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## 6. Ethnic Associations and Service Delivery in Australia

John Casey

**An extensive** post-World War II immigration program has brought almost two million immigrants to Australia from non-English-speaking (NES) countries. The influx of these immigrants has signified far-reaching changes for a society that had largely been made up of the descendants of English and Irish settlers. At first it was thought that the immigrants from NES backgrounds—initially from Europe and later also from the Middle East, South America, and Southeast Asia—would assimilate virtually unnoticed into the dominant Anglo-Australian culture, but they continued to be marginalized both economically and politically from mainstream Australian society, and virtually excluded from positions of decision making and power (Martin 1981).

Slowly, the NES immigrant communities acquired a fragile political base and began to demand a more equal participation

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at all levels of Australian society.\* Early assumptions of assimilation were reluctantly abandoned and a begrudging recognition was given to the distinct ethnic identities that existed in Australian society, and the right of immigrant communities to maintain their language and culture.

A crucial element in the settlement process of these communities is the formation of religious, social, cultural, sporting, political, and service organizations. A recent publication, the *Directory of Ethnic Community Organizations* (DIEA 1984), lists 2,600 organizations among the NES immigrant communities in Australia. These organizations are only the more formal associations in their communities. If the small, less-formal groupings that exist in each community are included, it can be estimated that there are some 5,000 NES ethnic organizations in Australia, ranging from small fraternal associations and large social clubs to substantial social-service agencies.

This paper will concentrate on the role of the not-for-profit, human service-oriented ethnic associations. The role of all of the ethnic organizations in the delivery of what is loosely defined as “service,” and their contribution to the settlement processes of their community cannot, however be underestimated. A study of the development of these organizations would reveal the strong link between their social, cultural, political, and service functions, which in the context of an immigrant community facing an uncertain future in a new country cannot easily be separated.

The paper does not replicate the field studies made in the other countries. Instead, it locates the ethnic service associations in the immigration and social-service history of Australia, and examines the role they play in social and human service delivery to their communities. Unlike the ethnic associations described in the papers on Britain and United States—which represent a continuum between social, cultural, and political activities and social services—the ethnic associations in Australia are part of a more clearly demarcated subset of ethnic organizations. Similar volun-

\*For brevity, the term “NES immigrant” is used throughout this paper. It refers to immigrants and refugees from countries where English is not the standard language. It primarily refers to the first generation of immigrants but it is also used in the sense of the “NES immigrant community,” which includes Australian-born descendants.

tary mutual aid associations have existed since the beginning of NES immigrant settlement in Australia, but these ethnic associations are a relatively new phenomena which have emerged in their current form only in the last few years. The associations are quickly integrating themselves in the community-based service sector and carving out their slice of the social service “pie” in Australian society.

The associations have had an indelible impact on social service delivery to NES immigrants, yet it is difficult to predict what direction that impact will take. It is still little more than a matter for speculation whether ethnic associations will be able to fulfill their goal of providing effective, culturally appropriate services and assisting their community in participating more fully in Australian society. Ethnic associations and the services they provide are as much a product of the political and human service systems in Australia as they are an expression of the needs of the NES communities. The restrictions inherent in these host systems may yet frustrate them.

Although this paper speaks about Australia in general, it concentrates on NES immigrants and their associations in Sydney. Sydney, a city of 3.2 million, and the capital of the state of New South Wales, is the largest urban concentration in Australia. The state population of 5.4 million represents 30 percent of the total population of the country, and the situation in Sydney is representative of the settlement of NES immigrants in urban areas throughout Australia.

### Immigration to Australia

The demographic impact of the postwar immigration program to Australia has been massive. In a little over two generations the prewar population of just over 7 million has doubled; 65 percent of the increase is the result of immigration and the children of immigrants. Although Britain had been the traditional source of new settlers, 55 percent of the postwar immigrants are from NES

countries. Australia has moved from a British-dominated colony to a multiethnic society. In large areas of the major cities persons born in NES countries make up more than 30 percent of the population. No one ethnic group dominates among the NES communities. In Sydney there are substantial numbers of Greeks, Italians, Yugoslavs, Arabic speakers, and Chinese, as well as smaller communities of Turks, Latin Americans, Eastern Europeans, and Indochinese. Australian cities are mosaics of ethnic enclaves (see table 6.1).

White immigration to Australia began in 1788 when Britain established a penal colony on the site of present-day Sydney. Convicts were transported to alleviate the crowded state of the jails which had resulted, in part, from the loss of the American colonies. Aboriginal ownership of the land was not recognized and within a few years most of the native population in contact with the settlers had been displaced, died of introduced diseases, or had been killed by the soldiers and convicts. For the first thirty years the new settlement remained largely a penal colony, but by the 1820s substantial numbers of free settlers were arriving. Apart from short periods of "gold rush," Australia has not—until recently—been a popular destination for immigrants. Australia could never compete with the glittering lure of the New World, and the danger and cost of traveling the long distances meant that Britain remained the primary source of immigrants (Loh and Lowenstein 1977; Wilton and Bosworth 1984).

In 1851 the population of Australia was 438,000. The discovery of gold in the 1850s brought a large influx of immigrants, including some Europeans and the first large group of nonwhite immigrants, the Chinese. By the early 1860s the population was near 1.25 million, and after the English and the Irish, the Chinese were the third-largest ethnic group. These population figures do not include the substantial numbers of aboriginals who were not counted in the official census until 1971.

The Chinese laborers were seen as eroding the working conditions of white workers, and their presence culminated in anti-Chinese riots on many of the gold fields. Partly in response to the Chinese, and to the use of Pacific Islanders in the sugar cane fields of the north, the ideal of a "white Australia" emerged in the late 1800s. Many of the Chinese and the Pacific Islanders were

Table 6.1. Birthplace of the Population: Sydney, Australia, 1981

Australia	2,322,193
U.K./Ireland	246,742
Austria	6,714
Czechoslovakia	6,024
Germany <sup>a</sup>	24,097
Greece	43,628
Hungary	10,822
Italy	62,682
Malta	21,265
Netherlands	16,780
Poland	14,134
Spain	4,956
USSR	9,319
Yugoslavia	44,351
Europe n.e.i. <sup>b</sup>	29,536
China	13,162
Cyprus	8,289
India	10,182
Lebanon	36,010
Malaysia	8,076
Sri Lanka	3,261
Turkey	9,480
Vietnam	15,385
Asia n.e.i.	51,871
Canada	4,935
U.S.A.	8,660
America n.e.i. <sup>c</sup>	25,257
Egypt	14,862
Africa n.e.i.	17,822
New Zealand	53,052
Oceania n.e.i.	12,885
Total	3,156,432

SOURCE: From Ethnic Affairs Commission, *Local Government Area Ethnic Population Profiles as at 1981 Census* (January 1984), p. 23.

