



Settlement  
Council  
of Australia

# **Submission: Employment White Paper**

Settlement Council of Australia

NOVEMBER 2022



***We wish to thank Nikita Sharma for her assistance in preparing this submission.***

*The Settlement Council of Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we operate, the Ngunnawal people. We also acknowledge the traditional custodians on the various lands on which migrants and refugees settle across Australia, and on which our sector operates.*

*We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to our lands and waters.*

## **About the Settlement Council of Australia**

*The Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) is the peak body representing the vast majority of settlement agencies across Australia providing direct services and support to people of migrant and refugee backgrounds.*

*Our members include organisations large and small, who are committed to the successful settlement of migrants and refugees across the country. Their services range from greeting new arrivals at the airport, through to assisting them to secure housing, learn English, make social connections, access services and find their first job. Australia's settlement services are recognised as being among the best in the world.*

# Table of Contents

<b>List of acronyms</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Background</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Responses to themes</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Theme 1: Full employment.....	8
Theme 2: The future of work .....	14
Theme 2.1 Building a sustainable care economy.....	14
Theme 2.3 Digitalisation and emerging technologies.....	16
Theme 3: Job security and fair pay .....	17
Theme 4: Equal opportunities for women & a more inclusive workforce.....	18
Theme 5: Labour force participation.....	20
5.1 Reducing barriers and disincentives to work.....	20
5.2 Improving labour market outcomes for those who face particular challenges.....	24
5.3 Skills, education and training .....	26
5.4 Migration settings .....	26
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>List of recommendations</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>30</b>

## List of acronyms

<b>ABS</b>	Australian Bureau of Statistics
<b>AMEP</b>	Adult Migrant English Program
<b>ANZSCO</b>	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
<b>CALD</b>	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
<b>EAL</b>	English as an additional language
<b>IELTS</b>	International English Language Testing System
<b>PMSOL</b>	Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List
<b>SCOA</b>	Settlement Council of Australia
<b>SETS</b>	Settlement Engagement and Transition Support

# Executive Summary

Australia is a migrant nation and has relied on migration for population growth and labour productivity for decades. As the peak body for settlement services, the Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) represents a community of members whose core work is helping people make Australia home. In this submission we offer policy and program recommendations to best set up migrants and refugees to contribute to Australia's economic future.

Australia welcomes people through a range of visa pathways, including skilled, family reunion and humanitarian pathways. Acknowledging that all people who permanently move to Australia undergo a process of settlement, this submission includes consideration of the factors affecting employment of people across the full spectrum of migrants and refugees living permanently in Australia. However, we include a particular focus on the issues affecting humanitarian entrants and those arriving through the family stream, as these are the majority of clients our sector currently supports.

In this submission we highlight several barriers to the full employment of migrants and refugees including skills qualifications recognition, lack of Australian work experience, language barriers, family and childcare commitments among others. We recommend legislative and policy changes to qualification and skills recognition processes as many migrants and refugees are unable to get jobs commensurate with their qualifications and skills.

English language proficiency is clearly linked to employment outcomes for both migrants and refugees, and many sectors have high English language proficiency requirements. We advocate for increased flexibility in English language proficiency requirements amongst professional bodies and organisations responsible for skills recognition.

Much of the worker shortage in the care economy is currently filled by migrants and refugees. We argue there is more potential to fill shortages by supporting unemployed people of migrant and refugee background to enter this sector and highlight innovative programs that are training migrants and refugees in the care sector.

Securing meaningful and sustainable employment is a vital part of successful settlement which can be limited through a lack of digital skills. There is a 'digital divide' between migrants and refugees and the rest of Australia, and therefore we advocate for increased investment in digital literacy courses and devices to be given to increase independence as employment opportunities.

We advocate for improved employment opportunities for migrants and refugees, through funding programs that help refugees learn to drive, engaging specialist employment services to work with businesses, and further supporting cohorts most at risk of discrimination in finding employment. Lastly, we advocate for the government to implement its commitment to increase the humanitarian intake to 27,000 spaces per year and expand settlement services to ensure all migrants who come to Australia are supported.

# Introduction

The Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) is grateful for the opportunity to make a submission in response to the Employment White Paper. Settlement is a broad process encapsulating civic, social, and economic aspects. As the peak body for migrant and refugee settlement services in Australia, we advocate for settlement outcomes that lead to people of migrant and refugee background fully participating in society. While employment is just one aspect of settlement, it is a valuable one for migrants and refugees in feeling secure. It is important to look at the specific issues facing migrants and refugees in gaining meaningful employment as one in three workers in Australia are born overseas.<sup>1</sup>



*“Employment provides social networks, economic independence, a sense of purpose, and the means for individuals and families to feel secure and participate in wider society. It contributes significantly to good physical and mental health.”*

*-Department of Home Affairs,  
Shergold Report*

This submission follows the Employment White Paper Terms of Reference and covers most of the government’s key themes. Our submission is based on previous consultations conducted over the past 24 months, in which issues relating to employment were raised across the SCOA network. In addition, SCOA hosted a Network Meeting dedicated to our submission for the Employment White Paper with over 40 attendees from across over 30 member organisations.

Consultations with settlement agencies have highlighted that the most important issues with regards to employment for migrants and refugees are:

- Flexibility in skills recognition
- Fairness in assessing English language proficiency requirements
- The need for specialised employment support services
- Employer flexibility and employer education
- The need for government incentives for employers to hire those who face significant barriers to employment.

## Background

Australia’s permanent migration program consists of two main streams:

- Skill stream (fill labour market gaps and positions where Australians are not available)
- Family (immediate family members of Australian citizens, permanent residents, or eligible New Zealand Citizens)

In addition to the permanent migration program the Humanitarian Program currently supports individuals and families fleeing persecution to settle in Australia.

---

<sup>1</sup> Grattan Institute. (2022). *Migrants in the Australian workforce A guidebook for policy makers*. Available online at: <https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Migrants-in-the-Australian-workforce.pdf>

Many migrants also come to Australia on temporary visas (temporary skills shortage visas, international students, and working holiday makers and others), or are granted temporary visas (temporary protection, bridging visas) in Australia. As the Grattan Institute has described, “Australia’s migrant intake is accompanied by a complex set of rules and regulations that governs who can come, how long they stay, and under what conditions they live and work.”<sup>2</sup> This submission will cover suggestions for increasing employment outcomes for both migrants and refugees, noting that refugees face particular barriers in addition to other migrants.

Many migrants and refugees, irrespective of skill level and visa category, arrive in Australia with skills and aspirations for their careers, but often begin their journey struggling to find employment, or working in a job that does not match their skillset or goals. This is often due to a lack of local experience, lack of recognition of skills, and discrimination. Not being able to have one’s overseas qualifications recognised inhibits many migrants and refugees from gaining meaningful employment with career progression. A 2021 CEDA study found approximately 23% of permanent skilled migrants in Australia were working in a job beneath their skill level costing \$1.25 billion in foregone wages between 2013-2018.<sup>3</sup>

Those who arrive through the family visa stream and as refugees face further barriers. Unlike skilled migrants, they are not required to establish their employability, English language proficiency, or a high level of financial resources prior to arrival. While many will come with these resources, many others will be building their employability and learning English for the first time. Not having sufficient English language skills is a key barrier to meaningful employment. According to recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 23.5% of Australia’s unemployed population have come from areas where English is not the main language.<sup>4</sup>

Refugees may face even further barriers due to pre-arrival experiences of displacement and interrupted education and employment. Refugees in Australia experience higher rates of unemployment than other migrants, however, they are also much more likely to be entrepreneurs. Exclusion from the labour market often ‘pushes’ refugees into self-employment. For example, refugees in Australia are twice as likely to be self-employed compared with the general population. Although self-employment is often considered to be a second-best choice, it can lead to significant economic gains and spur innovation. The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) recently reported that new businesses established by refugees are likely to add about \$1 billion a year to the Australian economy.<sup>5</sup> This is not only likely to spur innovation and trade but also create jobs. However, realising these social and economic benefits depends on the support that migrants and refugees receive in their self-employment endeavours.

To overcome these various challenges, it is essential that all migrants and refugees get the right support early in their settlement journey. Irrespective of visa category, this can fast-track their employment journey and maximise their earning potential, thereby optimising the social and economic benefits for Australia as a whole.

