

MEDIA RELEASE

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Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network urges targeted investment in young people ahead of Federal Election

Ahead of the Federal Election, the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia (MYAN) has launched its Election Policy Platform outlining the key issues that require immediate action from an incoming government.

MYAN is calling for:

1. Investment in young people

- Reinstatement of a Federal Youth Minister as a member of Cabinet
- Establishment of a Federal Youth Advisory Council, made up of young people under 30 from diverse backgrounds
- Increased rates for income support, Austudy and Youth Allowance, rent assistance and ongoing funding for affordable housing.

2. Rebuild our humanitarian/migration program and reimagine the settlement of young people and their families

- An increase in resettlement places for children and young people in the Humanitarian Program, with a focus on unaccompanied and separated children.
- A commitment to the review and reform of youth settlement services and increased investment in settlement services for children and young people.

3. Education and Employment Pathways

- Targeted career advisory programs within the school sector that emphasise VET, apprenticeships, and alternative post-school pathways including Specialist job creation programs designed with industry to fill workforce gaps
- An increase in opportunities for unprotected humanitarian visa holders to access higher education and training, including access to include Higher Education Loans Programs (HELP), Commonwealth Supported Places and concession rates and the removal of international fee requirements.

4. Mental Health

- Promote the mental health and wellbeing of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds through significant investment in accessible sports, recreation, arts, youth support, leadership development and employment.

5. Racism and social cohesion

- Adopt and resource the Australian Human Rights' Commission proposed **National Anti-Racism Framework** and related campaigns and programs.
- Establish an advisory body of young people and service providers from diverse backgrounds to advise and invest in national anti-racism initiatives and innovative strategies to combat racism and build social cohesion.
- Invest in measures that improve industry, regulatory and community responses to cyber-racism, and address its impacts on the mental health and wellbeing for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Chair of MYAN, Carmel Guerra OAM, said: “Targeted investment in young people is critical for Australia’s prosperity. Against a backdrop of unprecedented social and economic upheaval, this is a crucial time to work with young people to install a vision of a future that they feel hopeful and confident in.”

“We’ve spoken and listened to young people across Australia and considered their perspectives and views when it comes to MYAN’s election platform.

“Young people are the experts in their own lives – and they are the future of this country. They should be empowered to create and advise on solutions that will address issues that affect them, other young people, and Australia.”

MYAN National Manager Rana Ebrahimi said: “Young people have been disproportionately impacted by upheavals in education, training and employment opportunities and disruption to social connections throughout the pandemic which exacerbated pre-existing barriers faced by young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

“This election we appeal to the political parties to seriously improve policies to ensure that they impact positively on young people.”

About MYAN: Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia (MYAN) is an advocacy non-profit peak body that works in partnership with young people, government, and civil society to promote the rights and interests of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds and ensure these are recognised in policy and practice.

MEDIA: Interviews with spokespeople including young people are available. Please contact Jackie Hanafie on 0493 393 416.