

# **MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR MULTICULTURALISM**

Annual Report 2024 -2025

1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACT Government	Government of the Australian Capital Territory
EPIC	Exhibition Park in Canberra
FECCA	Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia
HCSD	Health and Community Services Directorate
MACM	Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism
MACT	Multicultural ACT
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
ToR	Terms of Reference
VAD	Voluntary Assisted Dying

## Technical Glossary

### **Charter for Multiculturalism**

A set of principles established under the *Multiculturalism Act 2023 (ACT)* guiding the ACT Government's commitment to promoting cultural diversity and inclusion.

### **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)**

A commonly used policy term referring to individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and/or who speak languages other than English.

### **Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism (MACM)**

An advisory body established under the *Multiculturalism Act 2023* to provide advice to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

### ***Multiculturalism Act 2023***

ACT legislation establishing the Charter for Multiculturalism and the Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism.

### **Multicultural ACT (MACT) (formerly known as the Office for Multicultural Affairs)**

A unit within the Health and Community Services Directorate (HCSD) responsible for multicultural policy and secretariat support to MACM.

## **Acknowledgement of Country**

The Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the land on which the ACT community gathers and lives. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging, and recognise the enduring contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the cultural life of the ACT.

We acknowledge the diverse multicultural communities of the ACT and the significant contributions migrant, refugee, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities make to the social, cultural and economic life of Canberra.

Wednesday 1 April 2026

Mr Michael Pettersson MLA,  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Minister Pettersson

**2024 - 2025 Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism Annual Report**

I am pleased to present the Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism Annual Report for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

This report outlines the activities and performance of the Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism (MACM), for the reporting period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. This is the second year within the term of this iteration the MACM.

This report has been prepared in accordance with section 7(2) of the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*.

It has been prepared in consideration and conformity with other legislation applicable to the preparation of the Annual Report by the MACM.

I certify that information in the attached annual report, is an honest and accurate account and that all material information on the operations of the MACM has been included for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

I hereby certify that fraud prevention has been managed in accordance with the *Public Sector Management Standards 2006* (repealed), Part 2.3 (see section 113, *Public Sector Management Standards 2016*).

Yours sincerely

**Miss Izabela Barakovska**  
Chair  
Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism

## Chair's Foreword

Following its inaugural year of establishment, the Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism (MACM, or the Council) continued to strengthen engagement between the ACT Government and multicultural communities across the Territory.

During the 2024-2025 reporting period, the Council focussed on consultation, strategic engagement, and providing advice on policies and initiatives affecting culturally, linguistically, and spiritually diverse communities across the ACT.

A significant milestone during the year was the Council's inaugural Community Consultation Forum, held in August 2024 in partnership with the Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

The forum brought together multicultural community members to share their experiences, priorities and emerging issues affecting their communities. Insights from this consultation helped inform the Council's workplan and ongoing advice to government, strengthening the integration of community perspectives into policy and service delivery discussions.

During the reporting period, Council members contributed advice and shared multicultural perspectives across a range of key policy areas, including gambling harm prevention, emergency preparedness, Voluntary Assisted Dying, coercive control, and access to period products.

MACM input helped ensure government initiatives were inclusive, culturally informed, and responsive to the needs of diverse communities, while also highlighting the importance of culturally appropriate communication, meaningful and proactive community engagement, and equitable access to services and programs.

In May 2025, the Council also hosted a consultation event with community organisations and service providers to discuss issues affecting multicultural communities, including domestic and family violence; access to services; community cohesion and social inclusion.

These discussions reinforced the importance of collaboration across government, service providers and community organisations to improve outcomes for multicultural communities.

During the year, the Council finalised and commenced implementation of its work plan, strengthening its strategic focus and providing a clear framework to guide its advice, engagement and consultation activities.

Through this work, the Council has also observed increasing discussion about social cohesion and what it means to build inclusive and harmonious communities. In this context, it is important to recognise that Canberra, like Australia, does not simply 'have' multicultural communities – but that it *is* a multicultural community, shaped and enriched by the diversity of all who call it home.

Looking ahead, the Council will continue to support the objectives of the *Multiculturalism Act 2023* and promote the Charter for Multiculturalism across government and the community.

The Council remains committed to ensuring multicultural perspectives are embedded in government decision-making and that Canberra continues to be a place where diversity is valued, belonging and inclusion are championed and experienced, and all communities can participate fully in society.

## Compliance Statement

The 2024-2025 Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism (MACM) Report must comply with the requirements outlined in the Annual Report Directions (the Directions) made under section 8 of the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*. The Directions are the ACT Legislation Register: [legislation.act.gov.au](https://legislation.act.gov.au).

The Compliance Statement indicates the subsections, under Parts 1 to 5 of the Directions, that are applicable to the MACM and the location of information that satisfies these requirements.

