

Media Release

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Australia's migration overhaul opens fresh opportunities for settlement and skills recognition

The value of permanent migration and the importance of harnessing overseas skills and qualifications within the local community should now be at the forefront of Australia's migration system, following the release today of the federal government's Migration Strategy.

CORE Community Services welcomes the government's initiative in overhauling the migration system which had become exceedingly complex through multiple visa classes and difficult pathways for prospective new arrivals.

The Chief Executive Officer of CORE, Juana Reinoso, has welcomed the focus on attracting people with the right skills to contribute to the community and the economy.

"Australia has an outstanding record of achievement in attracting and settling people from around the world, and it is important that we do everything possible to give new arrivals the best chance of connecting with communities and jobs.

"The Strategy provides a strong framework to build better pathways for migrants and improved social connections with communities and services in Australia," she said.

CORE Community Services is one of the largest settlement service providers in the Fairfield LGA in New South Wales which takes in the largest proportion of new arrivals in Australia.

One of the key obstacles for many arrivals has been the daunting process of recognition of overseas skills and qualifications.

Ms Reinoso said that while the new focus on skilled migration is welcome, many current migrants continue to face real barriers to employment because the process of skills recognition is slow and cumbersome.

"Many migrants are not able to gain recognition for their qualifications and end up working in low skilled jobs or in positions well below their ability," Ms Reinoso said.

She said much more needs to be done to remove barriers to mutual recognition of skills across the states and territories, as well as from some industry bodies and professional associations which have onerous and costly assessment processes.

"There continues to be many migrants who have worked as engineers, doctors and IT professionals in their home countries but who are forced to work in jobs well below their ability, or who have simply given up on the process of overseas skills recognition."

CORE has identified approximately 30 per cent of refugees and migrants with transferrable skills acquired in their country of origin who, due to tedious and costly processes, find it difficult to work independently in Australia.

CORE also welcomes the focus of the Strategy on permanent residency as a key feature of the migration system, something that was identified in the Parkinson Review of the migration system.

CORE works regularly with many people who have been left in a state of limbo, unable to gain citizenship because of a mix of administrative complexity and inflexible rules.

One of the key priorities must be getting people off temporary visa status and on to a more permanent footing where they can contribute and enjoy the benefits of citizenship.

“We want people to realise the mutual benefits that accrue through permanence and citizenship, not be left stranded in temporary migration,” Ms Reinoso said.

CORE looks forward to working with the Commonwealth and State governments to assist the thousands of new arrivals who will settle in South-West Sydney over the coming years, as well as those already here.

While there are wonderful stories of success, many also struggle to access basic services such as housing, healthcare, childcare and education.

CORE applauds the work of Ministers Clare O’Neil and Andrew Giles and the Department of Home Affairs in working to revamp the migration system.

CORE believes that a streamlined migration system can play a larger role in Australia’s economic and social development, especially in a climate where Australia is competing with other advanced economies to attracting overseas talent and capital.

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CORE Community Services Ltd is a not for profit organisation operating in South West Sydney since 1979. We run a wide range of activities, and programs across our key services; Children’s Services, Youth Services, Multicultural Communities, Aged and Disability Care and Community Hubs with a focus on Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities and vulnerable communities.

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