

FECCA welcomes Labor funding promise for Asian Languages

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) has welcomed a commitment by the Federal Opposition, announced today, to a \$32 million increase in funding for the teaching of Asian languages.

The Chairperson of FECCA, Mary Patetsos, said: "This increase in resources for Asian language teaching is an important step in improving the quality and scope of language education and FECCA applauds the initiative.

"FECCA also believes that Australia should make the most of the educational resources made available via the huge numbers of people in Australia who are already multilingual.

"We need to see our political leaders fund community language schools and ensure responsive language services, as part of an integrated national policy framework."

Ms Patetsos said that national debate around language policy did not take account of the existing multiculturalism and multilingualism of Australia.

"This is a remarkable gift to the nation and should form the basis of a comprehensive approach to language education, including a mandatory second language as well as support for community schools, interpreter services and a bilingual workforce.

"Such a framework would contribute even further to the the economic and social benefits that decades of immigration have brought to Australia," Ms Patetsos said.

In 2016, FECCA published a major report, *Australia's Growing Linguistic Diversity: An opportunity for a strategic approach to language services policy and practice*, available [here](#).

In 2017, FECCA released a report on bilingual and bicultural workforce, available [here](#).

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.

Contact: 0403 044 216 / emma@fecca.org.au