UNDERSTANDING REPORTING BARRIERS AND SUPPORT NEEDS FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING RACISM IN VICTORIA

Research report

Mario Peucker, Franka Vaughan,
Jo Doley and Tom Clark

A research and community engagement project by Victoria University in partnership with the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) and the Islamic Council of Victoria (ICV), funded by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)

Content and trigger warning

This report discusses sensitive and issues related to racism. It includes personal accounts of racism shared by people from culturally and racially marginalised communities. These accounts refer to often very confronting experiences and include, in some cases, racial slurs.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge, recognise and pay respect to the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Bunurong/ Boonwurrung, Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri/ Woiwurrung of the Kulin who are the Traditional Owners of lands where this project was carried out. We acknowledge the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia and their ongoing connection to land, waters and community.

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Addressing a multifaceted problem like racism requires multi-stakeholder and whole-of-community commitment and a range of different actions, but it always needs to start by listening to the communities that are affected by systematic and everyday racism, discrimination and vilification. This was at the heart of the research and community engagement project, *Understanding reporting barriers and support needs for those experiencing racism in Victoria* (2022-2024), led by Victoria University, in partnership with the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) and the Islamic Council of Victorian (ICV), and funded by Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth).

Based on a community survey among 703 Victorians from culturally and racially marginalised communities and 27 in-depth peer-facilitated focus groups with 159 participants, the project has been privileged to receive unprecedented insights into community perspectives on experiences with racism, reporting barriers and motives, and support needs after encountering racism. The project's aim was not only to gain a better evidence-based understanding – It also sought to create more safe spaces for communities to talk about racism and share their views on how to make practical changes that can have real-life impact. These community voices provided guidance on how to tackle the silencing effects of racism, enhance opportunities to speak out against racism and report personal experiences, and improve anti-racism support across Victoria.

KEY FINDINGS

Experiences of racism

- 76% of survey respondents have experienced racism in Australia (or someone in their care); two-thirds of them have experienced racism also in the past 12 months, most commonly in employment (57%), shopping centres/shops (50%), on public transport (38%) and other public places (37%) or online (35%). The focus groups also highlighted significant problems of racism in schools.
- Many experiences of racism can be described as casual or everyday racism, where legal protection mechanisms usually fall short, but racial and religious discrimination, which can be unlawful under Victoria's anti-racism legislation, has also been experienced by a large proportion of respondents (57% of those who have faced racism in past 12 months). Moreover, 55% faced racist verbal abuse and insults, and one in ten even stated they had been subjected to physical threats.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

(Non-)reporting racism

- Fewer than 16% have every reported an incident of racism to an organisation or community group. Those who have done so, reported predominantly within the organisation where the incident occurred (e.g. at work or at school) or to Victoria Police and, less often, to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC).
- Reporting racism is commonly regarded as a high-cost but low-outcome process: Over 85% stated it required a lot of time and energy and almost 78% felt distressed during the process, but fewer than three in ten received the support they were hoping for and 78% were disappointed with the outcome.
- The main reasons for reporting revolved around, first and foremost, raising awareness about racism, and holding the perpetrator to account. Seeking emotional support was also highlighted by many.
- The reasons for not reporting are often interconnected and mutually reinforcing. They include, among others, a sense of hopelessness (nothing would change; 91%), the view that reporting is too difficult (83%), concerns about not being taken seriously (83%), worries about negative consequences (76%) or not knowing where to report (75%). Negative reporting experiences in the past also discourage from reporting in the future.
- Fewer than 30% thought there were enough adequate reporting options in Victoria. While a majority knew how to generally report to Victoria Police, only few people knew how to access other reporting options and support services such as the VEOHRC.
- Two quite different modes of reporting racism were favoured: 61% would prefer to speak to someone in person, while 56% would like to report online through a reporting platform. Reporting via an app, phone or email were seen as viable (additional) options by some participants (between 37 and 40%).

Anti-racism support

- Participants expressed a strong need for empathic and emotional support (82%) and psychological/ mental health support (70%) after having experienced racism. Legal support or the desire to resolve the conflict through mediation were mentioned by fewer than half of the respondents. Many focus group participants also called for community-based and advocacy-focused support that 'has their back' and can assist in navigating the current reporting and support landscape.
- Key features of improved anti-racism support services that would make it more likely for communities to report include transparent processes that keep the person informed about their case, greater cultural sensitivity in the provision of support and more promotion of existing services. Services should be delivered by trusted organisations and qualified staff, ideally with lived experiences themselves, and in different community languages. These perspectives were strongly echoed across the focus group discussions where participants particularly emphasised the need for community-led support by people with lived experience and greater accountability for the perpetrators of racism.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

Based on the community input, this report highlights five areas of action for different stakeholders to consider concrete measures to better align reporting pathways and support services with community needs:

1. Awareness raising: racism, legal protections and support services

- Organising regular training and workshops on racism to strengthen racial literacy in schools, employment and beyond.
- Greater and ongoing community engagement to build awareness of legal anti-racism rights and existing reporting and support services in Victoria through community-led forums and online and offline campaigns.
- A first 'quick win' can be the promotion of the VEOHRC's online reporting platform, the Community Reporting Tool.

2. Improving existing reporting pathways and support services

- Reducing the personal 'costs' of reporting by building more culturally safe, multilingual services, providing in-person reporting and support options, delivered by people with lived experience and more transparent process of keeping the person informed about their case.
- Increasing accountability for racist behaviour by strengthening legal protection and enforcement of existing legal frameworks.
- Addressing overreliance on Victoria Police in cases where police often appear ill situated to provide the responses that the individual may expect; building capacity in local police stations to provide information about alternative anti-racism support options.

3. Establishing alternative community-led anti-racism services

- Making use of the greater flexibility of trusted community organisations and local community service providers in how they can respond to reports of racism and provide more partial, advocacy-based assistance to their clients or community members who have experience racism.
- Identifying (local) trusted organisations and service providers that can act as a first go-to contact (local anti-racism hubs or networks) for people experiencing racism. This approach entails building their capacity to respond adequately and to record racism-related reports to establish a local evidence base on racism; these community services would need to be resourced and promoted to achieve this.

4. Building broad organisational capacity to provide basic guidance on anti-racism support

- Complementing the work of community-led anti-racism hubs by building the capacity of various actors – from local councils and offices of local MPs to various service providers and community grassroots organisations – to provide basic information about existing reporting options and anti-racism support.
- Developing and promoting a multilingual anti-racism support booklet with key information about anti-racism protection, reporting pathways and support services available both locally and across Victoria.

5. Improving anti-racism support in places racism happens: schools, workplaces, shopping centres and public transport

- Engaging with duty holders (according to Equal Opportunity Act 2010), such as employers, schools and providers of good and services to enhance their awareness of their 'positive duty', supporting and encouraging their capacity to take active measures aimed at preventing and responding appropriately to racism within their organisational contexts.
- Working directly with shopping centre and retail management as well as public transport providers to develop anti-racism campaigns, review internal response practices and provide targeted anti-racism and/or by/up-stander intervention training.

1. INTRODUCTION

A clear majority of Australians acknowledge that racism remains a significant issue in our multicultural society. According to the 2023 results of the Scanlon Foundation Mapping Social Cohesion survey, 62% of Australians believe that racism is a 'fairly' or 'very big problem in Australia' (O'Donnell 2023). The Australia Talks survey, commissioned by the national broadcaster ABC in 2021 at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, found that 76% of the 60,000 Australian respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that 'there is still a lot of racism in Australia these days' (Crabb 2021).

