

FECCA calls for action on wage theft

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) said today that a report on underpayment of migrant workers raised matters of deep concern.

The report *Wage Theft In Silence: Why Migrant Workers Do Not Recover Their Unpaid Wages in Australia*, follows a survey of 4,322 international students, backpackers and other temporary migrant workers.

The Chairperson of FECCA, Mary Patetsos, said: "This report finds that almost a third of these workers earned \$12 an hour or less, about half the casual minimum wage.

"It is deeply concerning that so few of these workers took action to claim their correct wages, despite knowing that they were being underpaid. Employers need to step up and do the right thing."

The report indicates that a quarter of the workers surveyed fear their immigration status would be impacted if they took action to reclaim wages and many believed they would not be successful in doing so.

"FECCA believes there needs to be a better process for wage recovery, stronger support services and a guarantee that a worker's visa will not be put at risk for reporting wage theft," Ms Patetsos said.

"It is unacceptable that people know they are being underpaid but are afraid to report it."

The [Wage Theft in Silence](#) report was authored by senior law lecturers Bassina Farbenblum, from the University of New South Wales, and Laurie Berg, from the University of Technology Sydney.

FECCA is the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Our role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of our constituency to government, business and the broader community.

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