Victoria's anti-racism strategy 2024–2029
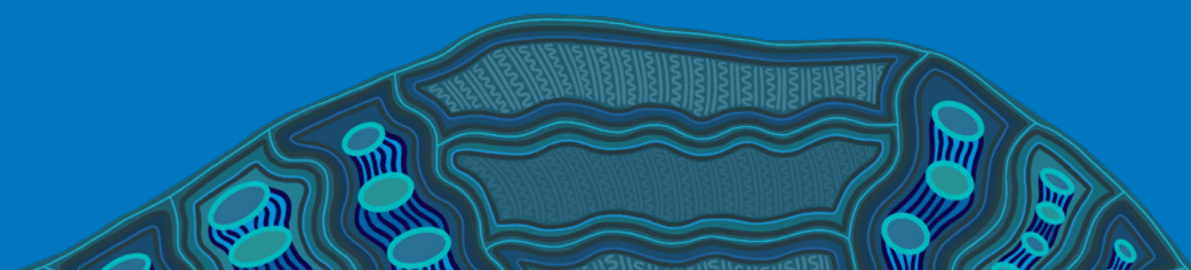
Victoria State Government

Description of the artwork

The Acknowledgement of Country artwork honours Traditional Owners, the lands, skies and waters. It pays homage to the many stories embedded within every detail of Country; the markings within the trees, the formation of the waterways and all Mother Earth's creations.

Bunjil is the creator spirit of the Wurundjeri people, positioned in the centre to acknowledge the Traditional Owners, Elders and their stories.

The wings are spread out to represent openness and Bunjil guiding us on our journey whilst we visit on this Country.

About the artist

Nakia Cadd is a Gunditjmara, Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung, Bunitj, Boon Wurrung woman who grew up in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. Nakia's work has strong design elements of line work that connect with her family lines and landscapes of her Countries. Her artwork is also inspired by her motherhood journey, family and Country. She likes to use art opportunities and platforms to creatively honour and retell her family's stories that symbolise immense strength and resilience.

Contents

Foreword

Victoria is a proudly diverse state.

Home to the world's oldest continuous cultures, Aboriginal peoples have lived on and looked after this land for more than 60,000 years.

There are more than 250 First Peoples ancestry groups. More than 150 First Peoples languages are still spoken across Australia including 44 language groups and 14 dialects in Victoria and at its borders.

Today, we come from more than 300 different ancestries, speak more than 290 languages and practise almost 200 faiths.

Our diversity is everywhere, it benefits everything – and it belongs to everyone.

That means the job of protecting our precious multiculturalism – that belongs to all of us too.

Because the truth is, for too many Victorians, racism remains an everyday reality.

Not only does it undermine individual dignity – it erodes our collective sense of fairness, justice and inclusion.

It stifles our potential, and it holds our state back.

It's why the Victorian Government's new anti-racism strategy 2024–2029 is aimed at addressing racism in all its forms – from acts of discrimination to systemic bias ingrained in our institutions.

This is Victoria's first statewide anti-racism strategy and the first of its kind in Australia. But creating a fairer future requires commitment beyond the pages of this document.

It's why this strategy sets out four key goals and, importantly, the actions that underpin them.

Whether it's policy reform, community engagement or education, our government is committed to championing that change.

We also remain committed to working in collaboration with communities.

Developed alongside leaders, advocates and individuals with lived experience, this strategy was only made possible by our partners in communities. We'll continue to work with you – to listen to you – as we deliver on its next steps.

This strategy would also not have been possible without the commitment of Victoria's Anti-Racism Taskforce. Its members gave their time and expertise to develop a strategy that both recognises the impacts of racism and a plan to overcome it.

Finally, we recognise everyone in the Victorian community who has contributed to developing this strategy. This includes the many First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians who so generously helped to bring this strategy to life.

Thank you for sharing your experiences, your ideas – and your hope for a stronger Victoria.

Hon Jacinta Allan,
Premier of Victoria

Ingrid Stitt MP,
Minister for
Multicultural Affairs

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP,
Minister for
Treaty and First Peoples

Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Government acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples and Traditional Custodians of the lands, skies and waters we now know as Victoria. We honour and pay our respects to First Peoples' Elders past and present, and we recognise the continuing strength of Victoria's First Peoples.

First Peoples communities have thrived for more than 60,000 years and are among the oldest living cultures on Earth. We recognise that since time immemorial, First Peoples in Victoria have practised their law and lore, customs and languages. They nurtured Country through their spiritual, cultural, material and economic connections to land, water and resources.

We acknowledge the strength and resilience of First Peoples in the face of historical and ongoing injustices. We honour the survival of their living cultures, knowledges and traditions.

We honour the tireless efforts of generations of First Peoples leaders and communities who have stood against racism and advanced the values of freedom, fairness and equality. This strategy is our commitment to a shared future that is free from racism and discrimination for all Victorians in generations to come.

Acknowledgement of Treaty and Truth

We acknowledge the past and ongoing harms that systems and structures of colonisation have caused First Peoples communities. Throughout our history, First Peoples have endured racism and discrimination and been excluded from social and economic opportunities.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission is helping us understand our history from the perspective of First Peoples, how it affects their present and how Treaty can lead to practical changes and solutions that improve the lives and futures of First Peoples.

Treaty offers a pathway to change what is not working. Treaty will have wide-ranging effects on the way the Victorian Government works with First Peoples, including in addressing racism. Victoria's Treaty process will enable the transfer of decision-making power to support self-determination, ensuring First Peoples have their say on the policies that affect their lives.

Through Treaty, we can bring Victorians together and feel shared pride in First Peoples heritage, history and culture.

Language statement

The words 'our' and 'we' in this document refer to the Victorian Government.

Victorians are diverse in culture, ethnicity and faith. Victorians from culturally, ethnically and religiously diverse communities use different terms to describe themselves and their communities, and terms people use can also change over time.

In this strategy, we use the term 'multicultural communities' to collectively describe the diverse cultural and ethnic groups that make up Victoria. We also use the term 'multifaith communities' to refer to Victoria's diverse religious and faith communities.

We recognise the diversity of First Peoples, communities and cultures throughout Victoria. While the terms 'Koorie' or 'Koori' are sometimes used to describe Aboriginal or First Peoples of southeast Australia, in this strategy we use the term 'First Peoples' to include all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Victoria.

To end racism together, we need a shared language for how we describe racism and the communities and people harmed by it. When we talk about 'racism and discrimination' in this strategy, we mean this to include and refer to both racial and faith-based discrimination, given they are closely related.

We define other key terms throughout this strategy and in the glossary.

Support services

The information in this strategy may be confronting to those who have faced racism and discrimination. For advice on services and support, please visit Victoria's anti-racism strategy website <https:/ /vic.gov.au/victorias-anti-racism-strategy>.

A message from the Anti-Racism Taskforce

The Anti-Racism Taskforce is the Victorian Government's expert advisory group that provided advice and recommendations on developing this strategy.

Throughout developing this strategy, the Taskforce has recognised that First Peoples in Victoria face specific and distinct forms of racism. The Taskforce understands that realising the right to self-determination is fundamental to addressing the racism First Peoples face. This strategy identifies the specific effects of colonisation on the First Peoples of this state.

We celebrate Victoria's rich cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. Our state's diversity is one of our greatest strengths, bringing many social and economic benefits. We are proud of Victoria's diversity.

This strategy focuses on ensuring all Victorians, including government and institutions, are central to efforts to prevent racism and discrimination in our state. It outlines how we can acknowledge, prevent and address racism and discrimination in schools, workplaces, government services and daily interactions.

The strategy centres on the lived experiences of diverse Victorians. We had the honour of hearing firsthand from community members across the state to inform its development.

We are deeply proud to be launching *Victoria's anti-racism strategy* and hope all Victorians will embrace their role in bringing the strategy's vision to life.

To find out more about the Taskforce, visit the Anti-Racism Taskforce online <https://www.vic.gov.au/anti-racism-taskforce>.

Sheena Watt MP – co-chair

Nick Staikos MP – co-chair

Chris Christoforou

Elvis Martin

Susan Carland

Farhat Firdous

Lawrence Moser

Wesa Chau

Rabbi Gabi Kaltmann

Chuol Puot

Appointed representatives from:

VICTORIAN multicultural commission

Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission

eccv

1. Introduction

Who this strategy is for

Victoria's first anti-racism strategy is for all Victorians. This includes people of all ages, abilities, genders, sexualities, faiths and cultural backgrounds.

It is for First Peoples who have cared for these lands, skies and waters for tens of thousands of years, as well as Victoria's newest arrivals and those who have made this state their home for generations.

It is for those who work in government and in broader public institutions, including health and education settings. It is also for those who work in community services, the media, sporting clubs and other private sector organisations.

Everyone has an active role to play in tackling racism, discrimination and vilification.

Why we need this strategy

Our consultations confirmed what existing research and data tell us. Racism is a widespread and common experience for First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith people in Victoria.

In the 2022 Australian Reconciliation Barometer survey, 60% of First Peoples respondents reported experiencing racial prejudice in the previous 6 months.[1] The Yoorrook Justice Commission recently found that systemic racism lies at the heart of much of the systemic injustice affecting First Peoples.[2]

In 2023, almost 1 in 5 (18%) Australians surveyed by the Scanlon Foundation said they faced discrimination in the last 12 months because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion.[3] Experiences of discrimination were much higher for people whose background was:

- Asian
- African
- Middle Eastern
- non-English speaking.

Despite Australians having an overwhelmingly positive view of multiculturalism, racism and discrimination remain significant issues.[4] More than 3 in 5 Australians (63%) have a negative view of one or more migrant groups from Asia, Africa or the Middle East or a non-Christian religion.[5] Recognition of the problem of racism is growing across the community. In 2023, 62% of Australians surveyed saw racism as a 'very big' or 'fairly big' problem in Australia, compared with 39% in 2020.[6]

The harms caused by racism are severe and far-reaching. People who experience discrimination report a significantly weaker sense of belonging and personal wellbeing.[7] Community members we spoke to recounted how racism has affected their safety, wellbeing, health (mental and physical) and financial security. They spoke of racism affecting their ability to study, play a sport, get a job and succeed.

We heard that experiences of racism are often made worse by other forms of oppression such as:

- sexism
- ableism
- ageism
- LGBTIQA+ discrimination.

We know that racism has serious health, social and economic impacts for people, communities and societies. Children and young people are particularly vulnerable to its harmful effects. Racism reduces our trust in one another and our overall sense of safety and wellbeing in the communities we live in.

With the world more digitally connected than ever before, global conflicts and crises can also threaten our sense of safety and cohesion in Victoria. The COVID-19 pandemic and recent conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine have shown that these crises often lead to more racism and discrimination locally. Recent efforts to advance self-determination, including the 2023 federal referendum on a constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament for First Peoples in Australia, have also been met with increased hate speech and racism against First Peoples.

Actions addressing racism and discrimination are now more important than ever – for First Peoples, for multicultural and multifaith communities and for all Victorians.

The aims of this strategy

This strategy is the Victorian Government's 5-year plan to tackle racism and discrimination so we can build a safer, fairer and more inclusive state. We want a Victoria grounded in shared humanity and equal human rights.

This strategy aims to create a Victoria where:

- every Victorian is valued, respected and has fair access to services, supports and opportunities
- First Peoples' collective right to self-determination is promoted and upheld
- everyone's rights and freedoms are equally protected
- everyone across the state, including in regional and rural areas, feels connected to their culture, faith, community and to each other
- we stand up for each other against intolerance, hate, inequality and unfairness
- all people can proudly be themselves, without fear of racism, discrimination or hate.

How we will achieve our goals

We will achieve our goals through actions to address and prevent racism and discrimination.

We will prevent and tackle racism and discrimination throughout the lifetime of the strategy, including by:

- supporting Victorians affected by racism and discrimination
- putting in place important reforms to undo racism and discrimination in the ways we work with people and in the services and supports for Victorians
- partnering with Victorian communities to challenge racism and discrimination in all areas of life
- urging all Victorians to understand, challenge, report and reject racism wherever it occurs.

This strategy supports government-wide efforts to achieve fairness, safety and equity for all Victorians. This includes the *Victorian Closing the Gap implementation plan* and the *Victorian Aboriginal affairs framework* (VAAF). The VAAF is underpinned by a commitment to First Peoples self-determination. The VAAF affirms self-determination as a human right, referring to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

This strategy also supports the *Victorian Government self-determination reform framework*. The framework guides public service action to make self-determination possible, in line with the government's commitment to the VAAF.

It also includes the Victorian Government's response to:

- the work of the Yoorrook Justice Commission
- the Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Vilification Protections
- strengthening anti-vilification laws.

We will take an intersectional approach, recognising how other forms of discrimination overlap with and can worsen experiences of racism for Victorians.

How we will measure our progress

We will develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the impact of the strategy on First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians across Victoria, including in regional and rural areas.

We will track progress, including across each of our priority goals.

Reporting back to communities

We will report back to First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities on our progress as actions are implemented. Open communication with communities will enable us to monitor the impact of our actions and ensure community needs remain at the forefront of our work.

Towards a Victoria free from racism

This strategy is part of a long history of law and policy reforms that have sought to address and prevent racism and discrimination across Victoria.

Building a Victoria that is free from racism means reckoning with uncomfortable parts of Victoria's history and present.

Since colonisation, First Peoples in Australia have faced:

- extensive systemic injustice
- racism
- discriminatory laws
- policy failures.

These have caused – and continue to cause – harm to First Peoples.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission establishes Australia's first truth-telling process. Its focus is on the historical and ongoing injustices faced by First Peoples in Victoria. To learn more about the Yoorrook Justice Commission, refer to the Yoorrook Justice Commission website <https://yoorrookjusticecommission.org.au>.

The history of racism in Victoria is also a history of resistance, activism and leadership by First Peoples to:

- fight for equal outcomes
- revitalise cultural knowledge and practices affected by colonisation
- build a diverse and inclusive Victoria
- advance First Peoples self-determination through Truth and Treaty processes.

To learn more about Victoria's truth and justice process, refer to First Peoples-State Relations' Truth and justice in Victoria <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/truth-and-justice>.

To learn more about Victoria's history of law and policy reforms, visit Victoria's anti-racism strategy website <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorias-anti-racism-strategy>.

2. Our strategy: at a glance

Our vision

A Victoria free from racism and discrimination, where all Victorians enjoy equal rights, freedoms and protections, and thrive in safe, healthy and supportive communities.

