

Arabic Communities and Well Being: Supports and Barriers to Social Connectedness

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In partnership with

Victorian Arabic Social Services

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Acknowledgments:

The background to this research project lies in discussions between people involved in the Australian-Arabic communities in Victoria, Victorian Arabic Social Services and the Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights at Deakin University. The focus of these discussions was the need to understand the types of linkages between Australian-Arabic communities and the wider community, and the ways in which these linkages were affected by changing perspectives of migrants and humanitarian entrants of Arabic background. What was needed, we believed, was insight into the lived experiences of difference and marginalisation and the types of networks, or social capital, operating in Australian-Arabic communities. It was only by understanding these experiences and networks that we could identify the factors that facilitate or hinder social connectedness between Arab communities and non-Arab communities, and could suggest ways of engendering better community relations.

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Executive Summary

This monograph is the product of research undertaken by the Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights at Deakin University in partnership Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS) and funded by VicHealth.

The project examined indicators of wellbeing and social connectedness among Arab Australians. Contemporary public policy initiatives may sometimes have the unintended effect of jeopardising rather than promoting social connectedness for marginalised groups. This report considers the assumptions that social capital is essentially positive and benefits all in equal measure, that individuals can access a wide range of social networks regardless of characteristics such as education, gender and ethnicity, and that Australian communities readily accept diversity.

The research identified key issues in inter-cultural relations from the perspective of Arab Australians and their willingness and capacity to engage beyond their own community. Strategies conducive to bonding and bridging social capital were identified within Australian-Arabic communities and analysed in terms of their implications for facilitating social connectedness between Arab Australians and members of the wider community.

In summary, the aims of the research project were to:

- investigate the most prevalent forms of social capital within Australian-Arabic communities;
- determine whether different forms of social capital enhanced or undermined social connectedness;
- investigate links between social capital and wellbeing; and
- explore the potential of bridging social capital in facilitating greater social connectedness between Arabic and non-Arabic communities.

The research project was underpinned by a critical review of current debates on social capital, inter-cultural relations and links between social connectedness and holistic wellbeing.

Main Findings

Findings related to the forms of social capital evident in Arab communities

- The Arab Australian community enjoys high levels of bonding social capital but lower levels of bridging social capital.
- Bonding social capital is evident in a range of different forms. The Arab Australian community is united by a common language and culture focused on close links with family and friends but exhibits a rich diversity based primarily on national origin but also on ancestry, religion and socio-economic status. Ethnic heritage, whether nationality, religion or kinship network, is a key element of self-concept for Arab Australians and a major focus of their networks of association. Religion is an important form of bonding social capital for Arab Australians and an important avenue for community participation and social connection. Arab Australians also tend to live in close proximity to each other and this is an important source of mutual support.
- Bridging social capital is less evident in Arab communities. Connections between Arab and non-Arabic community groups are more limited than those within Arabic communities. Furthermore, members of some smaller Arab communities are socially isolated from both non-Arabic and other Arabic communities.
- The social climate in Australia has become more difficult for Arab Australians since the so-called 'war on terror'. Arabic Australians experience a sense of being undervalued by the broader community, including when applying for work or accessing public services.
- Members of the Australian-Arabic community feel less safe within their neighbourhoods now than they did before the so-called 'war on terror' following September 11, 2001. Yet many Arab Australians, particularly Muslim women, regard police with some suspicion, reflecting a community concern about general police violence and competence.

- Arab Australians suffer more from poor employment and poor education experiences than the broader Australian community. Socio-economic concerns are prominent amongst Arab Australians including those relating to low socio-economic status and high levels of unemployment. For newly-arrived Arab Australian groups such as Iraqi Australians, poor labour market outcomes contribute to and are compounded by their comparative asset-poverty.

Findings related to the promotion or detraction from social connectedness

- The promotion of social connectedness for our respondents is impeded by wider-community attitudes towards Arab Australians which stigmatise and marginalise them. Despite a desire for closer interaction with the broader community, recent conflicts in the Middle East crisis have exacerbated a sense of isolation amongst Arab Australians. Stigmatising and marginalising attitudes exhibited by the broader Australian community on the basis of assumed traits act as barriers to a more active participation in the community for Arab Australians.
- Our respondents consider the media a major source of the hostility directed towards Arab Australians and the misunderstandings detracting from Arab Australian social connectedness with the broader community. Our respondents were particularly concerned by the media's regular portrayal of them as 'terrorists' or 'victims' rather than as successful citizens.
- Social hierarchy and status are important factors underpinning trust between Arab and non-Arab Australians and are important in the promotion of bridging and bonding social capital for Arab communities. Arab Australians place their trust in family and friends, but also in high status community leaders including non-Arabic community leaders. The elderly and religious leaders in particular are granted great respect and 'trust'. Trusted community representatives or community workers with knowledge of both Australian and Arabic cultures and available resources, services and participative options are considered important in promoting bridging social capital.
- Our respondents identified a lack of knowledge about culturally sensitive resources and services. This lack of knowledge detracted from their social

connectedness. For example, limited use of general community health services by people of Arabic-speaking background is associated with lack of knowledge of available services and lack of familiarity with the roles of service providers. Cultural practices within some communities, such as perceptions of shame associated with non-reliance upon family, can also deter service use. Community-specific (rather than mainstream) service providers were trusted more by Arab Australians as providers of culturally and linguistically appropriate service delivery, leading to higher rates of use of services.

- Our respondents identified poor English language skills as important detractors to social connectedness. While many of our respondents sought actively to develop their English language skills - despite fears of stigmatisation by the broader community - access to adequate support was an acknowledged problem.
- Our respondents understood government as having an important role in addressing inter-community tensions but were pessimistic about its willingness and capacity to do so.
- Accessing mainstream Australian culture and society was made more difficult for Arab Australians because of poor access to employment, education and community service programs such as language programs.

Findings related to the correlations between types of social capital in which participants are involved and indicators of personal wellbeing

- Our respondents enjoyed high levels of bonding social capital which is important to their wellbeing. They acknowledged participation in family life and religious and community organisations as important in facilitating social connectedness and underpinning personal and community wellbeing.
- External barriers to the promotion of bridging social capital, such as employer discrimination in work, limitations to culturally sensitive educational opportunities or accessing culturally sensitive community services and resources were of concern to our respondents.
- Of particular concern to our respondents was an increasingly hostile social climate fuelled by negative stereotypes and discriminatory depictions of

Arab Australians and Arabic and Islamic culture in the media. Our respondents drew a clear link between increasing social hostility and increased community stress and withdrawal from wider networks

- A number of our respondents drew direct links between their withdrawal from wider networks, their social exclusion and broader community discrimination, and their physical and mental health problems.

Findings related to the potential role of bridging social capital in facilitating greater social connectedness between Arab and non-Arab communities.

- Our study found that despite the pressures for withdrawal from the wider Australian community, bridging social capital remains important to Arab Australians in Victoria. Our respondents sought actively to foster bridging social capital by developing links with the broader community. However, they faced significant challenges to do so, including a climate of political and social hostility, discrimination and poorly targeted community resources and services. Active and concerted measures must be undertaken by the state and community organisations to overcome these barriers.

Key Recommendations

The following recommendations are based primarily on the empirical findings of the research project. The findings are aimed at facilitating greater social connectedness between Arabic and non-Arabic communities in Victoria. Of course, many of these recommendations are contingent on the provision of adequate government funding and government and community support.

1. **Enhanced specialised community-based services:** Provide long-term funding to community-based agencies to enable them to plan, implement and deliver well-targeted, culturally sensitive and effective services that would ultimately improve Arab Australian wellbeing. This recommendation is in line with the finding that disadvantaged and isolated members of the Australian Arabic community are more likely to access ethno-specific rather than mainstream services or require the intervention of an ethno-specific service to link them with mainstream service providers.
2. **Establishment of Australian-Arabic Community Centre:** VicHealth to convene a working group from all stakeholders to seek joint funding to

establish an Australian-Arabic Community Centre in Melbourne's northern suburbs, with expansion in the short term to include campuses near Williamstown, Dandenong and Shepparton. The Centre should have a brief to:

- serve as a community meeting place;
 - provide a location for the delivery of services for all Arab Australians irrespective of country of origin;
 - serve as a clearing house for information on Australian-Arabic community research, initiatives, events; publications, both within Australia and internationally;
 - represent Arab Australians on broader committees concerned with intercultural, community building and interfaith development, for example.
3. **Enhanced information and referral systems:** A number of respondents noted difficulties in finding out about and accessing community services. VicHealth, in collaboration with other government agencies, local governments and community organisations, should work together to develop a community outreach program promoting awareness of key services. Such initiatives should include translated brochures and marketing materials but should also incorporate community social workers and service providers through community outreach support programs.
 4. **Education support:** Liaise with the Department of Education, parents and schools to improve education outcomes for Australian-Arabic youth including by developing strategies to improve secondary school attrition rates, work experience, self-esteem and confidence, career counselling and training. Promoting better educational opportunities for Arab Australian youth is a fundamental requirement if their employment experiences are to be improved.
 5. **Employment information and referral services:** State agencies and community service providers must provide up-to-date information about job, education and training services. Following the conclusion of a service audit, gaps concerted measures should be undertaken to address them

including through the development of culturally-aware services such as Arabic information sessions, translated information kits and the establishment of outreach support networks.

6. **Employment opportunities:** Our respondents identified employer discrimination as a major impediment to increased labour market participation. A round-table should be convened between State agencies, employer organisations, relevant service providers (e.g. Job Network providers), and community organisations (including trade unions) to identify the sources and forms of employment discrimination affecting Arab Australians and to consider policies for overcoming such discrimination.
7. **Social Support:** State agencies, local governments and relevant community organisations to convene a round-table to consider ways of addressing social isolation and harassment related to racism, particularly for Arab Australian women and youth. Attention should be directed at developing community-inspired initiatives targeting xenophobia and the management of cross-cultural tensions.
8. **Arab success stories:** In line with a perceived cooling of the social climate and the need to overcome racist community attitudes, work with the Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs and community leaders to identify prominent Arab Australians - including religious leaders, business leaders and community leaders – and to develop a publicity campaign highlighting the diversity of the Australian-Arabic community, Arab “success” stories, and the contribution made to Australian community life by the Arab Australian community.
9. **Health services:** Working with community representatives, state service providers to develop and promote culturally sensitive health services for Arab Australians. State service providers should liaise closely with community organisations and local governments to identify and ensure programs address community needs. Culturally-sensitive health services should include information on the full range of health options available to address mental and physical illness including preventative medicine.

10. **Better identifying needs – health:** Conduct an audit of community-specific health services available to Arab Australians to provide a better basis for the development of community health policies.
11. **Better identifying needs – Language services:** Many of our respondents noted the importance of English language skills in promoting social connectedness. Conduct an audit of English language training options available for Arab Australians and lobby as necessary relevant governments for increased resources to be directed towards such programs. Ensure information on language programs is included in any outreach programs tailored to the needs of Arab-Australian communities. Work with all tiers of government to increase the availability of translation/interpreting services for Australian-Arabic communities. Make English-Arabic dictionaries available at all points of service delivery in locations where there are substantial numbers of people of Arabic background.
12. **Justice and policing:** Work with Victorian Police to develop targeted training programs for officers to address systemic discrimination within the police force and culturally insensitive policing practices.
13. **Better identifying needs – crime and justice:** There is insufficient information about Arab Australian engagement with the criminal justice system. Working with Arab community representatives, undertake further research into the justice and crime experiences of the Australian-Arabic community to better inform public policy

Section 1 Introduction

This monograph is the product of research funded by VicHealth into the wellbeing of Australian-Arabic communities undertaken by the Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights at Deakin University. The data collection was facilitated by Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS), a community organisation active in service delivery among Arab Australians in Victoria.

The study examined evidence of the extent of social connectedness between Arab Australians and the wider community and the willingness and capacity of Arab Australians to engage beyond their own community. It explored the ways in which the assumptions about building communities by developing social capital might be more complex and more problematic than policy makers had anticipated, particularly in the case of those who are marginalised in contemporary Australian society.

Public policy initiatives such as the 'Australians Working Together' policy and Victorian Government's 'Building Stronger Communities' focus on notions of community partnerships and social capital as vehicles to promote social inclusion or social connectedness and enhanced individual and community capacity and wellbeing. The initiatives are based upon assumptions that social capital is essentially a positive attribute of individuals and communities, that social capital benefits all in equal measure, that individuals have the capacity to access a wide range of social networks and that Australian communities readily accept diversity.

But these assumptions are being challenged in some quarters. Ways of measuring social capital are complex and the strength and range of social networks are being viewed as highly dependent on variables such as education, gender and ethnicity. Community attitudes which stigmatise and marginalise particular groups on the basis of assumed traits may act as barriers to engagement in many forms of community participation. Groups that are stigmatised and marginalised may consequently experience narrowing of social networks, which exacerbates their social exclusion and is related to adverse physical and mental health outcomes while experiencing high levels of particular forms of social capital.

Although few evaluations have been undertaken exploring the interface between diversity, community attitudes toward diversity and the impacts of those attitudes

on social connectedness for the groups concerned, anecdotal evidence has indicated that such a scenario is occurring for members of Arabic communities in Australia.

In this context, the aims of the research project were to:

- investigate the most prevalent form(s) of social capital evident in Australian Arabic communities;
- determine whether these types of social capital enhance or undermine social connectedness for Australians of Arabic background;
- investigate correlations between the types of social capital in which Arab Australians are involved and indicators of personal wellbeing;
- explore the potential role of bridging social capital in facilitating greater social connectedness between Australian-Arabic and non-Arabic communities.

To begin our research, we conducted a brief but critical literature review and analysis of inter-cultural relations, the links between social engagement and holistic wellbeing, and current debates on social capital. This was undertaken to establish the conceptual and theoretical context for the project and to build a background for the conduct of interviews with members of Australian-Arabic communities and informants involved in services and programs for those communities. The aim was to identify:

- key issues in inter-cultural relations between Arabic and non-Arabic communities, from the perspective of Australian-Arabic communities;
- if and how those issues impact on the willingness and capacity of members of Australian-Arabic communities to engage beyond their own community;
- manifestations of the major forms of social capital (bonding and bridging social capital) in Australian-Arabic communities;
- if there is evidence of more bonding than bridging social capital within Australian-Arabic communities, and if so, what issues does this raise for community members;
- whether there is evidence of social connectedness between members of Australian-Arabic communities and the wider community;

- the implications of the types of social capital amongst Australian-Arabic communities.

On the basis of the findings we were concerned to provide policy recommendations regarding specific initiatives that might strengthen the overall integration of Arab Australians into the wider society while at the same time validating the integrity of their culture.

Monograph structure

This Monograph has six sections. Section one provides a general introduction, Section two outlines the research methodology used to investigate levels of Arab Australian social connectedness. Section three contains a brief outline of theoretical and methodological issues relating to the concepts of 'social capital' and 'wellbeing'. This section considers the development of the concepts and their application in an Australian context, in particular the employment of broad indicators of community 'progress'. It describes the concepts of 'bridging' and 'bonding' social capital and examines internationally used measures of social capital and wellbeing relating specifically to social and civic participation, inter-community relations, control and self-efficacy.

Section four of the Monograph provides a detailed discussion of the profile of Australian-Arabic communities in order to contextualise subsequent research findings into Arab community wellbeing. The section outlines the major demographic and historical characteristics of Australian-Arabic communities, examines their comparative settlement patterns in relation to the broader Australian community.

Section five discusses the participation of Arab Australians within their own communities and within the broader Australian community. It uses the concepts of bridging and bonding social capital to explore the views of Arab Australians about inter-cultural relations and the manifestation of social capital forms including the current social climate, inter-community relations, issues of trust, crime and safety, community health status, language proficiency, education, employment, wealth and the meaning and value of life for Arab Australians.

The sixth section of the Report contains the main conclusions and recommendations concerning how links between Australian-Arabic communities and the broader Australian community could be developed and strengthened.

Section 2 Research Methodology

This project aimed to identify the factors that facilitate or hinder social connectedness between members of Australian Arab communities and non-Arab Australians so as to better inform policy programs in support of Arab Australian social connectedness.

This research undertaken explored some of the ways in which the assumptions underpinning contemporary public policy initiatives, such as *Australians Working Together* and *Building Stronger Communities* might have affected social connectedness for certain marginalised groups. These policy initiatives have drawn on the recommendations of the McClure Report (2000) and reflect the tenets of Third Way politics, in that they focus on notions of community partnerships and social capital as vehicles to promote social inclusion/ social connectedness and enhanced individual and community capacity and wellbeing. An issue in understanding the contributions of community partnerships and social capital lies in the assumptions made about social capital. For example, it is generally assumed that social capital is positive and benefiting all in equal measure, that people have equal capacity to access a wide range of social networks and that communities accept diversity, which then forms the basis of social capital initiatives. These assumptions have been challenged in the literature on a number of fronts, (Carson and Kerr 2003; Raffo and Reeves 2002; Stone and Hughes 2003; Cox and Caldwell 2000; Kenny 2000). In brief, the research process began from the following observations of recent discussions of social capital: the existence and measurement of social capital is contested; the strength and range of social networks is highly dependent on variables such as education, gender and ethnicity; and that acceptance of diversity is increasingly challenged in a neo-liberal policy regime.

Indeed, in a study on disadvantaged young people, Kerr and Savelsberg (2003) found that community attitudes which stigmatised and marginalised the young people on the basis of their assumed traits, acted as barriers to attempts by the young people to engaging in most forms of community participation (for example go to shopping centres or 'hang out' with friends). This then had the disturbing outcome of further narrowing their social networks, exacerbating their social

exclusion and being related to adverse physical and mental health issues. Although few other evaluations have been undertaken regarding the interface between diversity, community attitudes toward diversity and impacts of those attitudes on social connectedness for the groups concerned, anecdotal evidence thus far indicates that a similar scenario is occurring for members of Arab communities in Australia. This is the problem this project will investigate.

Likely public health benefits

Public health discourse has evolved over the years, broadly from 'life' issues (such as sanitation, immunisation initiatives etc) through the 'life disease' issues (such as diabetes, lung cancer, obesity), to 'quality of life' issues (such as the *Healthy Ageing* initiatives, which focus on individual holistic wellbeing). The latter are largely underpinned by a now well-established recognition that social integration is a core component of individual physical, psychological and emotional health (Plath 2002; Ahmad 1993). There are though two related sets of problems which emerge if individuals (or certain groups) have restricted access to networks that would facilitate social integration. First, there are the threats to individual 'quality of life' issues, as noted above. Second, the risk that access to the 'life' and 'life diseases' public health initiatives may well be severely compromised by restricted social integration.

Jordan (1996 p 180) refers to 'social exclusion through polarisation' and points to the way groups experiencing such exclusion then experience heightened personal risk through lack of access to goods and services, which in turn generates higher social costs. What is of concern in this study are the demonstrated patterns of marginalisation/exclusion and poor health outcomes evident amongst certain 'at risk' groups, such as Indigenous Australians (Jamrozik 2001; Stilwell 2000). The (thus far) largely anecdotal evidence on which we base this study indicates that Arab Australians are experiencing similar discrimination/marginalisation, which results in restricted social interaction, compromises their individual wellbeing and jeopardises access to curative and preventative health initiatives.

In exploring the potential of bridging social capital as a vehicle for greater social connectedness and enhanced wellbeing for Arab Australians, we see that the findings of this study have the potential to enhance cross-cultural understandings and inform debates on holistic wellbeing for a range of other groups who are 'at

risk' of social marginalisation, and hence arguably from access to a range of public health initiatives.

2.1 Research problem and approach

There is much discussion and anecdotal evidence available about, but thus far little research into, the marginalisation of Arabic communities, most particularly Muslim women. This would appear to be due at least in part to current global tensions and conflict and the resultant stereotyping of Arab community members. Indications are, however, that Arab Australians may indeed be unintentionally contributing to their own marginalisation in reacting to discrimination by 'retreating' into their own communities. That is, they are increasingly relying on bonding rather than bridging social capital. This is a cause of concern, given that such patterns limit – if not prevent – expansion of wider social networks which facilitate increased levels of social connectedness.

Thus the study has four aims. Namely:

- To investigate the most prevalent form(s) of social capital evident in Arab communities;
- To determine whether these types of social capital promote or detract from social connectedness;
- Investigate correlations between types of social capital in which participants are involved and indicators of personal wellbeing
- To explore the potential role of bridging social capital in facilitating greater social connectedness between Arab and non-Arab communities.

It is hoped these findings will inform recommendations about how innovative programs may be implemented to support the mobilisation of bridging and bonding social capital between Arab and non-Arab communities in ways that enhance social connectedness and cross-cultural understandings and promote individual and community capacity and wellbeing.

2.2 Research methodology

The research design incorporates two strands. First, a meta-analysis of the relevant literature and policy documents pertaining to a) inter-cultural relations, b) the links between social engagement and holistic wellbeing, and c) social capital.

Second, primary research which will explore (a) key informants' and Arab community members' perceptions and experiences of their social interactions and networks in their own and the wider community and (b) participants' feelings of wellbeing. This strategy will generate both quantitative and qualitative data and will allow for a triangulation approach to data analysis.

The project had five main components:

1. Literature and document meta-analysis
2. Gathering data from public sources such as the ABS
3. Gathering of data from an Arabic community focus group
4. In-depth interviews with Arabic community leaders
5. Final data analysis and write up

2.2.1 Literature and document meta-analysis

A brief but critical literature review and document analysis was undertaken of (a) inter-cultural relations, (b) the links between social engagement and holistic wellbeing, and (c) current debates on social capital. This set the theoretical context for the project and formed the background for the development of focus group and interview questions.

2.2.2 Data collection from public sources

Given that the collection of social data can be expensive and intrusive, we could not within a small research project undertake measures of each of the possible indicators of social capital and wellbeing. Accordingly, although defining which areas were more important than others was likely to be difficult and contentious, we thought it appropriate to rely upon existing data for many of the indicators and to focus upon collecting in-depth data in a few key areas where readily delineable data was unavailable.

We were able to use data from the Census, ABS surveys, etc., to undertake analyses of some available and appropriately delineable measures of comparative segregation and isolation, health status and safety, community engagement, support, development and satisfaction. We chose to collect new data on some elements of social capital to identify aspects of inter-cultural

relations and the links between social engagement and holistic wellbeing employing and adapting a collection of internationally established and tested measures that were consistent with the theoretical underpinnings of our research.