That racism continues to be a serious problem in Australia is no news to culturally and racially marginalised communities in Victoria and beyond. This has also been repeatedly confirmed by various surveys (Doery et al 2020; O'Donnell 2023; AHRC 2021, VicHealth 2014; Peucker et al. 2024, Kamp et al. 2024) and other research studies (e.g. Booth et al. 2011). In addition to the indisputable evidence of the persistence of racism, there is also little doubt about the severe impact that racism has on the health and wellbeing (Ferdinand et al. 2013; Department of Health and Human Services 2017; Haw and Hauw 2024) as well as the identity and belonging of individuals (O'Donnell 2023), on communities, inter-community trust, connectedness and cohesiveness of our society more broadly.

The increased acknowledgement of both the persistence of racism and its harmful impacts on individuals, communities and society has contributed to a renewed commitment among various stakeholders – from governments and various statutory agencies to community organisations – to tackle racism. Given the multifaceted nature of racism, anti-racism can and needs to take on many different forms. This complexity of racism, and of anti-racism, can feel intimidating, so the question 'where to start' can seem overwhelming. But regardless of what direction anti-racism commitment may take, it can only begin by recognising the problem we seek to address and speaking openly about it.

Talking about racism is not easy. Many of those *without* lived experiences who have benefited from historically engrained racial and racist power imbalances and hierarchies feel uncomfortable when confronted with the accounts of those who have been racially marginalised. For those who have faced racism personally and collectively speaking about their experiences is often painful, distressing and even re-traumatising, not least due to the lack of safe spaces for such conversations. Listening to and centring these community voices is crucial for any advancement in reducing racism.

That is where this project, titled *Understanding reporting barriers and support needs for those experiencing racism*, seeks to contribute by addressing one particular aspect of anti-racism: how to tackle the silencing effects of racism, enhance opportunities to speak out against racism and report personal experiences, and improve anti-racism support across Victoria. Committed to centring community voices without shifting the responsibility for tackling racism onto those with lived experiences, it was set up to combine impactful research with meaningful community engagement.

Funded through the 2022-23 Research Impact Grant program of the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth), Victoria University partnered with the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) and the Islamic Council of Victoria (ICV) to deliver this change-oriented project to provide empirical evidence on what Victoria's multicultural and multifaith communities have to say about:

- their experiences with racism,
- how pathways to report racism can be made more accessible and empowering, and
- how anti-racism support services can be made more responsive to the needs of those who face racism.

Over a period of 18 months, the project team conducted a survey that captured the views of 703 people from across Victoria's multicultural and multifaith communities, held 27 peer-led focus groups with 159 individual participants and (co-) facilitated numerous formal and informal community workshops, forums and discussion rounds across the state.

After a short overview of the current reporting and support service landscape in Victoria (Chapter 2) and a brief outline of our methodological approach (Chapter 3), this report presents the findings of the quantitative analysis of the survey and the qualitative insights gained through the focus groups (Chapter 4). Based on this community input, the final chapter discusses central issues for consideration to improve reporting pathways and anti-racism support service provisions in Victoria and to take effective and targeted actions to tackle racism (Chapter 5).

> **"LISTENING TO AND CENTRING THESE COMMUNITY VOICES IS CRUCIAL FOR ANY ADVANCEMENT IN REDUCING RACISM."**

2. BACKGROUND

Before outlining the project's methodology and presenting its findings, this background chapter attempts a concise overview of the demographic profile of Victoria's community affected by racism as well as a snapshot of the state's key legislation relevant to racism and pertinent reporting and support infrastructure.

DEMOGRAPHIC NOTES

According to the latest (2021) census, around 66,000 people identify as **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**, which constitutes 1.0% of the total population – an increase from 0.8% in 2026. Looking at the state's multicultural communities, almost half (49%) of Victorians were either born overseas (30%) or have at least one parent born overseas. The main **countries of birth**, other than Australia, were India (4%), the United Kingdom (3.3%) and China (2.6%), followed by New Zealand (1.5%), Vietnam (1.4%), the Philippines (1.1.), and Sri Lanka, Italy and Malaysia (all 1%). While the majority of Victorians identify with Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Celtic **ancestry** (i.e. English, Australian, Irish or Scottish ancestry), their proportion has been slowly declining as communities from other cultural, ethnic or national backgrounds have been growing, mainly as a result of changing immigration patterns. For example, in 2021, 77.7% of overseas-born Victorians were from 'non-main English speaking countries'.[1]

This is also reflected in the statistics on **languages spoken at home**, with 27.6% of Victorians speaking a language other than English at home. The developments in recent years illustrate that the proportion of English-only speaking households is decreasing but so is the number of non-English speaking homes where other European languages are spoken, such as Greek or Italian. In 2021, the languages most commonly spoken at home other than English were Mandarin (3.2%), Vietnamese (1.8%), Greek (1.6%, down from 1.9% in 2016), Punjabi (1.6%), Italian (1.4%, down from 1.9%) and Arabic (1.4%).

The demographic shift towards greater ethno-cultural diversity also manifests in the changes in the **religious make-up** of Victoria's society. The proportion of Christians, in particular of the Western (Roman) Catholic, Anglican and Uniting Churches, has been declining significantly while other faith communities continue to grow substantially. For example, 4.2% of Victorians identify with Islam (up from 3.3% in 2016), 3.3% with Hinduism (up from 2.3%), 3.1% with Buddhism (remaining on 3.1%) and 1.4% with Sikhism (up from 0.9%).

These statistics do not precisely quantify the number of Victorians from communities affected by racism. What they do show, however, is that a significant – and growing – proportion of Victorians are not of Anglo-Saxon/Celtic or white European background and speak a mother tongue other than English. These communities, together with First Nations peoples, are particularly at risk of being racially or culturally marginalised and thus, of facing racism, collectively or individually.

1 **https://www.health.vic.gov.au/multicultural-health-action-plan-2023-27/victorias-cultural-diversity**

LEGAL PROTECTION AGAINST RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION AND VILIFICATION

In Victoria, two pieces of legislation are particularly central in the context of anti-racism, making certain forms of racism unlawful: the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001.[2]

The **Equal Opportunity Act 2010** seeks to protect all Victorians from discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation. What is particularly important in the context of anti-racism is that the act prohibits discrimination because of, among other personal attributes, one's 'religious belief or activity' and 'race', that is, a person's colour; descent or ancestry; nationality or national origin; ethnic origin or 'any characteristics associated with a particular race'.[3] The act differentiates between direct and indirect discrimination in sections 8 and 9

- 'Direct discrimination occurs if a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with an attribute unfavourably because of that attribute'.
- 'Indirect discrimination occurs if a person imposes, or proposes to impose, a requirement, condition or practice— (a) that has, or is likely to have, the effect of disadvantaging persons with an attribute; and (b) that is not reasonable ...'

According to this act, discrimination is unlawful if it occurs in certain areas of public life such as employment, education (including TAFE and universities), clubs or sporting organisations, service providers like shops and restaurants, aged care, hotels or rental properties. The act also outlaws victimisation, which refers to a situation where 'a person subjects or threatens to subject the other person to any detriment because the other person' has made a racism-related complaint.