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Committee for Economic Development of Australia [CEDA]. (2021). *A good match: Optimising Australia’s permanent skilled migration*. Available online at: <https://cedakenticomedia.blob.core.windows.net/cedamediacontainer/kentico/media/researchcataloguedocuments/recent%20research/pdfs/ceda-migration-report-26-march-2021-final.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. (2022). *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*. Available online at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release#data-download>

<sup>5</sup> Refugee Council of Australia [RCOA]. (2019). *Refugees are the most entrepreneurial migrants in Australia*. Available online at: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/refugees-are-entrepreneurial/>

# Responses to themes

## Theme 1: Full employment

**Full employment and increasing labour productivity growth and incomes, including the approach to achieving these objectives.**

Each year, thousands of migrants and refugees make Australia their home.<sup>6</sup> They bring with them a diverse range of skills, qualifications and extensive professional experience that has the potential to bring enormous value to our businesses, our economy, and our society.<sup>7</sup> In Australia, both temporary and permanent migrants are more highly educated than people born in Australia.<sup>8</sup> Evidence suggests, however, that migrants, and refugees find it relatively difficult to gain a foothold in the labour market.<sup>9</sup> Although employment rates do improve with time, they continue to lag behind other migrant groups.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, there is a growing evidence base indicating that many migrants and refugees with overseas-obtained qualifications are working in lower skilled jobs, with a lack of recognition of overseas obtained qualifications and skills a key reason for this.<sup>11</sup> Of employed migrants and refugees – most experience ‘occupational skidding’, meaning they are unable to get jobs commensurate with their qualifications and skills.<sup>12</sup>

SCOA consultations with members and industry stakeholders revealed several barriers to the full employment of migrants and refugees. These include skills qualifications recognition, lack of Australian work experience, language barriers, family and childcare commitments among others. Research has shown that skills underutilisation is mostly experienced by migrants and refugees with backgrounds in the fields of Engineering, Health, Education, Information Technology and Management.<sup>13</sup>

### Skills recognition, qualifications recognition, and licensing

The requirements to work in Australia depend on the profession. Meeting these requirements is usually a separate process to applying for a job. Occupations that require specialised knowledge and skills in Australia have registration, licensing, professional membership or other industry requirements that must be met before migrants and refugees can start working.<sup>14</sup> Relevant skills

---

<sup>6</sup> Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019). *Investing in Refugees, Investing in Australia: the findings of a Review into Integration, Employment and Settlement Outcomes for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-integration-employment-settlement-outcomes-refugees-humanitarian-entrants.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019). *Investing in Refugees, Investing in Australia: the findings of a Review into Integration, Employment and Settlement Outcomes for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-integration-employment-settlement-outcomes-refugees-humanitarian-entrants.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Grattan Institute. (2022). *Migrants in the Australian workforce A guidebook for policy makers*. Available online at: <https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Migrants-in-the-Australian-workforce.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Deloitte Access Economics (2018). *Seizing the opportunity: Making the most of the skills and experience of migrants and refugees - A research report for Multicultural Affairs Queensland*. Available online at: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/au/Documents/Economics/deloitte-au-economics-making-most-skills-experience-migrants-refugees-011118.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019). *Investing in Refugees, Investing in Australia: the findings of a Review into Integration, Employment and Settlement Outcomes for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-integration-employment-settlement-outcomes-refugees-humanitarian-entrants.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Deloitte Access Economics (2018). *Seizing the opportunity: Making the most of the skills and experience of migrants and refugees - A research report for Multicultural Affairs Queensland*. Available online at: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/au/Documents/Economics/deloitte-au-economics-making-most-skills-experience-migrants-refugees-011118.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Department of Education, Skills and Employment website: <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/services-and-resources/Pages/qualifications-recognition.aspx> (Accessed on 13 November 2022).

assessing authorities check that the skills of overseas trained migrants and refugees meet the standards they set to work in a relevant occupation.<sup>15</sup>

The issue of skill qualification recognition was the focus of a report released by the Joint Standing Committee on Migration (JSCM) in 2006.<sup>16</sup> In a later report into migrant settlement outcomes in 2017, the JSCM said, 'Many submitters [to the inquiry] have commented on the difficulty of having overseas skills and qualifications recognised in Australia.'<sup>17</sup> However, despite the JSCM reports and sector recommendations the situation has not improved.<sup>18</sup> CEDA in their 2022 Employment White Paper submission found occupational licensing in New South Wales and Queensland is among the top five most restrictive of 21 OECD nations.<sup>19</sup> If Australia reduced stringent licensing guidelines, CEDA argues Australia could gain up to \$5 billion each year from reform.

Challenges relating to skills qualification recognition include coordination and oversight, fairness of processes, system navigation, English language requirements, and costs.

### I) Federal coordination and oversight of skill recognition process

Australia does not have a consistent, national approach to overseas skills and qualifications recognition. The Australian framework for recognition is complex, and extremely fragmented. Responsibility is fragmented across several levels of government and across departments, migration systems, and industry bodies.<sup>20</sup> Further, there are 34 recognition authorities spanning 450 occupations across different states and territories. As a result, there is limited oversight regarding how effective the various processes are in contributing to labour market outcomes.

Putting in place comprehensive national legislation on recognition would assist to close these gaps. A case in point is Germany, whose *German Recognition Act* established a legal right to the evaluation of regulated professions and skilled trades under the auspices of the federal government. Similarly, Denmark has put in place a comprehensive legal framework which establishes a central recognition agency with an oversight of assessment of skill recognition of all holders of foreign qualifications.<sup>21</sup>

National legislation on recognition allows for coordination, regular monitoring of implementation, improved fairness, transparency, consistency and accountability in the recognition process. In turn, this leads to improved accessibility to regulated professions and skilled trades by migrants and refugees.

**Recommendation 1: Review and implement legislative and policy changes to qualification and skills recognition processes, drawing on international best-practice examples such as frameworks used in Germany and Denmark.**

<sup>15</sup> Department of Home Affairs website: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/working-in-australia/skills-assessment/assessing-authorities> (Accessed on 13 November 2022).

<sup>16</sup> Joint Standing Committee on Migration, Parliament of Australia (2006). *Negotiating the maze: review of arrangements for overseas skills recognition, upgrading and licensing*. Available online at: <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3793471>

<sup>17</sup> Joint Standing Committee on Migration, Parliament of Australia (2017). *No one teaches you to become an Australian: Report of the inquiry into migrant settlement outcomes*. Available online at:

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Migration/settlementoutcomes/Report](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Migration/settlementoutcomes/Report)

<sup>18</sup> Settlement Council of Australia [SCOA]. (2017). *Recognising Overseas Qualifications – Maximising on Human Capital*. Available online at: [http://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Recognising-Overseas-Skills-and-Qualifications\\_Maximising-Human-Capital-in-Newly-Arrived-Australians-1.pdf](http://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Recognising-Overseas-Skills-and-Qualifications_Maximising-Human-Capital-in-Newly-Arrived-Australians-1.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Committee for Economic Development of Australia [CEDA]. (2022). *Employment White Paper Submission*. Available online at: <https://www.ceda.com.au/ResearchAndPolicies/Research/Workforce-Skills/Employment-white-paper-submission>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]. (2017). *Making Integration Work: Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications*. Available online at: [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/making-integration-work-assessment-and-recognition-of-foreign-qualifications\\_9789264278271-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/making-integration-work-assessment-and-recognition-of-foreign-qualifications_9789264278271-en)

## II) Ensure regulatory bodies treat migrants and refugees fairly

During consultations with members and stakeholders, SCOA heard that refugees often face systemic challenges and barriers to recognition. For example, having fled from war and conflict-ridden zones, refugees often lack required documentation. Additionally, when assessment criteria and procedures lack transparency, refugees become more disadvantaged than native-born applicants in accessing regulated professions and skilled trades. Under Australia's current system, migrants and refugees have no recourse during the skills recognition process.

To ensure that recognition practices in regulated professions and trades do not discriminate against migrants and refugees with foreign qualifications but comply with principles of fairness and transparency, the 'fairness commissioners' model could be introduced in Australia. Fairness commissioners act as a liaison between migrants and refugees, and the assessment body. They represent the interests of any migrants with foreign qualifications who consider applying for the assessment and recognition of an overseas qualification to work in a regulated profession.<sup>22</sup>

Canada's Ontario province successfully pioneered the fairness commissioner model in 2006. Under this model, the *Fairness Access to Regulated Professions Act 2006* was passed. The legislation grants applicants to regulated professions several rights including the following:

- The right to obtain clear information about the requirements, assessment criteria, processes, and timelines;
- The right to timely decisions;
- The right to an explanation of the reasons driving the results of the assessment;
- The right to request a review or appeal;
- The right to a transparent, objective, impartial and fair assessment of their qualification by adequately trained assessors; and
- The right to access application records.

The Canadian legislation also established the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) which is responsible for dismantling barriers to recognition by streamlining processes, improving information and providing support.<sup>23</sup> The provinces of Manitoba, Quebec and Nova Scotia have also followed suit, and passed similar legislation. The OFC has resulted in increased accessibility, fairness and equal treatment of overseas trained refugees in regulated professions and trades in Ontario. **Ten years following its establishment, the OFC realised a 59% increase in foreign trained licensed professionals.** The highest numbers of foreign trained licensed professionals during this period were lawyers, teachers, physiotherapists, pharmacists, dentists, social workers, physicians, engineers, nurses, and engineering technicians.

A regulatory environment that mandates transparent, objective, impartial and fair registration procedures for regulated professions and skilled trades reduces undue burdens, resulting in fairer processes. This in turn opens the door to experienced migrants and refugees being able to bring their skills, knowledge and judgement into Australia's workforce.

---

<sup>22</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]. (2017). *Making Integration Work: Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications*. Available online at: [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/making-integration-work-assessment-and-recognition-of-foreign-qualifications\\_9789264278271-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/making-integration-work-assessment-and-recognition-of-foreign-qualifications_9789264278271-en)

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

## System navigation of the skills recognition process

Recognition systems usually identify competences and then validate them. This process requires digital literacy, a high command of English, being able to gather evidence of attainment, knowing which authorities are involved in the recognition process, and understanding the procedures involved. This complexity is often mentioned as one of the main obstacles to full employment of migrants and refugees in Australia. This is largely due to cultural and language differences that can make navigating the process of skills recognition more difficult for the cohort.