Our priority goals

Goal 1.
Racist attitudes, behaviours and beliefs are recognised, challenged and rejected

Goal 2.
Government services and workplaces are safe, accessible and non-discriminatory

Goal 3.
Racism and discrimination are no longer barriers to participation, progress, safety and success across all sectors

Goal 4.
People subjected to racism receive appropriate and culturally safe services and supports

Key areas for action
Key actions to achieve our priority goals:

- Deliver anti-racism campaigns in sport to drive behaviour change.
- Support community-driven anti-racism initiatives at the local level.
- Strengthen protections to address racism and vilification.

- Build the capability of complaint and oversight bodies to better respond to reports of racism.
- Reduce racism and discrimination in policing.
- Embed monitoring and oversight of anti-racism efforts.

- Build the capability of organisations to be anti-racist.

- Strengthen appropriate and culturally safe support for people subjected to racism and discrimination.

Our guiding principles
These values guide this strategy and the way we will realise our vision:

We will **combat racism** and **discrimination** across all areas of public life.

We will be guided by the **voices of communities** and people's **lived experience**.

We will take action that is **targeted, practical and impactful**.

We will **build on work already underway** across Victoria.

We will take action based on **best practice, data and evidence**.

We will take actions that are **statewide and locally driven**.

We will be **intersectional** in our approach.

3. Examining the problem

Understanding the problem: defining racism

Racism is a form of discrimination where a person or group of people are treated unequally because they belong (or appear to belong) to a particular ethnic group or race. Racism is based on the idea that some races are superior to others. Racism is always accompanied by power – the power to discriminate against others.

Racism can present itself in many ways. Some are more direct and obvious like harassment, humiliation, abuse or violence. Some are more indirect and subtle and are built into our systems and structures. This strategy focuses on anti-racism at the interpersonal, institutional and structural levels. This strategy also recognises the distinct relationship between experiences of racism and discrimination and the use of anti-social behaviour and violence against First Peoples and people from multicultural and multifaith backgrounds.

Race is not a biological or genetic fact. It is an idea created to sort people into 'racial groups' by:

- their skin colour or other physical traits
- the language they speak
- their cultural practices
- their religion.

This idea has been driven by historical and current forms of colonialism, with violence and ideology enforcing the idea of a racial hierarchy between groups.[8]

Categorisation like this is not always imposed on people from the outside. People may choose to identify with cultural or language groups based on common characteristics (including histories of oppression). When it is imposed on others by those with power to discriminate, it is called **racialisation**.

Racialisation is the act of assigning racial identities to people or groups based on their physical or cultural traits or characteristics. It can maintain stereotypes and lead to discrimination. How groups are racialised in a society can change over generations as power and influence shifts. Sometimes when new ethnic or cultural groups arrive in a community, the boundaries between racial groups are redrawn. This changes who is included in the dominant racial group.

Information about different types of racism is at Appendix 1.

Racial discrimination and vilification are against the law and breach human rights

Discrimination: Under the Victorian *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, it is against the law to discriminate against someone based on their race (including their skin colour, ancestry, nationality or ethnic background) in areas of public life such as:

- work
- school
- using services
- renting or buying property
- taking part in sport
- accessing public places.

Vilification: In Victoria, under the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001*, vilification involves behaviour that incites hatred, serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people because of their race or religion. It is against the law to vilify others.

Understanding racism as an enduring effect of colonisation

Since the first acts of colonisation, institutional and systemic racism have been firmly fixed in the government's actions towards First Peoples. The government used laws and policies to try to:

- assimilate First Peoples into the general population
- deny First Peoples their connections to community, culture and Country.

Laws are framed and informed by the cultural, social and historical context they are developed in. The laws and policies that were used to dispossess and exclude First Peoples from social, economic and political life in Victoria were reinforced by racist beliefs about the inferiority of First Peoples. Such laws included:

- *Aborigines Protection Act 1869* (Vic)
- *Aborigines Protection Act 1886* (Vic).

Through these laws, First Peoples children were forcibly and cruelly removed from their families. We refer to the children subjected to these policies as the Stolen Generations. The displacement of successive generations of children has resulted in significant trauma. It also disrupted the passing down of traditional knowledge, oral traditions and cultural heritage for First Peoples.

State policies and legislation have had long-lasting effects on First Peoples, including ongoing and unequal intergenerational social and economic outcomes. For example, the 1997 *Bringing them home* report found that Stolen Generations were more likely to:

- face police attention as they reached adolescence
- suffer low self-esteem, depression and mental illness.

The report also found that Stolen Generations were almost always taught to reject their Aboriginality and Aboriginal culture. Instead, they were told to 'think and act like a white person'.[9]

The impact of dispossession and colonisation on First Peoples in Victoria lives on in systems like child protection and justice. First Peoples continue to be over-represented in these systems.

As the Yoorrook Justice Commission has noted:

> **Colonisation, as implemented by colonial and later Victorian state authorities, created the structure, systems and conditions under which First Peoples continue to be subjected to harm and systemic injustice, as well as human and cultural rights violations.[10]**
>
> – Yoorook Justice commission

The government has taken significant steps to address the harm it has caused. Still, the pursuit of Treaty aims to:

- better address the widespread and enduring forms of interpersonal, institutional and structural racism affecting First Peoples
- provide the pathway for self-determination.

In April 2024 the Premier of Victoria's statement to the Yoorrook Justice Commission noted that the Victorian Government recognises First Peoples' ongoing resilience and strength in maintaining and protecting their connection to community, culture and Country.

Understanding privilege

Some groups of people in Australian society do not face racism or the harm that it causes.

Racial privilege does not necessarily mean somebody's life is free from challenges. It means their opportunities will not be affected in the same way as someone from a racialised background. It is worth noting that many people still face racism and discrimination even with skin colour that is considered 'white'.

For example, people with racial privilege can see people they identify with widely and positively represented in the media. They can assume they will not be denied a job opportunity or rental property, or be treated differently at school, at work, in health care or the justice system on the basis of race.

In Australia, beliefs in white superiority and the inferiority of other racial groups were reinforced through discriminatory policies. These policies privileged some and disadvantaged others and have lasting effects to this day. 'Whiteness' was cemented as the norm or default through policies that:

- colonised, dispossessed and assimilated First Peoples in settler-colonial Australia
- discriminated against non-white migrants, like the *White Australia policy* (1901 to 1975), which banned these groups from moving to Australia.

These policies have continued systemic and structural racism in Australian society. It will take ongoing commitment and action to make sure all Victorians are on equal ground and have the same opportunities to thrive.

What we heard from the Victorian community

This strategy has been shaped by:

- the diverse voices, perspectives and experiences of Victorians from metropolitan, rural and regional areas
- research and data from across the state and country.

Understanding the experiences and extent of racism helps us understand why we need this strategy and where to focus our efforts.

How we heard the voices of the Victorian community

We heard from more than 670 Victorians through:

- roundtables with 150 experts and practitioners from key sectors, including jobs and employment, health services, housing, education, creative industries, sports and justice
- targeted consultations with 165 First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith community members in partnership with community-led organisations
- consultations with 30 stakeholders in rural and regional areas
- written submissions from 7 organisations
- 319 responses to an online survey open to the Victorian public.

Racism in different settings

We heard in consultations that public places like parks, streets, shopping centres and public transport are common settings for racism.

Experiences included:

- being followed or having bags searched by security guards in shops
- being threatened, spat at or physically attacked
- being denied entry to bars or clubs
- being ignored by staff in shops or restaurants
- being abused on social media and in traditional media
- witnessing or experiencing racism in public and community sport settings.

> **I have regularly experienced racial profiling by security. Despite dressing professionally and being friendly, a security guard without fail asks to inspect my bag, despite watching me carry things around the store to purchase them.**
>
> – Survey respondent

Racism in public places

First Peoples:

- First Peoples are 4 times more likely to experience racism than non-First Peoples.[11]
- Almost two-thirds (60%) of First Peoples reported experiencing racism in 2022 – almost 20% higher than in 2020. This included verbal abuse in public and being denied access to venues.[12]
- The values and attitudes of police and protective services officers (PSOs) to First Peoples, including any racial prejudices, can strongly influence and negatively affect how they use their discretionary powers.[13]
- There is a risk that police and PSO actions against 'antisocial' behaviour will affect First Peoples unequally and unfairly.[14]

Multicultural youth:

- A study of multicultural young people found that 85% of 16- to 24-year-olds experienced at least one incidence of racism. Many of these occurred in community or public places (73.5%).[15]
- Multicultural young people reported consciously changing how they behaved in public to avoid being exposed to racism. They also feared returning to public places after COVID-19 lockdowns ended.[16]

We also heard that people faced racism at sporting events from other players or spectators. Officials and community club staff were not always able or willing to step in.

A 2022 survey of Victorians found that 29% of people identified racism in sport as a big problem, with racial vilification often justified as a form of 'sledging' to put players off their game.[17]

Racism is also common in junior sports involving children and young people, with racial abuse often not well managed by clubs and victims expected to 'toughen up'.[18]

> **Watching incidences of when Aboriginal Australians or those from African or Asian backgrounds are being subjected to racist vilification when they play sport is demoralising. It also acts as a deterrent to young people with different cultural, ethnic or religious backgrounds from participating in sports. Both in the media but also in community sports, there needs to be more focus on inclusiveness, respect and celebration of the contribution of different sportspeople.**
>
> – Survey respondent

Racism during COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic and its lockdowns, reports of racism and discrimination increased across metropolitan, rural and regional areas in Victoria. These were fuelled by online hate and negative portrayals in the media.[19]

- The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) reported that there were 22% more reports of racial discrimination and vilification during 2020 and 2021.[20]
- A 2022 survey of Asian Australians found that 40% of participants faced racism during the pandemic. This was most commonly in public settings but also online. [21]
- Negative depictions of Muslims in international news stories during the pandemic have been linked to more attacks on Muslim Victorians in public. Muslim women accounted for 78% of victims.[22]
- In 2022 the Online Hate Prevention Institute identified increased vilification of Jewish, Muslim and Asian-Australian communities during the pandemic. It also noted the risk that people prone to extremism could escalate online hate speech into real-life hate crimes.[23]

Racism online and in the media

Racism online and in the media harms racialised communities and stokes racial abuse against First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities in daily life. Local and global events and days of significance can also fuel racism and vilification in online spaces. Misinformation on international conflicts spread through the media and online can also provoke racism and discrimination locally.[24]

> **The media has a tendency to overemphasise the ethnicity of perpetrators who come from diverse communities. This leads to stereotyping and fear in the community.**
>
> – Survey respondent

Online racism may look like the following:

- **Censorship:** racialised communities report having posts criticising colonisation and white supremacy removed or their accounts blocked, while racist posts themselves remain live.[25]
- **Misinformation:** untrue racist information can spread unchecked on social media in the form of stereotypes, scapegoating and allegations of reverse racism.[26]
- **Bullying, hate speech and calls to violence:** racist social media content can frighten, intimidate or silence users and incite others to commit violence. Studies have linked racist posts on social media to violence against First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities.[27]

Racism online

- 1 in 7 adults report being the target of online hate speech in Australia.[28]
- First Peoples face online hate speech at more than twice the national average.[29]
- Some studies have found that 78% of First Peoples face online hate speech on a weekly basis.[30] Online racism increases during events like the lead-up to the 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum.[31]
- 53% of young people and migrants to Australia surveyed had seen hate speech online. Muslim respondents face the greatest share of hate speech.[32]
- Of people who reported online hate speech, 58% said it causes negative impacts. These include mental or emotional stress, relationship problems and damage to their reputation.[33]

The media can also contribute to negative stereotypes and racist attitudes, and to increased hate crimes in the community.

The media is powerful. It can reinforce current power relations and racial privilege, shaping ideas around 'who gets to belong' and the way we view and treat one another.

Racism and the media

- A 2021 analysis of Australian media coverage revealed that 57% of opinion pieces and television current affairs segments portrayed race negatively, with Muslim Australians disproportionately negatively depicted.[34]
- First Peoples voices in the media are under-represented, historical and cultural contexts are often overlooked, and reporting often reinforces paternalistic attitudes.[35]
- As a result of the media's coverage of 'African gangs', South Sudanese-Australian young people reported facing more racism on public transport and in public spaces. They also experienced more surveillance by police and from teachers at school.[36]

Racism in government and community services

Entrenched economic and social disadvantage and discrimination mean that some racialised communities are at greater risk of family violence, elder abuse and homelessness than the general population.

In Victoria, 37% of First Peoples have experienced homelessness – one of the highest rates in Australia.[37] Almost two-thirds (61%) of Victoria's homeless population were born overseas.[38] First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith seniors also face a higher risk of elder abuse.[39] For this reason, access to government and community services is critical.

However, we heard that government services and agencies are often culturally unsafe. First Peoples and those from multicultural and multifaith backgrounds can face barriers to getting the help they need, when they need it.

We heard how historical and ongoing discriminatory policies have eroded trust in government agencies. We heard that some government services are culturally unsafe and difficult to navigate because they are only provided in English or do not respond to diverse cultural and faith needs.

Cultural safety

Cultural safety is about creating spaces that ensure the identities and experiences of diverse community members are heard, respected and included. This includes in places of work and leisure. It also covers the way services are designed, accessed and used.

For First Peoples, cultural safety is a decolonising approach to overcoming power imbalances and reducing racism through individual and institutional actions. Culturally safe actions aim to recognise and respect the rights, identities and experiences of First Peoples, as determined by them.

A culturally safe environment is free of racism, discrimination, assault, challenge or denial of identity.

Culturally safe services must:

- recognise First Peoples' right to self-determination
- respect First Peoples' and multicultural and multifaith communities' rights around cultures, languages and beliefs
- address racism, unconscious bias and discrimination
- enable people to share their concerns without fear of inaction or repercussions
- remove systemic barriers that negatively affect health, wellbeing and safety outcomes.

Consultation participants highlighted that diversity in the Victorian public sector workforce is an important way of ensuring government services are more culturally responsive and reflect the diversity of the community. This includes increasing diversity in executive and leadership roles in government and on government boards.

Consultation participants told us that government workplaces need to be culturally safe for First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith employees by ensuring they have:

- strong processes and policies to promote a workplace culture of anti-racism
- safe and effective ways for people who have experienced racism to report complaints.

