



Inquiry into the value of skilled migration to Australia: ECCV Submission

JANUARY 2026



About ECCV

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) is the peak body for people from migrant and refugee backgrounds in Victoria. ECCV works closely with more than 200 member organisations including ethnic associations, multicultural service providers, and regional ethnic communities' councils.

ECCV has been advocating for human rights, freedom, respect, equality and dignity for migrant and refugee communities, and for a socially cohesive and inclusive Victorian community, since 1974.

ECCV has a strong record of informing industry, practice and influencing Federal, State and Local governments to promote culturally responsive approaches and equitable access to services, anti-racism and socially just policy.

Suggested citation

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) (2026). Submission to the Inquiry into the value of skilled migration to Australia. Melbourne, Australia.



ECCV acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay respect to their Elders past and present.

Key Recommendations

1. Create a unified framework for overseas skills and qualifications recognition across Australia, with independent oversight by an Ombudsman to ensure transparency, consistency and accountability in decisions and processes.
2. Integrate and streamline the system so that skills recognition for migration, licensing and employment purposes is connected, reduces duplication and cuts unnecessary red tape, speeding up outcomes for skilled migrants.
3. Provide financial support to help individuals afford the recognition process, and develop a centralised online portal with clear, accessible information on requirements, pathways and requirements across professions and states/territories.
4. Establish local hubs with skills recognition navigators - specialist advisers who help overseas-trained professionals navigate the recognition system and connect them with employment opportunities aligned with their qualifications.
5. Establish a formal quarterly review cycle of the Core Skilled Occupation List to ensure the skilled migration program remains responsive to current and emerging labour market needs.
6. Explore options for further reform of skilled migration visa settings to provide predictable and timely processing, genuine job mobility and clear pathways to permanency supported by strong integrity and enforcement measures.
7. Extend or make permanent the Workplace Justice Visa and Strengthening Reporting Protections pilots.
8. That the Government re-commit to full implementation of the recommendations contained in the Final Report of the Migrant Workers' Taskforce.
9. Make temporary migrants eligible for the Fair Entitlements Guarantee so that they can receive financial assistance for unpaid wages and entitlements from employers who go out of business.
10. Consider further options to allow greater employment mobility for migrants on sponsored visas, to reduce the risk of exploitation by employer sponsors.
11. Work with State Governments to establish networks of organisations in each state to provide education to migrant workers about their rights as employees and about supports available.
12. Review the funding allocated to regional settlement services given the greater level of capacity-building work required to ensure successful settlement for refugees in regional Australia.
13. Take a place-based approach to regional settlement by working closely with settlement providers to regularly review and monitor service gaps, workforce needs, and the availability of appropriate local supports, amenities and programs.
14. Extend eligibility for aspects of settlement services to skilled workers settling in regional Australia.
15. Strengthen public confidence in skilled migration by proactive communications and campaigns about why skilled migration is essential, where skilled migrants are contributing across the economy, and how migration settings are coordinated with housing infrastructure and settlement planning.

‘Migrants are not just job seekers; they are an asset to the Australian economy.’

- **Australian Multicultural Framework Review, 2024**

Introduction

Skilled migration is a critical contributor to Australia’s economy, public services and long-term prosperity. It also contributes to the vibrant cultural diversity that defines modern Australia. In the context of the twin challenges of population ageing and ongoing skills shortages, skilled migrants support productivity growth, business continuity, and service delivery - particularly in sectors such as health, aged care, disability services, education, construction, engineering, and regional economies.¹ Moreover, skilled migration facilitates the transfer of knowledge, skills, and international connections to Australian workers and businesses, including in areas such as advanced manufacturing.

Furthermore, skilled migration is, and has always been, a complementary component of Australia’s labour market. It does not detract from building a sustainable local workforce; rather, it fills critical skills gaps and strengthens national economic capability.

Notably, the recent Australian Multicultural Framework Review highlighted that ‘skilled migrants add a staggering \$198,000 per person to the fiscal position of Australian governments over their lifetime’.²

Australia in 2026 faces significant skills shortages in key sectors, driven by population ageing, infrastructure demand and workforce gaps outside major cities. While migration is essential to addressing these shortages, Australia also has a large pool of skilled migrants already in the country whose qualifications and experience are underutilised due to barriers in skills recognition, licensing and job matching. Around 44% of permanent migrants work below their skill level, resulting in lost productivity and ongoing shortages in critical roles.