*“Working in a job different to that which a client is skilled and qualified for represents a missed opportunity financially and economically for both them and the community more broadly.”*  
- Deloitte Interim Evaluation of Career Pathways Pilot

Service providers, as well as migrants and refugees themselves, have reported that the processes are complex and confusing. Research conducted in Queensland in 2018 by Deloitte revealed that there does not appear to be a shared understanding regarding the need for, or outcomes of, certain processes. One example is confusion about the difference between qualification assessment (made at qualification level, not subject matter level), as compared with qualification recognition or equivalency that would be required to work in each field. This difficulty with navigation of a complex system can compound how protracted the process is in many instances. The delay in recognition can further exacerbate issues with recency/currency of skills and experience.<sup>24</sup>

The optimal pathway to navigate the system is largely dependent on an individual’s circumstances, their English proficiency, and their career goals. Yet there appears to be insufficient individualised support for migrants and refugees. Skilled migrants are not entitled to government support services like Workforce Australia, and most refugees receive the same support as all Australian jobseekers despite the obvious and unique challenges they face.<sup>25</sup>

Migrants and refugees need support to navigate the skills recognition process. The Career Pathways Pilot for Humanitarian Entrants (October 2016-June 2019) is an example of a program piloted by the Federal government to assist newly arrived humanitarian entrants to pursue relevant and satisfying career pathways utilising professional skills, education and experience acquired prior to arrival. The interim evaluation report of the pilot found that the program broadly supported clients to identify and pursue similar careers to those in which they are skilled. Providers suggested that having specialised support through the pilot was warranted and that there is demonstrable need. The program was commended for its flexibility. 11-17% of participants found employment in the same job as their pre-employment arrival, and a third of the participants had their qualifications recognised. Despite the indicators of success, the Career Pathways Pilot was not rolled out nationally.

In 2022, the Federal government introduced the following Skills Assessments Pilots:

- Pilot 1: Offered fast-tracked skills assessments for onshore migrants who have already submitted and paid for an application in a priority occupation and are awaiting an outcome (28 February 2022-17 June 2022).

---

<sup>24</sup> Deloitte Access Economics. (2018). *Seizing the opportunity: Making the most of the skills and experience of migrants and refugees - A research report for Multicultural Affairs Queensland*. Available online at: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/au/Documents/Economics/deloitte-au-economics-making-most-skills-experience-migrants-refugees-011118.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. Note that although new Workforce Australia services include a specialist stream for refugees, there are limited licenses that have been issued for these services and as such refugees in most locations do not receive specialist services.

- Pilot 2: Offers onshore migrants who reside in Australia on a family, partner, humanitarian or refugee visa with a free, fast-tracked skills assessment (28 February 2022-June 2023).
- Pilot 3: Pilot offers onshore migrants, who have previously received a suitable skills assessment in a priority occupation, with a free employability assessment and access to subsidised training to gain the specific skills required in the Australian job market (September 2022-June 2023).

SCOA commends the federal government for introducing three pilots which offer skilled migrants and refugees a pathway to improving employment outcomes and support for optimal skill utilisation. The pilots address challenges relating to long processing times and the costs of skills recognition. However, several concerns remain. Firstly, the duration of Pilot 1 was very short – 16 weeks. SCOA consultations with members and industry stakeholders revealed that most migrants and refugees were not aware of this pilot. Secondly, the eligibility for Pilot 1 was restricted to migrants and refugees with priority occupations.<sup>26</sup>

The eligibility criteria for Pilot 2 are restricted to migrants and refugees who have never undergone a skills assessment and who have skills, qualifications and/or experience directly relevant to a priority occupation. SCOA notes with concern that the eligible occupation list for Pilot 2 is not aligned with the Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List (PMSOL). For example, occupations such as Registered Nurse (Aged Care), Registered Nurse (Critical Care and Emergency), Registered Nurse (Medical), Registered Nurse (Perioperative) and Midwife were excluded from Pilot 2, yet there is a national shortage of nurses.<sup>27</sup> Further, Pilot 2 only applies to applicants on an eligible family, partner, refugee or humanitarian visa that was granted on or after 1 January 2016. This excludes refugees, humanitarian entrants and other eligible visa holders whose visa was granted before the stipulated timeline. Pilot 2 also excludes dependents of skilled migrants.

***Recommendation 2: Fund programs that provide individualised support to migrants and refugees to enter regulated trades and professions, such as the Career Pathways Pilot.***

***Recommendation 3: Review the Skills Assessment Pilots in consultation with settlement stakeholders with a view to broadening and simplifying the eligibility criteria.***

### III) English language skills requirements

The primary client base of SCOA members includes many migrants and refugees who do not speak English well or at all. As language is a key barrier to employment, accessible English language learning is essential for improving employment outcomes. In recent years there have been several welcome reforms to the Adult Migrant English Program which increase the accessibility of English language learning. This includes the removal of the 510-hour cap on tuition, and most recently, the allocation of \$20.0 million over 4 years from 2022–23 to provide more flexible delivery options for the Adult Migrant English Program.

In relation to flexible delivery options, introducing more work-integrated English language learning programmes present an opportunity for low-skilled migrants to enter the labour force

<sup>26</sup> The Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List (PMSOL) contains 44 occupations and aimed to support Australia's economic recovery from COVID-19 by allowing small numbers of sponsored skilled workers to return to Australia to fill urgent skills needs in critical sectors.

<sup>27</sup> The University of Melbourne. (2021). *The future of Australia's nursing workforce: COVID-19 and burnout among nurses*. Available online at: [https://www.unimelb.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/4085194/katelyn\\_mannix\\_report.pdf](https://www.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/4085194/katelyn_mannix_report.pdf)

and/or progress with their careers. Such approaches have been used on a small and local scale in various locations across Australia. The positive response to these initiatives aligns with international experiences. This approach was recently trialled in London through the English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) Employer Partnership pilot. The pilot helped migrant and refugee workers in low-paying jobs progress in their careers while learning English. The evaluation found the work-integrated English language learning model addressed significant obstacles to English learning including lack of time to travel to/from learning venues, not having enough time to engage with English-language activities due to precarious work, changing shifts and not being able to be released from work to attend courses.<sup>28</sup>

In addition, programs which deliver tuition that specifically teaches the language needed for a particular occupation should be supported and expanded. For example, Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS), together with key partners, coordinated a Certificate II in Engineering Studies Pilot, taught with bilingual support in the Karen language in 2020-21. At the beginning of the course, many students had low literacy and numeracy skills. It would not have been possible for students to undertake this course without bilingual and other support. The program simultaneously addressed language barriers to employment, and the need for manufacturing workers in the Bendigo region.

Recent developments in relation to the AMEP shift the program closer in the direction of flexible delivery options and create greater opportunities for work integrated English language learning. We commend the government on these developments and encourage work-integrated language learning to be a focus in flexible delivery options. We further recommend these approaches be monitored, evaluated and scaled where appropriate.

English language skills form an essential part of the skills qualification recognition process. The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test, required for skills recognition and registration purposes, expires every two years. Given the often-drawn-out nature of recognition and registration, migrants and refugees often have to pay to sit the test multiple times over the duration of the skills recognition process.<sup>29</sup> Skills recognition and professional/trade registration in most regulated professions such as health and teaching, have a high threshold for English proficiency. A minimum score of 7.0 in each of the four components (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) of the Academic IELTS, in one sitting is required. Feedback from our members indicate that the IELTS threshold is a major barrier to access of regulated professions and trades by many migrants and refugees. One way of addressing this challenge is for professional bodies and organisations responsible for skills recognition and issuance of practicing licenses to allow for flexibility on some components of the IELTS test. This of course should depend on each occupation, and the criticality of the band in question. An example is how several countries including the United Kingdom (UK), Ireland and the United States of America (USA) have lowered the threshold for the writing component for skills recognition and professional registration of nurses, from 7.0 to 6.5. In the UK, this has proven to be effective in increasing labour productivity in the health sector.

The UK has also introduced 'clubbing of IELTS' for registration of nurses and midwives. Under this system, overseas trained nurses and midwives can provide two IELTS test certificates to meet the above English proficiency requirements of S – 7, L – 7, R – 7, and 6.5 - W, provided the applicant has not scored below 6.5 in any categories in either of the test sittings. Additionally, the applicant must have taken the two test sittings within six months of each other.

---

<sup>28</sup> Greater London Authority (2021). *ESOL Plus Employer Partnership. Guide for Adult Learning Providers and Employers*. Available online at: [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mol\\_esol\\_plus\\_employer\\_partnership\\_report\\_2021\\_fa.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mol_esol_plus_employer_partnership_report_2021_fa.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Ibid

We also encourage greater use of other types of evidence such as acceptance of a pre-registration nurse, midwife or nursing associate qualification which was taught and examined in English, and/or recent practice of at least one year in a majority English speaking country.<sup>30</sup> In 2019, the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) amended its English language policy for qualification recognition by lowering the threshold for the IELTS Academic writing component from 7.0 to 6.5. Additionally, the AASW Board introduced the ‘clubbing of IELTS’ model which mirrors the UK Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) model. The amendment to the policy, is a positive decision in promoting flexibility for internationally trained migrants to gain the required scores in two sittings.

**Recommendation 4: The Federal Government should promote, monitor, evaluate, and scale work-integrated English language learning.**

**Recommendation 5: Ensure alternative pathways are available to establish English language proficiency in skills recognition and professional registration processes.**

#### IV) Costs

The high cost of the IELTS exam is prohibitive at AUD \$395. There is currently no form of financial assistance for refugees and humanitarian entrants with skills on the Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List (PMSOL) to study for and sit the IELTS test. During SCOA consultations many members explained that many migrants and refugees have expressed frustration that the IELTS test – required for recognition and registration purposes, expires every two years. Given the often-drawn-out nature of recognition and registration, migrants and refugees reported having to pay to sit the test multiple times over the duration of skills recognition process.<sup>31</sup>

**Recommendation 6: Fund the IELTS test for migrants and refugees with critical skills in regulated professions and trades falling under the Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List (PMSOL).**

## Theme 2: The future of work

### *The future of work and labour market implications of structural change*

#### Theme 2.1 Building a sustainable care economy

##### ***Building a sustainable care economy in the context of an ageing population and other drivers of demand for care services.***

According to the Productivity Commission, the aged care workforce will need to quadruple by 2050 as it is expected to employ just under one million workers.<sup>32</sup> This surge in the workforce demand will be buoyed by an ageing population with around 3.5 million Australians in need of age care each year.

