

FECCA calls on Government to ensure diverse voices are heard in the postal vote

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) has urged the Government to ensure that diverse voices are heard in the proposed postal vote on marriage equality.

Ms Eugenia Grammatikakis, Acting Chair of FECCA said: "FECCA calls on the Government through the Australian Electoral Commission and the Australian Bureau of Statistics to ensure that Australians of all backgrounds are included on the electoral roll and are fully informed of the postal vote process."

"Postal votes are unfamiliar to most Australians including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. It is critical that an inclusive process is adopted and that appropriate information and support is provided throughout the process to communities vulnerable to being disenfranchised," she said.

Ms Grammatikakis continued: "The 2016 Census shows that more than one fifth of Australians (21 per cent) speak a language other than English at home and nearly half of Australians had either been born overseas or have one or both parents who were born overseas."

"This means that information including how to register on the electoral roll, and on the postal vote process, must be provided to CALD communities through a range of channels and community languages," she said.

Ms Grammatikakis emphasised: "This must be a priority for the Government to prevent the disenfranchisement of individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds."

"As was the case with the 2016 Census, this type of education campaign requires resources and time. FECCA would welcome details about how CALD communities will be informed and included in this process and would be pleased to work with the ABS and AEC to this end."

FECCA is the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. FECCA's role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of its constituency to government, business and the broader community.

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