Reforming the fragmented and opaque system for recognising overseas skills and qualifications is central to unlocking this existing talent. The *Activate Australia’s Skills* campaign, supported by ECCV, calls for a unified national framework with independent oversight, streamlined recognition processes, financial support for applicants, and practical assistance through local skills-recognition hubs. These reforms would enable skilled migrants to work at their full capability, easing labour shortages and improving economic participation without increasing migration numbers.

Skilled migration also supports productivity only when visa settings promote mobility, security and fairness. Prolonged visa precarity, employer dependency and slow pathways to permanency undermine job matching, discourage skill investment and increase exploitation risks. While recent reforms such as the Skills in Demand visa and Strengthening Reporting Protections pilots are positive steps, further measures are needed to strengthen worker mobility, extend workplace justice

¹ Activate Australia’s Skills (2025). The Productivity Fast Track: Accelerating growth through better skills recognition. https://activateaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/The-productivity-Fast-Track_digital.pdf [Accessed 15 January 2026]

² Department of Home Affairs (2024). Towards Fairness: A multicultural Australia for all. <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/multicultural-framework-review/Documents/report-summary/multicultural-framework-review-report-english.pdf>, p.92. [Accessed 28 January 2026]

protections, fully implement the Migrant Workers' Taskforce recommendations, and ensure temporary migrants can access basic safety nets such as the Fair Entitlements Guarantee.

Finally, sustaining public confidence in skilled migration requires transparent data, strong protections and effective regional settlement support. Skilled migrants are vital to regional Australia, but retention depends on access to housing, services, employment pathways for families, and well-resourced settlement services. Governments must take a place-based approach to regional settlement, improve public reporting on labour market outcomes and compliance, and clearly communicate how skilled migration is coordinated with housing, infrastructure and service investment to maintain the social licence for Australia's skilled migration program.

Unlocking Migrant Talent

Australia currently faces skills shortages across multiple sectors and occupations, driven by factors such as demographic changes (especially an ageing population), major infrastructure and construction projects, digital transformation, and regional workforce gaps. Even though some labour-market pressures have eased slightly recently, shortages remain significant in many key areas, including healthcare and aged care, construction and trades, education, technology and digital, engineering and infrastructure, transport and logistics and hospitality and service roles.

In particular, our aged care workforce is currently unable to keep up with the increasing demand for care, especially given the trend away from residential care and towards more in-home care. In 2021, the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) found that Australia will need at least 400,000 additional workers across residential and in-home aged care by 2050.³

Australia does not currently have enough of the right skills in the right places to fully address these major skills gaps on its own, and both domestic workforce development and migration systems have limitations that slow solutions. However, Australia does have a large pool of already-present skilled migrants whose skills aren't fully utilised because of barriers in qualification recognition, licensing and job matching. Research shows that approximately 44% of permanent migrants are employed below their skill level, with 60% of these underutilised workers having entered through the skilled migration program, resulting in an estimated \$9 billion in foregone economic activity each year.⁴

This exacerbates existing skills mismatches - many migrants are over-qualified for their current jobs, while employers continue to report shortages in key roles. Skills mismatches and the underutilisation of skilled migrants are driven in large part by inadequate recognition of overseas qualifications and experience by accrediting bodies and employers - an issue that requires systemic reform.

³ Committee for Economic Development of Australia (2021). Duty of care: Meeting the aged care workforce challenge (2021). https://cedakenticomedia.blob.core.windows.net/cedamediatest/kentico/media/researchcataloguedocuments/recent%20research/pdfs/aged-care-workforce-2021-final_1.pdf, p.15. [Accessed 21 January 2026]

⁴ Deloitte Access Economics (2024). Billion Dollar Benefit: The economic impact of unlocking the skills potential of migrants in Australia. https://www.ssi.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/DAE_SSI_Skills_Mismatch_Report_19062024_WEB.pdf [Accessed 19 January 2026]

In Australia, qualifications recognition is in the hands of a diverse and fragmented range of professional and trades bodies. The criteria by which candidates are assessed are often unclear. Seeking review of overseas qualifications is a costly and time-consuming process.

Activate Australia's Skills is a national campaign led by SSI and supported by a broad alliance of businesses, unions, community and social organisations, to advocate for policy changes to unlock and utilise the skills of migrants so that they can work in jobs that match their qualifications and experience.