The survey questions included in our submission for funding were useful indicators, many of which had been employed on previous research projects, and fitted within the social capital matrix as we subsequently defined it. Nevertheless, some areas of social capital and wellbeing were better covered than others and it was necessary to modify the questions to concentrate on covering a few areas well in the research project. We aimed at having a minimum of three indicators for each concept that we addressed, the data from which could be collated into a general measure for the concept, for example, three or four questions directly relating to 'trust' and a similar number relating to social networks. The finalised survey questions for the focus group and key informant interviews are listed at Appendix A.

A six-month survey of newspaper reports and articles dealing with religious matters was undertaken to determine the most commonly expressed views of Christianity and Islam.

2.2.3 Focus group interviews

A focus group employing members of a local Arabic community and in-depth interviews with a range of key informants involved in services and programs within Arab communities was then conducted.

The method of data collection was via focus groups – where participants were asked to discuss a range of issues as pre-determined by the researchers, based on Steps 1 as above, but with flexibility to explore 'serendipitous' findings. According to Shaw (1999), focus group discussions have three particular advantages for qualitative research. First, the group interaction is itself the data, enabling the researcher to 'examine people's different perspectives as they operate within a social network and to explore how accounts are constructed, expressed, censored, opposed and changed through social interaction' (1999 pp155-156). Second, they are valuable when there is a power differential between participants and decision-makers. Third, they introduce a valuable approach to learning the extent of consensus on a particular issue. The focus groups were moderated by

the members of the research team and, with consent of participants, were tape-recorded.

The initial focus group for the project was held in June 2004 at Preston. The focus group consisted of eight members of the local Arabic-speaking community and included both men and women in several age brackets. Contact was made with key informants via the network already established by the researchers in the course of projects undertaken over a number of years and their personal involvement in Arab community groups.

Questions for the focus group were structured for a three hour focus group, with a loss of around 20 minutes for administration and refreshments, and an average response time of five minutes per question. There were 28 questions, delineated into the six dimensions of social capital specified in our DUREC submission, designed to bring to light some aspects of social capital that Arabic communities identify as significant (focus group questions are provided in Appendix 1). Each dimension included four to five questions and included indicators of and an indicator that delineated between bridging and bonding social capital.

Topics covered in the focus group included:

- key issues in inter-cultural relations between Arab and non-Arab communities, from their perspective;
- if and how those issues impact on the willingness and capacity of Arab community members to engage beyond their own community;
- if there is evidence of more bonding than bridging capital in Arab communities, and if so, what issues does it raise for community members?;
- to what extent participants feel there is evidence of social connectedness between members of Arab communities and the wider community; and
- recommendations about how links with the wider community could be developed/strengthened.

2.2.4 In-depth interviews

Following initial analysis data from the focus group, a series of in-depth interviews with community leaders and service providers was conducted in November 2004,

employing the focus group questions as an interview guide. Interviews were conducted in English.

For the face-to-face, in-depth interviews, a semi-structured questionnaire based on analysis of insights gained from steps 1 and 2 of the study was used. In formulating this questionnaire, we drew on the work of McCracken 1988 (cited Shaw 1999) who advocates open, direct questions leading to narrative production – that is the researcher and participant are recognised as being active in the process by which the participant becomes informant and ‘story-teller’. This method has been selected with full recognition that, as Shaw cautions, the researcher is not and cannot be impartial, and there is a ‘constant interactive tension as one person tries to penetrate the private world of another’ (1999 p149). All members of the research team on this project have extensive experience and demonstrated success in conducting this type of interview, where the generation of meaningful data relies on creating an environment of trust and mutual respect between researcher and participant. Examples here include Kerr’s studies of disadvantaged young people, unemployment, breaching and social exclusion (Kerr and Savelsberg 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003), and Mansouri’s extensive work with refugees and holders of Temporary Protection Visas (Mansouri and Makhoul 2004: Mansouri and Bagdas 2002: Mansouri 2001). These studies involved working with people who were vulnerable and/or at risk of marginalisation/social exclusion and all were based on semi-structured in-depth interviews.

2.2.5 Data analysis

Data relating to geographic segregation and isolation was derived from 2001 and 1996 Census CData software, generating data files for all major language groups in Victoria at the level of Census Collector Districts (CCDs). The data was analysed using SPSS software. Demographic mapping of the Arabic-speaking community was undertaken using CData.

The focus group was conducted in Arabic, recorded on audio tape and a transcription of the proceedings translated into English for content analysis. Interview data was recorded on audio tape, transcribed and subjected to content analysis.

The survey data of newspaper reports and articles dealing with religious matters was undertaken via *The Age* website. Reports and articles were subjected to content analysis to determine favourable, unfavourable or neutral presentations of religions. Articles dealing specifically with the war in Iraq were excluded from the analysis.

Section 3 Defining Social Capital and Wellbeing

This section reviews the literature and theoretical concepts related to social capital and community wellbeing. It does so to provide an analytical framework with which to assess Arabic community wellbeing in Australia. The section commences with a review of the concept of wellbeing, including an assessment of how it has been methodologically operationalised in earlier studies and the merits of such approaches for this study. The section then reviews the recent literature pertaining to social capital focusing on the concept of bridging and bonding social capital as measures particularly useful for considering Arabic community wellbeing in Australia. Social capital measures used in this study are then explained.

3.1 Well-being

The concept of wellbeing is concerned with the measurement of quality of life, including: standard of living, health, life achievement, personal relationships, personal safety, community-connectedness, and future security (Cummins 1996, Cummins 1997, and Cummins, et al. 2002). However, as an analytical concept it has been dogged by its imprecision and related measurement difficulties. Initially, the concept was used to broaden economic measures of wellbeing such as per capita GDP, although *individual* wellbeing was understood rather narrowly (for example, by the OECD) to involve three fundamental aspects of life: good health, sufficient income and rewarding work.

More recently, statisticians and researchers have attempted to broaden the concept of wellbeing to incorporate non-economic notions of community. In Australia, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has attempted to measure the *collective* wellbeing of the community by expanding its data collection to eight areas of community concern: health; family and community; education and training; work; economic resources; housing; crime and justice; and culture and leisure (*Measuring Wellbeing: Frameworks for Australian Social Statistics*, ABS 2001: 3). The ABS has also sought to measure 'beliefs' and 'community participation' through relatively infrequent surveys, for example on attitudes towards the environment or participation in volunteer labour or cultural activities. In 2002, to gather data to supplement existing indicators, the ABS conducted a General

Social Survey (GSS), which the ABS intends to repeat at four-yearly intervals.¹ The ABS also publishes data related to wellbeing annually under the title *Measures of Australia's Progress*.

The three 'domains' of progress defined in *Measuring Australia's Progress* (ABS, 2004) are economic, environmental and social progress. Each of these is measured only to the extent that progress is quantifiable and unambiguous. For our purposes, the most important of these is social progress, within which the ABS includes increases in the wellbeing of the population and increases in social cohesion. Increases in wellbeing are measured by assessing national 'progress' in relation to health, education and training, work, housing and financial hardship while increases in social cohesion are measured by assessing national progress in relation to family and community and crime.

Such efforts to measure community wellbeing have, however, been highly normative and continued to focus on economic notions of progress. For example, one of the ABS' criteria for inclusion as a 'headline' indicator is that a measure shows 'unambiguously good and bad directions of movement upon which virtually all would agree'. Surprisingly, the ABS argues that 'inequality' does not meet the criteria and so is not included as a 'headline' indicator. Although 'progress' in relation to inequality can be inferred from some of the measures employed, few sociologists would agree with the ABS that inequality does not constitute a 'headline' indicator of community wellbeing. The inadequacy of the approach taken in "*Measuring Australia's Progress*" becomes evident when we examine the actual indicators employed to determine progress within particular spheres. As is usual, the devil is in the detail. To measure 'health', for example, which is generally agreed as a key indicator of wellbeing, the ABS' requirement for universally accepted, non-controversial, atheoretical, quantifiable, longitudinal data means that *Measuring Australia's Progress* ultimately employs indicators relating only to life expectancy and leading causes of death. Any comprehensive measure of community health would need to take into consideration a much broader set of criteria.

Elsewhere the ABS does acknowledge that 'measuring wellbeing therefore involves mapping the whole of life'. (Victorian Year Book, 2001: 6) and involves both subjective and objective measures, which suggests that they are aware of

the magnitude of the problem of measurement, although they appear to assume that many of the more difficult to measure elements of wellbeing (eg: trust; obligation; love; self worth; spiritual commitment; and human rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, access to an independent justice system) can be overlooked in their more objective measures.

However, this acknowledgement has not been reflected in more expansive attempts to measure wellbeing. For example, the ABS has not accepted the need to test the access of different community groups to an independent justice system, although much previous research, including the Bureau's own, has shown the inequities faced by Indigenous and other groups in the area of criminal law. To some extent, this approach is justified. It is comparatively easy to demonstrate the gap in relative wellbeing (and community wellbeing is usually acknowledged as a *relative* measure) between, for example, Indigenous and other Australians, by analysing existing data collections in such areas as morbidity, mortality, crime or incarceration. However, demonstrating that Indigenous Australians or Arab Australians, recent migrants, people living in small rural communities, women or any number of other social groupings have differing morbidity, crime or incarceration rates does not necessarily reveal why this occurs nor does it necessarily present a solution to the problem. Our research does seek to identify inequities if they are discernible within existing data but we also aim to go some way towards providing explanatory information.

The limitations of the ABS' focus when attempting to measure wellbeing in large part reflects its reluctance to stray beyond existing areas of data collection. The sheer breadth of the ABS' data collection is undoubtedly useful for the measurement of community wellbeing. However, the data collected is usually highly quantified, which enables simple comparative analysis but substantially reduces the complexity of the information and the capacity for understanding the subtleties in meaning. Perhaps most importantly for our purposes, the data is often collected by sample survey and is generally not delineable to the level of relatively small groups such as Australian-Arabic communities. Nevertheless, there is a plethora of data sources used by the ABS providing information on particular communities that help us to define relative wellbeing. This amounts to literally hundreds of possible indicators of wellbeing, many of which could be regarded as

key indicators. Choosing particular indicators while ignoring others will inevitably be contentious.

3.2 Social Capital

While the ABS has expressed its clear commitment to measuring beliefs, trust and community participation, its commitment has been largely limited to measurement through an economist's lens and data collection. To overcome this overly econometric approach of wellbeing, researchers have developed the notion of social capital.

Social capital is a dynamic concept which attempts to capture the social processes which contribute to wellbeing. While the term can be traced back to the early developments in social theory, it has benefited from a recent explosion in popularity in recent years. The concept of social capital as a measure of social connectedness has been the subject of substantial studies within disciplines such as sociology and economics, mainly during the last decade. Social capital has been seen as a measurable aspect of personal wellbeing, most specifically in relation to the concepts of mutuality, reciprocity and trust. These concepts provide ways of understanding social interactions, relationships and networks of association. Particularly influential has been the work of Robert Putnam (1993; 2000; 2001)., Putnam has focused on the concepts of trust, reciprocity, norms and networks within the study of social capital (1993; 2000; 2001), including upon the 'bonding' aspect of communal activity and the influence that has upon personal wellbeing. Following Putnam, Fukuyama (1999: 16) defines social capital as informal values or norms that permit group cooperation, in particular, reliability and honesty that foster trust, while Bowles and Gintis (2002: 1), addressing social capital and community governance, add concern for associates, willingness to live by community norms and willingness to punish norm-breakers to the definition. While these definitions clearly derive from the American functionalist tradition, this has not lessened their appeal to researchers working within other paradigms.

Social capital is now commonly understood to refer 'to the stock of social connections including the trust, mutual understanding, shared values and behaviours that tie people together, encourage cooperation and generate a sense of community' (Jochum, NCVO, 2003: 7). Woolcock (2001) has identified an emerging consensus amongst theoreticians centred upon the 'norms and

networks that facilitate collective action' with social capital having two dimensions:

- '*Networks*: relating to social relations and interactions amongst individuals or within groups (families, organisations, communities etc.).
- '*Norms*: relating to the established rules of behaviour or standards of conduct and the shared standings or values held by a group of people (including trust and reciprocity).'

Crucially, norms and networks are embedded in the social structure and are mutually independent and reinforcing. Furthermore, social capital is understood as a resource that is 'productive', 'self-reinforcing' and 'cumulative', which exists alongside other forms of capital and that can be depleted (Jochum, NCVO 2003: 8). Social capital is also both a public and private good, contributing to individual and community wellbeing. Individuals or communities are generally seen as holding relative degrees of social capital. Social capital enables social interactions and is generated by them. Depending upon the outcomes of interactions, individual or community social capital can increase or decrease. Social capital is not a product of all social interactions but is generated when people participate in networks of association based upon mutuality, reciprocity and trust. Social interactions of this type can contribute to community wellbeing, cohesion, harmony and increased productivity. These things are notoriously difficult to measure since we generally cannot observe them directly but must rely upon indicators that in some instances are theoretically remote from the characteristics that they are supposed to describe.

Like the measurement of well-being, the measurement of social capital is contested. In an analysis of the empirics of social capital, Durlauf (2002) goes so far as to deny that existing research into social capital has shown that it has any empirical importance to socioeconomic outcomes. Durlauf's (2002) rejection of the empirical importance of social capital is based upon a complex and suspect mathematical analysis of the results of three studies, at least two of which can be seen as useful contributions to the development of the concept. The first is Furstenberg and Hughes' (1995) USA study which explored the impact of within-family social capital and community-based social capital upon educational and norm-breaking outcomes. The second is Narayan and Pritchett's (1999) study of

social capital and household incomes in rural Tanzania, where questions were developed to measure group memberships, the characteristics of groups of which participants were members, and levels of trust in family, neighbours, strangers and government officials.

The diversity of concepts and definitions employed in discussion of the concept of social capital has meant that research methodologies and instruments have been equally diverse or, as suggested by Bjørnskov and Svendsen (2003), ad hoc. Paxton (1999), in a discussion of whether social capital is declining in the United States, argues that measures of social capital have been disconnected from theoretical discussion of the concept, while Wendy Stone (2001: viii), of the Institute of Family Studies, in her overview of measurement of social capital in several countries, claims that

Where social capital has been measured to date, it has often been done so using 'questionable measures', often designed for other purposes, and without sufficient regard to the theoretical underpinnings of the concept to ensure validity or reliability

One obvious reason for this is that research into both community wellbeing and social capital has to a significant extent relied upon data and data collection instruments that were designed for research on other topics. Another reason is that, as the ABS states in *Measuring Australia's Progress* (2004) 'theoretical frameworks often require value-judgements about what overall progress means. National statistical agencies are usually uncomfortable making such statements.' Anne Spellerberg, of the Social Policy section of Statistics New Zealand, has summarised the approach of that organisation to the measurement of social capital (Spellerberg 2001) and, after surveying discussions of the topic by Spellerberg and the ABS, we might conclude that neither Statistics New Zealand nor the ABS intend to develop data collection instruments specifically designed to fit with a theoretically sophisticated definition of social capital.

Importantly, the assumptions that social capital is always a positive thing from which every person within a community benefits equally has been challenged, as have the ideas that individuals from every community group can equally access social networks and that Australian communities readily accept diversity. A sociological focus upon social capital and wellbeing, such as features in the work

of J. S. Coleman (1988; 1990) in the United States, includes an assessment of the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organisations.

A number of theorists argue that researchers should pay attention to both the positive and negative aspects of social capital. Putnam (2000:77) points out that introspective, authoritarian and exclusionary communities such as fundamentalist religious groups or the Klu Klux Klan (Putnam, 2000: 22, 340) are characterised by high levels of social capital. High status groups tend to increase their social capital at the expense of low status groups. Low status groups can generate high levels of social capital in opposing government policies or the dominant ideas within social institutions such as education and medical systems. High levels of trust can lead to the submerging of social problems, such as occurred in the context of the 'stolen generation' or the 'children overboard' affair. Cohesion and harmony sometimes needs to be disturbed for a society to progress.

These issues imply that adequate measures of social capital and wellbeing are complex. They need to include such measures as degrees of bonding within communities, bridging between communities, tolerance, stigmatisation and marginalisation. Since Robert Putnam argues that the decline in social capital in the USA is attributable to television watching replacing interactions with family and friends, we might also do well to examine leisure activities in measuring social capital and wellbeing for Australian-Arabic communities.

3.2.1 Bridging and bonding social capital

Social capital can have positive and negative consequences (Jochum, NCVO 2003: 10-11), although these will be influenced by environmental factors and distinguishing cause from effect is difficult and problematic. Beneficial consequences of high degrees of social capital have been found to include higher levels of economic growth, higher rates of labour market and political participation, better educational achievement, lower crime rates, better public health outcomes and higher levels of life satisfaction. Negative consequences have been found to include a restriction of individual freedoms (for example through pressures to conform and reducing privacy) and an increase in social exclusion (where individuals are barred from joining a community).

In the context of defining positive and negative aspects of social capital, it is useful to consider the differentiation into 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital. Neither is wholly positive or negative for the individual, the community to which they belong or the broader society. Bonding social capital is characterised by strong bonds among family members or among members of an ethnic group. Typically, bonding social capital is exclusive and tends towards the homogenisation and unity of the group. Bridging social capital is characterised by weaker and more diverse bonds than bonding social capital. Typically, bridging social capital tends towards heterogeneity. It is connected with diversity and includes overlapping networks. 'Bridging social capital relates to contacts between people of different backgrounds in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, education, socio-economic status and locality' (Jochum, NCVO 2003: 10).

Bonding capital adds to personalised trust and reciprocity, notably between family and friends, while bridging social capital promotes generalised trust and reciprocity. Rosalyn Harper (2002), of the UK Office for National Statistics, has identified bonding social capital as important to health outcomes in childhood and old age but may lead to exclusion while bridging social capital is seen as more significant for employment. According to the Jochum, NCVO (2003: 11):

While bonding social capital helps people to 'get by' in life and manage risks, crosscutting ties in the form of bridging or linking social capital are identified as being essential for 'getting ahead' and adapting to change. All three ... forms are considered necessary and finding the right balance between the three is critical to community and individual development.

Alternatively, high levels of bonding social capital can perpetuate ethnic, religious and other social divides and/or the pursuit of narrow sectional interests:

A high stock of bonding social capital can undermine the development of crosscutting ties, which enable 'public good' outcomes that benefit the community at large (Jochum, NCVO 2003: 11) .

Harper, following the work of the Michael Woolcock and the World Bank in social capital assessment, distinguishes bonding and bridging social capital from linking social capital, which she defines as connections where there are differing levels of power. This distinction, however, may be difficult to sustain both theoretically and empirically as there are recognisable and clearly identifiable hierarchies and

power relations within families, ethnic groups, business relationships, etc.. These hierarchies are undoubtedly significant for any measurement of social capital. It can also be argued that positive health outcomes depend substantially upon bridging social capital, particularly in the context of access to broader community resources by marginalised groups, and that bonding social capital can play a significant role in employment. Zhou and Bankston's (1994) study of second generation American-Vietnamese youth, for example, showed that high levels of involvement with the ethnic community were correlated with high levels of academic achievement, which suggested subsequent success in employment. The outcomes associated with bonding and bridging social capital may vary considerably from group to group and site to site.

3.2.2 Internationally used measures of social capital

There are substantial similarities between measures of social capital and wellbeing used in a number of countries, particularly since many countries take their lead from the work of the World Bank. However, local needs dictate that it is rarely that particular measures are agreed upon by most countries. The United Nations' Human Development Index (HDI), for example, in an attempt to draw comparable data from all nations, employs very few measures. Measures of social capital or wellbeing in particular countries are generally tailored to specific needs and existing data collections and have sometimes, as with the UK Office for National Statistics 'Community Well-Being Domain Workplan', been based upon a reconsideration of the concepts involved.

The World Bank's extensive Social Capital Assessment Tool (SOCAT) includes interview guides relating to community or organisational profiling and asset mapping and community and household questionnaires. Community profiling is undertaken through group interviews that establish consensus definitions of the community, defining 'catchment areas' and serving as a reference for household surveys. The major focus is upon describing community assets and services but other aspects of community activity are also covered.

Community profile and asset mapping interviews attempt to find agreed definitions of community, to identify community assets, collective action undertaken by the community and to measure community solidarity. Particular attention is paid to community governance and methods of community decision-

making. The process includes listing community institutions and defining relationships between organisations and the community, institutional networks and organisational density. The Community Questionnaire identifies general community characteristics and supports including available services, labour migration, education, health and environmental issues (including agriculture in rural areas). The Household Questionnaire identifies housing characteristics and constructs a genogram. It further identifies social capital, delineated into 'structural' social capital, which includes organisational density and characteristics, networks and mutual support organisations, exclusion and previous collective action, and 'cognitive' social capital, which includes solidarity, trust and cooperation and conflict resolution.

The World Bank has also produced an Integrated Questionnaire for the Measurement of Social Capital (SOCAP IQ or INQUESOC), which is intended for integration into the Living Standards Measurement Surveys (LSMS) system and provides a slightly condensed version of the questionnaires included in SOCAT. The instrument includes measures of groups and networks, trust and solidarity, collective action and cooperation, information and communication, social cohesion and inclusion, empowerment and political action

The UK Office for National Statistics (ONS) has published a Community Well-Being Domain Workplan 2003-2006 that outlines national data collection for the Community Well-Being Domain of Neighbourhood Statistics (NeSS). The main areas of data collection are in community stability, community participation and social networks/support. The data to be investigated is intended to contribute to the ONS project on social capital and the data collection/project assessment is further delineated into:

1. Voter turnout at elections, which is seen as a measure of social engagement.
2. Administrative data sources such as data collected by youth groups, housing action boards, residents associations, church groups, parent-teacher associations, voluntary organisation PEAKs, hour banks, self-help groups, blood donation bodies, schools (truancy rates), sporting, leisure and cultural organisations.

3. Best Value Performance Indicators, which are measures of user satisfaction by Local Authorities.
4. Development of standardised indicators of community well-being/social capital for use at the national and local level.
5. Modelling of social capital indicators to identify key national data to plug gaps in the information collected by use of the standardised indicators.
6. Development of measures of caring responsibilities between family members, neighbours and friends.
7. Population turnover, as an indicator of community instability.
8. Quality of life indicators, as developed by the UK Audit Commission, such as residents' views of their social environment.

The ONS argues that most indicators of community well-being essentially, measure different aspects of social capital. However, most researchers would probably see wellbeing as a much broader concept and social capital as more closely defined. Current data provided by the ONS includes information on: access to services; community well-being and social environment; crime and safety; economic deprivation; education, skills and training; health and care; housing; indices of deprivation and classifications; people and society; physical environment; and work deprivation. The category of community well-being/social environment includes information on communal establishments², health and provision of unpaid care, migration, and religion.

