



# Mobility and Transport for Young Refugees and Migrants in Australia

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SETSCoP Policy & Practice Resource

August 2024



## Acknowledgements

### First Nations acknowledgement

The Social Policy Group acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across Australia as the First Peoples and the Traditional Custodians and owners of the lands on which we live and work across Australia.

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, and the Turrbal and Jagera peoples, as the Traditional Custodians and Owners of the land on which our offices are situated. We pay our respects to their elders, past and present, and recognise their continuing connection to the land, waters, and communities.

As an organisation committed to advocating for social cohesion and the well-being of disadvantaged populations nationwide, we acknowledge and celebrate the diverse cultures, histories, and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to our country.

We extend our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout Australia, past, present, and future. We recognise their ongoing resilience, strength, and stewardship of the land and commit ourselves to ongoing efforts of reconciliation, understanding, and collaboration.

### LGBTIQA+ acknowledgement

The Social Policy Group acknowledge that we respect everyone's right to freely identify and affirm their sexual or romantic orientation and gender identity, including terms such as lesbian, gay, transgender, non-binary, gender diverse, genderqueer, queer, aromantic, asexual, bisexual, pansexual, sistergirls and brotherboys. We support the rights of people born with intersex variations to be free from discrimination and mistreatment on the basis of their sex characteristics.

We pay our respects to our community's lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer pioneers and acknowledge the lives of those LGBTIQA+ persons who never made it to safety.

As an organisation committed to designing and advocating for inclusive social policy, we celebrate our community's diversity and work to eliminate all forms of discrimination throughout Australia's systems.

### Victim survivor acknowledgement

The Social Policy Group acknowledges the significant impact of family and domestic violence on individuals, families and communities. We acknowledge the strength and resilience of the children, young people and adults who have, and are still, experiencing this violence and pay our respects to those who did not survive, and to their loved ones.



The SETSCoP is a community of practice (CoP) bringing together service providers who support refugees and vulnerable migrants under the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program. SETSCoP is facilitated by the Social Policy Group in partnership with settlement service providers to enable sharing and learning, and improve outcomes for people supported through the SETS program and the wider community.



The Social Policy Group (SPG) is a national, non-government, not-for-profit body with specialist expertise in social policy and program design with a focus on population diversity, social and community cohesion, gender equality, community participation and inclusion, systems' responsiveness, and community outreach and engagement.



Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia (MYAN) is an advocacy non-profit body that provides advice to the government and capacity building to those who work with young people.

MYAN has worked 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 since its formal inception in 2007. MYAN facilitates national connections between young people, academics, policymakers and practitioners, provides policy expertise, provides youth leadership opportunities and develops capacity-building resources.

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## 1. Refugee and migrant youth mobility and access to services

*This policy and practice resource paper focuses on mobility and transport for young refugees and migrants in Australia.*

Young refugees and migrants face hurdles when trying to get around. Family members often lack driver's licences to help young people learn to drive. Young people often encounter a lack of suitable public transport options, along with cost barriers to transport. Moreover, young refugees and migrants often live further away from services with limited options to reach them.

This resource collates examples of policies and programs that help young people better access services. These highlights are intended to:

1. Support settlement service providers in their strategic planning and implementation of programs for young people; and
2. Spur thinking for policymakers regarding ways to tackle this important issue.

The resource ends with a call to policymakers and practitioners to continue to work together to support young refugees and migrants to be better able to access places, people, and services across the country.

## 2. Grounded: Issues in transport options for young people

### 2.1 Zerah's transport and mobility

Twenty-two-year-old Zerah\* and her mother arrived in Australia on humanitarian visas in 2020, just before COVID-19 border restrictions and settled in a regional town. Zerah's mother has been trying to get her degrees, skills and experience as a pharmacologist recognised while working in a local supermarket. Zerah herself is about to finish a Certificate IV in Ageing Support. Zerah has sporadic shifts at a nearby café whenever staff are sick or on leave. Zerah gives some of this minimal and variable income to her mother to try to help with the rising rent and bills. The rest Zerah saves or spends when she hangs out with her friends she met at TAFE and at cultural events – though when her friends meet up in the evenings and if one of them can't give Zerah a lift, she struggles to make it.

