

Census data helps get English class funding for new migrants

The Australian Migrant Resource Centre (AMRC) in Naracoorte supports people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to settle into their new communities.

This support empowers new arrivals to positively contribute to South Australia's society, culture, economy and environment.

Multicultural Community Engagement Manager, Frances Kirby, said Census data helps provide insights into the Naracoorte region, which has become a popular destination for migrants in South Australia.

"With Census information about our region, we can see employment, income, housing, family composition and the economic contributions migrants make to our area," Ms Kirby said.

The AMRC is focused on community development and uses Census data to support funding applications.

Ms Kirby has recently used Census data to successfully apply for a grant to develop conversational English classes for newly settled women from Afghanistan.

"The mothers of the children that attend school here need to be able to speak English in order to help their children progress their education," Ms Kirby said.

"Speaking English is critical for having that sense of health and wellbeing by being part of the wider community, as well as their own cultural community.

"Female participants in our classes gain English skills and confidence to attain drivers' licences and undergo TAFE courses," Ms Kirby said.

The AMRC also publicises a network of employers and helps clients prepare for job opportunities. Job agencies often refer other clients to attend the English classes.

Ms Kirby said Census data was a great tool to share with the wider community.

"We provide Census data to a range of community organisations, including the Mayor, local council, the school and local businesses," Ms Kirby said.

"Our Mayor has most recently used the Census data to showcase the positive impact migration has had into regional and rural areas.

"Looking at the Census data since the year 2000, you can see the growth in the region of the 18 to 40 year old population, as well as the economic and social contribution our multicultural population is bringing to the community.

"Data collected through the Census on location, ancestry, religion, languages spoken at home, education and employment ensure organisations like AMRC can continue its vital work for the community," Ms Kirby said.