

Strong immigration program with integrity critical to Australia's future

Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans, said that it is critical for Australia's future to maintain a strong immigration program which has integrity.

"It will help us meet the skills and labour shortages we are facing in an increasingly competitive and globalised world, as Australia's population ages," he added.

"I find this research very encouraging – 69% of those surveyed agree that immigration makes Australia stronger. It is also encouraging that the percentage of people who feel that immigration levels are too high now is half the rate reported 10 years ago."

Laurie Ferguson, the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, saw the research as painting a positive picture of Australia as a cohesive society.

"While not a reason for complacency, I find it encouraging that Australia, one of the world's most diverse nations, retains very high levels of social cohesion," Ferguson said. "I note very positive findings in the report, such as 96% of those surveyed feeling a strong sense of belonging and 94% expressing pride in Australia."

There is the hope that this research report, called "Mapping social cohesion – the Scanlon Foundation surveys" would encourage Australian immigration, and make current migrants feel welcome.

"There is, of course, always work to be done," Ferguson added. "Many government, community and private sector programs contribute to social cohesion. The government is reviewing its multicultural policy and advisory arrangements to ensure we continue to make progress as a prosperous, cohesive and inclusive society."

He said that he looks forward to consultations and discussions on the details of the research in the near future.

Written by Professor Andrew Markus and Dr Arunachalam Dharmalingam of the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements in partnership with the Australian Multicultural Foundation, the research was funded by the Scanlon Foundation.

If you would like to find out more about immigration to Australia, or want to work and live in "The Lucky Country", you can get more information on Migration Expert's website.

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