Zerah has started to apply for jobs in aged care. There are only seven facilities in the town and there are multiple vacancies. Zerah has developed good

relations during her placement, and the language Zerah speaks is in demand due to projected increases in aged care residents from her community. However, almost all the roles require flexible working hours, including weekends, early morning shifts and after-hours shifts to help care for residents when they wake up and into the evenings.

The last buses in the town stop at 6:30 pm on weekends and 9:00 pm on weekdays. The first bus on Zerah's route on Sundays doesn't start until 9:30 am. It's a 13-kilometre bicycle ride down country roads, which would take almost an hour and would be dangerous at night.

Since Zerah's mother doesn't have a licence of her own and private driving lessons are costly, Zerah is struggling to learn to drive. She saw a program for free driving lessons online for 20 hours, but it is in another town, and it would still leave her many hours short of the licence requirements.

*\*Zerah is a composite character drawn from the community of practice examples and peak body consultations, where SETS providers have discussed the experiences of young people that they work with.*

Zerah's story highlights some of the issues young refugees and vulnerable migrants are facing every day across Australia when it comes to getting around. This includes high school students in Logan, Queensland; young hospitality staff in Albany, Western Australia; and university graduates in Launceston, Tasmania.

Young refugees and vulnerable migrants face major inter-connected and compounding issues in getting around.





## 2.2 Barriers to public transport

Refugee and migrant families are increasingly living far from city centres across Australia. This can largely be attributed to both the cost of living and housing crises, combined with urban planning and zoning. These areas are typically serviced by less frequent, less available, and less accessible public transport compared to inner-urban areas,<sup>1</sup> which means that residents must travel greater distances at a higher cost to access public transport services. Moreover, young refugees and vulnerable migrants living in regional or remote locations face even more significant challenges as they often have even fewer public transport options.

Without adequate public transport access, young refugees and vulnerable migrants living in outer suburbs, peri-urban, regional, and remote areas face diminished capability in accessing established services such as settlement service providers as well as mainstream services. These can also include access to suitable education and employment opportunities. Additionally, this can diminish young people's ability to connect with community and peers and engage with cultural and recreational spaces. As a result, young refugees and vulnerable migrants' physical and mental health are likely to be negatively impacted.

1. Rosier and McDonald (2011) *The relationship between transport and disadvantage in Australia*.

## 2.3 Barriers to private transport

It is widely known that Australia is a car-dependent country.<sup>2</sup> Cars are the most popular means of transport in every state and territory due to sprawling urban planning in the capital cities and the prevailing car culture. In a car-dependent country such as Australia, having a driver's licence and a working vehicle is often crucial for equitable mobility.

A study conducted by the Australasian College of Road Safety illustrated that culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members face significant road use challenges, including accessing the licensing system, obtaining experience and training to enable them to obtain a licence and drive safely, and

understanding the regulatory framework for driving in their given region.<sup>3</sup>

Young people from a CALD background often struggle to attain driver's licences since many of their parents and family do not hold licences of their own and therefore cannot mentor or supervise practice hours. Furthermore, their household may lack access to a vehicle or vehicle availability to be able to practise driving.

The upfront and ongoing costs of a vehicle present another hurdle for young migrants and refugees, including maintenance, fuel, insurance, and unforeseen costs.



2. The 2021 Census shows that 91 per cent of households responded to owning at least one vehicle and 55.1 per cent replied having two or more vehicles. Transport: Census, 2021. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/industry/tourism-and-transport/transport-census/latest-release>

3. Harrison, W. and Tapsas, D. (eds) (2007) *Enthusiasm in Search of a Strategy: Road Safety Programs and Needs in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities in Victoria*, AUSTRALASIAN ROAD SAFETY RESEARCH POLICING EDUCATION CONFERENCE 2007. The Meeting Planners.