It is noteworthy that the Equal Opportunity Act also contains a positive duty clause. It legally obliges organisations such as employers, education institutions, clubs and sporting organisations and providers of accommodation, goods and services to take 'positive action' to prevent and 'eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation' (Part 3 [14]). Related to this positive duty, the act includes a provision (s109) that can make an employer or principal legally responsible (vicarious liability) for discrimination that happened within their organisation if they have not taken all reasonable steps to eliminate discrimination and have not responded appropriately to resolve discrimination complaints or incidents.

The **Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001**, which is currently under review (as of June 2024), makes it unlawful to vilify a person on the basis of their religion or race (which is defined in a similar way as in the Equal Opportunity Act). Not every form of racist verbal abuse is covered by the act; instead it refers only to behaviour in any public area (including online space) that is 'inciting hatred against, or serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule of, an individual or class of people' (s7) because of their religion or race. It is widely acknowledged that the current legal threshold to prove that vilification – i.e., incitement of others to hate – has occurred is very high, which is one of the reasons why the act has been rarely applied successfully in court since it came into effect more than two decades ago. The Racial and Religious Tolerance Act, which also provides protection against victimisation, treats vilification mostly as a civil, not as a criminal matter. However, very serious forms of vilification can meet the criminal threshold and then be investigated by Victoria Police, in particular when the behaviour involves intentional conduct to incite physical threats. To date there has only been one court case in which the perpetrators were convicted of such serious vilification (Cottrell v Ross [2019] VCC 2142).

This can be considered one of the very few legal circumstances in Victoria where racism is treated as a **crime**. Usually questions of racism in the context of criminal conduct arise in relation to the perpetrator's motivation, which is taken into consideration in court when sentencing an offender for committing a crime (as defined in, for example, the Crimes Act 1958 or the Summary Offences Act 1966), such as physical assault, harassment or property damage.

2 There are several other laws that refer to certain forms of racism including, on state level, the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and, on Commonwealth level, the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 and the Fair Work Act 2009. Moreover, the Online Safety Act 2021 gives a mandate to the eSafety Commissioner to support victims of serious cyberbullying and online abuse, which can be related to racism.

3 **https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/race/#How-does-the-law-protect-me**

Section 5 of the Sentencing Act 1991 lists a range of factors the court must consider when determining the sentence, including 'whether the offence was motivated (wholly or partly) by hatred for or prejudice against a group of people with common characteristics with which the victim was associated or with which the offender believed the victim was associated'. An offence committed with such a motivation can be described as a hate crime and is referred to in Victoria as a **'prejudice motivated crime'**. Victoria Police also uses the term 'prejudice motivated incidents' to describe incidents that do not meet the criminal threshold but appear to be motivated by racial or religious bias or hatred.

MAIN REPORTING AND SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN VICTORIA

The two key statutory agencies in Victoria where people who have faced racism can report to and seek support are the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC, or the 'Commission') and Victoria Police. On the national level, the Australian Human Rights Commission has a mandate similar to VEOHRC, but based on Commonwealth legislation, such as the Racial Discrimination Act 1975.

VEOHRC's mandate in the context of (anti-)racism is shaped primarily by the abovementioned Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001. The Commission can be contacted via phone, email or through an online form, called the Community Reporting Tool. It provides general support and shares information about one's legal rights, but people can also lodge a formal complaint about discrimination, vilification or victimisation. Complaints can be made in any language; a third party can also lodge a complaint on behalf of the person who has experienced racism. After an initial assessment, VEOHRC can accept the complaint and then seek to assist in resolving it through an informal, free and confidential process called conciliation, which involves listening to all parties. The VEOHRC service is explicitly independent and impartial, and the Commission states that it does not 'advocate for or represent anyone in the process'.[4] People who do not want to make a formal complaint or use the conciliation service can also simply report an experience of racism through the Community Reporting Tool, without requesting to be contacted by the Commission for follow-up assistance.

The second key agency where Victorians can report certain forms of racism to is **Victoria Police**. As outlined above, the police take reports about prejudice motivated (alleged) crimes and incidents. Unless it is an emergency, when victims of crimes need to dial 000, Victoria Police encourages people to contact the local police station to report a crime or do so anonymously through Crimestoppers. In the context of racism, this also applies to reporting crimes that may have been motivated by racial or religious bias or hatred (prejudice motivated crimes). Victoria Police also encourages community members to report prejudice motivated *incidents* (i.e., acts that do not meet the criminal threshold) either to them or to VEOHRC. Although these incidents usually do not result in a full police investigation, the police would still take a report as it helps to better understand what is happening in the local community.

In addition to these two key statutory agencies in Victoria, some communities affected by racism, namely the Muslim community and the Jewish community, have established specialised reporting and/or support services for their community. Jewish community members can report antisemitic incidents online to the **Community Security Group** (CSG); the Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV) has a 'report antisemitism' button on its homepage that is linked to the CSG report platform. The incidents collected by CSG constitute a central source of information for the national Antisemitism report, published annually by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ), and, for the first time in 2023, the Victorian Antisemitism Report.

The Islamic Council of Victoria runs a specialised **Islamophobia Support Service** for Muslim community members who can contact the service via phone, email or an online reporting platform. The service is free and ranges from providing information and referrals to individual case management. The Islamic Council of Victoria collaborates with various stakeholders, including Victoria Police and VEOHRC, mental health and legal services as well as with the Sydney-based Islamophobia Register Australia.

4 **https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/complaints/what-you-need-to-know/**

3. METHODOLOGY

The project sought to combine meaningful and respectful community engagement with robust, ethical empirical research and a strong change-oriented agenda. Both the community engagement (including various formal and informal community forums and workshops) and the research components targeted adult Victorians who identify with **culturally and racially marginalised communities** or, in other words, communities affected by racism. This includes not only Victoria's (non-Anglo-white) multicultural and multifaith communities but, of course, also Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been subjected to violence and dispossession since the establishment of the Australian colonies and continue to face particularly high levels of racism (Ferdinand et al. 2013), manifested and experienced in ways that often differ from how other racially marginalised communities experience racism. While the research for this project was open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the project did not deliberately target these communities due to the fact that it did not have sufficiently strong First Nations community representation or leadership.

Community engagement and research processes were designed with a view to for cultural responsiveness and to building **safe spaces** for participants. This required centring community voices and closely collaborating with various community organisations and leaders. We were guided by our partners and participants at all stages to ensure we tailored our processes to the cultural and linguistic needs and preferences of community members who participated in the project.

The project has been strongly oriented towards outcomes and achieving **change**, which we consider crucial in anti-racism research: The success of such a project should be measured not merely, nor primarily, by academic outputs so much as its community impact and real-life changes for those affected by racism. Here, we sought to follow the basic rationale that anti-racism needs to be led by the expertise of those with lived experience without putting the burden on these communities to 'fix' racism. The research and community engagement sought to create opportunities for people from marginalised communities to share their perspectives on reporting racism and support needs and what needs to change to make it easier for them to speak out and get the support they desire. The community input shaped the findings (Chapter 4) and the issues for consideration to move forward (Chapter 5).

