrated by considering level of agreement with the current immigration intake and the proposition that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger'. In addition to the key variables identified, response to these questions also indicates that there is a consistency of higher negative response amongst residents outside the capital cities, the Australia-born, and (and in response to the value of immigration from many different countries) residents of New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland.

Comparison of 2007 and 2009 results indicates very little change: of 42 variables considered for the two questions, statistically significant change was observed for only 3 variables, or 7% (Tables 11.1 and 11.2).

**Table 11.1: 'What do you think of the number of immigrants accepted into Australia at present?'
Response: 'too high'**

Gender	Male	Female			
2007	33%	39%			
2009	35%	40%			
State	South Australia	Victoria	NSW	Western Australia	Queensland
2007	30%	30%	42%	35%	39%
2009	33%	37%	38%	39%	41%
Region	Capital	Rest of state			
2007	33%	43%			
2009	35%	42%			
Age	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+
2007	35%	28%	35%	35%	40%	46%
2009	38%	29%	31%	37%	38%	53%
Level of completed education	To year 12	Trade/diploma	BA or higher		
2007	41%	36%	20%		
2009	**47%****	**45%****	22%		
Birthplace	Australia	Overseas-ESB	Overseas-NESB		
2007	40%	29%	27%		
2009	43%	29%	25%		

**Significant change between 2007 and 2009 at p<.05

**Table 11.2: 'Accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger.'
Response: 'strongly agree' and 'agree'**

Gender	Male	Female			
2007	73%	62%			
2009	69%	**67%****			
State	South Australia	Victoria	NSW	Western Australia	Queensland
2007	75%	70%	64%	67%	65%
2009	71%	76%	65%	59%	65%
Region	Capital	Rest of state			
2007	70%	62%			
2009	71%	62%			
Age	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+
2007	75%	71%	72%	66%	66%	57%
2009	71%	73%	73%	67%	67%	55%
Level of completed education	To year 12	Trade/diploma	BA or higher		
2007	63%	66%	83%		
2009	63%	61%	78%		
Birthplace	Australia	Overseas-ESB	Overseas-NESB		
2007	64%	69%	75%		
2009	64%	71%	78%		

**Significant change between 2007 and 2009 at p<.05

12 Indexing the domains of social cohesion

A nominal index of social cohesion has been developed for this project, using the findings of the 2007 national survey to provide baseline data to facilitate measurement of change over time.

A factor analysis was undertaken of twelve survey questions; ideally a larger number of questions would be utilised, but the need to reach the required number of respondents precluded use of a longer questionnaire. Factor Analysis is a statistical technique that is applied to questions which elicit responses ranged along a continuous variable and serves to identify and group questions which have a common underlying factor resulting in a similar pattern of response. The analysis identified four distinct, uncorrelated factors. These correlate with the previously discussed indicators of social cohesion, the domains of 'Belonging', 'Acceptance and Rejection', 'Social Justice and Equity' and 'Worth'. Table 12.1 shows how each item loads on to a factor in the 2007 national survey. Factor loadings above 0.3 indicate a significant contribution to that factor. One categorical question (relating to experience of discrimination) was added to the second factor, 'Acceptance and Rejection', and a fifth factor, 'Participation (political)', was constructed without statistical validation utilising categorical variables.

The only difference in factor loadings between the 2007 and 2009 national surveys was for the question 'How often do you think the Government in Canberra can be trusted to do the right thing for the Australian people?' In 2007, this item was grouped with social justice and equity, in 2009 acceptance and rejection. To provide a consistent baseline, the 2007 loadings were utilised in the development of the index of social cohesion.

The following questions are utilised to develop the index of social cohesion:

> **Belonging:** Indication of pride in the Australian way of life and culture; sense of belonging; importance of maintaining Australian way of life and culture.
>
> **Social justice and equity:** Views on the adequacy of financial support for people on low incomes; the gap between high and low incomes; Australia as a land of economic opportunity; trust in the Australian government.
>
> **Participation** (political): Voted in an election; signed a petition; contacted a Member of Parliament; participated in a boycott; attended a protest.
>
> **Acceptance and rejection, legitimacy** (rejection): Negative view of immigration from many different countries; reported experience of discrimination in the last 12 months; disagreement with government support to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions; feeling that life in three or four years will be worse.
>
> **Worth:** Satisfaction with present financial situation and indication of happiness over the last year.

Table 12.1: Factor loadings 2007 national survey

Survey item	Factor 1 Belonging	Factor 2 Acceptance and Rejection	Factor 3 Social Justice and Equity	Factor 4 Worth
To what extent do you take pride in the Australian way for life 1 = To a great extent… 4 = Not at all	.80	-.04	.05	.00
To what extent do you have a sense of belongingness to Australia 1 = To a great extent… 4 = Not at all	.73	.00	-.01	.18
In the modern world, maintaining the Australian way of life is important 1 = Strongly agree… 5 = Strongly disagree	.67	-.29	.12	-.02
Accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger 1 = Strongly agree… 5 = Strongly disagree	-.04	.77	-.04	.22
Ethnic Minorities should be given government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions 1 = Strongly agree… 5 = Strongly disagree	-.31	.71	-.10	.06
In three or four years, do you think Australia will be.. 1 = Much improved… 5 = Much worse	.11	.55	.40	-.26
People living on low incomes in Australia receive enough financial support from the government 1 = Strongly agree… 5 = Strongly disagree	.12	.05	.68	.04
In Australia today, the gap between those with high incomes and those with low incomes is too large 1 = Strongly agree… 5 = Strongly disagree	.18	.02	-.67	.13
Australia is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life 1 = Strongly agree… 5 = Strongly disagree	.25	.11	.55	.12
How satisfied are you with your present financial situation 1 = Very satisfied… 5 = Very dissatisfied	-.06	.05	.23	.79
Taking all things into consideration, would you say that over the last year you have been 1 = Very happy… 5 = Very unhappy	.24	.12	.10	.70

After trialling several models, a procedure was adopted to bring to attention relatively minor shifts in opinion and reported experience, in preference to one which compresses or diminishes the impact of change by, for example, calculating the mean score for a set of responses. The purpose of the index is to heighten awareness of shifts in opinion which may call for closer attention and analysis.

The nominal index scores positive responses within four domains and negative responses within the domain of Acceptance and Rejection. As indicated in the following tables, the strongest response (for example, 'strongly agree') is weighted at twice the value of the second level ('agree'). The responses to each question within four of the five indexes are equalised; within the fifth index, the index of participation, activities requiring greater initiative (contacting a Member of Parliament, participating in a boycott, attending a protest) are weighted at double the value of the more passive activities of voting (compulsory in Australia) and signing a petition.

Table 12.2: Factor 1 – Acceptance and rejection

Survey item	Response	Frequency		Percent		Weight
		2007	2009	2007	2009	
Accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger.	Strongly disagree	155	181	7.8%	8.9%	2
	Disagree	362	361	18.1%	17.9%	1
Ethnic Minorities should be given government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions.	Strongly disagree	522	539	26.1%	26.7%	2
	Disagree	713	667	35.7%	33.0%	1
In three or four years, do you think Australia will be …	Much worse	45	42	2.2%	2.1%	2
	A little worse	173	206	8.7%	10.2%	1
Experienced discrimination because of national, ethnic or religious background in the last twelve months.	Yes	183	202	9.1%	10.0%	1

Table 12.3: Factor 2 – Worth

Survey item	Response	Frequency		Percent		Weight
		2007	2009	2007	2009	
How satisfied are you with your present financial situation?	Very satisfied	310	302	15.5%	14.9%	2
	Satisfied	1,152	1,158	57.6%	57.3%	1
Taking all things into consideration, would you say that over the last year you have been…	Very happy	685	592	34.3%	29.3%	2
	Happy	1,090	1,202	54.5%	59.5%	1

Table 12.4: Factor 3 – Belonging

Survey item	Response	Frequency		Percent		Weight
		2007	2009	2007	2009	
To what extent do you take pride in the Australian way for life?	To a great extent	1,158	1,164	57.9%	57.7%	2
	To a moderate extent	712	694	35.6%	34.4%	1
To what extent do you have a sense of belongingness to Australia?	To a great extent	1,547	1,462	77.4%	72.4%	2
	To a moderate extent	372	455	18.6%	22.5%	1
In the modern world, maintaining the Australian way of life is important.	Strongly agree	1,293	1,181	64.7%	58.5%	2
	Agree	602	705	30.1%	34.9%	1

Table 12.5: Factor 4 – Social justice and equity

Survey item	Response	Frequency		Percent		Weight
		2007	2009	2007	2009	
People living on low incomes in Australia receive enough financial support from the government.	Strongly agree	232	229	11.6%	11.3%	2
	Agree	676	772	33.8%	38.2%	1
In Australia today, the gap between those with high incomes and those with low incomes is too large.	Strongly agree	849	723	42.4%	35.8%	2
	Agree	693	712	34.6%	35.3%	1
Australia is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life.	Strongly agree	681	787	34.1%	39.0%	2
	Agree	931	875	46.6%	43.4%	1

Table 12.6: Factor 5 – Participation (political)

Survey item	Response	Frequency		Percent		Weight
		2007	2009	2007	2009	
Voted in an election in the last three years or so.	Yes	1,701	1,760	85.1%	87.2%	1
Signed a petition in the last three years or so.	Yes	1,102	1,124	55.1%	55.7%	1
Written or spoken to a federal or state Member of Parliament over the last three years or so.	Yes	471	546	23.6%	27.0%	2
Joined a boycott of a product or company over the last three years or so.	Yes	249	282	12.5%	14.0%	2
Attended a political meeting over the last three years or so.	Yes	188	218	9.4%	10.8%	2

2007 and 2009 survey findings compared

The 2007 national survey provided evidence of a society that was managing to establish a high level of positive outcomes, fostering a sense of belonging, social justice and worth. There were, however, indicators of concern with regard to participation and acceptance, misunderstanding between birthplace groups and varying experiences of discriminatory and hostile behaviour.

Comparison between the 2007 and 2009 survey findings reveals slight change, with variation under six percentage points within four of the five domains of social cohesion analysed. Variation is at its peak in the indicator of social justice and equity (12%), possibly explained by the greater attention to social justice issues by the Rudd government, compared with the Howard government which was in office at the time of the 2007 survey. There is also indication of heightened political participation. Beside these heightened positive indicators, on the negative side there is indication of heightened rejection (6%), and lowered sense of belonging (4%) and sense of worth (3%).

Table 12.7: Index of social cohesion

Category	2007 Index	2009 Index	Change 2007–09	Direction of change
Acceptance (rejection)	100	94.4	− 5.6	Lower
Sense of worth	100	97.2	− 2.8	Lower
Sense of belonging	100	96.9	− 3.7	Lower
Social justice and equity	100	112.4	12.4	Higher
Participation (political)	100	105.3	5.3	Higher

13 Birthplace groups in the national survey

Analysis of the national sample was undertaken by three birthplace groups – those born in Australia, those born in English-speaking countries (ESB), and those born in non-English-speaking countries (NESB)[5]. There was a large measure of convergence with regard to sense of belonging and worth and appraisal of social justice issues, as discussed below. The greatest *divergence* is evident in response to issues of participation and acceptance, including questions related to community involvement, experience of discrimination, and immigration and settlement policy.

Belonging

The Australia-born indicated the strongest sense of belonging, the greatest consideration to maintaining the Australian way of life and culture, and the greatest sense of pride; with the indicators aggregated, the ESB came next, followed by NESB.

While all indicators are slightly lower in 2009 for the NESB, the very high level of identification is a significant finding: thus 88% of the NESB group (93% in 2007) had a sense of belonging in Australia to a 'great' or 'moderate' extent, 87% (89%) took pride in the Australian way of life and culture to a 'great' or 'moderate 'extent, and 91% (94%) 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that maintaining the Australian way of life and culture was important.

Although at the aggregated level ('great' and 'moderate') response levels were similar in 2007 and 2009, there was a decline at the strongest level; thus among Australia-born, those indicating a 'great' sense of belonging declined from 84% to 80%, among NESB respondents from 62% to 50% (Figure 13.1).

In response to the statement that 'maintaining the Australian way of life is important', very few respondents across the three groups indicated disagreement, with marginal change between 2007 and 2009: only 4% (5% in 2007) of the Australia-born, 9% (5%) ESB and 8% (4%) NESB were in disagreement or neutral ('neither agree nor disagree').

Figure 13.1: Sense of belonging

---
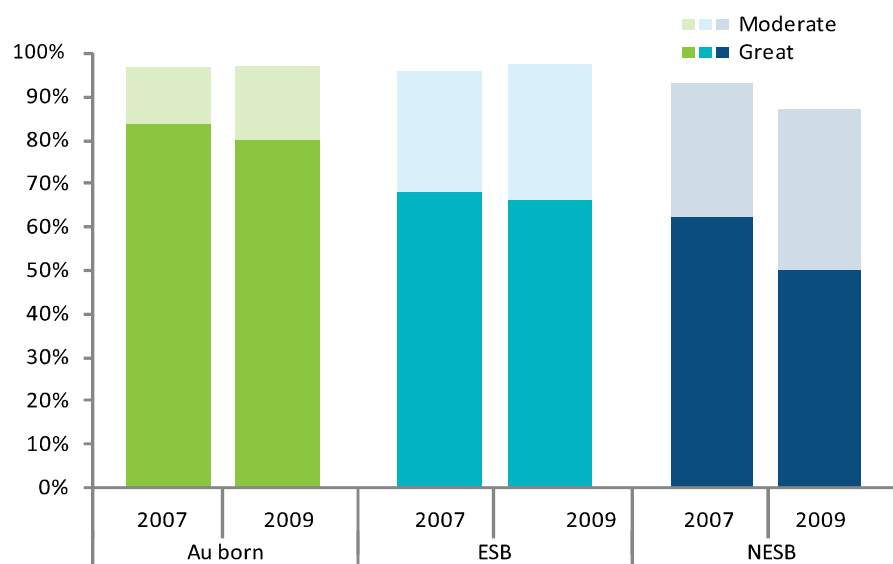
[5] The term 'non-English-speaking background' (NESB) is employed in this analysis as it is the most sensible and accurate term available, even though it is no longer preferred terminology in Australia. Terms in recent favour, which include CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) and MESC/non-MESC (Main English-speaking Country/non-Main English-speaking Country), are problematic. CALD, used exclusively to apply to non-English-speaking peoples, falsely implies that the English-speaking immigrants, who come from many lands, are not culturally diverse (that cultural diversity is somehow an attribute of the non-English-speaking). MESC/non-MESC is simply more confusing than ESB/NESB, without conferring any substantial terminological advantage.

Trust

With regard to levels of trust, similar results were obtained when the federal government was considered by Australia-born and ESB groups, with indication of higher levels of trust than in 2007 – 7% (7%) of the Australia-born and 6% (4%) of the ESB agreed that the federal government can be trusted 'almost always', 40% (34%) and 45% (34%) that it could be trusted 'most of the time'. Within the NESB group there was a similar level of agreement, again higher than in 2007 – 6% (14%) indicated 'almost always', 41% (20%) 'most of the time'. Combining the 'almost always' and 'most of the time' responses, the level of trust for Australia-born was 47% (41%), ESB 51% (38%) and NESB 48 (33%).

With regard to level of trust in people, the ESB group indicated highest levels. 62% (66%) of ESB respondents agreed that 'most people can be trusted', 57% (45%) NESB and 54% (53%) Australia-born.

Social justice and equity

In response to social justice and equity issues, a relatively large degree of consistency was recorded across the birthplace groups. Thus for the three groups in 2007, between 45%–47% agreed that those on low incomes received enough financial support from the government; in 2009, the same proportion – 46% – of the Australia-born and ESB agreed, but a significantly higher 64% of NESB agreed. When considering the proposition that 'Australia is a land of economic opportunity ...', the strongest agreement was from the ESB at 89% (86%), followed by 83% (80%) of the NESB and 82% (80%) of the Australia-born.

Acceptance and rejection

About two out of ten Australia-born report having experienced discrimination over the course of their lives as a consequence of their skin colour or ethnic origin; the proportion for the ESB is three out of ten (31%, 32% in 2007) and NESB almost five out of ten (48%, 43%). The NESB report discrimination over the last 12 months at more than double the level for the Australia-born (18%, compared to 8%), and at a higher proportion than in 2007.

Table 13.1: Reported experience of discrimination

Survey item	Australia-born		ESB		NESB	
	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009
Have you ever experienced discrimination … because of your skin colour or ethnic background?*	21%	19%	32%	31%	43%	48%
Have you ever experienced discrimination … because of your religion?	8%	8%	6%	4%	9%	8%
Have you experienced discrimination because of your skin colour, ethnic origin or religion in the last 12 months?**	8%	8%	8%	9%	13%	18%
N (unweighted)	1,465	1,510	291	256	246	247

* 2007 worded 'national or ethnic background'
**2009 worded 'national, ethnic or religious background'

Participation and community involvement

The ESB indicated the highest level of involvement, followed by the Australia-born, with the NESB registering the lowest level on most indicators. Thus 56% of the ESB, 49% of the Australia-born and 40% of the NESB indicated that they had undertaken voluntary work in the last twelve months; 61% (63% in 2007) of the Australia-born, 63% (47%) of the ESB and 34% (32%) of the NESB had signed a petition over the last three years; 30% (27%) of the Australia-born, 27% (27%) of the ESB and 18% (12%) of the NESB had contacted a Member of Parliament.

Table 13.2: Political participation

Survey item	Australia-born		ESB		NESB	
	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009
Voted in an election	93%	96%	71%	76%	67%	65%
Signed a petition	63%	61%	47%	63%	32%	34%
Contacted an MP	27%	30%	27%	27%	11%	18%
Participated in a boycott	14%	16%	12%	12%	75	10%
Attended a protest	14%	13%	10%	15%	12%	13%
Attended a political meeting	10%	12%	9%	13%	8%	6%
Participated in a strike	5%	7%	3%	3%	3%	6%
N (unweighted)	1,465	1,510	291	256	246	247

Immigration and settlement

Attitudes to immigration issues provide evidence of marked attitudinal divergence: the NESB are more likely by a large measure to agree with the benefit of immigration from a range of different countries and with government assistance to ethnic minorities. When considering the current immigration intake, in 2009 the level of support among ESB and NESB increased, the level among the Australia-born was constant.

