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Budget Policy Division  
Department of the Treasury  
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Submitted online

### **FECCA's Budget Priorities 2018-2019**

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) is the national peak body representing Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and their organisations. FECCA's membership comprises state, territory and regional multicultural and ethnic communities' councils. FECCA has an elected executive committee and a professional national secretariat, responsible for implementing policies and work programs on behalf of its membership and stakeholders.

FECCA welcomes the opportunity to highlight its budget priorities for 2018-2019. Budget priorities should include:

- Access and equity for CALD Australians to Government services
- Ensuring that people from a CALD background have the opportunity to fully participate in the Australian economy and society; and
- Protecting Australia's productive and harmonious multicultural society.
- Ensuring that diversity in aged care is inclusive and respected.

#### **Protection of Multiculturalism and challenging racism**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Improve resourcing of the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Race Discrimination Commissioner.
- Provide additional funding for the National Anti-Racism Partnership and Strategy (NARPS) and maintenance of resourcing for the Racism Stops with Me campaign would achieve much better, more comprehensive community reach and awareness, as well as outcomes with regards to tackling discrimination, racial and religious intolerance.

#### **SBS**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Provides appropriate resources to the SBS to support its distinctive and unique role in supporting CALD Australians.
- Reinstates SBS's base funds of \$8.7 million for the FY2018–19. (This is the money that was removed from the base funding in anticipation of additional advertising

flexibility; however, the legislation to enable this flexibility failed. Because the money was taken away in advance, SBS has been required to go back to the Government each year to have it reinstated. This funding is essential to SBS being able to continue to provide valuable programs and services to Australia's diverse society).

### **Access and Equity**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Continue to support peak body organisations including FECCA, NEDA, MYAN and other representatives of CALD communities to ensure that CALD Australians have equality in access and experience of Government services.
- Provide appropriate resources to ensure the digital access and equity gap to Government services is bridged for CALD users.
- Provide appropriate financial support for co-production of all services.
- Ensure appropriate funding for feedback and complaints mechanisms which drive quality and improvements to systems and appropriate supports to allow CALD individuals to access these mechanisms.
- Implement cultural competence training across all Government agencies and organisations funded by the Commonwealth.
- Caters for the language needs of all migrants through the provision of language services, whether through interpreting, translating or bilingual work.

### **Settlement Services**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Ensure adequate resourcing for settlement services with priority for ethno or cultural specific community organisations.
- Make settlement services available to all migrants who arrive in Australia, including asylum seekers.
- Ensure government funded settlement services be provided to eligible and needy migrants beyond their first five years of life in Australia. Settlement can be a life-long process, and thus this time limit is often inadequate.
- Ensure appropriate funding for English language programs to be provided at no further cost as part of their settlement process. We would urge for an expansion beyond the 510 hours.

### **Domestic and family violence**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Give priority to the following actions in the Third Action Plan (2016-19) of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children through:
  - Development of appropriate visa arrangements for temporary residents who are experiencing violence.
  - Review of eligibility requirements to enable more victims of violence to access financial support particularly those on temporary visas.
  - Work with service providers to improve access to temporary residents to available support services.

### **Ageing and Aged Care**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Adequate resources are attributed to embedding the National Aged Care Diversity Framework across the sector and the forthcoming CALD action plan.
- Provide adequate funding for ethno-specific organisations to assist CALD older people and their representatives to access *My Aged Care*.
- Provide adequate funding for CALD peak body organisations such as FECCA to engage their members and communities to inform best practice to achieve an equitable aged care system.
- Provide targeted funding to develop a bilingual and bicultural aged care assessment team, that is adequately resourced to assist CALD older people and their families to access government subsidised aged care through inclusive practice/assessment models.
- Funding for a linguistic supplement to be added to the suite of supplements which providers can utilise to optimise services for CALD consumers of Home Care Packages. This supplement will assist with understanding the Home Care Agreement, understanding of goal setting to ensure that wellness and re-ablement initiatives are embedded into care plans, interpreting of care, service and support plans, translation and interpretation of the monthly budget and ongoing linguistic support throughout the life of the Home Care Package.
- Ensure ongoing resourcing of the *My Aged Care* portal.
- Funding for a separate but aligned diversity portal of the Gateway to ensure that diverse aged care population groups are able to access supports and services in a respectful and inclusive way.
- Ensure that people living with dementia are supported to access aged care services. Linguistic support to be funded for people whose first language is not English.
- Funding of a specialised advocacy service for people living with dementia, in residential aged care facilities. Advocates to undertake targeted dementia training.
- Expansion of the CALD Link Worker program currently undertaken by Dementia Australia. Currently only three linguistic groups are catered for, which is insufficient to meet the needs of the community.
- Funding for a digital platform to assist older CALD people and their representatives to locate inclusive aged care services.
- Funding provided to FECCA to facilitate opportunities for the most vulnerable members of diverse communities to participate in aged care dialogue and articulate change, including advocacy with and on behalf of these groups.

### **Disability**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Ensures sufficient funding to multicultural sector organisations to develop and implement strategies aimed at empowering and strengthening capacity of culturally and linguistically diverse communities to participate in the NDIS.
- Ensures that the NDIA implements the National Disability CALD Strategy and funding is allocated to educating CALD communities on the NDIS.
- Works towards providing a solution that minimises the division between core government support services in the community for older people with disability.

### **Mental Health**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Ensure adequate long-term funding plan for the Mental Health in Multicultural Australia (MHIMA) Framework.

### **Diversity in the public service**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Provide funding to ensure that the Australian public service is reflective of the diversity of Australia's population at all levels, and across all departments and agencies. This may require:
  - Changes to recruitment and hiring practices.
  - Programs of mentoring and pathways for leadership aimed at public servants from CALD backgrounds.

### **Migrant Worker Protection**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Provide appropriate resourcing to the Fair Work Ombudsman to improve their outreach and services for migrant workers, including temporary migrant workers.

### **Support CALD young people find a pathway to work**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Support the introduction of additional assistance for CALD youth – in particular refugee and newly arrived migrant youth – to enable young people to develop the skills and acquire the experience needed to gain employment through, for example:
  - Appropriate support to ensure fair treatment and reasonable work conditions for CALD young people who are more vulnerable to pressure and exploitation.
  - Flexibility in the Employability Skills training, rather than a fixed term program. For some CALD young people, Employability Skills Training may require longer periods.
  - Culturally appropriate case management support during the intern and employment phases, particularly for those less familiar with Australian cultural and workplaces systems and structures.
  - Additional funding for the involvement of specialist youth or community organisations as part of the jobactive engagement process.
  - Provision of information in preferred languages.

### **Visa Cost**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Refrain from raising the cost of visa applications, particularly the costs associated temporary parent visas and other family based visas.

### **Skilling Australia Fund**

FECCA recommends that in the 2018-2019 Budget the Government:

- Locate alternative funding for the Skilling Australia Fund rather than implementing the levy on employers who hire migrant workers. Migrant workers should not be held responsible for unemployment levels or skills gaps amongst Australian citizens.