Currently, First Peoples make up just 1.2% of Victorian Public Service (VPS) employees, despite the Victorian Public Sector's commitment to a target of 2%.[40] Half (49%) report that their identity is a barrier to success in the workplace.[41]

Overall 1 in 10 VPS employees (10%) report that their cultural background is a barrier to success in the workplace.[42] This is particularly so for those:

- from East or South East Asian backgrounds (35%)
- from South Asian backgrounds (38%)
- who follow Islam (42%)
- who follow Buddhism (26%)
- who follow Hinduism (40%) or Sikhism (50%).[43]

> **Myself and most other women of colour that I know at work have experienced at least casual racism daily or weekly, and the worst experienced repeated acts of outright racism. Anti-racism efforts are required before any of the other activities can be effective.**
>
> – VPS Women of Colour Network's Diversity and Inclusion report submission

Barriers to accessing family violence support

Family violence occurs across all communities, regardless of cultural or faith background. However, the impacts of family violence are not felt evenly.

Both First Peoples and multicultural women face particular barriers to accessing critical support.[44] Women from refugee and migrant backgrounds are less likely to report family violence and can lack broader networks for help.[45]

In addition:

- In Victoria, First Peoples women are 45 times more likely to experience family violence than non-First Peoples women.[46] Service data also suggests that family violence towards First Peoples women is often committed by non-First Peoples partners.[47]
- Nationwide, First Peoples women are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence and 11 times more likely to die from assault compared with non-First Peoples women.[48]
- A survey of almost 1,400 migrant and refugee women in Australia found that 1 in 3 had faced some form of domestic or family violence. Of these:
  – 9 out of 10 experienced controlling behaviours
  – 4 out of 10 experienced physical or sexual violence.[49]
- Women on temporary visas face particularly high levels of migration-related abuse.[50]

Racism and health

Structural disadvantage, experiences of racism and a culturally unsafe service system can reinforce health inequalities.

First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities that face structural disadvantage in other areas of life may face worse health outcomes.

This can include:

- where they live
- their housing conditions
- income
- education levels
- how often they can access and use preventive healthcare services.

Low levels of English literacy can also increase healthcare inequalities, particularly when combined with low health literacy or underlying health risks.[51]

People who experience racism are much more likely to have poor mental and physical health. The greater the frequency of racist experiences, the worse the health outcomes.[52]

These issues are made worse when people face racism in healthcare settings and deal with a system that may be culturally unsafe or not responsive to their needs.

Racism is a health and wellbeing issue

Racism has serious effects on people's mental health and wellbeing.

- Facing racial discrimination regularly is associated with increased psychological distress and risk of mental illness.[53]
- The suicide rate among First Peoples nationally is twice the rate of the non-First Peoples population.[54] This can be due to complex interrelated social, cultural and historical influences including:
  - colonisation
  - intergenerational trauma
  - racism
  - disadvantage.[55]
- For young people, racial discrimination is linked to higher rates of anxiety, depression and psychological distress.[56] A national survey of high school students found that racism had mental and physical health impacts including:
  - post-traumatic stress disorder
  - depression
  - headaches
  - increased heart rate
  - muscle tension
  - anxiety.[57]
- Among First Peoples, a national study found that 48.3% of people who faced racism experienced psychological distress. This compares with 25.2% of people who did not face racial discrimination.[58]

During consultations, we heard that a lack of in-language information and interpreter services made accessing health care challenging for Victorians with low levels of English, including older people. Research also tells us that some groups are more likely to need interpreters in health settings. This includes, for example, women from refugee backgrounds compared with women from migrant backgrounds in Victoria.[59]

We also heard that people from multicultural communities find the health system confusing and challenging to navigate.

Research shows that First Peoples are more likely to delay seeking health services, leave hospital early and not seek medical treatment when it is needed. This may be due to past personal, family or community experiences of negative treatment in health services. In the 12 months from 2018 to 2019, 30% of First Peoples across Australia reported not accessing health care when they needed it.[60]

Along with a lack of available time and cost, First Peoples cited the following reasons for not accessing health care:

- feeling that the service was discriminatory, inadequate or not culturally safe
- not trusting the service provider
- feeling embarrassed or afraid.[61]

We also heard that some First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians have faced direct racism from healthcare staff, including:

- being talked down to
- being ignored
- having assumptions made about their lifestyle and habits.

Women from racialised communities described how their symptoms or pain were ignored or minimised by doctors:

It is common for [people of colour] to not get offered the care or medicines that others do. One nurse told me once that people like me just don't feel pain like white people do. Surprisingly many medical people think this and it is dangerous.

– Survey respondent

We also heard that people face challenges in finding culturally safe mental health services and providers across metropolitan, rural and regional areas. Consultation participants told us that sometimes healthcare staff do not have enough understanding of their needs or experiences of racism and discrimination. This prevents people from getting the treatment they need.

Addressing racism in health care is critical to ensuring First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities have better and fair health and wellbeing outcomes.

There is a lack of mental health providers who can understand cross-cultural issues and the mental health impact of discrimination and racism. I have struggled to find a mental health provider who can empathise with my struggles due to psychologists and counsellors being very white and very upper middle class. As they have never experienced racism and discrimination, they think it doesn't exist.

– Survey respondent

There needs to be trust in the community in the institutions and systems. In the [COVID-19] pandemic response, people were being asked to trust a system that they had no engagement with. When it was the trusted organisations coming to talk to people about testing and quarantine, then there was traction in the community. What works is support and investment in those institutions with community trust.

– Health consultation participant

Racism in health care

- In a national survey, 25% of respondents reported experiencing racism in healthcare settings.[62]
- An Australian study found that patients with low levels of English had only a 1-in-100 chance of having a professional interpreter available when needed in a primary care setting.[63] Unqualified family members and bilingual staff are often asked to interpret in health appointments, increasing the risk of poor health outcomes.[64]
- Women from refugee backgrounds are 5 times more likely than non-refugee migrants to need an interpreter during maternity care.[65] A study of Afghan families in Melbourne found that very few women who needed an interpreter during labour had access to one.[66]
- People from multicultural backgrounds often find mental health services to be Eurocentric and alienating.[67] Yet people from refugee backgrounds and people seeking asylum experience mental illness and suicidal behaviour at significantly higher rates than the general population.[68]

Racism in the justice system

First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities across Victoria face embedded racism in the justice system.[69]

Negative experiences and perceptions of the justice system for First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities also contribute to a lack of trust in the justice system, institutions and support services. The over-representation of First Peoples in Victorian criminal justice institutions and limited police accountability can result in trauma and mistrust of law enforcement.[70]

Incarceration separates people from their families, communities and support networks. This means that conviction and imprisonment cause lasting harm to racialised communities.[71] The *Cultural Review of the Adult Custodial Corrections System in Victoria* found that many First Peoples continue to experience the harmful effects of racism and discrimination in custodial environments. This can affect First Peoples' safety and their access to:

- health care
- mental health support
- programs to support rehabilitation and transition into the community.[72]

The values and attitudes of police and corrections staff, including bias and prejudice, can influence how they exercise their powers.[73]

First Peoples youth are less likely to be cautioned and more likely to be detained or arrested compared with non-First Peoples peers.[74] First Peoples youth aged 10 to 17 years are almost 10 times more likely than non-First Peoples peers to be under community-based supervision and detention.[75]

The impact of racism on the continued over-representation of First Peoples children and young people in the child protection and justice systems is a critical issue.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission investigated and reported on the uneven use of police discretion against First Peoples.[76] In evidence before the Yoorrook Justice Commission, the Chief Commissioner of Police acknowledged that racist attitudes and discriminatory police actions against First Peoples have caused significant harm across generations.[77] The Chief Commissioner of Police identified the importance of addressing:

- systemic racism
- unconscious bias
- unequal use of discretionary powers in outcomes for First Peoples.

This is reflected in Victoria Police's commitment to put in place 79 related reforms by 2025.[78]

At its worst, structural racism in the justice system can have devastating consequences for First Peoples – even leading to death. Since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, which tabled its final report in 1991, in Victoria there have been:

- 24 First Peoples deaths in the adult corrections system
- 10 First Peoples deaths in police custody and police operations.

This includes 6 First Peoples deaths since January 2020.[79]

The Victorian Ombudsman's 2024 *Investigation into healthcare provision for Aboriginal people in Victorian prisons* report found that the current system is failing to meet the needs of First Peoples, who have more complex health needs than non-First Peoples.[80] First Peoples are more likely to be held in custody and continue to die in Victorian prisons at unacceptable rates.[81]

Some groups of multicultural young people also face unequal contact with the justice system, with overpolicing identified as a challenge.[82] A study based on the experiences of young people from Pasifika and South Sudanese backgrounds in Greater Dandenong and Casey between 2016 and 2018 found that pre-emptive and 'risk-based' policing tactics resulted in targeted monitoring and surveillance.[83] Uneven or biased use of discretionary powers (such as cautions or diversions) can also lead multicultural young people deeper into the justice system.[84]

The report *Youth justice review and strategy: meeting needs and reducing offending* identified that multicultural young people are:

- less aware of their legal rights
- less likely to get diversionary interventions.

This results in some multicultural young people being drawn further into the justice system.[85]

We don't trust the system so we will try to avoid the system. Too often people of colour are influenced negatively by the justice system... So we avoid the system altogether if we can even [if] it might be a way to help us. Too often our experience with the justice system has been a negative experience. Once bitten then twice shy. Work needs to be done to heal the trauma systems have inflicted on people of colour to earn trust back.

– Survey respondent

The limited availability of free and appropriately qualified interpreter services to support CALD [culturally and linguistically diverse] people to negotiate the justice system is well known and has been raised in numerous inquiries and reviews. There is a direct link between language difficulties and miscarriages of justice... The importance of free, professional and appropriately skilled interpreter services for CALD people who need free legal services cannot be overstated.

– Written submission from the Peninsula Community Legal Centre

Over-representation of First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities in the justice system

First Peoples and some multicultural communities are over-represented in the justice system. This is not a result of race or ethnicity but can be due to compounding:

- social and economic disadvantage
- intergenerational trauma
- interpersonal and structural racism and discrimination.[86]

First Peoples communities:

- First Peoples are imprisoned at around 15 times the rate of all people in Victoria (1,898.2 for every 100,000 people, compared with 120.9).[87]
- First Peoples women are 11 times more likely than non-First Peoples women to be processed by police. First Peoples women are also less likely to receive bail.[88]
- First Peoples young people are 6 times more likely than non-First Peoples young people to get a police caution, arrest or summons.[89]
- First Peoples young people make up 15% of young people aged 10 to 17 years who are under Youth Justice supervision (in the community or in custody). This is despite making up only 1.5% of Victorians aged 10 to 23 years.[90]

African communities:

- Between 2021 and 2022, 39% of those in youth custody in Victoria were African-identifying young people.[91] Only 2.6% of the wider youth population aged 10 to 17 years identify as being of African descent.[92]

Racism in employment

Racism and discrimination in employment takes a variety of forms.

Unequal access to work opportunities because of institutional, structural and interpersonal racism stops people from enjoying equal economic participation and earning higher incomes. This can cement inequality for people from racialised communities and their families, making it harder to:

- find secure housing
- stay healthy
- pursue educational opportunities.

Limited employment opportunities can also affect a person's sense of identity and self-worth.

Employers may not recognise overseas skills and qualifications or they might avoid hiring qualified candidates without Australian work experience.[93] As a result, migrant workers are often over-represented in insecure and poorly paid employment. Up to 16% of recent migrants are paid less than the national minimum wage, compared with up to 9% of all Australian workers.[94]

International student graduates are likely to experience qualification–employment mismatch and have significantly poorer employment outcomes compared with their domestic counterparts. More than half of Temporary Graduate visa holders end up in jobs at the lowest skill levels despite being qualified for the top skill level.[95]

Multicultural women, including women from refugee backgrounds, have a significantly lower rate of workforce participation (47.3%) compared with multicultural men (69.5%).[96]

In a 2019 survey by the Victorian Multicultural Commission, nearly half (46%) of young multicultural people surveyed said their ethnic background, faith or culture was a barrier to employment.[97] Multicultural young people reported that they experienced name bias – being rejected for interviews when including their names in résumés. When submitting the same résumés without their names, they were offered interviews.[98] Participants in our community consultations noted these same experiences. International research confirms that facing racial discrimination when seeking employment is widespread.[99]

According to the *Victorian Government Aboriginal affairs report 2022*, the number of First Peoples women who are not employed or seeking employment has continued to grow, reaching 45.6%.[100] Barriers to employment play a factor in who can return to full- and part-time work, including caring duties and experiences of racism and sexism.