## 2.4 Differentiated access (peri-urban and regional issues)

Research indicates that certain groups are more likely to experience transport disadvantage, including young people as well as women, unemployed people, and people on low incomes.<sup>4</sup> As noted by Infrastructure Australia, there are significant disparities in public transport access between those living and working in inner suburbs and those living and working in outer suburbs (and peri-urban) in Australia's capital cities.<sup>5</sup>

Settlement Engagement and Transition Support organisations and practitioners have observed a trend of CALD youth (including young refugees and vulnerable migrants) moving to different areas that are further out from the city centre to outer-urban areas due to the housing crisis and cost of living pressures. Young refugees and vulnerable migrants are included in this cohort.

For some young refugees and migrants, they may be settled in regional or remote areas. This further compounds existing issues of access and mobility as the availability of public transport, access

to suitable education and employment opportunities, and access to services such as settlement providers, social integration programs, and health and mental healthcare services are sparse.<sup>6</sup>

Transport disadvantage in Australia is defined as difficulty accessing transport as well as difficulties associated with maintaining private transport.<sup>7</sup> Factors that define transport disadvantage are:

- Caused by cost;
- Availability; and
- Poor physical accessibility.<sup>8</sup>

These disadvantages often further entrench existing systemic disparities, affecting young refugees and vulnerable migrants' abilities to seek adequate education and employment opportunities, connecting with peers, communities and culture, and equitable access to green spaces and recreational activities. These factors can have long-lasting impacts on a young person's capability, economic capacity, and health and mental wellbeing.

4. Rosier and McDonald (2011) The relationship between transport and disadvantage in Australia.

5. Australian Government Infrastructure Australia (2018) Outer Urban Public Transport: Improving accessibility in lower-density areas. Australia Government Infrastructure Australia.

6. Mental Health Australia. Mapping Mental Health Care. <https://mhaustralia.org/mapping-mental-health-care>

7. Rosier and McDonald (2011) The relationship between transport and disadvantage in Australia.

8. Rosier, K. and McDonald, M. (2011) The relationship between transport and disadvantage in Australia, Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia Resource Sheet. Australian Government Australian Institute of Family Studies.

## 2.5 Funding

There is a lack of coordinated funding for youth mobility. The example programs highlighted in Table 1 (see below) demonstrate some working models that have been effective (to an extent) in delivering positive outcomes for young refugees and migrants. In some cases, these programs not only enable young refugees and migrants with pathways to greater mobility, but they can also be

opportunities to provide a safe space for young refugees and migrants to connect with local communities, peers and government services. However, there are gaps identified, such as the accessibility, affordability and availability of some programs, funding shortcomings and tailored and cultural appropriateness. Most of these may be addressed with appropriate funding.

## 2.6 Access to nature, community, culture, and recreation

Sports and the outdoors are often seen as defining cultural identity of Australians. These spaces not only offer physical and mental health benefits directly, but they also offer community and a sense of belonging for participants. For young refugees and migrants, participating in sports can help them navigate life in Australia, as well as learn English and build social relationships. These spaces can also help break down negative social stereotypes and foster broader social harmony.<sup>9</sup> For young refugees and migrants, diminished mobility and access to sports, recreational spaces, and nature

can be another barrier to building a sense of belonging in Australia.

Transport factors that may hinder young refugees and migrants' participation in these spaces may include:

- Lack of adequate public transport;
- Lack of private transport;
- Diminished capability of support from older family members; and
- Cost of transport.