In response to the question of whether immigration from different countries had made Australia stronger, 21% (20%) Australia-born, 28% (20%) ESB and 37% (30%) NESB were strongly in agreement (Figure 13.2).

In response to the question of government assistance to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions, 28% (27%) Australia-born, 27% (26%) ESB and 53% (53%) NESB agreed (Figure 13.3).

51% (50%) Australia-born, 66% (57%) ESB and 65% (60%) NESB considered the immigration intake to be 'about right' or 'too low'.

Sense of worth, life satisfaction

Responses to sense of worth and life satisfaction questions reveal two patterns. First, as in other elements of the survey, the responses of the Australia-born and ESB are differentiated from the NESB. Second, while Australia-born and ESB express higher levels of satisfaction with their lives at the strongest level, the NESB have a stronger sense that their own lives and the lives of today's children will improve (Figure 13.5).

There is little change between 2007 and 2009 when two levels of agreement are aggregated; but at the highest level, there has been a decline in the level of positive sentiment, particularly among NESB respondents. Thus, in 2007, 27% of NESB respondents indicated that they were 'very happy', 17% in 2009 (Figure 13.4).

Figure 13.2: Immigrants from many different countries make Australia stronger
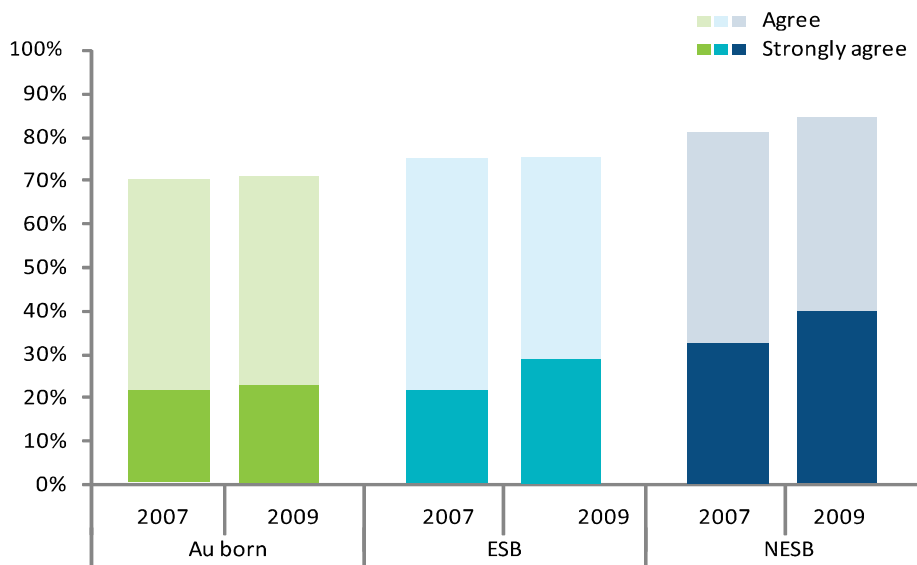
Figure 13.3: Funding to ethnic groups
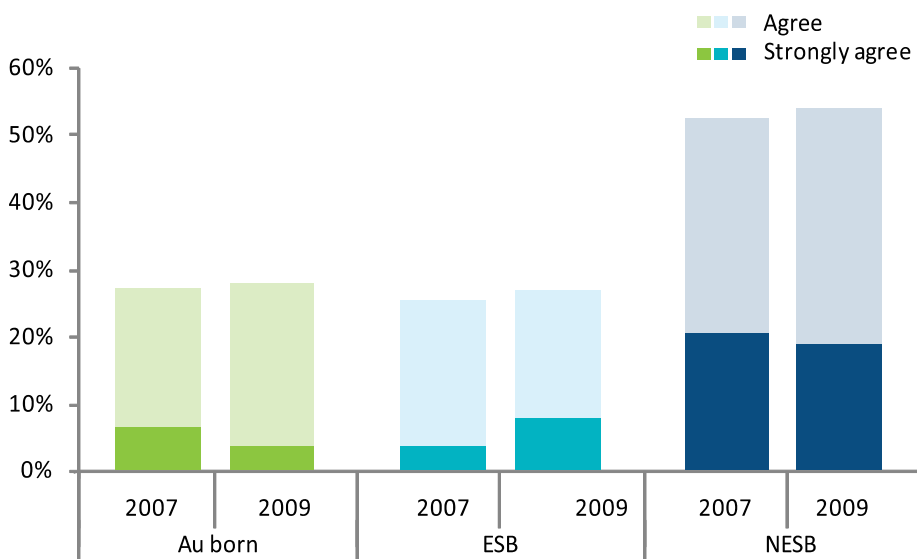
Figure 13.4: Happiness over the last 12 months
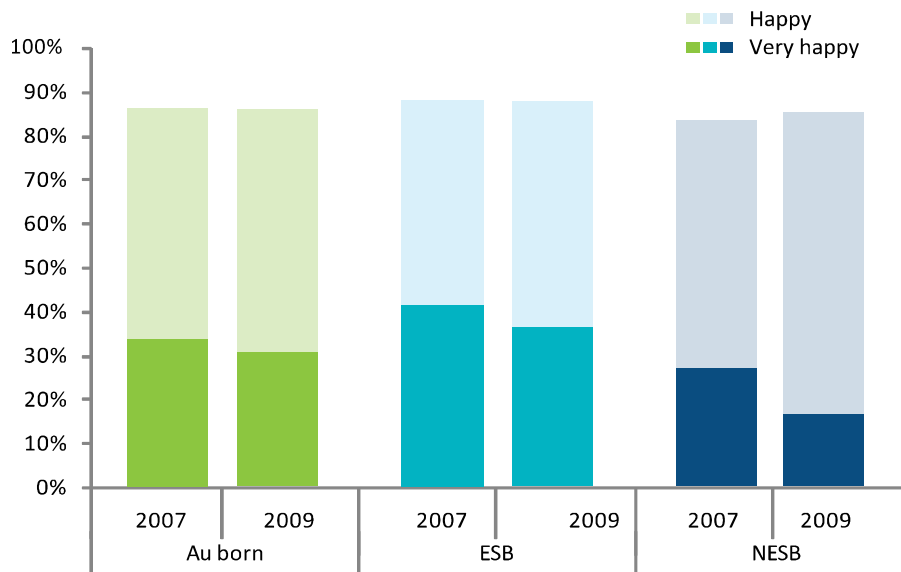
Figure 13.5: Lives of today's children will be
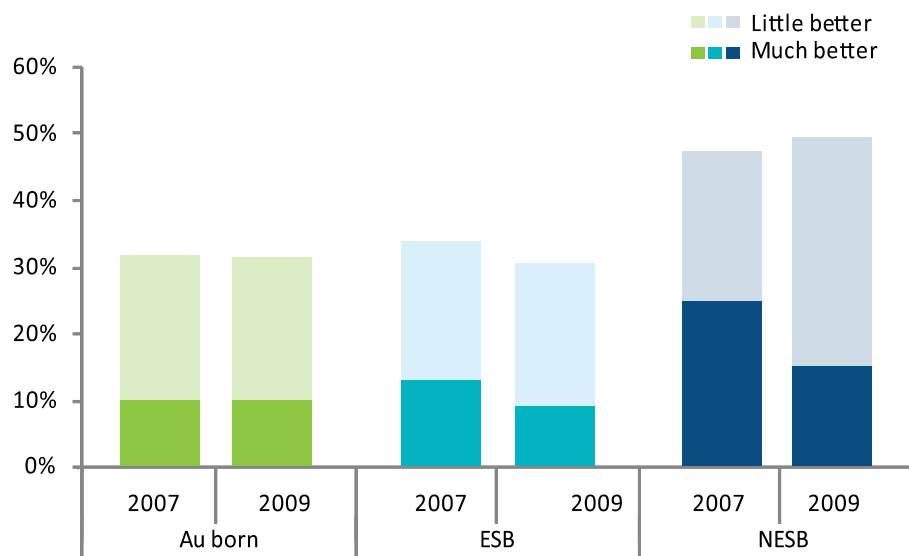
Immigrant cohort analysis

Further analysis of the overseas-born was undertaken by year of arrival to determine whether there were higher levels of identification with increased length of residence. As in 2007, the results of the national survey provide strong indication of the success of integration of immigrants into Australian society.

The overseas-born were divided into three categories: those arriving between 1967-81, 1982-96 and 1997-2009. A grid representation has been developed to allow for consideration of seventeen questions alongside each other, with the variance between the 1967-81 and 1997-2009 cohorts calculated and colour coded (Figure 13.6). The findings indicate that:

- The variance between the two cohorts is within a relatively narrow range: -14 to +18.

- The more recently arrived are more positive (indicated by the green coding) with regard to levels of trust, happiness with lives, and view of government support provided to those on low incomes. Although the age of the 1967-81 cohort (with a number now in retirement) may explain some more negative responses.

- The more recently arrived are more positive with regard to the current immigration intake and the impact of immigration.

- The more recently arrived are most clearly differentiated in their attitudes to cultural maintenance issues, whereas the older cohort approximate to mainstream perspectives.

- The more recently arrived are less sure (indicated by the pink coding) that those of different backgrounds get on well together, that neighbours are willing to help each other, and are more concerned about becoming a victim of crime, but it is notable that more than 70% of the newer arrivals are positive on these issues.

- As to be expected, the newer arrivals are less secure economically, although a high 81% agree that Australia is a land of economic opportunity where hard work is rewarded.

- Also as to be expected, amongst the newer arrivals there is a lower sense of belonging and sense of pride in the Australian way, but the variance is a function of almost unanimous (>95%) sense of belonging amongst the older cohort and indication of belonging at 85% amongst the more recent arrivals. The difference is more marked at the level of strongest response, as indicated in Table 13.3: 78% of those who arrived between 1967-81 'strongly agree' that they have a sense of belonging in Australia, but only 33% of the recent arrivals; 59% of the first group 'strongly agree' that they are proud of the Australian way of life, 39% of the newer arrivals.

The survey indicates the time taken to develop a sense of belonging and pride in the Australian way at the strongest level, but in response to a range of questions the newer arrivals indicate a positive outlook. The survey also indicates the extent to which the older immigrant cohort has adopted in large measure a mainstream Australian outlook.

Figure 13.6:   Overseas-born by year of arrival, national survey

Variance 1967-81 – 1997-2009	1967-81	1997-2009

Can trust most people[1]

+13	60	73

Can trust government in Canberra[2]

+6	44	50

Not worried about becoming a victim of crime[3]

-14	82	68

Feel safe walking alone at night[4]

-9	69	60

Sense of belonging[5]

-11	97	86

Pride in the Australian way of life[5]

-12	96	84

Happiness[6]

+6	90	96

Financial satisfaction[7]

-6	74	68

Land of economic opportunity[8]

-8	89	81

Adequate support for those on low incomes[8]

+14	51	65

Immigrants make Australia stronger[8]

+3	76	79

Current immigration about right or too low[1]

+13	64	77

Impact of Immigration in local area positive[9]

+12	49	61

Government should assist ethnic minorities retain customs and traditions[8]

+18	37	55

Important for ethnic groups to retain culture[1]

+15	42	57

People from different ethnic backgrounds get on well[8]

-12	80	68

People willing to help their neighbours[8]

-8	82	74

[1] Agree
[2] Almost always/most of the time
[3] Not very worried/not at all worried
[4] Very safe/fairly safe
[5] Great extent/moderate extent
[6] Very happy/happy
[7] Very satisfied/satisfied
[8] Strongly agree/agree
[9] Very positive/positive

🟥	>-25
🟧	-15-24
⬜	-5-14
🟨	+5-4
🟩	+6

Table 13.3: Sense of belonging and pride by year of arrival

Survey item	Response	Born in Australia	Born overseas – year of arrival		
			1967-81	1982-96	1997-2009
To what extent do you have a sense of belonging in Australia?	Great extent	80.2%	78.2%	51.1%	32.9%
	Moderate extent	16.8%	18.8%	37.4%	53.1%
	Total	97.0%	97.0%	88.5%	86.0%
To what extent do you take pride in the Australian way of life and culture?	Great extent	61.0%	59.3%	46.2%	39.4%
	Moderate extent	32.6%	37.0%	43.2%	44.1%
	Total	93.6%	96.3%	89.4%	83.5%
N (unweighted)		1,510	139	102	126

14 Local surveys

Social cohesion operates not in the abstract, the realm of the 'nation', but at the community level, where people of different backgrounds and cultures make their lives. This understanding informed the decision to undertake surveys in areas of high immigrant concentration, in regions where the historical record indicates that the potential for social tension is higher. Surveys typically focus on attitudes at the national level, or are local case studies. The Scanlon Foundation Social Cohesion surveys are distinctive in their objective to provide the means to interpret local data in the context of a simultaneous national survey.

In 2009, surveys were undertaken in two outer urban regions in which a high proportion (above 85%) of the population is Australia-born, and in four areas of high immigrant concentration. In terms of the discussion on the logic of public opinion (see page 11, above), the primary focus of the following discussion is not on the proportion of respondents agreeing or disagreeing with specific questions and propositions, but the extent of variation in the patterns of response at the national and local levels.

Outer urban

The outer urban areas surveyed were Engadine and adjacent suburbs (Heathcote, Waterfall and Woronora, all referred to as Engadine in the following discussion), located more than 30 km south-south-west of the Sydney CBD (50 minutes by car), part of the Sutherland Shire and bordering the Heathcote and Royal National Parks; and Sunbury, located more than 40 km north-west of the Melbourne CBD (45 minutes by car), part of the Hume LGA.

These areas are characterised by a high proportion of Australia-born residents, amongst the highest in Sydney and Melbourne, and a relatively high proportion of immigrants from English-speaking countries. Thus, while in Sydney 35% of the population is overseas-born and in Melbourne 31%, and 21% speak a language other than English in their homes, in the two areas surveyed, no more than 20% are born overseas and only 9%–10% speak a language other than English. In Sunbury the median individual weekly income is $50 above the national average, in Engadine it is $130 above the average. In the Australian Bureau of Statistics Socio-Economic Index, which measures the level of well-being in each region, Sunbury is ranked at the eighth decile (or the third-most advantaged level) while Engadine is ranked at the tenth decile (the most advantaged). Among survey respondents, Engadine had a marginally older population (18% retired compared to 13% in Sunbury), a very low proportion unemployed (3% compared to 6%), and indications of marginally greater prosperity; for example, 33% of Engadine respondents owned their own homes, compared to 28% in Sunbury.

The survey explored the attitudes of the Australia-born residents of Sunbury and Engadine, in the context of attitudes of the Australia-born in the national survey. It was of particular interest to provide an insight into attitudes in these largely Australia-born residential regions, located in the hinterland of major immigrant concentrations in the western suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne, two of which – Bankstown and the south-east region of the Hume LGA – were also surveyed.

When survey results for the Australia-born in the national survey and the Australia-born in the outer urban areas are compared, on most questions Engadine respondents indicated above average positive responses, Sunbury below average, but the difference for most questions was within five percentage points.

Thus, when asked concerning their level of happiness over the last 12 months, 88% of respondents in Sunbury and 92% in Engadine indicated that they were 'happy' compared with 89% at the national level. When asked for their response to the proposition that immigrants from many different countries made Australia stronger, 62% of Sunbury residents and 67% in Engadine agreed, compared with 64% nationally.

The greatest variation occurred when issues of participation and trust were considered for Sunbury, with results up to 13 percentage points below the national average; and sense of safety for Engadine, with results up to 16 percentage points above average. There are also some indications of heightened negativity in Sunbury when immigration issues are considered, an element that is not found in Engadine. Issues related to sense of worth and belonging produced the least variation, as indicated in the following summary table which groups responses within five categories. (Table 14.1; for full details, see Table 14.2.)

Table 14.1: Summary indicators, national and outer urban suburbs

Category	National (Au-born)	Sunbury (Au-born)	Engadine (Au-born)
Sense of worth/ belonging	81%	78%	84%
Participation and trust	50%	41%	53%
Acceptance and rejection: immigration issues	58%	53%	61%
Acceptance and rejection: neighbours	66%	64%	73%
Acceptance and rejection: sense of safety	69%	68%	83%
Average	68%	63%	74%
N (unweighted)	1,510	297	297

Table 14.2: Selected questions, national and outer urban suburbs

Survey item	All respondents National	Au-born National	Au-born Sunbury	Au-born Engadine
Level of happiness over the last 12 months: very happy and happy	89%	89%	88%	92%
Satisfaction with present financial situation: very satisfied and satisfied	72%	73%	67%	72%
What has been the impact of immigration in your local area? Very positive and positive	47%	45%	37%	48%
Local area: people from different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together: strongly agree and agree	70%	71%	73%	78%
Immigrants from many different countries make Australia stronger: strongly agree and agree	68%	64%	62%	67%
Current immigration intake is about right or too low	55%	51%	43%	54%
Local area: people willing to help their neighbours: strongly agree and agree	80%	81%	73%	78%
How worried are you about becoming a victim of crime in your local area? Not worried, not at all worried	75%	76%	76%	87%
Safe walking alone at night: very safe and fairly safe	61%	62%	59%	78%
Most people can be trusted	55%	54%	45%	53%
Trust local council to do what is right for the people in the area: almost always, most of the time	44%	45%	34%	55%
Do you agree or disagree that you can influence local council decisions affecting your local area? Strongly agree and agree	51%	54%	41%	57%
N (unweighted)	2,019	1,510	297	297

Green shading indicates difference >7 percentage points below the reference group

Regions of high immigrant concentration

As has been noted, the regions of high immigrant concentration surveyed were within the LGAs of Fairfield and Bankstown in Sydney and Greater Dandenong and Hume in Melbourne.

