

# Multicultural Australia

Australian Labor Party 1996 Policy Document - Multicultural Australia, Canberra, ALP, 1996, pp 6-7.

## **Australian Labor Party Multiculturalism policy for 1996 Federal Election**

Labor has built multiculturalism into a strategy for national cohesion and development for the next century, when the 2000 Olympics will once again place our multicultural achievements at the centre of world attention.

Labor, with its commitment to inclusiveness, social justice, tolerance and respect for diversity, has shown how multiculturalism works for the benefit of all Australians.

Under Labor, multicultural policy is a balance between rights and responsibilities.

The prime responsibility of all Australians, regardless of background, is commitment to Australia and to its laws and values. In return, Australia offers a range of rights, such as the right to equality, to respect for cultural heritage, freedom from discrimination and the right to social support.

Labor's multicultural policies embrace the unique contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to our nation.

## ***Labor has:***

- established a National Multicultural Advisory Council
- defined in a Multicultural Compact the principles of multiculturalism, including its rights and responsibilities
- set a target for the appointment of people of non-English speaking backgrounds to Government boards and advisory bodies
- maximised the economic value of multiculturalism through 'Productive Diversity' initiatives
- marked 1995 as the United Nations International Year for Tolerance with a national program celebrating the achievements of multicultural Australia
- attracted international recognition for Australia's multicultural achievements at the Global Cultural Diversity Conference in Sydney in 1995
- supported the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia with a total of \$1.2m since 1992-93
- provided a total of \$660,000 in core funding to State/Territory Ethnic Communities' Councils, and the Association of Non-English Speaking Background Women of Australia, since 1994-95

## ***Labor will:***

- present the Multicultural Compact to the Council of Australian Governments to seek the endorsement of all governments for the principles of the Compact
- advance the principles of multiculturalism and Access and Equity in a Commonwealth/State context at the Council of Australian Governments
- keep Multicultural Affairs within the Prime Minister's portfolio
- strengthen the policy advice and policy formulation role of the Office of Multicultural Affairs
- strengthen co-operation between our ethnic and indigenous communities
- strengthen the Access and Equity program across Government
- continue to proudly advance the strengths of our multicultural society to the international community.