<sup>a</sup>Includes West and East Germany.

<sup>b</sup>Not elsewhere included.

<sup>c</sup>Central and South America.

repatriated, nonwhite immigration was to be strictly controlled, and it was assumed that the remaining aboriginals would either die off or intermarry with the whites.

The "white Australia policy" was given official sanction in the form of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, one of the

first acts passed by the Federal Parliament, a body formed when the separate British colonies on the continent merged into the Australian Federation in 1900. Although the act did not specifically exclude nonwhites, its mechanisms were used to ensure that only “desirable” immigrants were admitted. The most infamous of the act’s provisions gave immigration officials the power to require a prospective immigrant to take a dictation test in any European language the official chose. If an immigrant could not pass a test in Gaelic, for example, at the discretion of an immigration official, he or she was excluded. The dictation test was regularly used until the late 1950s. Non-British immigration was not encouraged, but restricted numbers of Europeans—many of them refugees—who were deemed assimilable were admitted.

The end of World War II saw a major change in Australia’s immigration policy based both on the need for labor to fuel the postwar economic expansion and on a fear of invasion from the north. The population at that time was around seven and a half million in a country the size of the continental United States, and the Asian nations were seen as coveting Australia’s vast empty spaces. Fear of the “yellow hordes,” and of the “domino theory” (Australia would be the last “domino” to fall as communism swept down through Asia) were constant themes in Australian politics of the 1950s and 1960s. Postwar governments embraced an immigration program aimed at attracting 200,000 immigrants per year, and exhorted Australia to “populate or perish” (Australian Population and Immigration Council 1977).

There were not enough British to fill the quotas and so, for the first time, white immigrants from non-English-speaking countries were encouraged to emigrate to Australia. In keeping with the earlier notions of desirable immigrants, only Northern and Eastern Europeans were accepted at first as they were seen as more easily assimilable into Australian society. By the early 1950s the economic situation in northern Europe had stabilized and the area ceased to be the major source of immigrants. Southern Europeans, primarily Greeks, Italians and Yugoslavs, were then accepted. Later, many Turkish, Middle Eastern, and South American immigrants also arrived. In the meantime, international pressure and Australia’s regional obligations led to the unofficial disman-

ning of the “White Australia” Policy by the mid-1960s—it was not officially abandoned as government policy until 1972, under the Labor government—and substantial numbers of Asian immigrants and refugees began to arrive. The initial target of 200,000 immigrants each year was never met but, since 1948, Australia has admitted an average of 110,000 immigrants and refugees per year, about 45 percent of them from Britain and other English-speaking countries (see figure 6.1 and table 6.2).

It is important to note again that until the mid-1970s, Australia remained a relatively unpopular destination for immi-

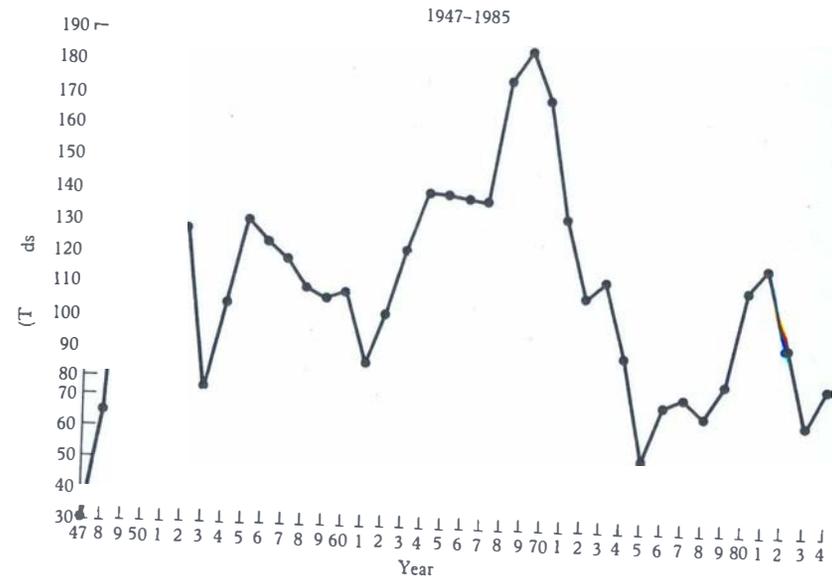


Figure 6.1. Immigrant Arrivals in Australia

SOURCES: For the years 1947–58: “Permanent Arrivals,” from Australian News and Information Bureau, Department of the Interior, *Australia in Facts and Figures*, vols. 19, 24, 26, 29, 33, 37, 41, 45, 49, 53, 57, 61, 1948–59. For 1959–60 through 1982–83: “Permanent Settler Arrivals,” from Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, *Australian Immigration: Consolidated Statistics*, no. 13, p. 17 (Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service, 1984). For 1983–84: “Permanent Settler Arrivals (estimated),” from Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, *News Release*, March 7, 1984. For 1984–85: “Permanent Settler Arrivals,” from Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, *Statistics Monthly* (April 1986), p. 6.

Table 6.2. Immigration by Major Source Countries to Australia, 1959–1982

United Kingdom/Ireland	854,244
Italy	176,708
Greece	154,389
Yugoslavia	154,119
New Zealand	84,279
Vietnam	62,561
Germany <sup>a</sup>	60,937
Lebanon	48,464
Netherlands	40,564
Malta	37,466
United States	36,592
India	34,247
South Africa	28,418
Turkey	27,605
Spain	25,842
Poland	24,348
Malaysia	20,995
Egypt	19,573
Cyprus	19,006
Philippines	17,062
Total (all countries)	2,285,935

SOURCE: Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, *Australia Immigration: Consolidated Statistics (1982)*, no. 13, pp. 60–63.

NOTE: Prior to 1959, no distinction was made in the statistics between those intending to settle permanently and those arriving for a stay of one year or more (long-term arrivals).

<sup>a</sup>East and West Germany.

grants. Australia actively recruited immigrants and for many years had an assisted-passage scheme which paid the relocation expenses for eligible newcomers. Other immigrants, particularly in the 1950s, came under an indenture scheme whereby they were contracted to work on government-sponsored capital works programs for two years in exchange for their passage. Whereas the United States sees itself historically as a benign haven for the “huddled masses,” and Britain sees itself as the reluctant mother country of its former colonial charges, Australia recognized the imperative it had to foster new settlement. It was not until around 1975 that applications to emigrate to Australia exceeded the annual immigration quota. For the first time since the 1930s strict immigrant quotas were reintroduced. The selection criteria for these quotas, however, were based on Australia’s labor needs or

its family reunion or humanitarian programs, and not on racial grounds.

