

SA's young migrants and refugee youth leading on ways to shape their futures

The Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly and Australian Migrant Resource Centre CEO, Eugenia Tsoulis, release their *Leading for our Future* Youth Symposium Report today. The report captures the ideas explored at the Youth Symposium held in October last year, where more than 300 South Australian migrant and refugee young people gathered to discuss the challenges they face accessing employment pathways, and importantly, the solutions they have for improving them.

The two organisations are committed to ensuring that critical policymakers, business leaders and service providers listen to what young migrant and refugee youth have to say about their lived experience, and identify targeted solutions that address the significant barriers to achieving rewarding, sustainable, long-term employment.

Through a series of roundtable discussions and presentations made by young migrant and refugee Youth from metropolitan and regional South Australian communities, the Symposium explored issues such as a lack of experience and qualifications, English language and communication, racism and discrimination, support with job searching and networks, and cultural 'clashes' that can often lead to misunderstandings.

The *Leading for our Future* Youth Symposium culminated in the following four key recommendations: implementation of a multicultural youth employment strategy; working with Business SA; developing materials to educate parents from new and establishing communities to support their children and young people through volunteering and unpaid work experience; and partnering with Regional Development Australia to pilot an innovative model of quality work experience placement for refugee and migrant young people living in regional South Australia.

The ideas generated via the symposium also included increasing targeting of existing traineeships and apprenticeships for migrants and refugee youth; supporting the expansion of networks to access work experience; accessing employment readiness programs, and assisting employers to become more culturally capable.

Further work will include discussions with government and non-government organisations to provide more opportunities for migrant and refugee young people to build our collective capacity to harness the full economic potential this group represents.

Quotes to be attributed to Commissioner for Children and Young People Helen Connolly:

By drawing on the strengths and expertise of our young migrants and refugees, we can deliver culturally appropriate support and programs that ensure migrant and refugee youth can successfully transition from education to employment in our state, and that future investment in our young people includes multicultural youth, directed to where they themselves have told us they need support.

Quotes attributable to Australian Migrant Resource Centre CEO Eugenia Tsoulis:

The report outlines some critical steps to move us forward. The challenge is for decision-makers to hear what refugee and migrant young people are saying and to collaboratively pilot new and innovative activities across South Australia that support their suggested solutions.

Background: The collaboration between the South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People and the Australian Migrant Resource Centre was designed to hear directly from young people from South Australia's refugee and migrant backgrounds, acknowledging that research shows access to education and employment are critical factors in ensuring successful settlement and integration of new arrival communities. There is a strong need for South Australia to provide targeted support for young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds given relatively high rates of youth unemployment coupled with few large manufacturing industries – the employers that have traditionally attracted CALD communities.

NOTE TO EDITORS

The *Leading for our Future, Youth Symposium Report* will be launched today (Wednesday 20 February 2019) 5pm, Adelaide Multicultural Centre, 23 Coglein St, Adelaide with the Minister for Industry and Skills, The Hon. David Pisoni MP and Minister for Human Services, The Hon. Michelle Lensink MLC both in attendance. Media are invited to attend. Please contact sharon.cleary@sa.gov.au to confirm attendance.

For more information about the work of the Commissioner for Children and Young People and go to www.ccyp.com.au

For more information about the work of the Australian Migrant Resource Centre go to www.amrc.org.au

Copies of *Leading for our Future Youth Symposium Report* will be available at the launch event or via download from the websites above from 6pm today.

For enquiries regarding this Media Release, please phone Sharon Cleary on 08 8226 3889 or email Sharon.cleary@sa.gov.au