### Part 1 – Directions Overview

The requirements under Part 1 of the Directions relate to the purpose, timing and distribution, and record-keeping of annual reports. The 2024-2025 MACM Annual Report complies with all subsections of Part 1 of the Directions. The report provides an overview of the MACM's activities during 2024-2025.

To comply with section 15, Feedback, in Part 1 of the Directions, the 2024-2025 MACM Annual Report provides contact details for the Council, giving readers the opportunity to provide feedback.

### Part 2 – Reporting Entity Annual Report Requirements

The requirement within Part 2 of the Directions is mandatory for all reporting entities and the MACM complies with all subsections. The information that satisfies the requirements of Part 2 is found in the 2024-2025 MACM Annual Report as follows:

- a. Transmittal Certificate, see page 5
- b. MACM's Overview, inclusive of all subsections, see page 8
- c. MACM's and performance and activities, inclusive of all subsections, see page 10
- d. MAMC's governance and administration, see page 20
- e. MACM's future priorities, see page 21.

### Part 3 – Reporting by Exception

The Council has nil information to report by exception under Part 3 of the Directions for the 2024-2025 reporting year.

### Part 4 – Directorate and Public Sector Body specific Annual Report Requirements

The following subsections of Part 4 of the 2023 Direction are applicable to the MACM and can be found within the 2024-2025 Council's Annual Report.

1. *Multiculturalism Act 2023, part 4, section 15*
2. *Charter for Multiculturalism*
3. *Terms of Reference*

## SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW

### 1.1. Purpose and Role of the Council

The Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism (MACM, the Council) provides advice to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs on matters affecting culturally, linguistically and spiritually diverse communities.

The MACM supports the implementation of the Charter for Multiculturalism outlined in the Multiculturalism Act 2023 and promotes inclusive policy development across government.

Acting as a bridge between government and multicultural communities, the Council ensures that emerging issues and diverse perspectives are considered in the development of policies and programs that meet the needs – and reflect the aspirations and experiences – of Canberra’s multicultural communities.

The Council works closely with:

- ACT Government directorates
- community organisations
- service providers
- advisory bodies
- multicultural peak organisations.

The Council’s work supports the ACT Government’s broader objective of promoting multiculturalism and ensuring that Canberra remains an inclusive and welcoming city.

### 1.2. Overview of the MACM

The MACM is a statutory advisory body that provides advice to the ACT Minister for Multicultural Affairs on issues affecting culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Established under the Multiculturalism Act 2023, the MACM’s first term commenced on 1 September 2023. The MACM formalises the ACT Government’s commitment to multiculturalism, inclusion, and belonging.

The Council consists of 11 members, including a Chair and Deputy Chair. MACM members are selected through a merit-based appointment process and bring diverse professional expertise, lived experience, and community perspectives.

The Council also serves as a mechanism for engagement between government and multicultural communities, providing strategic advice, identify emerging issues, and supporting improved engagement across government and the community.

### 1.3. Legislative and Governance Framework

MACM operates under the Multiculturalism Act 2023 and its Terms of Reference (ToR). The Act establishes the Charter for Multiculturalism, which sets out principles to guide government policy and promote cultural diversity, inclusion and participation across the ACT.

The Act also establishes the MACM as a formal advisory body to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

The Act sets out the reporting obligations relating to multicultural policy.

The Council's governance arrangements are supported by the MACM's Terms of Reference, which outline:

- membership arrangements
- roles and responsibilities of Council members
- appointment processes
- functions of the Council
- meeting procedures
- reporting arrangements.

The Council operates within the broader governance framework of the ACT Government and is supported administratively by Multicultural ACT within the Health and Community Services Directorate.

#### **1.4. Functions of the Council**

Under the *Multiculturalism Act 2023* and the MACM ToR, the Council's primary functions include:

- providing advice to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs on matters affecting culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- promoting the principles of the Charter for Multiculturalism
- identifying emerging issues affecting multicultural communities
- facilitating engagement between government and multicultural communities
- supporting community participation in policy development

The Council also supports whole-of-government initiatives to strengthen community participation and reduce barriers to engagement.

Through these functions, the Council provides strategic advice to the Minister, drawing on community perspectives to inform policies and programs affecting multicultural communities.

## SECTION 2 – PERFORMANCE AND ACTIVITIES

### 2.1. Council Membership Profile

MACM consists of 11 members including a Chair and Deputy Chair. Members bring experience in community leadership, policy development and multicultural advocacy.

Member	Role	Term
Izabela Barakovska	Chair	2023-2026
Shanti Reddy	Deputy Chair	2023-2026
Timothy Sunwoo <sup>1</sup>	Member	2023-2025
Arun Bharatula	Member	2023-2026
Sukriti Kapoor	Member	2023-2026
Zakia Patel	Member	2023-2026
Lew Ching Yip	Member	2023-2026
Sultana Lubna Alam	Member	2023-2026
Efe Momoh	Member	2023-2026
Ivapene Seiuli	Member	2023-2026
Chin Wong	Member	2023-2026
Irina Samsonova <sup>2</sup>	Member	2025-2026

Table 1: MACM Members

### 2.2. Council Meetings

During 2023–2024 the Council held five formal sitting meetings.