The proportion of employed First Peoples Victorians in industries with the highest income is less than the proportion of employed non-First Peoples Victorians.[101] This may be due to systemic racism and lack of equal opportunity, which contributes to the pay gap between First Peoples Victorians and others.[102]

A 2022 Women on Boards audit of non-corporate organisations in Australia found that, while women comprised 46% of board directors:

- only 5.7% of board directors were multicultural women
- only 3.2% were First Peoples women.[103]

First Peoples representation was also skewed, with representation occurring mostly on First Peoples–focused boards.[104]

Women from culturally diverse backgrounds also get paid less. The ethnic gender pay gap is double the national average gender pay gap – around 33–36%, compared with 14%.[105]
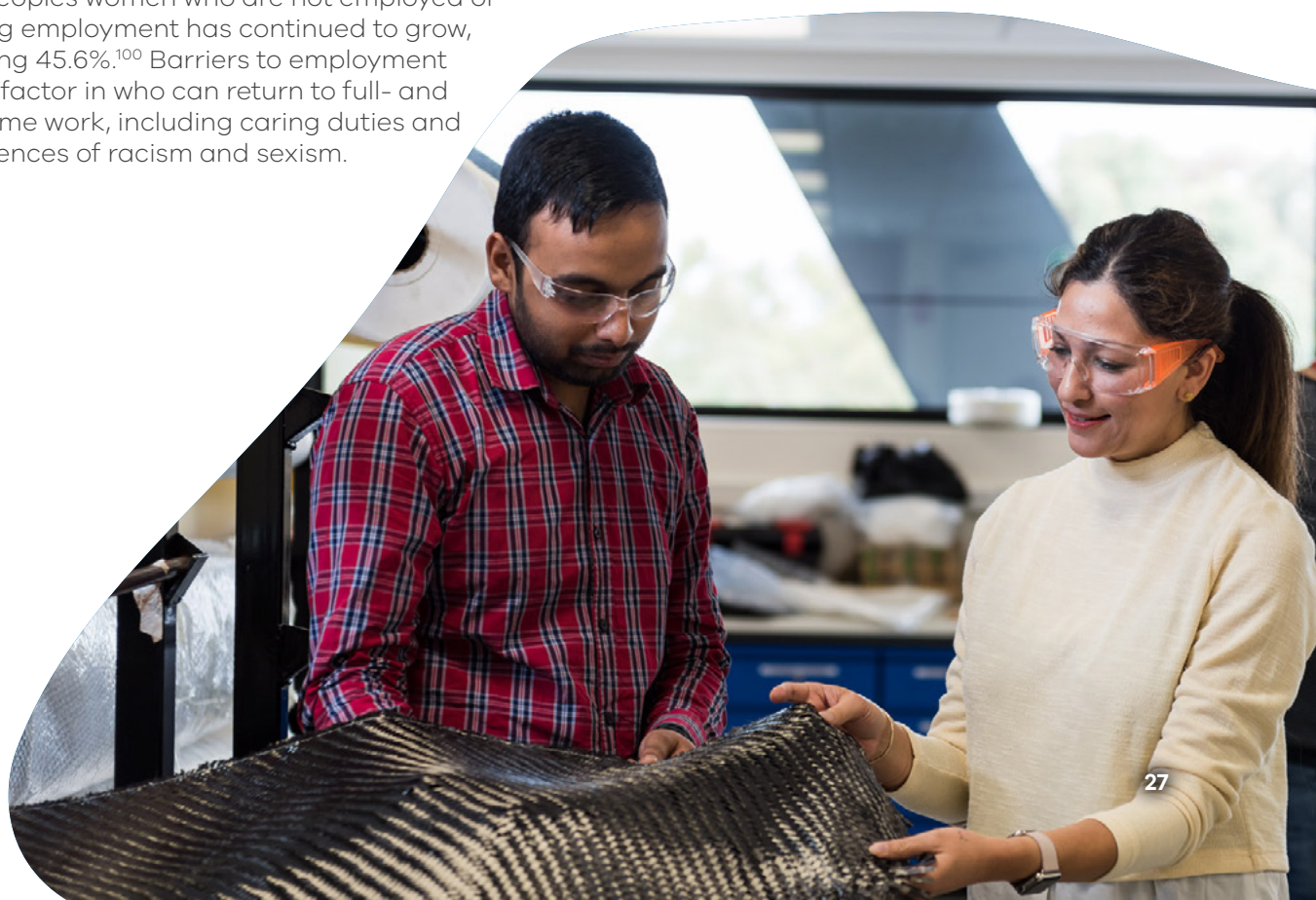
Racism in the workplace

- First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians face more barriers to gaining employment and a greater risk of harassment, discrimination and abuse in the workplace. This affects their safety and ability to succeed at work.

- A 2023 Australian study showed that people with non–English sounding names received 57.4% fewer positive responses to job applications, even though their résumés were identical to those with English-sounding names.[106]

- A 2023 nationwide survey found more than half of the migrant workers surveyed had experienced discrimination at work (54%) or felt unsafe at work (59%).[107]

- A 2021 study found that two-thirds of LGBTIQA+ multicultural and multifaith people experienced discrimination at work.[108]

- In a 2022 survey, 86% of culturally and racially marginalised women reported having to educate colleagues about race issues, causing distress to 72% of them.[109]

- Sixty-three per cent of First Peoples employees experience 'high identity strain', where they or others view their culture to be at odds with the dominant culture of the workplace.[110]

- Over three-quarters (76%) of women of colour in the VPS have either personally faced racial discrimination, witnessed it or both. Two-thirds of those who personally faced racism say they did not report it because they do not have confidence in the reporting process.[111]

- First Peoples women in the VPS are more likely to earn lower salaries and are less likely to hold managerial roles compared with First Peoples men and non–First Peoples staff.[112]

- Multicultural people – and women in particular – are under-represented at the management level in the VPS. Multicultural women are also over-represented in lower income brackets and under-represented in higher income brackets.[113]

Racism in education settings

Children and young people develop, learn and build a foundation for future wellbeing and success in early childhood settings, schools, TAFEs and universities. Education settings can nurture wellbeing through providing inclusive learning environments that celebrate diversity, build a shared understanding of traditions, beliefs and histories, encourage connection to other cultures, and promote respect and appreciation.

All educational institutions have a key role to play in preventing, identifying and responding to incidents of racism, and there are several initiatives and policies in place to help Victorian schools do this. This includes Victoria's Child Safe Standards, which set requirements for culturally safe learning environments, and intercultural capability in the Victorian Curriculum. Targeted resources like the Centre for Multicultural Youth's and Victorian Government's Schools standing up to racism guide also support positive school leadership on anti-racism.

Despite this, we know that racism in education settings remains, and there is more work to be done to make sure schools are culturally safe and free from racism. Experiences of racism in places of education can have a profound, long-term impact on children and young people's:

- social and emotional wellbeing
- engagement and participation
- school and work opportunities
- connection to community
- sense of identity and self-worth.

First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities told us that schools have not effectively addressed racism against students. They reported that teachers and staff can lack the training or resources necessary to address racism. They can treat incidents as bullying or treat the perpetrator and victim as equally to blame. As a result, schools are sometimes an unsafe place for many First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith students and families.[114]

> **Schools can be a place where young people experience misunderstanding, alienation and racism. They are a critical setting in which young people learn about themselves and the world. This includes first experiences of racism, which can carry long-term impacts in life.**
>
> – Written submission from the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria

> **I was lucky at high school – nobody knew my brother and I were First Nations because [we]… have fairer skin.**
>
> – Online survey respondent

First Peoples participants told us that the mainstream curriculum does not properly include their cultures, histories and experiences. They also said that the history of colonisation, violence and genocide of First Peoples is minimised. We heard calls to add these to the curriculum as well as anti-racism lessons for teachers and students.

Racism is also a key barrier to First Peoples access, participation and success in tertiary education.[115] High attrition and low levels of aspiration for further study have been connected to fear of cultural isolation or racism in higher education.[116]

Racism in Victorian schools and universities

- A 2021 study showed that 87% of Melbourne students of African heritage have experienced racial discrimination at school. This includes 95% of girls and young women and 78% of boys and young men.[117]
- Another study found that almost one-third (31%) of students in New South Wales and Victorian government schools have personally experienced racism from their classmates, and 12% experienced racism from teachers.[118]
- Even more students have witnessed racism. Almost two-thirds (60%) of students report seeing racism at school between students. Nearly half (43%) have witnessed racism from teachers.[119]
- Nationwide, a 2023 study revealed that almost two-thirds of Jewish students have experienced antisemitism at university. Because of antisemitism, 57% of Jewish students have hidden their identity on campus, and 1 in 5 have avoided campus altogether.[120]
- In 2023 the Commission for Children and Young People's extensive consultations with children and young people in out-of-home care found that racism in Victorian education settings significantly affects First Peoples students' educational engagement, health and wellbeing.[121]

4. The call to action: tackling racism benefits us all

Racism and discrimination have no place in our state.

This strategy recognises that all Victorians have a right to live with dignity and freedom, with equal rights and protection from racism and discrimination. These values are an important part of our state, enshrined in the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.*

Racism and discrimination are unacceptable and harmful. Tackling racism and leading the way in anti-racism in Australia will strengthen our society and unite our communities.

What is anti-racism?

Anti-racism means more than just responding to racism once it has happened. It involves actively identifying where racism has contributed to the exclusion and unfair treatment of First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities. It is challenging our beliefs and biases and transforming the structures, institutions and practices that allow discrimination and inequality to persist.

Anti-racism is a continuous practice and everyone's ongoing responsibility.

Anti-racism

At the personal level anti-racism means we...

- Reflect on how personal beliefs and attitudes towards each other may be based on stereotypes or unconscious biases.
- Do not make assumptions about people based on their skin colour, the language they speak, their cultural practices or their religion.
- Challenge or disagree with other people when they make racist jokes or comments.
- Listen to and learn from each other's perspectives, educating ourselves about each other's cultures and experiences, and how they may differ from our own.
- Report racist comments or behaviour when we witness it, and help the people targeted.

At the institutional level anti-racism means we...

- Identify and remove an organisation's racist policies, practices and procedures.
- Make policies and change processes to proactively promote racial equity.
- Include First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith people in the design of policies and processes that affect them.
- Improve environments and services to make them culturally safe.
- Guarantee equal access to professional pathways and to career and leadership development.
- Make sure leaders and people in power in an organisation have the tools to identify and overcome biases when making decisions.
- Develop measures to respond to and address racist actions by people in an organisation.

At the structural level anti-racism means we...

- Support First Peoples' right to self-determination, Truth and Treaty.
- Protect and promote human rights, including the right to freedom from racism and discrimination.
- Acknowledge and teach the history and ongoing effects of colonisation in schools.

- Acknowledge that cultural and social norms benefit some and marginalise others.
- Improve access to resources and economic and social participation for First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith groups.

Using intersectionality to understand and respond to racism

'Intersectionality' refers to the ways in which different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and disadvantage, making the impacts worse. These include, for example, racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism or ageism.

Aspects of a person's identity can include characteristics like:

- Aboriginality
- ethnicity
- age
- disability
- gender
- sexual orientation
- class
- language
- migration status
- religion.

An intersectional approach to anti-racism helps us to:

- understand and identify how systems and structures of inequality can overlap and worsen discrimination and marginalisation for racialised groups
- create more targeted and effective policies and services to address racism and consider overlapping forms of inequality, disadvantage and discrimination.

How anti-racism benefits our community

Racism and discrimination damage our society. Addressing racism builds social cohesion and belonging in Victoria, creating stronger bonds within and across different communities.

It creates a safer and stronger Victoria, where everyone can take part and thrive.

Combatting racism makes everybody safer

Addressing racism and racist ideologies is vital to protect the Victorian community and uphold the values of our state.

The Legislative and Social Issues Committee's *Inquiry into extremism in Victoria* highlighted how far-right extremist groups have incited or committed acts of violence or terrorism against First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities.[122]

Combatting racism helps ensure Victorians from First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities are safe and supported. It also creates a safer and more cohesive community for everyone.

Anti-racism is an investment in our future

Multiculturalism contributes to Victoria's vibrancy and prosperity. Cultural diversity adds around $1 billion to the Victorian economy every year.[123] When we embrace diversity, we drive innovation and productivity.

Our reputation as a safe and welcoming place to be stimulates the Victorian economy. Tourism alone contributes around $1.2 billion to the Victorian economy.[124]

Humanitarian settlement in Victoria has also had positive economic effects including:

- increased employment in the retail, accommodation, food and manufacturing sectors
- more demand for goods and services.

Taking action to combat racism will increase innovation and economic prosperity for the state.

Racism and discrimination cost us all

Although First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians bear the greatest cost of racism and discrimination, racism also costs Victoria as a whole. We all lose as a community when some of us experience barriers and harm that stop people from fully taking part and thriving. Racism also reduces our broader sense of safety, trust and community cohesion.

Racial discrimination has indirect costs to productivity in employment. The health costs of racial discrimination in Australia are around $37.9 billion each year.[125]

Racism has a tangible impact on Australia's economy, negatively affecting 2 of our largest industries – tourism and international education.[126]

Racist incidents have tarnished Australia's and Victoria's reputations as destinations for tourism, migration and study. They have also affected Victoria's ability to attract and retain skilled workers.[127]

Without targeted actions to address racism, we risk losing:

- key investment partners who want to operate in Victoria's metropolitan, rural and regional areas
- international workers and students, who bring global talent to Victoria.

Anti-racism supports self-determination

Addressing racism is in line with the Victorian Government's work to advance self-determination, Truth and Treaty. It also furthers Victoria's commitments to address racism under Victoria's *Closing the Gap implementation plan* and the *Victorian Aboriginal affairs framework* (VAAF).

The VAAF enables First Peoples to hold government to account on improving outcomes. Goal 20 ('racism is eliminated') recognises that removing racism in all forms and at all levels should not be the responsibility of First Peoples.

Priority Reform 3 of the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* commits the government to address racism by transforming government organisations, including:

- identifying and eliminating racism
- embedding cultural safety in practice
- providing services in partnership with First Peoples organisations, communities and people.

Priority Reform 3 aims to decrease the proportion of First Peoples who experience racism.

Victoria's *Closing the Gap implementation plan* includes actions to make sure mainstream institutions are culturally safe and responsive, including:

- partnering with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria towards Treaty
- truth telling through the Yoorrook Justice Commission.

The Victorian Government is committed to working with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria to progress a well-supported, well-planned and transparent Treaty process.

Through Treaty, Victoria is committed to:

- laying the foundations for renewed and positive relationships between the state, First Peoples and non–First Peoples Victorians
- celebrating the unique status, rights and histories of First Peoples
- embedding self-determination by handing over decision-making power so First Peoples can make decisions about their own future
- improving First Peoples' health, education and economic outcomes by ensuring they have a say on the policies that affect them.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission is the nation's first formal truth-telling process. It is currently investigating historical and ongoing systemic injustices committed against First Peoples.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission focuses on:

- truth telling and healing
- truth listening and educating broader Victorians
- making recommendations for systemic reform.

These focus areas are:

- reflected in the Yoorrook Justice Commission's goals of truth, understanding and transformation
- in its vision to see a transformed Victoria based on truth and justice
- grounded in First Peoples' enduring spirit, cultures and self-determination.