Fairfield LGA 30+ km west of the CBD (45 minutes by car), surveying conducted mostly in the north-eastern part of the LGA, including the suburbs of Smithfield, Fairfield, Cabramatta, Canley Vale, Prairiewood, Wakeley, Edensor Park

Bankstown LGA 20+ km (40 minutes by car) south-west of the CBD, surveying concentrated in the suburbs of Greenacre, Chullora, Mt Lewis, Bankstown

South-east Hume LGA 20+ km north of CBD (30 minutes by car), surveying concentred in Merri Ward, encompassing the suburbs of Broadmeadows, Dallas, Jacana, Coolaroo, Meadow Heights, Campbellfield

Greater Dandenong LGA 30+ km south-east of the CBD (30 minutes by car), surveying concentrated in the suburbs of Dandenong, Noble Park, Keysborough, Springvale.

These areas are characterised by the high proportion of overseas-born residents, amongst the highest in Sydney and Melbourne, and the relatively high proportion of immigrants from non-English-speaking countries. Thus in the areas of Hume and Bankstown surveyed, at the 2006 census close to 40% of the residents were born overseas, in Greater Dandenong and Fairfield close to 60%. In the postcode areas principally surveyed in Hume and in Greater Dandenong, over 60% of residents speak a language other than English in their homes, in Bankstown and Fairfield over 70%. Indicative of the diversity of these regions, when respondents to the survey were asked 'what proportion of all the people in your local area are of the same national or ethnic group as you', under 20% indicated 'all' or 'more than half', compared with 86% in Sunbury and 92% in Engadine.

In all four regions the average weekly individual income is well below the national average of $466: in 2006, in the postcode areas principally surveyed in Hume it was $248 and in Bankstown $317, in the LGA of Fairfield it was $319 and in Greater Dandenong $342. Consistent with these income levels, the Socio-Economic Index places south-east Hume in the bottom decile (the highest level of relative socio-economic disadvantage), the surveyed areas of Bankstown and Greater Dandenong in the third, and Fairfield in the fourth.

The survey in each of the four localities reached the target of 300 respondents, designed to yield a 50:50 ratio of Australia-born and overseas-born respondents. This methodology yielded sufficient respondents to analyse the findings for three birth-place groups at both the local and national levels:

- Long-time Australians (those born in Australia, with both parents born in Australia);

- Australia-born;

- NESB Australians (those born in a country whose main language is other than English).

The findings for these regions of immigrant concentration indicate much larger variation from the national findings for the long-time Australian and Australia-born respondents, lower variation for NESB respondents. Findings are summarised in Table 14.3 and represented in graphs (Figures 14.1, 14.3) and colour-coded grid diagrams (Figures 14.2, 14.4, 14.5).

There are four key findings from the comparison of attitudes of long-time Australian respondents at the national and local levels:

1. The indicators of sense of worth and belonging are only marginally different – thus 90% at the national level and 84% at the local indicate that they have been 'happy' or 'very happy' over the last 12 months.

2. Questions related to the impact of immigration show only minor variation. When asked about the impact of immigration in their locality, 40% of long-time Australian respondents in the areas of immigrant concentration indicate that the impact is positive, 44% in the national survey. When asked if people from different national and ethnic communities get on well together, 60% in the local survey and 68% in the national are in agreement.

3. There is, however, a marked difference when the on-going immigration program is considered: only 29% of long-time Australian respondents are of the view that the current intake is 'about right' or 'too low', compared with 50% at the national level.

4. Responses to a number of questions indicate that the level of social capital and sense of security is markedly lower for long-time Australians in these regions of immigrant concentration. Thus only 35% agree that most people can be trusted, 20 percentage points lower than respondents at the national level. Belief in capacity to influence local council decisions is 14 percentage points lower (40%, 54%). Agreement with the proposition that people are willing to help their neighbours is down 19 percentage points (63%, 82%). Concern with becoming a victim of crime and with safety on the streets at night produces the sharpest differentiation – only a small minority, 28% of local respondents, feel safe walking alone at night, 35 percentage points lower than at the national level (and 50 percentage points lower than the level of response in Engadine).

Figure 14.1: Selected questions, long-time Australian respondents, national and areas of immigrant concentration
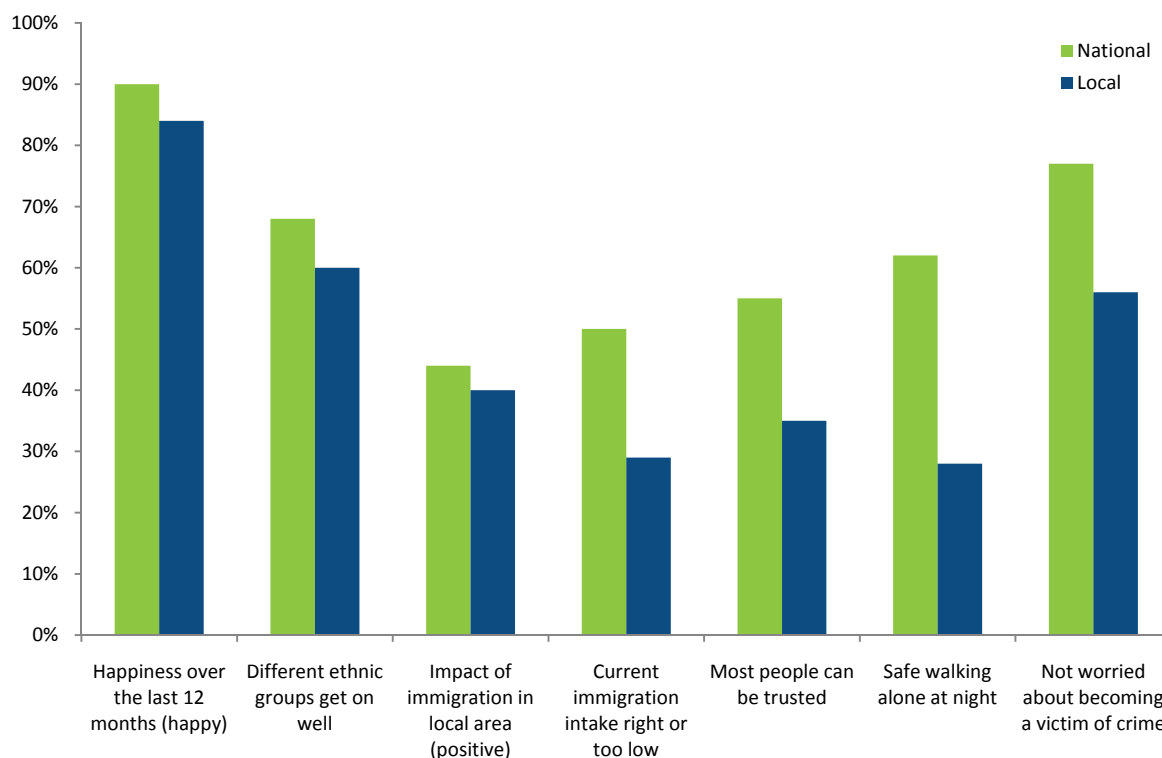
Figure 14.2:   National and local surveys (in areas of immigrant concentration): long-time Australian (2nd generation/+)

Variance National – Local	National – LT Au	Local – LT Au

Trust local government[2]

-10	46	36

Can influence local council[1]

-14	54	40

Can trust most people[8]

-20	55	35

Great sense of belonging

-2	82	80

Great sense of pride in the Aust. way of life

+4	63	67

Happiness[3]

-6	90	84

Financial satisfaction[4]

-7	74	67

Land of economic opportunity[1]

-1	81	80

Adequate support for low incomes[1]

-6	47	41

Immigrants make Australia stronger[1]

-10	63	53

Current immigration about right or too low[8]

-21	50	29

Impact of Immigration in local area positive[5]

-4	44	40

People from different ethnic backgrounds get on well[1]

-6	68	60

People willing to help their neighbours[1]

-19	82	63

Not worried about becoming a victim of crime[9]

-21	77	56

Feel safe walking alone at night[10]

-35	63	28

[1] Strongly agree/agree
[2] Almost always/most of the time
[3] Very happy/happy
[4] Very satisfied/satisfied
[5] Very positive/positive
[6] Very worried/worried
[7] Very safe/safe
[8] Agree
[9] Not at all worried/not worried
[10] Very safe/safe

	>-25
	-25-16
	-15-6
	+5-4
	>+4
	Agree 30-39
	Agree <30

Results for two other groups at the local level, Australia-born and NESB, indicate similar patterns of response. The main difference is that these groups are more positive than long-time Australians about the current immigration intake and the value of immigration from a range of different countries, although level of agreement is lower than the national. Thus 65% of NESB respondents at the national level support the current intake or its increase, compared to 50% of NESB respondents at the local level. A notable finding is that while the long-time Australians indicate a marginally lower level of agreement with the proposition that people from different national or ethnic groups get on well together (68% national, 60% local), there is almost no difference among the Australia-born, and among NESB respondents there is a higher proportion at the local level who agree with the proposition (79% local, 65% national). There is also a pattern whereby NESB respondents indicate a heightened level of trust in local authorities (Table 14.3, Figures 14.4, 14.5).

The key divergence, as with the long-time Australian respondents, occurs when trust in people and issues concerned with crime and personal safety are raised. For the three groups, the level of trust in people is in the range of 35–40% at the local level, 54–57% at the national; sense of safety when walking alone at night is in the range 28–40% at the local level, 57–62% at the national.

Comparison between long-time Australian and NESB respondents in the areas of high immigrant concentration indicate that a markedly larger proportion of long-time Australians have a stronger sense of belonging, to a lesser extent a greater sense of pride in the Australian way of life, but in response to most other questions the NESB respondents indicate more positive attitudes (Table 14.3, Figure 14.6).

Figure 14.3: Selected questions, NESB respondents, national and areas of immigrant concentration
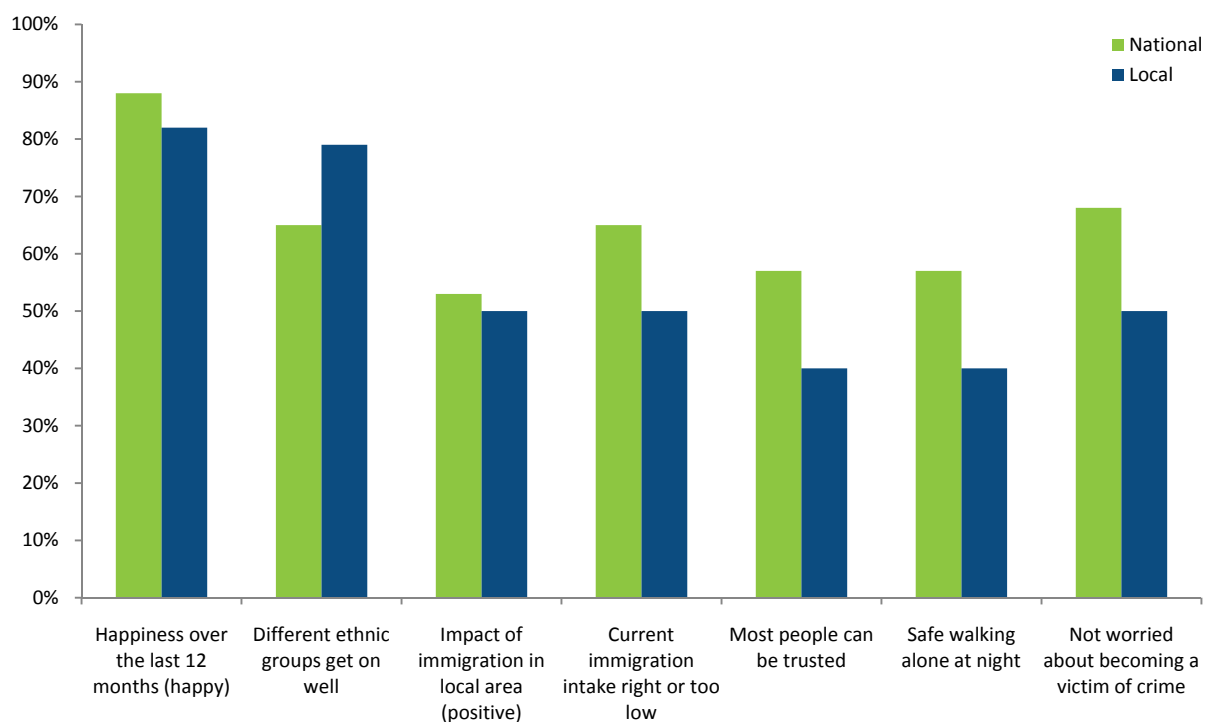
Table 14.3: Selected questions, long-time Australian, Australia-born and non English-speaking background respondents, national and areas of immigrant concentration

Survey item	All resp. National	LT Au National	LT Au Local	Au-born National	Au-born Local	NESB National	NESB Local
Level of happiness over the last 12 months: very happy and happy	89%	90%	84%	89%	83%	88%	82%
Satisfaction with present financial situation: very satisfied and satisfied	72%	74%	67%	73%	66%	64%	72%
What has been the impact of immigration in your local area? Very positive and positive	47%	44%	40%	45%	48%	53%	50%
Local area: people from different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together: strongly agree and agree	70%	68%	60%	71%	69%	65%	79%
Immigrants from many different countries make Australia stronger: strongly agree and agree	68%	63%	53%	64%	63%	78%	67%
Trust local council to do what is right for the people in the area: almost always, most of the time	44%	46%	36%	45%	39%	42%	47%
Do you agree or disagree that you can influence local council decisions affecting your local area? Strongly agree and agree	51%	54%	40%	54%	43%	44%	47%
Current immigration intake is about right or too low	55%	50%	29%	51%	41%	65%	50%
Local area: people willing to help their neighbours: strongly agree and agree	80%	82%	63%	81%	64%	74%	67%
Most people can be trusted	55%	55%	35%	54%	35%	57%	40%
How worried are you about becoming a victim of crime in your local area? Not worried, not at all worried	75%	77%	56%	76%	53%	68%	50%
Safe walking alone at night: very safe & fairly safe	61%	62%	28%	62%	35%	57%	40%
N (unweighted)	2,019	1,107	292	1,510	601	247	532

Light green shading indicates difference >10 percentage points from the reference group; dark green indicates difference >20 percentage points from the reference group
Key:
LT Au   - Long-time Australian (born in Australia, with both parents born in Australia)
Au   - Australia-born
NESB   - Non-English-speaking background, overseas-born

Figure 14.4: National and local surveys (in areas of immigrant concentration): Australia-born

Variance National – Local	National Australia-born	Local Australia-born

Trust local government[2]

-6	45	39

Can influence local council[1]

-11	54	43

Can trust most people[3]

-19	54	35

Great sense of belonging

-9	80	71

Great sense of pride in the Aust. way of life

-2	61	59

Happiness[3]

-6	89	83

Financial satisfaction[4]

-7	73	66

Land of economic opportunity[1]

-1	82	81

Adequate support for low incomes[1]

0	46	46

Immigrants make Australia stronger[1]

-1	64	63

Current immigration about right or too low[8]

-10	51	41

Impact of Immigration in local area positive[5]

+3	45	48

People from different ethnic backgrounds get on well[1]

-2	71	69

People willing to help their neighbours[1]

-17	81	64

Worried about becoming a victim of crime[9]

-23	76	53

Feel safe walking alone at night[10]

-27	62	35

[1] Strongly agree/agree
[2] Almost always/most of the time
[3] Very happy/happy
[4] Very satisfied/satisfied
[5] Very positive/positive
[6] Very worried/worried
[7] Very safe/safe
[8] Agree
[9] Not at all worried/not worried
[10] Very safe/safe

- >-25
- -25-16
- -15-6
- -5+4
- >+4

- Agree 30-39
- Agree <30

Figure 14.5: **National and local surveys (in areas of immigrant concentration): non-English-speaking backgrouns (NESB)**

Variance National – Local	National NESB	Local NESB

Trust local government[2]

+5	42	47

Can influence local council[1]

+3	44	47

Can trust most people[8]

-17	57	40

Great sense of belonging

+8	50	58

Great sense of pride in the Aust. way of life

+8	47	55

Happiness[3]

-6	88	82

Financial satisfaction[4]

+8	64	72

Land of economic opportunity[1]

+6	83	89

Adequate support for low incomes[1]

-4	64	60

Immigrants make Australia stronger[1]

-11	78	67

Current immigration about right or too low[8]

-15	65	50

Impact of Immigration in local area positive[5]

-3	53	50

People from different ethnic backgrounds get on well[1]

+14	65	79

People willing to help their neighbours[1]

-7	74	67

Worried about becoming a victim of crime[9]

-18	68	50

Feel safe walking alone at night[10]

-17	57	40

[1] Strongly agree/agree
[2] Almost always/most of the time
[3] Very happy/happy
[4] Very satisfied/satisfied
[5] Very positive/positive
[6] Very worried/worried
[7] Very safe/safe
[8] Agree
[9] Not at all worried/not worried
[10] Very safe/safe