Meeting	Date
1	27 August 2024
2	29 October 2024 <sup>3</sup>
3	25 November 2024
4	18 February 2025
5	29 April 2025
6	30 June 2025

Table 2: MACM Meeting during the 2024-2025 reporting period

Meetings provided an opportunity for members to discuss policy developments, receive briefings from ACT Government directorates and statutory authorities, and provide advice on emerging issues affecting multicultural communities.

Key topics discussed during the reporting period included:

- *Period Products and Facilities (Access) Act 2023*
- Emergency preparedness, disaster resilience, and recovery
- Community wellbeing, inclusion, and cohesion
- Voluntary Assisted Dying implementation
- Gambling harm prevention and culturally responsive supports

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Sunwoo resigned in December 2024, and his term finished in December 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Irina Samsonova was appointed on 29 April 2025, and her term will finish on 30 August 2026.

<sup>3</sup> 29 October 2024 meeting was cancelled because of the Caretaker period.

- Energy transition and consumer policy impacts on vulnerable households
- Community safety, social justice, and domestic and family violence prevention
- Community consultations, engagement activities, and advisory participation in cross-government and interjurisdictional forums
- Promoting multiculturalism and multicultural perspectives through events, networks, and media
- Implementation of the Council’s strategic priorities and Work Plan.

### 2.3. Inaugural MACM Consultation Forum and Stakeholder Workshop Events

Consultation with multicultural communities and key stakeholders is a core function of the MACM under its Terms of Reference. During 2024-2025, the Council undertook two major engagement activities to ensure community perspectives inform government policy and program development, and service delivery.

#### 2.3.1. Community Consultation Forum – August 2024

The MACM’s inaugural Community Consultation Forum, held in partnership with the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, brought together 27 multicultural community members who shared their perspectives on matters affecting culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the ACT. The forum featured a panel Q&A session, a ‘community café’ discussion, a Ministerial address, and a presentation by the Race Discrimination Commissioner.

Participants raised priorities including immigration and settlement support, access to services, domestic and family violence, social cohesion, and broader social justice concerns. They emphasised the need for meaningful consultation and advocacy for culturally responsive services. Feedback from the forum informed the MACM’s workplan and ongoing advice, strengthening the integration of lived experience into policy development and service planning.

#### 2.3.2. Service Provider Consultation – May 2025

The Council also hosted a consultation event specifically for community partners and service providers, working across settlement support, community wellbeing, and social services. 17 representatives from 12 organisations attended, providing frontline insights on emerging issues affecting multicultural communities, and identifying opportunities to strengthen culturally responsive service delivery.

Participants highlighted systemic barriers, gaps in culturally competent service delivery and intersectional challenges impacting employment, housing and mental health access. Attendees reported that they valued the forum as an opportunity to share perspectives, build networks, and coordinate responses across sectors.

#### 2.3.3. Key Themes and Summary of Forum Events

Key themes across the forum and consultation event included:

- **Meaningful community engagement:** early and ongoing consultation to ensure multicultural perspectives shape policy and services.
- **Domestic and family violence:** addressing cultural barriers, stigma, and accessing gaps in support services.
- **Support for migrants and refugees:** overcoming systemic challenges in employment, housing, mental health, and credential or skills recognition, with attention to intersectional needs.
- **Community cohesion and inclusion:** promoting cross-cultural understanding and systemic approaches to build inclusive communities.

- **Culturally responsive and aware services:** accessible, trauma-informed, and multicultural services tailored to diverse needs.
- **Cross-sector collaboration:** strengthening partnerships between government, service providers, and community organisations to coordinate responses and share insights.

Through these forums, the MACM strengthened its role as a bridge between government, service providers, and multicultural communities, ensuring its advice is informed, strategic, and inclusive.

#### *MACM Forum and Stakeholder and Service Provider Summary 2024 -2025*

<b>Consultation/Forum</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Key discussion topics</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>MACM Community Consultation Forum</b>	9 August 2024	27 Multicultural community members	Community engagement and priorities; domestic and family violence; migrant and refugee experiences; community cohesion; social justice.	Community insights directly informed the Council’s workplan, strategic priorities, and advice to Government.
<b>MACM Consultation with Key Stakeholders and Service Provider</b>	30 May 2025	17 representatives from 12 organisations	Social cohesion; support for migrants and refugees; domestic and family violence; culturally responsive service delivery.	Service provider perspectives shaped the Council’s ongoing advice, future engagement strategies, and recommendations for culturally responsive service delivery.

*Table 3: MACM Forum and Consultation*

## **2.4. Workplan and Priorities**

During the 2024-2025 reporting period, the Council progressed implementation of its Work Plan (September 2024-September 2025) which focuses on four strategic priorities:

- Communication and community engagement
- Domestic and family violence prevention
- Support for migrants and refugees
- Community cohesion and social justice.