Refugees have also been a major part of postwar settlement in Australia. In the late 1950s and 1960s Hungarians and other Eastern European refugees came in substantial numbers, and many of the South Americans that began to arrive in the early 1970s were fleeing military dictatorships. In 1975 the first boatloads of Vietnamese refugees landed on the northern coast of Australia, precipitating a major overhaul of Australia’s refugee policies. From 1975 to 1984, 114,100 refugees were resettled in Australia. With a refugee-to-population ratio of 1 to 138, Australia is the top receiving nation among the industrialized countries (U.S. Committee for Refugees 1986). The vast majority of the current refugees are Indochinese, with smaller numbers of Eastern Europeans and Latin Americans (see table 6.3).

Table 6.3. Refugee and Special Humanitarian Programs: Country of Birth of Arrivals to Australia, July 1984–June 1985

<i>Refugee Program</i>	
Kampuchea	
Laos	1,208
Vietnam	188
Eastern Europe	5,819
Latin America	1,183
Middle East	578
Other	558
	146
<i>Special Humanitarian Program<sup>a</sup></i>	
Indo-China	
Eastern Europe	52
Latin America	270
Middle East	1,261
East Timor	1,352
Sri Lanka	777
(White) Russian	436
Other	837
	185
Total	14,850

SOURCE: Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, *Statistics Monthly (April 1986)*, Canberra, p. 18.

<sup>a</sup>Australia adheres to the UN definition of a refugee as someone who is, among other things, “out of his country of origin.” The Special Humanitarian Program refers to people who are not refugees by the UN definition and some change-of-status cases in Australia.

Immigration levels over recent years fell from a peak in the late 1970s as both the Liberal and Labor governments attempted to respond to a high unemployment rate and an economic downturn. Recent research, however, has indicated that immigration can aid economic development and increase employment (Chapman and Miller 1986). The present Labor government—in a reversal of the party's traditional enmity to imported labor—is again strengthening the immigration program (see table 6.4). The projected number of immigrants for 1986 is back up to about 80,000, with proposals to increase the intake to 110,000 within five years (*The Sun Herald* 1986).

Finally, as an island, Australia has been able to control its borders fairly strictly. Illegal immigration has been restricted almost exclusively to persons overstaying visitors' visas. According to current estimates, there are 50,000 illegal aliens in Australia (Collins 1986).

### Changing Attitudes to Immigration

The influx of NES immigrants created a crisis of identity for the British-colony mentality of pre-World War II Australia which had been based firmly on the belief of the superiority of white, English-speaking cultures. This crisis spurred significant changes in both public policies and "community opinion" towards NES immigration and settlement. These changes in attitudes have evolved through a number of identifiable stages.

Table 6.4. Immigration to Australia by Category, July 1984–June 1985

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent of Total Immigration</i>
Family migration	41,116	52.7
Skilled labor	7,019	9.0
Business migration	1,561	2.0
Independent migration	213	0.3
Refugee/special humanitarian	14,850	19.0
Special eligibility <sup>a</sup>	13,328	17.1
Total	78,087	100

SOURCE: Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, *Statistics Monthly* (April 1986), Canberra, p. 6.

<sup>a</sup>Of this category, 10,587 are New Zealanders.

### ASSIMILATION

The first postwar reaction to NES immigration was that the new immigrants should, and would, simply melt into Australian society and become just like Anglo-Australians. This firm belief in assimilationism was an important factor in convincing Australian society to accept the presence of a large number of non-British immigrants (Martin 1978). Only a few years earlier popular publications such as *The Bulletin* and *Smith's Weekly* had led vicious racist attacks against European immigrants (Dugan and Swarc 1984).

This attitude was reflected in an almost complete absence of support services for newly arrived immigrants. The federal government provided hostels to process and temporarily house immigrants when they first arrived, but once out of the hostels they were on their own. As it was assumed that the assimilation of NES immigrants would not be problematic, no need was seen for special provisions to ensure that they had access to existing social and health services. English classes and some orientation programs were provided in migrant hostels, but they were generally not available to people outside the hostels until the 1960s. Voluntary organizations receiving funds for working with immigrants concentrated their efforts on British immigrants and assimilating the "New Australians," as the NES immigrants were called.

### INTEGRATION

By the mid-1960s it was becoming obvious that assimilation was unworkable in practice. Large concentrations of NES immigrants in the inner urban areas of Sydney and other major cities were becoming more visible; health and human services organizations were starting to be embarrassed by their inability to reach NES immigrants; the few isolated advocates for the rights of NES immigrants were starting to come together and advocate collectively; and the immigrants themselves had achieved a political base from which to lobby.

Assimilationism slowly started to give way to new ideologies. It became acceptable to assert that there was a legitimate role for the preservation of immigrant cultures and languages. The civil rights movements and the reemergence of ethnic identities in other parts of the world were having their echo among the aboriginal

and NES immigrant communities in Australia. At first ethnic identity was only seen in an integrationist sense (Martin 1981). The preservation of culture was seen as a “cushion,” softening the blow of culture shock and smoothing the path to eventual integration. The end product of this integration could be one of two things; it could either be a delayed assimilation into Anglo-Australian culture, or the creation of a new Australian culture which would be the synthesis of all the old cultures—the “melting pot.” In the early 1970s, the confirmation of the rights of NES immigrants to preserve their language and culture began to take on a more permanent, pluralist sense (EAC 1978).

#### MULTICULTURALISM

The early 1970s also saw the emergence of the “ethnic vote”—NES immigrants for the first time were seen as a significant sector of the voting population. The first Labor government in over twenty years was elected partly by successfully wooing the NES immigrant communities, and by offering a hope for a wide-scale social reform. In 1973 the Whitlam Labor government launched its manifesto for immigrant affairs in *A Multicultural Society for the Future* (Grassby 1973), which entrenched the new pluralism as the basis for government policies. “Multiculturalism,” a term borrowed from Canada, quickly became a bipartisan approach and was continued by the subsequent Fraser Liberal (conservative) government.

Multiculturalism acknowledges the more permanent role for self-expression by ethnic groups, and claims to grant equal status and access to all ethnic groups in Australia. It recognizes that Australian society is no longer defined only in terms of the Anglo-Celtic culture of the British colonizers, and that monolingual and monocultural services discriminate against NES immigrants. Multiculturalism has meant that existing services are being adapted to meet the needs expressed by the ethnic diversity of Australian society. The existence of interpreting services, migrant service units in government departments, the Migrant Resource Centres, more English classes, and grants to ethnic associations are all part of an overall strategy to give NES immigrants equal access to services. Federal funding has established the Special Broadcasting Service which has television and radio networks

broadcasting in the languages of immigrants, and more funds are available for immigrant cultural groups.

