

ECCV Position Paper

New and Emerging Communities

ECCV notes that new and emerging communities represent considerable diversity within and across ethnic communities. Australia ranks among the top three refugee resettlement countries in the world¹ and our permanent immigration program includes Skilled, Family and Humanitarian visa groups from a large number of different countries.²

ECCV is aware that continuing international tensions are creating increased numbers of displaced persons seeking refuge in the world's main immigration countries including Australia.

ECCV emphasises that people from new and emerging communities in Victoria are from the Middle East and South-West Asia, Asia and Africa regions.³

ECCV defines new and emerging communities as those groups that:

- recently settled in Australia
- are small in number but with a significant increase in the previous five years
- lack sufficient infrastructure resources relative to established ethnic communities.⁴

ECCV notes that people from new and emerging communities may experience some or all of the following⁵:

- lack established family networks, support systems, community structures and resources, relative to more established communities
- are more vulnerable than established communities as they are often from a refugee background and have experienced displacement due to civil unrest
- have low levels of education and workforce skills due to displacement

¹ DIAC Settlement Planning Update March 2012

² DIAC *The Outlook for Net Overseas Migration May 2011*

³ Australian 2010-2011 Humanitarian Program resettlement in DIAC Annual Report 2010-2011 page 6

⁴ James Jupp AM, *Defining New and Emerging Communities* in Australian Mosaic Issue 24, March 2010 p10-12 and Policy Document FECCA New and Emerging Communities Policy *Supporting New and Emerging Communities to Participate in and Contribute to Australian Society 2010*

⁵ Adapted from FECCA New and Emerging Communities Policy Statement 2010

- have limited English language skills
- are unfamiliar with mainstream government services that are available in Australia and are less likely to be able to locate services that can help them meet their basic needs
- experience employment and job advancement barriers
- face difficulties gaining recognition for overseas qualifications

ECCV emphasises that data collection based on country birth of many refugees and migrants does not necessarily capture their social, cultural and ethnic background as many have moved across borders before arriving in Australia and often children born in one country may have parents from a different country.

ECCV is aware that people from refugee and emerging community backgrounds may be more vulnerable to racial, cultural and religious discrimination in Australia as well as the negative impacts of stereotyping resulting in limitations on their social and economic participation.

ECCV believes there is a need for on-going targeted support for newly arrived migrants and refugees in Victoria as successful settlement of people from predominantly non-English speaking countries is often dependent on the quality and level of support they receive as they begin their new life in Australia⁶.

ECCV applauds the initiatives of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) that support the initial settlement of newly arrived migrants and refugees in Australia and in particular the DIAC Community Profiles⁷ on a range of new and emerging communities to assist service providers.

ECCV advocates for a clearer focus by Government departments on the needs of new and emerging communities, and in particular a whole-of-government approach.

ECCV notes that the largest groups of recent arrivals in Australia are from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, Sri Lanka. Others are from Egypt, China, Kuwait, Lebanon, Turkey, Syrian Arab Republic, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Fiji, Eritrea, Uganda, Korea, South, Indonesia, Nigeria, Myanmar, Somalia, India, Saudi Arabia and Viet Nam as well as Stateless Persons.⁸

⁶ Adapted from FECCA New and Emerging Communities Policy Statement 2010

⁷ DIAC website at <http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/settlement-planning/community-profiles.htm> accessed 3.5.12

⁸ According to the AMES Humanitarian Settlement Scheme update (March 2012)