3.3 Social capital measures used in this study

The measures of social and civic participation that we have employed follow internationally used measures of social capital and wellbeing and have been adapted and supplemented with material designed for the specific environments of Australian-Arabic communities in Victoria.

We have sought information from Australian-Arabic communities relating to several of the areas of data collection identified in SOCAT and by the ONS. We have focussed upon measures relating to respondents' participation within their

own communities and within the broader Australian community, and aspects of inter-community relations. These can be grouped under the two broad categories:

- measures of social and civic participation – social and civic participation; crime and safety; trust; and
- measures of control and self-efficacy – health; language proficiency; education; employment and wealth; meaning and value of life.

3.3.1 Measures of social and civic participation

3.3.1.1 Social and civic participation

For our study, several of the community-based social capital measures employed in Furstenberg and Hughes' (1995) and Narayan and Pritchett's (1999) studies were relevant. We asked respondents to identify patterns of interaction with family and friends, and with people outside their ethnic community. We asked respondents to describe their patterns of social participation, to identify community organisations such as a neighbourhood house or a sporting group to which they belong and the nature of their involvement. We also asked respondents to identify factors that might deter them from becoming a member of such an organisation and, to discover whether there have been changes in the social and civic participation of the group since the so-called 'war on terror', whether the likelihood of them joining an organisation that had non-Arabic members has increased or lessened in recent years.

As additional measures of civic participation and commitment, we asked respondents whether they have access to the information that they need concerning local community services, whether they feel that Australia is a country in which average citizens can influence governments, whether they have ever attempted to engage their local council or Member of Parliament in addressing community problems and how they would go about addressing issues that might arise in their community.

We have also asked respondents to describe what effect they believe, if any, that events such as such as the war in Iraq, the so-called 'war on terror', or the treatment of asylum seekers have had on perceptions of their community.

3.3.1.2 Crime and safety

Issues of crime and safety are a significant element of wellbeing for individuals and communities. Victims of crime may suffer physical, psychological, emotional or financial damage while fear of crime can restrict involvement in social activities to the extent that some members of the community seldom leave their homes. As well as the effect of crime upon Australian-Arabic communities, an assessment of comparative wellbeing should include the relative criminalisation of members of those communities.

There are two main sources of crime data in Victoria: police statistics and (ABS) victim surveys. The latter are generally considered to be more valid but the former are often considered more reliable. The methods used to construct Victorian crime data differ from those used in some other States, therefore caution must be employed when making comparisons with other data (see Appendix B). A comparative analysis of crime rates for Australian ethnic groups has recently been undertaken by Satyanshu Mukherjee (1999) in a report prepared for the then Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. Mukherjee utilised crime statistics from Victoria for the five year period 1993-94 to 1997-98 and National Prison Census data for the years 1982 to 1998. Some of the data used is directly applicable to the Arab community. Mukherjee (1999: iv) states:

ethnicity and crime was not only a contemporary issue in Australia but also in most (of) Western Europe and North America. Politicisation of the issue, wide media coverage of 'crimes' by migrants, violence against migrant groups, and hate crimes has caused heightened concerns in many parts of the World.

Official crime statistics, and sometimes data on arrests and imprisonment, generally refer to crimes by residents and non-residents, sometimes delineating groups by country or region of birth. Reference is also made to illegal migrants. They generally do not delineate ethnicity in crimes against persons. For that type of information, we need to draw upon victims of crime surveys. General sources of victimisation rates include the *ABS Measures of Australia's Progress (2004)* and *General Social Survey (2002)*, although neither delineates data to the level of specific migrant communities. We have also asked respondents to identify how

safe they felt in their neighbourhood and whether their perception of personal safety had changed since the recent international crisis.

3.3.1.3 Trust

The concept of trust has been the subject of much academic discussion and seems to have been dominated by economists, whose interpretations of the term are somewhat distant from what practitioners in other disciplines such as sociology might understand it to mean.

To take a not untypical example, Francesco Galassi's (2002) monograph on measuring social capital in Italy begins promisingly with a discussion of differences between the economic success of farmers in the north and south of Italy during the early part of the twentieth century. This relative success has been attributed to varying levels of social capital between the north and the south, and specifically to a relative lack of trust in their neighbours exhibited by rural southern Italians. As Galassi's narrative progresses, however, he introduces more and more complex mathematical equations to the discussion in an attempt to quantitatively define the differences between the two groups. To the reader seeking information on the effects of social capital, the purpose of these calculations is unclear and they appear to shed no more light on the problem than could have been obtained from employing more straightforward multivariate analyses. Ultimately, Galassi's monograph, like other writings in the area such as Durlauf's (2002) analysis of the empirics of social capital, suffers from the traditional problem of economist analyses identified by Granovetter (1985) in a discussion of economic action and social structure. Economist writings on the subject of social capital tend to employ an undersocialised conception of man (sic): they attempt to reduce a complex web of human behaviour to a few mathematical equations.

Other economists have placed an absolute rather than relative interpretation on social capital, claiming that some people possess social capital while some people do not while still others have confined their measurement of the concept to experimental game theory, constructing highly artificial situations in an attempt to identify individual characteristics that are indicators of 'trust'. To complicate matters further, in an article on measuring "trust" Glaeser *et al* (2000), employing both experimental and survey methodology, found that standard attitudinal survey questions were better at predicting 'trustworthiness' than at predicting

'trust'. It is not that such work does not provide some useful insights, only that its focus tends to be rather narrow. Glaeser *et al* also found that high levels of trust often depended upon participants having similar social characteristics, particularly those of race or nationality, and that high status individuals were more likely to be seen as trustworthy.

But 'trust' has also pre-occupied a large and diverse number of social scientists including sociologists and political economists (Fukuyama 1995; Seligman 1992; Giddens 1990; Putnam 1993; Offe, 1999). Offe (1999:43), for example, has criticised what he calls the 'ideal of an intelligently regulated market', which overemphasises the economic foundations of trust. Providing a sociological explanation of trust, defined broadly as the 'belief that *others*, through their action or inaction, will contribute to my/our wellbeing and refrain from inflicting damage upon me/us' (Offe, 1999: 47), he draws an essential link between trusting and risk-taking, based on the ultimately uncertain nature of this belief in others. Offe notes that people continue to trust in others despite the inherent risk of people betraying this trust because 'trusting "too few" people in "too" narrowly defined respects is irrational because it leads the agent to opt for non-cooperation out of distrust where benefits could actually be derived from a more generous belief in the trustworthiness of others' (1999:48). Offe's point is that trust is something more than investment calculus. Rather, it is something built up over time through familiar, vertical and horizontal social interactions, and also through more distant categorical (trust in groups and communities) and institutional mechanisms (trust in institutions).

In this study we asked respondents to identify the people in whom they placed the most trust, why they trusted those people, whether they placed trust in people who were not members of their ethnic community, and, in particular, whether they placed trust in officials such as their local police. We also asked our respondents to identify to whom they would turn to for help and why and whether they saw people who were not members of their ethnic group as being able to provide assistance in resolving problems within their community.

3.3.2 Measures of control and self-efficacy

Measures of control and self-efficacy cover a wide range of variables. Those we have focussed upon in this project include health, language proficiency, education, employment, wealth and the meaning and value of life.

3.3.2.1 Health

Robert Putnam has emphasised the connection between social isolation and poor health (he claims that public health research shows that people who are socially isolated are as much at risk of death as people who smoke)³. We have asked respondents whether they perceive themselves as having the capacity to control their own health, particularly in relation to personal stress levels. We have asked respondents to describe the level of control that they have over their life and to what extent they perceive their life as being controlled by others.

3.3.2.2 Language proficiency

For groups such as Australian-Arabic communities, language proficiency is an important factor impacting upon social participation, control and self-efficacy. To assess language proficiency, we have made use of data from the Census, the general literacy survey conducted by the ABS in 1996, previous research into language use by migrant communities and statements from respondents.

3.3.2.3 Education, employment and wealth

Typically, the contribution of social capital to wealth generation is the major focus of economists' work in the area. For example, in a working paper which addresses the issue of a single underlying explanation of social capital, Bjørnskov and Svendsen (2003) state:

...the presence of social capital determines how easily transaction costs are lowered because informal self-enforcement of contracts is now possible without third party enforcement Social capital becomes 'the glue that holds societies together, lubricating voluntary collective action, increasing income and accordingly serving as an additional production factor.

Many economists seem to have taken their lead from the World Bank's Social Capital Initiative, the focus of which is upon the relationship between social capital and economic prosperity. The World Bank argues that 'for operational

purposes social capital refers to the norms and networks that enable collective action'. The World Bank's Social Capital Assessment Tool is designed to collect quantitative and qualitative social capital data at the household, community and organisational levels. The World Bank claims that, at the household level, SOCAT delineates structural and cognitive social capital and links that information to wealth.

In the measurement of wealth, information about incomes is relatively easy to obtain. The focus of discussions concerning relative wealth within the community tends to be upon incomes. The ABS measures incomes via the census and through regular surveys. Individual incomes are collated into household and family incomes. As many low-income earners belong to families or households in which there are also high-income earners, family or household incomes are better indicators of wealth than is individual income. Taken together, household incomes, median income data, socio-economic indices and the number of high-income earners within particular localities provide a view of comparative wealth across the state. However, as with most social indicators, these measures are only a guide to wealth distribution. They do not, for example, necessarily reflect the value of accumulated capital to particular families or individuals.

We have made an assessment of the relationship between education, employment and wealth for Australian-Arabic communities based upon respondent interviews, ABS and other data.

3.3.2.4 The meaning and value of life

Finally, we asked respondents to address issues relating to the meaning and value of their lives by asking them whether they perceive themselves as valued within their own community, whether they perceive Australian-Arabic communities as valued by the wider Australian society, whether religion plays an important part in their lives and whether religion has become more or less important to them since the recent international crisis.

Section 4 Australian-Arabic communities

4.1 Defining Australian-Arabic communities

The ABS measures Australia's population in several ways and the measure acknowledged as most reliable is the Census. The Census captures data under a number of variables related to ethnicity⁴, some of the more commonly used being language spoken, country of birth, religious affiliation and ancestry. The Census is conducted every five years and the latest was conducted in 2001.

Within the Australian Standard Classification of Cultural and Ethnic Groups (ASCCEG),⁵ ethnic groups are classified according to both geographic origin and social and cultural characteristics. The ABS classifications are intended to cover ancestry and ethnic or cultural identity. In ABS data, Arabic groups are included within the broad category of North African and Middle Eastern peoples. Around half of Australians born in North Africa or the Middle East use Arabic as a first or second language. Under the category "Arab", the ABS includes the sub-categories of: Algerian; Egyptian; Iraqi; Jordanian; Kuwaiti; Lebanese; Libyan; Moroccan; Palestinian; Saudi Arabian; Syrian; Tunisian; Arab (not further defined); and Arab not elsewhere classified, which includes Baggara, Bedouin and Yemeni peoples.

When analysing Census or other data, it is important to recognise that the North African and Middle Eastern broad category also includes peoples classified by the ABS as non-Arab. The largest non-Arab groups included are Turkish and Jewish but there are several smaller groups that people of non-Arabic background may or may not recognise as differing from people of an Arabic background, for example, Assyrian/Chaldean, Berber, Coptic, Iranian or Kurdish peoples. Many people from a non-Arabic background might also assume that all Arabs are Muslims.

Despite a great deal of diversity in terms of country of origin, religion and socio-economic status (see below), Arabic communities are united by a common language (Modern Standard Arabic) and a common culture focussed upon the family (Mansouri and Makhoul, 2004: 58).

4.2 Arabic-speaking people

At the 2001 Census, there were close to 210,000 people Australia-wide who claimed to normally speak Arabic (including Lebanese) at home. Around 47,000 (23%) of these lived in Victoria. The Arabic community is diverse and while many Arabic-speaking people are part of long-standing Australian communities, about 60% of those normally speaking Arabic at home are first-generation migrants. Nevertheless, in Victoria and Australia-wide, the largest birthplace grouping for people normally speaking Arabic at home is Australia. Of first generation migrants, the largest group is people born in Lebanon. Together, people born in Lebanon and people born in Australia make up nearly three-quarters of the Arabic-speaking group in Australia and a slightly lower proportion in Victoria. The next largest Arabic-speaking groups are people born in Egypt, people born in Iraq and people born in Syria.

In 2001, Victoria's Arabic-speaking community was fairly similar in demographic make-up to that for Australia as a whole (see Table 4.1). The proportion of Arabic-speaking persons in Victoria born in Lebanon was a little lower than the national average while the proportion born in Egypt was higher. Australia-wide, there were substantial populations of Arabic-speakers born in Sudan, Jordan, Kuwait, and Gaza Strip and West Bank but the populations of these groups living in Victoria were not large. While the group born in Eritrea was also quite small, two thirds of the group lived in Victoria.

Table 4.1 Birthplace of Arabic-Speaking Persons – Victoria, Australia (2001)

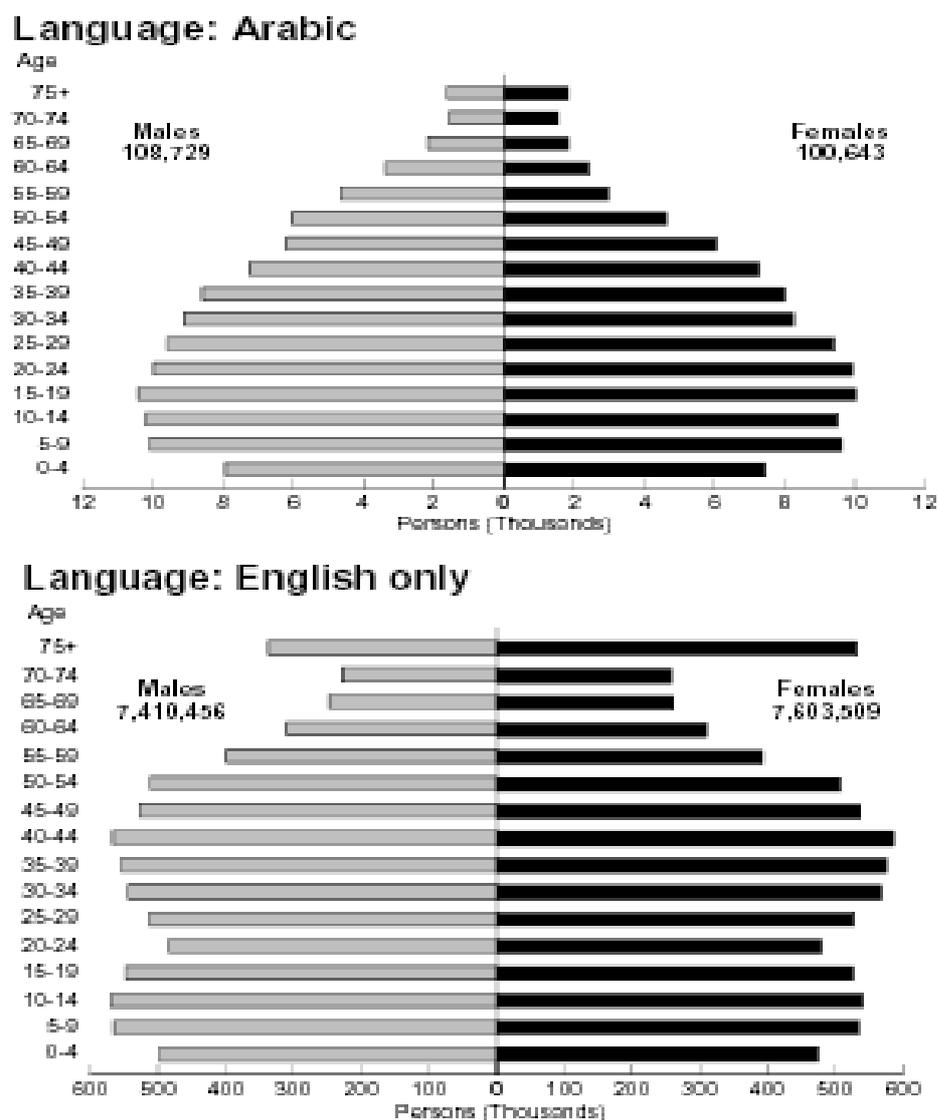
Birthplace	Persons		% of Language Group	
	Vic	Aust	Vic	Aust
Australia	18,745	87,276	39.7	41.7
Lebanon	12,799	64,698	27.1	30.9
Egypt	5,083	15,671	10.7	7.5
Iraq	2,795	10,824	5.9	5.2
Syria	1,333	4,762	2.8	2.3
Sudan	627	3,625	1.3	1.7
Jordan	336	2,719	0.7	1.3
Kuwait	463	1,809	1.0	0.9

Birthplace	Persons		% of Language Group	
	Vic	Aust	Vic	Aust
Gaza Strip & West Bank	450	1,793	1.0	0.9
Eritrea	627	924	1.3	0.4
Other	3,950	15,275	8.4	7.3
Total	47,188	209,376	100.0	100.0

Sources: DIMIA (2003a: 27); Mansouri and Makhoul (2004: 60)

Australia's Arabic-speaking community has increased rapidly in size in recent years. At the 2001 Census, the Arabic-speaking group was the fourth-largest of the non-English-speaking groups, had increased in size by 18% since 1996 and was four times the size of the group in 1976. The number of people normally speaking Arabic at home in Victoria stood at around 31,450 in 1991. The group increased in size by around 4,250 people between 1991 and 1996 to more than 35,700. This constituted an increase of 13.5% and made the group the sixth largest of the non-English speaking groups in Victoria. The growth in the group between 1996 and 2001 was even greater. By 2001, the number of Victorians normally speaking Arabic at home had risen by almost one third over the 1996 figure. This constituted an increase in group size of fifty percent in only a decade. The Arabic-speaking group had a substantially greater growth rate in Victoria than in Australia as a whole. The number of Arabic-speaking migrants continues to grow. Around 1,800 Arabic-speaking migrants settled in Victoria in 2003 of whom around half were born in Sudan and around one quarter were born in Iraq (Mansouri and Makhoul 2004: 61).

Figure 4.1 Age Group Pyramids: Arabic Speakers; English Speakers – Australia (2001).



Source: DIMIA (2003a: 35)

We should also recognise that due to the substantial differences in the age profiles of the Arabic-speaking community and the English-speaking community (see Figure 4.1), the social needs of the two groups may differ considerably in some respects. As nearly 60% of people normally speaking Arabic at home are first generation migrants, the group has a far smaller proportion of members in the older age categories than does the English-speaking community. Almost 90% of Australians claiming Middle Eastern ancestry are aged under 35 years.

4.2.1 Birthplace

At the 2001 census, the population of Victoria included 14,160 persons who were born in Lebanon, 11,590 persons who were born in Egypt and 6,110 persons who were born in Iraq. Not all of these people normally speak Arabic at home but the proportions of those doing so are similar for Victoria and Australia as a whole. Demographic and historical profiles for some of the major birthplace groups within the Arabic-speaking community are available from the DIMIA website.

Table 4.2 Growth in Selected Birthplace Groups – Victoria (1996, 2001)

Birthplace	Persons 2001	Normally speaking Arabic at home	Persons 1996	Growth 1996-2001
Lebanon	14,160	90.4%	14,045	+ 0.8%
Egypt	11,590	43.9%	11,945	- 3.0%
Iraq	6,110	45.7%	3,474	+ 75.9%
Sudan	987	63.5%	344	+ 186.9%
Kuwait	616	75.2%	452	+ 36.3%
Eritrea	996	63.0%	747	+ 33.3%

Source: Census Data, 2001

There were substantial increases between 1996 and 2001 in the populations of some smaller birthplace groups that are classified as newly emerging communities (see figure 4.2). These include communities with significant numbers of Arabic-speaking people such as people born in Sudan, which almost tripled in size, people born in Iraq, which grew by 75%, and people born in Kuwait or Eritrea, each of which grew by around one third. However, there was very little growth in the group born in Lebanon and the number of Victorians born in Egypt fell slightly. With the exception of people born in Iraq, most of the groups showing rapid growth are still relatively small. However, continued growth such as that shown in the last Census period will eventually lead to significant change in the national balance of the Australian-Arabic community.

4.2.2 Ancestry

The ABS 2001 Census Dictionary describes the "Ancestry" variable, which is coded using the ASCCEG. Ancestry refers to the birthplace of one or both of a

respondent's parents. Ancestry is recognised as a broader measure than either birthplace or language normally spoken at home.

At the 2001 Census, respondents were able to select one or more ancestry categories, although the ABS coded only the respondent's first two selections for data analysis. Census data shows the number of people having a particular ancestry but can also be analysed by dual ancestry response, for example, the number of people having both Australian and Arabic ancestry. Consequently, the sum of census ancestry data may be greater than the number of Census respondents. However, Census ancestry summaries are still likely to undercount the number of people with a particular ancestry. In the USA, for example, it was estimated that the 2000 Census measure of ancestry captured only about one-third of people of Arabic origin. The undercount was attributed to high rates of intermarriage for third and fourth generation people of Arabic origin, indicating a high degree of assimilation by the Arabic community, and a mistrust or misunderstanding of intrusive measures such as government surveys by recently arrived migrants. The Australian Ancestry variable only includes two generations and probably undercounts to a greater extent than the US measure.

At the 2001 Census, around 145,750 people born in Australia claimed Arabic or Middle Eastern ancestry. At more than 89,000, by far the largest category within this group was people with one or both parents born in Lebanon. The total number of people claiming Lebanese Ancestry was more than 162,000 (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Birthplace of Persons Claiming Lebanese Ancestry – Australia (2001)

Birthplace	Persons	% of group
Australia	89,021	54.9
Lebanon	63,410	39.1
Egypt	624	0.4
Syria	435	0.3
New Zealand	368	0.2
Kuwait	253	0.2
South Africa	178	0.1
USA	164	0.1
Ghana	146	0.1

Birthplace	Persons	% of group
Brazil	139	0.1
Other	7,500	4.6
Total	162,238	100.0

Source: DIMIA (2003a: 64)

The Census recorded around 71,000 Australians who were born in Lebanon and around 65,000 persons normally speaking Arabic at home who were born in Lebanon. Around 90% of Australians born in Lebanon and nearly ten thousand Australians born in countries other than Australia or Lebanon claimed Lebanese ancestry. This demonstrates the diversity of Arabic communities. Second generation Lebanese account for around 89,000 of the group measured by the ancestry variable. Third or fourth generation Lebanese are not measured.

