The Australian Government plays an important role in ensuring Australia continues to be one of the most culturally diverse and socially cohesive nations in the world. Improving employment and community participation among newly arrived migrants and refugees has financial and social benefits to communities and helps maintain social cohesion. When people are participating fully in communities there is reduced likelihood of extended welfare dependence, and at worst, marginalisation and radicalisation.

What was announced in the 2016 Budget?

The 2016 Budget includes $10.9 million over three years for two measures to help support newly arrived migrants and refugees in ways that will promote social cohesion, with a particular focus on improving the speed and success of pathways to employment.

These measures will help to strengthen people’s sense of belonging in Australian society and increase social cohesion and economic participation.

Increasing Community Hubs

With an investment of $5.7 million over three years, the Government will increase the number of Community Hubs – a programme that helps migrants and humanitarian entrants connect with their communities.

Our priority will be on ensuring hubs exist in all locations where newly arrived humanitarian entrants and migrants will be settled. Community Hubs are a proven effective way to bring together newly arrived migrants and to increase their participation and engagement in the community, and their sense of belonging.

Career Pathways pilot

The Government is investing $5.2 million over three years for a new career pathways pilot programme targeting newly arrived, skilled humanitarian entrants with vocational level English proficiency.

The pilot will provide targeted support to help humanitarian entrants find employment in jobs that match their skills. It will be delivered by selected service providers and will complement employment assistance already available to Australian jobseekers.

Key facts

The National Community Hubs Programme has been running for six years. In the first half of 2015, it is estimated that the existing 39 Community Hubs were visited more than 250,000 times.
Increased funding for the National Community Hubs programme will:

- Increase the number of Community Hubs by up to 30.
- Engage an expected additional 12,000 new migrants and humanitarian entrants in community supports and activities.

The new Career Pathways pilot programme will:

- Be delivered in selected locations across Australia.
- Benefit up to 1200 humanitarian entrants.
- Involve humanitarian entrants that have qualifications and/or professional or technical trade skills and vocational level English language proficiency.
- Assist in improving job outcomes for participating humanitarian entrants and increase their contribution to Australian workforce productivity.

More information

For more information about this measure and other Department of Social Services' Budget measures, visit the Department of Social Services website (www.dss.gov.au).

For information about the 2016 Budget, visit the Australian Government budget website (www.budget.gov.au).