Tackling racism complements the government's deep commitment to First Peoples self-determination and Victoria's Treaty and truth-telling processes. By doing so, we can create a Victoria where First Peoples live free from racism and have the power to take control of their own affairs.
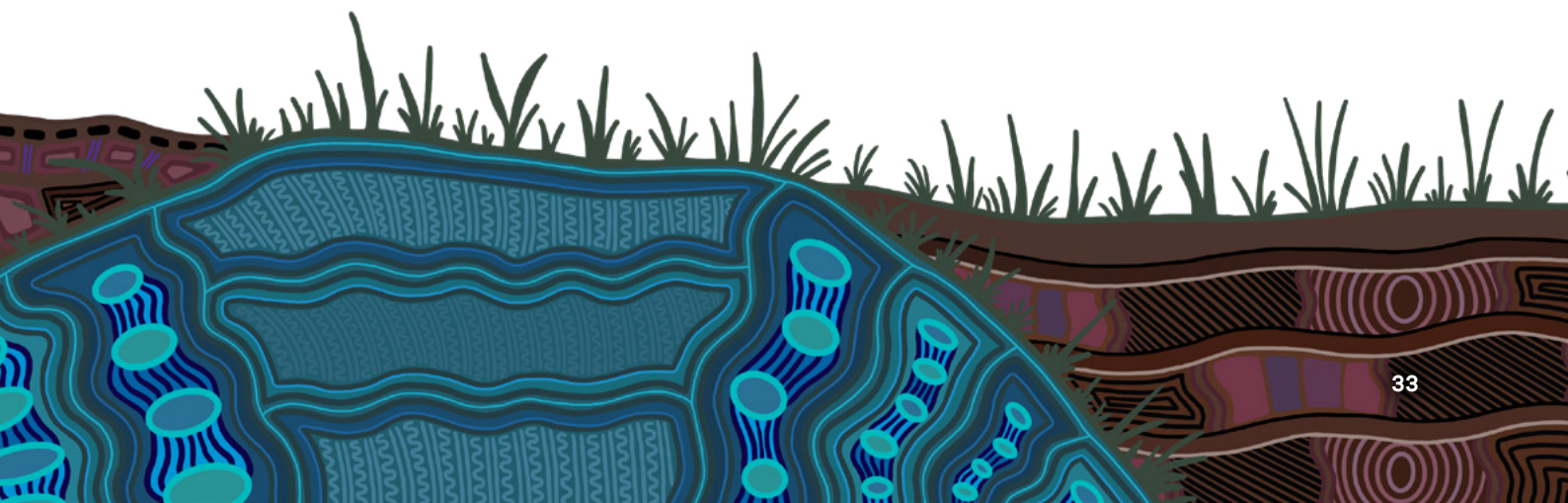
5. The plan for action

The plan for action is the blueprint for how we will achieve our vision for a Victoria free from racism and discrimination.

We want all Victorians across metropolitan, rural and regional areas to:

- enjoy equal rights, freedoms and protections
- thrive in safe, healthy and supportive communities.

The plan outlines:

- our 4 priority goals for meaningful, widespread change to address racism at all levels and across all areas of life
- the actions we will take to achieve these goals.

Some of our approaches will be broad and some will be tailored to specific communities. A number of anti-racism activities under these actions focus on First Peoples communities and align with the principles of self-determination and capacity building. The detail of these actions will be developed through the strategy's implementation.

We will develop a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan to track the progress of these actions. Data related to racism is not always collected or easy to access. Through creating a monitoring and evaluation framework, we will continue to build a better understanding of racism in Victoria and how we can work collectively to address it.

Goal 1: Racist attitudes, behaviours and beliefs are recognised, challenged and rejected

Challenging racist behaviours and attitudes is crucial to tackling racism and discrimination and in creating the wide and enduring change we want to see in our society.

Every Victorian must understand that discriminating against people based on race or religion is against the law. All of us are responsible for eliminating racist behaviours. It should not be left to the people who have experienced racism. This must be reflected in all areas of society.

To achieve this, we will focus on:

- community-driven initiatives to shift attitudes and behaviour at the local (grassroots) level
- strengthening community understanding of racism and addressing racism in areas such as sport
- groundbreaking legislative reforms and community-driven action to address racism and vilification in Victoria, improving protections for all Victorians.

Challenging and changing behaviour is the most effective way to shift attitudes over time.

Guided by the lived experiences of our community, we will work to ensure race discrimination and vilification are no longer tolerated in Victoria and lead a path to anti-racism.

Education and action needs to come from people of all walks of life. Developing anti-racism strategies and educating others should not be the sole responsibility of people from multicultural backgrounds. We can all better educate the people in our lives to not be racist and how to better support people who are victims of racial abuse.

– Survey respondent

Goal 1: Racist attitudes, behaviours and beliefs are recognised, challenged and rejected

Key areas for action

Community-driven initiatives to shift attitudes and behaviour at the grassroots level

Support First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities affected by racism to create local solutions driven by lived experience.

Anti-racism campaigns to drive behaviour change, increase awareness or rights and build accountability

Strengthen community understanding of racism and address racist behaviours in sport.

Groundbreaking reforms and community-driven action to address racism and vilification in Victoria

Strengthen Victoria's anti-vilification laws as part of the response to the *Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Vilification Protections* including:

- increasing protections for all Victorians
- banning the Nazi salute.

Deliver grassroots community campaigns to tackle antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Future priority areas

- Support education initiatives to challenge racist attitudes and create a more inclusive education system.
- Amplify First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith voices in the media.

Tackling racism in regional Victoria through the Local Anti-Racism Initiatives (LARI) grants program

Levels of racism in regional and rural Victoria are generally the same as in urban areas.[128] However, a lack of access to culturally safe and targeted supports and services in regional Victoria can make the effects of racism and discrimination worse.[129]

Regional Victorians told us that racism leads people to withdraw from the community. This increases feelings of not belonging and affects health and wellbeing.

They also told us that people who experience racism in regional areas often do not report it. This can be because of a lack of access to services or a lack knowledge about reporting. It can also be because in a small community – where everybody knows everybody – there is a fear that filing a report will lead to social exclusion.

In 2021 the Victorian Government funded 42 organisations through the LARI grants program to help local organisations empower communities to tackle racism.

LARI reached more than 23,200 people directly and millions more online. A number of LARI grants targeted regional and rural Victoria, including $450,000 to 4 local community organisations to tackle racism in Greater Shepparton:

- **Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc** ran training for large regional organisations to build cultural competency and cultural awareness among staff. The sessions, which were led by First Peoples and multicultural and multifaith trainers, reached 140 senior staff from large regional organisations and service providers. The participants reported positive organisational changes from taking part in the training program.

- **Greater Shepparton Lighthouse** created an anti-racism leadership program focusing on Year 5 and 6 students at primary schools in the region. More than 800 students took part in the program. The program helped students identify racism and turn what they had learned during the workshop sessions into actions.

- **Know Your Roots** worked with Greater Shepparton Secondary College and several community and sports organisations to support First Peoples, refugee and migrant community members to identify and report incidents of racism and build a sense of belonging. Almost 1,500 people took part in the project, of which more than 500 were young people. The Know Your Roots workshops were run by trainers from First Peoples and refugee and migrant backgrounds. The workshops helped build connections and respect between First Peoples and multicultural and multifaith communities in the region.

- **Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc**, with Kaiela Institute and the University of Melbourne, created a Yorta Yorta–led anti-racism in sport program for local sporting clubs in Greater Shepparton and the Goulburn Murray region.

The presence of Aboriginal and migrant project officers working together has created opportunities for intercultural exchange and promoted greater respect and understanding among young people from different backgrounds. This unexpected outcome highlights the importance of diversity and the value of creating opportunities for different cultural groups to work together and learn from each other.

– Know Your Roots

Combatting antisemitism in Victoria: the Nazi Hakenkreuz and salute ban, and Holocaust education in schools

To combat antisemitism, the Victorian Government has committed to and delivered a range of measures to send a clear message that Nazi ideology and the hatred it spreads is not tolerated in Victoria. This includes:

- undertaking law reforms to prevent harm caused by Nazi symbols and gestures, including strengthening the *Summary Offences Act 1966* to ban the public display of the Nazi Hakenkreuz symbol and public display and performance of the Nazi salute
- expanding Holocaust education professional learning opportunities for Victorian government secondary school teachers
- making sure that Holocaust education is included in the Year 9 history curriculum in all Victorian government schools.

The education programs build on community programs such as Courage to Care's Upstander programs. The Upstander programs empower participants to act, giving them practical tools to stand up against racism, bullying and prejudice in the schoolyard, workplace and community.

> **Change usually occurs at grassroot levels... when communities are empowered and educated, they can make meaningful changes that permeate the wider society. Those small organisations and individuals making a difference need help.**
>
> – Survey respondent

Schools Standing Up to Racism

Schools Standing Up to Racism is a collaboration between the Centre for Multicultural Youth and the Victorian Department of Education. It offers a range of resources to support schools to address racism and discrimination in their school environment.

Resources include:
- an action plan for creating inclusive school communities (a step-by-step anti-racism approach for schools at any stage of their journey)
- an anti-racism policy template that schools can adapt for their context
- an anti-racism conversation guide for teachers and school leaders

- reflection tools for staff and students
- lesson plans for primary and secondary students
- a supporting resource on family engagement.

The resources aim to support schools to create safe spaces in which to build the intercultural awareness and understanding needed to prevent and address racism and discrimination.

Schools Standing Up to Racism encourages a whole-of-school approach and actively promotes student voice to create meaningful and sustainable change.

Measuring our progress: signs of impact

We will know we are on track for success when:

- more Victorians understand that they have a role to play in combatting and preventing racism
- First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities feel safer in their everyday lives, including seeing a reduction in the national level of racism so that:
  - fewer Australians experience discrimination based on skin colour, ethnic origin or religion (down from 18%)[130]
  - fewer First Peoples experience racism (down from 60%)[131]

- there is more social cohesion in the state including seeing a reduction in the number of Victorians who feel that multiculturalism does not make life in their area better (down from 6.7%)[132]
- community-led organisations have increased capacity to address and respond to racism
- community sports organisations are actively practising anti-racism activities.

Goal 2: Government services and workplaces are safe, accessible and non-discriminatory

Addressing racism also means dismantling it at the structural level. Left unchecked, structural racism in the form of laws, policies and process can lead to unfair and unequal outcomes.

To effectively challenge racism and drive change, the Victorian Government must look inwards as an institution and an employer. We must consider what structures, policies and processes may perpetuate racism and respond swiftly.

To achieve this, we will focus on:

- education programs for complaint and oversight bodies to better respond to and refer reports of racism and create a safer experience for service users
- actions to reduce discrimination in policing
- developing an anti-racism monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure the effectiveness of strategy actions.

We will continue to build on our efforts to partner with First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians to make sure their voices are embedded in the design and delivery of policies and services that affect them.

For First Peoples, this means we will centre self-determination in service design. We will focus on supporting Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to design and provide services to First Peoples that respond to community needs and goals.

As both a workplace and service provider, we will work to remove structural barriers so racist laws, policies and processes no longer stop people from fully taking part and succeeding.

Goal 2: Government services and workplaces are safe, accessible and non-discriminatory

Key areas for action

Initiatives to prevent discrimination in government services, systems and programs

Run education programs for complaint and oversight bodies to better respond to and refer reports of racism and create a safer experience for service users.

Embed oversight and monitoring to support accountability and track strategy progress

Establish an anti-racism monitoring and evaluation framework to support whole-of-government monitoring of the strategy.

Initiatives to reduce racism and discrimination in policing

Challenge internal biases and unequal use of discretionary policing to address the impact this has on First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith groups.

Future priority areas

- Build the capability of the Victorian Public Sector and government services to prevent and respond to racism.
- Improve our understanding of differences in outcomes for First Peoples and multicultural and multifaith groups across public services and systems.
- Improve in-language resources and build specialist capability of interpreters to improve the accessibility of critical government services.
- Strengthen the capability of law enforcement services to respond to racism and build community awareness and trust around reporting.

Barring Djinang employment strategy for the Victorian Public Sector

Barring Djinang – a Taungurung phrase meaning 'pathway of the feet' – is the Aboriginal employment strategy for the Victorian Public Sector.

Since *Barring Djinang* was launched in 2018:
- 24 First Peoples graduates have completed the graduate pathway program and entered ongoing public sector employment
- 90 emerging First Peoples leaders from across the sector took part in the leadership program
- 150 First Peoples staff took part in career development and coaching initiatives.

Barring Djinang also supported the creation of a Victorian Public Sector-wide First Peoples staff network – Nyanak Lotjpa ('we all talk' in Yorta Yorta).

The strategy is being updated, with an emphasis on accelerating progress on better employment outcomes for First Peoples in the Victorian public sector through:
- building employment pathways into the sector
- strengthening leadership capacity
- providing more ways for First Peoples staff to connect across the sector.

The strategy will also focus on using anti-racism models to strengthen cultural competency among the broader workforce and leadership to:
- contribute to self-determination goals
- prepare for Treaty
- help make the public sector an employer of choice for First Peoples in Victoria.

Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – strong culture, strong peoples, strong families 2018–2028

Following the Royal Commission into Family Violence, the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum developed a new 10-year, First Peoples–led agreement to address family violence in First Peoples communities.

The *Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – strong culture, strong peoples, strong families agreement*:
- commits government and First Peoples services to work together and be accountable for ensuring First Peoples and their families and communities are stronger, safer, thriving and free from family violence
- ensures the community is getting the right services to respond in a culturally safe way
- reflects the many voices and stories of First Peoples living across Victoria.

The Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum and its members are the individual and collective champions and strategic leaders who oversee the agreement. They work closely with the community and stakeholders to:
- refine the First Peoples–led agenda for culturally safe responses to family violence
- make key decisions
- advance the strategic priorities and monitor progress against the Dhelk Dja agreement.

Since 2018 the agreement has:
- strengthened investment in embedding First Peoples–led community family violence services
- strengthened the cultural safety of prevention programs and family violence support and response
- contributed to building a specialist First Peoples workforce
- contributed to building an evidence base for family violence prevention and intervention.

Measuring our progress: signs of impact

We will know we are on track for success when:

- more First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians feel culturally safe and are treated with dignity and respect when using government services; this includes seeing fewer experiences of racism and discrimination for employees, clients and end-users

- there are clearer reporting pathways to complaint and oversight bodies, and more First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians understand their rights and feel supported in reporting experiences of racism and vilification

- there is an increase in understanding of the impact of systemic racism and bias on policing, and Victorian police are more skilled and confident in using a human rights approach to addressing racism and discrimination.

We will develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for this strategy to effectively:

- track trends, progress, issues and outcomes of anti-racism work across government

- develop reports with recommendations for best anti-racism practice

- report back to communities on program effectiveness.

Goal 3: Racism and discrimination are no longer barriers to participation, progress, safety and success across all sectors

Stopping racism also means influencing organisations, businesses and institutions outside of government to address racism and discrimination.

Organisations play a part in creating barriers that stop people from fully taking part in all facets of life, including work, study, health and sport. They also have a critical role in reducing these barriers and supporting full and safe participation, progress and safety.

This strategy recognises that the progress the Victorian community wants to see extends beyond what government does. It needs to occur in people's everyday lives as family members, workers, consumers, students, patients or players on a sports field.

To achieve this, we will focus on:

- statewide initiatives to build the capability and capacity of organisations to prevent and respond to racism
- systems-focused initiatives to address longstanding issues around racism and to create safer, more inclusive environments
- initiatives to address barriers to work opportunities and representation in leadership positions for under-represented groups.