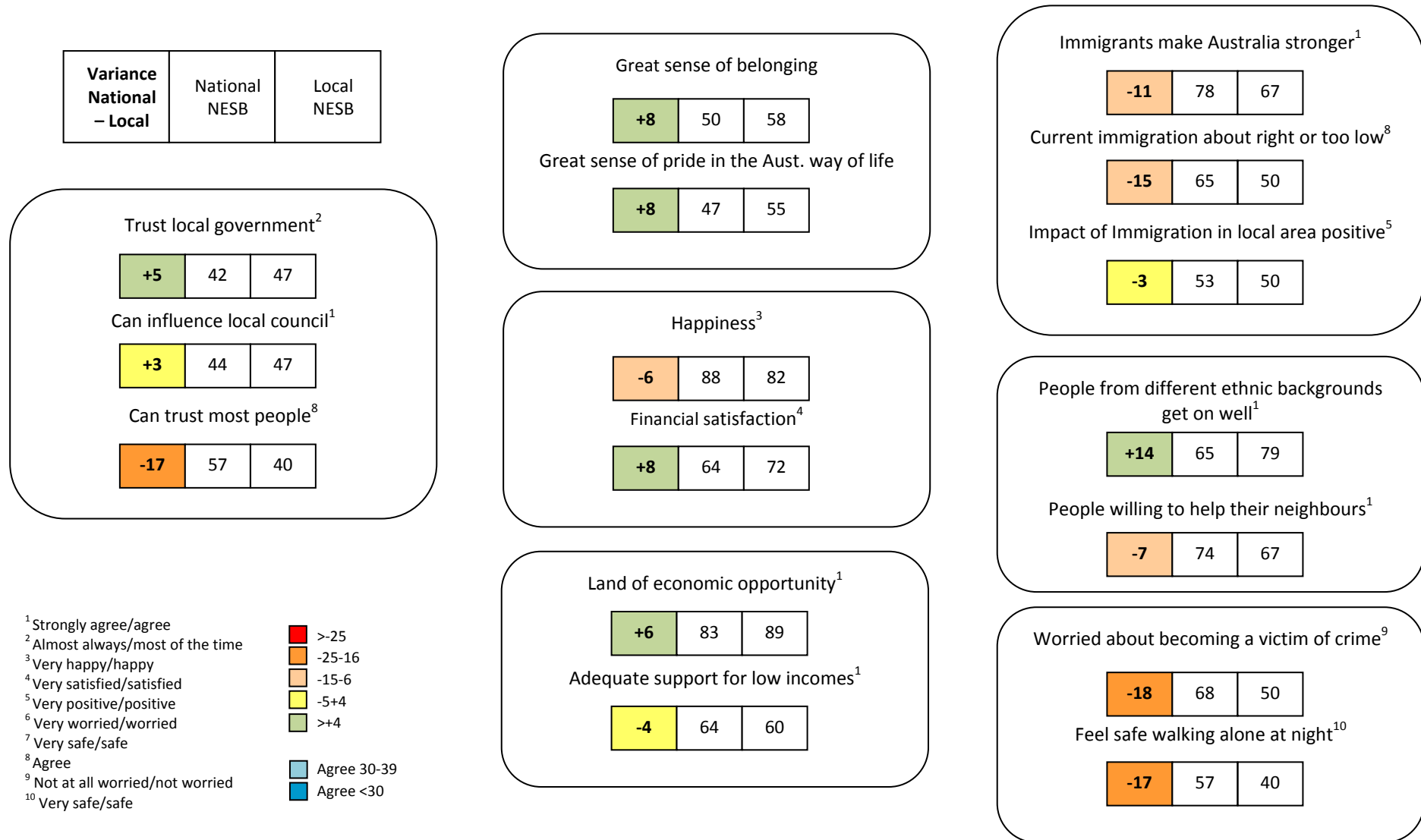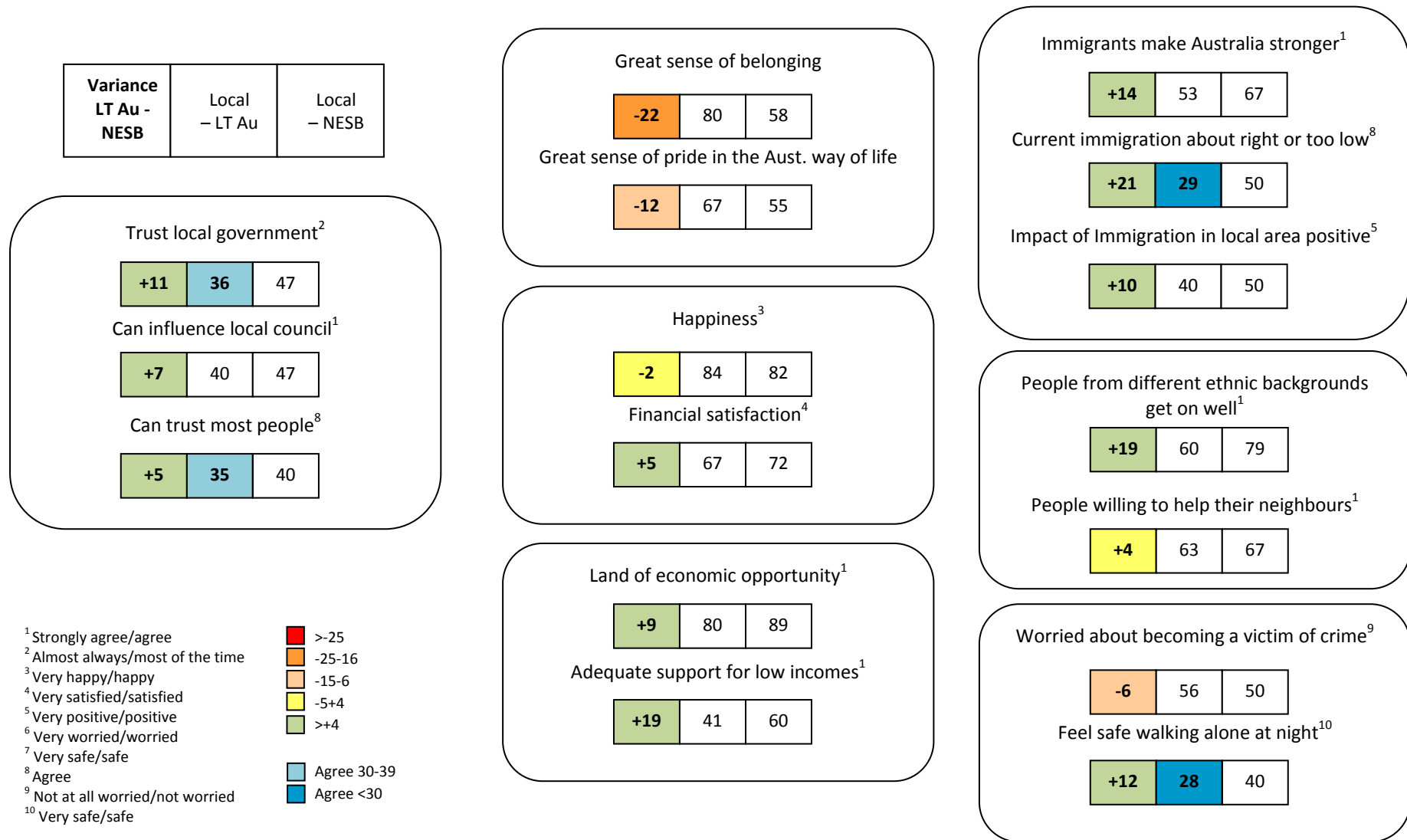|	
■ (red)	>-25
■ (orange)	-25-16
■ (peach)	-15-6
■ (yellow)	-5+4
■ (green)	>+4
■ (light blue)	Agree 30-39
■ (blue)	Agree <30

Figure 14.6: Local survey (in areas of immigrant concentration): long-time Australian and non-English-speaking background

Variance LT Au - NESB	Local – LT Au	Local – NESB

Trust local government[2]

| +11 | 36 | 47 |

Can influence local council[1]

| +7 | 40 | 47 |

Can trust most people[8]

| +5 | 35 | 40 |

Great sense of belonging

| -22 | 80 | 58 |

Great sense of pride in the Aust. way of life

| -12 | 67 | 55 |

Happiness[3]

| -2 | 84 | 82 |

Financial satisfaction[4]

| +5 | 67 | 72 |

Land of economic opportunity[1]

| +9 | 80 | 89 |

Adequate support for low incomes[1]

| +19 | 41 | 60 |

Immigrants make Australia stronger[1]

| +14 | 53 | 67 |

Current immigration about right or too low[8]

| +21 | 29 | 50 |

Impact of Immigration in local area positive[5]

| +10 | 40 | 50 |

People from different ethnic backgrounds get on well[1]

| +19 | 60 | 79 |

People willing to help their neighbours[1]

| +4 | 63 | 67 |

Worried about becoming a victim of crime[9]

| -6 | 56 | 50 |

Feel safe walking alone at night[10]

| +12 | 28 | 40 |

[1] Strongly agree/agree
[2] Almost always/most of the time
[3] Very happy/happy
[4] Very satisfied/satisfied
[5] Very positive/positive
[6] Very worried/worried
[7] Very safe/safe
[8] Agree
[9] Not at all worried/not worried
[10] Very safe/safe

>-25
-25-16
-15-6
-5+4
>+4

Agree 30-39
Agree <30

The diminished sense of safety which has been identified is primarily a function of socio-economic disadvantage (not of immigrant concentration). Comparison with the Melbourne LGA of Frankston illustrates this point.

There are suburbs within the Frankston LGA which are ranked in the lower deciles of the Socio-Economic Index, have an average proportion of residents born in Australia (72%) and a high proportion (86%) who speak only English in the home. Yet sense of safety is on par with the areas of immigrant concentration surveyed. To take Victorian examples, Community Indicators Victoria data on sense of safety when walking alone at night places Frankston, Hume and Dandenong LGAs all in the bottom 20%. Research tables prepared by Professor Tony Vinson and his associates establish that in a number of suburbs in these three LGAs, court convictions, domestic violence and prison admissions are in the top 20% (Table 14.4).

Table 14.4: Greater Dandenong and Frankston Local Government Areas, selected characteristics 2006

Locality	Overseas-born	Crime against person/ per 100,000	Crime against property/ per 100,000	Sense of safety	Court convictions*	Prison admissions*
Greater Dandenong LGA	56.0%	1,307	6,756	47.4%	1st decile	1st decile
Frankston LGA	22.5%	1,139	7,102	55.3%	2nd decile	2nd decile
Melbourne region	31.0%	800	5,910	64.0%		
Victoria	23.8%	822	5,482	66.5%		

*Selected suburbs

Source: Community Indicators Victoria; Tony Vinson, *Dropping Off the Edge* (Richmond 2007), supplementary statistical tables.

These statistics point to an environment in which social cohesion is made difficult to attain. The Community Indicators Victoria project, sponsored by VicHealth, explains the significance of its research in the following terms: 'Neighbourhoods which are perceived as safe, foster community participation, encourage physical activity, community connectedness and add to the health and well-being of local residents and visitors.'[6] The reverse applies to neighbourhoods perceived to be unsafe, the immediate significance of the 2009 findings for the areas of immigrant concentration. If sense of threat and lack of trust thwart the building of links between people there is the risk of escalating conflict. This conflict can take many forms, such as violence between youth gangs. The distinctive threat in areas of immigrant concentration is that tensions take on an ethnic dimension, replicating the pattern witnessed in many societies whereby ethnic groups become the scapegoats for socio-economic difficulties experienced by local residents.

---

[6] Community Indicators Victoria, Perceptions of Safety (internet site).

15 Discrimination

The national survey indicates that slightly more than one in four respondents (26% in 2009, 27% in 2007) report the experience of discrimination over the course of their lives because of their 'skin colour or ethnic origin' (2009), worded 'national or ethnic background' in the 2007 survey. The proportion reporting discrimination on the basis of religion is much lower, 7% in 2009, 8% in 2007.

One in ten respondents to the national survey (9% in 2007) report discrimination on grounds of national or ethnic background or religion over the last 12 months; 4% (7%) report discrimination on an ongoing basis, at least once per month.

The reported experience of discrimination is higher in the surveyed regions of immigrant concentration. In 2009, a number of indicators were 50% higher in these regions: 39% (26% national) reported discrimination over the course of their lives on the basis of 'skin colour or ethnic origin', 12% (7% national) on the basis of religion; 15% (10% national) reported incidents of discrimination over the last 12 months, 6% (4% national) at least once per month.

Findings were considered for specific birthplace, region and language groups: Australia, NESB, China and Vietnam, the Middle East, India and Sri Lanka. The highest level of discrimination ever experienced on the basis of 'skin colour or ethnic origin' was reported by those born in China or Vietnam, and in the NESB category. By a large margin, the highest level of discrimination on the basis of religion was reported by those born in the Middle East. Reported experience of discrimination over the last year was highest among those born in India or Sri Lanka (twice the national average), while those reporting the highest number of incidents (at least one per month) were also those born in India or Sri Lanka (Table 15.1).

Table 15.1: Incidence of reported discrimination, national and local areas of immigrant concentration

Response	National Total	Sunbury & Engadine (Au-born)	4LGA (Gr. Dandenong, Hume, Bankstown, Fairfield)					
			Total	Au-born	NESB	China & Vietnam	Middle East	India & Sri Lanka
Ever – ethnicity	26%	23%	39%	32%	47%	48%	35%	44%
Ever – religion	7%	7%	12%	12%	12%	4%	24%	12%
Last 12 months	10%	10%	15%	13%	17%	19%	17%	20%
At least once per month	4%	3%	6%	6%	7%	8%	7%	12%
N (unweighted)	2,019	594	1,210	601	532	122	147	49

There was a large measure of consistency in the reporting of forms of discrimination in 2007 and 2009. Verbal abuse was most common, almost at the same level in 2009 as actions which made respondents feel that they did not belong.

The 2009 surveys at the national level and in areas of immigrant concentration indicated that incidents of discrimination were most likely to occur on the street, followed by place of work and when being served in a shop. There was lower reporting of discriminatory incidents in schools than in 2007.

Forms of workplace discrimination were next reported, with the most serious forms of discriminatory acts – involving property damage and physical assault – the least common. Comparison of the two national surveys indicates an increase in the proportion of reported property damage and physical attack, with physical assault at twice the level reported in 2007 (Figure 15.1).

Figure 15.1: 'What form did the discrimination take?' National (2007, 2009) and areas of immigrant concentration, 2009
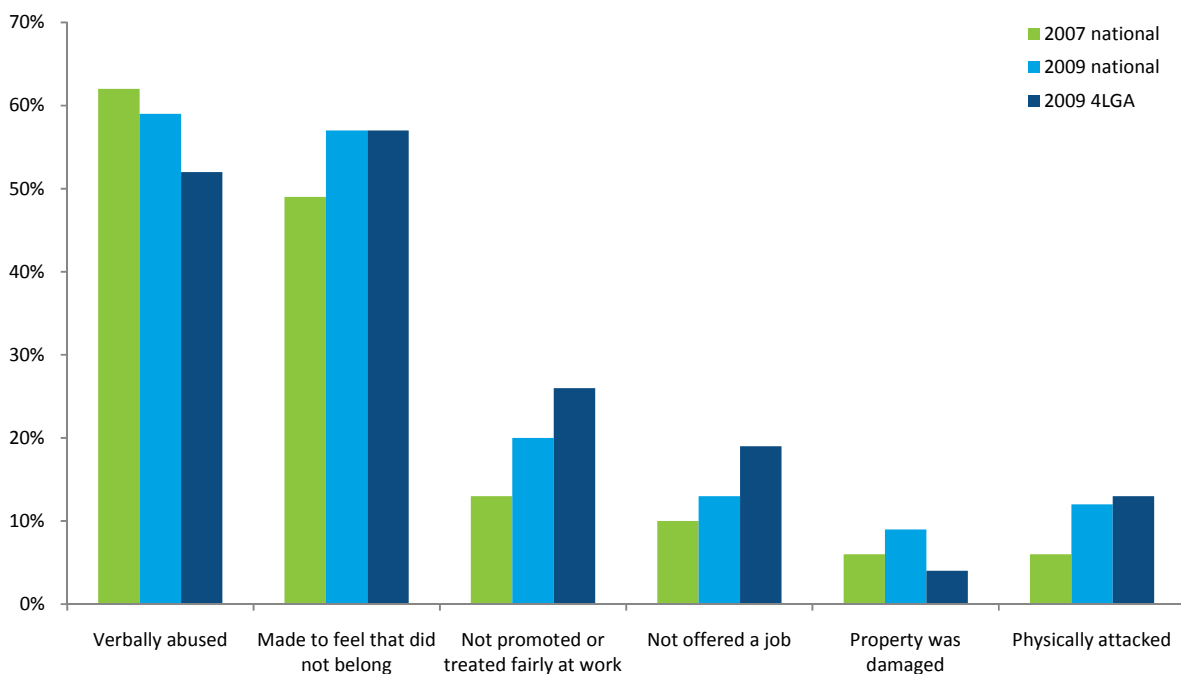
Respondents are those who experienced discrimination in the last 12 months.
Respondents had the option of specifying more than one form of discrimination.

16 Intolerance of diversity

Intolerance of diversity is found in all national groups. Research undertaken by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia indicates that the proportion of the intolerant within the countries of the European Union ranges from a low of 4% of the population to a high of 27%. The intolerant are characterised by unease when in the presence of members of minority ethnic groups, their belief that minority cultures do not enrich society, their support for policies to encourage the emigration of minorities, their demand that those who remain assimilate to the dominant culture, and their opposition to anti-racist government policies. Intolerant attitudes are more widely held by people living in Mediterranean and eastern European countries and are at the lowest levels in Scandinavian countries.

At the other end of the spectrum are the actively tolerant, who make up from 7% to 33% of the populations of EU member countries. They welcome the presence of minorities, believe that minorities enrich society, oppose policies of assimilation and give strong support to anti-racist initiatives.