The research underpinning this report encompassed a large Victorian-wide survey and a series of 27 peer-facilitated community focus groups.[5] Both the survey and the focus groups covered four main thematic areas:

- Experiences of racism
- Reporting and (non-)reporting: experiences, motives and barriers
- Support services: assessment, needs and expectations
- Ways to improve reporting pathways and support services

5 The project received Ethics approval by Victoria University Human Ethics Committee.

Informed by earlier research, we anticipated that participants would have **different ideas of what racism is** and how it can manifest. We recognise these subjective perceptions whilst also encouraging respondents to think about racism in a broader sense, we sought to establish some basic features of what racism means. Therefore, the survey included the following prompt, and focus group facilitators were encouraged to convey this to the participants before starting the discussions:

> Racism can mean many different things. We encourage you to think about racism as anything (such as behaviour, rules, comments) that made you feel excluded or unwelcome, or treated unfairly because of your ethnic, cultural or religious background, skin colour, your language or anything related to these characteristics.
>
> Racism can be obvious but is also often hidden and subtle. Racism can be intentional and motivated by racist attitudes, but in other cases the perpetrator may not even be aware that they acted in a racist way.
>
> Note: Religious prejudice, discrimination or exclusion are also forms of racism

SURVEY

The survey comprised of closed questions, including multi-responses questions, scales to express levels of agreement or awareness or to rank the importance of certain features, as well as a number of open-ended questions. The average time to complete the survey was around 15-20min. The survey was mostly completed online but was also made available in pen-and-paper format if requested, and it could be completed in English as well as Arabic, Vietnamese and Simplified Chinese.

We collected a purposive sample as we targeted Victorians, aged 18 or older, who identified with culturally or racially marginalised community, or with a community collectively affected by racism. We recruited survey participants through a range of channels (e.g. community events, social media), various community networks, including but not limited to those of the project partners ICV and ECCV, and snowballing (e.g. WhatsApp community groups). Several local councils, who joined the project as formal or informal partners, also assisted in promoting the survey among their local communities. This typically included tapping into networks of grassroots organisations as well as local interfaith or multicultural advisory bodies or committees.

Of the approximately 1,300 initial survey responses we excluded around 500 responses to ensure a meaningful sample that only includes people from our target audience by applying the following criteria:

- Respondents from outside of Victoria
- Respondents not from affected communities
- Completed less than 70% of the survey

After applying these inclusion-exclusion criteria, we ended up with 703 valid responses, which form the basis for our quantitative analysis of the survey. Due to the purposive sampling approach, we do not claim that the data are statically representative, but given the large sample size, they allow robust quantitative insights.

THE SURVEY SAMPLE

A majority of the **703 respondents** were women (70.2%), with 26.8% identifying as men; the remaining 3.0% either preferred not to say or identified differently. Almost two-thirds were aged between 18 and 45; among them 11.4% were between 18 and 25 years old. Almost 30% were between 46 and 65, and 6.0% were over 65 years of age.

Respondents were from various national backgrounds and the vast majority had immigrated to Australia (first generation): Only 17% of survey respondents were born in Australia. Of those who migrated to Australia, over one-half have lived in Australia for 15 years or more (arrived before 2010), and 27.8% arrived after 2016, including 8.4% who immigrated only since 2020.

The most common countries of birth, apart from Australia, were India (10.5%), China (8.1%) and Vietnam (5.5%; Table 1). An analysis of the open text survey question where respondents had the opportunity to describe their ethnic, cultural or religious background in their own words showed the great diversity of the sample. Of those who used

geographical markers to describe their background, for example, 21.3% were Middle Eastern, 19.0% East Asian, 17.7% Indian or Sri Lankan, 14.4% African, and 13.3% South East Asian. Among those who identified through their religion, the vast majority were Muslim, with a significant proportion describing themselves as Buddhist, Jewish or Hindi.

TABLE 1: COUNTRIES OF BIRTH: AUSTRALIA AND 25 TOP COUNTRIES (%)

Australia	17.0
India	10.5
China	8.1
Vietnam	5.5
Pakistan	3.0
Iraq	2.9
Sri Lanka	2.6
Syria	2.6
Iran	2.4
Singapore	2.0
Somalia	2.0
Afghanistan	1.9
Lebanon	1.7
Philippines	1.6
Turkey	1.6
Egypt	1.4
Hong Kong (S.A.R.)	1.3
Italy	1.3
New Zealand	1.3
United Kingdom	1.3
Brazil	1.2
Malaysia	1.2
Nepal	1.2
Nigeria	1.2
Eritrea	1.0
Fiji	1.0

FOCUS GROUPS

To complement the mostly quantitative survey responses and to gain deeper qualitative insights into the experiences and perspectives of communities, we conducted **27 focus groups**. Each of these focus groups was peer-facilitated by a trusted community member with lived experiences, who was trained by the project team to organise and facilitate the group discussions. They had a high level of autonomy in how they recruited 'their' focus group participants, and in where and how to run the focus group in a way that ensured a maximum degree of cultural safety and comfort among participants. The facilitators received an honorarium and a certificate of appreciation.

A total of **159 community members** participated in one of these 27 focus groups (mostly 5-6 per focus group), which were predominantly held in-person, with some facilitators opting for conducting it virtually. Participants came from various ethno-cultural backgrounds, from African (in particular Somali), Chinese and Middle Eastern to Indian, Vietnamese, Filipino and Iranian origin, among many others, and from various religious faith groups, including many Muslim community members. While just over one-half of the focus groups were conducted in English, many were held partially or entirely in a community language such as Vietnamese, Arabic, Mandarin, Somali or Filipino.

It was left to the peer facilitator's discretion and expert judgement to find what they considered the 'right' composition for their focus group in terms of, among others, the participants' ethnic, cultural or religious background, language, age or gender. Some of the focus groups were gender-mixed, others were women-only (and one was men-only); some were exclusively young people, others mostly older participants and age-mixed; some were ethnically or religiously homogenous, others multicultural and multifaith. One focus group was conducted specifically with university students, other groups include several people who arrived in Australia only recently or people with an insecure visa status.

3. METHODOLOGY (CONTINUED)

Focus groups were audio-record and transcribed. Where the discussion was held in a community language, we either asked the facilitator to translate during the focus group, or the facilitator prepared a selective transcript of the discussion afterwards based on the recording. The transcripts were then analysed focussing on the four themes covered in the focus group discussion (see above)

The key findings from the qualitative analysis of the 27 focus groups together with the predominantly quantitative analysis of the survey responses (we also analysed the qualitative survey open-text responses) are presented and discussed in the next chapter. They allow unprecedented empirical insights into what Victoria's multicultural and multifaith communities think about reporting racism and anti-racism support needs. These insights provide an evidence base that can help improve existing services, identify gaps and explore ways to fill these gaps in the support infrastructure.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

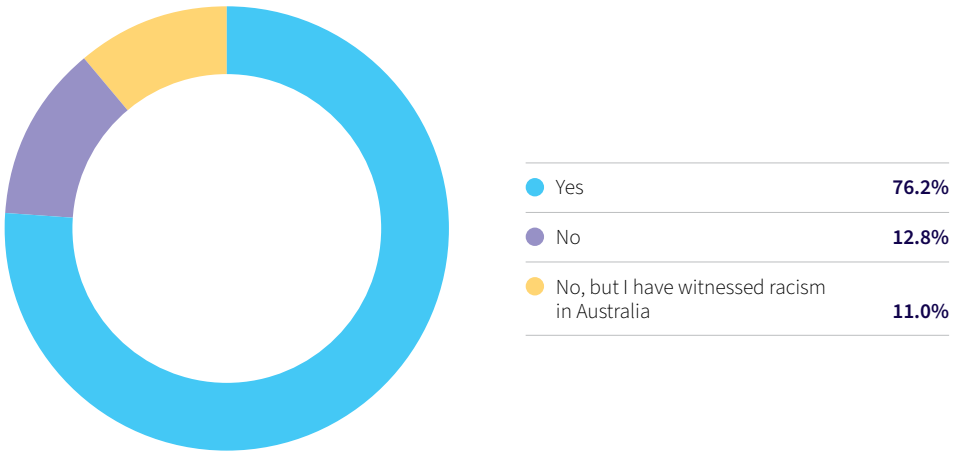
The following chapter presents an overview of the quantitative survey findings, complemented by qualitative insights and stories of lived experiences from the 27 community focus groups. It starts with a section on participants' experiences with racism in Victoria (4.1), followed by elaborations on their perspectives on reporting pathways, motives and barriers (4.2), and anti-racism support needs (4.3.). The chapter concludes with a presentation of community suggestions on how to encourage more people to speak out and report racism and how to improve support services (4.4).

