



ETHNIC COMMUNITIES' COUNCIL OF VICTORIA

voices of multicultural Victoria

- MEDIA RELEASE -

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ECCV CALLS FOR NEW MULTICULTURAL STRATEGY FOR VICTORIA AND INVESTMENT IN STATE BUDGET TO SUPPORT MIGRANT AND REFUGEE COMMUNITIES

The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria has called for the development of a new Multicultural Strategy for Victoria and recommended more than \$150 million be allocated in May's State Budget as part of a broader extension of the Victorian Government's approach to engagement with migrant and refugee communities.

In its 2021-22 Pre-Budget Submission to the Victorian Government, the ECCV recommends a range of initiatives focused on mental health, youth, employment, disability, older people from CALD communities, as well as an extension of the Government's forthcoming Anti-racism Strategy and community-led COVID-19 response and recovery initiatives.

ECCV Chairperson Eddie Micallef said the development of a new Multicultural Strategy was critical to ensuring government policies and services are inclusive, equitable and responsive to migrant and refugee communities.

"The past year has been difficult for the whole community, but the challenges faced by migrant and refugee communities have been building over a longer period of time," Mr Micallef said.

"Migrant and refugee communities have been overlooked and under-served by many of the public policy and public health measures over the past year.

"More than 30 percent of our population is from a CALD background, with one in two Victorians having at least one parent born overseas. CALD communities should not be an afterthought, particularly in major government initiatives or when communicating public health messages, which need to be culturally responsive.

"We believe there needs to be a further strengthening in the Victorian Government's approach, and our communities need to have a stronger voice at the decision-making table.

"This submission outlines the key measures and dedicated support we believe our communities and our sector needs to both recover and to thrive in the years to come," Mr Micallef said.

ECCV's key recommendations include:

- \$5 million over two years for the development of a new Multicultural Strategy for Victoria to promote inclusion and equity for migrant and refugee communities.
- \$12 million over four years to build on the Anti-Racism taskforce approach to the Anti-Racism Strategy.
- \$40 million over two years for a specific COVID-19 recovery plan for migrant and refugee communities, including \$7.5 million for community-based communications activities about the vaccination program.
- \$3 million over three years to develop a culturally responsive model to promote better mental health of people from migrant and refugee communities

Other measures call for changes that will support migrant and refugee communities long-term, including increased resources to support people with disability living in the community, resourcing the multicultural sector to respond to family violence and supporting social and community connection for older people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, including sustained support for CALD senior's clubs.

Mr Micallef said the ECCV policy recommendations had been costed and focused on assisting migrant and refugee communities to address major challenges in key areas.

“These recommendations set the stage for longer-term change to overcome systemic barriers that keep migrant and refugee communities confronting discrimination, exclusion, abuse, poor health, education and employment outcomes.”

[Download the submission](#)

Media Enquiries:

Victoria Kyriakopoulos, Media & Member Engagement Manager - media@eccv.org.au; 0431 091 738