International surveys in the years 2003–07 in which Australia participated indicate that in Australia there is a relatively high level of support for immigration and a high proportion of Australians welcome the economic benefits of immigration and the new ideas and cultures that immigrants bring. (Figure 16.1)

Figure 16.1: Attitudes to immigration intake and perception of the value of immigration, national surveys, 2003
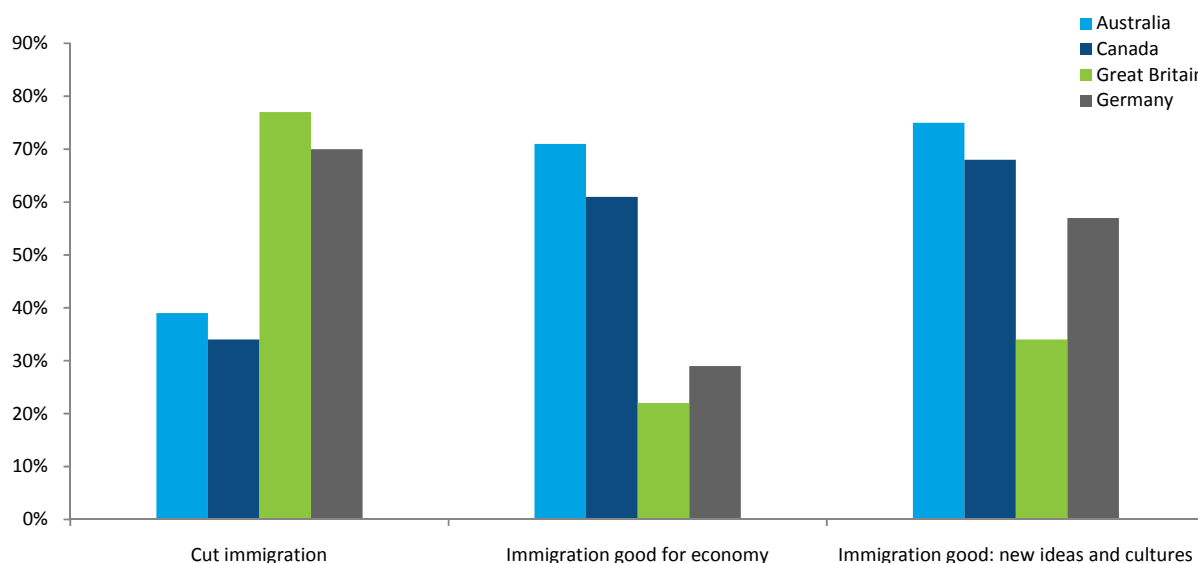
Source: ISSP 2003

But close to 10% of the Australian population may be termed intolerant (and a similar proportion actively tolerant). Thus a recent international survey found that 9% of Australian respondents 'strongly agreed' with the proposition that 'ethnic diversity erodes a country's security' and a further 11% 'agreed', a relatively high proportion; in the United States 4% 'strongly agreed' and in Sweden 3% (Figure 16.2).

Figure 16.2: Agreement with the proposition that 'ethnic diversity erodes a country's security', national surveys by country, 2004–07
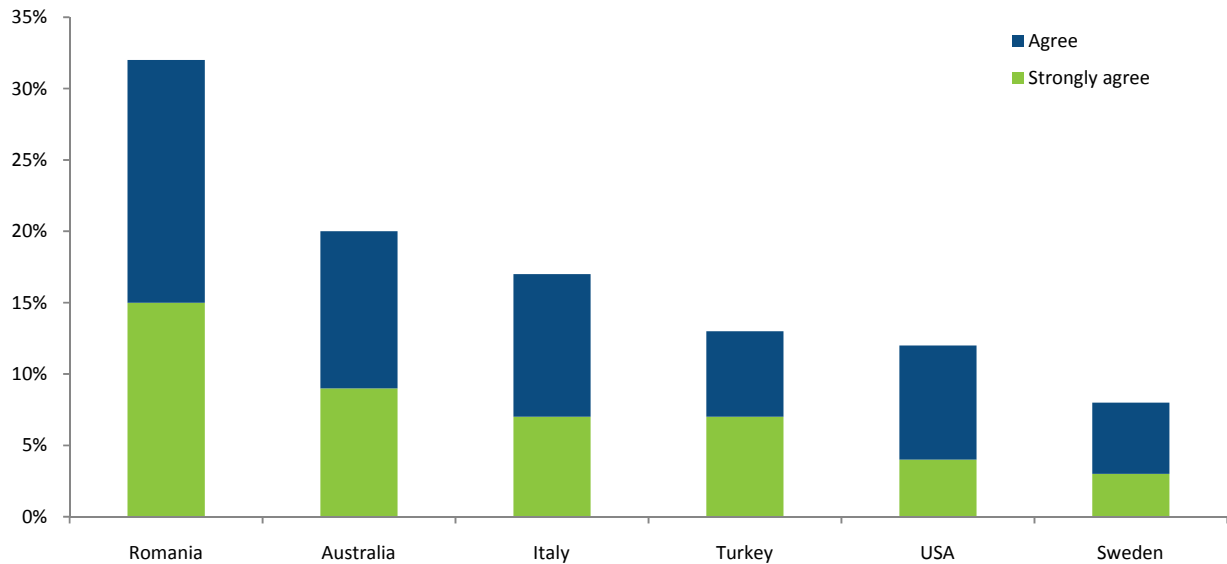
Source: WWS 2004–07; responses were ranked on a 10-point scale, ranging from 'ethnic diversity erodes a country's security' at one end to 'ethnic diversity enriches my life' at the other. Levels 1–2 are interpreted as indicating 'strong agreement', levels 2–4 as indicating 'agreement'.

The level of intolerance indicated by the 2009 social cohesion survey is first considered in responses to one proposition and one question:

- 'Accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger.'
- 'In general, what has been the impact of immigration on daily life in your local area?'

There is a consistency of response across the 2007 and 2009 surveys in views on the value of 'immigration from many different countries'. Those indicating strong disagreement comprised 8% of respondents in 2007, 9% in 2009; a further 18% indicated disagreement in 2007, the same proportion in 2009 (Table 16.1).

The particular value of the social cohesion survey, as has been noted, lies in the scope to explore the significance of ethnicity and community. The highest level of strong disagreement with the value of immigration 'from many different countries', at 17% of respondents, is among long-time Australians resident in regions of immigrant concentration; the lowest level, at 9%, is among NESB respondents in the same regions.

Table 16.1: 'Accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger.' National and local surveys, 2009

Respondents by locality	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Total disagree	N (unweighted)
National – total respondents	9%	18%	27%	2,019
National – long-time Australian	12%	20%	32%	1,107
Local (4 LGA) – long-time Australian	17%	23%	40%	292
Local (4 LGA) – Australia-born	12%	19%	31%	601
Local (4 LGA) – NESB	9%	13%	22%	532
Local (Sunbury and Engadine) – Australia-born	11%	17%	28%	594

The same pattern is even clearer when strong disagreement and disagreement are aggregated.

In response to a question concerning the impact of immigration on daily life in the local area, again the highest level of negative response is among the long-time Australian residents in regions of immigrant concentration, the lowest level is among Australia-born residents in the outer urban areas, where there is relatively little direct contact with immigrants (Table 16.2).

A consistent finding of surveys conducted in Australia over the last 30 years (depending on the type of question asked) is that levels of intolerance and rejection of cultural diversity can reach 40–45% of respondents. The core of the intolerant, numbering close to 10%, hold strongly negative views on issues related to a diverse immigration intake and multiculturalism. The intolerant make up a higher proportion of the population in some geographic regions and among specific birthplace groups.

Table 16.2: 'In general, what has been the impact of immigration on daily life in your local area?' National and local surveys, 2009

Respondents by locality	Very negative	Negative	Total negative	N (unweighted)
National – total respondents	2%	6%	8%	2,019
National – long-time Australian	2%	6%	8%	1,107
Local (4 LGAs) – long-time Australian	9%	25%	31%	292
Local (4 LGAs) – Australia-born	6%	20%	26%	601
Local (4 LGAs) – NESB	3%	14%	17%	532
Local (Sunbury and Engadine) – Australia-born	1%	3%	4%	594

To provide further indication of the range of attitudes by regions of residence and birthplace, responses to three questions were correlated, to identify those who [i] consider the current immigration level to be 'too high' and [ii] disagree with the proposition that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger' and [iii] disagree with the proposition that 'ethnic minorities in Australia should be given government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions'. At the national level, 17% of respondents considered the immigration intake to be 'too high' and disagreed with the two propositions (compared to 18% in 2007). Among the Australia-born the proportion is around 21%, in marked contrast with NESB respondents around 8%. The highest level of correlation is among the Australia-born in regions of immigrant concentration, with the peak of 35% among long-time Australians.

Table 16.3: Three correlated immigration questions, cross-tabulated by birthplace, national and local

National Total	4LGA Total	National LT Au	4LGA LT Au	2LGA LT Au	National Au	4LGA Au	2LGA Au	National NESB	4LGA NESB
17%	15%	22%	35%	21%	21%	24%	21%	8%	8%
N= 2,019	1,210	1,107	292	444	1,510	601	594	247	532

Table 16.4: Three correlated immigration questions, cross-tabulated by birthplace, in rank order

4LGA LT Au	4LGA Au	National LT Au	2LGA Au	National Au	2LGA LT Au	National Total	4LGA Total	National NESB	4LGA NESB
35%	24%	22%	21%	21%	21%	17%	15%	8%	8%

Figure 16.3: Three correlated immigration questions, cross-tabulated by birthplace, in rank order
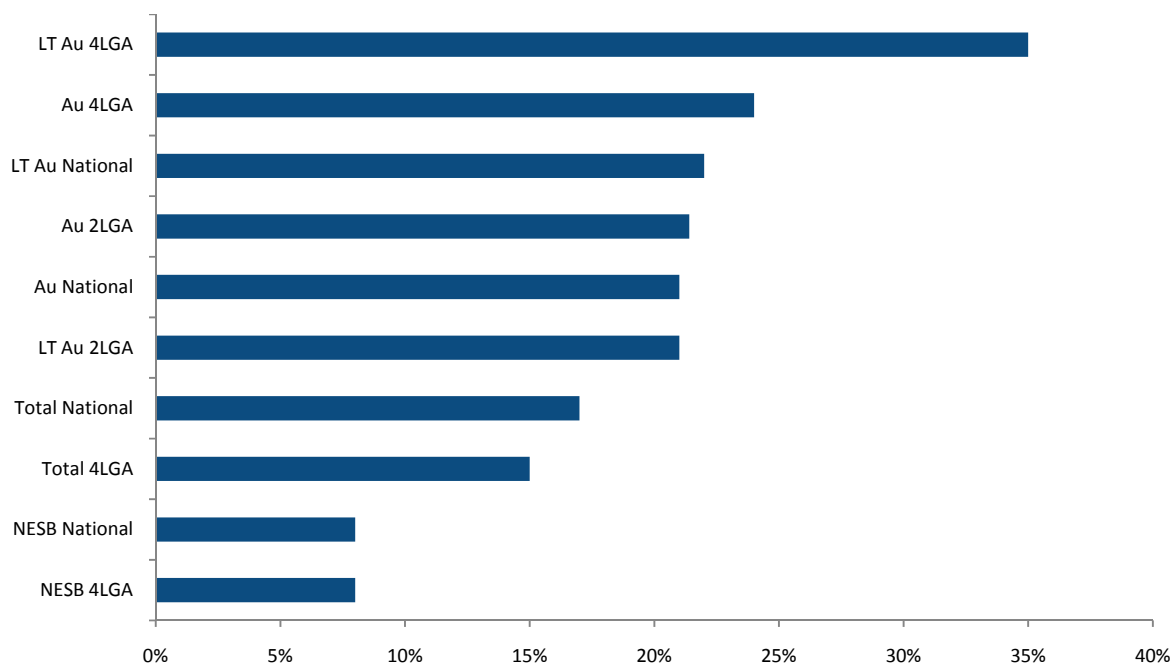
17 Statistical analyses

A range of statistical techniques were employed to provide further understanding of attitudes in the Australian community. The analyses considered correlations between positive (and negative) attitudes to immigration and selected demographic and attitudinal variables.

Constructing an attitudinal scale

A scale of Attitudes to Immigration was developed on the basis of responses to the 2009 national survey. Six of the questions relating specifically to immigration issues, specified in Table 17.1, were considered. Factor Analysis disclosed that four out of the six questions grouped together.

Table 17.1: Survey items relating to attitudes to immigration

Survey item	Loading	Included
Accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger 1 = Strongly Agree …. 5 = Strongly Disagree	.80	Yes
What do you think of the number of immigrants accepted into Australia at present 1 = Too high, 2 = About Right, 3 = Too low	-.78	Yes
Ethnic minorities in Australia should be given Australian government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions 1 = Strongly Agree …. 5 = Strongly Disagree	.73	Yes
In general, what has been the impact of immigration on daily life in your local area 1 = Very Positive… 5 = Very Negative	.38	Yes
Your local area, that is within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance of where you live is a place where people from different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together 1 = Strongly Agree …. 5 = Strongly Disagree	.01	No
It is better for a country if different racial or ethnic groups maintain their distinct customs and traditions OR it is better if these groups adapt and blend into the larger society 1 = Maintain distinct, 2 = Both, 3 = Blend	-.02	No

On the basis of responses to these four questions, the 'Attitudes to Immigration' scale was developed, in a similar way to the technique used to create the Index of Social Cohesion. Responses were scored to produce a scale that ranged between -2.20 and +2.44. This scale was standardized to have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1.0 for easier interpretation. **High values on the scale indicate negative feelings towards immigration and low values indicate positive feelings.** The scale was slightly skewed towards low values as a higher proportion of respondents indicated positive feelings. Respondents who score high values on the scale typically believe the number of immigrants in Australia is 'too high', disagree that accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australian stronger, rate immigration as having a negative impact in their area and disagree with government funding to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions.

The scale was used in a series of One-way Analyses of Variances (ANOVAs). This statistical procedure tests whether there are significant differences in the group mean scores on Attitude to Immigration when a range of demographic and behavioural variables were tested. In the following graphs, higher bar graphs indicate negative attitude to immigration. This analysis establishes that negative views are most likely to be held by:

- Those over the age of 65;

- Those without post-school educational qualifications or with trade or diploma level qualifications;

- Those who, when asked about their present financial circumstances, indicate that they are struggling to pay bills or are poor;

- Those whose profession is indicated as machinery operator, driver or labourer;

- Those who indicate a religious affiliation, but only attend a religious service once or twice a year, or do not attend at all;

- Those whose marital status is widowed or divorced.

Positive views are most likely to be held by:

- Those under the age of 34, and the linked demographics of those who have never married and are students;

- Those of non-English-speaking background;

- Those who, when asked about their present financial circumstances, indicate that they are prosperous or living very comfortably;

- Those who hold a University level qualification and the linked demographic of those who are employed in a professional capacity;

- Those who participate in a religious service at least once a month, followed by those who indicate that they have no religion;

- Those who indicate that they are likely to vote for the Green Party in the next election.
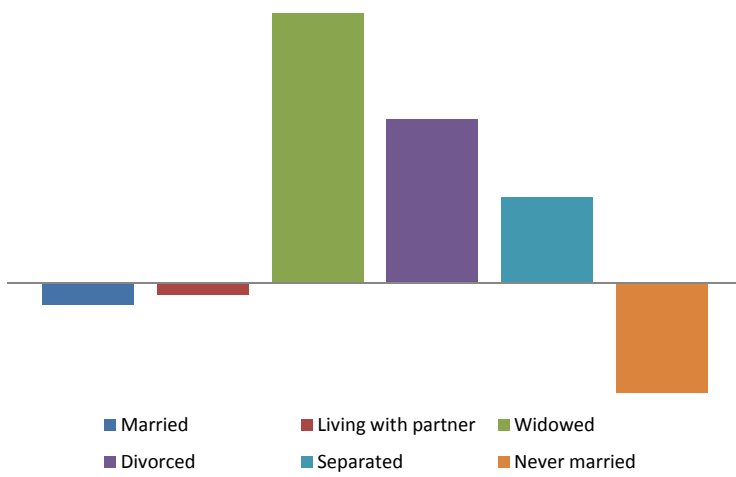
Figure 17.1: Attitude to immigration by age
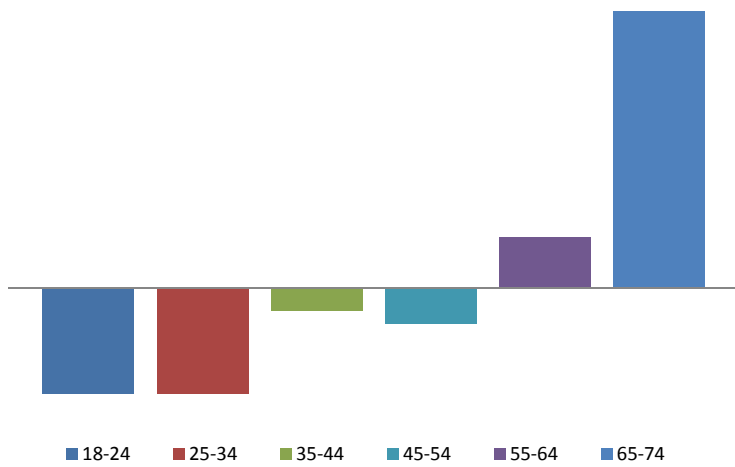
Age	N	Mean score
18-24	171	-.1349
25-34	324	-.1344
35-44	307	-.0291
45-54	270	-.0466
55-64	261	.0643
65-74	210	.3495

■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-44 ■ 45-54 ■ 55-64 ■ 65-74

Figure 17.2: Attitude to immigration by birthplace

■ Au-born ■ Overseas ESB ■ NESB
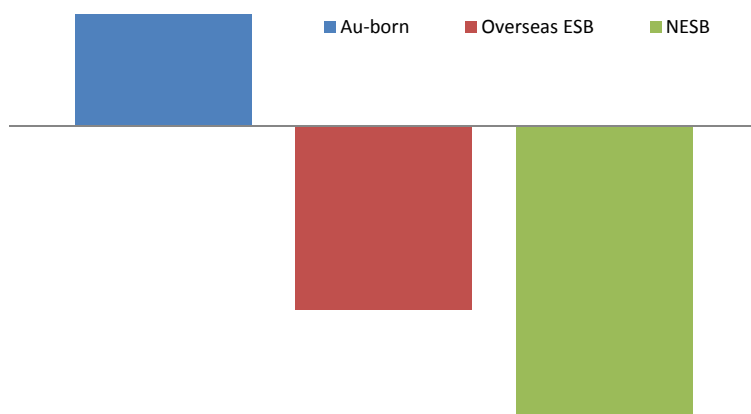
Birthplace	N	Mean score
Au-born	1076	.1304
Overseas ESB	162	-.2136
NESB	310	-.3407
Total	1548	-.0001