4.1 EXPERIENCES WITH RACISM

Confirming the findings of many recent research studies (Doery et al. 2020; O'Donnell 2023; AHRC 2021, VicHealth 2014; Peucker et al. 2024, Kamp et al. 2024), this study highlights that the majority of participants, both in the survey and the focus groups, have experienced racism in Australia.

Over three quarters (76.2%) of the survey respondents stated that they (or someone in their care) had ever experienced racism in Australia (Graph 1). A further 11% had witnessed but not experienced racism themselves, and only 12.8% had neither witnessed nor experienced racism in Australia. There were no significant differences between men (78.2% experienced racism) and women (75.9%). For those born overseas, their time of arrival and duration of residency in Australia also was not statistically significantly related to their stated experiences of racism. That means similar levels of experiences with racism were reported in the survey regardless of time of arrival and duration of residency.[6]

GRAPH 1: EXPERIENCES OF RACISM IN AUSTRALIA



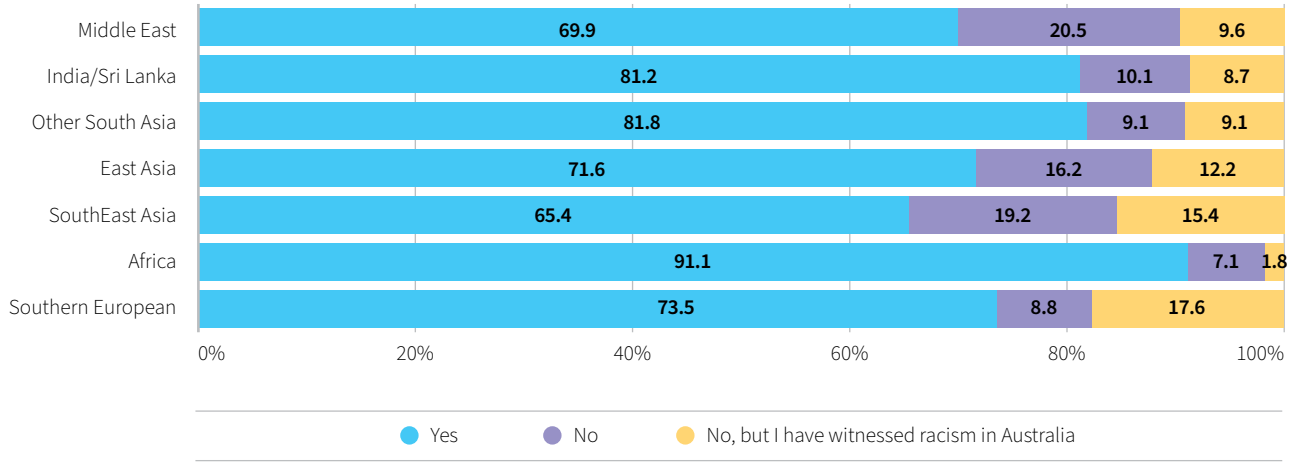
N=703

6 Asking participants in the survey or focus groups as to whether they have experienced racism yield responses that should be interpreted with caution. The responses to this question are not necessarily a reliable, objective quantitative measurement of the salience of racism. The yes-or-no response to this question can be, and often appears to be, influenced by a range of personal factors, such as people's different understandings of what constitutes racism, their level of awareness that they have been subjected to racism and even their psychological willingness to acknowledge and state in the survey that they have been victimised (Peucker et al. 2024; Ben 2022).

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Some **ethno-cultural and/or religious groups** were more likely to state they had experienced racism in Australia than others (Graph 2). Drawing on survey participants' self-identification (a voluntary open text box in the survey), we found that experiences of racism are particularly prevalent among those from African background (91.1%), followed by those of Indian or Sri Lankan (81.2%) or other south Asian background (81.8%). Lower than average – but still high – levels of racism were disclosed by those of southeast Asian (65.4%) and Middle Eastern background (69.9%).

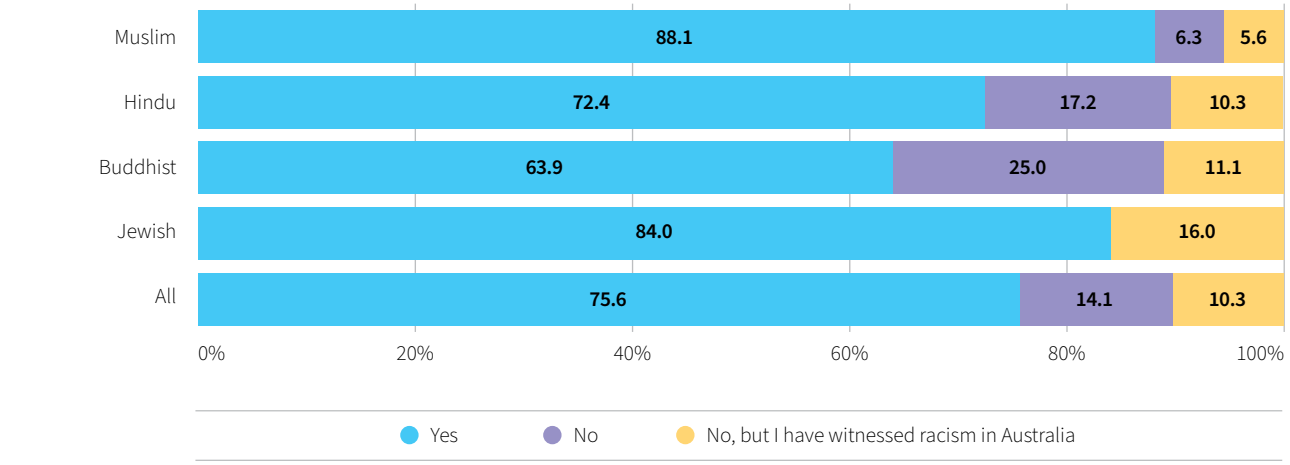
GRAPH 2: EXPERIENCES OF RACISM IN AUSTRALIA BY ETHNO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND



N=390 (respondents who identified based on their national or ethno-cultural background)

Differences also emerged between those who identified through their faith or religious background (Graph 3). A particularly high proportion of Muslim (88.1%) and Jewish (84.1%) survey respondents state that they have experienced racism (and/or Islamophobia or antisemitism), while those who identify as Hindu or as Buddhists stated proportionally less often that they had faced racism in Australia.

