

ADVANCING MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia

POLICY PLATFORM **2022**



ADVANCING MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA: Election response to FECCA's Policy Platform

For over 40 years, FECCA has proudly worked alongside multicultural communities, broader Australian society and both Coalition and Labor governments to help build an Australia where everyone, no matter their background or how long they have lived in this country, can belong equally and without barriers.

In the lead up to the 2022 election, FECCA consolidated many challenges and barriers into eight areas for action across society in [Advancing Multicultural Australia: The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia Policy Platform 2022](#).

With only 8% of candidates in the federal election coming from a diverse background¹ it is important for everyone in Australia to consider how each party is responding to the needs of our multicultural society.

FECCA's Policy Platform was sent to the major parties for response, town halls were held across the country and candidates were met face to face.

Multicultural Election Advocacy in Action

During the campaign period we saw a Federal Election Forum held in Wollongong by the Multicultural Communities' Council of Illawarra (MCCI), Western Sydney's Migrant Resources Centre's (MRC) Meet the Candidate Forum, a Vote to Influence held by the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland and many other important events. Communities raised issues of housing, cost of living, communication with culturally and linguistically diverse communities and how parties planned to ensure diverse representation at all levels of society. Candidates responded with plans for affordable housing and increased support for Medicare, dual citizens to be permitted as representatives in parliament, doubling of humanitarian visa entrants and enhanced community sponsorship program.

Meetings were held across the country explaining challenges and solutions and ultimately directly asking candidates for change. Many promises were made throughout the campaign including, both the ALP and LNP making commitments of \$1.6 million towards building costs of a new Vietnamese Cultural Centre in Girrawheen. Amongst other promises, the ALP committed \$700,000 to fund a new kitchen and community centre for Sikh Volunteers Australia and \$15 million to give every community language school in Australia a funding boost of up to \$30,000. LNP commitments included \$5 million to multicultural and religious community groups to make their places of worship and gathering safer and reduce youth disengagement and anti-social behaviour and \$1.5 million for Hindu Community Hub at the Sri Vakrathunda Vinayagar Temple in Basin Victoria.

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2022/may/16/only-8-of-candidates-in-the-federal-election-come-from-diverse-backgrounds>



Major parties' responses

FECCA received responses from the Australia Labor Party (ALP) and the Australian Greens (Greens) on their commitment to advancing multicultural Australia. At time of publishing, the Coalition had not responded.

Party responses and announcements tracked against the FECCA Policy Platform 2022 recommendations, as of 20 May 2022

FECCA's recommendations	Coalition commitments	Labor commitments	Greens commitments
<p>Establish an Office for Multiculturalism to ensure a cohesive and coordinated whole-of-government approach to multicultural policy</p>		<p>Labor will support the development of a fair, productive and cohesive society by reviewing how the national government supports multiculturalism.</p> <p>The review will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • institutional arrangements required to meet the needs of multicultural Australia at the commonwealth level • existing state and territory legislative and regulatory frameworks, programs, and services • roles and functions of government and non-government organisations respectively, and the appropriate relationship between them to ensure the most effective planning and provision of programs and services to migrants • diversity and inclusion strategies that considers the hiring and retention of culturally and linguistically diverse staff service wide in order to build a public service that better reflects multicultural Australia at all classification levels. 	<p>The Greens will establish a Commonwealth Government Multicultural Commission</p>



1. A Fair and Inclusive Society			
Establish a First Nations Voice protected by the constitution.		Labor will implement the Uluru Statement in full – Voice, Treaty and Truth.	The Greens were the first party to support the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full. Their full plan for Treaty and First Nations Justice includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishing a Truth and Justice Commission; ● Providing funding for First Nations health; ● Compensation for Stolen Generation survivors; ● Caring for Country, and; ● Fixing our justice system.
Commit to an informed and resourced anti-racism strategy.		Labor will commit \$7.5 million to fund the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) to complete its National Anti-Racism Framework and implement a comprehensive national anti-racism strategy.	The Greens platform centres the need for a national anti-racism strategy with \$50 million in funding over four years to deliver the strategy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● \$40 million in grants to community organisations and local governments to deliver programs that tackle structural racism, create awareness and empower communities to prevent racism ● \$5 million for national anti-racism campaigning.
Create a whole of government mechanism to overhaul the Australian migration program resulting in a fair, timely and transparent pathway to citizenship.			The Greens have also called for significant reform to provide pathways to permanent residence for temporary visa holders.
2. Equitable Access and Outcomes from Government Services			
Implement a revised Multicultural Access and Equity Policy Framework that is strong, transparent and includes mandated reporting and data collection from all government departments and agencies.		Labor will ensure government departments review and update departmental Multicultural Access and Equity Policy Guides to ensure programmes and services are fit for purpose.	The Greens will implement a Multicultural Access and Equity Policy Framework that requires all non-corporate Commonwealth entities, such as government departments and agencies, to report annually to the Commission on action taken to promote multiculturalism, the use of interpreting and translation services, and the extent to which people from diverse backgrounds have been represented on boards and committees.