Figure 17.3: Attitude to immigration by marital status

Marital status	N	Mean score
Married	783	-.0218
Living with partner	173	-.0124
Widowed	104	.2636
Divorced	116	.1604
Separated	58	.0843
Never married	313	-.1080
Total	1547	-.0014

Figure 17.4: Attitude to immigration by employment situation
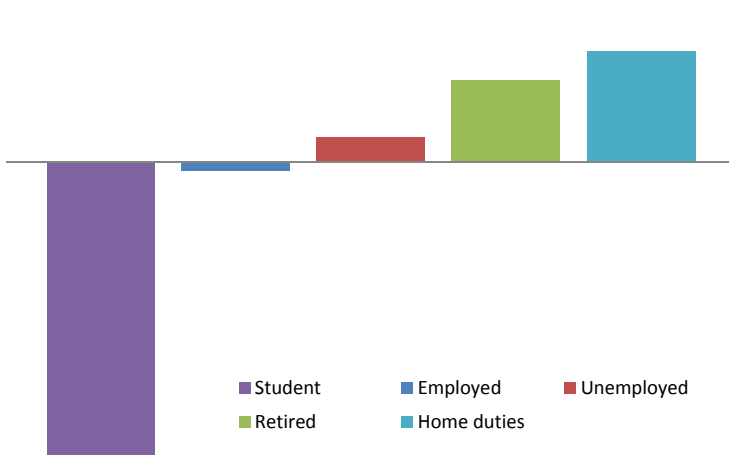
Employment status	N	Mean score
Employed	961	-.0127
Unemployed	62	.0388
Retired	295	.1275
Student	103	-.4602
Home duties	104	.1716
Total	1526	-.0012

Figure 17.5: Attitude to immigration by financial situation*
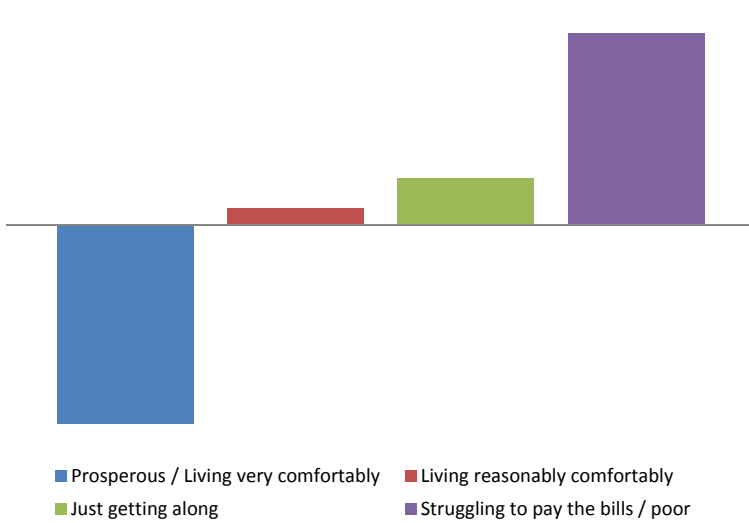
Financial situation	N	Mean score
Prosperous / Living very comfortably	245	-.2763
Living reasonably comfortably	843	.0236
Just getting along	358	.0661
Struggling to pay the bills / poor	98	.2678
Total	1545	.0014

*Which of the following terms best describes your financial circumstances today?

Figure 17.6: Attitude to immigration by highest level of completed education*
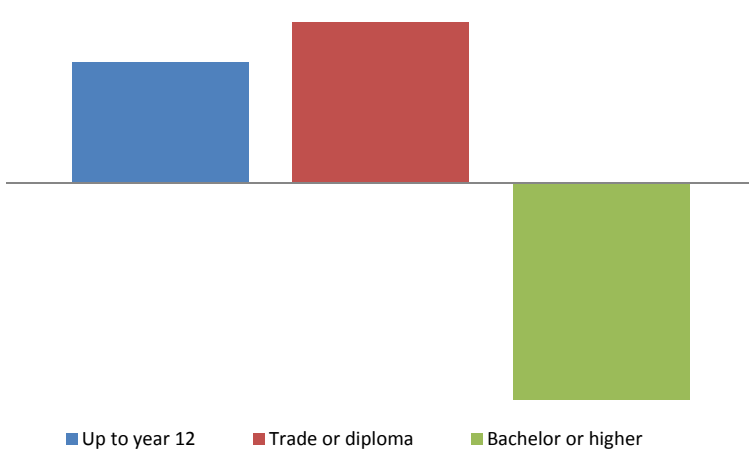
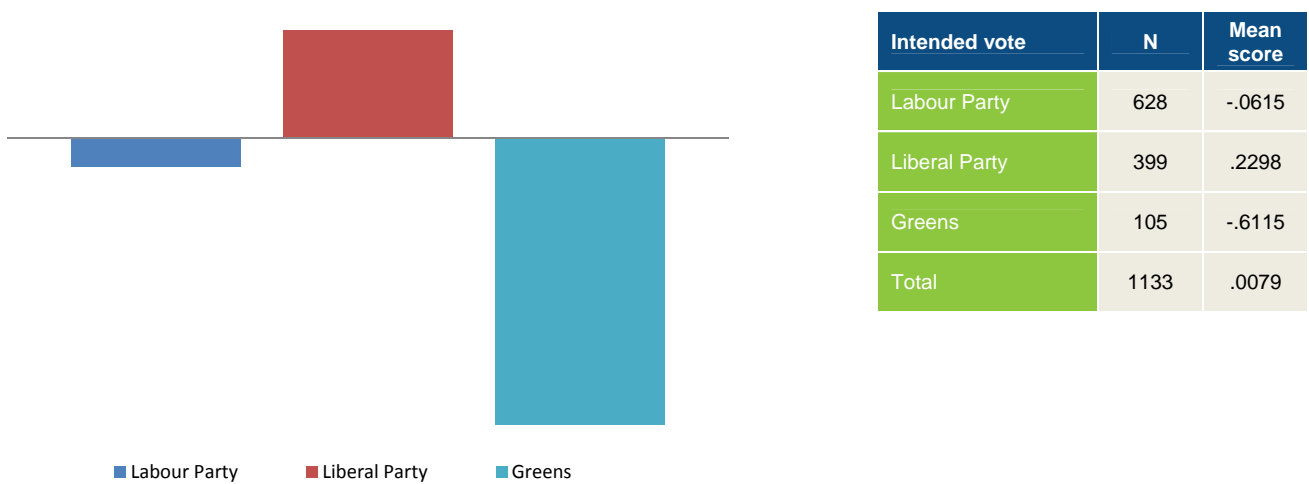| Education	N	Mean score
Up to year 12	554	.2170
Trade or diploma	387	.2895
Bachelor or higher	593	-.3894
Total	1533	.0010

* What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Figure 17.7: Attitude to immigration by participation in religion*
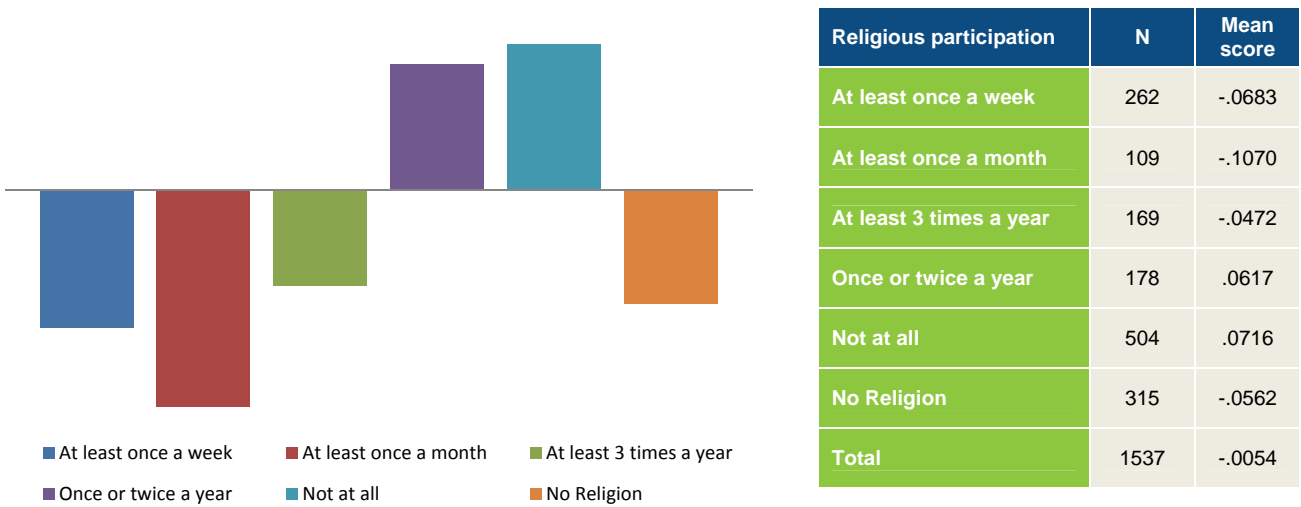
Religious participation	N	Mean score
At least once a week	262	-.0683
At least once a month	109	-.1070
At least 3 times a year	169	-.0472
Once or twice a year	178	.0617
Not at all	504	.0716
No Religion	315	-.0562
Total	1537	-.0054

Legend:
- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- At least 3 times a year
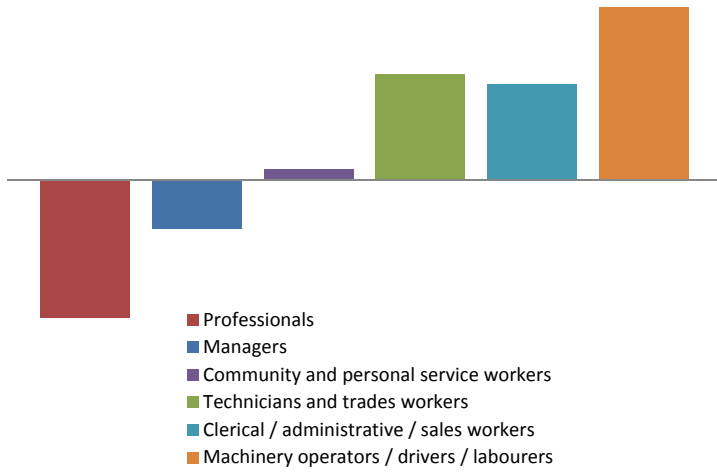- Once or twice a year
- Not at all
- No Religion

* In the past 12 months, how often did you participate in religious activities or attend religious services or meetings – with other people – other than for events such as weddings and funerals?

Figure 17.8: Attitude to immigration by intended vote (three largest political parties)*

Intended vote	N	Mean score
Labour Party	628	-.0615
Liberal Party	399	.2298
Greens	105	-.6115
Total	1133	.0079

Legend:
- Labour Party
- Liberal Party
- Greens

* If there was a Federal election held today, for which party would you probably vote?

Figure 17.9: Attitude to immigration by occupation

- ■ Professionals
- ■ Managers
- ■ Community and personal service workers
- ■ Technicians and trades workers
- ■ Clerical / administrative / sales workers
- ■ Machinery operators / drivers / labourers

Status	N	Mean score
Managers	134	-.1084
Professionals	329	-.3063
Technicians and trades workers	156	.2369
Community and personal service workers	107	.0249
Clerical and administrative workers	89	.1836
Sales workers	57	.2635
Machinery operators and drivers	29	.3006
Labourers	51	.4351
Total	952	-.0143

Logistic regression

Attitudes indicated by response to three questions relating to immigration included in both the 2007 and 2009 surveys were further explored using logistic regression analysis. As in the analysis using the scale Attitudes to Immigration, the logistic regression analysis included the variables of age and educational qualifications; the analysis also considered gender, place of residence (capital city/ rest of state) and parentage of Australia-born respondents. Logistic regression analysis was employed to find which demographic variables best distinguish between the responses to the three survey questions.

Findings from 2007 and 2009 for the three questions are presented in Tables 17.2, 17.3 and 17.4. The results are presented as odds ratios. **An odds ratio greater than 1 indicates** that a given group, for example males, is **more likely to report a more negative view** towards immigration compared with the reference group, in this case females, for the variable gender. **A value of less than 1 indicates that a given group is likely to report a more positive view compared with the reference group.**

This analysis further supports the significance of the variables of age and educational attainment identified above and considers additional demographic variables. The best predictors of a negative attitude to immigration were found to be:

- Age – 55+ years;
- Education – trade or diploma level qualification;
- Country of birth – Australia-born, with both parents Australia-born;
- Residence – outside of a capital city.

1: Agree with the view that 'the number of immigrants accepted in to Australia at present is too high'.

The best predictor of *agreeing* that the number of immigrants accepted in to Australia is 'too high' was age. People aged 55 or above were 52% more likely to report immigration as 'too high' compared to a reference group of people aged less than 35. Those aged between 34 and 54 years were very similar in opinion of those aged less than 35. This result is similar to the result of the 2007 survey, however in 2007 people aged between 35 and 54 were significantly more likely to report immigration as 'too high' (28%, compared to 8% in the 2009 survey). This difference in response indicates a more positive attitude to immigration in 2009 within this age group, reflected in a number of questions.

Education level was also found to be a strong predictor. Those respondents with a university qualification were 68% less likely to report immigration as 'too high', compared to those who had completed school up to year 12. This result is nearly identical to the 2007 survey.

In terms of country of birth and parentage, respondents born overseas (either from a non-English-speaking background or from an English-speaking background) were 48% less likely to report immigration as 'too high', compared to those Australia-born. Again, this result is nearly identical to the 2007 survey.

Males were 25% less likely than females to report immigration as 'too high', compared to 27% in 2007.

The remaining variable, location of residence, did not differentiate between respondents. That is, those residing in a capital city or the rest of the state did not statistically differ in their response to question 1. By contrast, in 2007, people residing outside capital cities were 27% more likely to report immigration as 'too high'.

2: Disagree that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger'.

There were similar demographic trends for question 2. Age was the best predictor of disagreeing that accepting immigrants makes Australia stronger. People aged 55 or above were 47% more likely to believe accepting immigrants does not make Australia stronger, compared to those aged 35 and younger. In 2007, people aged between 35-54 years of age were significantly more likely to disagree with question 2. However, in 2009, 35-54 year olds could not be statistically differentiated from those aged less than 35.

Tertiary education was the best predictor of *agreeing* that accepting immigrants makes Australia stronger. Respondents with a university education were 48% less likely to disagree with the proposition. There was no significant difference between respondents with a trade or diploma qualification and a Year 12 qualification in 2007 and 2009.

Respondents born overseas from a non-English-speaking background were 41% less likely to disagree that accepting immigrants makes Australia stronger compared to the reference group, Australia-born and both parents Australia-born. The remaining groups did not differentiate from the reference group. This result was similar to 2007.

Gender and state of residence were not found to be significant predictors in 2009. However in 2007, males were 35% more likely than females to agree that immigrants make Australia stronger.

3: Attitudes to Australian government giving assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain their customs and traditions.

Again a similar pattern was evident in responses to question 3. Age was found to be the most significant predictor, with respondents aged 55 or over nearly 3 times more likely to disagree that ethnic minorities in Australia should be given government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions compared to those aged under 35. Those aged 34-54 are just over two times more likely to disagree with question 3 than the reference group. These values are nearly identical to the results of the 2007 survey, however the strength of negative response has increased in the 2009 survey.

Education was found to be a significant predictor. Those with a trade or diploma qualification are 52% more likely to oppose government funding for maintenance of ethnic minority traditions compared to those with a high school education. Conversely, those with a university education are 38% less likely to disagree, compared to the reference group. In 2007, having a trade or diploma qualification did not distinguish respondents from high school educated.

Respondents born overseas and from a non-English-speaking background were 61% more like to agree that ethnic minorities should be given government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions than Australia-born respondents both of whose parents were born in Australia. There was a statistically significant increase in opposition to government assistance amongst respondents born in Australia to overseas-born parents.

In terms of residence, those respondents born outside capital cities were 46% more likely to disagree with question 3. A similar result was found in 2007. Finally, gender was not found to be a significant predictor.

Table 17.2: Logistic regression estimates in odds ratio – agree with the view that 'the number of immigrants accepted in to Australia at present is too high' (1 = 'yes', 0 = 'no' or 'about right')

Covariates	Estimated effects (odds ratios)	
	2007	2009
Gender		
Female [R]	1.00	1.00
Male	0.73**	0.75**
Residence		
Capital city [R]	1.00	1.00
Rest of state	1.27*	0.99
Age		
Less than 35 [R]	1.00	1.00
35-54	1.28*	1.08
55+	1.58**	1.52**
Education		
Year 12 or less [R]	1.00	1.00
Trade/Diploma	0.88	0.95
University	0.35*	0.32**
Country of birth/ parentage		
Au.-born, both parents Au-born [R]	1.00	1.00
Au.-born, one parent Au-born	0.89	0.84
Au.-born, neither parent Au-born	0.87	0.99
Born overseas, ESB	0.63**	0.52**
Born overseas, NESB	0.61**	0.53**
R^2	0.09	0.14
N	1,754	1,827

R= reference group; ** p<.01; *p<.05; R2 = approx. variance explained.

Table 17.3: Logistic regression estimates in odds ratio – disagree that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger' (1=yes, 0=no)

Covariates	Estimated effects (odds ratios)	
	2007	2009
Gender		
Female [R]	1.00	1.00
Male	0.65**	1.01
Residence		
Capital city [R]	1.00	1.00
Rest of state	1.19	1.21
Age		
Less than 35 [R]	1.00	1.00
35-54	1.40*	1.00
55+	1.64**	1.47**
Education		
Year 12 or less [R]	1.00	1.00
Trade/Diploma	0.88	1.20
University	0.31**	0.52**
Country of birth/ parentage		
Au.-born, both parents Au-born [R]	1.00	1.00
Au.-born, one parent Au-born	1.10	0.56
Au.-born, neither parent Au-born	0.47	0.69
Born overseas, ESB	0.87	0.71
Born overseas, NESB	0.51	0.59**
R^2	0.09	0.07
N	1,826	1,869

R= reference group; ** p<.01; *p<.05; R2 = approx. variance explained.