GRAPH 3: EXPERIENCES OF RACISM IN AUSTRALIA BY RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

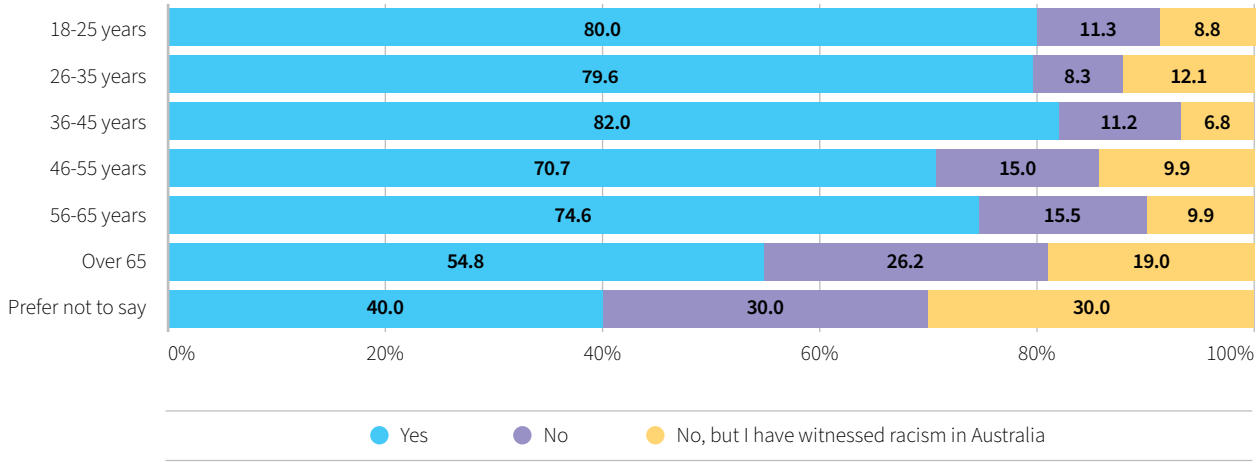


N=233 (respondents who identified with one of these main religious/faith groups)

Age also played a role. Younger respondents were more likely to state that they had experienced racism in Australia (Graph 4). The quantitative analysis revealed a statistically significant association between age and experiencing racism (or rather respondents' likelihood to state in the survey that they have).

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

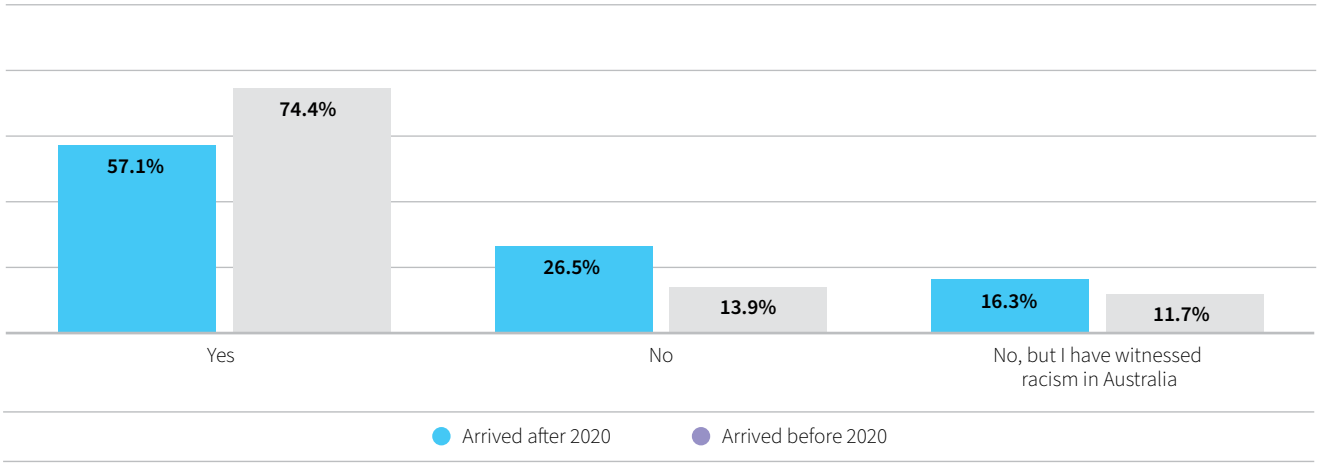
GRAPH 4: EXPERIENCES OF RACISM IN AUSTRALIA BY AGE



N=699; chi-squared test of independence revealed an association between age and experiencing racism, (12)=29.24, *p*=.004, although the association was weak; Cramer's *V*=.15

While 57.1% of those who have **arrived in Australia only recently** (after 2020) state in the survey they had experienced racism, this proportion was higher (74.4%) among those who arrived prior to 2020 (Graph 5). These findings need to be interpreted with caution and should not be regarded as evidence that recent arrivals face less racism (see footnote 6). Our analysis found the association between time of arrival and experiencing racism was not statistically significant.

GRAPH 5: EXPERIENCES OF RACISM IN AUSTRALIA BY YEAR OF ARRIVAL

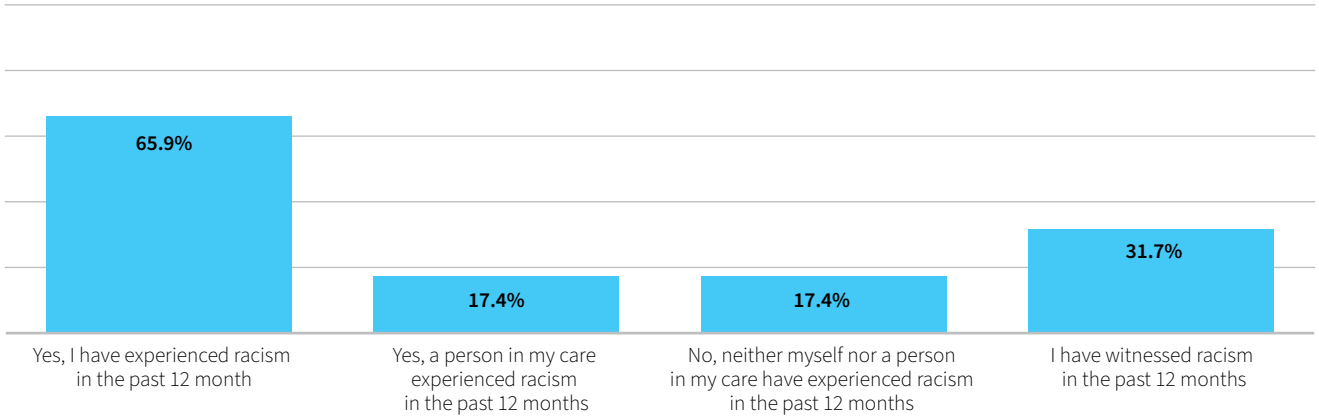


N=581

For many, racism is not only an experience of the past, it continues to affect their lives today. Two thirds (65.6%) of those who had ever experienced racism in Australia stated they had also faced racism in the previous 12 months. Over 17% of respondents said that someone in their care, supposedly their children in most cases, had experienced racism in the past 12 months, and almost one third (31.7%) have (also) witnessed racism (Graph 6). Almost half (48%) of those who have experienced racism in the past 12 months, stated they face racism 'sometimes', while almost one quarter said it happens 'frequently' to them; the remaining 28% stated it has happened to them 'once or twice'.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 6: EXPERIENCES OF RACISM IN PAST 12 MONTHS



N=536; % of those who have ever experienced racism in Australia (Respondents could select more than one response)

Although it may not always be clear to those who face racism what (ascribed or real) identity attributes made them targets of it, most survey respondents believe the racist incident was related to their ethnic or cultural background (70%) and/or the colour of their skin (62%). Around four in ten thought it was because of their language or accent (44%) and/or of their faith or religious background (40%). Over one fifth maintained that their gender may have also played a role. Some respondents also suspect that their sexual orientation or gender identity or their disability could have played a role as well. Many respondents as well as focus group participants expressed the view that several of these attributes may have been at play simultaneously and/or that different layers of their identities are often too intertwined to pinpoint exactly what made them the target of racism.