---

<sup>30</sup> The Nursing and Midwifery Council UK. (2020). *English language requirements*. Available online at: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/english-language-requirements/>

<sup>31</sup> Deloitte Access Economics (2018). *Seizing the opportunity: Making the most of the skills and experience of migrants and refugees - A research report for Multicultural Affairs Queensland*. Available online at: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/au/Documents/Economics/deloitte-au-economics-making-most-skills-experience-migrants-refugees-011118.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Productivity Commission. (2011). *Caring for Older Australians*. Available online at: <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/aged-care/report/aged-care-overview-booklet.pdf>

Much of the worker shortage in the care economy is currently filled by migrants and refugees. The care economy is the largest employer in Australia and overwhelmingly employs women rather than men.<sup>33</sup> In addition, a huge proportion of child carers (34.6%), aged and disabled carers (37%) and personal care assistants (50.2%) in Australia are overseas born.<sup>34</sup> Many of SCOA's members offer innovative programs which aim to upskill migrants and refugees to enter the care workforce. Settlement Services International (SSI) delivers the Home Care Workforce Support Program (HCWSP) which links people to provide care in seniors homes.<sup>35</sup> The program aims to address Australia's aging population and talent shortage to help personal care workers to enter the workforce. The Australian Migrant Resource Centre (AMRC) ran the Women's Employment into Action (WEIA) project – a program to support migrant and refugee women to complete vocational training and find work primarily in the care economy. An independent review of the WEIA project found that the program not only allowed women to gain employment, but also benefited Australia more broadly by reducing welfare dependence and filling worker shortages in the care economy. There is more potential to fill shortages by supporting unemployed people of migrant and refugee background to enter this sector by supporting programs such as those referenced in this section. This is a key opportunity to get long-term unemployed people into the workforce, while filling critical gaps.

Programs such as the Jobs Victoria Fund could also be expanded to help eligible employers apply for subsidies to meet the costs of taking on new, eligible employees for much needed care workers.<sup>36</sup> Via the Jobs Victoria Fund, employers eligible for Level 1 subsidies through this program can access up to \$20,000 for employing newly arrived migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds and people seeking asylum and refugees among others who face significant barriers to employment.

Despite the importance of the care economy to Australia's wellbeing, the work is underrecognised and undervalued. Although working within the aged care sector requires extensive qualifications and credentials, the work itself is classified as low skilled according to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO). Further, the care sector is one of the lowest paid sectors in Australia, and often underpaid, as well as highly casualised. SCOA welcomes the recent 15% minimum wage increase for aged care workers but more needs to be done to offer job security and protections from exploitation for migrants and refugees working in this sector.<sup>37</sup> Gender segmentation, cultural background and structural factors all play an important role in shaping migrants' entry into the aged care sector. The low pay and status of care work mean that much of it is assigned to women. Moreover, the sector does not look attractive to Australian workers. As a result, aged care is often the 'go-to' sector for jobs when it comes to women from CALD backgrounds who are often secondary or tied migrants. To ensure equity in social outcomes, we need to look at the way we undervalue gendered and racialised work and address this - otherwise the push to get more migrants and refugees into the care economy will result in entrenched social inequities. In view of this, we further recommend

---

<sup>33</sup> Care Economy Cooperative Research Centre. (2021). *Care Economy CRC*. Available online at: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55373307e4b045515a790ade/t/61a8435999f6107b2ab9a3f0/1638417248293/MT0144\\_CIS\\_009\\_CARECRC+UPDATE+v4\\_%C6%92\\_WEB+PAGES.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55373307e4b045515a790ade/t/61a8435999f6107b2ab9a3f0/1638417248293/MT0144_CIS_009_CARECRC+UPDATE+v4_%C6%92_WEB+PAGES.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> The University of New South Wales [UNSW]. (2018). *Markets, migration & the work of care in Australia. FACT SHEET 1: Migrant Workers in Frontline Care*. Available online at:

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/Migrant%20Workers%20in%20Frontline%20Care.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> Settlement Services International [SSI]. (2022). *Home Care Workforce Support Program*. Available online at: <https://www.ssi.org.au/homecare#:~:text=About%20the%20program&text=Through%20this%20program%2C%20SSI%20aims,care%20supporting%20our%20senior%20Australians.>

<sup>36</sup> Jobs Victoria. (2021). *Jobs Victoria Fund Guidelines*. Available online at: [https://jobs.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/604787/Jobs-Victoria-Fund-Guidelines-updated-10am-16-November-2021.pdf](https://jobs.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/604787/Jobs-Victoria-Fund-Guidelines-updated-10am-16-November-2021.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> Minister for Health and Aged Care Media Release. (7 November 2022). *A pay rise for aged care workers*. Available online at: <https://www.health.gov.au/ministers/the-hon-mark-butler-mp/media/a-pay-rise-for-aged-care-workers>

ensuring adequate funding and higher wages for this sector, in conjunction with efforts outlined above to increase the number of migrants and refugees entering the sector.

**Recommendation 7: Expand programs that provide tailored training to migrants and refugees to enter the care economy.**

**Recommendation 8: Ensure adequate funding and higher wages for those working in the care economy.**

### Theme 2.3 Digitalisation and emerging technologies

#### **The transformation associated with digitalisation and emerging technologies.**

Digital literacy and digital access for migrants and refugees is paramount for their successful settlement. Settlement involves being able to access basic information, often involving digital skills, to access services via MyGov and other online platforms. Digital inclusion is not just about computers and the internet, it is about using technology as a way to improve skills, to enhance quality of life, to support education and to promote economic wellbeing across all elements of society. In today's Australia, digital inclusion is essential to living, working and participating in society. A report by SCOA and the Good Things Foundation found there is a 'digital divide' between migrants and refugees and the rest of Australia.<sup>38</sup> Securing employment is a vital part of successful settlement which can be hindered by one's lack of digital skills. Further below (under Theme 5) we discuss the new Workforce Australia online platform and the digital access issues surrounding it. The push towards online services is causing a lot of stress to those who are not digitally literate. Newly arrived migrants and refugees arrive with various levels of digital skills, so it is important to acknowledge this diversity and be flexible to individual circumstances, abilities and needs.



*“There is a digital divide (resources and skills) among the less privileged and others. There needs to be steps to **bridge this gap** and encourage digital inclusion.”*

- TAFE NSW

Online job recruitment can be a real barrier for newly arrived people. Processes such as selection criteria and cover letters can be unfamiliar, and people are often left to search for this information themselves with little guidance. In previous consultations, SCOA has emphasised the digital divide amongst people from CALD backgrounds and the need for steps to bridge this gap and encourage digital inclusion to foster independence and improve access to education and employment.<sup>39</sup> One recommendation to bridge the digital divide is to provide in-language digital learning resources/bilingual support and integrate it with other settlement or learning activities. Another is to give access to digital devices to participants of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). Devices, such as laptops, could be provided to students upon their enrolment in the AMEP to facilitate their English language learning and digital literacy skills. Providing AMEP participants with the proper technology to undertake their studies would both improve digital

---

<sup>38</sup> Settlement Council of Australia & Good Things Foundation Australia. (2020). *Supporting the digital inclusion of new migrants and refugees*. Available online at: <https://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Supporting-the-digital-inclusion-of-new-migrants-and-refugees.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

inclusion and increase the uptake of the AMEP. Laptops and phones should also be included in the Basic Household Goods Package, provided as part of the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP).

**Recommendation 9: Government should invest in digital literacy content and devices for newly arrived migrants and refugees undertaking AMEP and include digital devices in the Humanitarian Settlement Program's Basic Household Goods Package.**

## **Theme 3: Job security and fair pay**

### ***Job security, fair pay and conditions, including the role of workplace relations***

Other job-related concerns for migrants include wage underpayments and exploitation. This is a major problem for regulation of work in Australia, particularly for temporary migrants. The issue of wage underpayments cumulates from several factors – the growing temporary migration program with limited employment opportunities and rights and many visa categories that reduce worker agency. Collectively, these factors explain the non-compliance of businesses and employers with the wage standards in Australia. Scholars identify that the main reasons why migrants face wage underpayments are their concentration in low-skilled and low-paid work and the constrained job mobility of temporary migrants. While the former is associated with structural barriers and a lack of labour market opportunities, the latter stems from the inability of migrants to switch employers due to visa regulations or reliance on employers to gain permanent residency rights. SCOA therefore supports the government's announcement after the Jobs and Skills Summit to implement the recommendations of the Migrant Workers' Taskforce to tackle migrant worker exploitation.

Job security not only depends on the type of employment contract but also worker perceptions of feeling secure and less likely to be dismissed. Migrants, especially those from CALD background, are more likely to report low levels of job security. They are more likely to work in more casual, short-term or precarious jobs. As discussed above, the care economy, which is one of the fastest growing areas of employment, is particularly affected by this. Further, even our own sector has grappled with issues of job security and fair pay, at the same time as advocating for improved conditions for those we work with. Settlement service employees often have short-term contracts due to a lack of consistent funding.

Further, the gender discrimination affecting women working in the helping professions has not been addressed for settlement services, unlike other government funded services. In 2012, the Fair Work Commission brought the Equal Remuneration Order (ERO) in to achieve pay parity for work of equal value. At the time, the Federal Government chose to phase in equal pay for wages covered by the Social and Community Services (SACS) Award by providing organisations with supplementary payments over at least eight years. These payments expired in the 2020-21 Financial Year. To date, the settlement sector workforce has not had this funding renewed or renegotiated contracts for relevant programs so that they reflect increased wages. This is despite a whole of government commitment to do so and most other government funded programs receiving additional funds to ensure funding matches current award wages. On top of this, settlement services did not benefit from the recent \$560 million measure in the Federal Budget to ease cost pressures on social services.