9. Australian Sports Commission (2024). Cultural, racial and linguistically diverse communities. [https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity\\_in\\_sport/inclusive-sport/understanding-our-diverse-audiences/cald](https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity_in_sport/inclusive-sport/understanding-our-diverse-audiences/cald)





## 3. Good practice in settlement of youth access

### 3.1 Outreach

It has been observed that transportation can pose a significant challenge for young people, particularly when they are new to an area. To help them gain a better understanding of public transport and increase their confidence in using it, some programs have made efforts to coordinate with young people by meeting them at a central and agreed-upon location — such as a train station — and travelling together to a program venue. Initiatives like these have proven to be extremely valuable, particularly for newly arrived young refugees and migrants, as well as for those who may not have travelled outside of their local areas before.

Settlement practitioners often connect to young people at touchpoints as part of their outreach strategies to engage young people about the programs available. Some examples of outreach touchpoints can include:

- Schools
- TAFES, universities
- Libraries
- Sports programs

Programs with great engagement have been those that are offered at more locations with ease of access, and areas of coverage, and are either free or affordable for young refugees and vulnerable migrants.

### 3.2 Building trusted relationships

Successful outreach is often an essential first step in building trusting relationships. Running in-school programs or recreation-based programs has provided practitioners with ways of engaging with young people and building relationships.

Approaches such as providing transport to events, travelling together, and online chat spaces have also been effective ways of building relationships with young people.



### 3.3 Addressing needs

The mobility and transport needs of young refugees and vulnerable migrants can overlap with other population demographics in Australia. Addressing these needs has been demonstrated in multiple programs, whether they are targeted especially for this cohort or have aimed to address the needs of a wider youth demographic.

Recognising that young refugees and vulnerable migrants are often disadvantaged in gaining mobility and freedom of movement in Australia, where car dependency is crucial. Some of these primary needs include:

- Access and understanding jurisdictions' licensing systems (different laws across different states);
- Access and affordability of driving lessons, instructions, and mentors; and
- Access to vehicles.

Programs that offer young people affordable driving lessons, mentors/supervision and access to vehicles, can address these immediate needs. We note that some of these programs may not be

targeted or tailored specifically to young refugees and vulnerable migrants.

Programs that have been designed to meet the specific needs of young refugees and vulnerable migrants have offered support in getting driving learner's permits, which can include language support, access to technology and education in licensing systems.

Secondary needs that young refugees and vulnerable migrants may face may include dimensions that result from disadvantaged access and mobility. These may include:

- Access to suitable education and employment opportunities;
- Access to services (including settlement services and other mainstream services), health and mental services, and programs (i.e., driving programs, social cohesion programs, job-ready programs); and
- Access to culture (activity hubs, city centres, community, cultural events), peers (socialising) and recreational spaces (nature, green spaces, sporting).



# 4. Transport and mobility programs

This paper outlines some driving programs offered by organisations or local councils that could help tackle the challenges facing young refugees and vulnerable migrants.

Organisations are providing either free or affordable programs to groups – including young refugees and vulnerable migrants – to navigate through hurdles in accessing the licencing system, gaining practical driving experiences or accessing nature and recreational activities.

Some of the programs highlighted below demonstrate localised solutions to youth mobility. This section can be used for referrals and for learning examples.

Location	Program	Description
ACT	The Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services (MARSS):  Learn to Drive Program	The Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services (MARSS) has a Learn to Drive Program to assist clients to obtain the ACT Provisional or full licence and start driving independently. Clients need to be over the age of 16 years old with an ACT Learners Licence. Clients need to come from low-income backgrounds with family incomes less than \$50,000 per year or single incomes less than \$18,000 per year. However, the program could be a financial burden for low-income individuals and families as it costs \$45 per hour (MARSS Australia Inc. 2023). <sup>10</sup>
ACT	The Salvation Army: Drive for Life	<p>The Drive for Life program primarily supports young people ages between 16–25 and is designed to meet the needs of young people who may find it difficult to achieve their driver’s licence.</p> <p>The Drive for Life program applies a holistic approach to support young people to engage with the licensing system, this includes the support such as obtaining ID and filling out forms for the driver’s licence.</p> <p>In the ACT, the ACT Government has partnered with the Salvation Army to help disadvantaged learner drivers meet requirements to get their licence. Participants who meet the criteria for assistance are referred to the program through various agencies affiliated with the Salvation Army and then paired with volunteer driving mentors.</p> <p>The Salvation Army’s Driver for Life programs exist to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide equity in access to driving lessons and supervision;</li> <li>• Improve employment and education opportunities for young people; and</li> <li>• Help young people become experienced, safe and confident drivers.</li> </ul>