Activate Australia's Skills targets the system that recognises overseas skills and qualifications, which many migrants find slow, costly and complex. This system often prevents qualified professionals from working in their trained professions in Australia. In advocating for changes to allow migrants to work to their full potential, the campaign highlights that hundreds of thousands of skilled migrants are currently working in jobs below their level of training. It emphasises that by reforming the system to activate these existing skills, Australia can ease labour shortages in critical sectors and improve productivity.

As a signatory to the *Activate Australia's Skills* campaign, ECCV endorses the following recommendations, which align with four key reforms that the campaign advocates:

Recommendation 1: Create a unified framework for overseas skills and qualifications recognition across Australia, with independent oversight by an Ombudsman to ensure transparency, consistency and accountability in decisions and processes.

Recommendation 2: Integrate and streamline the system so that skills recognition for migration, licensing and employment purposes is connected, reduces duplication and cuts unnecessary red tape, speeding up outcomes for skilled migrants.

Recommendation 3: Provide financial support to help individuals afford the recognition process, and develop a centralised online portal with clear, accessible information on requirements, pathways and requirements across professions and states/territories.

Recommendation 4: Establish local hubs with skills recognition navigators - specialist advisers who help overseas-trained professionals navigate the recognition system and connect them with employment opportunities aligned with their qualifications.

Core Skilled Occupation List

The creation of a new Core Skilled Occupation List (CSOL) has been a key step in providing a unified approach, replacing the previous fragmented and overlapping lists and providing a clear reference point for skilled migrants and employers. Frequent updates to the CSOL are critical to ensuring Australia's skilled migration program remains responsive, credible and effective. Labour market conditions can shift rapidly due to economic cycles, technological change, demographic pressures and policy reforms, particularly in sectors such as health, care, construction, clean energy and digital industries. Infrequent updates risk locking the migration system into outdated assumptions, resulting in skills being prioritised where shortages have eased while emerging and acute gaps remain unaddressed.

More regular updates would enable migration settings to respond to real-time evidence of demand, improving alignment between visa allocations and genuine workforce needs. This would provide greater certainty for employers struggling to fill roles, reduce reliance on short-term or insecure labour, and help prevent the underemployment of skilled migrants whose occupations no longer reflect market demand. A dynamic approach would also strengthen confidence in the system by demonstrating that migration settings are driven by transparent labour market data rather than static or inflexible lists.

To support this, the Government should introduce a formal, quarterly review cycle for the CSOL, overseen by an independent labour market advisory body. This body should draw on data from the ABS, Jobs and Skills Australia, industry peak bodies and regional stakeholders to assess current and emerging shortages, with capacity to recommend interim adjustments where critical needs arise. Embedding this process would ensure migration pathways remain responsive to regional labour market conditions and aligned with long-term workforce planning, strengthening the contribution of skilled migration to economic resilience and regional development.

Recommendation 5: Establish a formal quarterly review cycle of the Core Skilled Occupation List to ensure the skilled migration program remains responsive to current and emerging labour market needs.

Supporting productivity and innovation

Australian businesses benefit most from skilled migration when visa settings are predictable and timely, allow sufficient worker mobility to improve job matching, and protect against exploitation that distorts labour markets.

Prolonged visa precarity and employer dependency reduce productivity by discouraging skills investment, limiting job mobility, and suppressing wages in certain sectors. As outlined in the following section, they also increase the risk of exploitation, underpayment and unsafe work, particularly where migrants fear visa cancellation if they report abuse.

Complex and lengthy transitions from temporary to permanent visas exacerbate these risks by discouraging job mobility and deterring the reporting of exploitation.⁵ Ties to specific employers or sponsors can further deter reporting of underpayment, unsafe work or sexual harassment, while delays in recognition pathways often push skilled migrants into low-paid work outside their profession, contributing to de-skilling over time.⁶

Skilled migration therefore only truly supports productivity and innovation when visa settings promote mobility, security and fairness. Prolonged visa precarity and employer dependency undermine job matching, skills investment and workforce participation, while increasing exploitation

⁵ Grattan Institute (2023). Short-changed: How to stop the exploitation of migrant workers in Australia. <https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Short-changed-How-to-stop-the-exploitation-of-migrant-workers-in-Australia.pdf> [Accessed 21 January 2026]

⁶ Unions NSW (2024). Disrespected, disregarded, and discarded: Workplace exploitation, sexual harassment and the experience of migrant women living in Australia on temporary visas. <https://www.unionsnsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/REPORT-NICSHR.pdf> [Accessed 21 January 2026]

risks. Productivity gains therefore depend on strong integrity settings and clear pathways to permanency, not processing speed alone.