This means encouraging organisations, businesses and institutions to adopt anti-racism best practice in policy and governance.

This will create safe, inclusive environments and promote fair outcomes for First Peoples and those from multicultural and multifaith backgrounds.

> **We directly need policy that ensures people who experience structural exclusions to these industries can have opportunities to meaningfully participate in them. This includes embedding diversity standards in the industries, facilitating meaningful collaboration and consultation and supporting ongoing education and training in anti-racism and cultural safety.**
>
> – Written submission from Diversity Arts Australia

Goal 3: Racism and discrimination are no longer barriers to participation, progress, safety and success across all sectors

Key areas for action

Initiatives to build the capability of organisations to be anti-racist and respond to racism
Develop an anti-racism 'tick' accreditation scheme to improve the capacity of private and community sector organisations to apply anti-racist best practice in: • recruitment • retention • progression • workplace health and safety.
Publish comprehensive race discrimination guidelines to educate organisations on their obligations around race discrimination. This will include resources to help them: • identify racism • develop prevention plans • complete audits • operate in a culturally safe way.

Future priority areas

- Develop initiatives to reduce barriers to employment and progression for First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities.
- Create culturally responsive employment supports and outcomes for First Peoples and multicultural people.
- Embed systemic reforms to prevent and respond to racism and discrimination in health, justice and other settings.
- Promote anti-racism practice in sport and recreation settings.
- Strengthen leadership pathways for First Peoples and multicultural people.

Victorian Equal Opportunity Human Rights Commission's Guideline: Race discrimination in the workplace

In August 2024 the Victorian Government and VEOHRC launched the *Guideline: Race discrimination in the workplace*. This guideline serves as a blueprint for preventing and addressing workplace racism and race discrimination. It is an important resource to make sure Victoria's workplaces are inclusive and that everyone can thrive and succeed at work.

VEOHRC developed the guideline in consultation with the Victorian community including multicultural and First Peoples communities, advocacy organisations, community legal centres, unions and workplace discrimination experts.

The guideline seeks to combat race discrimination in the workplace by:

- helping to increase organisational understanding of workplace racism and build racial literacy
- assisting employers to understand and comply with their legal obligations under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- helping employers to identify, prevent and respond to racism in the workplace and in work-related settings using 5 standards for compliance
- supporting First Peoples and racialised Victorians to fully take part in the workforce
- assisting people experiencing workplace discrimination to understand and enforce their rights.

Alongside the guideline, VEOHRC has developed other resources including policy guides, employee guides and fact sheets to support workplaces to become anti-racist.

To ensure the resources are accessible to all Victorians, the fact sheets, active bystander guide and racial literacy guide have been translated into 12 languages: Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Farsi, Hazaragi, Karen, Khmer, Korean, Punjabi, Somali, Turkish and Vietnamese.

All resources, including translations, can be found on the VEOHRC website <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/resources/guideline-workplace-race-discrimination/>.

Measuring our progress: signs of impact

We will know we are on track for success when:

- more First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians feel culturally safe and represented in key sectors and settings

- there is an increase in the take-up of our anti-racism accreditation scheme and compliance with the 'tick' standards to measure improvement over time

- we contribute as a state to an increase in the number of Australians reporting that their organisation is taking steps to create a diverse and inclusive workplace (up from 57%).[133]

Goal 4: People subjected to racism receive appropriate and culturally safe services and supports

Preventing racism from occurring is crucial. Ensuring people are supported when racism does happen is equally important.

This strategy recognises that pathways to reporting racism and discrimination do not always make people feel safe or supported. A lack of information, transparency and community trust in services can mean that racism is under-reported.

Reporting racism can be retraumatising for people if:

- complaints are not taken seriously
- perpetrators are not held accountable
- appropriate services and supports are not available.

All Victorians should feel safe to report experiences of racism and discrimination. And all Victorians should have access to culturally safe services and supports.

To achieve this, we will focus on services to support people subjected to racism and discrimination, making sure community needs are front and centre and respond to changing circumstances.

We can improve community confidence to report racism by:

- building trust with the community
- ensuring complaints processes are transparent and effective.

Goal 4: People subjected to racism receive appropriate and culturally safe services and supports

Key areas for action

Initiatives to give culturally safe support to people who face racism and discrimination

Help local communities connect people facing racism with relevant support services and existing community structures.

Future priority areas

- Explore initiatives to raise awareness of reporting pathways.
- Explore initiatives to collect and publish data on racism and discrimination in Victoria.

Reducing Racism project – phase 2

The Reducing Racism project, led by VEOHRC, aims to empower Victoria's multicultural and multifaith communities to understand their rights and respond to racism. Over 4 years and 2 project phases, VEOHRC worked to make it easier for communities to report racism.

Achievements for phase 1 included:

- creating a deeper, 2-way dialogue, shown through ongoing engagement between VEOHRC and community partners – this has created an emerging and informed bank of stories illustrating the harm of racism and the benefits of multiculturalism
- running 22 customised education sessions with more than 540 Muslim and African leaders and members across Victoria with the Islamic Council of Victoria, the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights and Nelson Mandela Day Australia
- co-designing resources on rights, responsibilities and formal structures to address racism – partner organisations have used these in their own community education programs.

In phase 2 of the project (2020 to 2021), VEOHRC responded to emerging community needs around the pandemic. VEOHRC engaged deeply with multicultural and multifaith communities across Victoria to understand the impact of racism related to COVID-19 and to help people who experienced discrimination or vilification based on their race or religion. This included:

- empowering community members to understand and exercise their rights
- partnering with councils and service providers working with multicultural communities to help them better use human rights and equality law to respond to racism
- increasing reporting of racial and religious discrimination and vilification to VEOHRC through the Community Reporting Tool (CRT).

The program had broad community reach and achieved the following outcomes:

- A total of 1,249 people attended information sessions – 98% of participants said the content increased their understanding of their rights and their ability to report instances of racism.
- Across 4 local government areas (identified as culturally diverse regions) 144 people completed the Reducing Racism and Human Rights Advocates course. The course empowered staff from councils and organisations that provide services to multicultural communities to develop awareness and advocacy skills.
- An overwhelming 98% of participants increased their confidence to identify racism and their knowledge of VEOHRC's functions. After completing the course, 92% of participants said they would report racism (up from 58%).
- The CRT was improved and broadly promoted, with 25 organisations adding the CRT to their websites.
- VEOHRC developed a racism information chatbot prototype.
- VEOHRC worked with the National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters' Council to create 24 in-language podcasts.

One of the greatest achievements of the Reducing Racism project was raising awareness of laws and reporting – especially in relation to the Community Reporting Tool. Many people from different cultural backgrounds would not report racism, or they wouldn't report it because they wouldn't know where to do it. The Community Reporting Tool may have already been available locally, but it wasn't something we knew about prior to the project.

– Stakeholder[134]

Measuring our progress: signs of impact

We will know we have made progress when:

- long term, we see fewer reports or complaints of racism to complaint and oversight bodies (down from 156 complaints to VEOHRC, recorded in 2022–23)[135]
- more perpetrators are held to account, including more successful prosecutions of prejudice-motivated crime by Victoria Police.

In the short term, we expect the number of complaints to increase as the public becomes more aware of their rights and how to report.

6. The way forward

We have the vision and the reforms to realise this strategy.
We can improve the lives of First Peoples, multicultural and
multifaith Victorians and create a safer, more equitable state.

To get us there, we will work with communities and organisations
to carry out actions. We will measure our progress and keep
Victorians informed as we build a state free from racism.

Roles and responsibilities

- The Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Minister for Treaty and First Peoples will lead this strategy.
- Victorian Government ministers and their departments will work together to carry out whole-of-government actions, as well as actions that are part of their area of responsibility.
- The Victorian Anti-Racism Taskforce will support early implementation by providing expert community advice, governance and oversight of the strategy's early actions.
- VEOHRC and the Victorian Multicultural Commission will protect human rights and promote equality, inclusivity and diversity for all Victorians.

Reporting back to communities

First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities are critical to this strategy's success. We will regularly report back to communities on our progress as actions are put in place.

Open communication with communities will enable us to monitor the impact of our actions and ensure community needs remain at the forefront of our work.

7. Appendices and endnotes

Appendix 1: Understanding racism

Interpersonal racism

Interpersonal racism is racism between people. It can be direct or indirect, and intentional or unintentional. Examples include:

- verbal abuse, slurs, threats, intimidation or physical attacks on people or property
- excluding people from sports, social activities or events because of their ethnicity
- comments or behaviours, like derogatory jokes, that indicate negative or racist attitudes (sometimes called microaggressions).

> **Random people yell out racist slurs while I'm driving or taking a walk.**
>
> – Online survey respondent

> **Casual racism… where people share some racist opinion in conversation without even thinking about it, because they don't realise it's racist or they assume I agree because I'm white.**
>
> – Online survey respondent

Interethnic or intercultural racism

Interethnic racism is prejudice or discrimination between 2 or more (non-dominant) ethnic groups. Interethnic racism can often be traced back to colonialism. Racist ideology spread by colonial forces emphasised and institutionalised hierarchical differences between the ethnic groups they controlled. Over time, these racist dynamics continued. This shows how the same people can both experience racism and perpetrate racism against others.

53

Institutional racism

Institutional racism refers to organisational policies, practices or procedures that discriminate against First Peoples or people from multicultural or multifaith backgrounds.

Institutional racism can make it difficult for people to access services or opportunities, which deepens inequality. An example of this is when a hiring manager disqualifies a candidate based on their name.

> **Not catering for the needs of people from other religions, like [not] having a prayer room or meditation room in their working places.**
>
> – Online survey respondent

> **Forms of racism and discrimination can often be subtle rather than overt incidents. Often, they show up in institutional discrimination with people of colour and First Nations people under-represented in positions of power.**
>
> – Online survey respondent

Structural racism (also called systemic racism)

Structural racism is discrimination that is so deeply embedded in daily life that it is seen as the 'way things are'. Structural racism exists because systems and society have developed over time based on racist principles and practices.

Structural racism worsens economic and social inequality for First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities. This leads to poorer outcomes in health, justice and economic participation. Examples of structural racism include:

- disproportionate impacts of past public drunkenness laws to First Peoples and people in the Sudanese and South Sudanese communities[136]
- schools mainly teaching white European colonial history and ignoring First Peoples' histories
- First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith voices being under-represented in the media
- the media promoting negative stereotypes about racialised communities.

Racism cannot be understood only as interpersonal interactions, or as the behaviour or attitudes of individuals. I experience racism constantly, in all settings, because policies, services and cultural norms in this country are designed to serve the white majority.

– Online survey respondent

Assumptions [are] inbuilt into the curriculum that everyone or the ideal subject is white, English-speaking, Christian or secular background, straight and so on. Teaching of culture and history [comes] from an embedded position of white supremacy.

– Online survey respondent

Internalised racism and intraethnic racism

Internalised racism is when people accept society's racist stereotypes, beliefs or ideologies about themselves or their own culture. Internalised racism can cause people to despise or reject their own culture or ethnic group (intraethnic racism). They may become confused about their identity and where they belong.

An example of internalised racism is believing beauty standards that say lighter skin or hair of a certain colour or texture are better. Internalised and intraethnic racism are a product of a complex mix of historical, cultural and social dynamics.

Having an accent means being put down, even in our own community, because it's internalised racism.

– Consultation participant, community consultation

Appendix 2: Glossary

Term	Definition
Ableism	Discrimination or prejudice against people with disability. This includes systemic and interpersonal exclusion and oppression of people or groups of people with disability.
Ageism	Stereotyping, prejudice and actions or attitudes that discriminate against individuals or groups based on their age.
Anti-racism	The work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic and social life to eliminate structures, policies and practices that cause and perpetuate racial inequality.[137]
Antisemitism	Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jewish people that may be expressed as hatred of Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed at people who are or perceived to be Jewish or their property, Jewish community institutions or religious facilities.[138]
Colonisation	Establishing a colony or colonies in a country or area. In Australia, colonisation began with the First Fleet's arrival from Britain in 1788. It then progressed over time with settlements in different states. Colonisation dispossessed First Peoples of their traditional lands.[139] The impact of colonisation continues in Australia to this day.
Cultural safety	An approach to providing services by creating an environment where First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith people can receive care and support without assault, challenge or denial of their identity and experience.[140] This involves learning from and relating respectfully to people from communities to provide culturally appropriate care and support.[141]
Discrimination	Unfair or unequal treatment of a person or group of people because of a personal characteristic that is protected by law. It is against the law to discriminate against a person in areas of public life, including in workplaces, schools, government services and taking part in community activities.
Dispossession	The action of depriving someone of land, property or other possessions.
First Peoples	All Traditional Owners of a place (including family and clan groups) and their ancestors. Also Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who live or lived in what we now call Australia in the time before or since the start of colonisation.[142]
Gender	Gender is part of a person's personal and social identity. It refers to a way a person feels and sees themselves. It can be about differences in identity, expression and experience as a woman, man or gender diverse person.

Term	Definition
Homophobia	Fear, prejudice, stereotypes and negative beliefs and behaviours that people hold towards lesbian, gay and bisexual people and people with diverse sexualities.
	Homophobic behaviour includes offensive language and slurs, bullying, abuse and physical violence, and discrimination. It also includes systemic barriers like denying access to services or opportunities based on a person's sexuality.
Intersectionality	Intersectionality recognises that people may experience overlapping forms of inequality, discrimination and disadvantage based on a range of attributes. These attributes can include Aboriginality, ethnicity, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, class, socioeconomic status, language, migration status and religion. This shapes people's experiences, opportunities and life outcomes.
	An intersectional approach to anti-racism recognises that people who have multiple attributes experience unique forms of racism because disadvantage and discrimination are compounded. It looks at ways to address racism through actions that respond to the needs of people based on the whole person rather than the single attribute of race or ethnicity.
Islamophobia	A fear, prejudice or hatred of Muslim people (or those perceived to be Muslim) and the religion of Islam. This can manifest in hostility, violence, intimidation, harassment and abuse.[143]
LGBTIQA+	The term 'LGBTIQA+' refers to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer or asexual. The plus sign indicates that there are many different terms used to describe identity, which are not all covered by the letters LGBTIQA.
Lived experience	Personal knowledge gained through direct, firsthand involvement in everyday events rather than through assumptions and constructs from other people, research or media.
Microaggressions	Commonplace comments or actions that are hostile, insulting or show a negative attitude to a racialised person or communities. This can include jokes, slights, stereotypes or offhand and condescending comments to or about a person or racial group.
Multicultural	A term used to describe people or groups of people who belong to the many cultural, racial and ethnic groups in Victoria.
Multifaith	A term used to encompass the vast number of diverse faith groups in Victoria.
	Faith refers to a group that share their own religion, spirituality and traditions.