10. Migrant And Refugee Settlement Services. (2023). Driving Programs – Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services. [online] Available at: <https://marss.org.au/driving-programs/> [Accessed 6 Feb. 2024].

Location	Program	Description
ACT	Multicultural Youth Services: Driving Licence	Multicultural Youth Services has Road Read (L Plate) courses and driving lessons.  More information: <a href="https://mhub.org.au/contact-us/">https://mhub.org.au/contact-us/</a>
SA	Australian Refugee Association (ARA)	ARA recruits driving mentor volunteers to help individuals from refugee and migrant backgrounds obtain their driver’s licences.  “Volunteers supervise learner driving practice and provide guidance and encouragement to help learner drivers achieve the 75 driving hours required to graduate to P Plates. The ARA car has safety features fitted and volunteers receive specialised training before commencing with a learner driver, who has previous driving experience with a qualified instructor.”  Find out more: <a href="https://www.australianrefugee.org/get-involved/giveyourtime/">https://www.australianrefugee.org/get-involved/giveyourtime/</a>
NSW	Navitas Skilled Futures and Gymea Community Aid and Information Service	Another notable program is Navitas Skilled Futures and Gymea Community Aid and Information Service co-operated pre-learner course to help participants from resettlement communities get their driver’s licence. <sup>11</sup> The course will equip students with the literacy, numeracy and computer skills they need to pass the licence tests. The program also prepares students with the key vocabulary they need to talk about cars and their different parts (Navitas Skilled Futures 2021).
NSW, Toowoomba		In collaboration with the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the local PCYC, Multicultural Australia SETS Toowoomba ran two tailored programs to provide driving education to Yazidi women and youth settling in the Toowoomba region. <sup>12</sup> Yazidi youth participated in the local PCYC driving simulator with the support of an instructor and a Bi-Cultural Worker to provide language support. This program helped 25 Yazidi Youth acquire practical driving skills to obtain their Learners Licence. <sup>13</sup>

11. Prineas, E. (2021). Get on the road with Navitas Skilled Futures and Gymea. [online] Navitas Skilled Futures. Available at: <https://navitas-skilled-futures.com.au/news/english-for-driving-get-on-the-road-with-navitas-english-and-gymea/> [Accessed 6 Feb. 2024].

12. PCYC. (n.d.). Braking the Cycle. [online] Available at: <https://www.pcy.org.au/youth-and-community/personal-and-leadership-development/braking-the-cycle/>.

13. Settlement Council of Australia. (2023). Driving Education to Yazidi Youth and Women (SETS) Multicultural Australia. Available at: <https://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/11/2023/MA-Transport-Case-Study-.pdf> [Accessed 6 Feb. 2024].