Recommendation 6: Explore options for further reform of skilled migration visa settings to provide predictable and timely processing, genuine job mobility and clear pathways to permanency supported by strong integrity and enforcement measures.

Preventing exploitation of migrants in the workplace

ECCV commends the Federal Government for measures it has taken in recent years to reduce exploitative practices of migrants in the workplace. These steps have been taken in response to an increasing body of evidence in recent years highlighting large-scale exploitative employment practices, such as wage theft, unacceptable working conditions, bullying and harassment, and in extreme cases, slavery-like practices, affecting visa holders living in Australia.⁷

A widespread survey of migrant workers that formed the basis for the *Wage Theft in Silence* report, published in 2018, found that despite widespread underpayment of wages, fewer than one in ten underpaid workers made an attempt to seek redress. It found that migrant workers were generally aware of their rights and understood when they had been underpaid, disproving the common assumption that ignorance was a significant driver of exploitation. The main reasons that survey respondents gave for why they did not attempt to recover lost wages were a lack of knowledge about how to go about seeking redress, fear of consequences for their migration status, and a belief that it would be pointless. This indicates the need for greater support for migrant workers to help overcome these barriers.

Although it is not part of the official skilled migration program, the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme has nonetheless generated economic benefits to Australia of around \$806 million since 2022, but evidence shows these gains are not shared equitably with the workers themselves. This is highly concerning. Workers are often tied to single employers and face visa insecurity, excessive wage deductions, poor housing and high living costs, leaving many with extremely low take-home pay and undermining the scheme's stated development and remittance goals.

These widely documented conditions have led to the spectre of "modern slavery".⁸ Evidence to a NSW parliamentary inquiry and media reporting by ABC and SBS highlight exploitation linked to weakly regulated labour hire firms, underreporting driven by fear of retaliation, and thousands of workers disengaging into visa precarity.⁹ There are growing concerns about the scheme in Pasifika

⁷ See for example Australian Government (March 2019), Report of the Migrant Workers' Taskforce, p.16 – "The Taskforce acknowledges the very grave matter of criminal labour exploitation in Australia, including human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices."

⁸ Mathieson, A. (January 20 2026). 'Exploitation, underpayment and poor conditions' - Economic benefit from federal labour scheme comes at steep cost to Pasifika workers. National Indigenous Times. <https://nit.com.au/20-01-2026/22201/wealth-from-commonwealth-labour-scheme-comes-at-a-modern-slavery-cost-to-pasifika-workers> [Accessed 28 January 2026]

⁹ Woods, C. (December 24 2025). PALM scheme exploitation revealed in NSW parliamentary inquiry. Law Society of NSW Journal. <https://lsj.com.au/articles/palm-scheme-exploitation-revealed-in-nsw-parliamentary-inquiry/> [Accessed 28 January 2026]

and broader multicultural communities, and reforms to certain aspects - particularly labour hire licensing and greater worker mobility – are necessary to protect workers and maintain Australia’s credibility as a humane employer..

Another major issue of concern is the increased reporting of “sham contracting,” where employers misrepresent employment as independent contracting, requiring workers to register as a business, making them ineligible for entitlements such as annual leave, sick leave and superannuation. Due to their unfamiliarity with Australian employment law, this issue also particularly affects temporary visa holders from multicultural backgrounds.

Temporary visa holders who have experienced workplace exploitation now have access to Workplace Justice Visas that allow them to remain in Australia while pursuing legal action or government investigation against their employer. This is a positive step forward, and ECCV urges the Government to extend or make permanent the Workplace Justice Visa pilot.

Another positive recent initiative by the Australian Government was the introduction, in July 2024, of the Strengthening Reporting Protections pilot. This guarantees certain temporary visas holders that they won't have their visa cancelled for breaching conditions, if that breach is linked to workplace exploitation that they report, provided they get certification from a government agency or accredited third party. Along with the Workplace Justice Visa, this encourages reporting of exploitation by offering visa protection for migrants to stay and resolve claims, reducing fear of deportation, and affirming all workers' rights.