Funding pressures on some settlement programs have become critically unsustainable. This is due to a confluence of factors including the shortfall left by the cessation of SACS supplementation funding; a recent 4.6% increase in award level wages; inflation and increases in the cost of service delivery; and increased regulatory burdens. The impact of this is felt in job insecurity and reduced pay. We therefore urge the government to ensure the May 2023 Federal Budget includes funding for relevant settlement services to ensure we can retain the workforce, which in turn supports others into fair and productive employment.

**Recommendation 10: Reinstate funding for relevant settlement services to cover the shortfall left by the cessation of SACS supplementation funding, indexation; recent wage increases; and other cost pressures.**

## Theme 4: Equal opportunities for women & a more inclusive workforce

***Pay equity, including the gender pay gap, equal opportunities for women and the benefits of a more inclusive workforce.***

In this section we highlight the issues facing migrant and refugee women and offer insights into programs which can be scaled up or expanded to take into account these particular issues. Migrant and refugee women for instance face various cultural expectations as caregivers, may have less family support due to family being overseas and can face difficulties in learning to drive or accessing drivers' licenses.

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women (47.3%) have a considerably lower level of workforce participation (i.e., employed or actively looking) compared to CALD men (69.5%).<sup>40</sup> We wish to draw attention to two particular factors that contribute to this.

The first is the impact that childcare has on women returning to the workforce. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data reveals childcare is the largest barrier to female participation in the labour force.<sup>41</sup> Migrant women are also less likely to have the support of grandparents or other extended family to assist with child minding. Therefore, the accessibility of childcare, or lack thereof, has particularly acute impacts for migrant and refugee women. For these reasons we support measures introduced by the government to improve access to childcare for women, and we also support continued free and accessible childcare for parents undertaking the AMEP.



*“We can’t ignore the impact that childcare has on women returning to the workforce.”*  
- Access Community Services Ltd.

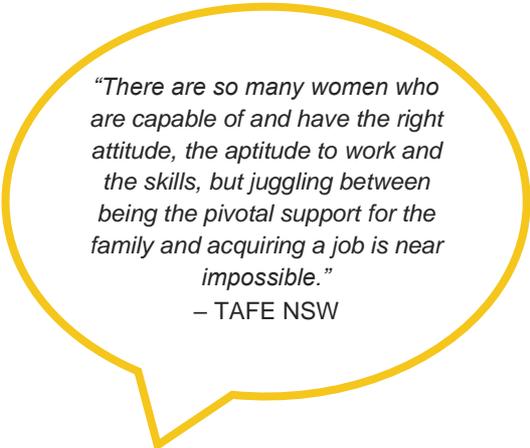
**Recommendation 11: Continue to implement measures increasing the accessibility of childcare for women and ensure continued free and accessible childcare for parents undertaking the AMEP.**

<sup>40</sup> Australian Government. (2017). *Towards 2025: An Australian Government Strategy to Boost Women’s Workforce Participation*. Available online at: <https://womensworkforceparticipation.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/towards-2025-strategy.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. (2022) *Childcare still largest barrier to female participation*. Available online at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/childcare-still-largest-barrier-female-participation>

The second major theme that came out of our consultations was the tailored assistance that women from migrant and refugee backgrounds require, and the way eligibility criteria for current programs designed to meet their needs have gendered impacts.

The Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program provides support to humanitarian entrants and other eligible vulnerable migrants for up to 5 years after arrival. SETS client services helps in accessing English language skills, education, and programs to prepare for employment, among others. It is a key program for supporting many migrant women, and includes a dedicated domestic and family violence component. SCOA has previously advocated for removing limitations to accessing SETS. Some women are limited in accessing SETS as their settlement



*“There are so many women who are capable of and have the right attitude, the aptitude to work and the skills, but juggling between being the pivotal support for the family and acquiring a job is near impossible.”*

– TAFE NSW

journey may be impeded by assuming caregiving responsibilities. Many women may find that they are ready to learn English and look for employment after their kids are a bit older, however by then the 5-year time limit for accessing SETS has passed. Further, many women are excluded as only people on certain visa categories are eligible. This limits the opportunities for women to be referred to various services and programs that can assist their independence and employment. We therefore recommend the removal of limitations to accessing SETS based on length of stay in Australia and visa category. SETS can also help refugee women access mental health services, including torture and trauma services, which is incredibly important for women in the community who have undergone incredible trauma. Without being properly addressed, mental health concerns can add an additional layer of complexity to refugee women gaining employment.

In addition to SETS, community hubs (delivered by Community Hubs Australia) are targeted at migrant and refugee women and have been described as ‘a good soft entry point for refugees’ to help build confidence and acquire English.<sup>42</sup>

**Recommendation 12: Remove limitations to accessing SETS based on length of stay in Australia and visa category and fund the expansion of SETS services and community hubs.**

In addition to SETS and community hubs, migrant and refugee women require tailored specific employment support. Such support can consider the unique barriers facing migrant and refugee women in gaining employment. For example, the way cultural expectations around caregiving manifest in different communities can vary. Further, migrant women are less likely than both male migrants and non-migrant women to have driving licenses. Refugee women may face additional

---

<sup>42</sup> Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019). *Investing in Refugees, Investing in Australia: the findings of a Review into Integration, Employment and Settlement Outcomes for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-integration-employment-settlement-outcomes-refugees-humanitarian-entrants.pdf>

challenges such as experiences of trauma and having lost family members. These factors require targeted and tailored consideration.

The ParentsNext Program is one employment program that takes a specifically gendered approach. ParentsNext helps single parents with young children prepare for employment (primarily women).<sup>43</sup> However, such programs are most effective for migrant and refugee women when they are delivered by a provider who can integrate culturally responsive practices with a gendered approach. In fact, delivering the program without skills in cultural responsiveness can have perverse impacts for migrant and refugee women's employment outcomes. We therefore recommend that ParentsNext and similar programs be delivered by organisations that specialise in working with migrant and refugee women. Currently, there are a small number of organisations in our network that deliver ParentsNext, and this proportion must increase to allow migrant and refugee women to access more responsive employment support.

***Recommendation 13: ParentsNext and any similar programs that take a gendered approach should include providers that work with multicultural communities as their primary focus.***

## **Theme 5: Labour force participation**

***Labour force participation, labour supply and improving employment opportunities.***

Issues discussed here in Theme 5 have also been also addressed under Theme 1, 2, 3 and 4. In this section we discuss additional ways to improve employment opportunities for migrants and refugees including funding programs that help refugees learn to drive, engaging with businesses to support them in hiring migrants and refugees, increasing specialist Workforce Australia licenses, and support for young people. Lastly, we advocate for the government to implement its commitment to increase the humanitarian intake to 27,000 spaces per year and expand settlement services to ensure all migrants who come to Australia are supported.

### **5.1 Reducing barriers and disincentives to work**

***Reducing barriers and disincentives to work, including the role of childcare, social security settings and employment services.***

#### **Driving programs**

Getting to work often involves the use of a driver's license and a car, especially for those living outside the major cities, or living in affordable housing which tends to be further from public transport. Providing funding for settlement services to deliver driving courses, and access to driver's licenses, can have a profound impact on building confidence and enabling migrants and refugees to access more employment opportunities. Programs such as driving lessons have a huge impact in building confidence and independence, especially in women (as discussed in the previous section). However, we heard from our members such programs are underfunded and have long wait lists (e.g., Access Community Services Ltd.'s Women at the Wheel Project, MARSS Learn to Drive, and others). We therefore recommend funding programs that support

---

<sup>43</sup> Department of Jobs and Small Business. (2018). *ParentsNext Evaluation Report*. Available online at: <https://www.dewr.gov.au/parentsnext/resources/parentsnext-evaluation-report>

migrants and refugees to learn to drive, including targeted programs for women. This will help immensely in reducing barriers and disincentives to work.

**Recommendation 14: Fund programs that support migrants and refugees to learn to drive, including targeted programs for women.**

### Engage with businesses to meet their needs

According to research, many businesses are eager to hire refugees as they contribute to diverse and inclusive workplaces and have various expertise and bilingual skills.<sup>44</sup> Yet, employers need to be informed and supported in employing refugees as they face distinctive challenges.

***“[Refugees] tend to have lower turnover ratio and greater loyalty to employers. They help to create new customer markets for the future and to service the needs of an ethnically diverse society. Many employers see refugees as resourceful, determined and highly motivated.” - Department of Home Affairs, Shergold Report***

In order to start employing more refugees, businesses need guidance from specialist employment providers, which can provide guidance to employers from recruitment to screening candidates and support whilst employed. Both specialist employment providers and settlement services could assist in linking refugee cohorts to businesses keen to hire refugees. For this to work, employers also need to be flexible in their hiring processes due to a lack of local work experience, qualifications gained overseas, and having English as an additional language. Through collaboration, employers and migrant and refugee services can support many more migrants and refugees into meaningful work.

There is a need to upskill and educate employers and businesses across Australia as to how to employ and support migrants and refugees. To give just one example of a common barrier in hiring practices, basic requirements such as having a visa or proof of identity can be hard for refugees who do not have passports and are often issued ImmiCards (a document issued to certain visa holders who do not have a passport recognised by the Australian Government). We heard about individuals who attended interviews and did not receive positions due to the employer not knowing what an ImmiCard was. Employers who limit job searches to permanent residents or citizens are limiting the potential of many migrants and refugees. Employers need to have more flexibility to change work and interview practices in order to be able to draw in migrants and refugees.

