

28 October 2020

Com.It.Es South Australia publishes community engagement report of the South Australian Italian Community Bodies. “Understanding the Past, Present and Future!”

Com.It.Es South Australia is pleased to announce the completion of our community engagement report which was commissioned by the Com.It.Es committee in 2016. Com.It.Es. South Australia undertook the “Club Project” to understand the past, present and future role of Italian associations, clubs and welfare bodies in South Australia. Having an understanding of the current and future positioning of these institutions is particularly important especially in the context of the generational change of the current Italo-Australian society.

In the past associations and clubs were places where Italian people from particular regions and towns could gather together and participate in social and sometimes cultural activities. However, with over of time there has been a generational change which has affected the roles that these organisations play in the contemporary Italo-Australian society. Second and third generations Italians are fully integrated into the Australian society and do not identify with associations and clubs. This means that maintaining the regional and cultural values of associations and clubs as well as their identities is problematic in the current society. In other words, the future of these organisations is unclear. Therefore, Com.It.Es. South Australia decided to undertake a small-scale investigation to consider this issue as a priority following the 2015 election.

Mr Mark Quaglia current Executive Member and the President of Com.It.Es at the time when this project was commissioned stated *“In 2015 Com.It.Es embarked on a research project with the aim of engaging with many of the Italian Clubs and Associations of South Australia to provide us with information of the current challenges facing them. What was clearly evident is that the clubs - now 50 years from their birth remain inextricably connected and largely patronised by its founding mothers and fathers many of whom today are aged 75+. Most importantly this project provided an opportunity for the administrators of these bodies to voice the challenges they are facing and the challenges they must confront to remain viable and relevant a world so different from the one when they arrived years ago.”*

Dr Christian Verdicchio President of Com.It.Es stated *“The Com.It.Es committee saw this as an important project and role to engage with as many as the local clubs, associations and organisations as possible to get a contemporary view on the current state of our Italian community bodies. It was not an easy task, but I am so proud and thankful of the Com.It.Es committee and all of those members of the community we met in order to exchange words to put this report together”.*

Com.It.Es South Australia also wishes to thank Marylisa Fabian for her tireless efforts in scribing our meetings over the years, and to Associate Professor Angela Scarino and Dr Matteo Farina for their amazing work in analysing the data and completing the report for us in a systematic academic approach. We also want to acknowledge the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for funding this project in conjunction with the support of the Consulate of Italy in Adelaide.

To view the report go online to our resources page on www.sacomits.org.au/resources

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