These priorities guide the Council’s consultation and advice to the ACT Government, and reflect its role in advising the Minister, consulting with communities, and promoting multiculturalism across the ACT.

The Council’s work plan is available online on the [MACM’s information page](#).

## **2.5. Key Activities and Advice to Government**

Throughout the reporting period the Council provided advice and input across a range of policy and community issues including:

### **2.5.1. Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) Implementation**

- Members provided advice to the ACT Health Voluntary Dying End-of-Life Policy Team on culturally appropriate communication, engagement, and access considerations for multicultural communities.
- Raised multicultural perspectives on cultural, spiritual, and faith-based considerations relevant to end-of-life decision making and access to services.
- Emphasises the importance of accessible information and culturally sensitive engagement to support informed decision making across diverse communities.

### **2.5.2. Gambling Harm Prevention Community of Practice**

- Council continued to participate in the Gambling Harm Prevention Community of Practice, advocating for culturally responsive harm preventions and support services.
- Members contributed to discussions and presentations on how cultural factors influence gambling behaviours and help-seeking in multicultural communities.
- The Council highlighted the need for further research, community education, and culturally appropriate prevention strategies to better support culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

### **2.5.3. *Period Products and Facilities (Access) Act 2023***

- Council provided advice on the implementation of the *Period Products and Facilities (Access) Act 2023*, ensuring culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches for diverse communities.
- Members highlighted ways to improve access to public facilities and information for multicultural communities.
- Engagement focussed on identifying potential barriers and promoting equitable access to period products, including considerations for language, cultural practices, and community awareness.

### **2.5.4. Coercive Control Public Awareness Campaign**

- Council engaged with HCSD on the coercive control public awareness campaign, providing advice on culturally appropriate communication and engagement approaches.
- Members highlighted the importance of safe, accessible, and culturally sensitive messaging to ensure awareness initiatives effectively reached multicultural communities.
- Advice included practical strategic to support community-based engagement, improve understanding of coercive control, and ensure information is delivered through trusted networks and appropriate channels.

### **2.5.5. Energy Consumer Reference Council**

- Council contributed multicultural perspectives through participation in the Energy Consumer Reference Council, including advice on the transition from gas to electricity and the potential impact on vulnerable and low-income households.
- Members advocated for equitable approaches to ensure remaining gas users, including vulnerable communities, are not disproportionately affected by increasing network costs.

- Council members also supported community engagement activities relating to the installation of community batteries in Casey, Dickson, and Fadden.

#### **2.5.6. Disaster Resilience Strategy and Implementation**

- Council participated in workshops and consultations led by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS) to inform the ACT Disaster Resilience Strategy and Implementation Plan.
- Members provided advice on culturally appropriate communication and engagement strategies to ensure emergency preparedness information is accessible to multicultural communities.
- Council continues to engage with the Disaster Resilience and Risk Reduction Community of Practice, ensuring diverse perspectives inform planning and initiatives.
- Additional engagement was undertaken with the Australian Red Cross ACT Director of Migrant Support National Programs on emergency preparedness, to discuss their programs and explore the available resources and opportunities for collaboration with multicultural communities.

#### **2.5.7. ACT Policing – Multicultural Community Engagement**

- Council engaged with ACT Policing, including the Multicultural Community Liaison Officer program, to strengthen relationships and support engagement with multicultural communities.
- Discussions focussed on building trust, improving communication, and enhancing culturally responsive approaches to policing and community safety.
- Ongoing engagement highlight opportunities across domestic and family violence responses, community education, and awareness of support services.

#### **2.5.8. Community Consultation Activities**

- Consultation with multicultural communities and stakeholders is a core function of the MACM. During 2024-2025, the Council undertook two key consultation activities to inform its advice and work plan priorities.
- On 9 August 2024, the Council hosted its inaugural Community Consultation Forum in partnership with the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. 27 Community members participated, sharing perspectives on issues affecting their communities. Their feedback from the forum informed the Council's Work Plan and advice to Government and strengthened engagement between the Council and community organisations.
- On 30 May 2025, Council hosted a consultation with key stakeholders and service providers. 17 representatives from 12 organisations across the multicultural, legal, social services, and community support sectors attended. Discussions focussed on three priority areas of the MACM Work Plan: community cohesion, support for migrants and refugees, and domestic and family violence responses. Participants provided positive feedback and emphasised the need for systemic change to strengthen service accessibility, trust, and cultural responsiveness across sectors.

#### **2.5.9. National Multicultural Festival (NMF) Engagement**

- During the 2025 National Multicultural Festival, the Council hosted a community stall and engaged with more than 200 people from over 50 cultural backgrounds.
- Community members shared views on issues including language access and availability of translation services, employment opportunities, cultural inclusion, and experiences of racism and discrimination.
- The Council maintained ongoing consultation with the NMF team, and provided feedback to help ensure the event was inclusive and responsive to community needs.

