

FECCAe-NEWS

The Newsletter of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia



National Multicultural Women's Conference 2016

3-4 November 2016, Parkroyal Parramatta, Sydney

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From the FECCA Chairperson



Welcome to our September edition of FECCA e-News.

It has been a busy month, for FECCA. We held our thematic event on languages – Australia's shifting linguistic landscape: Language policy and practice. Dr Joseph Lo Bianco, Professor of Language and Literacy

Education at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education was our keynote speaker. This event served as a backdrop to launch FECCA's report - [Australia's growing linguistic diversity: An opportunity for a strategic approach to language services policy and practice.](#)



This report is an outcome of FECCA's consultation and research to develop an evidence base on language service provision in Australia's 'new and emerging' languages. The report considers the complexity of addressing language services needs in view of the dynamics of the migration, and particularly the humanitarian program, over the recent years, and proposes sustainable, flexible and forward-looking solutions.



We are nearing our inaugural National Multicultural Women's Conference 2016 – *Influencing Change: Vision and Impact*. Join us and engage in in-depth conversations and the exchange of ideas relating to issues affecting migrant and refugee women, as well as develop professional networking across the sector. Registration for the conference is still open, and we have a full program of speakers for the two days. For more information

and to register, visit: <http://www.nmwc2016.com/index.php>

We are also pleased to announce that the Australian Human Rights Commission will be hosting 'A Conversation in Gender Equality', with Australia's Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins. The consultation will be held on Friday 4 November, from 7:30am - 8:30am. The Commissioner is keen to hear about the challenges people are facing in their families, their workplaces and their communities. She would also like to hear about what opportunities for change there are, and how this can inform her work going forward. All attendees must be registered to attend the consultation. To find out more or to register visit: <http://www.nmwc2016.com/gender-equality.php>

Joseph Caputo OAM JP

FECCA NEWS

FECCA releases report proposing strategic approach to language policy and practice in Australia

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) held a thematic event on 'Australia's shifting linguistic landscape: Language policy and practice' at the Museum of Australian Democracy (Old Parliament House) in Canberra today.

Dr Joseph Lo Bianco, Professor of Language and Literacy Education at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, was our keynote speaker for the event.

The event also featured the launch of FECCA's report, 'Australia's Growing Linguistic Diversity: An opportunity for a strategic approach to language services policy and practice'.

The report provides an analysis of FECCA's consultation and research to develop an evidence base on language service provision in new and emerging community languages, that is, languages spoken by individuals who came to Australia as humanitarian entrants over recent years.

FECCA Chairperson Joe Caputo said, "The provision of language services can enhance access to social services for migrants, assist to alleviate isolation and lead to better connections with the community."

"Quality language services can also improve health outcomes and enable access to fundamental rights, such as the right to a fair trial. The availability of well-trained, competent interpreters to work with individuals in complex circumstances, such as family and domestic violence situations, is critical to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of these individuals."

Training options for interpreters in new and emerging community languages is limited. In this report, FECCA has recommended an optimal training and accreditation model, based on a review of the various models across jurisdictions and the identification of good practice elements. There is a strong need for a national, multi-jurisdictional program to increase the quantity and quality of language services to meet the language services needs in new and emerging languages.

With the diversity of Australia's population increasing, a solution to address language services needs for emerging languages must be sustainable, flexible and forward-looking; one that can be contextualised and applied to specific languages and the changing circumstances of supply and demand.

Dr Joseph Lo Bianco, Professor at the University of Melbourne stated, "To build our interpreting, translating and mediation services we need high levels of proficiency, support for less commonly taught languages, flexibility and innovation."

"It is in the interests of the entire national community that we support language services, because by doing so the entire community benefits."

The proposed solution could also have a positive flow-on effect for addressing language services supply and demand gaps for other, more established languages, by developing evidence of good practice and innovative solutions. FECCA's report outlines a way forward.

Read Australia's Growing Linguistic Diversity: An opportunity for a strategic approach to language services policy and practice [full report here](#).

Read Australia's Growing Linguistic Diversity: An opportunity for a strategic approach to language services policy and practice [Executive Summary here](#).

Family migration vital for successful settlement

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) welcomes the Productivity Commission's report from its inquiry into Australia's Migrant Intake. The report is an important contribution to our understanding of the impact of Australia's migration programmes.