Location	Program	Description
NSW	Uniting: 120 Countdown	<p>120 Countdown is a free Driver Licensing Access Program assisting people in disadvantaged communities (including Aboriginal Communities) to obtain, retain and regain their drivers' licence to improve their access to education, employment, health and other services.</p> <p>120 Countdown helps people obtain their L-plates and connect learner drivers with volunteer mentors to complete the 120 hour of driving practice needed before they can go for their P-plates.</p> <p>The program is available in Mid North Coast NSW. Offices are located in Nambucca and Coffs Harbour. The Nambucca office covers Bowraville, Macksville, Nambucca Valley, Urunga and Valla. The Coffs Harbour office covers Coffs Harbour and surrounds.</p> <p>Free and accessible driving program for CALD youth to access in certain locations.</p>
VIC	Connecting Communities: A Public Transport Pilot	<p>In the City of Casey, South East Community Links (SECL) practitioners and local settlement service providers ran a pilot program named Connecting Communities: A Public Transport Pilot as a result of acknowledging a consistent lack of awareness and engagement with public transport for newly arrived communities with English as an additional language.<sup>14</sup> SECL conducted a trial public transport training model to test the effectiveness of providing in-language resources and support to existing and newly arrived women living in the City of Casey (Settlement Council of Australia 2023). The four-week long pilot program helped two small groups of 30 Afghan women develop better knowledge and access to the local public transport system in their area.</p>
VIC	Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council (SMECC): Driving Mentor Program	<p>SMECC's Driving Program is available to all people from their local CALD community, who are looking to obtain a Victorian driver's licence.</p> <p>The aim of the program is to give CALD community members the confidence and skills needed to obtain their Australian Learners and Probationary licence.</p> <p>This is done through L and P learner driving education programs and driving lessons. The service cost is \$50 for an hour of lessons. The program runs every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.</p> <p>The price of the program might cause financial burden.</p>

<sup>14</sup> Settlement Council of Australia. (2023). Connecting Communities: A Public Transport Pilot South East Community Links. Available at: <https://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/10/2023/SECL-Transport-Case-Study-FINAL.pdf> [Accessed 6 Feb. 2024].

Location	Program	Description
VIC	VicRoads Victorian Community Road Safety Partnership Program	<p>As a recipient of the VicRoads Victorian Community Road Safety Partnership Program, MRC North West Region offers road safety programs. This program aims to enhance road safety for newly arrived refugees, vulnerable road users and older drivers from CALD backgrounds, offering both off-road and on-road driving activities.</p> <p>"Off-road activities help people before they start driving so you can become familiar with a car and what's expected when you are driving around Melbourne.</p> <p>On-road activities involve driving lessons with a driving mentor. This means you'll have an experienced driver with you when you're learning who is there to support you and help you gain confidence and become a competent driver, on the road."</p> <p>More information: <a href="https://www.mrcnorthwest.org.au/services/sets-settlement-engagement-transition-services/">https://www.mrcnorthwest.org.au/services/sets-settlement-engagement-transition-services/</a></p>
VIC	MiCare, Yarra Women behind the wheel	<p>MiCare and the Inner Melbourne Settlement Engagement Transition Support team offers a six-week driving program for women of refugee and migrant backgrounds living in or near the City of Yarra.</p> <p>"The course spans 6 weeks and is packed full of information on driving laws, the licensing system, the finances of owning and driving a car, staying safe on the road, and drivers' rights and responsibilities.</p> <p>After the completion of the classes, the participating women are given 5 driving lessons with an instructor who teaches in-language to strengthen driving skills."</p> <p>More information: <a href="https://www.micare.com.au/news/news/yarra-women-behind-the-wheel/">https://www.micare.com.au/news/news/yarra-women-behind-the-wheel/</a></p>
VIC	MDS (Master Driving School), Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre	<p>MDS partners with not-for-profit organisations (some organisations have included Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre, Salvation Army, Red Cross, Anglicare, Job Prospects, Sarina Russo Job Access, Melbourne City Mission/Youth Support Services) to deliver driving lessons.</p> <p>Find out more: <a href="https://masterdrivingschool.net.au/our-non-for-profit-partner-organisations/">https://masterdrivingschool.net.au/our-non-for-profit-partner-organisations/</a></p>