This intersectionality manifests in many different ways. The focus group analysis found that it was particularly salient in the exclusion and marginalisation of Muslim women wearing a hijab or niqab. Several participants recalled being called derogatory names or being treated unfairly because of their hijab, for example at school, at work, in the health sector or in the street. As a young Muslim man from Somali background (B.1) stated: '*As a male it is much easier than for female Muslims … they are very visible [because of their] hijab.*'

But intersectionality shapes experiences of racism also beyond the hijab: For example, some participants observed that ***young*** people, in particular those of African background and especially men and boys, were subjected to racism in, among others, public spaces such as shopping centres or when encountering police.

A hijab wearing Muslim woman shared in a focus group (MB.1) how she once tried to book an appointment at a public hospital but was told there were no availabilities and that she should go to a private hospital. Later, she phoned the same hospital and was able to make a booking. *'You face a lot of things like this'*, she concluded.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

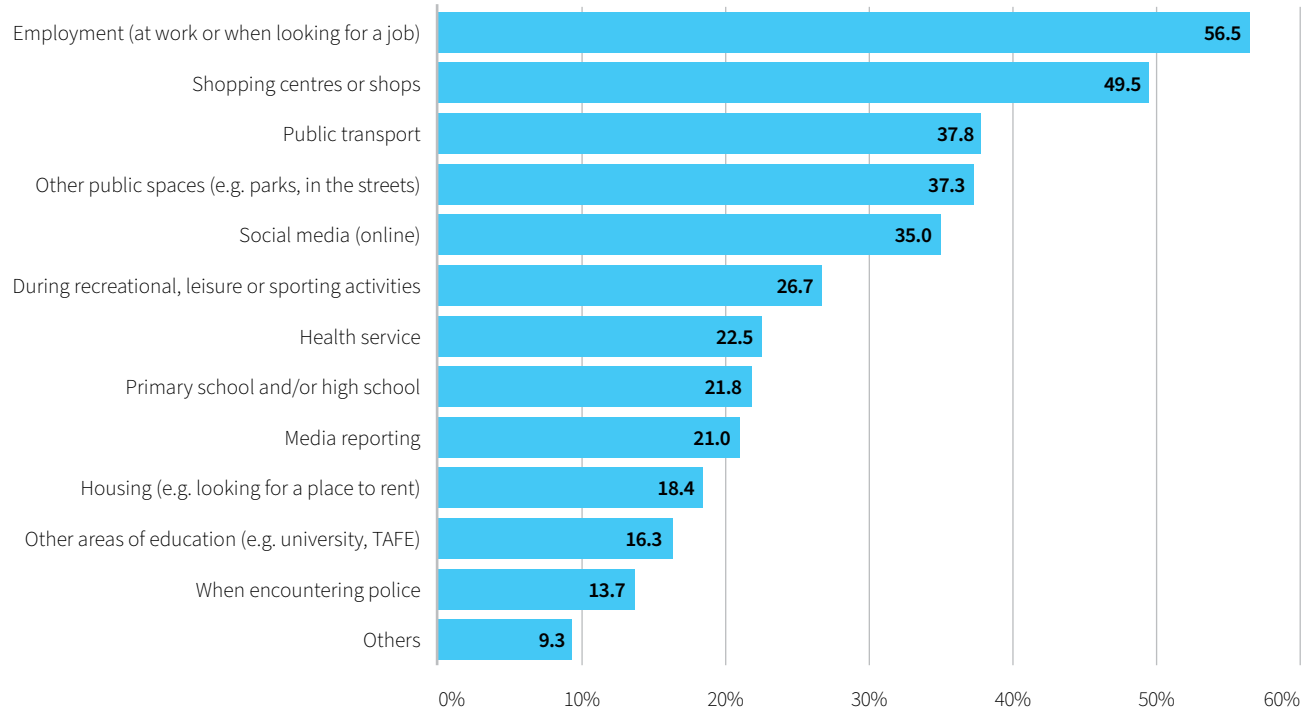
Sites of racism: Across all areas of life

Racism happens across all areas of life as both the survey data and the analysis of the focus groups highlight. The sites or social contexts where a particularly high proportion of respondents experienced racism during the previous 12 months (Graph 7) were employment, i.e. at work or when looking for a job (56.5% of those who experienced racism in the past 12 months), and in various public areas such as shopping centres or shops (49.5%), on public transport (37.8%) and other public spaces such as parks or in the streets (37.3%).

More than one third also faced racism on social media (35.0%), 26.7% during leisure, recreational or sporting activities and 22.5% in the context of health services. Racism is also experienced across various education settings, including primary and secondary schools (21.8%) and the tertiary education sector (e.g. TAFE or universities) (16.3%); housing (e.g. when looking for a place to rent) (18.4%) or when encountering police (13.7%).

When interpreting these survey findings, it is important to consider the different 'opportunity structures' of these social areas, i.e., how often participants may be in certain social contexts. For example, most participants would have been out shopping or on the streets, but fewer would have spent any time looking for a home to rent or in the education settings in the previous 12 months (and don't have school-aged children), and only some may have had dealings with police. Thus, a relatively low proportion of racism in certain areas may also be affected by less frequent exposure to certain social settings. This does not necessarily mean that racism happens less often within these settings.

GRAPH 7: AREAS OF EXPERIENCED RACISM IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



N=386 (Respondents could select more than one response)

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Types of racism: everyday racism, discrimination and abuse

Racism manifests in a variety of ways. The survey findings and the analysis of the focus groups shed light on these complexities and help identify particularly salient patterns of racism.