Despite the bipartisan commitment to the general concepts of multiculturalism, its policies and practices continue to be controversial. The conservative approach stresses that immigrants can maintain their identity only as long as it doesn’t interfere with a commitment to an “Australian ethic” and narrowly defined social cohesion (Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs 1982), and to the extent to which it can contribute to the “problem-solving” tasks of social and human services. Too much ethnicity is seen as destabilizing. A liberal approach stresses the “rights” aspects of multiculturalism, claiming that a recognition of diversity must be accompanied by a recognition of the rights of all residents to full and equal participation in cultural, social, economic, and political life. Critics from the right claim that multiculturalism undermines the fabric of Australian society, while critics from the left assert that it only serves to gloss over the structural differences and true causes of discrimination (Jakubowicz, Morrissey, and Palser 1984).

These changes in attitude have not occurred without resistance from influential sectors of Australian society. Each successive wave of immigrants has been treated with a certain amount of suspicion (Loh and Lowenstein 1977). In the 1950s the labor movement closed ranks against the influx of “wogs” (a derogatory name for European immigrants), and “Asians out” graffiti is all too common in Sydney in the 1980s. Hostility toward immigrants has always increased during periods of economic recession, and the current climate of uncertainty has witnessed the reemergence of many of these sentiments. In early 1984, a speech by an eminent historian, Geoffrey Blainey, sparked off a bitter, and at times racist, debate about the “Asianisation” of Australia (EAC 1984b; FECCA 1984).

#### Current Demographics

Despite the “success” of the postwar immigration campaign and the rhetoric of “rags to riches” stories, many NES immigrants—

as measured by a range of social and economic indicators—are concentrated near the bottom of the Australian socioeconomic ladder.

1. *Occupational Distribution:* Australia has the second-largest overseas-born work force in the world (after Israel). Twenty-six percent of the labor force was born overseas; 17 percent in NES countries. NES immigrants are not, however, evenly distributed throughout the occupational categories. Forty-five percent of employed NES immigrants work in manufacturing or construction industries and 25 percent of all unskilled blue-collar workers in Australia are of NES migrant extraction. In comparison, 15 percent of the Australian born work in manufacturing. The Australian born and migrants from English-speaking countries are more likely to be employed in skilled, white-collar, or professional occupations (Storer and Papadopoulos 1982).
2. *Unemployment:* Manufacturing and construction industries are the first affected and hardest hit during economic downturns. As a result some NES immigrant groups are carrying a large part of the burden of current unemployment. NES immigrants who arrived in the 1950s and 1960s have an unemployment rate close to that of Australian-born workers—in March 1984 the unemployment rate for the Italian born was 8.4 percent, while for the Australian born it was 9 percent. However recently arrived communities and those with a large proportion of youth are particularly vulnerable. In 1984 the unemployment rate for the Vietnamese born was close to 34 percent, and it was 27 percent for the Lebanese born (EAC 1984a).
3. *Income:* The Henderson (1975) report on poverty showed that 30 percent of the Italian born and 23 percent of the Greek born, but only 9 percent of the Australian born, were under the poverty line. Every study of income distribution by ethnic origin has shown that workers born in NES countries have a significantly

lower average wage than the Australian born and workers born in English-speaking countries (Lever-Tracy 1981).

4. *Accommodation:* NES immigrants tend to live in areas that reflect their work and income. In the cities they are concentrated in poorer, “less-desirable” inner-city or outer urban areas. In some Sydney local government areas (Marrickville, Botany, and Fairfield) NES immigrants are more than 33 percent of the population (EAC 1984c).

These demographic facts outline the extent of the effects of discrimination against NES immigrants, who were imported largely as unskilled labor. As factory fodder for the postwar economic boom, their position has become that of a new working class in Australia (Collins 1978). Although above the aboriginal population on most social indicators, they remain very much a disadvantaged minority in Australian society—a minority very likely to be in need of the human services.

### Social Services in Australia

Individual effort and independence from government intervention are important values in Australian society. At the same time, however, the rights of Australians to receive services and the obligation of the government to provide them are recognized. The Australian government—federal, state, and local—takes a major role in human service delivery. Higher education, primary health care, income maintenance, and employment services are either directly run as government entities or receive the large majority of their funding from government sources. Currently there are no tuition fees at Australian universities, and Medicare, the government health insurance plan, provides free health care to all Australian residents, including immigrants.

The *New York Times* (1986), in an article on Australia, re-

ferred to the “cradle to the grave welfare system” which “has not enhanced competitiveness.” This description may reflect the perception by many conservatives of an overly intrusive government involvement in service delivery, but it also distorts the extent of such government involvement. Jones, in his book *The Australian Welfare System* (1983), calls Australia a “welfare laggard” in relation to European countries. Labor struggles of the late nineteenth century and the early part of this century laid the groundwork for a welfare state more akin to the countries of northern Europe than to the United States, but conservative forces have restricted the extent of the benefits. Australian social services are more liberal than these in the United States, but fall short of the benefits available in northern Europe.

Because of the extensive government involvement in services, privatization has not occurred on the scale that it has in the United States and, unlike the United States, large private philanthropic foundations and corporate sponsorship are limited as alternate sources of funding for social services. At the same time, the voluntary tradition in Australia is strong and a large nongovernment sector plays an important role in service delivery in a number of key areas. With the exception of a small group of large, established—mostly church-based—charities, and organizations working on specific disabilities and illnesses, however these organizations deliver only a small minority of “hard services.” Moreover, the expectation remains that, even though services are provided through the nongovernment sector, the vast bulk of the funding will come from government sources.

Only a small cartel of long-established nongovernment organizations have the resources to provide services such as income maintenance or other major direct services. The vast majority of organizations in the nongovernment sector deliver “soft services,” self-help, and community development. The restriction on the services that nongovernment organizations deliver is a result not only of a government commitment to services, but also of barriers within legislation governing the nongovernment sector. Only a small minority of nongovernment agencies are eligible for charity status, or tax-deductible status for contributions. Agencies that do not qualify for these narrow categories are in effect denied access

to private funding. Without status as a charity, organizations have only a limited right to seek and collect private funds; without the tax-deductible status on contributions, organizations cannot expect to attract them. Until last year, legislation on incorporation as a legal entity virtually excluded small nongovernment organizations. The organizations had no legal status beyond that of their individual members. Without corporate status, organizations are restricted in the property they control and in their business transactions, and members are personally liable for any debts incurred. Recent legislation has made incorporation more available.