Recommendation 7: Extend or make permanent the Workplace Justice Visa and Strengthening Reporting Protections pilots.

After a series of public scandals, the Federal Government in 2016 established the Migrant Workers’ Taskforce to identify actions that could be taken to support vulnerable workers and to hold employers accountable for their actions. The Taskforce’s Final Report, delivered in March 2019, made a number of recommendations, including the threat of criminal sanctions and jail time for employers found to have engaged in deliberate and systemic underpayment of wages to migrant workers.¹⁰

The Government committed to implementing the recommendations contained in the Taskforce’s Final Report, but the pandemic appeared to disrupt progress towards this aim. The Government should re-commit to this process and outline the actions it intends to take to move towards full implementation of the recommendations. In particular, the Taskforce’s recommendation that workers on temporary visas be able to access the Fair Entitlements Guarantee¹¹ - the safety net that allows employees to access employment entitlements if they lose their job through the liquidation or bankruptcy of their employer - should be a priority for swift implementation.

¹⁰ Department of Employment and Workplace Relation (2019), Report of the Migrant Workers’ Taskforce. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/migrant-workers-taskforce/resources/report-migrant-workers-taskforce> [Accessed 28 January 2026]

¹¹ Ibid.

Recommendation 8: That the Government re-commit to full implementation of the recommendations contained in the Final Report of the Migrant Workers' Taskforce.

Recommendation 9: Make temporary migrants eligible for the Fair Entitlements Guarantee so that they can receive financial assistance for unpaid wages and entitlements from employers who go out of business.

The Australian Government's Migration Strategy notes that under the previous temporary skilled migration settings, linking a migrant's visa to a single employer created a power imbalance that can lead to exploitation by unscrupulous employers.¹² In response, the Government replaced the Temporary Skill Shortage (subclass 482) visa with the new Skills in Demand (SID) visa as the main temporary employer-sponsored skilled work visa.

Under the SID visa, if a job ends, a visa holder has up to 180 days to find a new sponsor, and they retain full work rights while seeking new employment. This replaces the old limit of approximately 60 days under the Temporary Skill Shortage system, helping to reduce the vulnerability of skilled migrants whose visa is tied to a single employer. The SID system also includes enhanced compliance and sponsorship obligations for employers. However, even with these changes, the risk of employer/sponsor dependence still exists. The greater the friction in changing employers, the more leverage an unscrupulous employer holds, so further steps should be considered to enhance employment mobility. Options could include:

1. Allow pre-approval of multiple sponsors (or an "open SID" period), so workers can move jobs without restarting sponsorship.
2. Permit bridging-period work with any employer in the same occupation, not only approved sponsors.
3. Enable sector-based sponsorship (e.g. aged care, construction) rather than firm-based sponsorship for shortage sectors.

Recommendation 10: Consider further options to allow greater employment mobility for migrants on sponsored visas, to reduce the risk of exploitation by employer sponsors.

Any scheme for protecting migrant workers from exploitation must include education for migrants so that they understand their rights at work, what steps they can take to avoid becoming victims of exploitative practices, and how they can seek redress if they do experience exploitation. Migrant communities need access to tailored, culturally safe education and legal assistance. The Federal Government should work with state governments to identify and fund appropriate networks of community legal centres and other organisations capable of providing education sessions to migrant workers about their rights at work. So that the responsibilities for ensuring compliance with employment and migration law do not fall entirely on employees, employers who hire temporary workers should be required to demonstrate their familiarity with the relevant laws.

¹² Australian Government (2023). Migration Strategy: Getting migration working for the nation. For workers. For businesses. For all Australians. <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/programs-subsite/migration-strategy/Documents/migration-strategy.pdf> [Accessed 22 January 2026]

Recommendation 11: Work with State Governments to establish networks of organisations in each state to provide education to migrant workers about their rights as employees and about supports available.

Supporting settlement in regional Australia

Skilled migrants are essential to the long-term economic and social sustainability of regional Australia. Many regional communities face persistent workforce shortages, ageing populations and declining labour supply, particularly in health, aged care, education, engineering, agriculture and the trades. Targeted regional skilled migration programs play a critical role in addressing these gaps, supporting business growth and maintaining essential services. However, attracting skilled migrants to regional areas is only part of the challenge; retention depends on adequate settlement support, including access to affordable housing, transport, language services, employment pathways for partners, and culturally responsive health and education services. Strategic investment in these enablers is necessary to ensure skilled migrants can settle successfully, integrate into local communities and make a lasting contribution to regional development.