FECCA is strongly opposed to the Commission's recommendations with respect to parent visas, which appears skewed toward fiscal impacts. The social and cultural contribution of family stream migration should not be underestimated.

The Productivity Commission's report recommends that the Australian Government amend arrangements for permanent parent visa applicants. In the short term, the Commission says the Government should:

- increase substantially the charge for contributory parent visas;
- narrow eligibility to non-contributory parent visas to cases where there are strong compassionate grounds to do so, accompanied by clear published criteria to limit applications for such visas;
- consider lowering the caps for contributory parent visas; and
- introduce a more flexible temporary parent visa that would provide longer rights of residence, but with requirements, as for other temporary visas, that the parents or sponsoring child would meet the costs of any income or health supports during the period of residence.

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection advises there is approximately a 30 year wait before visa grant consideration for parent (non-contributory) visa applications. There is a delay of up to 50 years for people applying for remaining relative and aged dependent relative visa applications. The associated costs for contributory parent visas are also significantly higher than those for non-contributory visas.

FECCA NEWS

FECCA Chairperson Joe Caputo said, “The availability of family reunion is essential for successful settlement, allowing migrants to maintain family ties and connections. Family reunion is also related to core human rights principles around the rights of Australians to live with their family members.”

“FECCA is fundamentally opposed to the imposition of a fee for immigration to Australia. Australia’s migration intake should be balanced and merit-based, not based on the financial means of a potential migrant. A holistic approach should be adopted, looking at the skills and other contributions of migrants”, said Mr Caputo.

FECCA believes the Migration Programme must achieve a balance between skilled and family migration. We are concerned that the report’s recommendations do not adequately recognise the importance of family migration. Overlooking the benefits of Family migration may lead to the system being heavily skewed toward skilled migration.

[Read FECCA’s full response to the Productivity Commission’s report on Australia’s Migrant Intake here.](#)

Attempts to weaken 18C threaten strength of RDA for multicultural Australia

The Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia (FECCA) opposes attempts to amend and weaken Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act.

Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act provides important protection against racially motivated attacks, including hate speech, against members of Australia’s culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

FECCA Acting Chairperson Eugenia Grammatikakis said, “Attacks against CALD communities have increased in recent years, causing distress for the individuals and communities affected, while promoting exclusion and fear.”

The Racial Discrimination Act attempts to strike a balance between the right to freedom from racial vilification and the right of freedom of expression. FECCA opposes the proposal to remove the words “insult” and “offend” from section 18C of the legislation.

Section 18D sets out exemptions to ensure that conduct will not be unlawful where done reasonably and in good faith (that is, in the performance, exhibition, artistic work; for any genuine academic, artistic or scientific purpose, or any other genuine purpose in the public interest).

FECCA believes that the 2014 debate on this issue was extensive and does not need to be re-opened. There was an overwhelming community response against changes to the Racial Discrimination Act; with thousands of community members and their organisations expressing alarm that the

then proposed repeal of 18C, would strip protection from the most marginalised members of our society and threaten social cohesion in Australia.

“FECCA reiterates our opposition to any amendment of 18C that would see a weakening of provisions that are crucial to ensuring harmony, by protecting vulnerable groups. We continue to stress the importance of the Australia’s diverse society in coming together to foster community harmony and cohesion”, said Ms Grammatikakis.

FECCA Access and Equity survey

Feedback and complaints mechanisms allow you to tell service providers when you are not satisfied with the quality of their service or when they haven’t met their service commitments. These mechanisms can also be used to provide positive feedback, suggestions or compliments about a service.

You can access feedback and complaints mechanisms for a vast array of government services, including health, employment, aged care or disability services.

FECCA is consulting to find out how well known feedback and complaints mechanisms for government services are to migrants, refugees, and culturally and linguistically diverse Australians, and how these mechanisms can be improved to be more accessible and best suited to these communities.

You can complete the survey [here](#).

Employability Skills Training

FECCA made a submission to the Department of Employment about the design of Employability Skills Training, which is one part of the Youth Jobs PaTH package announced in the Budget in May. FECCA highlighted the need for consideration of, and responsiveness to, the particular needs of young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with regard to the planning and implementation of programs.

You can read FECCA’s submission [here](#).

Working Holiday Maker Visa Review

The Government is undertaking a review into tax arrangements for working holiday maker visa holders. FECCA made a submission to highlight concerns that removing access to the tax free threshold for this cohort will further exacerbate exploitation and underreporting.