Location	Program	Description
VIC	L2P Driver Program	<p>The L2P Driving Program in Victoria is an initiative designed to support and educate young drivers aged between 16 and 21 facing barriers in learning to drive, as they transition from a learner's permit (L-plater) to a provisional license (P-plater). It is aimed at providing them with the necessary skills and experience to become safe and responsible drivers on the roads. The program consists of a number of requirements that learners must complete before progressing to the next stage, including logging at least 120 hours of supervised driving practice, undertaking hazard perception tests, and attending workshops or seminars that cover topics such as defensive driving techniques, road rules, and alcohol and drug awareness. Eligible young people are offered a minimum of one hour of supervised driving each week. The program is funded by Transport Accident Commission and managed by the Victorian Government.</p> <p>More information: <a href="https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/licences/your-ps/get-your-ps/preparing-for-your-licence-test/l2p-learner-driver-mentor-program">https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/licences/your-ps/get-your-ps/preparing-for-your-licence-test/l2p-learner-driver-mentor-program</a></p>
WA, Perth	RYDE (Regional Youth Driver Education Program) (Council Funded)	<p>The RYDE program provides young people the opportunity to complete their 50 hours of supervised driving experience with one of their volunteer 'Driving Mentors'. The program exists because many young people find it difficult to complete the 50 hours driving experience now required for a WA Driver's Licence. This might be caused by them not having the access to an appropriate vehicle, or a qualified person to spend all of those hours in the passenger seat. The RYDE program will connect learner drivers with Volunteer Mentors and a Program vehicle, so that they can get their licence and all of the opportunities that come with it.</p> <p>Locations could be difficult to access by CALD youth facing transport disadvantage. For instance, only two places in Perth operate the program and the CALD youth must go to the youth centre. However, it is a very affordable program that significantly helps with accessing licensing and practising driving skills.</p>

Location	Program	Description
WA	The Driver Education program at the Edmund Rice Centre	<p>The Driver Education program at the Edmund Rice Centre in WA targeted SETS Clients and provided 36 driving lessons, Drive Safe classes, and helped clients to get ready for the 'Hazard Perception Test'.<sup>15</sup> The program is available to eligible humanitarian entrants and is at the subsidised cost of \$1,188 (Settlement Council of Australia 2023). An interest-free loan from Mercy Care Lending Service is available for clients who are unable to pay for the total fees and interested clients are first required to finish and pass an English test (Settlement Council of Australia 2023). The result of the English test decides whether the client is suitable for the Keys for Life (12 hours). The Keys for Life program includes presentations, games, learning activities and a workbook with over 200 practice quiz questions to be completed and culminates in a final theory test quiz. The schedule for the class is for two full days from 9 am to 3 pm with one day of study in between. Once the client passes the requirement, they will receive an accredited Keys for Life certificate from the Department of Education partnered with the Department of Transport. The clients can use the certificate to acquire their official WA Learners Licence (Settlement Council of Australia 2023). While the program helps clients acquire a Learners Licence, the cost might be steep for clients from low-income backgrounds.</p>
QLD	Police-Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC): Braking the Cycle (BTC)	<p>PCYC BTC is PCYC's volunteer driver mentor program designed to support learner drivers without access to a supervisor or registered vehicle to complete their logbook hours. The aim of the program is to provide young people with increased employment opportunities, community connection and driver education.</p>
Multiple States	First Hike Project	<p>First Hike Project is a not-for-profit organisation operating out of Perth, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra.</p> <p>First Hike Project takes youth from refugee background on all-expenses-paid and all-equipment-provided overnight hiking and camping experience in the Australian bush, with the goal to offer safe, no-cost hiking experiences to people new to Australia with the hope that they will feel more at home in Australia once they step outside the suburbs and discover nature.</p>

<sup>15</sup> Settlement Council of Australia. (2023). Driver Education Program Edmund Rice Centre WA. Available at: <https://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/11/2023/ERCWA-Transport-Case-Study.pdf> [Accessed 6 Feb. 2024].



## 5. Policy and practice recommendations

Australia is becoming increasingly diverse, with one in five Australians born overseas and more than half of the population having at least one parent who was born overseas (according to Census 2021). Within this diverse population are young people of refugee and migrant backgrounds. It is crucial that these young people can access the necessary support and resources. Mobility enables young people to pursue their aspirations. Moreover, empowered and mobile young people become even greater contributors to broader society.