The next largest Arabic ancestry grouping for people born in Australia was people with one or both parents born in Egypt (around 10,300 people).

4.2.3 Religion

Of the more than 281,500 Australians who claimed to be Muslim at the 2001 Census, around one third (92,742 people) lived in Victoria. Comparing the 'religion' measure to the 'language spoken at home' measure shows that there is not necessarily a high degree of congruence between the various measures of ethnicity employed by the Census. The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) has collated information from the 2001 Census showing the most common birthplaces of persons from selected religious groups. This data shows, for example, that, Australia-wide, more than 36% of people within the Islamic group were born in Australia, just over 10% in Lebanon and around 3% in Iraq (see Table 4.4). The respective figures for Arabic-speaking persons born in those countries and resident in Australia were 42% born in Australia, 31% in Lebanon and 5% in Iraq.

Table 4.4 Birthplace of Islamic Persons – Australia (2001)

Birthplace	Persons	% of Religion
Australia	102,566	36.4
Lebanon	29,321	10.4
Turkey	23,479	8.3
Afghanistan	9,923	3.5
Bosnia & Herzegovina	9,892	3.5
Pakistan	9,238	3.3
Indonesia	8,087	2.9
Iraq	7,749	2.8
Bangladesh	7,596	2.7
Iran	6,353	2.3
Other	67,372	23.9
Total	281,576	100.0

Source: DIMIA (2003a: 50)

The Islamic group includes significant numbers of people who were born in Turkey, Afghanistan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Iran while the numbers of people born in those countries who are Arabic-speaking are too few to constitute separate categories in the generally released Census data. Similarly, the Arabic-speaking group includes significant numbers of people who were born in Egypt, Syria, Sudan, Jordan, Kuwait, Gaza Strip & West Bank and Eritrea. None of these birthplace groups are large enough to constitute separate categories in the generally released data on the Islamic religion group.

The Australian-Islamic community has increased rapidly in size in recent years. In Victoria, the group increased in size by more than one third between 1996 and 2001. Australia-wide, the number of adherents to Islam almost doubled over the last two Census periods, increasing from 146,650 in 1991 to around 281,500 in 2001. In terms of size, Islam is now in the top ten religious groupings in Australia⁶. Despite the size of the group, the ABS Census religion definitions do not distinguish between the different forms of Islam⁷. On the other hand, the ABS Census religion definitions delineate more than eighty varieties of Christianity, the great majority of which have very few adherents in Australia. The lack of further classification of Muslims

within Census data is an issue which it is now perhaps appropriate for the ABS to address.

The 2001 Census data shows that while almost 65,000 people normally speaking Arabic at home were born in Lebanon, less than half this number claimed affiliation with Islam. Post-1975 migrants from Lebanon were amongst the earliest Australian immigrant groups to include substantial numbers of Muslims and the proportion of people currently claiming affiliation to Islam in Lebanon is close to 70%. In fact, Australians of Arabic background are less likely, and for some nationalities much less likely, to claim affiliation to Islam than residents of their countries of origin.⁸ Only 9% of Australians born in Egypt are Muslim compared to 94% of residents of Egypt⁹ while only around one third of Australians born in Iraq or Syria are Muslim compared to more than 90% of residents of those countries. Of the 1,800 Arabic-speaking migrants who settled in Victoria in 2003, around one quarter were Muslim and around three-quarters were Christian (Mansouri and Makhoul 2004: 62).

For each of the major Australian-Arabic birthplace groups, the 2001 Census showed a stronger commitment to religion than for the general Australian population with far fewer members of each group indicating that they had no religious affiliation. This may be significant in the maintenance of a substantial degree of social distance between some Australian-Arabic groups and the wider community since Martin (1972) found that groups with a strong religious orientation were not so well assimilated as those with a more secular orientation. Religions constitute networks of association and Martin's findings support the suggestion that religious affiliations maintain particular sets of ideologies or self-concepts.

4.3 Australia's Arabic communities

4.3.1 The Lebanese

The Lebanese community is the largest of Australia's Arabic communities and is relatively diverse, including Muslims, Christians, people from urban and rural backgrounds, newer arrivals, long standing migrants and several generations. Immigrants from Lebanon began arriving in small numbers during the nineteenth century but the flow increased substantially during Australia's post-World War II industrial boom and again following the 1975 civil war in Lebanon. Early arrivals

were classified by Australian authorities as 'Turks' or 'Syrians'. 'Lebanese' was not a commonly employed classification until Lebanon gained independence in 1943. The DIMIA Community Information Summary reports that the combined Lebanon-born and Syria-born communities in Australia numbered 1,886 people in 1947. Lebanese immigrants to Australia numbered around 400 per year from 1947 to 1961 and around 800 per year up to 1966. Migration to Australia increased to around 3,000 per year following the Arab-Israeli War of 1967 but declined to around 2,200 per year between 1971 and 1976. The total Lebanese-born population of Australia tripled in the decade to 1976 when it reached around 33,500 people. It has doubled in size since then. At the 2001 Census, the group comprised 71,310 people. Three-quarters of these live in New South Wales and one fifth (14,160 people) in Victoria.

At the 2001 Census, most Lebanon-born Australians claimed Lebanese ancestry (87%) and a small proportion (2%) claimed Armenian ancestry. Around 41% were Muslim and around 38% Catholic. Lebanon-born Australians have a very high rate of Australian citizenship (97%) compared to the average for first-generation migrants (75%).

The Australian-Lebanese community is, on average, relatively old, with a median age of 42 years compared to 35.6 years for the general Australian population, but younger than the remainder of Australia's first-generation migrants (median age 46 years). The group contains slightly more males than females and has a relatively high fertility rate.

The community is educationally diverse but is generally much less well educated than the Australian average. Only 28% held an educational or occupational qualification compared to 46% of the broader Australian community. The proportion holding higher qualifications (9%) was around half the Australian average. At the 2001 Census, around 94% of the Australian Lebanon-born community indicated that they normally spoke a language other than English at home. Around 91% spoke Arabic and 1.4% spoke Armenian. Of those who did not normally speak English at home, three quarters indicated that they spoke English well or very well. The OMRG (1997) report¹⁰ stated that elderly women were the most likely members of Australia's Lebanese community to be poorly educated and illiterate. The Australian Lebanon-born labour force participation rate (45%)

was significantly below the Australian average (63%) and the unemployment rate of 14.5%, as measured by the Census, was double the Australian average. Of those who were in paid employment, 51% were employed in a skilled occupation, which was just below the Australian average, and 22% were employed in 'unskilled' work, which was a little above the Australian average.

4.3.2 The Egyptians

The Egyptian community is one of Australia's longest established non-English-speaking groups. Around 100 Egyptians were recorded in the 1901 Census. Their numbers increased slowly until after World War II. There were around 800 Egypt-born residents of Australia in 1947 and ten times that many by 1954. The DIMIA Community Information Summary reports that many of the Egyptians who migrated to Australia during the 1950s and 1960s were Coptic Christians displaced by the social upheavals of Egyptian independence in 1953 and the Arab-Israeli War of 1967. A substantial proportion of post-1953 migrants from Egypt have been relatively wealthy, urbanised, skilled professionals. Australia's Egypt-born population stood at around 28,000 in 1971 and 33,370 in 2001. About half of the group live in New South Wales and around one third in Victoria.

The Egyptian community is quite diverse. At the 2001 Census, the most common ancestries for Egypt-born Australians were Egyptian (40%), Greek (16%) and Italian (6%). Most Australian-Egyptians were Orthodox Christians, with 29% claiming affiliation with the Coptic Orthodox Church, 18% Greek Orthodox and around 26% Catholic. Only around 9% were Muslim. Egypt-born Australians have a very high rate of Australian citizenship (96%).

The Australian-Egyptian community is on average, relatively old, with a median age (53.3 years) for first generation migrants significantly above that of the average for overseas-born Australians and for the general Australian population. Only around 3% of the group are children and 26% are aged over 65 years. Males slightly outnumber females within the group.

The community is, on average, better educated than the general Australian population. Around 55% held an educational or occupational qualification and almost one third held higher qualifications. At the 2001 Census, 78% of the Australian Egypt-born community indicated that they normally spoke a language other than English at home. Around 47% spoke Arabic and 13% spoke Greek. Of

those who did not normally speak English at home, 88% indicated that they spoke English well or very well. The Australian Egypt-born labour force participation rate (50%) was significantly below the Australian average but the unemployment rate of 7.9%, as measured by the Census, was only slightly above the Australian average. Of those who were in paid employment, 56% were employed in a skilled occupation, which was above the Australian average, and 16% were employed in 'unskilled' work, which was a little below the Australian average.

4.3.3 The Iraqis

Australia's Iraqi community is one of the fastest growing migrant groups. More than one third of Victoria's Iraqi population arrived in Australia between 1991 and 1995 and almost one half after 1995. The Iraqi-born population of Australia is now more than ten times the size of the population in 1976, when the group was first large enough to be delineated in Census data. Around two-thirds of the Australian-Iraqi community live in New South Wales and around one quarter in Victoria. The great majority of Victoria's Iraqi community (92%) live in metropolitan Melbourne. Migration from Iraq to Australia increased substantially during the early 1990s following the Gulf War and subsequent repression of minorities by the Baath regime. Most Iraqi migrants during the early 1990s arrived as refugees. The OMRG (1997) report stated that the majority were males who had fled the Iraqi army and had been placed in camps Saudi Arabia. They were likely to be suffering significant physical and mental health problems due to war trauma and mistreatment in the camps. Following their arrival in Australia, these migrants placed great emphasis upon providing assistance to relatives in Iraq and upon helping those relatives to come to Australia. Many later Iraqi migrants have arrived under family reunion and skilled migrant schemes.

The DIMIA Community Information Summary reports that the Australian-Iraqi community includes Kurds, Assyrians, Armenians, Turks, Turkmens and Jews. At the 2001 Census, most claimed Assyrian (39%) or Iraqi (29%) ancestry, while 40% declared themselves as Christian (predominantly Catholic) and 31% as Muslim. More than half of the Victorian Iraq-born group were Catholic. Iraqi-Australians have a significantly higher rate of Australian citizenship (87.6%) than the average for first-generation migrants.

At the 2001 Census, around 94% of the Australian-Iraqi community indicated that they normally spoke a language other than English at home. Of those who did not normally use English, 44% spoke Arabic, 41% spoke Assyrian (41%) and a small percentage spoke Kurdish. More than 70% indicated that they spoke English well or very well.

The Australian-Iraqi community is relatively young, with a median age (33.4 years) for first generation migrants significantly below that of the average for overseas-born Australians (46 years) and also below that of the general Australian population (35.6 years). Around 14% of the group are children and around 6% are aged over 65 years. Males significantly outnumber females within the group but the proportion of Australian-Iraqis living in couple-with-children households (71%) is far higher than the Australian average (50%).

In terms of education and employment, the group are significantly disadvantaged. At the 2001 Census, Iraqi-Australians were much less likely to hold educational or occupational qualifications (37.5%) than the Australian average, although the number holding higher qualifications was slightly higher than the Australian average. The labour force participation rate for the group (45.8%) was significantly below the Australian average and would probably have been substantially lower had the group not had such a large gender imbalance. As measured by the Census, more than one third of the group were unemployed, compared to an Australian average of 7.4%. Of those who were in paid employment, only 41% were employed in a skilled occupation, compared to an Australian average of 53%, and 31% were employed in 'unskilled' work, compared to an Australian average of 19%.

Section 5 Indicators of Arab Australian social connectedness

This section draws on the social capital concepts and literature reviewed in section three to analyse our research findings on Arabic community wellbeing in Australia. It begins with a brief analysis of the comparative segregation and geographic distribution of the Arab Australian community in Victoria. The section then draws on the concepts of social and civic participation and control and self-efficacy to analyse our respondents' perceptions of Arabic community wellbeing.

5.1 Comparative segregation and isolation

5.1.1 Intermarriage

A commonly used indicator of community integration/segregation is 'intermarriage' (exogamy) or the proportion of a group that marry people outside their ethnic group. Georgias, and Jones (2002) state that intermarriage is related to group size, residential segregation, religious homogeneity and social distance from the dominant cultural group. Kulczycki and Lobo (2002: 202) state that the 'extent to which ethnic intermarriage occurs is widely accepted as an important indicator of assimilation and identification.' In ethnically diverse societies, marriage within the group (endogamy) is recognised as perpetuating social distance while exogamy is seen as implying acculturation through diminishing ethnic identification. Low rates of intermarriage may lead to expansion of the group without the acculturation or dilution of group culture that is often seen as associated with high rates of intermarriage. For smaller groups, the capacity to maintain a high rate of marriage within the group may depend upon the availability of prospective partners through continued migration. Georgias, and Jones (2002) note that Australian assimilationist immigration policies during the post-World War II industrial expansion included a deliberate under-recruitment of females for particular migrant groups.

Rates of intermarriage for Australian migrant groups differ considerably. Groups such as the Italian and Greek communities have historically shown much lower rates of intermarriage (Georgias, and Jones, 2002) than groups such as the

German or Dutch communities who might be seen as culturally much closer to the dominant Australian 'Anglo' culture. For Arab Australian communities, the evidence suggests that intermarriage rates differ considerably for different sections of the community. A report by Siew-Ean Khoo and David Lucas, published by the Australian Centre for Population and Urban Research (cited in Khoo *et al*, 2002), showed that some Australian-Arabic groups had relatively high rates of intermarriage after the second generation. Similar findings have resulted from analyses of 1990 and 2000 US Census data relating to American-Arabic communities. Kulczycki and Lobo (2002) found that more than 80% of people of Arabic ancestry born in the United States had non-Arab spouses. Exogamy amongst members of American-Arabic communities was associated with good English-language skills and high levels of education. Kulczycki and Lobo (2002) also found a high rate of intermarriage amongst American-Arabs of Lebanese ancestry.

However, intermarriage rates for particular birthplace groups within the Australian-Arabic community were much lower than for the community as a whole. Females born in Australia with parents born in Lebanon were (along with females born in Australia with parents born in Turkey) more likely than any other large Australian community group to marry first-generation migrants as, according to research undertaken by Bob Birrell (Khoo *et al*, 2002), they commonly sought partners amongst people who had not yet migrated from their homelands. Birrell also claims that the practice of seeking a partner in the 'homeland' was also evident for Middle-eastern men but was less common than for Middle-eastern women. Georgias, and Jones (2002) note that intermarriage rates for Australian migrant communities have generally been higher for males than for females.

Intermarriage rates for Australians with parents born in Lebanon were amongst the lowest of Australia's larger migrant groups in 1991/92¹¹ (72.5% of brides and 52% of grooms marrying within the group) while at the 2001 Census, around two-thirds of third generation Australian-Lebanese had married outside their group. This is well below the intermarriage rate for the American-Lebanese community and is probably associated with the differing levels of education and English-language skills for the two groups. Kulczycki and Lobo (2002) report that, on average, Arab Americans have higher educational levels than the broader American community and 83% claim to have strong English-language skills. As was stated earlier, the

Australian-Lebanese community is generally much less well educated than the Australian average and 75% of Lebanon-born Australians report strong English-language skills.

5.1.2 Geographic segregation and isolation

Evenness measures of segregation are generally used to compare the spatial distributions of different groups within a metropolitan area. Segregation is smallest when majority and minority populations are evenly distributed. The most widely used measure of evenness is the index of dissimilarity (ID). Conceptually, dissimilarity measures the percentage of a group's population (in this study, people normally speaking a particular language at home) that must change residence for each locality (in this study, each ABS Census Collector District or CCD) to reflect the proportion of that group within the overall area (in this study, Victoria). Index values range from 0.0 (complete integration) to 1.0 (complete segregation) but are normally expressed as a percentage.

A less commonly employed measure is the index of isolation or P* Index, which describes for a specified group the average probability of interacting with another specified population. As with all statistical measures of this type, the likelihood of interaction is based purely upon geographic location and does not take into account interactions that are based on other types of community or networks of association. In this study, the relative isolation of particular language groups has been assessed according to the likelihood that members of that group will interact with people normally speaking English at home within the same locality (CCD). Calculations for the study are based upon persons within all Victorian CCDs at the 2001 Census. Indices have been calculated for each of the twenty largest language groups in Victoria, including people normally speaking English at home, and are shown in the table below. Index values range from 0.0 to 1.0.

Calculations for the index of dissimilarity are not sensitive to the composition of the remaining population of a locality. They differ from the calculations for the P* Index in that they assess the distribution of the subject group relative to the whole population rather than relative to another population sub-group. The indices provide slightly differing pictures of the position of various language groups.

Table 5.1 Indices of Dissimilarity (ID) and Isolation (P*) – Language Normally Spoken at Home – Main Language Groups – Victoria (2001)

Language	Population	% of total population	P* Index	ID
Arabic (inc. Lebanese)	47,217	1.02%	0.5205	63.3%
Chinese	113,033	2.43%	0.5677	56.5%
Croatian	25,540	0.55%	0.5700	61.4%
English	3,474,069	74.79%	0.7986	42.6%
French	11,047	0.24%	0.6712	70.3%
German	20,129	0.43%	0.7543	49.5%
Greek	122,224	2.63%	0.5926	51.8%
Hindi	10,686	0.23%	0.5963	74.5%
Indonesian	9,280	0.20%	0.5829	81.9%
Italian	149,110	3.21%	0.6006	48.6%
Macedonian	32,660	0.70%	0.4717	75.4%
Netherlandic	10,644	0.23%	0.8088	67.7%
Polish	19,676	0.42%	0.6269	59.2%
Russian	13,831	0.30%	0.6379	79.9%
Serbian	16,068	0.35%	0.5640	69.9%
Sinhalese	11,637	0.25%	0.5862	77.1%
Spanish	22,821	0.49%	0.5817	60.4%
Tagalog	18,162	0.39%	0.5776	65.5%
Turkish	28,361	0.61%	0.4679	75.0%
Vietnamese	63,775	1.37%	0.4185	72.4%
All Persons	4,644,947			

N=8642 Census Collection Districts

Source: Census Data 2001

Employing only the index of dissimilarity, residents normally speaking English at home are, unsurprisingly, the least segregated. Nevertheless, 43% of people normally speaking English at home would need to change residence to achieve an even distribution of that group. People normally speaking Indonesian at home are the most segregated: 82% of that group would need to move to another locality for the group to be evenly distributed across all Victorian CCDs. As the number of people normally speaking Indonesian at home is relatively small, a

redistribution of that group to achieve an even spread of the group across the Victorian population would result in only around one person speaking Indonesian per CCD. This is an unlikely and socially undesirable outcome for the group which demonstrates the inadequacy of the index of dissimilarity, as a single measure, for assessing the social position of relatively small community groups, particularly within a relatively heterogeneous population such as that of Victoria.

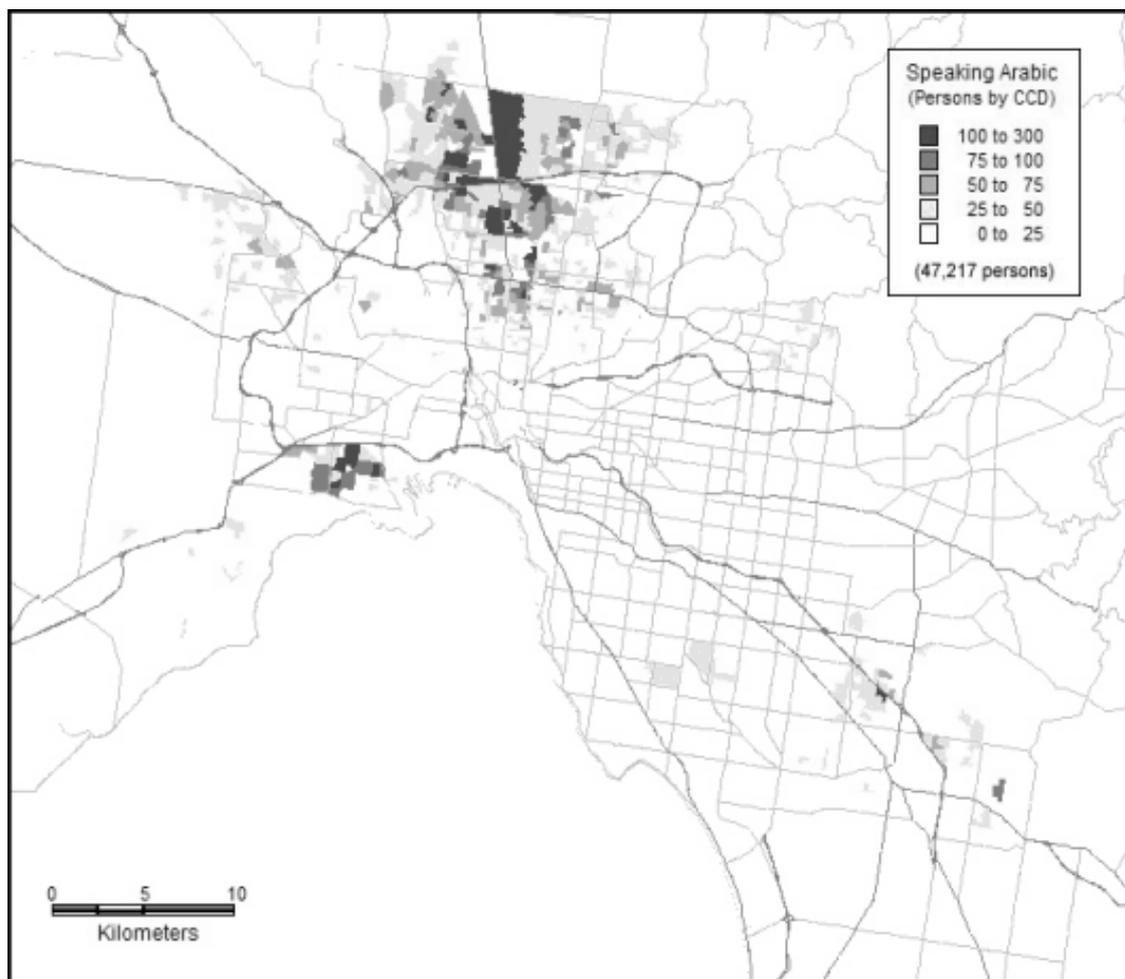
While the number of people normally speaking Arabic at home is substantially larger than the number speaking Indonesian, the group is still not large enough for the index of dissimilarity, as a single measure, to be useful in assessing the level of segregation experienced by the group. Almost two thirds (63%) of the group would need to change location for the group to be evenly distributed geographically and this would result in around five Arabic-speaking people, or one family, per CCD. Again, this is an unlikely and socially undesirable outcome.