You can read FECCA’s submission [here](#).

STAKEHOLDER UPDATES

Police recruitment brochures - Translations available

Victoria Police recruitment brochures are now available in 26 community languages, most of which are new and emerging.

The brochures outline the role police play in the community and the process of becoming a Police Officer. A Police Officer performs duties that are diverse and challenging. Police serve to protect life and property, detect and apprehend offenders, and help those in need of assistance.

The languages available are: English, Amharic, Burmese, Chinese (Simplified), Chin-Hakha, Dari, Dinka, Farsi, Hindi, Indonesian, Juba-Arabic, Karen, Korean, Nuer, Oromo, Pashto, Punjabi, Sinhalese, Somali, Swahili, Tamil, Thai, Tigrinya, Turkish, Urdu and Vietnamese.

Victoria Police strives to be an inclusive and diverse workforce which represents the community it serves.

For more information visit: <http://www.policecareer.vic.gov.au/police>.

How to lodge this tax time

There are four ways people can lodge this year, so that everyone's needs and preferences are covered:

1. Online using [myTax](#)

[myTax](#) is quick, easy, safe and secure. So far, over 1.8 million people have lodged their 2016 tax return using myTax. Once a tax return has been lodged, myTax can also be used to make changes if needed. This year, myTax is available for all individuals, including sole traders. You can also use myTax complete a tax return for the years 2015 and 2014, if returns for either of these years haven't been lodged and need to be, and you meet the myTax eligibility criteria for these years.

2. Our free [Tax Help](#) service

ATO-trained volunteers assist people to prepare and lodge their tax returns. Anyone who has simple tax affairs and earns around \$50,000 or less can use Tax Help. Tax Help is available from July to October in all capital cities and many regional areas across Australia. Find the nearest Tax Help centre in the attached work document 'Tax Help locations 2016'.

3. A [paper tax return](#)

Some people may not be able to lodge online. They can order paper tax returns and instructions [online](#) or by calling **1300 720 092**.

4. A [registered tax agent](#)

Anyone who is using a tax agent for the first time, or using a different tax agent this year, needs to make contact with them before the end of October 2016.

The deadline for options 1, 2, and 3 is **31 October 2016**.

We have information about tax time on our website in 17 languages: [Arabic](#), [Assyrian Neo-Aramaic](#), [Bengali](#), [Chinese](#), [Dari](#), [English](#), [Hindi](#), [Indonesian](#), [Korean](#), [Punjabi](#), [Russian](#), [Sinhalese](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), [Tamil](#), [Urdu](#), or [Vietnamese](#).

STAKEHOLDER UPDATES

Have you worked in Australia as an international student, working holiday maker or on another temporary visa?



Please take a 5 minute, anonymous survey and have your say on working conditions in Australia.

\$1,500 in prizes on offer

Multiple choice, in 10 languages



<http://bit.ly/2czWCI8>



MULTICULTURAL NEWS & EVENTS



Invitation to Ethnic Communities - Walk Together 2016

FECCA is proudly supporting Welcome to Australia's event, Walk Together this year. Walk Together is an annual celebration of Australia's diversity, designed as a tangible expression of the welcoming, fair and compassionate society we're committed to building.

Walk Together 2016 will be a huge celebration of diversity and a loud declaration that thousands of Australians believe we can become a nation known for our compassion, generosity and welcome.

Faced with increasing instances of fear and prejudice, it's more important than ever for values of compassion and welcome to reign. The overall goals for the event are to provide an opportunity for individuals and organisations to express their belief in a welcoming, inclusive community, in a non-political way that celebrates diversity and the benefits it can give to our society.

We invite you and your organisations, to take part in this year's Walk Together event, held in your city, to showcase your support to an inclusive and cohesive Australia. Details can be found here: www.welcometoaustralia.org.au/walk-together-2016/

This year, we would like to see more cultural diversity being celebrated throughout Australia at Walk Together 2016. We believe our diverse ethnic communities have an important role to play in shaping our future.

Invite your friends, wear your colours and let's celebrate our cultural diversity. If you would like to do more, contact walktogether@welcometoaustralia.org.au

Let's celebrate our future and let's walk together on October 22. #WeShareOurFuture

Carers Count!

Help raise awareness this National Carers Week by saying Thank You to Australia's unpaid carers for all they do and let them know how much they count!