### 5.1 Opportunities for policymakers

#### a) Invest in mobility as a foundation for wider settlement outcomes

Mobility underpins overall settlement for young people. When young refugees and migrants struggle to physically reach education, employment, and services, they struggle in their overall settlement and their wellbeing. This means, that funding for mobility is particularly important.

Funding for mobility is currently fragmented. Driving programs — even those with heavy volunteer hours — are stretched to capacity. Settlement providers note that if they “dig deep” to provide closer to the 100–120 hours of supervised driving young people need to get their licences, then they can only offer this to very few refugees and migrants (who have few other options to get this supervision). Conversely, if they broaden it out to more people, organisations may only be able to provide 10–20 hours — leaving people far short of what they

need. Organisations may pick one of the two, or do their best to balance these demands and find that there are extensive waiting lists for the programs in either case given how valuable they are.

Funding for these programs is sometimes provided by state governments, local governments, or philanthropic grants. The amount needed far exceeds the current available funding. Policymakers and government can work to provide increased funding to support young people to gain their licences and unlock wider contributions to the Australian economy and society. Beyond driving programs, policymakers can work across government to support investments in accessible and sustainable transport and mobility options for young refugees and migrants (with associated benefits for the wider population).

#### b) Continue to examine the importance of mobility and its implications for settlement

Policymakers can support the continued exploration of the importance of mobility, including a better understanding of the spatial and design implications of changing settlement location patterns to outer-urban and regional areas.

### 5.2 Opportunities for settlement practitioners

#### c) Build trust and communications channels

While this may sound somewhat counterintuitive for helping young people access services, when asked by a settlement practitioner “How can I help get more young people to our activities?”, fellow settlement providers in the SETSCoP all emphasised the first step is building trust. Settlement practitioners noted that even if one is centrally located and easy to reach, young people will not access

services in the absence of hard-built trusting relationships. After establishing trust, settlement providers can connect with young people on their terms: through WhatsApp group chats, Facebook Groups, or word-of-mouth, giving ample time for young people to plan and travel to services and activities that they can benefit from.

#### d) Get creative, mobile, and flexible with services

Settlement providers stressed the need to meet young people where they are:

- By establishing strong relationships with schools, TAFES, and universities;
- By establishing strong relationships with sports clubs and artist hubs;
- By outreach at libraries and youth spaces;
- Through making activities available after school and work hours; and,
- Through creative approaches including providing transport options.

Providing services after-hours and on weekends, plus other creative approaches to making services accessible, also needs adequate financial support, which is linked to the opportunities for policymakers above.

#### e) Continue to advocate for the benefit and value of supporting better mobility and access for refugee and migrant youth.

The work of improving and supporting youth mobility is often delivered outside the scope of funded structures for settlement service providers. This can include activities such as helping youth gain knowledge about the Australian (States’) licensing systems, establishing meetups to guide youth through public transport infrastructure or partnerships with programs that service broader communities’ mobility.

Settlement service providers working with youth understand the importance of mobility and access and need support to deliver these highly beneficial services.

- Continue to advocate for mobility and access to be included within funded structures and programs.
- Continue to advocate for better planning at the local level to ensure communities have access to adequate public transport options.
- Continue to advocate community initiatives and programs that support and empower youth mobility.

### *f) Refer and collaborate*

There is a diversity of services in locations across Australia that are working to help young people obtain their driver's licences, access nature, or conduct outreach to isolated and disconnected youth.

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Settlement practitioners can use the examples outlined in Section 4. Transport and Mobility Programs above to find services already implementing important work in the space to learn from and refer to where appropriate. Settlement practitioners can also use platforms

like the SETS Community of Practice to collaborate with other youth settlement practitioners across the sector and the country to work towards solutions and shared outcomes for young migrants and refugees.

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