The postwar immigration program began in the period in which Australia was shaping its welfare state. Keynesian economics had supposedly provided the tools to end poverty, and the economic boom would ensure that all Australians prospered. The agitation of the 1960s shattered that myth somewhat, and showed that not all were sharing equally in the supposed wealth, but it was not until 1975 that poverty was “officially rediscovered.” The report *Poverty in Australia: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty* (Henderson 1975) confirmed what some advocates had been claiming for nearly a decade: that large numbers of Australians were living below the poverty line, and that NES immigrants, along with the aboriginals, were disproportionately represented among the poor.

The federal Labor government, elected after the Henderson inquiry had begun its work but before the report was published, brought with it a greater commitment to social issues. In an attempt to respond to the needs highlighted in the Henderson report and to demands for more control over services by the recipients of those services, the Labor government encouraged local service initiatives through the Australian Assistance Plan (AAP). The AAP created a large number of community-based services aimed primarily at community organizing and advocacy. In keeping with the expectation that the government take responsibility, the community-based services were almost entirely government funded.

A state Labor government elected in 1975 extended these initiatives to services funded through state government bodies. In 1979 the New South Wales Department of Youth and Community Services funded the network of Neighbourhood Centres, managed

by locally elected management committees, to provide local information and referral, community development, and advocacy services to localities throughout the state.

The return of a federal Liberal (conservative) government in 1975 saw the abandonment of much of Keynesian theory and the introduction of austere Monetarist policies but, despite the dismantling of the AAP and general social-service cutbacks, many of the community-based initiatives started under the Labor government have survived. The first flush of progressive hope that accompanied the introduction of these initiatives had subsided and even the conservatives had seen the value in promoting self-help. A Labor government was elected again in 1983 and removed some of the fears of further wholesale cutbacks, although by 1986 it too was engaging in a number of "austerity measures."

### Immigrants and Social Services

Australian immigration policy has always been based on the premise of new settlers and never that of guest workers (Australian Population and Immigration Council 1977). Immigrants were brought to Australia to build a new, permanent life there for themselves and for their children. An immigrant or refugee, having gone through a selection process in the home country or country of first refuge, generally arrives in Australia with a permanent-resident visa. Permanent residents have essentially the same rights and access to services as do citizens. They cannot vote or hold certain offices and they have a three-year restriction on their length of stay outside the country, but most immigrants have unrestricted access to government benefits and services. Permanent residents can apply for citizenship after two years of residence in Australia.

Social service law generally does not refer to immigration status, but to length of residence or intention to reside. To be

eligible for sickness or unemployment benefits,\* an applicant must have resided in Australia for one year immediately prior to application or be likely to remain permanently. Most recent legal immigrants are deemed to satisfy the second requirement and can receive the benefits if they satisfy other income or medical requirements. Other benefits or pensions for widows, supporting parents, and the elderly have more-restrictive residence requirements, but immigrants who don't meet the criteria may still be eligible for Special Benefit, which is decided on individual circumstances and is paid at the same rate as unemployment and sickness benefits (DSS 1986).

Even in cases where the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (DIEA) has sought to restrict the access to benefits to certain groups of immigrants, administrative decisions within the Department of Social Security (DSS) have tended to grant them income maintenance through Special Benefit. The DIEA, for example, introduced the Assurance of Support Scheme to allow the entry of relatives who were eligible for immigration under the family reunion policy but who were liable to become a public charge. The potential immigrant's sponsors in Australia signed an agreement with the DIEA to fully support the relatives for ten years during which they were ineligible for pensions or benefits. In 1985 the DSS stated that the Assurance of Support would lapse when the assured persons become Australian citizens or are "absorbed into the Australian community." No clear rules have been adopted for "absorption" but substantial residence (two years) is thought to satisfy the requirement (WRC 1986).

In the first decades of the immigration program, and in keeping with the assimilationist philosophy of the time, no special accommodation was made in social and health services for the needs of immigrants. It was assumed that NES immigrants would quickly assimilate and that universal services were fully accessible to all sectors of the population. By the late 1960s, the validity of this assumption was being questioned both by Anglo-Australian

\*Pensions and benefits in Australia are noncontributory. All costs are met by the federal government from general revenue.

advocates of immigrant rights and by the NES immigrant communities themselves. The inability of government services to reach NES immigrants was becoming an embarrassment, and researchers were demonstrating that while services remained monolingual and monocultural they were, in effect, discriminating against NES immigrants. NES immigrants were missing out on benefits and services for which they were legally eligible (EAC 1978).

Although multiculturalism was adopted as a government policy by the Labor government in 1973, it was not until 1977 that a comprehensive federal review of the services available to immigrants was undertaken. The federal Liberal government's *Migrant Services and Programs* report (Galbally 1978) recommended a major overhaul of many services, and recommended the abandonment of universality to a large extent, and the incorporation of principles of a minimalist, problem-solving brand of multiculturalism into service delivery. The assumptions implicit in this approach were that needs or problems were temporary, and once they were met, programs could be stopped and funds diverted to other new need areas. Needs were closely linked to an initial settlement period. The principles of the Galbally report were later reconfirmed in the *Evaluation of Post-Arrival Services and Programs* (AIMA 1982). In New South Wales, the state Labor government's *Participation* report (EAC 1978) had provided a more expansive analysis of immigrant services, emphasizing the rights of NES immigrants to full participation in Australian society, and focusing more on the legislative and structural changes necessary to ensure those rights.

Current social and health services reflect both the expectation that the government will take major responsibility for services and the official commitment to multiculturalism. The federal Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, as well as regulating the intake of immigrants, assumes the role of a major service provider. The DIEA includes the Settlement Branch, which deploys teams of bilingual case workers and administers the department's funding programs, and the Telephone Interpreter Service; a twenty-four-hour service in all major languages operating across the country. In addition, the DIEA funds the Adult Migrant Education Service which organizes English-language classes. Four

of the six states have an Ethnic Affairs Commission to oversee immigrant issues, and most federal and state government departments with major service functions have a migrant services or ethnic affairs unit.