A more complex picture emerges when we employ both the ID and P* Index. While, for example, the Vietnamese-speaking population of Victoria is the seventh-most isolated group when employing the index of dissimilarity, on the P* Index the Vietnamese-speaking group is the most segregated from English-speaking residents. This implies that locations where there are substantial numbers of Vietnamese speakers are relatively heterogeneous in including a number of different language groups but are also the locations where there are fewest people normally speaking English at home. Since the number of people normally speaking English at home far outnumber any other group, this does not mean that there are not substantial numbers of English-speaking people within those localities, only that the proportion of the English-speaking group within those localities is significantly lower than for the State as a whole.

After the Vietnamese-speaking group, the groups most segregated from the English-speaking group are those speaking Turkish, Macedonian or Arabic at home. While both the Turkish-speaking and Macedonian-speaking groups rank high on the index of dissimilarity, each requiring around 75% of the group to change residence to achieve even distribution, the Arabic-speaking group is placed around the middle of the range of ID values for language groups in Victoria. This still, however, represents a fairly high level of geographic isolation and a high degree of segregation of the Arabic-speaking group from people normally

speaking English at home. Data from the Census also indicates that the geographic isolation and segregation of the Arabic-speaking group is increasing. While the number of people normally speaking Arabic at home increased by around one third between 1996 and 2001, the number of CCDs with 25 or less Arabic-speaking people increased by less than 7% while the number of CCDs with in excess of 100 Arabic-speaking people more than doubled.

Figure 5.1 Distribution of Arabic-speaking Persons - Melbourne Metro (2001)



The map above shows the concentrations of Arabic (including Lebanese) speaking persons in the Melbourne area as measured by the 2001 Census.¹² The heaviest concentration is in Melbourne's northern suburbs but there are also concentrations in the south eastern suburbs and in the Williamstown area. Seventy percent of Victoria's Iraq-born population (4,260 people), 45% of Lebanon-born

Victorians (6,420 people) and 24% of Egypt-born Victorians (2,740 people) live in the northern metropolitan municipalities of Hume, Moreland, Darebin or Whittlesea. A significant population of people of Arabic background, many of whom have been refugees, also exists in the Shepparton area. Comparison with distributions from the 1996 Census indicates that Arabic-speaking people were becoming more geographically concentrated, especially in the northern suburbs and around Williamstown, prior to the recent international crisis. Unfortunately, we will not have access to comparable data showing subsequent movement or concentration of people until around 12 months after the 2006 Census.

We must emphasise that an analysis of the geographic isolation and segregation of people normally speaking Arabic at home is only an indicator of the position of the Arabic community as a whole. A significant proportion of people of Arabic background, particularly amongst those born in Australia, normally speak English at home and are not included within the 'Arabic' group in the isolation and segregation analysis. Nevertheless, the geographic location of the language group is generally considered a good indicator of the geographic location of the community of which they are a part.

5.2 Social and civic participation

This section analyses our respondents' views in terms of the social capital measures of social and civic participation introduced in Section three.

5.2.1 Participation in Australian-Arabic communities

Our respondents confirmed the importance that Australian-Arabic communities place upon the maintenance of kinship networks and links with close friends – a key measure of bonding social capital. Each of our respondents who was able to, made regular and frequent efforts to maintain family connections and often met or talked with close friends. Personal or telephone contact with relatives or friends typically occurred several times each week. A community advocate described this 'traditional' pattern of interaction as stemming from a sense of duty to family and friends:

'They still [keep] up with their traditions of visiting families and friends; whether it's every weekend for social/general activities such as barbeques and stuff like that, or they do as a way of keeping a sense of duty. There is a sense of

duty in the Arabic community – that if I visit you, you owe me a visit... and sometimes it's because someone is sick and they have to go and visit them or somebody lost someone in their family and they have to offer their condolences, or because of feasts or special occasions' .

Meetings are generally on a family-to-family basis rather than between individuals. While people of Arabic background are willing to socialise without their children when appropriate, this is not the preferred option.

The ABS General Social Survey (2002) showed that more than 95% of Australian adults had contact with family or friends living outside the household in the week prior to the survey, but did not record the frequency or intensity of the contact. While there is no statistical data to support the claim, our anecdotal evidence suggests that members of Australian-Arabic communities may place more importance than much of the broader Australian community on the maintenance of close relationships with family and friends.

Typically, people of Arabic background are members of large kinship groups, although many first generation Arabic-Australians have migrated without that support network. Where respondents were isolated from their immediate family, such as those first generation Arab Australians who migrated without their immediate family, the loss of regular contact was keenly felt. One respondent stated:

I came, along with my two bachelor sons, to Australia about six years ago. I also have a son and a daughter, both of whom married and living in Iraq, who refused to migrate to Australia. So I very much wish to see the reunion of the whole family with the coming of my children to Australia. This separation has affected me greatly. The separation from my children is very hard to cope with. There ought to be a solution with respect to my children so that I could have peace of mind.

While another, a Lebanese man aged 75 years, spoke of his family, the stress and loneliness of separation:

... five years have passed and I have not seen my children; I have nine children... Do I not have the right to see my children? Do I not miss them? How could I possibly journey to Lebanon by bearing the travel expenses? I do not know! This has led to emotional and psychological stress, not mentioning

the various ailments I am beset with. Every week, I visit the doctor who treats my blood pressure, and checks my heart and my emotional wellbeing. My loneliness is also looked at, as I live alone.

Outside of the family, respondents participated in Australian-Arabic communities through membership of community-specific groups. Where membership of inter-community organisations was seen as valuable, membership of community-specific groups was seen as essential for the maintenance of social identity. Arab-Islamic groups, for example, provided the only opportunity for some respondents to undertake necessary religious observances. Particular communities had bought properties where events such as weddings or funerals, that would attract too many people for a private house, could be held. Other respondents identified community-specific organisations as contributing to improvements in their mental health.

Membership of community-specific organisations is empowering for Arabic-Australians. Respondents who were members of community-specific organisations such as religious organisations were often involved in the management of those organisations. They felt able to discuss organisational matters and to contribute to the resolution of organisational problems. They generally did not participate in the management of organisations auspiced by the broader Australian community.

A major reason why such participation was empowering was because it provided participants with a support network. Like other migrant communities, a support network might include a group of people from the same village who have settled close to each other in Melbourne or people with common migration circumstances such as the Iraqi refugee group that have settled near Shepparton. For older migrants especially, living within an established community location with access to Church or Mosque, access to Arabic newspapers and where communication with service providers such as doctors and business such as shopping can be conducted in Arabic is essential to a sense of independence.

Support networks play a particularly significant part in providing information about community services. As people of Arabic background typically place great emphasis upon personal relationships, access to service providers is often obtained through an existing relationship with a particular community worker. Many members of Australian-Arabic communities are unaware of the availability of

services unless they have been informed of them by a family member, community worker or close friend. Knowledge of services can also be related to length of tenure in Australia and level of English language skills.

Community-specific organisations are crucial for groups such as Muslim Lebanese women. The Open Mind Research Group (OMRG) (1997) report (see the section on *Inter-community Relations and Trust* below) states that Muslim Lebanese women are often dependent on men for information. Community-specific organisations provide an opportunity for increasing the independence of groups such as Muslim Lebanese women and addressing issues such as wife assault which might otherwise remain hidden.

While group participation was seen as empowering, our respondents said such participation was segmented, primarily on the basis of national origin. Our respondents noted that many of the community-specific organisations of which they were aware were based upon nationality and while the various organisations were in contact with each other, there was a strongly expressed view that they should have stronger links. A community advocate stated that there was no recognised 'Arabic' community centre in Melbourne which could serve as a meeting place for people from different Arabic groups. The work that might be done at such a centre was currently being undertaken, inadequately, by centres catering to the broader community:

We need somebody who is a community worker, somebody who will be able to respond every day to just people who drop in with their problems. We don't have the capacity to do that and yet we have to.

Al-Krenawi and Graham (2000) have pointed out, culturally specific considerations such as gender relations and individuals' places in their families and communities that inform interactions with the Australian-Arab community are complicated by the highly diverse nature of ethnic Arab societies with 'heterogeneous systems of social differentiation based on ethnic, linguistic, sectarian, familial, tribal, regional, socioeconomic, and national identities'. When asked if they socialised with people other than those within their ethnic community, one of our respondents replied that they regularly mixed with people from 'Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian communities' while another stated that they liked to form ties with other people regardless of whether they were 'Arabs or Iraqis' and another that 'I also have a

Lebanese friend'. Each respondent defined particular Arabic nationalities as distinct communities. Some respondents stated that many members of Arabic communities were unaware of the existence of and did not inquire about organisations servicing other Arabic communities. It was apparent that members of some Arabic communities were socially isolated from both non-Arabic and other Arabic communities.

5.2.2 Participation in the broader Australian community

Members of Australian-Arabic communities seek to be part of the broader Australian community by socialising regularly with neighbours with whom they are on friendly terms, by attending general community festivals and celebrations, through membership of inter-community organisations and, especially for younger people, socialising with work-mates.

However, participation in the broader Australian community through involvement in inter-community organisations was considered a valuable but more difficult way to participate. Most of our respondents were members of both inter-community and community-specific organisations, although they typically regarded the two types of organisation as differing substantially. Some respondents regularly and frequently attended inter-community organisations. Often they had been informed by a social worker of the existence of such organisations and the view was expressed by a number of respondents that insufficient information was available to Australian-Arabic communities concerning the activities undertaken and resources provided by inter-community organisations and service providers. Some felt that they had been excluded from crucial services because information concerning those services had not been sent to them in Arabic.

Significantly, respondents who were members of inter-community organisations said they were involved only at the level of participation in group activities and appeared to have little involvement in the management of such organisations. Respondents identified a lack of understanding of management practices, customs and traditions and particularly language difficulties as barriers to engagement.

Several respondents and their families regularly attended a Community Health Centre or sporting club where they could undertake physical exercise and

engage in group sporting activities. Others attended venues or organisations where they were provided with the opportunity to develop English language skills, to undertake other practical activities such as learning healthy cooking or handicraft skills, to obtain useful information or consult references, to play board games or to embark on group excursions. The latter, which were also a feature of the activities of community-specific groups, were seen by respondents as providing good opportunities for developing or maintaining inter-community contact:

Once every week I go to the community gathering in Preston, where there is an interpreter, and where I stay all day. I look forward to being taken on a trip outside Melbourne.

The view was expressed by one respondent that the wider community often regarded Arabs or Muslims as detached and inward-looking and that involvement in inter-community organisations was a means of undermining this perception.

Lack of good English language skills was identified as the most significant barrier to increased involvement in broader community organisations and to general interaction with the broader community. As one respondent put it:

We only know the Arabic language; nonetheless we do interact with any other Australian community. In other words, we can co-exist with Australians, although we do not know their language. I, for instance, live in an area inhabited by Italians, Greeks and Australians. I am the only Arab residing in a multi-story apartment building, which houses 120 families. My neighbours would ask me why do you not sit and chat with us? I would reply that neither I would be able to understand you, nor would you be able to understand me. This is what has prevented mutual understanding and interaction. I do have friends from the other communities, and we do greet each other. Apart from saying: 'Hello, how are you, good morning, good bye and thank you', I have difficulties in expressing myself in English.

And another:

The problem with the Arabs is that we are afraid of intermixing due to their weakness in spoken English. We are reluctant to speak [English], lest they misunderstand us.

However, while there appeared to be a general fear of misinterpretation and a reluctance to expose poor English-language skills, some respondents made attempts to overcome language barriers, not only between Arabic-speaking and English-speaking people but also between themselves and other migrant groups. One of our respondents, for example, stated:

It is nice for one to intermingle with people so as to make acquaintances, irrespective of whether they are Arabs or foreigners. It is nice to be able to be of benefit to them, and they be of benefit to us.

Others stated that they regularly attempted to converse with Australian-Greeks or Australian-Italians, sometimes through an interpreter.

Thus, while most respondents expressed a preference for socialising and mixing with the wider community rather than confining their interactions to their own community or staying at home and watching television, they acknowledged that poor communication and cultural difference acted as barriers to socialising with people from other communities.

One of these cultural barriers was identified by some respondents as the emphasis Australians placed upon their working life. Their view was that socialising was acknowledged as much more important in their countries of origin as it was in Australia. However, this view of the relative importance of working life may reflect class position as much as ethnicity. This was generally not an aspect of cultural difference focussed upon by people we interviewed who were employed as skilled professionals.

There was an understandable ambiguity in our respondents' attitudes towards acculturation. While a desire to be seen as part of the broader Australian community was clearly evident, there were also some fears expressed relating to a devaluing of their existing culture. This was often couched in vague references to 'customs and traditions'. A general reluctance to discuss 'taboo' subjects such as sexuality tended to disguise fears of younger members of their communities, especially girls, adopting inappropriate sexual behaviour.

But they don't have the same mistrust letting daughters go outside if they were in Lebanon and they were going out with all their brothers because I think you know that they have a shared common values and common

understanding of these things so they, there is you know a general feeling that its going to be OK because the people know what we expect.

The difficulties of interacting with the broader Australian community had been seen by our respondents as diminishing over time, not only because longer tenure meant improved English language skills but also because time provided the opportunity for the development of mutual respect for customs and traditions. Contact between children from different cultures was seen as especially effective in breaking down barriers, for both children and parents. Our respondents indicated that persistent misconceptions on both sides created great social distance between some members of Australian-Arabic or Australian-Muslim communities and the broader Australian community.

Several respondents saw the difficulties faced by people of Arabic background in adapting to the traditions and customs of Australian society as a particular challenge. They identified the development of greater awareness of the broader community - and a change in outlook on the part of both Arabic Australians and the broader Australian community - as a priority for action. Respondents asked that information gathered during the research project concerning relationships between Arabic and non-Arabic communities be conveyed to relevant government officials so that mechanisms could be put in place to dissipate and avoid repetition of current inter-community friction. One respondent stated:

I believe that, not the ordinary people, but those who are in positions of responsibility may be able change the way of treatment, by redressing the undemocratic and illiberal process that may have taken place in individual cases. The heads of government or officials are supposed to be the first people who actually practice or personify democracy and freedom. The populace naturally acts in conformity with the policies that are directed to it. This is because the people in this country are guided; in that the government directs the public in line with its policy, method of approach, or media. If the way is opened for various communities to co-operate together like equals, then differences would disappear. The people in charge of decision-making are supposed to be overseeing the process of equality between the various ethnic communities, and between the different segments of society

While respondents identified government as having an important role in addressing inter-community tensions, they were also pessimistic about the willingness and capacity of government to do so. The narratives of some of our respondents with longer Australian tenure contained indications of a perception that government *beyond* the local level did not generally represent the interests of the Australian-Arabic community, although distinctions were made between the various tiers of government: federal; state; and local.

Respondents were pessimistic about the responsiveness of Australian governments to their needs as citizens. While some respondents felt that 'ordinary' Australian citizens, because they lived in a democratic society, should be able to influence government, they also felt that government frequently did not listen to the voices of ordinary citizens. This was especially so regarding Australia's participation in the war in Iraq, which respondents felt had been widely opposed by ordinary people. If individuals had little influence upon government, neither did the Australian-Arabic community as a whole. A community advocate said:

Because we're not a very united community we don't tend to form a critical mass that can somehow influence government

It was felt that representative organisations such as the Australian Arabic Council had had some impact on influencing political issues of relevance to their communities but generally did not address Australian governments on welfare issues. Respondents said that advocates who might address welfare issues were too under-resourced and preoccupied with day-to-day activities to do so.

Most respondents had had dealings with local governments, for example over rates and property improvements (most with unsatisfactory outcomes). Following the election of more local representatives of Arabic background, it was felt that there had been gradual change towards meeting the needs of Australian-Arabic communities. However, with the exception of general services such as libraries and rubbish collection, members of Australian-Arabic communities still exhibited a significant lack of knowledge of available local government services.

Despite an expressed desire for closer interaction with the broader Australian community and with other Australian-Arabic communities, recent media presentations of Middle Eastern terrorists and the war in Iraq have exacerbated a sense of isolation among Arab Australians. Respondents identified the mass media

as playing an important role in shaping the kind and level of community participation of Arab Australians. In particular, the mass media was identified as an important source of inter-community tension. In this context, respondents expressed a desire to see governments influence the way in which Arabs were portrayed in the media. Some respondents noted that the mass media misinformed 'ordinary' Australian citizens about issues that might affect Australian-Arabic communities. For example, our respondents suggested that the existing support for intervention in Iraq would dissipate if the Australian public were informed of the true facts.

Our research supports the view that perceptions and experiences of stigmatising and marginalising community attitudes on the basis of assumed traits act as barriers to attempts by members of Australian-Arabic communities to engage in most forms of community participation. Kerr and Savelsberg's (2003) study demonstrated similar processes at work in the marginalising of disadvantaged young people. The perception of our respondents is that stigmatisation has increased substantially during the recent international crisis. Younger members of Australian-Arabic communities can experience stigmatisation on several fronts: they are stigmatised by the general community because of their ethnicity and because of their youth. Furthermore, some of our respondents have reported that some young Arab Australians, such as Lebanese youth, have been stigmatised by other Arabic ethnic groups because of the bad publicity Lebanese 'gangs' in Sydney and Melbourne have attracted for Australian-Arabs.

In addition, cultural practices within some Australian-Arabic groups act as deterrents to the use of some government services. A community advocate stated that:

...in general, I find that people in our community don't tend to know very much about what is happening – the services available to them, unless they really, really, really need and are desperate for a particular service and start asking around.

Cultural concepts such as 'honour and pride' prevented people of Arabic background from making full use of, for example, services for the elderly. Use of such services might imply that an individual was 'not fulfilling [her] role as a good daughter'. A report by OMRG (1997) stated that underuse of the welfare system by

Australian-Lebanese was less related to a lack of knowledge of the system than to concepts of 'shame' associated with asking for help from agencies external to the family. Nevertheless, there is a high demand upon existing community-specific service providers.

5.2.3 The social climate

Our respondents had ambiguous feelings about whether Australian-Arabic communities were valued by the broader Australian community. One respondent stated:

There is respect and appreciation but ... the conflicts in the Middle East have strained the relations.... the media has caused them to fear us, and we them... We were happy in Australia. They used to respect all the people from the various communities equally. All of us were treated with equal respect and governed by one regime and one law.

In the context of respect from the broader Australian community, a number of respondents expressed the view that people of Arabic background were now treated differently to other Australians when applying for work or by officials when travelling as a result of the recent international crisis. Both communities were now more conscious of difference and this had resulted in a loss of mutual respect. A community advocate claimed that people of Arabic background, who felt that their communities had made major contributions to the development of Australia, now viewed themselves as undervalued by the broader Australian community because the focus of attention upon their communities was consistently negative.

One consequence of a cooling social climate could be the withdrawal of community members from interactions with the broader community or, especially amongst younger people, as acts of bravado designed to disguise their loss of respect. A community advocate stated:

...when Arabic and Moslem communities feel in any way targeted they tend to be more reclusive so it does impact on their interaction with other communities. They tend to withdraw and not socialise

One respondent feared that the subsequent reduced social contact 'would lead to the emergence of mono-ethnic suburban communities' while another said that:

*When I went shopping, I would be asked: "Are you Lebanese or Arab?"
Whereupon I would reply proudly, "Yes, I am an Arab and I am Lebanese."
Now however I am reluctant to say that because they regard Arabs as
terrorists*

Our respondents were unanimous that the current social climate was characterised by tension between Australian-Arabic communities and the broader Australian community. Some respondents noted that this tension had existed for some time in the context of conflict between Palestine and Israel but all agreed that the tension was exacerbated by the war in Iraq. They clearly felt that Arab Australians were unfairly subjected to discrimination and vilification that was not experienced by other migrant groups:

The pressure that is being exerted against the Arab community is greater than that experienced by any other present community in Australia.

While another claimed:

The truth of the matter is that the electronic media, in particular, always portray the Iraqi people as unenlightened, that they are ignorant and troublemakers, and that they are terrorists. Obviously, this is incorrect. All the communities and the public, at large, watch the television, from which they take their information. Actually, it is opposite to that perception. The country is at ease, and the people are decent, most of them are educated like other peoples. The media, however, is against this actuality.

Our respondents articulated a strong concern with the identification by sections of the mass media and sections of the broader Australian community of all Arabs or all Muslims with terrorist activities. A respondent said:

As soon as they know that I am an Iraqi, they would distance themselves from me, and seem frightened from me, because they regard me as a terrorist. So the media does influence the community.

And another:

As far as I am concerned, the veil issue has become a major problem. For, the woman who wears the veil in public is looked upon as if she is a terrorist, and bears the label of terrorism.

A community advocate said:

If they do things or say things that are seen to be in any way questioning the attitudes towards the war on terror they will be labelled as sympathising with terrorism.

Statements from our respondents such as 'Are all Muslims guilty?' and 'Why blame us; we are innocent!' were common. This problem might be addressed by the employment of prominent members of Australian-Arabic communities, including religious leaders, business leaders, academics, sportspersons and entertainers, in the delivery of information to the broader Australian community through such means as mass media and public forums to make better known the nature and diversity of Australian-Arabic communities.

In response to a question on whether their ethnic community had suffered as a result of issues such as the war in Iraq, asylum seekers, or the war on terror, one of our respondents stated:

As regards the issue the Arabs, particularly Iraqis, and terrorism, I would like to ask a question: Was it the Iraqis who attacked America and threatened it, or was it the Americans who entered Iraq and threatened it? Who came and threatened the other? Obviously, America, along with some other states, attacked [Iraq] in a fierce manner. We have seen the graphic images of the killings and bombings of the people. Is this the way liberation ought to be? That is not right. Hence, there is a profound unease in every Arab.

Members of the Australian-Arabic community identify with the plight of asylum seekers and refugees. Community members have repeatedly informed members of government and senior public officials through lobbying and the mass media of for the plight of asylum seekers and refugees and of human rights violations experienced by them. One of our respondents stated:

We tend to use victims to make an influence if you like. ... and the embarrassment factor.

The conditions of asylum seekers and refugees are already well established and the presentation of further evidence of their victim status would seem to have little potential effect, except perhaps where court cases have been won and the government has been forced into changes of policy or practice. Taking the path

of 'embarrassing' the government or presenting 'victims' tales may not always be the most effective means of gaining government support for Australian-Arabic community development as it could build further barriers between those communities and government. Focussing upon members of the community as victims could reinforce perceptions of the Australian-Arabic community as lacking self-reliance. Self-reliance is a key element of rhetoric defining Australian culture: those lacking self-reliance are readily defined as 'other'. To emphasise that Australian-Arabic communities are 'Australian' it is probably important that government and the broader Australian community be continually reminded of 'Arabic' success stories since these can identify Arabs more closely with the Australian ethos of self reliance.