- The festival provided an opportunity for informal engagement with community members who may not otherwise participate in formal consultations.
- Feedback from these conversations informed the Council’s ongoing advice to Government and increased community awareness of the Council’s role and functions.

#### 2.5.10. Cross-Government Policy and Advisory Collaboration

- Council participated in cross-government advisory groups and forums, including the Joint Advisory Council of Chairs (JACC), contributing multicultural perspectives to cross-portfolio discussions such as housing reform, ageing, belonging and inclusion.
- This work supported greater consideration of intersectional issues affecting diverse communities in government policy and service development.
- Council representatives participated in interjurisdictional engagement, including a roundtable facilitated by the Canberra Multicultural Community Forum (CMCF) with the Commonwealth Assistant Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, ACT representatives of Federal Parliament, and the ACT Chief of Police.
- The roundtable included discussion on social cohesion, national multicultural policy, skills recognition, and the establishment of the new Office for Multicultural Affairs within the Department of Home Affairs.
- The appointment of Miss Izabela Barakovska (the MACM Chair) to the Australian Multicultural Council further strengthened national engagement and representation of ACT multicultural communities in national policy discussions.

#### 2.5.11. Championing Multiculturalism

- The Council actively engaged in community events to celebrate cultural diversity, highlight multicultural perspectives, and promote inclusion.
- MACM members participated in Ramadan celebrations, Lunar New Year and Diwali events; the Welcome to Canberra Expo (hosted by Multicultural Hub Canberra); the 2024 ACT Multicultural Awards; the NMF; as well as serving as a Master of Ceremonies for citizenship and award ceremonies in collaboration with HCSD.
- The Council worked with media partners and the tertiary education sector, including ABC Canberra and the University of Canberra Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance, to explore strategies to improve engagement with multicultural communities, support culturally informally storytelling, enhance media literacy and democratic participation, and address miss-and-disinformation.
- These activities strengthened relationships with community and sector stakeholders, promoted inclusion and unity in diversity, and ensured multicultural perspectives inform both government policy and community dialogue in the ACT.

### 2.6. Key Advice Provided to Government

Policy Area	Engagement	Outcome
<b>Health Policy</b>	Implementation of Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD)	Advice informed culturally appropriate communication, engagement, and access strategies for multicultural communities.
<b>Gambling Harm Prevention</b>	Participation in the Gambling Harm Prevention Community of Practice	Strengthened focus on culturally responsive prevention, support services, and culturally informed research programs.
<b>Gender Equality and Public Health</b>	<i>Period Product and Facilities (Access) Act 2023</i>	Improved culturally inclusive access to facilities and information for multicultural communities.

<b>Domestic and Family Violence Prevention</b>	Coercive Control Public Awareness Campaign	Advice informed culturally appropriate communication, community engagement approaches, and safe awareness strategies for multicultural communities.
<b>Energy and Consumer Policy</b>	Participate in the Energy Consumer Reference Council	Informed equitable approaches for multicultural and vulnerable households during the gas-to-electricity transition; supported community engagement for battery installations.
<b>Disaster Preparedness</b>	ACT Disaster Resilience Strategy and Implementation Plan	Enhanced emergency communication for preparedness for multicultural communities.
<b>Community Safety and Policing</b>	Engagement with ACT Policing and the Multicultural Community Liaison Officer program	Improved engagement and information sharing between ACT Policing and multicultural communities, supporting culturally responsive approaches to community safety.
<b>Community Safety and Social Justice</b>	Consultation with community partners and service providers on domestic and family violence and social justice issues	Advice informed culturally safe service delivery and strengthened cross-sector collaboration, and community awareness and prevention initiatives.
<b>Community Engagement</b>	MACM Community Consultation Forum	Community feedback informed MACM priorities and contributed insights on issues affecting multicultural communities in ACT
<b>National Multicultural Festival (NMF)</b>	Community engagement at the 2025 NMF	Insights from diverse community members through informal consultation informed Council advise and raised awareness of the MACM.
<b>Cross-Government Policy and Advisory Collaboration</b>	Participation in the JACC and interjurisdictional forums	Multicultural perspectives were shared across government forums, supporting cross-portfolio collaboration and ensuring intersectional issues were considered in policy and program development.
<b>Championing Multiculturalism</b>	Participation in community events, festivals, ceremonies, and media engagement	The Council's participation in community engagements strengthened community connections, increased the visibility of multicultural perspectives, and promoted inclusion and belonging across the ACT.

Table 4: MACM Engagements by Policy Area- Activities and Outcomes

## 2.7. Performance Analysis

During the 2024-2025 reporting period, the Council provided advice to the ACT Government on policy initiatives and programs affecting culturally, linguistically, and spiritually diverse communities.

Advice was informed through Council meetings, cross-government consultations, engagement with service providers and other key stakeholders, and community feedback. This ensured

multicultural perspectives were embedded in policy development, program implementation, and community engagement activities.

