



# ECCV Analysis of the Victorian State Budget 2014-15 Building a Better Victoria

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The key focus of the 2014-15 Budget in the Budget Paper 1, Treasure's Speech on 6 May 2014 was on new infrastructure investment to drive job creation, productivity and economic growth in Victoria.

The State Government allocated \$24.4 million to fund its current multicultural programs in 2014-15. That amount is a similar amount to the 2013-2014 budgets. Allocations were made to the following programs.

## New and Emerging Communities Leadership Program

\$1 million over four years for the New and Emerging Communities Leadership Program includes \$200,000 for the new Nelson Mandela Ubuntu Leadership program, that extends the existing African Community Leadership Program, specifically assisting African communities - refer to page 43, [Budget Paper No 3 Service Delivery](#).

### *ECCV comment*

ECCV believes this initiative is part of the OMAC (Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship) Multicultural Multifaith Youth Network

## Multicultural Communities Infrastructure Fund (MCIF)

\$6 million over two years for the Multicultural Communities Infrastructure Fund (MCIF) is continued to help build new and enhance existing multicultural community facilities as well as revitalise cultural precincts.

### *ECCV comment*

ECCV notes that the MCIF consists of small grants for not-for-profit community organisations representing culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and local councils in Victoria that can demonstrate the community facility to be enhanced is used primarily by CALD groups. The funds are for minor works to existing community facilities such as a building extension to provide additional meeting space or a kitchen upgrade.

Major grants funds in the MCIF include significant upgrades or construction of community facilities as well as streetscape enhancements to cultural precincts with relevant cultural theming. The three long standing cultural

precincts in the City of Melbourne consist of Chinatown in Little Bourke Street; the historic heartland of Melbourne's Italian community in Lygon Street, Carlton; and Melbourne's Greek precincts in parts of Lonsdale and Russell Streets.

### Transport initiatives for international students

From 2015, the Government will provide subsidised travel on public transport for eligible international students in partnership with higher education providers - refer to page 7, [Budget Paper No 1, Treasurer's Speech](#).

#### *ECCV comment*

ECCV welcomes the public transport support for international students. If however, international students need to purchase an annual concession ticket in advance to be eligible. Such an upfront payment would be a significant financial burden for some students.

### Major outputs to support and strengthen communities by OMAC

The Budget Paper lists outputs and performance measures within government departments. The following is an excerpt as listed on page 217, [Budget Paper No 3, Service Delivery](#).

The Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship (OMAC) coordinated the following performance measures and outputs related to the provision of services and support to culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse communities.

Major Outputs/Deliverables Performance measures	Unit of measure	2014-15 Target	2013-14 Expected outcome	2013-14 Target	2012-13 Actual
*Cultural Diversity Week events supported by the Victorian Multicultural Commission	Number	300	349	200	298
Grants approved	Number	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,400
Language services projects implemented	Number	15	15	15	15
Seminars delivered under the Migrant and Refugee Rights and Responsibilities Seminar Program	Number	90	93	55	64

\*The Budget Paper No 3 notes that the 2013-14 expected outcome is higher than the 2013-14 target, as community interest was higher than expected due to greater community awareness. The 2014-15 target has been revised upwards to reflect this.

#### *ECCV comment*

ECCV welcomes the continuation of the OMAC programs for Victoria from culturally diverse backgrounds.

In particular ECCV welcomes the continuation of the 2,300 grants approved in the table above representing Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) grants to support, develop and sustain local ethnic and multicultural organisations and programs, especially new and emerging communities in the areas of:

- Promoting Harmony: multifaith and interfaith
- Building and facilities improvement
- Multicultural festival and events Round One and Two
- Community language schools program
- Strengthening multicultural communities
- Organisational support
- Multicultural senior citizen organisational support

ECCV notes that the 2013-14 and 2014-15 targets have remained the same despite an increase in the number of new and emerging community language groups

ECCV welcomes the language services projects implemented in the table above and believes they include:

- Interpreter Scholarship Project
- Professional Development courses for practising interpreters and translators at venues such as Monash University
- OMAC Multilingual Government Information Online Project that ECCV participated in through its Stakeholder Group meetings to develop two booklets for the Victorian whole-of-government policy and procedures for *Using Interpreting Services* and *Effective Translations*.

The Budget Paper No 3 noted that the 2014-15 target Rights and Responsibilities Seminars increased due to the incorporation and the transfer of the Refugee Action Program, an education program for newly arrived communities in January 2013 from the Department of Justice to the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship (OMAC).

ECCV welcomed the opportunity to partner with OMAC in delivering some of those sessions in its Capacity Building Forums.

For further information contact Dr Irene Bouzo, Senior Policy Officer, ECCV at email [ibouzo@eccv.org.au](mailto:ibouzo@eccv.org.au) and telephone 03 9349 4122