Term	Definition
Race	The way people in societies construct categories to group people based on geographical, historical, political, economic, social/cultural factors and physical traits.
	While race categories are used to create groups of people based on shared characteristics, race is a social construct. This means that different societies create categories of race based on shared characteristics. However, racial groups are not fixed. The way people classify themselves and each other changes over time.
Racial groups	Groups people are categorised into based on perceived shared characteristics or practices such as visible attributes (skin colour or physical features), shared characteristics (language, national or ethnic origin), cultural practices or religion.
Racialisation	An ongoing process that creates different groups in a society based on perceived common characteristics such as geographical, historical, political, economic, social/cultural factors and physical traits.
	Racialisation describes the way people in a society are categorised by those in society with power, resources, influence and control. It is a way people and groups with social power in a society can choose who to include and exclude.
Racialised communities	Collectively refers to multicultural and multifaith communities that have been categorised into racial groups through the process of racialisation.
Racism	Beliefs, behaviours, systems and structures in a society that cause unfair and unequal distribution in power, resources and opportunities between racial or ethnic groups.
	Racism includes beliefs, stereotypes, prejudices or discrimination at the personal, institutional and societal levels.
Racism, internalised	A form of individual racism where people hold negative attitudes, beliefs or perceptions about themselves, their racial group or their own culture, and other people who belong to these groups. This includes beliefs about which groups and people are superior and inferior.
Racism, interpersonal	Racism between individuals and other people or groups of people, including actions and behaviours involving negative stereotypes or prejudices about people based on their race, skin colour or ethnicity.
Racism, institutional	Racism that occurs in organisations (like businesses, workplaces and schools) and in institutions (like the justice system or the public service).
Racism, structural	Racism that is entrenched in a society between institutions and individuals.
Sexism	Discrimination, prejudice or unfair treatment of a person or group of people based on their gender or sex.

Term	Definition
Slurs	Words or phrases used against a person or group of people to insult or express disrespect, hostility or criticism.
Unconscious bias	Learned assumptions, beliefs or attitudes about people or groups of people that are held subconsciously or without awareness.
Vilification	Behaviour that incites hatred, serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people because of their race or religion.[144]
Whiteness	The racialised identity given to people who are positively racialised within a society as being white-skinned. Whiteness includes the customs, cultures, values and beliefs of the white racialised group.

Whiteness refers to the way that white racial identity is normalised within a society so non-white people are seen as inferior or 'other'.

Whiteness provides social advantages to white people or those perceived to be white. |

Endnotes

1   Polity Research and Consulting, *2022 Australian Reconciliation Barometer*, Reconciliation Australia, 2022. <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/publication/2022-australian-reconciliation-barometer>.

2   Yoorrook Justice Commission, *Yoorrook for Justice: report into Victoria's child protection and criminal justice systems*, Victorian Government, 2023. <https://yoorrookforjustice.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Yoorrook-for-justice-report.pdf>.

3   J O'Donnell, *Mapping social cohesion 2023*, Scanlon Foundation, 2023, p 68. <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/mapping-social-cohesion-2023>.

4   O'Donnell, *Mapping social cohesion 2023,* p 9.

5   O'Donnell, *Mapping social cohesion 2023,* p 72.

6   O'Donnell, *Mapping social cohesion 2023,* p 83; A Markus*, Mapping social cohesion: The Scanlon Foundation Surveys 2020,* Scanlon Foundation, 2020.

7   O'Donnell, *Mapping social cohesion 2023,* p 10.

8   F Fozdar, R Wilding and M Hawkins, *Race and ethnic relations*, 1st edn, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 2009.

9   Commonwealth of Australia, *Bringing them home: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families*, 1997, p 131.

10 Yoorrook Justice Commission, *Yoorrook for Justice: report into Victoria's child protection and criminal justice systems,* p 62.

11 A Markwick, Z Ansari, D Clinch and J McNeil, 'Experiences of racism among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults living in the Australian state of Victoria: a cross-sectional population-based study', *BMC Public Health,* 2009, 19:1-14.

12 Polity Research and Consulting, *2022 Australian Reconciliation Barometer.*

13 Yoorrook Justice Commission, *Yoorrook for Justice: report into Victoria's child protection and criminal justice systems*.

14 Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, *Building back better: Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service COVID-19 recovery plan, 2021*. <https://www.vals.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/FINAL–Building-Back-Better-Victorian-Aboriginal-Legal-Service-COVID-19-Recovery-Plan-February-2021.pdf>.

15 N Priest, J Guo, K Doery, R Perry, K Thurbe and R Jones, *Addressing racism and its health impacts on children and young people: research summary*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth), Australian National University and Murdoch Children's Research Institute, 2021. <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/news-publications/research-publications/racism-racial-discrimination-and-child-and-youth-health>.

16 Priest et al., *Addressing racism and its health impacts on children and young people: research summary.*

17   Victorian Government, *Change our game: state of play survey 2022–23*, Victorian Government, 2023. <https://changeourgame.vic.gov.au/leadership-centre/state-of-play-survey-2022-23>; K Farquharson, R Spaaij, S Gorman, D Lushe and R Jeanes, 'Managing racism on the field in junior sport', in P Essed, K Farquharson, K Pilla and EJ White (eds), *Relating worlds of racism: dehumanisation, belonging, and the normativity of European whiteness*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2018.

18   Farquharson et al., 'Managing racism on the field in junior sport'.

19   Online Hate Prevention Institute, *Coronavirus used to fuel Sinophobia*, Online Hate Prevention Institute website, 2020. <https://ohpi.org.au/coronavirus-used-to-fuel-sinophobia>.

20   Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC), *Reducing racism during COVID-19*, VEOHRC, 2020. <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/legal-and-policy/covid-19-and-human-rights/reducing-racism-during-covid-19>.

21   A Kamp, N Denson, R Atie, K Dunn, R Sharples, M Vergani, J Walton and S Sisko, *Asian Australians' experiences of racism during the COVID-19 pandemic*, Centre for Resilient and Inclusive Societies (CRIS), Melbourne, 2022. <https://www.crisconsortium.org/research-reports/asian-australian-racism-covid-19>.

22   D Iner, *Islamophobia in Australia IV* (2014–2021), Islamophobia Register Australia, Islamic Sciences and Research Academy of Australia and Charles Sturt University, 2023. <https://islamophobia.com.au/resources>.

23   Online Hate Prevention Institute, *Coronavirus used to fuel Sinophobia*.

24   K Lewis, 'In times of war, digital activism has power. Here's how to engage responsibly', *The Conversation*, 24 October 2023. <https://theconversation.com/in-times-of-war-digital-activism-has-power-heres-how-to-engage-responsibly-215882>.

25   JG Asare, 'Social media continues to amplify white supremacy and suppress anti-racism', *Forbes*, 8 January 2021. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/janicegassam/2021/01/08/social-media-continues-to-amplify-white-supremacy-and-suppress-anti-racism>.

26   M Brown, S Elizondo and R Ray, 'Combating racism on social media: 5 key insights on bystander intervention', *Brookings Institute*, 1 December 2021. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/combating-racism-on-social-media-5-key-insights-on-bystander-intervention>.

27   K Müller and C Schwarz, 'Fanning the flames of hate: social media and hate crime', *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 2020, 19(4):2131–2167, doi:10.1093/jeea/jvaa045.

28   eSafety Commissioner, *Online hate speech: findings from Australia, New Zealand and Europe*, eSafety, Netsafe and UK Safer Internet Centre, 2020. <https://www.esafety.gov.au/research/online-hate-speech>.

29   eSafety Commissioner, *Online hate speech: findings from Australia, New Zealand and Europe.*

30   T Kennedy, *Indigenous peoples' experiences of harmful content on social media*, Department of Indigenous Studies, Macquarie University, Sydney, 2020.

31   J Dunstan and A Yu, 'Victoria's Aboriginal treaty body urges Facebook parent company Meta to clamp down on racist abuse, *ABC News*, 26 May 2023. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-05-26/aboriginal-treaty-first-peoples-assembly-facebook-racist-abuse/102394960>.

32   eSafety Commissioner, *Young people and social cohesion: research into the online experiences of young people to support eSafety programs promoting social cohesion and digital resilience*, eSafety Commissioner and Department of Education, Victorian Government, 2016.

33   eSafety Commissioner, *Online hate speech: findings from Australia, New Zealand and Europe.*

34   All Together Now, *Politely racist: a case study on readers' comments in Australian mainstream newspapers*, All Together Now, University of Technology Sydney,

Cultural & Indigenous Research Centre Australia, Department of Social Services, 2021. <https://alltogethernow.org.au/media-monitoring-report-politely-racist>.

35   All Together Now, *When inclusion means exclusion: social commentary and indigenous agency*, All Together Now, University of Technology Sydney, Cultural & Indigenous Research Centre Australia and Department of Social Services, 2021. <https://alltogethernow.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/When-inclusion-means-exclusion-report-2021.pdf>.

36   K Benier, J Blaustein, D Johns and S Maher, '*Don't drag me into this': growing up South Sudanese in Victoria after the 2016 Moomba 'riot'*, Centre for Multicultural Youth, Monash University and University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 2018; Commission for Children and Young People, *2023–2024 Youth Forum Report 1: a snapshot of consultations with young people as part of the South Sudanese Australian Youth Justice Expert Working Group*, CCYP, 2024.

37   Victorian Government, *Victorian Aboriginal affairs report*, First Peoples–State Relations, Victorian Government, 2017.

38   Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Estimating Homelessness: Census*, ABS website, 2023. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/housing/estimating-homelessness-census/latest-release#state-and-territories>.

39   CA Walsh, JL Olson, J Ploeg, L Lohfeld and HL MacMillan, 'Elder abuse and oppression: voices of marginalized elders', *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*, 2010, 23(1):17–42.

40   Victorian Public Sector Commission, 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees 2023', *Workforce data (state of the public sector), 2024*. <https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/workforce-data-state-of-the-public-sector/employee-diversity-and-inclusion-2023/aboriginal-and-or-torres-strait-islander-2023/>; Victorian Public Sector Commission, *Barring Djinang: Aboriginal Employment Strategy*, 2018.

41   Victorian Public Sector Commission, 'Workgroup behaviour 2023', *Workforce data (state of the public sector)*, 2024. <https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/workforce-data-state-of-the-public-sector/employee-experiences-in-the-workplace-2023/workgroup-behaviour-2023/>.

42   Victorian Public Sector Commission, *Workgroup behaviour 2023*.

43   Victorian Public Sector Commission, *Workgroup behaviour 2023*.

44   Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), 'Improving family violence legal and support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: key findings and future directions', *Research to Policy & Practice*, 2020, 25–26; C Vaughan, K Block, C Sullivan, J Hourani, S Khaw, et al., *Multicultural and Settlement services Supporting women experiencing violence: The MuSeS project*, ANROWS, Sydney, 2020.

45   Department of Social Services (DSS), *Hearing her voice: report from the kitchen table conversations with culturally and linguistically diverse women on violence against women and their children*, DSS, Commonwealth of Australia, 2015.

46   Department of Health, *Your health: report of the Chief Health Officer, Victoria, 2018*, Department of Health, 2018. <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/your-health-report-of-the-chief-health-officer-victoria-2018>.

47   Djirra, Submission: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander action plan to end violence against women*, April 2023.

48   Australian Human Rights Commission, *Wiyi Yani U Thangani (women's voices): securing our rights, securing our future report (2020)*, Australian Human Rights Commission, Australian Government, 2020.

49   M Segrave, R Wickes and C Keel, *Migrant and refugee women in Australia: the safety and security study*, Monash University, Melbourne, 2021.

50   Segrave et al., *Migrant and refugee women in Australia: the safety and security study.*

51   J Dawe, E McDonald, E Riggs, J Szwarc and J Yelland, 'Interpreter requirements of women of non-English speaking migrant backgrounds in maternity hospitals in Melbourne, Australia', *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care*, 2023, doi: 10.1108/IJMHSC-08-2023-0073.

52   Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), *Racism in Victoria and what it means for the health of Victorians*, DHHS, Victorian Government, 2017, p 18.

53   AS Ferdinand, Y Paradies and M Kelaher, 'Mental health impacts of racial discrimination in Australian culturally and linguistically diverse communities: a cross-sectional survey', *BMC Public Health*, (2015)15:401, doi:10.1186/s12889-015-1661-1.

54   M Truong and E Moore, *Racism and Indigenous wellbeing, mental health and suicide*, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australian Government, 2023. <https://www.indigenousmhspc.gov.au/publications/racism>.

55   Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Suicide & self-harm monitoring: populations & age groups* [data set], 2022. <https://aihw.gov.au/suicide-self-harm-monitoring>.

56   N Priest, Y Paradies, B Trenerry, M Truong, S Karlsen and Y Kelly, 'A systematic review of studies examining the relationship between reported racism and health and wellbeing for children and young people', *Social Science & Medicine,* 2013, 95:115–127.

57   F Mansouri, L Jenkins, L Morgan and M Taouk, *The impact of racism upon the health and wellbeing of young Australians*, Foundation for Young Australians, 2009. <https://research.monash.edu/files/11597854/Impact_of_Racism_FYA_report.pdf>.

58   KA Thurber, M-M Brinckley, R Jones, O Evans, K Nichols, N Priest, et al., 'Population-level contribution of interpersonal discrimination to psychological distress among Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults, and to Indigenous–non-Indigenous inequities: cross-sectional analysis of a community-controlled First Nations cohort study', *The Lancet*, 2022, 400: 2084–2094.

59   J Dawe et al., 'Interpreter requirements of women of non-English speaking migrant backgrounds in maternity hospitals in Melbourne, Australia'.

60   Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) and National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA), *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework*, AIHW and NIAA, Canberra, 2023.

61   AIHW and NIAA, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health performance framework.*

62   K Blair, K Dunn, A Kamp and O Alam, *Challenging Racism Project 2015–16 National Survey Report*, Western Sydney University, 2017. <https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1201203/OMAC1694_Challenging_Racism_Report_4_-_FINAL.pdf>.

63   CB Phillips and J Travaglia, 'Low levels of uptake of free interpreters by Australian doctors in private practice: secondary analysis of national data', *Australian Health Review*, 2011, 35(4):475–479.