5.2.4 Inter-community relations and trust

An important indicator of bonding and bridging social capital is who a group feels is worthy of trust and who is not. Our respondents were quite clear that immediate family and relatives were the first people in which they would place their trust and after that, close friends. In regard to seeking help when they needed it, they made comments such as 'first and foremost comes the family'. As their closest relationships were with family members, they were seen as the people with the most knowledge of the respondents' situation and problems. A community advocate stated that this was true even of migrants of long tenure with well established networks of association and familiarity with and confidence in broader community service providers.

This pattern of trust primarily in family is what we might expect from most community groups. Although the ABS General Social Survey (2002) indicated that levels of 'trust' of people living outside the respondent's household were significantly lower for people of non-English-speaking background (NESB) than for the remainder of the Australian community, the NESB (non-English speaking background) or CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) group predominantly (86%) regarded non-household members as potential sources of support in time of crisis. In the ABS survey, the NESB group were less likely than other groups to provide financial support to relatives living outside their household or to have children living outside their household, which would account for some of the

difference between groups in the levels of trust. Nevertheless, on average, the level of trust of people outside the household was very high for all Australians.

Members of Australian-Arabic communities frequently exhibit a strong sense of social hierarchy and high status individuals, particularly religious leaders, are often regarded with great respect. A community advocate suggested that such community leaders are likely to be afforded a high level of trust. There was some evidence that our respondents' 'trust' in high status individuals extended to leaders of the broader Australian community, although there was also criticism of a lack of strong leadership.

For our respondents, trust in members of the broader Australian community was not assured but depended upon how well that person was able to demonstrate an understanding of the respondent's view of the world:

It all depends on the person, regardless whether he is an Australian, Italian, Greek or Arab. Whether or not I trust a person it would depend on the extent to which I feel that I am at ease with him. It also depends on the ethics of this person, his conversation, and understanding.

The ethics and values of the other person were considered crucial in generating trust:

It depends on the style or manner of the person who you are dealing with, his method in life and at home, as well as his values. You might feel that his characteristics are compatible with one's own values and ethics, and on that basis, it would be possible to develop a social relationship with him, irrespective of his nationality or religion. So what is important is one's ethics and values.

As was familiarity:

Trust comes with companionship. Only with that close relationship would you know whether or not to confide in that person.

It was clear that trust was generated on the level of personal relationships and that our respondents would be more likely to place trust in members of the broader Australian community if they had more regular and frequent contact with that community.

Glaeser *et al's* (2000) have observed that high levels of trust often depend upon participants having similar social characteristics, particularly those of race or nationality. However, our respondents indicated that they would seek help from sources outside their community when appropriate. One respondent said:

Obviously, help in question would depend on the nature of our need. If we are in need of something that the family could help with, we would resort to it. If, on the other hand, we needed financial or administrative assistance, related to Centrelink or the hospital, we would turn to government employees. Thank God, everything is available in this country; any person who requires assistance can readily seek help.

Not all respondents shared this relatively benign view of Centrelink services. One, whose husband held a Temporary Protection Visa, expressed concern that 'the laws in Australia are continuously changing' and claimed that she did not understand why the government was deliberately trying to make things difficult for her family. However, most of our respondents did not indicate that they generally lacked trust in state service providers or government. For respondents without professional qualifications in particular, there was often a high level of trust in government and a high level of expectation that Members of Parliament and government agencies would act in the interests of individual members of Australian-Arabic communities and in the interests of those communities as a whole, although our respondents were rather less inclined to invest their faith in particular agents such as police (see *Crime and Safety Issues*).

While trust in family meant that our respondents turned to it first in times of need, this did not mean they discounted the wider community as a source of assistance. Some of our respondents said they acknowledged state officials as having the power to assist them where ordinary Australians did not. In response to the question of whether people who were not members of an Arabic community could do anything to resolve problems within that community one respondent stated:

Yes, they may be drawn from the non-Arab community. However ... it is necessary that the official, and not any ordinary person, be responsible for remedying the problem that I am facing. This is because the ordinary person might say I will help you by words, but in actual fact lacks the capacity to

assist. By contrast, an official would be in a position to talk to you and resolve your problem

A second respondent stated:

I resort to an interpreter whenever there is a language problem. He will ask me about the nature of the problem and will attempt to resolve it. He succeeds on most occasions. And so if the council uses the services of an interpreter, it is likely that he would be able to resolve a given problem.

Other respondents, particularly those employed in occupations that brought them into regular contact with government agencies, regarded politicians generally, if not state service providers, with a degree of cynicism. As one respondent pointed out, trust in government was not stimulated when politicians 'say something about Muslim communities [then] meet with Christian leadership', even if this encouragement of divisions within Australian-Arabic communities was inadvertent. Such respondents understood that help for Australians of Arabic background was more likely to be forthcoming from some politicians than others.

Perceptions of trust can be expected to play an important role in supporting Arab community wellbeing in Australia. In particular, levels of trust can impact upon service use in a community. The Open Mind Research Group (OMRG) (1997) in a report prepared for Department of Social Security, Centrelink and the Department of Health and Family Services, attempted to measure levels of need, levels of ability to meet that need and levels of integration for migrant groups including migrants of Arabic background. OMRG defined need as the likely demand for government services and information about services. The study found, amongst other things, that Iraqi migrants in particular suffered from unmet needs and that this in part reflected the fact that this group had little experience of welfare services in their country of origin and were suspicious of services provided by the state, preferring services provided through the Mosque. For groups experiencing a significant degree of social distance from the broader Australian community, culturally appropriate service delivery is more likely to be obtained from trusted community-specific service providers. Culturally appropriate service delivery encourages higher levels of trust of the service provider amongst members of Australian-Arabic communities. Higher levels of trust lead to higher rates of use of services.

5.2.5 Crime and safety issues

The lack of disaggregated crime data for ethnic communities makes it impossible to draw definitive conclusions about the experience of Arab Australians with the criminal justice system. Mukherjee (1999) found that evidence from Australia, Europe and North America supports the contention that there is bias against minority groups in their contacts with the criminal justice system. This bias extends to police decision-making (whether, for example, to issue a caution or pursue a prosecution) and the court system (whether, for example, to convict or to impose a custodial sentence upon conviction). Part of the explanation for this bias is that suspects from minority groups are often perceived by police and courts as having 'unstable' family backgrounds, although family stability within Australian-Arabic communities is probably much higher than for the broader Australian community.

While Victorian Police statistics employ a limited classification of offenders by 'race', they do not delineate people of Arabic background (see Appendix B) and the basis for classification is often subjective. Men and unemployed persons are generally more likely to be the victims of crime while national rates of robbery or assault are around ten times as high for those aged under 20 years as for those aged 65 years and over. The Australian Arabic Welfare Council Inc in NSW has claimed that police in NSW stereotype Arabic-speaking people and Arabic-speaking youth in particular as trouble makers and likely to be members of gangs (Mukherjee, 1999: 113).

It is relevant that many members of Australian-Arabic communities, along with many migrant communities, live in lower socio-economic urban areas and so we would expect members of these communities to endure higher crime rates than the general Australian community. The ABS in *Measuring Australia's Progress* (2004) states 'To the extent that the prevalence of crime affects people's trust of others there may also be a link between crime rates and levels of social cohesion'. Generally, urban areas tend to exhibit higher crime rates than rural areas¹³ and lower socio-economic areas higher crime rates than higher socio-economic areas. Many if not most members of Australian-Arabic communities, along with many migrant communities, live in lower socio-economic urban areas and so we would expect members of those communities to endure higher crime rates than the general Australian community.

Our respondents regarded the police with some suspicion. This view appeared to be based more upon a perception that the police did not carry out their duties efficiently or were unnecessarily violent than upon a perception that police actions were influenced by racism toward people of Arabic background. On the question of whether respondents trusted their local police, one respondent stated:

Yes, I do trust the police, but sometimes they do arrive late on the scene, following the event. According to what I have heard, they do not carry out their tasks correctly.

But another stated:

Frankly, I do not trust any person. Even the police, I can not trust them. The police who are supposedly protecting the public, cannot be trusted.

And another:

I personally am afraid of them, as I have seen many things that the police have carried out. I am scared of them, and I do not like them. For instance, when I previously owned a petrol station, a man entered the premises and pulled out a knife. The police eventually came and hurled the intruder onto the floor. The face of the assailant was deeply scratched. I believe that the police had used excessive force in apprehending him

And another:

...the police are ordinary people. They are like us; they eat, drink and they have wives, children and responsibilities. Their lives are to a certain extent harsh. So they do have some justifications. However, there are some in the police force who take law into their own hands... Some police officers are even prone to racism, which we have noticed very much, particularly these days.

To the extent that there was a perception of racism towards members of Australian-Arabic communities by police, and few respondents expressed such a view, the perception was that it had manifested more obviously since the recent events in the Middle East. Perceptions were shaped both by personal contact and by relayed information from other members of the community.

For recent migrants and members of relatively socially isolated communities, expectations of police may be shaped by experiences in their country of origin. A community advocate said:

In Lebanon, we don't have a very strong police at all. People don't really think very highly of them because they were corrupt. But they don't have much power. In Iraq maybe they feared them because they were probably a thing to be reckoned with the regime and they were like informants of the regime so there isn't a lot of trust. So it's going to vary from one Arabic country to another. But I think mainly in Australia that the experience of the Arabic community towards the police is very much based on how they've been treated by them here.

However, on the whole, our respondents held a view of the police shared by other groups of similar socio-economic status. They did not appear to regard the failings of the police as directed towards them personally, but rather as systemic problems of law enforcement.

In terms of personal safety, Australia-wide, the ABS (2004) reports that there was only a small increase in the proportion of households (between 8% and 9%) suffering a household crime and in the proportion of people experiencing a personal crime (around 5%) between 1993 and 2002. Household crimes include actual or attempted break-ins and theft of a motor vehicle. Personal crimes include assaults, sexual assaults and robbery, with assaults accounting for the bulk of reported personal crime. Rates for Victoria were below the national average, although Victoria's rate of personal crime increased significantly over the period measured. In addition, based upon victims surveys, the ABS estimates (Crime and Safety, Australia, 2003) that less than one quarter of assaults that take place in Victoria are reported to police, which is a significantly lower rate of reporting than for all other States.

The ABS' General Social Survey (GSS) (2002) found that NESB migrants reported a slightly higher rate of actual or attempted break-ins than the broader Australian community, their rate of physical or threatened violence was very much lower. In part, the lower than expected rate of assault might be explained by the typical family composition of the group. Couples, with or without children, reported a lower rate of assault than single person households and a much lower rate than

one parent families. On the other hand, unemployed people and those not in the labour force but not retired reported a very much higher rate of assault, as did people renting accommodation, especially those in public housing. Furthermore, the survey results indicated that the perceived safety of the NESB or CALD group as a whole was much lower than that of people born in Australia. Around double the proportion of NESB/CALD respondents compared to Australian-born respondents to the GSS reported feeling unsafe or very unsafe in their homes after dark.

Our respondents reported feeling unsafe within their neighbourhood and that their feelings of safety had diminished since the war in Iraq and the so-called 'war on terrorism':

By God, I do not feel safe, particularly with terrorism being such a patent issue. Quite frankly, I do not walk the streets, because I am frightened.

And:

We sleep and wake up afraid for our children, our selves and our houses... We in fact had migrated to Australia in search of safety for our selves and our children.

And:

I am frightened.... the events have affected me greatly.

Safety was a particular concern for Muslims:

Islamic schools have been attacked, because they are Islamic. Consequently, we send our children to school whilst fearing that they might be assaulted.

And for women:

As for our veiled sisters, I believe that of all the people, they have suffered the most from this problem, particularly with respect to walking at night. And I do not think a veiled woman would walk the street at night, and if she was to walk during the day, from time to time verbal and physical assaults occur. So what would happen if she was to walk at night?

5.3 Control and self-efficacy

The comments made by our respondents were rather ambiguous regarding how much control they had over their lives. They generally regarded Australia as a place where they were free to pursue their own interests and to make the best of their individual talents. In particular they supported ambition in their children as evidenced in the following statement:

I have a son who dreams one day he will become a pilot.

However, they also saw themselves as constrained by external forces, particularly through depictions of their communities in the mass media. There was concern that current mass media depictions of Arabs would dominate the relationship between communities for the next generation, as well as helping to introduce more specific constraints upon people of Arabic background.

Following the extensive discussion of September 11 in the mass media, our respondents expected that anyone of Arabic background would face substantial barriers in pursuing that profession regardless of their ties, or lack of them, to particular Arabic communities. There was also a frequently expressed sense of restriction due to unfavourable economic circumstances. Insufficient funds were continually cited during discussions of the maintenance of kinship networks or attempts to pursue broader social interactions.

It was evident in discussions with our respondents that some members of Australian-Arabic communities thought of themselves as subordinate to members of the broader Australian community and some were reluctant to declare their Arabic background in public gatherings, although there was also a perception that this sense of subordination and fear of identification with 'terrorists' might be overcome through the development of greater mutual understanding of the respective cultures. One respondent remarked that 'We should not think of ourselves as inferior to them'.

5.3.1 Health Status

Many of our respondents said that they were suffering from health problems including stress. Some indicated that they or members of their families were undergoing treatment for a range of illnesses such as diabetes, high blood

pressure, back pain or insomnia that they believed were associated with high stress levels.

At home is my daughter who is ill, suffering from a stroke that arose from the cumulative effects of stress.

While there was a general reluctance amongst our respondents to discuss issues of mental health, some acknowledged they suffered from mental health problems, mostly subsumed under the broad category of 'depression'. Comments such as 'I am always exhausted, suffering from depression' were typical. While they made attempts to control or disguise their level of depression, this was perceived as having little effect upon their physical symptoms and most felt they had little control over their personal health or that of their immediate family. High stress levels were also seen as contributing to social problems such as excessive gambling, bankruptcies, violence and suicides.

Respondents who identified themselves as having mental health problems commonly related these to high stress levels stemming from stigmatisation, isolation, low income levels and continuing violent conflict in their countries of origin. That is, respondents drew a link between low bridging social capital and health outcomes. Several studies have established links between social exclusion and health problems in Australian-Arabic communities. For example, Mansouri and Bagdas (2002) found that prolonged mandatory detention has devastating effects on the physical and mental health of asylum seekers. This was also the finding of Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1998) report on the detention of unauthorised arrivals and a report by Sultan and O'Sullivan (2001) on psychological disturbances in asylum seekers. Since a number of this group subsequently become members of Australian-Arabic communities, they constitute a sub-group with severe health problems. The presence of this sub-group within their community exacerbates the sense of marginalisation felt by the Australian-Arabic community as a whole and contributes to the adverse physical and mental health outcomes experienced by that community.

Our research supports the view that the narrowing of social networks consequent to stigmatising and marginalising community attitudes exacerbates the social exclusion of members of Australian-Arabic communities and is related to adverse

physical and mental health outcomes. Members of the Australian-Iraqi community identified the major source of stress as the conflict in Iraq:

With the unpleasant news that we are receiving, we are very apprehensive, as we do not know what will be our fate... Our nerves are strained by what is happening

We are tense and uneasy about our families and friends, who we have remained there, as well as all the Iraqi people. We are fatigued and concerned about them. We pray for them.

Other respondents identified the source as longer-term conflict between Arabic and other communities, particularly conflicts centring upon the political crises in Palestine or Lebanon:

The subject of tension can be traced to previous years; however it has intensified during these days.

And:

I have diabetes because of fear and tension. I have endured it for the last ten years. It emerged because of the experiences of war, fear and trepidation over my future and the future of my children. All this has a detrimental effect on my health and state of mind. At present, I visit my psychiatrist more frequently than I go out for leisure.

A key question is how the Australian-Arabic community seeks to address issues of stress and consequent physical and mental health consequences. Recent research in the United States (Al-Krenawi and Graham, 2000; Erickson and Al-Timimi, 2001), the Middle East (Ben-Ari, 2001; Al-Adawi, *et al.* 2002) and Australia (Mansouri and Makhoul, 2004; Batrouney, 1977) has highlighted cultural factors affecting the use of mental and physical health services by Arab communities. Al-Adawi, *et al.*'s (2002) Oman study on Arabic attitudes toward the care and management of people with mental illness found they were influenced by neither socio-demographic factors nor previous exposure to people with mental illness but were related to traditional community beliefs that rejected a biomedical model. Erickson and Al-Timimi's (2001) study of interactions between American mental health professionals and an American-Arab community demonstrated that common myths and misconceptions about Arab Americans affected those

interactions. Mansouri and Makhoul (2004: 31) point to the underuse of general community health services in the Goulburn Valley by Arabic-speaking new settlers, resulting from lack of knowledge of available services and lack of familiarity with the roles of service providers. Batrouney (1977) argues that low usage of general community services such as nursing homes by Arab-Muslims are due to factors such as perceptions of shame associated with non-reliance upon family and limited understanding of and access to general community services. An OMRG (1997) report identified a tendency within the Australian-Lebanese community to reject what they perceived as 'new' health concepts such as counselling, health services or child care, as these were seen as encroaching upon family functions.

Some of our respondents identified a lack of knowledge about services, how services were accessed and unfamiliarity with the roles of service providers as barriers to accessing general community health services. However, where these barriers had been overcome, respondents generally indicated that those health services met their expectations. Furthermore, rather than rejecting a bio-medical model of health consumption, we found that our respondents generally embraced that model amongst in relation to both physical and mental health. For example, one respondent had been advised to become a member of an Arabic support group by their psychiatrist and reported that membership of that group had contributed to an immediate improvement in their mental health.

Our research, however, suggests that members of the Australian-Arabic community have adopted the bio-medical model uncritically, seeing medication as a solution to all health problems, resulting in new health challenges for community members. It was claimed by a community advocate that overuse of prescription drugs amongst the Australian-Arabic community was at a level that should raise concern. There was some evidence to support this claim from our respondents with statements such as:

Currently, I take four or five tablets per day, as well as taking sleeping tablets because I am very anxious for the welfare of my children.

While there was no acknowledgement amongst our respondents that a problem of illicit drug use existed within their communities, a Department of Human Services (2000) report has suggested that there is widespread use of illicit drugs within Australian-Arabic communities. The report said that discussion of illicit drugs is a

taboo subject for Australian-Arabic communities and that identification as an illicit drug user was likely to lead to social stigma and isolation. Treatment services were described as culturally insensitive and unlikely to be utilised by members of Australian-Arabic communities because of stigmatisation within their community, language and transportation problems. Some respondents hinted at the existence of this problem by criticising a lack of appropriate recreational options as a problem for their community coupled with a perception by younger people of Arabic background of not belonging to the culture of either their parents or that of the broader Australian community.

While it is beyond the scope of this study to assess the effects of socio-economic standards and health in Australian-Arabic communities, it is reasonable to assume that Australian-Arabic communities face further risks to their health status as a result of low income levels and associated problems of low resources. Batrouney (1977), for example, argues that the low socio-economic status of elderly Arab-Muslims impedes their access to general community health services. Abraham *et al* (1995) report that low incomes are associated with general poor health and higher than average rates of illness. Within the general Australian population, rates of serious chronic illness or severe handicap

5.3.2 Language proficiency

Proficiency in the English language is a key element necessary to promote bridging social capital within Australia, while maintenance of first language skills as the sole language of communication is often an indicator of high levels of bonding social capital. Relatively low levels of proficiency in English inhibit knowledge of and participation in most aspects of the broader community for members of Australian-Arabic communities. As one respondent said:

I become shy when someone speaks with me in English. I wait for him to finish his conversation, and say to him, I do not understand English!

Australia-wide, the number of people normally speaking a language other than English (LOTE) at home, as measured by the Census, increased from around 2,458,500 to around 2,854,000 between 1991 and 2001. This constitutes 15% of the total population. In 2001, the proportion of people born in a non-English speaking country (NESC) in Victoria (16.7%) was the highest of all the States and Territories.

Around 924,000 Victorians, or almost 20% of the population, were LOTE speakers. More than 40% of overseas-born Victorians claimed to normally speak only English at home but the proportion of people speaking only English was significantly lower amongst more recently arrived migrants. While half of those who arrived in Australia before 1981 claimed to normally speak only English at home, this was true for less than one quarter of those arriving between 1991 and 1995. Census data indicates that there has been a slight upward trend in the proportion of migrants normally speaking only English at home in recent years¹⁴. Almost three-quarters of recent migrants normally speak a language other than English. This group includes a high proportion of people with poor or non-existent command of English.

Table 5.2 Percentage of language group speaking English not well or not at all by age group – Australia (2001)

Language	0-12	13-24	25-54	55-64	65+
Arabic (inc. Lebanese)	22.9	6.5	42.0	12.5	16.0
All LOTE speakers	15.6	5.0	37.7	14.6	27.1

Source: ABS Census Data 2001

Across Australia, several of the fastest growing language groups were amongst those with the lowest rates of English proficiency and Arabic was one of those groups. Of more than 209,000 persons in Australia who indicated that they normally spoke Arabic at home at the 2001 Census, around 33,200 (16%) indicated that they spoke English not well or not at all (see Table 5.2). The proportion of Arabic-speakers with poor English language skills in Victoria was very similar. A higher proportion of Arabic-speakers with poor English language skills were in the younger age groups than for LOTE speakers generally but this is at least partly explained by the significant numbers of older migrants within the much larger Italian and Greek-speaking groups and the comparatively small number of older migrants within the Arabic-speaking group.

Particular sections of the Australian-Arabic community are more likely to be proficient in English than others. We would expect members of long-standing communities and those with relatively high levels of education to have good

English language skills. However, this is not always the case. Research in the United States during the 1970s demonstrated that social distance was a significant factor impeding second language acquisition amongst Latino communities. As a group, people who experienced lowered social status and saw themselves as socially distant from their host community following migration tended to reinforce migrant community ties, with consequent bolstering of self-worth, through continued use of their first language and low rates of acquisition of English language skills.