Most of the services for NES immigrants have only been in existence for, at the most, ten years. Despite their increasing presence, many generalist services have been slow to respond to the needs of immigrants. The New South Wales Department of Youth and Community Services was described in a report in 1982 as a "conservative and Anglo-Australian organization which was being forced slowly and at times reluctantly into accepting its contemporary responsibilities" (Jakubowicz and Mitchell 1982). This description is applicable to most government and nongovernment services in Australia. Lobbying by advocates for NES immigrants rights have forced many changes in service delivery, but the battles have often been long and bitter. At times the victories have been short lived. Groups that have fought to establish immigrant services units in government departments have witnessed how, instead of creating instruments to change the department, they have created bureaucratic backwaters where anything labeled "ethnic" is sent to be ignored (Casey 1985).

In December 1983 the premier of New South Wales sent memos to all state government ministers requiring their departments to submit ethnic affairs policy statements designed to "adapt existing programs and services to meet more effectively and equitably the needs of the multicultural community." This new policy, known as "mainstreaming," is a tacit acknowledgment that in the five years since the state government published the *Participation* report (EAC 1978), which chronicled the marginalization of NES immigrants and set out a blueprint for policies addressing NES issues, there has been only limited success in bringing NES immigrants into the mainstream of Australian society.

One of the major strategies in service delivery to NES immigrants has been the adoption of the community-based service models established under the Australian Assistance Plan (AAP). The *Participation* report (EAC 1978) and the federal *Migrant Services and Programs* report (Galbally 1978) advocated the creation of separate sources of funding for ethnic groups to establish their

own service associations. The federal government withdrew funding from the fiercely assimilationist Good Neighbour Councils and funded a network of Migrant Resource Centres—community-based service centers which serve areas with major concentrations of immigrants. It also extended programs that provided funding to nongovernment organizations to employ social welfare workers to work with immigrant communities. The state Ethnic Affairs Commission established funding programs to provide “seed” funds for new ethnic associations. Traditional sources of funding also began to rethink their policies and sought to make their processes more accessible to ethnic groups. The availability of these funding sources has been the impetus for the growth of ethnic associations.

The support for nongovernment, community-based funding has always been promoted as being “nonpolitical,” and service is somehow meant to be value free. Funds are allegedly granted to those who can best demonstrate their ability to provide service. Even the most casual analysis, however, reveals how funding sources bestow their favors on organizations sharing their ideologies. Among the NES immigrant communities, maintaining the semblance of being “nonpolitical” has at times proven to be especially difficult. Governments have been reluctant to admit that the NES immigrant communities are divided along political, religious, and ethnic lines. The emphasis on cohesion as the basis for multiculturalism has meant that governments have been particularly harsh on those organizations engaging in anything that could be remotely interpreted as “political,” particularly with regard to the internal politics of the immigrant communities or their home countries. In the Italian community, an organization with roots in a wartime, pro-Mussolini group has grown, while an organization with union and Italian Communist party ties has had submission after submission rejected. In the Turkish community funders have had to choose between left- and right-wing organizations, in the Arabic-speaking community between Moslem and Christian, and in the Yugoslav community between Serbs and Croats. The return of the Labor government has seen a more “balanced” allocation of federal funds, but more overtly political organizations are still avoided.

The last ten years have seen a dramatic expansion of ethnic associations and their consolidation as a legitimate sector of nongovernment social welfare. They are funded despite an apparent duplication of services provided directly by government departments or through nongovernment organizations such as the Neighbourhood Centres, as they are seen as the link between their community and mainstream services. With restrictions on the possible extent of their work because of government involvement in social services, constraints on funding sources, and the legal barriers on nongovernment organizations, ethnic associations act primarily as information and referral agencies and advocates for their clients who have difficulty negotiating the system. Their role is seen to be complementary to the specialist immigrant services units in government agencies and the increasing numbers of multilingual staff.

### The Work of Ethnic Associations

In New South Wales in 1985 there were sixty-five service-oriented ethnic associations representing thirty NES immigrant groups, according to a listing published by the Local Community Service Association (LCSA), a nongovernment, community service lobby organization. The LCSA list included only those associations that had a primary goal of providing social and human services, served one language or ethnic group, and had a relatively stable, sophisticated structure. Less formal organizations, organizations that had other aims but provided incidental social services, and broad-based organizations serving more than one group were not included.

These ethnic associations are a new addition to the network of the community-based services first established in the early 1970s under the Australian Assistance Plan. At first funding for establishing these community organizations was restricted to universal services, but the late 1970s saw the beginning of the systematic distribution of these funds to ethnic-specific associations.

The two government reports mentioned earlier also established separate sources of funding through the extension of the federal Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs' Grant-in-Aid and Migrant Project Subsidy programs, and the state Ethnic Affairs Commission's Community Funding Program. Although many of the organizations may have been in existence for a number of years—particularly among the longer-established communities—the large majority of them would not have had access to the funds to employ full-time workers until within the last five to seven years. Many of these associations were previously more socially or culturally oriented, and some were based in churches, but the availability of funds for social-service functions have drawn them into their current role.

Ethnic associations are also part of the large body of non-government organizations too small to deliver hard services. The associations tend to be small agencies, either entirely voluntary or employing at most a small professional and administrative staff. The largest association would employ around eight workers with a budget of \$200,000, while the average budget of an ethnic association in New South Wales is \$20,000 to \$30,000 per annum. Eighty-five to 90 percent of the associations funding comes from either state or federal sources, and their survival as viable service deliverers depends on their ability to gain access to public funds. The associations, as a prerequisite to obtaining government funds, function on the typical "community management" model and a management committee is elected from the membership. They are usually low on resources, understaffed, and function from inadequate premises.

The political impact of multiculturalism has also meant that NES immigrant lobby organizations have formed which are able to provide support and advocacy for these ethnic associations. The three local Ethnic Communities' Councils, one in each of the major cities in New South Wales, in cooperation with Ethnic Communities' Councils in other states and the national Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia bring together thousands of small NES immigrant organizations into an influential ethnic lobby.

The mainstay of a typical association's work is its drop-in/casework function. The office of the association is open during

working hours—often only part-time—and clients present themselves at the association without appointments. The casework consists of informing clients of what services are available and how to obtain them; filling in forms; assisting clients in dealing with English-only government departments and businesses; and assisting them in finding work, accommodation, etc. Few associations provide ongoing casework or in-depth counseling, usually recognizing their lack of resources and trained personnel in this area. Some associations also take a more active role in advocacy work on social service and wider political issues that affect their community.

In both their organization and aspects of their service delivery the ethnic associations could be seen as the equivalent of the state's network of Neighbourhood Centres and Community Information Centres. Like the Neighbourhood Centres they are seen as providing a localized and responsive way of ensuring that a community has access to government services and the means to organize itself around the issues that affect it. Ethnic associations tend to emphasize their casework function more than do the Neighbourhood Centres, and instead of defining their "community" by a geographical boundary, ethnic associations define it as an ethnic or language group.