National Carers Week 2016 (16 – 22 October) is a time to recognise and celebrate the outstanding contribution that Australia's 2.8 million unpaid carers make to our nation.

1 in 8 Australians provide unpaid care and support to a family member or friend with a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail aged. Carers make an enormous contribution to our communities as well as our national economy and National Carers Week provides you with a chance to show your appreciation.

This National Carers Week you can get involved by visiting the website and taking a couple of minutes to say Thanks, showing your support to help build a carer-friendly Australia. By doing so, you can help us demonstrate the considerable community support for Australia's carers.

You can also help raise awareness by rounding up workmates, friends and family for a National Carers Week event, drawing attention to who carers are, what they do and how they can access services and supports.

Organise a morning or afternoon tea, fundraiser or workshop to raise awareness of the diversity of carers and the roles they perform, and take advantage of the opportunity to inform friends and colleagues of the support services available to carers.

Visit www.carersweek.com.au for more information on how you can Say Thanks and get involved! You can also help spread the word through your social media channels with the hashtag #Carers2016

MULTICULTURAL NEWS & EVENTS



Brotherhood
of St Laurence

Working for an Australia free of poverty

Would you like to mentor a young person?

Apply to become a mentor in the ReSource Youth Program and you can help young people of refugee, migrant and asylum seeker backgrounds reach their aspirations.



The Brotherhood of St Laurence's ReSource Youth Program works with young people of refugee, migrant and asylum seeker backgrounds in the Hume and Whittlesea local government areas, empowering them to make informed decisions about education, training, employment and volunteering pathways.

We are looking for mentors who:

- have trade or professional experience, particularly in the following industries – HR, IT, engineering, retail, hospitality, sport and recreation, health and community services
- can provide mentoring to a young person or group of young people at fortnightly meetings in Epping or Broadmeadows
- are able to commit to 6–12 months' involvement, with some availability during business hours.

You can apply to become a mentor by:

- emailing your application with a current resume to volunteer@bsl.org.au
or
- submitting an online expression of interest at: bsl.org.au/mentoreoi

For further information, please call one of our Youth Development Officers on **9422 5650** or view the position description at: bsl.org.au/mentorpd



This program is supported by the Federal Department of Social Services and the Office for Youth of the Victorian State Government.

BSL JN 1112_mentors

Anti-Poverty Week

16-22 October 2016



**Poverty and severe hardship affect more than a million Australians.
Around the world more than a billion people are desperately poor.**



In Anti-Poverty Week help fight poverty and hardship.

- Why not organise a display, stall or award?
- Maybe a workshop, lecture or forum?
- How about a fundraiser, fact sheet or petition?

For more information and ideas:

- visit www.antipovertyweek.org.au
- email apw@antipovertyweek.org.au
- call 1300 797 290

MULTICULTURAL NEWS & EVENTS



Griffith University NDIS Symposia Series

NDIS and CALD communities: Aiming high for equitable access

What steps will ensure people from CALD backgrounds with disability are best supported by the NDIS?

Date: Tuesday, 11 October 2016, 8.30am - 4.30pm
Venue: Multi-Faith Centre, Building N35, Nathan Campus
Griffith University - 170 Kessels Road, Nathan.
Cost: \$100 Standard / \$25 Concession
Register: <http://events.griffith.edu.au/d/vvqmvk>



Griffith University is proud to partner with AMPARO Advocacy Inc on its ninth NDIS Symposium. It's a series that brings together people with disability, their families, researchers and professionals to ask some challenging questions about the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). AMPARO Advocacy defends, protects and promotes the rights and interests of vulnerable people from a non-English speaking background who have a disability.

This symposium will explore:

- What can we all do to ensure that culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities have equitable access to the NDIS?
- How do we create culturally safe and responsive systems?
- What are the experiences of individuals with disability and families from CALD backgrounds?
- What can we learn from the Victorian NDIS trial site in Barwon on working with refugee communities?

This event appreciates the support of the Queenslanders with Disability Network, Community Resource Unit, Queensland Council of Social Service, Mamre Association, Speaking Up For You, MDA, Access Community Services, Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma and Diversicare.

More Information/Register via Event Website

Registrations now open online >> <http://events.griffith.edu.au/d/vvqmvk>
Email ndissymposia@griffith.edu.au / Phone 07 3382 1458 (please leave a message)