As expected, proficiency in English increases with length of residence in Australia. While less than 15% of all first generation migrants in Victorian claimed that they spoke English poorly or not at all at the 1996 Census, the proportion was around 32% for those who had been resident for less than a year and only 12% for those arriving before 1981. The great majority of Australians born in Egypt (69%) arrived in Australia prior to 1986, as did most Australians born in Lebanon (61%). The Lebanese have been migrating to Australia since the late-nineteenth century but migration for the group accelerated during Australia's post-World War II industrial expansion. Far fewer Australians born in Syria (46%) and only a small percentage of Australians born in Iraq (15%) arrived in Australia prior to 1986. At the 2001 Census, thirty-three percent of Australians born in Iraq had arrived in Australia between 1986 and 1995 and 43% had arrived after 1996.

On the basis of length of residence, we would expect people born in Egypt and people born in Lebanon, on average, to exhibit relatively good English language skills while people born in Iraq would, on average, be the least likely of the larger Australian-Arabic communities to possess adequate English language skills. This expectation is met in relation to the Egyptian and Iraqi groups but not the Lebanese. Almost 28% of Victorians born in Iraq who normally spoke a language other than English at home indicated at the 2001 Census that they spoke English poorly or not at all while the proportions for those born in Lebanon and Egypt were 24% and 11% respectively. On the basis of poor English language skills and community growth rates, it would appear that people born in Lebanon are, on average, slower to acculturate than other Australian-Arabic communities. The second generation of Australian-Lebanese commonly provide information concerning the general Australian community to their extended families. Khoo *et al* (2002: vii) state that, with the exception of the Greeks, the Lebanese are more likely than any other large second generation migrant group to continue to use

their parents' language at home, even when they reach middle age. The relatively poor rate of second-language acquisition amongst the Australian-Lebanese community is perhaps related to a widely held perception of social distance from the broader Australian community amongst that group and may be just as much a product as a cause of their low socio-economic status when compared to that of the Australian-Egyptian community.

The English language skills of several other Australian-Arabic communities were assessed as poor in the OMRG (1997) report¹⁵. The proportion of Australians born in Kuwait, Libya or Tunisia not speaking English well were found to be within the range of the proportions for those born in Egypt, Iraq or Lebanon while the English language skills of Australians born in Syria were assessed as being on average significantly poorer. Those for Australians born in Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates were assessed as being on average relatively good. With the exception of Australians born in Algeria and Tunisia, the OMRG (1997) report assessed each of these groups as experiencing a significant degree of social distance from the broader Australian community based upon holding substantially different cultural or religious norms and values.

Age is also has an important influence on English proficiency. For LOTE groups in general, English proficiency is very much lower for older people, with low rates of English proficiency being recorded for at least 15 of the main community languages spoken by Victorians aged 65 years and older in 1996. However, for older people, very low rates of proficiency occurred for both long-standing migrant communities and rapidly growing communities. Many older migrants use English less than they did when they were younger, particularly following retirement from the paid workforce, and proficiency consequently declines.

The ABS conducted a general literacy survey in 1996 and part of the survey involved a measure of first language literacy for adults who did not normally use English at home (see Table 5.3).¹⁶ The ABS survey showed that respondents tended to over-estimate their level of English literacy and we might expect that this over-estimation also occurs in self-assessment of competency for languages other than English. It is likely, therefore, that actual levels of literacy for languages other than English are a little lower than those shown in Table 5.3. Age is also a factor in first-language literacy rates. We have assessed the level of reliability that should be

attached to the survey data for some of the more common language groups on the basis of the number of persons surveyed. The results of the survey and the level of reliability that should be attached is shown in the table below.

As can be seen from the table, speakers of Arabic fare relatively well in first language literacy (self assessed) but less so in English literacy (derived from objective test results). While around two-thirds of people normally speaking Arabic at home claimed a good or very good level of first-language literacy, less than one third exhibited a good or very good English literacy level when tested. Nevertheless, the relatively high rate of first-language literacy amongst people normally speaking Arabic at home indicates that information is most likely to be effectively communicated to the group if delivered in Arabic.

Table 5.3 ABS General Literacy Survey Results (1996)

Language spoken at home	% Good first language literacy	Survey reliability	% Good English prose literacy	% Good English Report literacy
Italian	75%	high	14%	15%
Greek	67%	high	28%	34%
Cantonese	72%	medium	45%	45%
Vietnamese	47%	medium	25%	37%
Arabic (inc. Lebanese)	69%	medium	32%	32%
Polish	79%	low	n.a.	n.a.
Spanish	63%	low	n.a.	n.a.
Mandarin	40%	low	n.a.	n.a.
Croatian	50%	low	19%	24%
Tagalog (Filipino)	100%	low	n.a.	n.a.
Macedonian	54%	unreliable	n.a.	n.a.
Maltese	58%	unreliable	n.a.	n.a.
Turkish	0%	unreliable	n.a.	n.a.

Source: ABS unpublished data

It should be noted, however, that the ABS survey showed that respondents tended to over-estimate their level of English literacy and we might expect that this over-estimation also occurs in self-assessment of competency for languages other than

English. While competency in a first language for speakers of languages other than English is often assumed, the level of first language literacy amongst Australian migrants varies widely. A non-English-speaking migrant may be literate in English, their first language, both or neither. Furthermore, oral proficiency in languages other than English is not necessarily a good indicator of literacy in that language but neither should a lack of oral proficiency in English or another language be assumed to indicate a low level of literacy. Unfortunately, with the exception of the testing of students of foreign languages, literacy in languages other than English is rarely assessed in Australia. It is likely, therefore, that actual levels of literacy for languages other than English are a little lower than those shown in the table above. Nevertheless, the relatively high rate of first-language literacy amongst people normally speaking Arabic at home indicates that information is most likely to be effectively communicated to the group if delivered in Arabic.

Our respondents recognised the disadvantages of poor English language skills and despite their fears of stigmatisation by the broader community were active in undertaking measures to develop them, although they sometimes encountered unexpected difficulties:

There is a notice stating that they teach the English language. However, there is no Arabic corresponding to the English words.

Our respondents identified development of English language skills as a primary motivation for attending non-Arabic community venues but also identified poor English language skills as a significant barrier to participation in non-Arabic organisations. In a study of the demand for bilingual, bicultural nurses, Hawthorne *et al* (2000) conclude that patients rank clear communication as of equal or greater importance than culturally specific services. Comments from our respondents such as 'I wish I could learn the language for it is paramount' were typical.

We can expect the language proficiency challenges faced by members of the Australian-Arabic community to manifest as health problems for some community members. At a very basic level, Batrouney (1977) has found that low literacy levels impede understanding of general community health services amongst elderly Arab-Muslims. Furthermore, we should expect that as Australian-Arab communities age, there will be an even greater need than currently for community specific

communication with that group in Arabic. For example, Mansouri and Makhoul (2004: 23) have reported that high levels of illiteracy amongst older members of Australian-Italian and Australian-Albanian communities impedes use of available translated information on health services. The preparation of community-specific, Arabic language information, both written and verbal, *and* the use of dedicated Arabic community and media services to disseminate such information is therefore likely to be particularly effective in addressing the health and wellbeing needs of Arab Australians. Such an approach will be particularly beneficial for groups such as the Australian-Lebanese community who have adequate access to Arabic radio and press.

5.3.3 Education, employment and wealth

Employment is fundamental to an individual's sense of self-identity and self-worth. Employment has been found to improve individual wellbeing including by increasing personal skills, self-confidence and self-esteem (Mansouri and Makhoul 2004). Paid employment is also an indicator of social inclusion in Australian society. Education is central in underwriting access to paid employment, with higher levels of education correlating to better employment outcomes. Education also enhances language proficiency and research indicates that successful labour market outcomes for migrants are dependent on English language proficiency (Centrelink 2002).

It is a common phenomena for recent migrant communities in developed nations to experience patterns of labour market segmentation when attempting to enter the workforce, reflecting a range of factors including the skill and language profile of migrants, but also discriminatory practices, resulting in the concentration of these communities in low skill, insecure jobs (Castles and Miller 2003: 195-7). However, evidence indicates that Arab Australians suffer disproportionately from poor labour market outcomes. The 1991 Census indicated that all Arabic birthplace groups had higher than average levels of unemployment. More than half of Australians born in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia or the UAE were unemployed. People born in Iraq or Saudi Arabia were amongst the migrant groups with the highest levels of unemployment in Australia. Only a few groups, such as the Australian-Egyptian community, have clearly improved their relative position during the last decade.

Mansouri and Makhoul (2004: 23-30) reviewed the evidence Arab Australian men, women and youth and found significant differences between their employment and education experiences and those of the wider community. For example, Muslim men have one of the highest rates of unemployment of all migrant groups in Australia (25.3 per cent compared to 8.8 per cent for the Australian male population) and a significantly lower participation rate (62.4 per cent compared to 73 per cent for the Australian male population). Significantly, a significant proportion of Arab Australian men are highly skilled and well-educated (see Section four). Arab Australian youth also suffer from poor labour market outcomes. Lebanese youth, for example, experience the highest unemployment levels of any group in Australia (35 per cent). Mansouri and Makhoul (2004: 23) note that this experience is exacerbated by 'high secondary school attrition rates, lack of work experience, poor career counselling in schools and poor career options and training'. Furthermore, Arab Australian youth also suffer from labour market discrimination, negative stereotyping and racism from employers. The employment experiences of Arab Australian women are heavily shaped by household gender roles – women being responsible for nutritional, housing, education, childrearing and health issues within the family - which limits female participation in the labour market.

Census data shows greater disparity in education levels amongst migrants from the Middle East and North Africa than for the general Australian population, emphasising the diversity of the group. While Middle Eastern and North African migrants have a slightly higher proportion of people holding higher educational qualifications¹⁷ and people who have completed Years 11-12 of secondary schooling than the general Australian population, the proportion of the group holding Diploma or Certificate qualifications is significantly lower and the proportion without any formal schooling is significantly higher than for the general Australian population. Consequently, while some members of the group are educationally advantaged, a relatively high proportion lack work skills appropriate to the post-industrial Australian economy. Sub-groups that are on average educationally disadvantaged include the Australian-Lebanese community in particular and the Australian-Iraqi community. Both groups are significantly under-represented in managerial and professional employment and significantly over-represented in 'unskilled' employment, although each have a higher than

average number of people employed in trades occupations. Both groups have significantly higher unemployment rates and significantly lower labour force participation rates than the Australian average.

There is statistical and anecdotal evidence that Arab Australian communities are also comparatively asset poor. Many of the poorest members of Australian-Arabic communities live in areas with comparatively low levels of social infrastructure. Comparatively few residents of those localities own or are purchasing their homes and few have access to resources such as adequate superannuation. At the 2001 census, around 40% of Victorians owned their own homes and around one third were purchasing their homes. Amongst the Victorian-Iraqi community, only 14% owned their own homes and only 25% were purchasing their homes. While 15% of Victorians lived in private rented accommodation and 3% in public housing, the respective proportions for the Victorian-Iraqi community were 42% and 6%. Nevertheless, where Australians of Arabic background do hold assets, they are likely to share them with their immediate family. Khoo *et al* (2002: vi) state that second generation Lebanese are amongst the most likely members of migrant communities to be living in homes owned by their parents.

Unemployment, underemployment and precarious employment are significant factors in the creation of income and wealth inequalities between Arab and non-Arab Australians and, by extension, may be said to detract from social capital levels evident in Arab communities. The over-representation of some Australian-Arabic communities in the ranks of the unemployed and underemployed can be expected to be an important factor impacting upon community wellbeing. Low income levels, particularly those associated with high levels of unemployment, have been identified as a principal concern for members of Australian-Arabic communities and our research corroborates these findings. HREOC (2003b) found that a lack of security of tenure was identified as an issue for the Australian-Iraqi community.

The Australian-Egyptian community, on the other hand, have a significantly higher proportion of people with higher educational qualifications than the Australian average, a lower proportion of people without formal educational qualifications, a higher than average number of people employed in professional occupations and a lower than average number employed in trades, semi-skilled and unskilled

occupations. While their labour force participation rate is significantly lower than the Australian average, their unemployment rate is around the same as that of the broader Australian community.

Our respondents were acutely aware of their lack of financial resources. Lack of adequate English language skills were viewed by many as a major impediment to gaining employment. Some of them were acutely aware of a lowering of status when compared to their position in their country of origin. Some noted high community unemployment levels as an important factor contributing to social isolation and low levels of community self-efficacy and control. Younger members of Australian-Arabic communities were described by one respondent as lacking confidence in the prospect of securing employment to the extent that they no longer attempted to find work. For many young Australians of Arabic background this is not an unrealistic assessment of their situation as youth unemployment rates remain significantly higher than those for the general community and unemployment rates in Melbourne's northern suburbs and for particular migrant groups remain high. Combining youth, locality and ethnicity leads to very poor employment prospects for the group. Labour force participation rates have remained relatively steady in recent years and changes to the means of generating labour force statistics disguise the real extent of unemployment and underemployment. The problem of youth 'drop out' from the labour force might be addressed via a mentoring program employing people of Arabic background prominent in fields such as politics, entertainment, sport or business.

This lack of confidence in their prospects may be impacting on the perceptions of young Arab Australians of the efficacy of education. In reference to the closure of a school in Melbourne's northern suburbs that included a large number of students of Lebanese background, a community advocate stated:

We have a school here that just closed down recently. We know that some families won't even bother sending their kids next year to any other school

This experience may intensify intergenerationally. Khoo *et al* (2002: vi) report that second generation Lebanese are amongst the migrant groups most likely to complete secondary schooling and obtain post-secondary qualifications. Third generation members of migrant groups, on the other hand, are less likely than the second generation to gain higher qualifications than their parents. This implies that

the children of longer established migrant groups may find more difficulty than those of newer migrant groups in achieving upward mobility.

HREOC (2003b) has also identified a problem for the Australian-Iraqi community that has been common to many migrant groups for a great length of time: a lack of official acknowledgment or general community mistrust of overseas qualifications, poor English-language skills and a general discriminatory attitude towards new migrant groups leads to difficulties for members of the Australian-Iraqi community in finding work that is appropriate to their qualifications and experience. Highly qualified migrants are under-employed as low level process workers or as casual labour in occupations such as fruit-picking or cleaning. While this may be viewed as a 'temporary' outcome in the context of long-term labour force trends, it is a far more permanent status for individual migrants.

5.3.4 The meaning and value of life

Our questions concerning the meaning and value of life focussed upon respect for individuals and communities and the place of religion in our respondents' lives. Our respondents' responses to our questions on religion suggest that, on the whole, religion may occupy a more important position in the lives of Muslim than Christian members of Australian-Arabic communities. Most of the comments about religion made by respondents concerned Islam. Typically, respondents were concerned with having an appropriate place to undertake religious practices, with having their children attend appropriate schools, with adolescent sexual practices (although sexuality was generally referred to indirectly) and with the general attitude of the broader Australian community towards Islam.

Ethnic heritage, be it nationality, religion, village or kinship network, was a key element of self-concept for our respondents and a major focus of their networks of association. Religion was seen by a number of our respondents as an important element of their heritage. Our respondents - both Christian and Muslim - were clear that the current so-called 'war on terror' and the negative portrayal of Islam as a result of it made teaching their religious beliefs to their children more important:

We would like to teach our children our religion. It is a matter of importance to us that the young generation believes in our faith.

And:

Religion obviously is important in the times we are currently living in. This is because at present the most influential element that has come to prevail over the world is materialism. Therefore, we are in need of religion, not just Islam, but also Christianity, and even Judaism. There should be a place for religion so that the people would sense piety, and feel that they are ascending and that there is reward and penalty. We should educate the coming generation, because afterwards there would be no place for religions. Currently, here [in Australia] the prevailing trend is towards the non-religious affiliation. I mean that, at present, there are many people in Australia who do not profess a particular faith. This trend is growing. For instance, you will find parents who are Muslim, Christian or any other faith, while the children's adherence to religion is gradually weakening. Hence, at present we need to impart to our children the noble values of our religion; and every faith has virtuous values. And it is this that we wish to convey to the next generation so that they could in turn bring up religious, but not fanatical, generations. And this is the most significant thing with respect to the religions; in that they should be devoid of intolerance. We hope that this would be realised.

Respondents often referred to negative reporting by the mass media about Islam as an important factor influencing inter-community trust. To identify the tenor of reporting of religious affairs in the mass media, we carried out a small survey of recent newspaper articles.¹⁸ Analysis of the survey data suggests that religious matters concerning all faiths are predominantly reported negatively. However, this was more the case for articles dealing with Islam than for articles dealing with Christianity. Around three-quarters of the articles recorded in the survey dealt with Christianity and around one fifth dealt with Islam. While a significant proportion of the articles dealing with Christianity could be considered either neutral or positive, only a few articles dealing with Islam could be considered neutral and positive articles were rare.

While most articles concerning Christianity were negative, within both negative and positive articles the positions put forward by religious leaders were generally not dismissed out of hand but were treated as points of debate. A large proportion

of the articles dealing with Christianity focussed upon a dialogue between religious beliefs and Western liberalism and most were concerned with aspects of life related to sexuality such as the status of homosexuality, the abortion debate and scandals involving the sexual activity of priests.

By contrast, a number of articles dealing with Islam focussed upon fundamental oppositions between the Muslim world and the Western world. While the dialogue between Christianity and liberalism was generally treated as a legitimate element of regular debate within Western democracies, only a few articles suggested that dialogue between the West and Islam was fruitful. More commonly, articles were printed in which American correspondents such as David Brooks¹⁹ described Islamic 'terrorists' as part of a 'death cult' pursuing 'pathological' goals of 'barbarism' that were 'beyond negotiation' or in which Australian commentators such as Gerard Henderson²⁰ described the 'anti-Western Islamist ethos' as having 'something in common with Nazism and communism' as each were 'apocalyptic and death-obsessed mass movements' and while 'There has always been a pacifist tradition in the West', 'some political or religious ideologues do not believe in dialogue'. Brooks and Henderson were both writing in the wake of the Beslan siege and might be considered amongst the more extreme anti-Islam commentators, but positive comment concerning Islam or even comment from a Muslim perspective is more difficult to find in the daily press. When comment from a Muslim perspective is reported, it is more likely to reflect Islamist than moderate views and there are few indications in the mass media that divisions or debates occur within Islam that are comparable to those which occur amongst Christians.

In the current political climate, it is unsurprising that Islamic Australians might be sensitive towards negative reporting of Islam in the mass media. The manner in which Islamic affairs are reported in the mass media contributes to the perception of their marginalisation on the part of Islamic Australians, and in a predominantly Christian country where Christian religious festivals are privileged, that perception is not likely to be lessened by the knowledge that the mass media reports most religious affairs negatively.

Despite the suggested disunity and recriminations between Australian-Arabic communities mentioned earlier, our respondents clearly articulated a sense of religious harmony within their communities, between people of different religions

and between Arabs and non-Arab Australians living as neighbours. They apparently believed that attempts by the mass media to sow discord had had an effect only upon people that they did not know personally.

Section 6 Conclusions and Recommendations

This section draws on the findings detailed in the section five to draw conclusions about determinants of the social connectedness of Arab-Australian communities. Based on these conclusions, a number of policy recommendations are offered designed to promote or overcome those factors inhibiting Arab-Australian social connectedness.

Our study does not support the contention that Arab Australians are unintentionally contributing to their own marginalisation in reacting to discrimination by 'retreating' into their own communities i.e. by increasingly relying on bonding social capital. Our respondents sought actively to develop links with the broader community but faced significant challenges in doing so including a climate of increasing political and social hostility, employment discrimination and poorly targeted community resources and services.

6.1 Conclusions

Findings related to the forms of social capital evident in Arab communities

The Arab Australian community enjoys high levels of bonding social capital but lower levels of bridging social capital.

Bonding social capital is evident in a range of different forms. The Arab Australian community is united by a common language and culture focused on close links with family and friends but exhibits a rich diversity based primarily on national origin but also on ancestry, religion and socio-economic status. Ethnic heritage - whether nationality, religion or kinship network - is a key element of self-concept for Arab Australians and a major focus of their networks of association. Religion is an important form of bonding social capital for Arab Australians and an important avenue for community participation and social connection. Arab Australians also tend to live in close proximity to each other and this is an important source of mutual support.

Bridging social capital is less evident in Arab communities. Connections between Arab and non-Arabic community groups are more limited than those within Arabic

communities. Furthermore, members of some smaller Arab communities are socially isolated from both non-Arabic and other Arabic communities.

The social climate in Australia has become more difficult for Arab Australians since the recent international crisis. Our respondents report being treated differently to non-Arabic Australians including when applying for work or accessing public services. Community members suffer from a sense of being undervalued by the broader community. Several of our respondents, particularly women, reported experiencing racism. Both Arab Australians and the broader community are now more conscious of difference.

Members of the Australian-Arabic community feel less safe within their neighbourhoods now than they did before the so-called 'war on terror' following September 11. Many Arab Australians – particularly Muslim women – also regard police with some suspicion, reflecting a community concern about police violence and competence rather than a particular concern about police racism.

Arab Australians also suffer more from poor employment and poor education experiences than the broader Australian community. Socio-economic concerns are prominent amongst Arab Australians including those relating to low socio-economic status and high levels of unemployment. For newly-arrived Arab Australian groups such as Iraqi Australians, poor labour market outcomes contribute to and are compounded by their comparative asset-poverty.

Findings related to the promotion or detracting from social connectedness

The promotion of social connectedness for our respondents is impeded by wider-community attitudes towards Arab Australians which stigmatise and marginalise them. Despite a desire for closer interaction with the broader community, recent conflict in the Middle East and the so-called 'war on terror' have exacerbated a sense of isolation amongst Arab Australians. Stigmatising and marginalising attitudes exhibited by the broader Australian community on the basis of assumed traits act as barriers to a more active participation in the community for Arab Australians. Non-Arabic community attitudes have become more hostile since September 11 and the recent international crisis. Social hostility has contributed to a sense of social isolation resulting in negative experiences amongst Arab Australians.

Our respondents consider the media a major source of the hostility directed towards Arab Australians and the misunderstandings detracting from Arab Australian social connectedness with the broader community. Our respondents are particularly concerned by the media portrayal of them as 'terrorists' or 'victims' rather than as successful citizens.

Social hierarchy and status are important factors underpinning trust between Arab and non-Arab Australians and are important in the promotion of bridging and bonding social capital for Arab communities. Arab Australians place their trust in family and friends, but also in high status community leaders including non-Arabic community leaders. The elderly and religious leaders in particular are granted great respect and 'trust'. Trusted community representatives or community workers with knowledge of both Australian and Arabic cultures and available resources, services and participative options are considered important in promoting bridging social capital.