64   J White, T Plompen, C Osadnik, L Tao, E Micallef and T Haines 'The experience of interpreter access and language discordant clinical encounters in Australian health care: a mixed methods exploration', *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 2018, 17(1):151.

65   J Dawe et al., 'Interpreter requirements of women of non-English speaking migrant backgrounds in maternity hospitals in Melbourne, Australia'.

66   J Yelland, MA Biro, W Dawson, E Riggs, D Vanpraag, K Wigg et al., *Engaging professional interpreters in labour: a Bridging the Gap quality improvement initiative*. Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Melbourne, 2016.

67   M Plowman and S Izzo, *Recommendations for a culturally responsive mental health system*, Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria and Victorian Transcultural Mental Health, Melbourne, 2021.

68   Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (RCVMHC), 'Chapter 21', *Final report (Volume 3): Promoting inclusion and addressing inequities*, Victorian Government, 2021.

69   Parliament of Victoria, Legislative Council, 'Chapter 4', *Inquiry into Victoria's Criminal Justice System*: *Volume 1*, 2022.

70   Yoorrook Justice Commission, *Report into Victoria's child protection and criminal justice systems*, p 270.

71   Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS), 'Appendix B: relevant excerpts and recommendations from VALS' Submission to the Criminal Justice Inquiry', *Submission to Victoria's anti-racism strategy (December 2021)*, VALS, 2021.

72   Cultural Review of the Adult Custodial Corrections System, *Safer prisons, safer people, safer communities: final report of the Cultural Review of the Adult Custodial Corrections System*, 2022.

73   Yoorrook Justice Commission, *Report into Victoria's child protection and criminal justice systems*.

74   Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), *Our youth, our way: inquiry into the over-representation of Aboriginal children and youth in the Victorian justice system*, CCYP, Melbourne, 2021.

75   Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Youth justice in Australia 2022–23: Victoria*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/youth-justice-in-australia-annual-report-2022-23/contents/fact-sheets/victoria>.

76   Yoorrook Justice Commission, *Report into Victoria's child protection and criminal justice systems*.

77   Chief Commissioner of Police's Opening Statement to Yoorrook Justice Commission, paragraph 13. <https://yoorrookjusticecommission.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/VPOL.0004.9999.pdf>.

78   Victoria Police, *Chief Commissioner's Statement of Commitment*, 11 March 2024; Chief Commissioner of Police's Opening Statement to Yoorrook Justice Commission, paragraph 14. <https://www.police.vic.gov.au/statement-commitment>.

79   Yoorrook Justice Commission, *Report into Victoria's child protection and criminal justice systems*, p 237.

80   Victorian Ombudsman, *Investigation into healthcare provision for Aboriginal people in Victorian prisons*., March 2024, pp 150-151. <https://assets.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/assets/FINAL_07.03.24_VO-PARLIAMENTARY-REPORT_Investigation-into-healthcare-provision-for-Aboriginal-people-in-Victorian-prisons_Mar-2024.pdf>

81   Yoorrook Justice Commission, *Report into Victoria's child protection and criminal justice systems*, p 360; Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, *National report, Volume 1*, 1991.

82   Parliament of Victoria, Legislative Council, *Inquiry into Victoria's criminal justice system: Volume 1*.

83   L Weber, '*You're going to be in the system forever': policing, risk and belonging in Greater Dandenong and Casey*, Monash University, Melbourne, 2020. <https://policeaccountability.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Youre-going-to-be-in-the-system-forever-June.pdf>.

84   Parliament of Victoria, Legislative Council, *Inquiry into Victoria's criminal justice system: Volume 1.*

85   P Armytage and J Ogloff, *Meeting needs and reducing offending: youth justice review and strategy*, Victorian Government, 2017.

86   Armytage and Ogloff, *Meeting needs and reducing offending: youth justice review and strategy.*

87   Sentencing Advisory Council, *Imprisonment rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria*, Sentencing Advisory Council, 2023. <https://www.sentencingcouncil.vic.gov.au/sentencing-statistics/victorias-indigenous-imprisonment-rates>.

88   Victorian Government, *Victorian Government Aboriginal affairs report 2023*, p 142. <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/parliamentary-activity/tabled-documents-database/tabled-document-details/8298>.

89   Victorian Government, *Victorian Government Aboriginal affairs report 2023*, p 137.

90   CCYP, *Our youth, our way: inquiry into the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in the Victorian youth justice system*, p 21.

91   Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), *Annual report 2021–22*, CCYP, Melbourne, 2022, p 50. <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/about-us/annual-reports>.

92   Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 Census [TableBuilder], ABS website, 2021 <https://www.abs.gov.au/>.

93   Harmony Alliance, *A strategic approach to improving employment outcomes of women from migrant and refugee backgrounds in Australia*, Harmony Alliance, 2019. <https://www.harmonyalliance.org.au/publications>.

94   B Coates, T Wiltshire and T Reysenbach, *Short-changed: how to stop the exploitation of migrant workers in Australia*, Grattan Institute, Melbourne, 2023.

95   Department of Home Affairs, *Review of the migration system: final report*, Australian Government, 2023. <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-publications/reviews-and-inquiries/departmental-reviews/migration-system-for-australias-future>.

96   Department of Premier and Cabinet, 'Culturally and linguistically diverse women', *Towards 2025: an Australian Government strategy to boost women's workforce participation*, Commonwealth of Australia, 2017. <https://www.agec.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2017-Government-Workforce-Startegy-towards-2025-strategy-Womens-workforce-participation.pdf>.

97   Victorian Multicultural Commission, '*Meet me in the middle': facilitating the employment of young multicultural people in post COVID19 Victoria*, Victorian Government, 2020, p 18. <https://www.multiculturalcommission.vic.gov.au/roundtable-and-research-reports>.

98   Victorian Multicultural Commission, *'Meet me in the middle': facilitating the employment of young multicultural people in post COVID19 Victoria*, p 18.

99   M Bertrand and S Mullainathan, 'Are Emily and Greg More Employable Than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination', *American Economic Review*, 2004, 94 (4): 991–1013; L Quillian, A Heath, D Pager, A Midtbøen, F Fleischmann and O Hexel, 'Do Some Countries Discriminate More than Others? Evidence from 97 Field Experiments of Racial Discrimination in Hiring.' *Sociological Science*, 2019, 6:467–496.

100   First Peoples–State Relations, 'Opportunity and prosperity', *Victorian Government Aboriginal affairs report 2022,* Victorian Government, 2022. <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/victorian-government-aboriginal-affairs-report-2022/opportunity-and-prosperity>.

101   First Peoples–State Relations, *Victorian Government Aboriginal affairs report 2022.*

102   First Peoples–State Relations, *Victorian Government Aboriginal affairs report 2022.*

103 Women on Boards, *Truth be told: (No) cultural diversity on Australian boards*, Women on Boards, 2022.

104 Women on Boards, *Truth be told: (No) cultural diversity on Australian boards*.

105 R Whitson, 'Culturally diverse women paid less, stuck in middle management longer and more likely to be harassed', *ABC News*, 12 March 2022. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-03-12/why-cultural-diversity-matters-iwd/100899548>.

106 M Adamovic and A Leibbrandt, 'Is there a glass ceiling for ethnic minorities to enter leadership positions? Evidence from a field experiment with over 12,000 job applications', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 2023, 34(2):1–13.

107 Migrant Workers Centre, *Insecure by design: Australia's migration system and migrant workers' job market experience*, Migrant Workers Centre, Melbourne, 2023. <https://www.migrantworkers.org.au/insecure_by_design>.

108 M Pallotta-Chiarolli, B Sudarto and J Tang, *Navigating intersectionality: multicultural and multifaith LGBTIQ+ Victorians talk about discrimination and affirmation*, Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council, Victorian Multicultural Commission and Victorian Government, 2021. <https://www.agmc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/AGMC_ReportA4P_NIR_Web18may2021.pdf>.

109 V Mapedzahama, F Laffernis, A Barhoum and J O'Leary, *Culturally and racially marginalised women in leadership: A framework for (intersectional) organisational action*, Diversity Council Australia, 2023. <https://www.dca.org.au/research/culturally-and-racially-marginalised-carm-women-in-leadership>.

110 Diversity Council Australia, *Gari Yala (Speak the Truth): Centreing the work experiences of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Australians*, Diversity Council Australia, Sydney, 2020.

111 HYC Yip, J Arnanta, M Munshi, S Lamb, Y Chen and V Pillay, *Safer workplaces for women of colour project*, Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) Victoria, MindTribes and University of Melbourne, 2022, p 4. <https://cpsuvic.org/woc/files/sw-for-woc-research-report.pdf>.

112 Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector, *Intersectionality at work: building a baseline on compounded gender inequality in the Victorian public sector*, Victorian Government, 2023. <https://content.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-10/Intersectionality-At-Work-Report.pdf>.

113 Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector, *Intersectionality at work: building a baseline on compounded gender inequality in the Victorian public sector*.

114 K Hammond and N Bottriell, *Stand out, speak up: racism and Islamophobia in Victorian schools – research report*. Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights, Melbourne, 2023.

115 J Gibbs, Y Paradies, G Gee and N Haslam, 'The effects of Aboriginal tertiary students' perceived experiences of racism and of cultural resilience on educational engagement', *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 2022, 51(2).

116 Gibbs et al., 'The effects of Aboriginal tertiary students' perceived experiences of racism and of cultural resilience on educational engagement'.

117 The Ubuntu Project, *Racism in schools: African Australian students speak up*, The Ubuntu Project, 2021. <https://fliphtml5.com/nbxmp/ukwb/basic>; W Tuohy, 'Calls for anti-racism training as African-Australian students report discrimination in school', *The Age*, 18 October 2022. <https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/calls-for-anti-racism-training-as-african-australian-students-report-discrimination-in-school-20221018-p5bql5.html>.

118 N Priest, S Chong, M Truong, M Sharif, K Dunn, Y Paradies et al., 'Summary of findings', *Findings from the 2017 Speak Out Against Racism (SOAR) student and staff surveys*, Centre for Social Research and Methods, Australian National University, Canberra, 2019. <https://csrm.cass.anu.edu.au>.

119 Priest et al., 'Summary of findings', *Findings from the 2017 Speak Out Against Racism (SOAR) student and staff surveys*.

120 Social Research Centre, *The Jewish University Experience Survey*, Zionist Federation of Australia, 2023. <zfa.com.au>.

121 Commission for Children and Young People, *Let us learn: systemic inquiry into the educational experiences of children and young people living in out-of-home care*, Commission for Children and Young People, Melbourne, 2023.

122 Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee, *Inquiry into extremism in Victoria*, Victorian Government, 2022. <https://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/inquiry-into-extremism-in-victoria/reports>.

123 Victorian Government, *Victorian. And proud of it: Victoria's multicultural policy statement*, Victorian Government, 2017, p 10. <https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-policy-statement>.

124 Victorian Government, *Victorian. And proud of it: Victoria's multicultural policy statement*.

125 A Elias and Y Paradies, 'Estimating the mental health costs of racial discrimination', *BMC Public Health*, 2016, 16(1205).

126 Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, *Economic contribution of tourism to Victoria 2020–21*, Victorian Government, 2021. <https://business.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/2062480/Economic-Contribution-of-Tourism-to-Victoria-2020-21.pdf>; Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, *Economic value of Victoria's international education*, Victorian Government, 2020. <https://djpr.vic.gov.au/priorities-and-initiatives/economic-value-of-victorias-international-education>; H Babacan, J Pyke, A Bhathal, G Gill, M Grossman and S Bertone, *The community safety of international students in Melbourne: a scoping study*. Institute for Community, Ethnicity, and Policy Alternatives (ICEPA), Victoria University, 2017.

127 M Baas, 'Victims or profiteers? Issues of migration, racism and violence among Indian students in Melbourne', *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 2014, 55(2):212–225; MY Zhang, 'Students in China heed their government's warnings against studying in Australia', *The Conversation*, 6 July 2020. <https://theconversation.com/students-in-china-heed-their-governments-warnings-against-studying-in-australia-141871>; B Birtles, 'China cautions students about "racist incidents" during coronavirus pandemic if they return to Australia', ABC News, 9 June 2020. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-06-09/china-warns-students-not-to-return-to-australia-after-coronaviru/12337044>.

128 O'Donnell, *Mapping social cohesion 2023*.

129 Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth), *Bright Futures: rural and regional report*, Victorian Government, 2018.

130 O'Donnell, *Mapping social cohesion 2023*.

131 Polity Research and Consulting, *2022 Australian Reconciliation Barometer*.

132 Victorian Agency for Health Information (VAHI), *Victorian Population Health Survey 2020 – Dashboards*, VAHI, 2020.

133 R D'Almada-Remedios and J O'Leary, *Inclusion@Work Index 2021–2022: Mapping the state of inclusion in the Australian workforce*, Diversity Council Australia, Sydney, 2021.

134 Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, *Reducing racism phase 2 – impact report 2020–2021*, Victorian Government, 2022, p 27.

135 Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, *2022–2023 annual report*, 2023. <https://www.humanrights.vic. gov.au/resources/annual-report-2022-23/>.

136 Expert Reference Group on Decriminalising Public Drunkenness, *Seeing the clear light of day: expert reference group on decriminalising public drunkenness: report to the Victorian Attorney-General*, August 2020.

137 Race Forward, *Race reporting guide*, Race Forward, 2015. <https://www.raceforward. org/reporting-guide>.

138 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance*, 2024. <https:// www.holocaustremembrance.com>.

139 Australian Human Rights Commission, 'Glossary', *Bringing them home education model*, Australian Government, 2007. <https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/ files/content/education/bth/download/ glossary.pdf>.

140 R Williams, 'Cultural safety: what does it mean for our work practice?', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 2008, 23(2):213–214.

141 Department of Health, *Cultural responsiveness framework: guidelines for Victorian health services*, Victorian Government, 2009.

142 Yoorrook Justice Commission, *Letters Patent*, Victorian Government, 2021. <https://yoorrookjusticecommission.org. au/wp-content/uploa>ds/2021/09/Letters-Patent-Yoo-rrook-Justice-Commission-signed-10-1.pdf>.

143 I Awan and I Zempi, *A working definition of Islamophobia: a briefing paper*, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, 2020. <https://www. ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/ Issues/Religion/Islamophobia-AntiMuslim/ Civil%20Society%20or%20Individuals/ ProfAwan-2.pdf>.

144 Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, *Racial and religious vilification*, Victorian Government, 2023. <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/ for-individuals/racial-and-religious-vilification>.