

MEDIA RELEASE

25 OCTOBER 2017

FRESH VOICES FOR VICTORIA'S MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES

The Victorian Multicultural Commission has welcomed several new members to the state's Regional Advisory Councils, who will continue the important work of advocating for the interests of their communities.

VMC Chairperson Helen Kapalos said the eight councils cover both metropolitan and rural Victoria and are integral to informing government policy and supporting Victoria's multicultural communities.

"The insights, input and perspective of our new RAC members are an important addition to the Commission's work as the primary conduit between multicultural communities and government.

"Their contributions are crucial to our ability to advise government on how to best meet the needs of Victorians from all cultural backgrounds, in all corners of our state, on specific issues that matter to their communities.

"Advocating for communities is not just about problem analysis, it's about designing possibilities that enrich the social fabric of our great state" said Ms Kapalos.

The new Regional Advisory Council members will also work with the Commission to promote cultural diversity in their regions.

There are three councils representing the metropolitan areas, and one each for Barwon South West, Gippsland, Grampians, Hume and Loddon Mallee.

Council members have been appointed for a two-year term, and will meet three times a year.

Ms Kapalos said the Victorian Multicultural Commission placed particular emphasis on recruiting young people and people who have recently arrived in Victoria.

"We can only understand what young people and newly-arrived Australians truly need by engaging in meaningful dialogue, and the Regional Advisory Councils provide an important platform for these voices."

Council members come from 53 different cultural backgrounds and are made up of everyday community members, local business owners, service providers and local government representatives.

The involvement of everyday community members will allow the Commission to gain on-the-ground insights into issues affecting multicultural communities, such as migrant and refugee settlement services, social inclusion, employment, education, housing, citizenship, and connection to culture.

Media enquiries contact Iona Salter on 03 7017 8190 or iona.salter@dpc.vic.gov.au, or Ingelise Jones on 03 7017 8128 or ingelise.jones@dpc.vic.gov.au.