

Homelessness figures

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) said today that Australian Bureau of Statistics figures showing rates of homelessness for people of overseas origin were a cause for great concern.

The ABS figures show that in 2016, people who were born overseas and arrived in Australia over the previous five years accounted for 15 per cent (17,749 people) of all the homeless on Census night.

In 2016 there were also 9,514 people living in 'severely crowded' dwellings who were born overseas and who had arrived in Australia in 2011 or earlier, up 61% when compared to 2011.

The Chairperson of FECCA, Ms Mary Patetsos said: "These figures show how vulnerable newly arrived migrants are when they first come to Australia.

"The early years are when they most need help—and proposals to extend the waiting periods for welfare support will put these people at even greater risk.

"People of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background often face discrimination when applying to rent a home as well as when trying to find work.

"All of this contributes to their risk of homelessness and exclusion.

"We need to help them through first challenging years in their new land, not make settlement more difficult for them," Ms Patetsos said.

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

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