**Recommendation 15: Specialist employment providers (i.e., those with ‘refugee’ or ‘CALD’ Workforce Australia licenses) should act as a link to assist business to employ refugees and support more flexibility in hiring processes.**

We hear from members that programs that allow workers to learn English on the job, starting with basic tasks, while they learn could also be beneficial for those who feel they have to choose

---

<sup>44</sup> Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019). *Investing in Refugees, Investing in Australia: the findings of a Review into Integration, Employment and Settlement Outcomes for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-integration-employment-settlement-outcomes-refugees-humanitarian-entrants.pdf>

between learning English and finding work. However, there needs to be incentives for employers to employ people who are still in the process of learning. These could come in the form of government funded financial incentives.

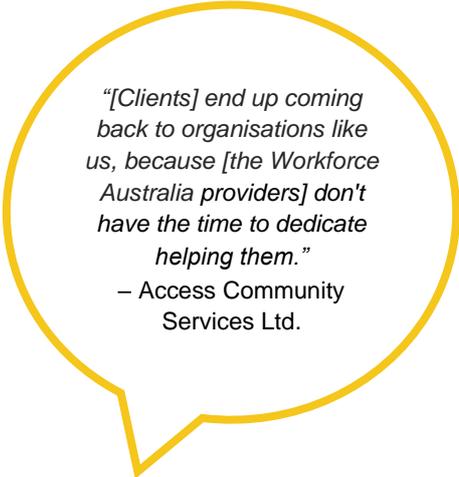
**Recommendation 16: Learn while you work programs should be implemented/expanded including financial incentives needed to encourage employers to participate.**

## The need for specialised employment services

SCOA has a number of suggestions for the new Workforce Australia Employment Services. We will address many of them here, however SCOA is also making a fuller submission on these issues to the House Select Committee Inquiry into Workforce Australia Employment Services in the coming months.

SCOA's main recommendation is that mainstream job providers, within the new Workforce Australia Employment Services, lack the specialist multicultural experience to work with migrant and refugee job seekers. Our member organisations who do not directly deliver employment services have reported a significant improvement in the usefulness of specialist employment services for refugee and CALD cohorts, as compared to when they refer clients to mainstream employment services.

SCOA urges expansion of specialist services and greater utilisation of settlement services in delivering Workforce Australia services. We believe settlement services are best placed to deliver specialist employment support to CALD and refugee jobseekers and we want to make sure these groups are not left behind. In a 2019 government review into integration, employment and settlement outcomes for refugees and humanitarian entrants, it was noted, "mainstream employment services are not best placed to provide the specialised support that refugees need."<sup>45</sup> Twenty per cent of people on JobSeeker payments are from CALD backgrounds hence having appropriate supports for this cohort is paramount.<sup>46</sup> In the last tender round for Workforce Australia, only three (3) 'refugee' licenses were issued across Australia – and all are in Melbourne, while ten (10) 'CALD' licenses were issued in various locations across Australia.<sup>47</sup> SCOA is therefore advocating for more specialist refugee and CALD licenses to be issued as well as for licenses to be issued in areas that have high caseloads of CALD and refugee jobseekers. There are many providers with a wealth of experience and proven track records in working with migrants and refugees in the employment space which should be granted refugee or CALD licenses. There is an argument for



*"[Clients] end up coming back to organisations like us, because [the Workforce Australia providers] don't have the time to dedicate helping them."*

– Access Community Services Ltd.

<sup>45</sup> Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019). *Investing in Refugees, Investing in Australia: the findings of a Review into Integration, Employment and Settlement Outcomes for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-integration-employment-settlement-outcomes-refugees-humanitarian-entrants.pdf>

<sup>46</sup> Australian Council of Social Service [ACOSS]. (2022). *How to reduce long-term unemployment*. Available online at: [https://www.acoss.org.au/media\\_release/how-to-reduce-long-term-unemployment/](https://www.acoss.org.au/media_release/how-to-reduce-long-term-unemployment/)

<sup>47</sup> Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2021). *Successful Organisations for Workforce Australia Services (previously referred to as Enhanced Services – Generalist and Specialist)*. Available online at: <https://tenders.employment.gov.au/tenders/b0bb0fc3-23ae-ec11-983f-002248d3b28f#LICENSES>: One (1) in Sydney Greater West, one (1) in Sydney North and West, one (1) in Inner Metropolitan Melbourne, one (1) in North Eastern Melbourne, one (1) in North Western Melbourne, one (1) in South Eastern Melbourne and Peninsula, one (1) in Western Melbourne, one (1) in the Gold Coast, one (1) in Wivenhoe and one (1) in Adelaide North.

localised settlement services to have these licenses as they have a footprint of offices, people are familiar with our organisations, and there is better access to interpreters. Employment is a core part of settlement, and settlement services do most of the work of supporting people into finding employment but without the infrastructure that would be available to them if they were delivering employment services. Settlement and employment are inseparable. Many barriers to employment such as English language skills, health and wellbeing, transport, and so on are settlement issues. Given they are so interdependent, it makes sense for both settlement services and employment services to be housed together, as was recommended in the Shergold report.<sup>48</sup>

We have heard from our member organisations that many Workforce Australia providers are not familiar with the complexity of settlement journeys. Without specialist providers, settlement service providers are educating Workforce Australia providers on the support that is on offer for migrants and refugees and to understand the pathways to improve their English first, before entering the workplace – which is a critical and central part of supporting migrants and refugees into employment. SCOA has previously advocated for the co-location of services (having services located on site in the same building or within walking distance) which fosters good coordination between settlement services and English learning, employment, and health services.<sup>49</sup> These settlement services, many of which offer employment services, have a wealth of experience and knowledge. This arrangement increases interactions between service providers, and more effective referral and engagement when a possible issue is identified. It increases uptake of services by clients, and contributes to positive settlement outcomes overall.



*“We have had clients who have been told they would lose payments during that period when they were not meant to be getting any punitive measures.”*  
– CASS Care

Our member organisations expressed frustration in the high turnover rate between jobactive and Workplace Australia, and the need to re-explain and re-educate job service providers on various programs (AMEP, IELTS etc.) We have heard that where migrant or refugee job seekers have long term career aspirations, these are often dismissed so as to get a client into any job as fast as possible. One key frustration was the lack of understanding about AMEP, and points earned from attending English classes, especially the time and patience needed to learn English. People who are doing 16 hours a week or more of AMEP satisfy the Workforce Australia 100-point activity test, yet clients are being pressured to do more outside these 16 hours of English. We have also heard clients have had to take

time off from AMEP to attend Workforce Australia appointments, hindering their learning journey.

SCOA welcomes the government’s ‘clean slate’ policy so people who accrued penalties or demerits under the old system are able to start fresh.<sup>50</sup> However, we have continued to hear that clients have faced punitive measures under the mutual obligation system. These issues are far less prevalent where there is a local CALD or refugee specialist provider.

---

<sup>48</sup> Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019). *Investing in Refugees, Investing in Australia: the findings of a Review into Integration, Employment and Settlement Outcomes for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-integration-employment-settlement-outcomes-refugees-humanitarian-entrants.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> Settlement Council of Australia [SCOA]. (2022). *Submission: Next steps to improve Australia’s settlement and integration of refugees*. Available online at: <https://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/SCOASU1.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, (2 August 2022), *Workforce Australia Select Committee*. Available online at: <https://ministers.dewr.gov.au/burke/workforce-australia-select-committee>

Other issues surrounding Workforce Australia include that the online platform is not multilingual, it is difficult to opt out of the online service, and clients in certain areas are being sent to Workforce Australia providers far away causing transport and logistical issues.

**Recommendation 17: Issue more specialist CALD and refugee Workforce Australia licenses to areas that have high caseloads of CALD and refugee jobseekers.**

Other employment programs should also be housed within specialist multicultural services. This includes the ParentsNext program as discussed above. In addition to self-employment services should be delivered by specialist multicultural services. As mentioned previously, refugees are highly entrepreneurial. Unfortunately, refugees often turn to building businesses as a workaround for dealing with discrimination in the workplace.<sup>51</sup> We therefore support calls by other peak bodies such as the Refugee Council of Australia in calling for the government to support initiatives that help refugee and humanitarian entrants set up businesses.<sup>52</sup> Programs such as Settlement Services International's (SSI) Ignite Small Business Start-ups and Thrive Refugee Enterprise support small business creation for migrants and refugees and could be expanded.

**Recommendation 18: Expand government initiatives that help refugee and humanitarian entrants set up businesses.**

## **5.2 Improving labour market outcomes for those who face particular challenges**

### ***Improving labour market outcomes for those who face particular challenges in employment, including First Nations people, those who live in rural and remote areas, younger and older Australians, people with disability, and those who may experience discrimination.***

This entire submission has focused on improving labour market outcomes for migrants and refugees, including discussion of how particular cohorts are especially disadvantaged in the labour market. Particularly disadvantaged groups include humanitarian entrants; people who arrive through the family stream or are dependents of primary applicants; and women. We refer to the section above for recommendations on these groups. In addition, we wish to highlight further challenges facing migrant and refugee young people. We wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Multicultural Youth Advocacy network in identifying these issues.