Without the hard data that a survey of the associations would furnish, it is difficult to accurately inventory the myriad of services that they provide. It is, however, possible to identify the major service needs the associations attempt to address.

#### INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Many of the services in Australian society continue to be inaccessible to NES immigrants. This inaccessibility is expressed both in terms of the lack of information about available services and the inability of many of the services to cater to immigrant clients. The associations attempt to fill these gaps. They act as brokers, informing their community of what is available and referring clients to appropriate services. If the client cannot speak English the association often becomes the go-between for the clients and the appropriate government department or nongovernment agency.

Information about services is usually given on a one-to-

one basis in response to individual inquiries, but associations also organize information sessions and talks on issues of interest to their community. Increasingly over the last four years, government and nongovernment services have become aware of the way in which a lack of information discriminates against non-English-speaking communities. Translated information material, advertising through the ethnic media, and outreach efforts are becoming more integral to community and public affairs units of services. The ethnic associations utilize these efforts to facilitate their own information functions.

At times, however, the quality of the information provided by the ethnic associations is questionable; the information providers themselves are often uninformed. Many of the staff in the ethnic associations have only limited experience in Australian social services, and have too little time to inform themselves of the current situation or to keep up with changes.

#### INCOME MAINTENANCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Figures quoted earlier in this paper identified the NES immigrant communities as more likely to be in poverty, and many NES communities are experiencing significantly higher rates of unemployment than the Anglo-Australian population. The hardest hit are the recently arrived immigrant groups (EAC 1984a). Government responsibility for income maintenance and the ethnic association's limited funds mean that the associations are not able to assume any income maintenance role beyond working with clients to ensure that they have access to pensions and benefits available through government departments and to emergency relief funds or goods in kind from the government and large charities.

Employment services are also organized directly through the federal and state governments. The Commonwealth Employment Service of the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations determines eligibility for unemployment benefits and provides local-level job-finding services through their neighborhood offices. As with income maintenance, ethnic associations faced with the high unemployment in their communities can do little except help members of their community to ensure that they

have access to the services, benefits, and training that are available. Some ethnic associations assist members in finding employment through the informal networks that exist in the community, but few if any would provide a formalized job-finding service.

Since 1983 federal funds for job creation and training programs have been available through the Wage Pause Program, the Community Employment Program, and the Participation and Equity Program. A large proportion of the money has been given to government programs, but community organizations have also been given funds for local job creation initiatives. A number of ethnic associations have successfully petitioned for funds to employ workers in the associations and thereby expanded their services.

Occupational health is also a major employment concern for NES immigrants as many are employed in high-risk industries. The incidence of work-related injuries are higher among NES workers than among English-speaking workers, despite attempts to lower the injury rate. Although ethnic associations do not provide any direct services to injured workers, a significant proportion of their work involves clients receiving injury compensation payments and sickness benefits. A number of associations organize activities such as support groups for members with work-related injuries.

#### HOUSING

NES immigrants tend to live in the poorer inner-city neighborhoods or the new housing developments in the outer areas of Sydney. Moreover, their low income and proportionately higher rates of poverty have meant that many immigrants are eligible for public housing through the state Department of Housing.

Ethnic associations provide two main services in relation to housing. First, as with unemployment, some of the associations provide informal accommodation-finding services through networks in their community and through real estate agents they know to be reliable. Second, they assist eligible applicants in negotiating the bureaucracy of the Department of Housing, which—like public housing authorities throughout the world—is notorious for its long waiting lists and lack of responsiveness to

tenants' requests. Tenant advocacy and the protection of tenants' rights have only recently made an impact on the work of ethnic associations. Nongovernment advocacy groups are making more of an effort to reach NES immigrants, and the Department of Housing has recently established a Multicultural Housing Policy Unit.

#### LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

The need to acquire English skills is the common denominator among the NES immigrant communities. English classes are available directly through the Adult Migrant Education Service funded by the federal Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and the state Department of Technical and Further Education. Both departments and the state Board of Adult Education also provide teachers or funds to community organizations for classes. Most ethnic associations organize some classes, particularly for women and the elderly.

At the same time, ethnic associations provide a range of services and activities to preserve the language and culture of their country of origin, and to perpetuate them among the Australian-born children. Many associations sponsor music and dance groups, and most language groups now have their own "ethnic schools." The ethnic schools function after school hours or on Saturday afternoons to teach language and culture to the children of immigrants. They are separate legal entities from the ethnic associations and receive their own funding from the federal Department of Education and the state Ethnic Affairs Commission, but many are organized under the auspices of an ethnic association.

#### LEGAL AND IMMIGRATION ADVICE

NES immigrants are often unaware of their legal rights and have limited access to legal services. Ethnic associations do not have the capacity to provide any comprehensive legal assistance. At best, some of the associations may have volunteer lawyers providing free legal advice for a few hours a week, but most associations rely on building links with community legal aid centers in their areas or upon government bodies providing legal advice.

Immigration inquiries—regarding citizenship, the sponsorship of relatives, and change of status—also account for much of the work of ethnic associations, particularly among those communities still coming to Australia in substantial numbers. An immigration law "industry" has not developed in Australia and, in the absence of lawyers seeking the work, ethnic associations find that they are expected to carry much of the burden of answering inquiries and assisting clients in filling out forms. Moreover, despite the government's commitment to permanent settlement, there has been a significant return rate of immigrants to their home countries, particularly those immigrants of retirement age who see retirement "back home" as more appealing. Requests for repatriation assistance, and inquiries on the portability of pensions and benefits, have also become part of the work of ethnic associations.

#### SERVICES FOR SPECIAL GROUPS

Women often bear the greater burden in immigration. Male immigrants have a greater degree of social and economic freedom and more job-related opportunities to learn English. Many immigrant women work outside the home as well as carrying the domestic duties, and differing cultural expectations between the old culture and Australian society create stresses in relationships.

Many of the associations reflect the male-dominated stereotypes of their communities and avoid services that could in any way be interpreted as undermining the role that that culture ascribes to women. A number of associations do, however, organize women's social and information sessions and refer women to other organizations for health and counseling services.

As demographic forecasts map the aging of the general population, the elderly are increasingly recognized as a needy sector of the population. NES communities are also having to come to terms with what is essentially the first generation of NES elderly. Poverty, lack of care for the infirm, isolation, and home-sickness are the main concerns facing the NES elderly. Language regression—the tendency of the NES elderly to lose their command of English—also serves to accentuate those needs.