3. Inclusive Policy and Practice Design			
Boost funding for multicultural community organisations to ensure the voices of culturally and linguistically diverse people are meaningfully included in policy and practice design.	The Coalition will build on their \$62.8 million social cohesion investment that is strengthening community unity and resilience including supporting enhanced engagement with multicultural communities.		The Greens will commit \$10m per year for a Multicultural Fund, which will make grants to organisations promoting social cohesion through innovation, education and intercultural Cooperation.
Establish a national working group on culturally and linguistically diverse data collection.		Labor will introduce whole-of-government standards for measuring Australia’s diversity, to improve policy design, resource allocation, inform diverse hiring standards and service planning.	The Greens will provide \$5m for a National Working Group on Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Data Collection, to ensure the data that government collects is informed by and reflects the full extent of Australia’s multiculturalism, diversity and intersectionality.
4. Effective Communication for All			
Fund and sustain a package of language support to include translations; interpreting; a Community Review Panel; in-language and in-culture support options and community engagement.			The Greens will commit \$10 million to establish a National Language Support package, to help government better connect with people in multiple languages.
Implement extensive digital literacy programs tailored to multicultural communities to support the increased use of online services.		Labor will improve the accessibility of digital government services for those with low digital literacy and those who speak English as an additional language.	
Boost funding for the public broadcasters to bolster their in-language service offering and capability.	The Coalition will provide the SBS with \$959 million over the next three years – an increase of \$62-million over the current three year funding period.		The Greens will ensure the ABC and SBS have increased funding, enabling them to bolster their in-language service offering and capability.



5. A Secure and Successful Multicultural Workforce			
Develop a national comprehensive multicultural workers' rights education plan designed and delivered with multicultural and ethno-specific organisations.		Labor will also ensure that application forms and information on business support programs are available in a range of community languages and in plain English.	The Greens will commit \$20m to develop a national comprehensive multicultural worker rights education plan designed and delivered with multicultural and ethno-specific organisations.
Pilot a language allowance model to recognise and remunerate bilingual aged care workers and apply findings to other sectors to support the delivery of culturally responsive care		Labor will expand the ability and availability of frontline government services staff with language skills and nuanced cultural understanding to undertake case work in language.	The Greens will pilot a language allowance model to recognise and remunerate bilingual aged care workers and apply findings to other sectors to support the delivery of culturally responsive care.
6. Access to Quality Health Care for All			
Fund the Australian Multicultural Health Collaborative to support the voice of people from culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse backgrounds to provide advice and guidance to the Australian Government.			The Greens support the principle and foundation of an Australian Multicultural Health Collaborative and would work with stakeholders and the community to ensure that it meets the needs of the community for a consideration of funding.
Establish within the Department of a Health a specialist policy unit to advise and coordinate health policy development, program design and implementation that is inclusive of the needs of multicultural people.			The Greens would support a Department of Health specialist policy unit to advise and coordinate health policy development, program design and implementation that is inclusive of the needs of multicultural people which has representation of and collaborates with those communities it seeks to benefit.
Make the 'Framework for Mental Health in Multicultural Australia' mandatory for all States and Territories	The Coalition will invest \$17.8 million to provide mental health support to multicultural communities across Australia		The Greens would support states and territories in legislating the 'Framework for Mental Health in Multicultural Australia' to ensure that this is achieved.



7. Culturally Responsive Aged Care for All

Develop a multicultural-specific aged care navigator service based on full evaluation of the EnCOMPASS program within the Care Finder model, and support and sustain it with core funding.

The Greens would provide \$10m in funding to develop a multicultural-specific aged care navigator service based on full evaluation of the EnCOMPASS program within the Care Finder model.

8. Culturally Responsive Disability Services for All

Apply the learnings from the NDIS Multicultural National Community Connector Program to reform the NDIS infrastructure to ensure equity of outcomes for multicultural people with disability.

The Greens would apply the learnings from the NDIS Multicultural National Community Connector Program to reform the NDIS infrastructure to ensure equity of outcomes for multicultural people with disability.