#### **Young people**

Our consultations have also highlighted that young people, especially those on temporary visas, face incredible challenges in gaining employment. Young people who arrive in Australia as teenagers can face many difficulties including learning a new language, a lack of local work experience, a lack of bridging social capital (networks to get ahead), and a lack of knowledge of pathways to work or study. Young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds are more likely to be unemployed and underemployed than their Australian born counterparts.<sup>53</sup> This is due to

---

<sup>51</sup> Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019). *Investing in Refugees, Investing in Australia: the findings of a Review into Integration, Employment and Settlement Outcomes for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-integration-employment-settlement-outcomes-refugees-humanitarian-entrants.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> RCOA. (2022). *2022 Jobs and Skills Summit: Eight opportunities to increase the potential of humanitarian migration to Australia*. Available online at [https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/202209\\_Brief\\_Jobs-Summit-and-Refugees.pdf](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/202209_Brief_Jobs-Summit-and-Refugees.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) (website) Available at: <https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/hilda>

many factors including discrimination and racism, limited guidance counselling at school a lack of local experience and social capital. Young people need access to work experience (i.e., internships, volunteering) to gain that local experience but are often limited by a lack of personal local connections. Government funding for targeted internships could prepare young refugees for job-readiness.

**Recommendation 19: Fund paid internships for marginalised young refugees with a lack of local experience and social capital.**

The ability to work and provide is especially important for young people, as they are sometimes the breadwinner of the entire family. SCOA members advocated for more flexible schooling for teenagers that allow for work and study (Accessible Pathway Schools). Accessible Pathway Schools were praised by some members:

***There are very few schools in New South Wales, for example, that are called Accessible Pathway Schools. One of them is immensely popular with young people where there are different start times, there's no age limit, and you're respected by the teachers that you are a breadwinner, and then you can't be at school every day to go to work - MYAN NSW***

Investing in young people is extremely important. There are a number of valuable, government supports for young migrants and refugees including the Youth Transition Support (YTS) service to support young humanitarian entrants find work or study. However, YTS services are limited as they were initially only funded as a pilot and in a handful of locations nationally. SCOA therefore advocates for YTS funding to continue and be expanded across all jurisdictions. Another program recommended by SCOA members is the Victorian Government's Community Employment Connectors (CEC) program which provides culturally appropriate support to disadvantaged young jobseekers (16-25 year olds from a CALD background).<sup>54</sup> Experienced organisations, including many of SCOA's members in Victoria, host CECs to work with disadvantaged CALD young jobseekers to prepare them for employment through information, referral and connection supports. Programs such as the CEC program could be expanded to the national stage. One of SCOA's members, Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc., has said the CEC program has revealed that regional businesses interested in employing people from refugee backgrounds benefit from guidance from specialists who can enhance the outcomes and sustainable employment by supporting the process from recruitment to screening candidates, and support whilst employed.

**Recommendation 20: Extend funding for the Youth Transition Support (YTS) service and expand to all jurisdictions to support young humanitarian entrants find work or study.**

---

<sup>54</sup> Government of Victoria. (2022). *Community Employment Connectors Program*. Available online at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/community-employment-connectors-program>

### 5.3 Skills, education and training

#### ***Skills, education and training, upskilling and reskilling, including in transitioning sectors and regions.***

Please refer to Theme 1 where we discuss skills recognition, upskilling, underemployment and more.

### 5.4 Migration settings

#### ***Migration settings as a complement to the domestic workforce.***

SCOA supports the government's announcement to increase the permanent Migration Program to 195,000 places per year in 2022-23. A 2021 Treasury Paper estimated that the 2018-19 permanent migrant cohort (Skill, Family, Humanitarian) makes a positive cumulative lifetime contribution of \$20 billion higher than a cohort drawn from the Australian population especially due to the younger age of these migrants.<sup>55</sup> SCOA also hopes the government will soon implement its commitment to increase Australia's annual humanitarian intake to 27,000 spaces per year. As mentioned throughout this submission, humanitarian entrants bring a wealth of experience and are eager to contribute to Australian society. As the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) said in its 2022 Jobs and Skills Summit Issues Paper, "To ensure Australia remains an attractive destination for future migrants as well as ensuring Australia's reputation as a welcoming nation, changes to the size of the migration program must not be at the expense of programs such as humanitarian, family, partner, and carer visas."<sup>56</sup>

#### ***Recommendation 21: Implement commitment to increase Australia's annual humanitarian intake to 27,000 spaces per year.***

In recent years the majority of federal funding for settlement services has been for refugees and humanitarian entrants, however settlement is a process that all people who migrate to Australia go through. With the government planning for a broader intake of migrants, we believe Australia has great settlement infrastructure in place and are capable of settling many more people than we do. However, government needs to mobilise the infrastructure more to do that. In order to maintain our strong and cohesive multicultural society, we need to ensure everyone who arrives in Australia has access to settlement support if they need it. Migrants may contribute economically, but Australia also owes them social obligations.

#### ***Recommendation 22: Expand settlement services to ensure all migrants who come to Australia are eligible for at least a basic level of support.***

While the government is looking overseas for people to fill workforce shortages, there are many migrants and refugees in Australia that have skills to offer that are being underutilised. This is

---

<sup>55</sup> The Treasury. (2021). *The lifetime fiscal impact of the Australian permanent migration program*. Available online at: [https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/p2021-220773\\_1.pdf](https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/p2021-220773_1.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia [FECCA]. (2022). *A Secure and Successful Multicultural Workforce FECCA's Jobs and Skills Summit Issues Paper- August 2022*. Available online at: <https://fecca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/FECCA-Jobs-and-Skills-Issues-Paper-August-2022.pdf>

especially true for those visa holders with restrictions on their work rights. Employers are often extremely hesitant to take on migrants on temporary or bridging visas. The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) says there are 107,177 people who have applied for refugee protection in Australia (waiting for a result, under review, or denied protection) who are on bridging visas of which many do not have work rights. SCOA supports a resolution to the visa status of these groups, and reinstating their work rights.<sup>57</sup> By granting working rights or permanency to these refugees, these thousands of people will be able to contribute to the Australian workforce.

**Recommendation 23: Resolve the visa status of those awaiting refugee protection and provide them with working rights while awaiting resolution.**

## Conclusion

Throughout this submission we have highlighted the immense benefit that migrants and refugees bring to Australia – not just in filling workforce shortages or their tax contributions – but their resourcefulness, their work ethic and much more. Despite this, migrants and refugees face many barriers in gaining employment in Australia. Chief among them is skills recognition, a lack of local work experience, and issues with English language requirements. Humanitarian entrants, women, young people, and family entrants face particular barriers. Throughout this submission, we have offered suggestions and recommendations for policy changes, program that should be expanded, and priority areas for funding.

Australia has world class services with specialist skills in working with migrants and refugees. Settlement service providers have a wealth of knowledge and experience to help set up migrants and refugees for life and work in Australia. Australia is only growing, and with an expansion of the migration program, SCOA believes the Australian government should invest in an expansion of settlement services to cover all migrants who arrive, regardless of their visa stream. To thrive and succeed in Australia, migrants and refugees need tailored supports, best provided by the settlement sector with decades of experience. While not all migrants and refugees will need the same intensity of assistance, all should at least be entitled to a basic level of support.

There are immense opportunities available for both businesses and migrants/refugees when it comes to increasing labour productivity growth. Our 23 recommendations range from policy changes, to funding increases and extensions of pilots underway. There is immense talent already onshore, but policy and program settings are holding many migrants and refugees back from reaching their potential.

Lastly, we know how important it is for the public to be on board with any policy changes. A recent Scanlon Foundation survey found the percentage of people who agree that ‘immigrants are good for Australia’s economy,’ increased from 74% in 2018 to 87% in 2022.<sup>58</sup> Clearly many across Australia are feeling the impacts of labour shortages and realise the great benefit migrants and refugees can bring to Australia’s economy.

<sup>57</sup> RCOA. (2022). *2022 Jobs and Skills Summit: Eight opportunities to increase the potential of humanitarian migration to Australia*. Available online at [https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/202209\\_Brief\\_Jobs-Summit-and-Refugees.pdf](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/202209_Brief_Jobs-Summit-and-Refugees.pdf)

<sup>58</sup> Scanlon Foundation Research Institute. (2022). *Mapping Social Cohesion 2022*. Available online at: <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/mapping-social-cohesion-2022>

## List of recommendations

**Recommendation 1: Review and implement legislative and policy changes to qualification and skills recognition processes, drawing on international best-practice examples such as frameworks used in Germany and Denmark.**

**Recommendation 2: Fund programs that provide individualised support to migrants and refugees to enter regulated trades and professions, such as the Career Pathways Pilot.**

**Recommendation 3: Review the Skills Assessment Pilots in consultation with settlement stakeholders with a view to broadening and simplifying the eligibility criteria.**

**Recommendation 4: The Federal Government should promote, monitor, evaluate, and scale work-integrated English language learning.**

**Recommendation 5: Ensure alternative pathways are available to establish English language proficiency in skills recognition and professional registration processes.**

**Recommendation 6: Fund the IELTS test for migrants and refugees with critical skills in regulated professions and trades falling under the Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List (PMSOL).**

**Recommendation 7: Expand programs that provide tailored training to migrants and refugees to enter the care economy.**

**Recommendation 8: Ensure adequate funding and higher wages for those working in the care economy.**

**Recommendation 9: Government should invest in digital literacy content and devices for newly arrived migrants and refugees undertaking AMEP and include digital devices in the Humanitarian Settlement Program's Basic Household Goods Package.**

**Recommendation 10: Reinstate funding for relevant settlement services to cover the shortfall left by the cessation of SACS supplementation funding, indexation; recent wage increases; and other cost pressures.**

**Recommendation 11: Continue to implement measures increasing the accessibility of childcare for women and ensure continued free and accessible childcare for parents undertaking the AMEP.**

**Recommendation 12: Remove limitations to accessing SETS based on length of stay in Australia and visa category and fund the expansion of SETS services and community hubs.**

**Recommendation 13: ParentsNext and any similar programs that take a gendered approach should include providers that work with multicultural communities as their primary focus.**

**Recommendation 14: Fund programs that support migrants and refugees to learn to drive, including targeted programs for women.**