Our respondents identified a lack of knowledge about culturally sensitive resources and services as important in detracting from their social connectedness. For example, limited use of general community health services by people of Arabic-speaking background is associated with lack of knowledge of available services and lack of familiarity with the roles of service providers. Cultural practices within some communities, such as perceptions of shame associated with non-reliance upon family, can also deter service use. Community-specific (rather than mainstream) service providers were trusted more by Arab Australians as providers of culturally and linguistically appropriate service delivery, leading to higher rates of use of services.

Our respondents identified poor English language skills as important detractors to social connectedness. While many of our respondents sought actively to develop their English language skills - despite fears of stigmatisation by the broader community - access to adequate support was an acknowledged problem.

Our respondents understood government as having an important role in addressing inter-community tensions but were pessimistic about its willingness and capacity to do so.

Accessing mainstream Australian culture and society was made more difficult for Arab Australians because of poor access to employment, education and community service programs such as language programs.

Findings related to the correlations between types of social capital in which participants are involved and indicators of personal wellbeing

Our respondents enjoyed high levels of bonding social capital which is important to their wellbeing. They acknowledged participation in family life and religious and community organisations as important in facilitating social connectedness and underpinning personal and community wellbeing.

External barriers to the promotion of bridging social capital, such as employer discrimination in work, limitations to culturally sensitive educational opportunities or accessing culturally sensitive community services and resources were of concern to our respondents.

Of particular concern to our respondents was an increasingly hostile social climate fuelled by racist and discriminatory depictions of Arab Australians and Arabic and Islamic culture in the media. Our respondents drew a clear link between increasing social hostility and increased community stress and unsafety. A number of our respondents drew direct links between their social exclusion and broader community discrimination towards and disenfranchisement of Arab Australians and their physical and mental health problems.

Findings related to the potential role of bridging social capital in facilitating greater social connectedness between Arab and non-Arab communities.

Significantly, our study does not support the contention that Arab Australians are unintentionally contributing to their own marginalisation in reacting to discrimination by 'retreating' into their own communities i.e. by increasingly relying on bonding social capital. Rather, our study found that bridging social capital was important to Arab Australians in facilitating greater social connectedness between Arab and non-Arab communities in Victoria. Our respondents sought actively to foster bridging social capital by developing links with the broader community. However, they faced significant challenges to do so including a climate of political and social hostility, discrimination and poorly targeted community resources and services. Active and concerted measures must be undertaken by the State and community organisations to overcome these barriers.

6.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based primarily on the empirical findings of the research project. The findings are aimed at facilitating greater social connectedness between Arabic and non-Arabic communities in Victoria. Of course, many of these recommendations are contingent on the provision of adequate government funding and government and community support.

1. **Enhanced specialised community-based services:** Provide long-term funding to community-based agencies to enable them to plan, implement and deliver well-targeted, culturally sensitive and effective services that would ultimately improve Arab Australian wellbeing. This recommendation is in line with the finding that disadvantaged and isolated members of the Australian Arabic community are more likely to access ethno-specific rather than mainstream services or require the intervention of an ethno-specific service to link them with mainstream service providers.
2. **Establishment of Australian-Arabic community centre:** VicHealth to convene a working group from all stakeholders to seek joint funding to establish an Australian-Arabic Community Centre in Melbourne's northern suburbs, with expansion in the short term to include campuses near Williamstown, Dandenong and Shepparton. The Centre should have a brief to:
 - serve as a community meeting place;
 - provide a location for the delivery of services for all Arab Australians irrespective of country of origin;
 - serve as a clearing house for information on Australian-Arabic community research, initiatives, events; publications, both within Australia and internationally;
 - represent Arab Australians on broader committees concerned with intercultural, community building and interfaith development, for example.
3. **Enhanced information and referral systems:** A number of respondents noted difficulties in finding out about and accessing community services. VicHealth, in collaboration with other government agencies, local

governments and community organisations, should work together to develop a community outreach program promoting awareness of key services. Such initiatives should include translated brochures and marketing materials but should also incorporate community social workers and service providers through community outreach support programs.

4. **Education support:** Liaise with the Department of Education, parents and schools to improve education outcomes for Australian-Arabic youth including by developing strategies to improve secondary school attrition rates, work experience, self-esteem and confidence, career counselling and training. Promoting better educational opportunities for Arab Australian youth is a fundamental requirement if their employment experiences are to be improved.
5. **Employment information and referral services:** State agencies and community service providers must provide up-to-date information about job, education and training services. Following the conclusion of a service audit, gaps concerted measures should be undertaken to address them including through the development of culturally-aware services such as Arabic information sessions, translated information kits and the establishment of outreach support networks.
6. **Employment opportunities:** Our respondents identified employer discrimination as a major impediment to increased labour market participation. A round-table should be convened between State agencies, employer organisations, relevant service providers (e.g. Job Network providers), and community organisations (including trade unions) to identify the sources and forms of employment discrimination affecting Arab Australians and to consider policies for overcoming such discrimination.
7. **Social Support:** State agencies, local governments and relevant community organisations to convene a round-table to consider ways of addressing social isolation and harassment related to racism, particularly for Arab Australian women and youth. Attention should be directed at developing community-inspired initiatives targeting xenophobia and the management of cross-cultural tensions.

8. **Arab success stories:** In line with a perceived cooling of the social climate and the need to overcome racist community attitudes, work with the Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs and community leaders to identify prominent Arab Australians - including religious leaders, business leaders and community leaders – and to develop a publicity campaign highlighting the diversity of the Australian-Arabic community, Arab “success” stories, and the contribution made to Australian community life by the Arab Australian community.
9. **Health services:** Working with community representatives, state service providers to develop and promote culturally sensitive health services for Arab Australians. State service providers should liaise closely with community organisations and local governments to identify and ensure programs address community needs. Culturally-sensitive health services should include information on the full range of health options available to address mental and physical illness including preventative medicine.
10. **Better identifying needs – health:** Conduct an audit of community-specific health services available to Arab Australians to provide a better basis for the development of community health policies.
11. **Better identifying needs – Language services:** Many of our respondents noted the importance of English language skills in promoting social connectedness. Conduct an audit of English language training options available for Arab Australians and lobby as necessary relevant governments for increased resources to be directed towards such programs. Ensure information on language programs is included in any outreach programs tailored to the needs of Arab-Australian communities. Work with all tiers of government to increase the availability of translation/interpreting services for Australian-Arabic communities. Make English-Arabic dictionaries available at all points of service delivery in locations where there are substantial numbers of people of Arabic background.
12. **Justice and policing:** Work with Victorian Police to develop targeted training programs for officers to address systemic discrimination within the police force and culturally insensitive policing practices.

13. **Better identifying needs – crime and justice:** There is insufficient information about Arab Australian engagement with the criminal justice system. Working with Arab community representatives, undertake further research into the justice and crime experiences of the Australian-Arabic community to better inform public policy.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Social Capital and Wellbeing Survey Questions

Focus Group Questions

Dimension 1: Social Participation

Q1. Are you a member of any community organisation such as a neighbourhood house or a sporting group? If you are a member of such an organisation, what is the nature of your involvement?

Q2. What factors might deter you from becoming a member of such an organisation?

Q3. Would you be more or less likely to join an organisation that had non-Arabic members now you were than three years ago?

Q4. Do you prefer to go out and socialise or stay home and watch television?

Dimension 2: Social Ties and Support

Q5. How often do you see or speak to your family and/or close friends?

Q6. Do you socialise with people from outside your own ethnic community?

Q7. If you need help, who do you turn to and why?

Q8. Do you think that people who are not members of an Arabic community can do anything to resolve problems within that community?

Dimension 3: Mutual Relations and Trust

Q9. Do you trust people from outside your ethnic community?

Q10. Do you trust your local police?

Q11. Do you feel safe walking on the streets near your home?

Q12. Generally, do you feel more or less safe than you did three years ago?

Q13. Who do you trust most and why?

Dimension 4: Control and Self-efficacy

Q14. How do you view the current social climate? Would you describe it as relaxed, tense or stressful?

Q15. Do you think that you have the ability to change things so that you feel less stress?

Q16. Do you have much control over your own health?

Q17. To what extent do you control what happens in your life?

Q18. To what extent do you think that your life is controlled by others?

Q19. Do you think that international events have impacted on how people from outside your own community perceive you?

Q20. Do you think that you or your ethnic community have suffered as a result of issues such as the war in Iraq, asylum seekers, or the war on terror?

Dimension 5: Civic Participation

Q21. Do you feel that, in Australia, average citizens can influence governments if they want to?

Q22. If an issue arose in your local neighbourhood which you wanted to address, how would you go about this?

Q23. Have you ever contacted your local council or local Member of Parliament to complain about a community problem?

Q24. Do you feel that you have access to the information that you need about local community services?

Dimension 6: Appreciating the Meaning of Life and its Value

Q25. Do you think that you are valued by the Australian Arabic community?

Q26. Do you think the Australian Arabic community is valued by the wider Australian society?

Q27. How important is religion to you?

Q28. Is religion more or less important to you now than it was three years ago?

Interview Questions for Community Leaders

Section A - Social Participation

Q1. How do members from the Arabic speaking communities socialise?

Q2: So what do you think about other forms of socialising?

Q3: What types of community organisations do members of the Arabic speaking communities belong to?

Q4: Are there any particular events or activities that are preferred by the Arabic community?

Section B - Social Ties and Support

Q5: When needing support, who would members of the Arabic speaking community be most likely to turn to and why?

Q6: What are the existing social networks or services - either Arabic specific or mainstream - that are available to the Arabic speaking community?

Q7. How knowledgeable is the community about the services and support networks that exist for the Arabic speaking community?

Q8: How likely is it for the Arabic speaking community to use the services that they do know of and why?

Q9: Are there any factors that might prevent them from using Arabic specific services?

Q10: How close-knit and clustered is the Arabic speaking community?

Q11: How close-knit is the Arabic speaking community with the Anglo-Celtic community and other communities?

Q12: Is there a need to strengthen social participation in the Arabic speaking community?

Section C - Mutual Relations and Trust

Q13: How trusting are members of the Arabic-speaking community of persons outside their cultural background? And what are the reasons for this?

Q14: How does the community see the police and their relationship with the police force compared to that in their countries of origin?

Q15: How safe is the community here? and has this affected community confidence?

Section D - Control and Self Efficacy

Q16: How do you feel the community views the current social climate?

Q17: How different is the social climate today from five or ten years ago?

Q18: What effect has the current social climate had on the community's health? Physically, emotional, mental?

Q19: Are there any particular health effects that have occurred in Arabic communities?

Q20: What effect has the current social climate had on the community's well-being?

Q21: What effect has that had on the family and the community in terms of education and training, employment, crime or culture ?

Q22: What support is the community basically lacking?

Q23: Can Arabic communities adopt any measures to change or improve their existing services?

Section E - Civic Participation and Commitment to Others.

Q24: How do you view the ability of the Arabic community to influence government?

Q25: How well networked is the Arabic community with local government?

Q26: How confident or active is the Arabic-speaking community in contacting Members of Parliament and raising issues of concern?

Q27: How much interest have Members of Parliament shown in reaching and addressing needs identified by members from the Arabic-speaking community?

Section F - Appreciating the Meaning of Life and its Value

Q28: Do you think the Australian Arabic community is valued by the wider Australian society?

Appendix B: Crime Statistics

Victorian Police crime data represents only those offences known to Police for which a crime report has been completed. Victoria Police crime statistics record instances of more than 3,000 statutory or common law offences grouped into 23 broad offence categories which are further grouped into four classes of crime: crimes against the person; crimes against property; drugs; and other crimes. Personal details, including some related to ethnicity, are recorded for suspects taken into custody or identified by police.

Victoria Police publish information on offender ethnicity in their crime statistics under the headings:

- Alleged offenders processed by offence and racial appearance; and
- Alleged offenders processed by offence and country of birth

This information is stated for more than 90% of crimes processed. However, personal details such as racial appearance are frequently based upon the subjective assessment of the attending police rather than upon verified 'official' information or even confirmation of the police assessment from the offender. Since the reliability of such subjective assessments varies widely, this clearly constitutes a problem for the interpretation of data. The Victoria Police employ four 'race' categories of offender: Aboriginal; Asian; Caucasian; and Other. People of Middle Eastern origin are included within the 'Other' category but it is doubtful whether consistent assessment of such personal characteristics can be verified.

Police crime data is essentially a record of police activity and should not be interpreted as a complete picture of criminal activity. Not all crimes are made known to police and for some crimes, such as minor crimes relating to property or crimes relating to family assaults, or indeed most assaults, police statistics might not be considered particularly reliable. Victimisation studies often show considerable variance from official police data. Greater reliability can be placed on the recording of the most serious offences such as homicide but even then, definitions change over time. Rather than reflecting changes in criminal behaviour, fluctuations in recorded crime may result from changes in police procedures, changes in systems for recording data or changes in community attitudes.

Reported offences for a particular time period consist of those offences recorded during that time period, regardless of when an offence occurred or was reported to police. The Offence Rate is offences per 100,000 population (population derived from ABS Estimated Resident Populations).

The Victoria Police employ three methods of counting crime:

- For all crimes against the person and most property crime, data represents the number of victims of crime.
- For "victimless" crimes (eg: possession of drugs), data represents the number of offenders.
- For a few offences (eg: piracy), data represents the number of incidents.

Victoria Police crime statistics record only the most serious offence arising from a criminal action. Unlike crime statistics for some States, Victorian data does not show the lesser charges that may be laid as a consequence of a particular criminal action. Where multiple offences of the same type occur simultaneously, a

single offence is recorded. Where multiple offences of the same type occur at different times or locations, multiple offences are recorded.

Offences dealt with by penalty notice and traffic offences are not recorded in Victoria Police crime data.

Clearances constitute police activity including the processing of offenders and conclusion of investigations where the police assessment was that no offence occurred or a complaint was withdrawn or where a perpetrator was known but could not be charged. Clearances do not necessarily constitute successful prosecutions.

The ABS collate national crime statistics from data collected by police in all States and Territories. Police data is complemented by information from sources such as crime victimisation surveys. The aim is to provide Australia-wide comparable data as a basis for assessing longitudinal trends. While attempts have been and continue to be made to standardise the recording of crime data across Australia, considerable differences remain in definitions of crime and recording methods between States. Consequently, it may not be safe to draw comparisons between incidence rates for many crimes, or between offender characteristics such as ethnicity, between criminal jurisdictions or over long time periods.

The ABS' *Measuring Australia's Progress*" (2004) defines two categories of crime: household crimes; and personal crimes. Household crimes include theft of a motor vehicle and actual or attempted break-ins. Personal crimes include assaults, sexual assaults and robbery.

Appendix C: Measures of Income Disparity

Income disparity, a measure of the gap between rich and poor, can be assessed by comparing the incomes of the highest earners with those of the lowest earners. This is commonly done by dividing the population into quartiles, quintiles or deciles and calculating income share ratios and their derivatives, such as the Gini Co-efficient. Quintile data for Australia for several years can be found in Income Distribution, Australia, (ABS 6523.0) and in Winter (2000).

Comparative Income Unit Quintile Shares - Australia

Quintile	1981-82	1986	1990	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1999-00
Lowest (first)	4.6%	4.8%	4.8%	3.6%	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%
Second	9.8%	9.7%	9.7%	9.3%	9.1%	9.4%	9.0%	9.0%
Third	16.6%	15.9%	15.5%	15.2%	15.0%	15.2%	15.0%	15.0%
Fourth	24.8%	24.4%	23.9%	24.0%	23.7%	24.0%	23.9%	23.8%
Highest (fifth)	44.2%	45.3%	46.2%	47.9%	48.3%	47.5%	48.3%	48.5%
Q5/Q1 ratio	9.61	9.44	9.63	13.31	12.71	12.50	12.71	12.76
Gini Co-efficient	0.400	0.410	0.420	0.443	0.437	0.444	0.446	0.448

Relative income disparity can be calculated by comparing the share of total weekly income of the lowest and highest quintiles, expressed as the Q5/Q1 ratio. A Q5/Q1 ratio of 10 means that the total income of the highest quintile is ten times the total income of the lowest quintile. The higher the ratio, the greater the disparity in incomes. Across Australia, income disparity as measured by both the Q5/Q1 ratio and the Gini Co-efficient has increased substantially over the last two decades. The proportion of total income received by all but the highest one-fifth of the population has declined while that of the highest earners has increased. In 1981-82, the highest quintile received 9.6 times the income of the lowest quintile. By 1999-200, the highest quintile share of total income had increased by more than 4% and its value was 12.8 times the income of the lowest quintile. However, much of the increase in income inequality occurred prior to 1994-95. There was little change in the quintile shares of gross income during the second half of the 1990s. In 1997-98, the ABS household expenditure survey showed the lowest quintile of income units to have a mean income of \$124 per week (Australia-wide) while the highest quintile had a mean income of \$1,590.

Government pensions and allowances were the principal sources of income for the lowest quintile. Only a small proportion of the quintile was classified as employed. This section of the population included a high proportion of single people, a third of whom did not occupy an independent household. The principal source of income for the highest quintile was wages and salaries. A large proportion of the quintile were two-income families.

Calculations of income inequality based on gross income can be supplemented by more sophisticated measures. When adjustments are made for income tax

contributions and the relative needs of differing households, the income inequality apparent in quintile shares of total income is reduced.

Income Unit Quintile Shares - Australia (1999-2000)

Quintile	Gross weekly income	Disposable income	OECD Equivalent	Henderson Equivalent
Lowest	3.8	4.7	6.7	7.1
Second	9.0	10.8	11.6	12.8
Third	15.0	16.2	16.9	17.7
Fourth	23.8	24.0	24.1	23.8
Highest	48.5	44.3	40.7	38.5
Q5/Q1 ratio	12.76	9.43	6.07	5.42
Gini coefficient	0.448	0.396	0.346	0.317

Source: Income Distribution, Australia, (ABS 6523.0)

Disposable income calculations decrease the Q5/Q1 ratio by around 25% while equivalent income calculations reduce the Q5/Q1 ratio by half. Most of the adjustment occurs within the highest and lowest quintile shares. The Henderson and OECD Equivalence scales give slightly different weight to particular income unit characteristics. As a result, the Henderson Scale tends to indicate a lower level of income inequality. Neither scale shows a significant change in income inequality in recent years.

Notes

¹ The ABS General Social Survey conducted in 2002 utilised a sample of around 3,700 Victorians (15,500 people Australia-wide aged 18 years and over), approximately balanced for the proportions of the population born in Australia and overseas. With a sample of that size, State data is not safely delineable at the level of major birthplace groupings other than "Australia", "main English-speaking countries" and "other". Consequently, data for groupings as specific as the Australian-Arabic community in Victoria is unavailable.

² A communal establishment is defined as an establishment providing managed residential accommodation. Managed means full-time or part-time supervision of the accommodation. In most cases (for example, prisons, large hospitals, hotels) communal establishments can be easily identified. Small hotels and guesthouses are treated as communal establishments if they have the capacity to have 10 or more guests, excluding the owner/manager and his/her family. Sheltered housing is treated as a communal establishment if less than half the residents possess their own facilities for cooking.

³ In an interview with Geraldine Doogue on ABC's Radio National, Tuesday 25/12/2001.

⁴ The Census measures related to ethnicity include: Country of Birth; Country of Birth of Mother/Father; Main Language Other than English Spoken at Home; Religious Affiliation; Proficiency in Spoken English; and Year of Arrival in Australia.

⁵ Other indexes relevant to ethnicity include the Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC), the Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL) and the Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups (ASCRG).

⁶ A question on religious denomination has been included in all Australian Censuses but answering the question has always been optional. Consequently, Census data on religious affiliation must be regarded as less reliable than other Census measures.

⁷ Nor do the ABS religious definitions differentiate between the various forms of Buddhism, which has even more adherents in Australia than Islam.

⁸ Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (2003) Fact Sheet: Australians of Arab, Middle Eastern and North African Birth and Ancestry, sourced to unpublished Census data and the CIA World Fact Book, 2002.

⁹ Islam is the official religion of Egypt and many Christian Egyptians migrated following independence.

¹⁰ See the 'Inter-community Relations and Trust' section of this text.

¹¹ Khoo, S. E., P. McDonald, D. Giorgas and B. Birrell, Second Generation Australians, Report for the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, 2002: 127

¹² The Census measures of non-English speaking persons indicate only those people aged 5+ years who normally speak a particular language at home, not all speakers of that language.

¹³ Although the ABS' "Measures of Australia's Progress" (2004) notes that small rural localities with low socio-economic levels often exhibit very high rates of crime.

¹⁴ The proportion rose from a low of 20% for those arriving in 1992 to 26% for those arriving in 1996.

¹⁵ The assessment of English language skills in the OMRG (1977) report is based upon data from the 1991 Census. Skill levels for some Australian-Arabic groups may have changed since 1991.

¹⁶ The survey results apply only to those who normally speak a particular language at home, not to all speakers of that language. Survey reliability has been evaluated according to the number of people providing valid responses to the first-language literacy self-assessment.

The survey employed a four-point ordinal scale ranging from 'very poor' to 'very good'. In our analysis, the results have been collapsed to a two-point scale for ease of presentation and to increase the reliability of the data for the smaller language groups.

Some language groups scored slightly higher on English prose literacy than on English Report literacy. The prose literacy tests included material from newspapers, magazines and brochures. Report literacy refers to material which includes items such as tables, schedules, charts, graphs, maps and forms.

It would be expected that first-language prose literacy would also be higher than first-language Report literacy. Material containing tables, charts, etc., is less likely to be understood than that containing only prose.

¹⁷ Higher qualifications include postgraduate degrees, graduate diplomas and graduate certificates, bachelor degrees and advanced diplomas.

¹⁸ To identify the tenor of reporting of religious affairs in the mass media, we carried out a survey of reports and articles in *The Age* newspaper from June 2004 to November 2004. Details were recorded where religion was a substantial element of a story. Of 140 reports and articles recorded, 104 (74%) focussed primarily upon Christianity, 24 (17%) focussed primarily upon Islam, 8 (6%) concerned issues related to interactions between Christianity, Islam or Judaism and 4 (4%) concerned other faiths. Reports and articles where the major focus was the ongoing wars in the Middle East or conflicts in Eastern Europe were omitted from the analysis.

¹⁹ David Brooks is a senior editor at the US journal *The Weekly Standard* and a columnist with *The New York Times*. His article entitled "West too squeamish to discuss death cult" appeared in *The Age* on September 9, 2004.

²⁰ Gerard Henderson is executive director of The Sydney Institute and a regular contributor to *The Age*. His article entitled 'These ideologues do not believe in a dialogue' appeared in *The Age* on September 14, 2004.