Apart from their usual referral and advocacy role to ensure that existing resources are responding to the needs of the elderly,

ethnic associations attempt to address the isolation of the elderly in their communities. Nearly all ethnic associations organize gatherings, classes, group outings, and home visiting for isolated elderly. A number of associations are also examining the possibility of establishing nursing homes catering to their own ethnic group.

### Issues in Service Delivery

As a relatively new phenomenon, both within the Australian social-service scene and to many of the NES immigrants involved in them, ethnic associations remain controversial. The question of integration into Australian society is a major issue facing ethnic associations. While, on one hand, the associations advocate that members of their ethnic group acquire those aspects of Australian society necessary to survive and prosper, their very existence is rooted in the preservation of a separate ethnic identity.

The White Australia Policy was based on the premise that other races and cultures would only serve to taint a purely British colony. Later the fiercely assimilationist policies and rhetoric of the 1950s and early 1960s made an attempt to reconcile the Anglo-Australian past with the reality of the diverse immigration of the postwar era, and were a defense against the perceived threat to the British way of life. With the new pluralism of multiculturalism, and the seemingly greater acceptance of diversity, the issue has only become less complicated by degrees and ethnic associations are still finding themselves walking the thin line between acceptance and rejection. At the same time as policymakers are increasingly recognizing the validity of making ethnic associations partners in service delivery, the associations and the government departments that fund them find themselves under attack for dividing Australia. The influential weekly magazine *The Bulletin* (1986) carried an article on "How the Bloated Ethnic Industry Is Dividing Australia" which, in a throwback to assimilationist thought, described how government monies to ethnic organizations were undermining the cohesiveness of Australian society.

Ethnic associations and their advocates constantly find themselves having to justify the existence of the associations. Do they provide better services than mainstream organizations? Can

they contribute to a better access to mainstream services for their communities? The advocates of service delivery through ethnic associations claim that only through linguistically and culturally appropriate services can the needs of NES communities be met. While generalist providers of services can do much to ensure that their services are accessible, there will always be those sections of the community whose needs can only be met through associations organized through their own communities. It is not a question of either mainstream or ethnic services. Both types of organizations have complementary roles to play in service delivery (Casey 1985).

How exactly the ethnic associations can best fulfill their role is another area of controversy. Far from being consensual groups, NES immigrant communities are "dynamic, contested arenas of ideas and values" (Jakubowicz and Meekosha 1986). The debates between conservative and liberal forces in the wider social-services community are also evident among the ethnic associations. With limited resources, a constant tension is kept between what are seen as the competing priorities of "direct-service" work and organizing and advocacy work. Ethnic associations generally tend to lean toward direct service. This more conservative approach is imposed by a combination of a number of factors. First, the sheer pressures of their high client loads and lack of resources leave most associations struggling to handle their day-to-day work. Second, many of the staff and management in the associations lack experience in social service issues and alternative service delivery strategies. Third, there is a fear of "biting the hand that feeds them"—associations are reluctant to take on work that may be perceived as antagonizing funding bodies or bringing criticism of the association or the NES communities.

The ethnic associations have a high profile among their respective communities and there is little doubt that they are drawing on the best resources and energies of the NES immigrant communities to maintain their current level of service. Further, by accepting without question the constraints imposed by the Anglo-Australian funding structures and by the separation of services, ethnic associations are compartmentalizing service delivery in a way that may be denying the essential connections between

culture, politics, religion, and services in the immigrant experience. Given the restrictions on their resources, these services may ultimately have only a limited impact on the current situation. Like the wider social services in Australia which have had restricted success in reducing inequities (Jones 1983), ethnic associations will find that their goals of equal access and equal opportunity for their communities are difficult to achieve.

In December 1985, the Committee of Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programmes and Services was established by the federal government (Jamarozik 1986). The committee commissioned a study on "the present and potential further role and effectiveness of the voluntary sector in the provision of services to immigrants" which focuses on the work of forty ethnic associations in Sydney. Preliminary findings of the study highlight areas of concern in the service delivery of the associations. In particular, Petruchenia (1986) reports that there is a big gap between the policy and the practice of multiculturalism, and that many associations feel they continue to face a lack of understanding and sensitivity. Funding was also a major concern. Most ethnic-specific funding tends to be for a period of one year or less, and the associations considered that it resulted in insecurity and inflexibility which greatly restricted service development.

Another major concern is that expressed earlier in regard to the information services of the associations. Just as the associations are, at times, struggling to provide accurate information on services to their clients, their lack of information hinders their ability to advocate for themselves as agencies. Over the last few years, for example, funds for job creation programs have injected millions of dollars into nongovernment services. While ethnic associations have gotten access to some of the funds they rarely have known about them by the first round of funding.

### Conclusion

Ethnic associations in Sydney, as defined in this paper, form a distinct subset within the multitude of organizations that exist among the NES immigrant communities. Although many of the

associations have their roots in social, cultural, political, or religious organizations, the availability of funding for community-based ethnic organizations to take on a service function has prompted these associations to redefine their roles to coincide with the expectations of the funding bodies. The paper has demonstrated how this small number of associations provide community-based social services to their own ethnic groups within an Australian framework. Conclusions about these ethnic associations must consider what effect these services have, and what advantages or disadvantages they offer to NES immigrant communities.

The associations are the result of the struggle of advocates, both NES immigrants and Anglo-Australians, to create services that will be more sensitive to the particular needs of the separate NES immigrant communities while also providing a means by which members of those communities can get access to mainstream services in the Australian society. NES immigrants in Australia are more likely to be unemployed, to work in low-paying jobs, and to suffer discrimination in access to goods and services. Can these ethnic associations meaningfully address these imbalances?

Ethnic associations are indeed providing a more responsive form of service delivery to their communities, and their advocacy work can help ensure that mainstream services also become more responsive to all their constituents. There are dangers, however, which may signify that in the final balance the ethnic associations may only serve to perpetuate the marginalization of NES immigrants.

The ethnic associations suffer from a lack of resources which severely curtails the effectiveness of their services. Moreover they are currently still at the edges of the nongovernment social-service sector and have found it difficult to lobby for their own interests, or even to gain access to the expert knowledge necessary to function efficiently. In their present format many of the ethnic associations are condemned to providing second-class service, and this inadequate service may maintain immigrant "ghettos," shielding mainstream services from future criticisms of unresponsiveness.

The report of the Committee of Review of Migrant and

Multicultural Programs and Services will undoubtedly determine the direction of public policy regarding ethnic associations for at least the next decade. Whatever the direction the committee's recommendations take, the associations themselves will have to develop their political acumen and the ability to promote their interests and that of their communities; capacities that many do not presently possess.

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