Table 17.4: Logistic regression estimates in odds ratio – disagree that 'ethnic minorities in Australia should be given government assistance to maintain customs and traditions' (1=yes, 0=no)

Covariates	Estimated effects (odds ratios)	
	2007	2009
Gender		
Female [R]	1.00	1.00
Male	0.91	1.19
Residence		
Capital city [R]	1.00	1.00
Rest of state	1.29*	1.46**
Age		
Less than 35 [R]	1.00	1.00
35-54	1.80**	2.09**
55+	2.29**	2.83**
Education		
Year 12 or less [R]	1.00	1.00
Trade/Diploma	1.06	1.52**
University	0.61**	0.62**
Country of birth/ parentage		
Au.-born, both parents Au-born [R]	1.00	1.00
Au.-born, one parent Au-born	0.73	1.08
Au.-born, neither parent Au-born	0.92	1.54*
Born overseas, ESB	0.97	1.13
Born overseas, NESB	0.31**	0.39*
R^2	0.13	0.17
N	1,837	1,846

R= reference group; ** p<.01; *p<.05; R2 = approx. variance explained.

Predicting social cohesion

Multiple regression[7] analysis was used to investigate attitudinal predictors of social cohesion. New to the 2009 survey, respondents were asked 'Your local area, that is within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance of where you live, is a place where people from different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together?' Participants responded on a five point scale from 'Strongly agree' to 'Strongly disagree'.

The attitudinal variables analysed related to levels of trust, sense of belonging, views of immigration and cultural diversity, fear of crime in the local area, the willingness of neighbours to help each other, and the capacity of individuals to influence local council decision.

Attitudinal predictors and their relationship with agreeing that the local area is cohesive are shown in Figures 17.10 and 17.11. The first analysis is of the national survey, the second of the local surveys in the four areas of high immigrant concentration.

---

[7] Multiple Regression is a multivariate technique that mathematically produces a linear combination of variables to predict an outcome variable, in this case the view that the local area is 'a place where people from different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together'.

Figure 17.10: Agreement that the local area is cohesive, attitudinal predictors, national survey – multiple regression analysis
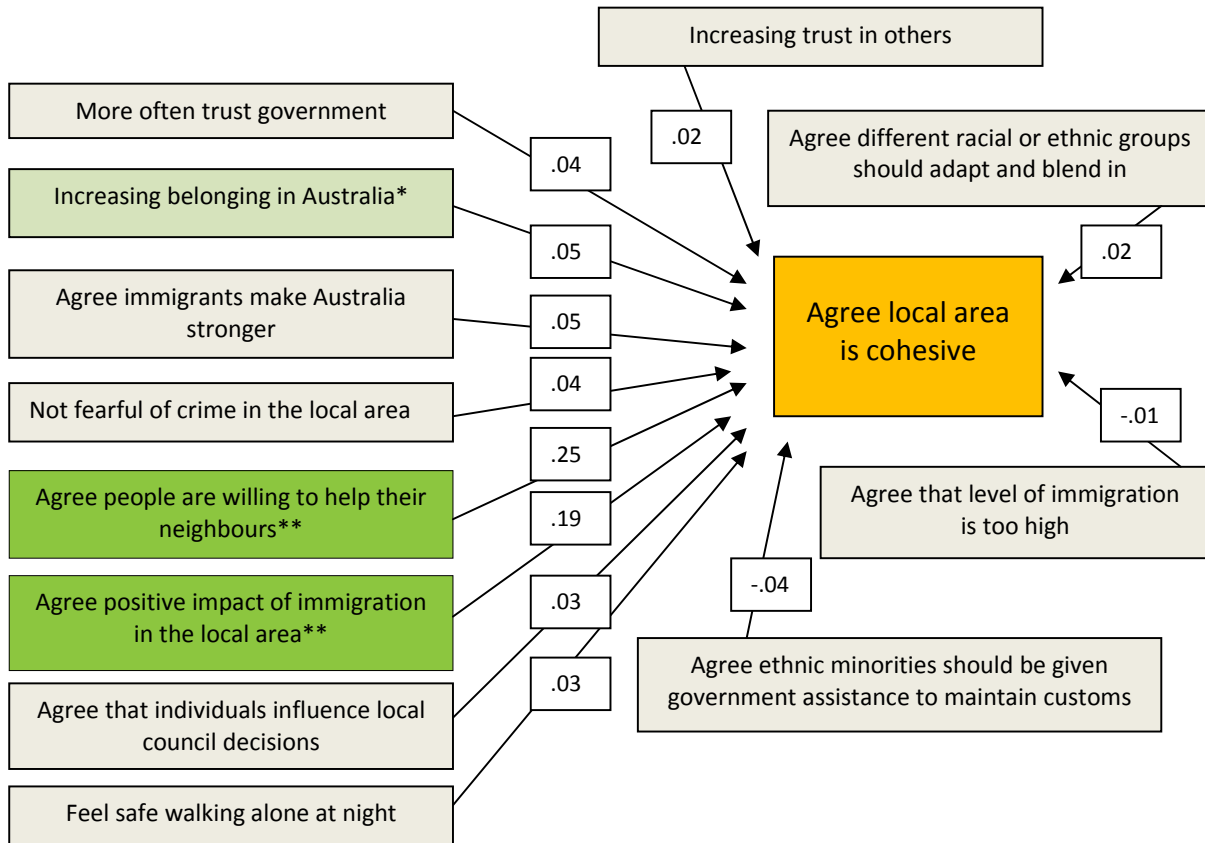
Note: N = 595. ** p < .05, * p < .10. Part (also called semi-partial) correlations are shown. This indicates the correlation between the predictor and agreement that the local area is cohesive, while removing the overlapping contribution of remaining predictors.

Figure 17.11: Agreement that the local area is cohesive, attitudinal predictors, local survey in areas of high immigrant concentration – multiple regression analysis
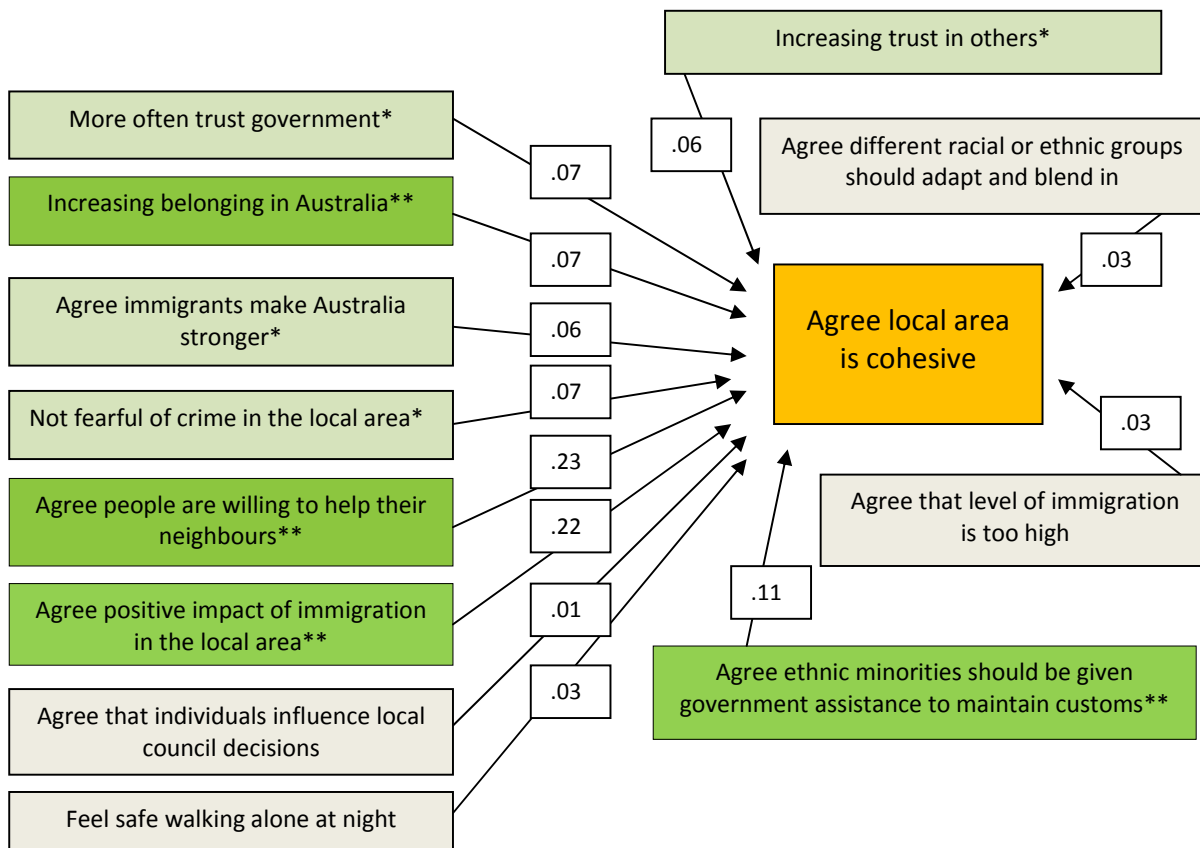
Note: N = 934. ** p < .05, * p < .10. Part (also called semi-partial) correlations are shown. This indicates the correlation between the predictor and agreement that the local area is cohesive, while removing the overlapping contribution of remaining predictors.

The best attitudinal predictors of agreement that the local area is cohesive in the national survey were found to be:

- Agreement that neighbours are willing to help each other;
- Agreement that there is a positive impact of immigration in the local area;
- Heightened sense of belonging in Australia.

The analysis of the local survey in areas of high immigrant concentration indicates a broader range of statistically significant attitudinal indicators; these are (with the first four significant at <.05 level):

- Agreement that neighbours are willing to help each other;
- Agreement that there is a positive impact of immigration in the local area (these first two attitudinal indicators are the strongest predictors in both the national and local surveys);
- Agreement that ethnic minorities should be given government assistance to maintain their customs;
- Heightened sense of belonging in Australia;
- Heightened level of trust in others and in government;
- Agreement with the value of immigration from different countries;
- Lowered fear of crime.

18 Ongoing challenges

This concluding discussion brings together findings related to areas of high immigrant concentration.

As has been noted, there is much that is positive, with similarity of response at the national and local levels. Thus, questions relating to happiness over the last twelve months, financial satisfaction, and future expectations, all result in difference of less than 10 percentage points. This level of difference is possibly as low as it can be when comparison is made between a national sample and relatively disadvantaged socio-economic regions.

Additional data reinforces these positive findings. For specific birthplace groups sense of belonging is in the range 88–97% at the national level, 89–95% in areas of high immigrant concentration. In response to the proposition that Australia is a land of economic opportunity where hard work brings a better life, there is a similarly high level of agreement. This proposition yields results in the range 81–83% at the national level, 81–89% at the local, with the strongest level of agreement amongst NESB respondents (Table 18.1).

Table 18.1: Sense of belonging and view of Australia as a land of economic opportunity, national and local, 2009

Survey item	All resp. National	LT Au National	LT Au Local	Au-born National	Au-born Local	NESB National	NESB Local
Sense of belonging: great and moderate extent	95%	97%	95%	97%	95%	88%	89%
Australia is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life: strongly agree and agree	82%	81%	81%	82%	81%	83%	89%
N (unweighted)	2,019	1,107	292	1,510	601	247	532

A key question asked respondents if people of different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together in their neighbourhoods: this question yielded agreement in the range 60–70% for most birthplace groups.

The consistency of indicators of belonging, sense of worth and life satisfaction brings into sharp relief the marked difference in response when views on the level of immigration, sense of safety and trust are considered in areas of high immigrant concentration. Marked variation is also evident in these areas in reported experience of discrimination – some 50% higher in regions of immigrant concentration – and in the findings of other researchers, notably the work of Professor Tony Vinson on social inclusion and the Community Indicators Victoria and the Victorian Perception of Justice surveys.

Among the strongest attitudinal predictors of perception of cohesion in the local area is agreement with the proposition that neighbours are willing to help each other. The challenge for the federal and state governments, local authorities and community organisations, is to devise and co-ordinate strategies to improve sense of neighbourly co-operation, safety and trust. These include :

- Supporting socio-economic well-being of the most disadvantaged;

- Adequately funded projects for young people;

- Community empowerment, based on an approach which maximises local involvement in the development and implementation of projects;

- Universal programs that build sense of equity, trust and community;

- Tangible and meaningful day-to-day outcomes;

- Commitment to long-term projects, with a time scale of eight to ten years, not short-term initiatives which raise (and then frustrate) legitimate aspirations.[8]

The magnitude of the task is indicated by the finding that those least supportive of immigration and cultural diversity include respondents with no or limited post-school qualifications and in difficult financial circumstances. There are no easy, quick-fix solutions. But in context of the currently planned on-going large immigration intake, there are urgent social cohesion issues requiring serious attention. Research indicates that some similarly placed low status socio-economic regions do better than others. There are lessons to be learned and applied.

---

[8] See, for example, Department of Communities and Local Government, '*What Works' in Community Cohesion,* London, 2007.

Appendix: The 2009 Questionnaire

Monash University
Social Cohesion Research Program

2009 SURVEY

Questionnaire Structure
Modules

Screening and Introduction
A: Economic
B: Voluntary work and political
C: Socio-Cultural
D: Discrimination
E: Reflective
F: Neighbourhood (new)
Demographics

Sub-project (SUBJOB) structure

1.   General community (national random sample, quota by standard 15 locations)
2.   Targeted overseas-born (4 geographic locations; 50/50 overseas-born / Australia-born)
3.   Targeted Australia-born (2 geographic locations, 100% Australia-born)

Call outcome codes (SMS screen) (no change from 2007)
No answer
Answering machine (no message left)
Answering machine (left message 1)
Answering machine (left message 2)
Fax machine / modem
Engaged
Appointment
Stopped interview
LOTE – No follow up
Named person not known
Telstra message / Disconnected
Not a residential number
Too old / deaf / disabled/health/family reasons
Claims to have done survey
Away for duration
(SUPERVISOR USE ONLY) Refused prior (eg. phoned 1800 number to refuse participation after receiving letter)
Remove number from list

*(ALL)

A1   To start with, I'd like you to tell me your views on various economic and social issues. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. (PROBE: Is that agree or strongly agree / disagree or strongly disagree?)

(STATEMENTS)
a.   Australia has an excellent government school system.
b.   People living on low incomes in Australia receive enough financial support from the government
c.   In Australia today, the gap between those with high incomes and those with low incomes is too large.
d.   Australia is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life.

(RESPONSE FRAME)
1.   Strongly agree
2.   Agree
3.   (Neither agree nor disagree)
4.   Disagree
5.   Strongly disagree
6.   (None of the above/ Don't know)
7.   (Refused)

*(ALL)

A5.   Now a question about your own financial circumstances. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present financial situation? (PROBE: Is that satisfied or very satisfied / dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?)

1.   Very satisfied
2.   Satisfied
3.   (Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied)
4.   Dissatisfied
5.   Very dissatisfied
6.   (Don't know)
7.   (Refused)

MODULE B: POLITICAL

*(ALL)

B1new The next questions are about unpaid voluntary work. By this I mean any unpaid help you give to the community in which you live, or to an organisation or group to which you belong. It could be to a school, a sporting club, the elderly, a religious group or people who have recently arrived to settle in Australia.

Have you done any unpaid voluntary work of this kind in the last 12 months?

1.   Yes
2.   No
3.   (Don't know)
4.   (Refused)

*(UNDERTAKES VOLUNTEER WORK) (B1=1)
B2new How often do you participate in this sort of voluntary activity? (PROBE TO CLARIFY)

1. At least once a week
2. At least once a month
3. Three to four times a year
4. At least once a year
5. Less often than once a year
6. (Don't know)
7. (Refused)

*(ALL)
B4.   Now some questions about different forms of political action people can take. Please tell me which if any, of the following, you have done over the last three years or so. (READ OUT)
(ACCEPT MULTIPLES)

1. Voted in an election
2. Signed a petition
3. Written or spoken to a Federal or State Member of Parliament
4. Attended a political meeting
5. Joined a boycott of a product or company
6. Attended a protest, march or demonstration
7. Participated in strike action, or
8. Some other form of political action (SPECIFY _____)
9. (None of the above) ^s   (GO TO B6a)
10. (Don't know) ^s   (GO TO B6a)
11. (Refused) ^s   (GO TO B6a)

 *(ALL)
B6a.   How often do you think the government in Canberra can be trusted to do the right thing for the Australian people? Would you say …(READ OUT)

1. Almost always
2. Most of the time
3. Only some of the time, or
4. Almost never
5. (Don't know)
6. (Refused)

MODULE C: SOCIO-CULTURAL

*(ALL)

C1.   Now some questions about immigration. What do you think of the number of immigrants accepted into Australia at present? Would you say it is … (READ OUT)

1. Too high
2. About right, or
3. Too low
4. (No opinion/ don't know)
5. (Refused)

*(ALL)

C10.   Do you think the balance or mix of immigrants from different countries is about right?

1. Yes   (GO TO C2)
2. No
3. (No opinion - I do not support immigration at all)   (GO TO C2)
4. (No opinion – I do not think of immigration in terms of countries of origin)
                                                  (GO TO C2)
5. (Don't know)   (GO TO C2)
6. (Refused)   (GO TO C2)

*(BALANCE IF IMMIGRANTS IS NOT RIGHT) (C10=2)

C11.   From which countries, if any, should there be more immigrants?