Consistent with its functions under the *Multiculturalism Act 2023* and the Council’s Terms of Reference, the MACM’s performance can be considered across three key areas: providing advice to government, engaging with multicultural communities, and promoting the principles of the Charter for Multiculturalism.

Key areas of advice included:

- Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) implementation
- Gambling harm prevention and culturally responsive supports
- Disaster resilience, emergency preparedness and recovery
- Social justice, domestic and family violence, and community safety and cohesion
- Energy transition and consumer policy impacts on vulnerable communities
- Community engagement, consultation, and the promotion of multiculturalism
- Period products and facilities access, and culturally appropriate health initiatives.

Throughout the reporting period, Council members participated in meetings, consultations, workshops, and events across government, community, and advisory sectors.

These engagements enabled the Council to contribute multicultural perspectives across a wide range of policy areas, strengthen relationships with stakeholders, and ensure government initiatives are more inclusive and responsive to the needs of diverse communities.

Beyond formal meetings, members drew on their personal and professional experiences to provide nuanced insights, practical knowledge, and lived expertise, enhancing the Council’s ability to understand community needs and inform policy across several ACT Government portfolios in a meaningful way.

The combination of professional engagement and personal perspective ensures the Council’s advice is both strategic and grounded in the realities of multicultural life in the ACT.

## 2.8. Performance Summary 2024-2025

Objective	Activity	Outcome
<b>Provide advice to government on multicultural issues</b>	Participation in consultations and advisory group across ACT Government initiatives	Multicultural perspectives informed policy development, program design, and implementation across diverse ACT Government portfolios.
<b>Strengthen engagement with multicultural communities</b>	Community Consultation Forum, Service Provider Consultation event, and engagement at the National Multicultural Festival	Community feedback shaped Council priorities and advice, and strengthened connections with multicultural communities and sector stakeholders.
<b>Promote culturally inclusive policy development</b>	Input into VAD implementation, gambling harm prevention, disaster resilience, and <i>Period Products and Facilities (Access) Act 2023</i> roll out	Policies and programs considered the needs and perspectives of multicultural communities throughout the ACT.

<b>Foster cross-government collaboration</b>	Participation in advisory bodies, JACC, and interjurisdictional engagement, including the Australian Multicultural Council	Multicultural perspectives contributed to cross-portfolio and national discussions, supporting collaboration and intersectional policy considerations.
<b>Promote multiculturalism, inclusion and belonging</b>	Engagement at festivals, community celebrations, citizenship ceremonies, awards, media, and other community forums	Raised visibility of multicultural perspectives, promoted inclusion, and reinforced belonging, and supported culturally inclusive initiatives.
<b>Support implementations of the <i>Multiculturalism Act 2023</i></b>	Ongoing advice aligned with the Charter for Multiculturalism	Strengthened whole-of-government focus on multicultural inclusion, community participation, and culturally responsive programs.

Table 5: MACM performance Summary 2024-2025

## 2.9. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Collaboration

Community engagement remains a core function of the Council, underpinning its role in providing informed, culturally nuanced advice to the ACT Government.

Council members contribute through formal consultations, advisory forums, and cross-government engagement, as well as through their professional expertise and lived experience, bringing insights that strengthen the relevance and impact of the advice provided.

The Council acts as a bridge between government and multicultural communities, fostering two-way dialogue that helps shape more inclusive, responsive initiatives while building trust and awareness. Collaborations with organisations such as Legal Aid ACT, Settlement Council of Australia, Health Care Consumers Association, Multicultural Hub Canberra, and the Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services support this work.

Members also participate in a wide range of cultural, civic, and community events, as discussed throughout this report. These activities provide opportunities to engage directly with communities, understand emerging issues, and amplify multicultural perspectives in government decision-making.

Through these engagements, the Council strengthens relationships, promotes inclusion, and ensure that multicultural voices inform policy, program delivery, and community dialogue across the ACT.

## 2.10. Contribution to Multiculturalism in the ACT

Through consultations and policy advice, the MACM supports implementation of the *Multiculturalism Act 2023* and promotes the principles of the Charter for Multiculturalism across the Territory.

The Council's work focuses on shaping how government engages with multicultural communities, ensuring policies and programs are culturally, linguistically, and spiritually informed, and promoting inclusion and equity across all initiatives.

Key contributions include:

- Strengthening engagement with multicultural communities
- Promoting culturally inclusive policy and program development
- Advocating for equitable access to services
- Supporting initiatives that enhance community wellbeing
- Contributing multicultural perspectives to cross-government initiatives
- Promoting multicultural understanding and inclusion across the ACT.

## SECTION 3 – GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

### 3.1. Administrative Arrangements

MACM is supported by Multicultural ACT within the Health and Community Services Directorate.

Multicultural ACT provides coordination and secretariat support to the Council and assists with engagement between the Council, key stakeholders, and government agencies.