**Recommendation 15: Specialist employment providers (i.e., those with 'refugee' or 'CALD' Workforce Australia licenses) should act as a link to assist business to employ refugees and support more flexibility in hiring processes.**

**Recommendation 16: Learn while you work programs should be implemented/expanded including financial incentives needed to encourage employers to participate.**

**Recommendation 17: Issue more specialist CALD and refugee Workforce Australia licenses to areas that have high caseloads of CALD and refugee jobseekers.**

**Recommendation 18: Expand government initiatives that help refugee and humanitarian entrants set up businesses.**

**Recommendation 19: Fund paid internships for marginalised young refugees with a lack of local experience and social capital.**

**Recommendation 20: Extend funding for the Youth Transition Support (YTS) service and expand to all jurisdictions to support young humanitarian entrants find work or study.**

**Recommendation 21: Implement commitment to increase Australia's annual humanitarian intake to 27,000 spaces per year.**

**Recommendation 22: Expand settlement services to ensure all migrants who come to Australia are eligible for at least a basic level of support.**

**Recommendation 23: Resolve the visa status of those awaiting refugee protection and provide them with working rights while awaiting resolution.**

# References

Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. (2022). *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*. Available online at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release#data-download>

Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. (2022) *Childcare still largest barrier to female participation*. Available online at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/childcare-still-largest-barrier-female-participation>

Australian Council of Social Service [ACOSS]. (2022). *How to reduce long-term unemployment*. Available online at: [https://www.acoss.org.au/media\\_release/how-to-reduce-long-term-unemployment/](https://www.acoss.org.au/media_release/how-to-reduce-long-term-unemployment/)

Australian Government. (2017). *Towards 2025: An Australian Government Strategy to Boost Women's Workforce Participation*. Available online at: <https://womensworkforceparticipation.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/towards-2025-strategy.pdf>

Care Economy Cooperative Research Centre. (2021). *Care Economy CRC*. Available online at: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55373307e4b045515a790ade/t/61a8435999f6107b2ab9a3f0/1638417248293/MT0144\\_CIS009\\_CARECRC+UPDATE+v4\\_%C6%92\\_WEB+PAGES.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55373307e4b045515a790ade/t/61a8435999f6107b2ab9a3f0/1638417248293/MT0144_CIS009_CARECRC+UPDATE+v4_%C6%92_WEB+PAGES.pdf)

Committee for Economic Development of Australia [CEDA]. (2021). *A good match: Optimising Australia's permanent skilled migration*. Available online at: <https://cedakenticomedia.blob.core.windows.net/cedamediacontainer/kentico/media/researchcataloguedocuments/recent%20research/pdfs/ceda-migration-report-26-march-2021-final.pdf>

CEDA. (2022). *Employment White Paper Submission*. Available online at: <https://www.ceda.com.au/ResearchAndPolicies/Research/Workforce-Skills/Employment-white-paper-submission>

Deloitte Access Economics (2018). *Seizing the opportunity: Making the most of the skills and experience of migrants and refugees - A research report for Multicultural Affairs Queensland*. Available online at: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/au/Documents/Economics/deloitte-au-economics-making-most-skills-experience-migrants-refugees-011118.pdf>

Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2021). *Successful Organisations for Workforce Australia Services (previously referred to as Enhanced Services – Generalist and Specialist)*. Available online at: <https://tenders.employment.gov.au/tenders/b0bb0fc3-23aec11-983f-002248d3b28f#LICENSES>

Department of Home Affairs. (2021). *AMEP Consultation and Funding Model Comparison Report*. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/PDFs/amep-consultation-funding-model-comparison-report.pdf>

Department of Home Affairs. (2022). *Youth Transition Support services*. Available online at: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/support-for-young-refugees/youth-transition-support-services>

Department of Jobs and Small Business. (2018). *ParentsNext Evaluation Report*. Available online at: <https://www.dewr.gov.au/parentsnext/resources/parentsnext-evaluation-report>

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia [FECCA]. (2022). *A Secure and Successful Multicultural Workforce FECCA's Jobs and Skills Summit Issues Paper- August*

2022. Available online at: <https://fecca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/FECCA-Jobs-and-Skills-Issues-Paper-August-2022.pdf>

Government of Victoria. (2022). *Community Employment Connectors Program*. Available online at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/community-employment-connectors-program>

Grattan Institute. (2022). *Migrants in the Australian workforce A guidebook for policy makers*. Available online at: <https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Migrants-in-the-Australian-workforce.pdf>

Greater London Authority (2021). *ESOL Plus Employer Partnership. Guide for Adult Learning Providers and Employers*. Available online at: [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mol\\_esol\\_plus\\_employer\\_partnership\\_report\\_2021\\_fa.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mol_esol_plus_employer_partnership_report_2021_fa.pdf)

Jobs Victoria. (2021). *Jobs Victoria Fund Guidelines*. Available online at: [https://jobs.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/604787/Jobs-Victoria-Fund-Guidelines-updated-10am-16-November-2021.pdf](https://jobs.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/604787/Jobs-Victoria-Fund-Guidelines-updated-10am-16-November-2021.pdf)

Joint Standing Committee on Migration, Parliament of Australia (2006). *Negotiating the maze: review of arrangements for overseas skills recognition, upgrading and licensing*. Available online at: <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3793471>

Joint Standing Committee on Migration, Parliament of Australia (2017). *No one teaches you to become an Australian: Report of the inquiry into migrant settlement outcomes*. Available online at: [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Migration/settlementoutcomes/Report](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Migration/settlementoutcomes/Report)

Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, (2 August 2022), *Workforce Australia Select Committee*. Available online at: <https://ministers.dewr.gov.au/burke/workforce-australia-select-committee>

Minister for Health and Aged Care Media Release. (7 November 2022). *A pay rise for aged care workers*. Available online at: <https://www.health.gov.au/ministers/the-hon-mark-butler-mp/media/a-pay-rise-for-aged-care-workers>

Minister for Home Affairs Media Release. (25 October 2022). *Delivering a stronger and more secure economy through migration and better cyber security*. Available online at: <https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/ClareONeil/Pages/delivering-stronger-and-more-secure-economy.aspx>

Nestorowicz, K. (2013). *International Migration and the Choice of Self-employment*. Available online at [https://depotuw.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/item/342/thesis\\_inestorowicz.pdf?sequence=1](https://depotuw.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/item/342/thesis_inestorowicz.pdf?sequence=1)

The Nursing and Midwifery Council UK. (2020). *English language requirements*. Available online at: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/english-language-requirements/>

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]. (2017). *Making Integration Work: Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications*. Available online at: [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/making-integration-work-assessment-and-recognition-of-foreign-qualifications\\_9789264278271-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/making-integration-work-assessment-and-recognition-of-foreign-qualifications_9789264278271-en)

Productivity Commission. (2011). *Caring for Older Australians*. Available online at: <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/aged-care/report/aged-care-overview-booklet.pdf>

- Refugee Council of Australia [RCOA] and Fairfield Multicultural Interagency. (2017). *Not Working: Experiences of refugees and migrants with Jobactive*. Available online at: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Jobactive.pdf>
- RCOA. (2019). *Refugees are the most entrepreneurial migrants in Australia*. Available online at: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/refugees-are-entrepreneurial/>
- RCOA. (2022). *2022 Jobs and Skills Summit: Eight opportunities to increase the potential of humanitarian migration to Australia*. Available online at [https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/202209\\_Brief\\_Jobs-Summit-and-Refugees.pdf](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/202209_Brief_Jobs-Summit-and-Refugees.pdf)
- Scanlon Foundation Research Institute. (2022). *Mapping Social Cohesion 2022*. Available online at: <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/mapping-social-cohesion-2022>
- Settlement Council of Australia [SCOA]. (2019). *Recognising Overseas Qualifications – Maximising on Human Capital*. Available online at: [http://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Recognising-Overseas-Skills-and-Qualifications\\_Maximising-Human-Capital-in-Newly-Arrived-Australians-1.pdf](http://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Recognising-Overseas-Skills-and-Qualifications_Maximising-Human-Capital-in-Newly-Arrived-Australians-1.pdf)
- Settlement Council of Australia [SCOA]. (2022). *Submission: Next steps to improve Australia’s settlement and integration of refugees*. Available online at: <https://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/SCOASU1.pdf>
- Settlement Council of Australia [SCOA] & Good Things Foundation Australia. (2020). *Supporting the digital inclusion of new migrants and refugees*. Available online at: <https://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Supporting-the-digital-inclusion-of-new-migrants-and-refugees.pdf>
- Settlement Services International [SSI]. (2022). *Home Care Workforce Support Program*. Available online at: <https://www.ssi.org.au/homecare#:~:text=About%20the%20program&text=Through%20this%20program%2C%20SSI%20aims,career%20supporting%20our%20senior%20Australians.>
- Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019). *Investing in Refugees, Investing in Australia: the findings of a Review into Integration, Employment and Settlement Outcomes for Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Available online at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/review-integration-employment-settlement-outcomes-refugees-humanitarian-entrants.pdf>
- The Treasury. (2021). *The lifetime fiscal impact of the Australian permanent migration program*. Available online at: [https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/p2021-220773\\_1.pdf](https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/p2021-220773_1.pdf)
- The University of Melbourne. (2021). *The future of Australia’s nursing workforce: COVID-19 and burnout among nurses*. Available online at: [https://www.unimelb.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/4085194/katelyn\\_mannix\\_report.pdf](https://www.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/4085194/katelyn_mannix_report.pdf)
- The University of New South Wales [UNSW]. (2018). *Markets, migration & the work of care in Australia. FACT SHEET 1: Migrant Workers in Frontline Care*. Available online at: <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/Migrant%20Workers%20in%20Frontline%20Care.pdf>