None ^s	Poland
Afghanistan	Serbia / Montenegro
Canada	Singapore
China (excluding Taiwan)	South Africa
Croatia	Sri Lanka
Egypt	Sudan
Fiji	United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales,
Germany	Nth Ireland)
Greece	USA
Hong Kong	Vietnam
Hungary	Asia (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
India	South America (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC
Indonesia	COUNTRIES)
Ireland	North America (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC
Italy	COUNTRIES)
Iran	Middle East (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
Iraq	Western Europe (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC
Lebanon	COUNTRIES)
Macedonia	Eastern Europe (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC
Malaysia	COUNTRIES)
Malta	Africa (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
Netherlands (Holland)	Other (please specify)
New Zealand	(Don't know)
Philippines	(Refused)

*(BALANCE IF IMMIGRANTS IS NOT RIGHT)
C12.   From which countries, if any, should there be less immigrants?

         1   SAME CODE FRAME AS ABOVE TO BE USED

*(ALL)
C2.   Do you agree or disagree with the following statements. (PROBE: Is that agree or strongly agree / disagree or
         strongly disagree?)

         (STATEMENTS)
         a)   Accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger
         b)   Ethnic minorities in Australia SHOULD be given Australian government assistance to maintain their customs
               and traditions

         (RESPONSE FRAME)
         1.   Strongly agree
         2.   Agree
         3.   (Neither agree or disagree)
         4.   Disagree
         5.   Strongly disagree
         6.   (None of the above/ Don't know)
         (Refused)

*(ALL)

C7.   To what extent do you take pride in the Australian way of life and culture? Would you say … (READ OUT)

         1.   To a great extent
         2.   To a moderate extent
         3.   Only slightly, or
         4.   Not at all
         5.   (Don't know)
         6.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
C8.   And to what extent do you have a sense of belonging in Australia? Would you say … (READ OUT)
         1.   To a great extent
         2.   To a moderate extent
         3.   Only slightly, or
         4.   Not at all
         5.   (Don't know)
         6.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
C9.   Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? In the modern world, maintaining the Australian way of
         life and culture is important. (PROBE: Is that agree or strongly agree / disagree or strongly disagree?)
         1.   Strongly agree
         2.   Agree
         3.   (Neither agree nor disagree)
         4.   Disagree
         5.   Strongly disagree
         6.   (Don't know)
         7.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
D1.   Have you ever experienced discrimination in Australia because of your skin colour, ethnic origin or religion?
       (PROBE TO CLARIFY) (ALLOW CODES 1 AND 2 TO BE MULTI CODED)

       1.   Yes – Skin colour or ethnic origin
       2.   Yes – Religion
       3.   No   (GO TO E1)
       4.   (Don't know)   (GO TO E1)
       5.   (Refused)   (GO TO E1)

*(HAS EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION) (D1=1 or 2)
D5   Have you experienced discrimination because of your skin colour, ethnic origin or religion over the last 12
       months?

       1.   Yes
       2.   No   (GO TO E1)
       3.   (Refused) (GO TO E1)

*(HAS EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION) (D5=1)
D2.   Please tell me which of the following best describes how often this discrimination occurred over the last 12
       months. Would you say …(READ OUT)

       1.   Daily / all of the time
       2.   Once or twice a week
       3.   Once or twice a month, or
       4.   Once or twice a year
       5.   (Don't know)
       6.   (Refused)

*(HAS EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION) (D5=1)
D3.   Where has this discrimination occurred? Please tell me if any of these apply. Was it … (READ OUT)
       (ACCEPT MULTIPLES)

       1.   When being served in a shop
       2.   When being served in a government office
       3.   When seeking employment, or at work
       4.   When seeking to rent or buy an apartment or house
       5.   At school
       6.   On the street, or
       7.   Somewhere else (SPECIFY _____)
       8.   (Don't know) ^s
       9.   (Refused) ^s

*(HAS EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION) (D5=1)

D4   What form did the discrimination take? Please tell me if any of these apply. (READ OUT)
       (ACCEPT MULTIPLES)

       1.   Were you made to feel that you did not belong
       2.   Were you verbally abused
       3.   Were you not offered a job
       4.   Were you not promoted or fairly treated at work
       5.   Was your property damaged
       6.   Were you physically attacked, or
       7.   Something else (SPECIFY _____)
       8.   (Don't know) ^s
       9.   (Refused) ^s

MODULE E: REFLECTIVE

---

*(ALL)

E1.   Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing
       with people? (PROBE: Is that can be trusted / can't be too careful?)

       1.   Can be trusted
       2.   Can't be too careful
       3.   Can't choose
       4.   (Refused)

*(ALL)

E2.   Taking ALL things into consideration, would you say that over the last year YOU have been … (READ OUT)

       1.   Very happy
       2.   Happy
       3.   (Neither happy nor unhappy)
       4.   Unhappy, or
       5.   Very unhappy
       6.   (Don't know)
       7.   (Refused)

*(ALL)

E3.   In three or four years, do you think that your life in Australia will be… (READ OUT)

       1.   Much improved
       2.   A little improved
       3.   The same as now
       4.   A little worse, or
       5.   Much worse
       6.   (Don't think will be living in Australia) (GO TO F1)
       7.   (Cannot predict / Don't know)
       8.   (Refused)

*(LIVING IN AUSTRALIA IN THREE OR FOUR YEARS) (3E NOT 6)
E4.   Compared with your life, do you think that the lives of today's children will be … (READ OUT)

        1.   Much better   (GO TO F1)
        2.   A little better   (GO TO F1)
        3.   The same as now   (GO TO F1)
        4.   A little worse, or
        5.   Much worse
        6.   (Cannot predict / Don't know) (GO TO F1)
        7.   (Refused)   (GO TO F1)

*(LIVES OF NEXT GENERATION WILL BE WORSE) (E4=4 OR 5)
E5.   Why do you say that?

        1.   Response given (please specify)
        2.   (Don't know)
        3.   (Refused)

MODULE F: NEIGHBOURHOOD

*(ALL)
F1   What proportion of all the people in your local area are of the same national or ethnic group as you? Would you
        say…(READ OUT)

        1.   All the same,
        2.   More than half,
        3.   About a half,
        4.   Less than half
        5.   Much less than half
        6.   (Don't know)
        7.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
F2   Do you agree or disagree with the following statements … (READ OUT) …

        (STATEMENTS)
        a)   People in your local area are willing to help their neighbours?
        b)   Your local area, that is within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance of where you live, is a place where people
             from different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together?
             (PROBE: Is that agree or strongly agree / disagree or strongly disagree?)

        (RESPONSE FRAME)
        1.   Strongly agree
        2.   Agree
        3.   (Neither agree nor disagree)
        4.   Disagree
        5.   Strongly disagree
        6.   (There are not enough immigrants in my neigbourhood to have any impact)
        7.   (Don't know)
        8.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
F3   In general, what has been the impact of immigration on daily life in your local area?   Would you say … (READ OUT)

1. Very positive
2. Somewhat positive
3. Neither positive nor negative
4. Somewhat negative, or
5. Very negative
6. (There are not enough immigrants in my neighbourhood to have any impact)
7. (Don't know)
8. (Refused)

*(ALL)
F5   To the best of your knowledge, in the last 12 months would you say the level of immigration into Australia has increased, decreased or is unchanged?

1. Increased
2. Decreased
3. Unchanged
4. (Don't know)
5. (Refused)

*(ALL)
F6   Which of the following is closest to your view? It is better for a country if different racial or ethnic groups maintain their distinct customs and traditions OR it is better if these groups adapt and blend into the larger society.

1. Better if different racial or ethnic groups maintain their distinct customs and traditions.
2. Better if these groups adapt and blend into the larger society.
3. (Agree with both)
4. (Don't know)
5. (Refused)

*(ALL)
F7   Thinking now about local community issues or problems - Do you agree or disagree that you can influence local council decisions affecting your local area?   (PROBE: Is that agree or strongly agree / disagree or strongly disagree)

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. (Neither agree nor disagree)
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. (Don't know)
7. (Refused)

*(ALL)

F8   How often do you think the local council can be trusted to do what is right for the people in your area? Would you say … (READ OUT)

1. Almost always
2. Most of the time
3. Only some of the time, or
4. Almost never
5. (Don't know)
6. (Refused)

*(ALL)

F9a   How safe do you feel walking alone in your local area during the day? Would you say … (READ OUT)

1. Very safe
2. Fairly safe
3. A bit unsafe: or
4. Very unsafe
5. (Neither safe nor unsafe)
6. (Never walk alone during the day)
7. (Don't know)
8. (Refused)

*(ALL)

F9b   What about during the night, how safe do you feel walking alone at night in your local area? Would you say … (READ OUT)

1. Very safe
2. Fairly safe
3. A bit unsafe: or
4. Very unsafe
5. (Neither safe nor unsafe)
6. (Never walk alone at night)
7. (Don't know)
8. (Refused)

*(ALL)

F10   Thinking about all types of crime in general, how worried are you about becoming a victim of crime in your local area? Would you say … (READ OUT)

1. Very worried
2. Fairly worried
3. Not very worried
4. Not at all worried
5. (Don't know)
6. (Refused)

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

*(ALL)
DEM1a We're nearly finished now. Just a final few questions to make sure we've spoken to a good range of people.

How old were you last birthday?

2   Age given (RECORD AGE IN YEARS (RANGE 18 TO 99) (GO TO DEM2)
(Refused)

*(REFUSED AGE DEM1a=2)
DEM1b Could you please tell me which of the following age groups are you in? (READ OUT)

1.   18 - 24 years
2.   25 - 34 years
3.   35 - 44 years
4.   45 – 54 years
5.   55 – 64 years
6.   65 – 74 years, or
7.   75 + years
8.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
DEM2.   RECORD GENDER

1.   Male
2.   Female

*(ALL)
DEM3.   Which of the following best describes your current marital status? Are you…(READ OUT)

1.   Married
2.   Living with a partner
3.   Widowed
4.   Divorced
5.   Separated, or
6.   Never married
7.   (Don't know)
8.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
DEM4. How many children, if any, do you have?

1.   Record number (SPECIFY) (RANGE 1 – 10)
2.   No children   (GO TO DEM15)
3.   Refused   (GO TO DEM15)

*(ALL)
DEM15 In which countries were you and your family members born?

    (STATEMENTS)
    a) Starting with yourself
    b) Your spouse? (ONLY ASK IF DEM 3=CODE 1 OR 2 (MARRIED OR LIVING WITH PARTNER)
    c) Your mother?
    d) And finally, in which country was your father born?

    (RESPONSE FRAME)
       Australia
       Canada
       China (excluding Taiwan)
       Croatia
       Egypt
       Fiji
       Germany
       Greece
       Hong Kong
       Hungary
       India
       Indonesia
       Ireland
       Italy
       Lebanon
       Macedonia
       Malaysia
       Malta
       Netherlands (Holland)
       New Zealand
       Philippines
       Poland
       Serbia / Montenegro
       Singapore
       South Africa
       Sri Lanka
       Sudan
       United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales,
          Nth Ireland)
       USA
       Vietnam
       Other (please specify)
       (Not applicable) (ONLY DISPLAY FOR
          STATEMENTS C AND D)
       (Don't know) (ONLY DISPLAY FOR
          STATEMENTS B, C AND D)
       (Refused)

PREDEM16 IF DEM15a=CODE 1 OR 34 (BORN IN AUSTRALIA OR REFUSED) GO TO DEM7, OTHERS CONTINUE.

*(IF DEM15a=2-33 NOT BORN IN AUSTRALIA)
DEM16   In what year did you arrive in Australia?

    1.   Response given (SPECIFY ___) (ALLOWABLE RANGE 2009 LESS AGE OF RESPONDENT)
    2.   (Don't know)
    3.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
DEM7.   What is your first language?

    English   (GO TO DEM6)
    Arabic
    Lebanese
    Australian Indigenous Languages
    Cantonese
    Mandarin
    Croatian
    Greek
    Hindi
    Italian
    Macedonian
    Spanish
    Turkish
    Vietnamese
    Other (Specify)
    (Don't know)
    (Refused)

*(IF DEM7=2–17 ENGLISH IS A SECOND LANGUAGE)
DEM8.   (Please bear with me as we ask this question of everyone), how well, would you say you SPEAK English?

    1.   Very well
    2.   Well
    3.   Not well, or
    4.   Not at all
    5.   (Can't say)
    6.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
DEM6.   Are you an Australian citizen?

    1.   Yes
    2.   No
    3.   (Don't know)
    4.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
DEM10 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

1. Primary school
2. Year 7 to Year 9
3. Year 10
4. Year 11
5. Year 12
6. Trade/apprenticeship
7. Other TAFE/Technical Certificate
8. Diploma
9. Bachelor Degree
10. Post-Graduate Degree
11. Other (Specify)
12. (Refused)

*(ALL)
DEM11 Which one of these BEST describes your employment situation? Are you … (READ OUT)

1. Employed
2. Unemployed
3. Retired
4. Student
5. Home duties, or
6. Something else (Specify)
7. (Don't know)
8. (Refused)

PREDEM13 IF DEM11=CODE 1 (EMPLOYED) CONTINUE. OTHERS GO TO PREDEM13a

*(EMPLOYED IF DEM11=1)
DEM13 What is your current occupation? (PROBE: Main duties and job title)

1. Managers
2. Professionals
3. Technicians and trades workers
4. Community and personal service workers
5. Clerical and administrative workers
6. Sales workers
7. Machinery operators and drivers
8. Labourers
9. Other (specify) (Probe for job title and main duties)
10. (Don't know)
11. (Refused)

PREDEM13a IF DEM10=CODES 6-10 AND DEM11=CODE 1 (POST SECONDARY SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS AND EMPLOYED)
CONTINUE. OTHERS GO TO DEM13b

*(POST SECONDARY SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS AND EMPLOYED)
DEM13a   To what extent, if at all, do you use the skills and knowledge gained from your qualifications in your current job? Would you say … (READ OUT)

1. To a great extent
2. To a moderate extent
3. Only slightly, or
4. Not at all
5. (Don't know)
6. (Refused)

*(ALL)
DEM13b Which of the following terms best describes your financial circumstances today? Would you say you are   (READ OUT)

1. Prosperous
2. Living very comfortably
3. Living reasonably comfortably
4. Just getting along
5. Struggling to pay bills
6. Poor
7. (Don't Know)
8. (Refused)

*(ALL)
 DEM 15x   Are you renting, paying off a mortgage, do you own your home outright or do you have some other arrangement? (PROBE TO CLARIFY)

1. Renting from a private owner or real estate agent
2. Renting from housing commission / public housing property / community housing property
3. Being bought (i.e. have a mortgage)
4. Owned
5. Paying board
6. Living rent free
7. Something else (specify)
8. (Refused)

*(ALL)
DEM17new What is your religion, even if you are not currently practicing?

1. Catholic
2. Anglican (Church of England)
3. Uniting Church
4. Presbyterian
5. Greek Orthodox
6. Baptist
7. Lutheran
8. Islam
9. Buddhist
10. Judaism
11. Hinduism
12. Christian (no further information)
13. No religion
14. Other (SPECIFY)
15. (Don't know)
16. (Refused)

PREDEM19 IF DEM17new=12 (CHRISTIAN NFI) CONTINUE OTHERWISE GO TO PREDEM20

*(CHRISTIAN) (DEM17NEW=12)
DEM19 Is that (or most closely) (READ OUT)

1. Catholic
2. Anglican (Church of England)
3. Uniting Church
4. Presbyterian
5. Greek Orthodox
6. Baptist
7. Lutheran, or
8. Something else (SPECIFY)
9. (Don't know)
10. (Refused)

PREDEM20 IF DEM17new – 1 to 12 or 14 CONTINUE OTHERWISE GO TO PREDEM22)

*(SPECIFIED A RELIGION) (DEM17new= 1 TO 12 or 14)
DEM20   How important is religion in your life today?

1. Very important
2. Somewhat important
3. Neither important not unimportant
4. Not very important
5. Not at all important
6. (Don't know)
7. (Refused)

*(SPECIFIED A RELIGION) (DEM17new= 1 TO 12 or 14)
DEM21   In the past 12 months, how often did you participate in religious activities or attend
        religious services or meetings – with other people – other than for events such as
        weddings and funerals? Was it ..(READ OUT)

        1.   At least once a week?
        2.   At least once a month?
        3.   At least 3 times a year?
        4.   Once or twice a year?
        5.   Not at all?
        6.   (Don't know)
        7.   (Refused)

*PREDEM22 – IF DEM6=1 CONTINUE OTHERWISE GO TO PREDEM18)

*(CITIZEN) (DEM 6=1)
DEM22 And to finish up just one question about voting intentions. If there was a Federal election held today, for which
        party would you probably vote?

        1.   Labour Party
        2.   Liberal Party
        3.   National Party
        4.   Greens
        5.   Independents
        6.   Other (Specify) _____
        7.   (Don't Know)
        8.   (Refused)

*PREDEM18 IF SUBJOB=1 (NATIONAL RANDOM SURVEY) CONTINUE, OTHERS GO TO CLOSE

*(NATIONAL RANDOM SURVEY ONLY)
DEM18 And finally, can I have your postcode please?

        1.   Response given (SPECIFY____) (Allowable range: 800 - 9729)
        2.   (Don't know)
        3.   (Refused)

*(ALL)
CLOSE   Thank you for your help. Just in case you missed it my name is (…) and this survey was conducted on behalf of
Monash University.

*(ALL)
END   If you have any queries or concerns about the survey, I have a number I can give you if you like…..
       Questions about who is conducting the study and how your telephone number was obtained - The Social
       Research Centre, ph: 1800 023 040
       Concerns or complaints about how the study is being conducted – Monash University ethics Project Number:
       (2007/0319), ph: 03 9905 2052, Email: scerh@adm.monash.edu.au
       Questions about the purpose of the research and why it is being conducted – Professor Andrew Markus, Tel: 03
       9905 9944, Email: andrew.markus@arts.monash.edu.au

Glossary

ESB – person of English-speaking background

LGA – Local Government Area

Long-time Australian – a term used in the SBS *Living in Diversity* report, defined in this report as those respondents who are born in Australia to Australia-born parents. This does not necessarily mean that they are of Anglo-Celtic backgrounds. This term is only used with the reference to the local surveys in this report.

NESB – person of non-English-speaking background.