### 3.2. Secretariat Support

Secretariat support includes:

- coordinating meetings and preparing agendas and minutes
- supporting policy advice and consultation processes
- coordinating stakeholder engagement
- supporting Council communications and reporting.

The Council can be contacted via the MACM Secretariat at [ACTMAC@act.gov.au](mailto:ACTMAC@act.gov.au).

### 3.3. Remuneration

Remuneration for advisory council members is determined in accordance with relevant ACT Government policies and determinations of the ACT Remuneration Tribunal, where applicable.

### 3.4. Communication and Engagement

Council members promote awareness of multicultural issues through engagement with community organisations, participation in public events and collaboration with advisory bodies.

They attend a wide range of forums, workshops, and consultations, including those that do not traditionally engage multicultural perspectives, to ensure diverse voices inform policy and program development.

The Council also supports communication initiatives that promote the Charter for Multiculturalism.

Through these activities, members build strong relationships with communities, government agencies, and stakeholders while advocating for culturally, linguistically, and spiritually inclusive and considerate approaches across the ACT.

The Chair also participates in the Joint Advisory Council of Chairs forum, supporting the MACM to engage across advisory portfolios, sharing insights and fostering collaboration to ensure multicultural perspectives inform broader cross-government initiatives.

## SECTION 4 – WORK PLAN

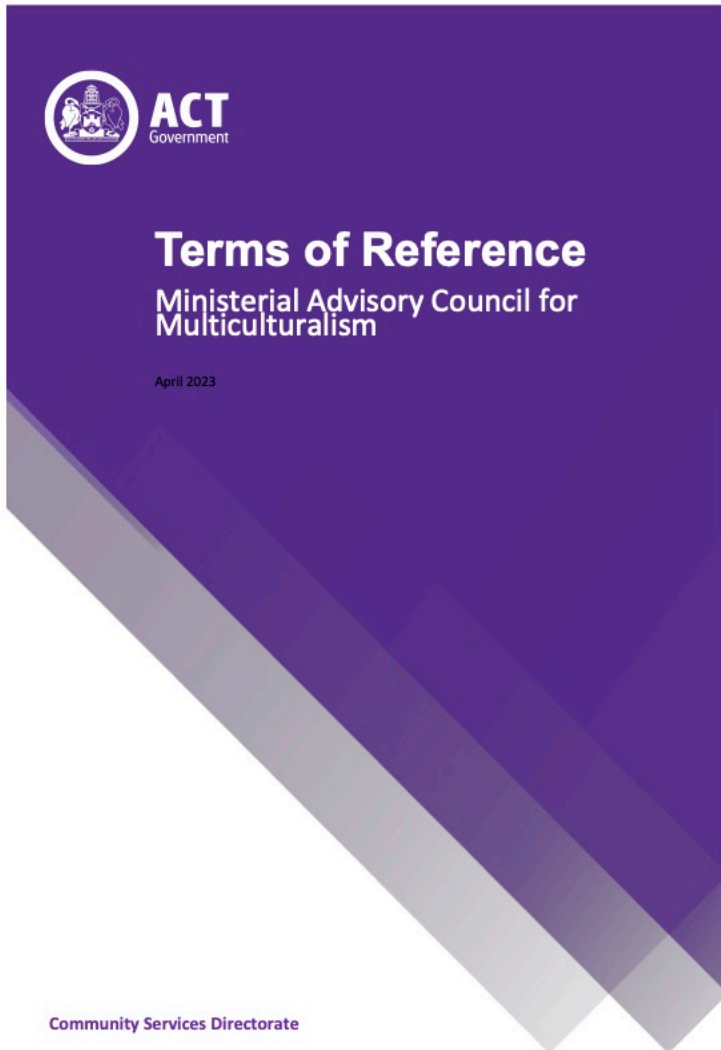
### 4.1. Priorities for 2025-2026

Key priorities for the Council in the next reporting period include:

- **Continuing implementation of the MACM’s Work Plan**, ensuring activities align with legislative functions, stakeholder priorities, and community needs.
- **Strengthening engagement with multicultural communities**, including underrepresented and intersectional groups, and providing guidance on effective, inclusive consultation approaches.
- **Supporting implementation of the *Multiculturalism Act 2023***, ensuring government policies and programs reflect the Act’s principles.
- **Promoting the Charter for Multiculturalism** through community events, advisory activities, and engagement across government.
- **Providing advice on emerging multicultural policy issues**, including cross-government initiatives, systemic barriers, and sector-specific challenges.

## Appendix A – Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism Terms of Reference

Please find here, the MACM [Terms of Reference](#).



## Appendix B – Charter for Multiculturalism

Please find here the [Multiculturalism Act 2023](#).