Many migrants are attracted to regional Australia by job opportunities, family connections and lifestyle options. Ensuring that appropriate supports are in place for migrants settling in regional areas will require close collaboration between all levels of government, settlement and other service providers, and multicultural and ethno-specific organisations such as regional ethnic communities' councils (RECCs).

Addressing the specific needs of regional Australia, such as skills shortages, therefore requires addressing the challenges that migrants face in settling in regional areas, which will in turn make regional settlement a more attractive proposition. RECCs in Victoria have highlighted to ECCV the following main challenges for new arrivals settling in regional areas:

- Housing affordability and availability.
- Lack of proper infrastructure and services, including schools, reliable transport and health infrastructure.
- Access to affordable and regular early years education and childcare. Adult clients experience difficulties with finding suitable and affordable childcare while attending English classes.
- Long wait times for general practitioners, with some clinics not taking on new clients.
- Lack of resourcing for services to provide migrants and refugees with enough support to address all their individual needs.
- Decline in sustainable employment opportunities.
- Isolation and difficulty making meaningful connections with the community during the pandemic, the after-effects of which are still being felt by new arrivals.

These challenges highlight the need for a place-based approach to settlement, which involves addressing settlement needs at the local level, and in a manner that is tailored to different regional locations. New arrivals must have access to the support required to successfully integrate and transition to living in a new country.

Once the Australian Government has identified a regional location as an area of settlement, its suitability must be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. Local circumstances in regional settlement locations are subject to change due to different economic, social and political pressures. The Australian Government must thoroughly review those locations, in consultation with the settlement sector and regional communities, to determine local workforce needs, assess the availability of appropriate housing, and identify service gaps (such as the availability of interpreters), response strategies, and community attitudes towards migrants.

Such measures will help ensure that settlement supports in regional communities are effective, efficient and responsive to local needs. The presence of strong, adequately resourced and well-established settlement services is essential to meeting the settlement needs of regional communities and must be prioritised by the Australian Government.

Recommendation 12: Review the funding allocated to regional settlement services given the greater level of capacity-building work required to ensure successful settlement for refugees in regional Australia.

Recommendation 13: Take a place-based approach to regional settlement by working closely with settlement providers to regularly review and monitor service gaps, workforce needs, and the availability of appropriate local supports, amenities and programs.

Recommendation 14: Extend eligibility for aspects of settlement services to skilled workers settling in regional Australia.

Increasing public understanding about benefits of skilled migration

Public understanding of skilled migration remains uneven and sensitive to domestic housing pressures, service access and cost-of-living concerns amid disinformation, misinformation and, frankly, opportunism by some political actors. Communication strategies that focus solely on aggregate economic benefits have proven insufficient to counter these disturbing trends, as evidenced by the so-called ‘March for Australia’ rallies.

Improving public understanding is further constrained by some gaps in data. Limited labour market data - including demographic information on language and ancestry, and visa pathways – also obscures patterns of underutilisation.¹³ Strengthening data collection and public reporting is central to informed debate and building trust.

Effective public awareness strategies should clearly articulate:

- why skilled migrants are needed, including the specific shortages they address
- where skilled migrants are settling and working
- what complementary investments are being made in housing, infrastructure and settlement services.

¹³ FECCA (2020). If we don't count it... it doesn't count! Retrieved from <https://fecca.org.au/updates/if-we-dont-count-it-it-doesnt-count-2/> [Accessed 22 January 2026]

Sustaining public confidence in skilled migration requires transparent, accessible and locally relevant information. Without clear reporting on outcomes, protections and system impacts, public debate risks being shaped by misperception rather than facts and evidence, undermining the social licence for Australia's skilled migration program that over multiple generations has underpinned the nation's success. Furthermore, this needs to be complemented by unambiguous statements from political leaders and public officials who utilise the plethora of evidence to counter harmful and uninformed narratives.

Recommendation 15: Strengthen public confidence in skilled migration by proactive communications and campaigns about why skilled migration is essential, where skilled migrants are contributing across the economy, and how migration settings are coordinated with housing infrastructure and settlement planning.

For more information about this submission, email ECCV CEO Farah Farouque: ceo@eccv.org.au