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### Schedule 1 Charter for multiculturalism

(see s 7)

The Legislative Assembly believes our community is enriched by the long and continuous cultures of the first peoples of Australia and the diverse cultures, languages, religious or spiritual beliefs of the many other people who have made our community their home. Accordingly, we say:

**Regardless of your background and experiences, and how you have come to be in the ACT—**

- 1 you are welcome and your contributions to our community are valued
- 2 you are free and safe to express, practise, maintain and celebrate your cultural, religious and spiritual identity
- 3 you are entitled to use, preserve and share your language
- 4 you are free to participate as equals in the civic, cultural, economic, educational, political and social life of the ACT
- 5 you are entitled to equitable access to information, services and programs provided to our community

**We have a shared responsibility to—**

- 6 value the contributions of all people, regardless of their backgrounds and experiences
- 7 embrace and realise the benefits that diversity brings to our civic, cultural, economic, educational, political and social life
- 8 create a harmonious and unified community based on mutual respect, trust and understanding
- 9 end racism and other forms of unlawful discrimination.

## Appendix C – The MACM Work Plan (September 2024 – September 2025)

The Council's work plan is also available online on the [MACM's information page](#).

### Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism (MACM) Work Plan: September 2024 - September 2025

#### Introduction

The *ACT Multiculturalism Act 2023*<sup>4</sup> established the Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism (MACM) to provide strategic advice to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. The Council's mandate is to promote multiculturalism, foster inclusivity, and address the needs of people from culturally, linguistically and spiritually diverse backgrounds living in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

The ACT's population grew from 258,000 in 1986 to 454,000 in 2021, with a rising proportion of residents born overseas, reflecting the Territory's expanding diversity<sup>5</sup>. This growth underscores the importance of the Council's role in advising the government on policies and programmes that ensure all residents feel included and valued.

#### Strategic Priorities

1. **Communication and Engagement Plan:** MACM will develop a communication and engagement plan, building on feedback from the 9 August 2024 Community Forum. The plan aims to enhance Council visibility and increase community participation in government consultations. MACM will continue responding to consultation and engagement requests from government directorates, ensuring policies are informed by the multicultural community's needs, enabling tailored services.
  - **Visibility and Engagement:** Establish an online presence, including social media, and develop regular feedback mechanisms to ensure community views influence policy. Promote the Charter for Multiculturalism through community events, online platforms, and partnerships with service providers and community organisations.
2. **Addressing Domestic and Family Violence:** MACM will provide culturally sensitive advice to the Minister on DFV and collaborate with service providers to improve access for multicultural communities.
  - **Cultural Sensitivity:** Advocate for culturally safe Domestic and family violence (DFV) services and promote spaces tailored to different cultural needs.
3. **Supporting Migrants and Refugees:** MACM will focus on identifying challenges related to immigration, settlement support, and skill recognition. The Council will advocate for resources and programmes that facilitate successful integration.
  - **Skill Recognition and Settlement Support:** Promote policies that enhance skill recognition and improve culturally appropriate settlement services.
4. **Community Cohesion and Social Justice:** MACM will foster social cohesion by promoting respectful dialogue and inter-cultural engagement, addressing the impacts of government policies on multicultural communities.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdb/au/legis/act/num\\_act/ma20233o2023275/](https://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdb/au/legis/act/num_act/ma20233o2023275/)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/census>

- **Social Cohesion Initiatives:** Support initiatives that counter discrimination and enhance community safety.

**Table 1. Key Activities, Milestones and Deliverables**

Activity	Milestones	Timeline	Deliverables
1. Develop Communication and Engagement Plan	Draft Plan	Q3 2024	Engagement Plan Draft
	Final Plan	Q4 2024	Approved Communication and Engagement Plan
	Community Feedback Sessions	Q1 2025	Summary Report of Community Feedback
	Engagement Updates	Q2 2025, Q3 2025	Updated Engagement Plan (if required)
2. Address Domestic and Family Violence	Position Paper on DFV	Q4 2024	Position Paper with Recommendations
	Collaborate with Service Providers	Q1 2025	Partnership Agreements/Email exchanges
	Promote Cultural Sensitivity	Ongoing (Q3 2024 - Q3 2025)	Cultural Sensitivity Workshops and Materials
3. Support Migrants and Refugees	Identify Key Challenges	Q3 2024	Report on Challenges Faced by Migrants and Refugees
	Advocate for Skill Recognition	Q4 2024	Recommendations for Policy Changes
	Improve Settlement Services	Q1-Q2 2025	Enhanced Settlement Support Programmes
	Engagement with Stakeholders	Ongoing (Q3 2024 - Q3 2025)	Regular Consultations with Migrant and Refugee Communities
4. Advocate for Social Cohesion Policies	Draft position paper	Q2 2025	Position paper with policy recommendations
	Engage with Multicultural Communities	Q2-Q3 2025	Summary report of community feedback
	Regular briefings to the Minister	Q2-Q4 2025	Advisory notes and recommendations to the Minister
Annual Reporting	1st Annual Report	Q4 2024	Comprehensive report on Council activities and impact
	2nd Annual Report	Q4 2025	Follow-up report detailing progress and new initiatives

*Note: these priorities and timelines will be regularly reviewed in consultation with community members.*