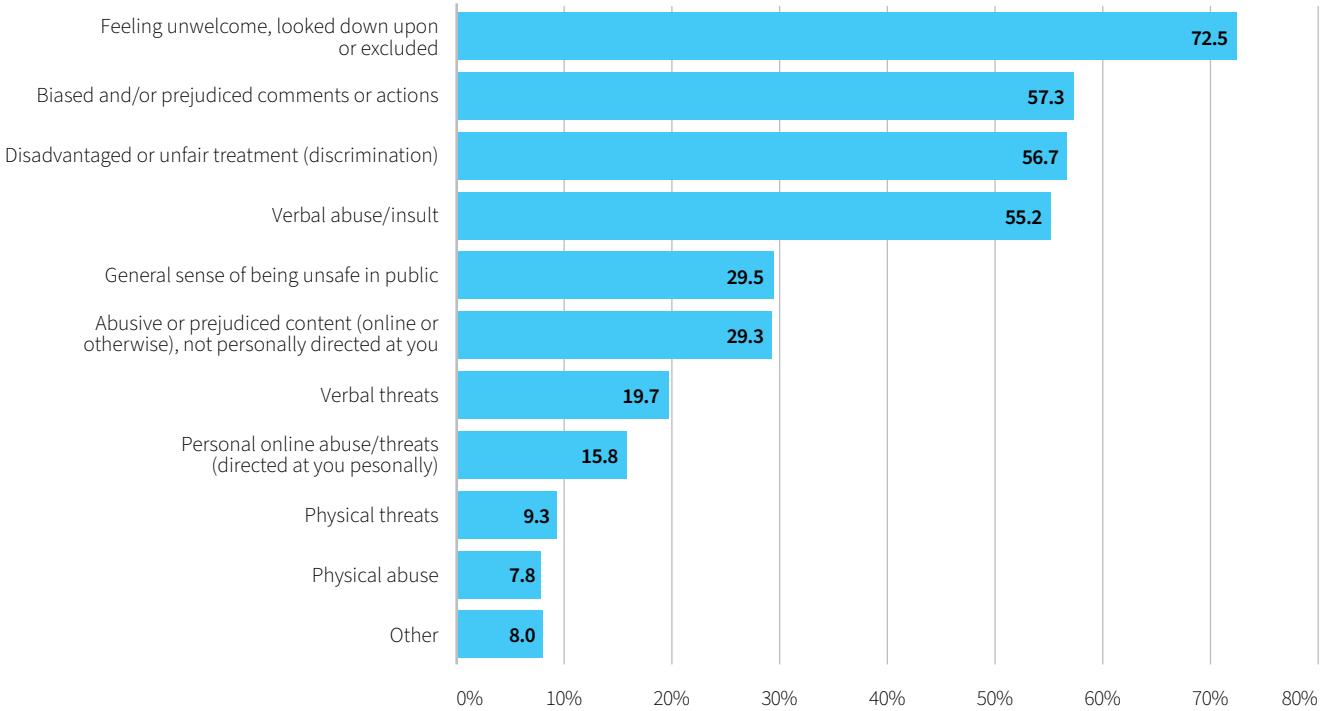
The most common and frequently experienced forms of racism among the participants (Graph 8) fall under what has been described as casual racism or 'everyday racism' (Essed 1991). In recent years, the term racial microaggression has become popular to capture these 'brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color' (Sue et al. 2007: 271). This project avoids the term 'microaggression', which we consider a misnomer, as previous studies and the analysis of our community focus groups have highlighted that these forms of casual racism often have profoundly serious (not 'micro') effects on individuals. Williams and colleagues recently found in the US context 'significant associations between experiencing microaggressions and higher levels of depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder, impaired psychological well-being, and decreased self-esteem' (Williams et al. 2021: 992).

In our survey, 72.5% of those who have faced racism in the past 12 months described their experience as 'feeling unwelcome, looked down upon or excluded', and 57.3% experienced 'biased and/or prejudiced comments and actions' directed at them. These findings underscore the prevalence of everyday racism in the lives of many of the study participants.

In addition, a majority also experienced disadvantaged or unfair treatment (discrimination) (56.7%) and racist verbal abuse or insults (55.2%). One in five (also) faced verbal threats, and almost one in ten even physical threats, while 7.8% were physically abused in a racist incident. Exposure to general racist 'abusive or prejudiced' content (not personally directed at them), online or in the media, was mentioned by 29.3%, and 15.8% experienced personal abuse or threats online.

A young man of Sudanese background (D.1) recalled an incident where he was racially abused and physically attacked at school. He said: 'There were many similar incidents, but I wouldn't even say that's the worst. I'd say subtle racism is even worse. The deep-rooted, subconscious racism is the worst kind.'

GRAPH 8: TYPES OF RACISM EXPERIENCED IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



N=386 (Respondents could select more than one response)

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Personal stories of racism: insights from the focus groups

The peer-facilitated focus groups sought to provide an opportunity for participants to share their personal experiences with racism in more detail. Overall, their accounts demonstrate that racism occurs across all areas of life while also confirming the survey findings on prevalent sites of racism (in particular, but not limited to, employment, shopping centres and other public spaces, and education) and types of racism (in particular, everyday racism, discrimination and verbal abuse). In addition, some focus group participants also stressed how they have been affected by systemic racism, and others elaborated on racialised tensions and conflicts between and even within racially marginalised communities. The following section presents selected examples to shed light on these personal experiences.

Employment: from everyday racism to discrimination

Many focus group discussions unpacked experiences with various manifestations of racism in the context of employment, ranging from discriminatory barriers in recruitment and promotion practices to racist insults and more subtle expressions of everyday racism from clients, colleagues and supervisors.

Several participants highlighted persistent **discriminatory hiring practices**, which have made it very difficult for many to get a job interview or secure a job, assumedly because their application was dismissed due to their non-English name or non-Anglo-Saxon background.

> One participant from Somali background said (D.5): *'When applying for jobs, I often don't get an interview or any meaningful response because of my name. Employers might be biased, even without realising it. They're naturally more comfortable with a 'John' or a 'Joe.' My name is different, and it makes them uncomfortable. It could be intentional or unintentional, but it's discouraging to apply for countless jobs and never hear back.'*
>
> Similarly, a participant in another focus group (H.2.) shared: *'Even if you are qualified and apply, you most likely will never hear back. That's my experience as well.'*
>
> A Somali mother recalled (D.2) how *'[her] daughter applied for a job at [the local shop of a large bakery chain] but was told there is no place. But then her friend got the job… My daughter was so so so sad.'*
>
> A survey respondent wrote: *'I am a computer engineer and I could not find any job because of my name AHMED and when I tried to replace it with 'Alex', I got interviews within a week. But when they discover my name is Ahmed, they change their minds.'*

Some also mentioned the problem of **overseas qualifications** not being recognised – a perspective that points to systemic-institutional forms of exclusion as an additional barrier.

> The participants in focus group D.4. discussed the issue of overseas qualifications not being recognised: *'Foreign qualifications are denied and rejected here when applying for a job. We don't know where to ask for help, there is not any assistance.'*
>
> *'Foreigner overseas qualifications are often not recognised, even for my father who is an engineer, degree from Birmingham and has worked in the UK. So, he got another Masters in Australia but then was told he lacks Australian work experience … there is always a new barrier, never ever going to be good enough for anything, or he is "over-qualified".'*

For many focus group participants, racism has also been a common **experience at their workplace**, perpetrated by co-workers, supervisors or clients. The discussions in the focus groups included various

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

experiences with racist insults and abuse, discriminatory work assignments or promotion practices, casual racist remarks and refusal to accommodate religious practices.

Several participants faced barriers in advancing their career because of their background, sharing experiences where they felt they were treated unfairly in **promotion** decisions. One participant of Filipino background (G.3) maintained, for example, *'that people with accents or different backgrounds are often assigned menial jobs, while their qualifications and work experience are disregarded.'* This would then lead to them missing out on promotion or other opportunities: *'I often ask myself: Why I'm working so hard – for nothing?'*. In another focus group (H.2), a young male participant recalled how he had trained a white female colleague at work, and when a promotion opportunity arose, she was promoted instead of him. His supervisor explained this decision by saying *'she was so well trained.'*

A female participant in a multicultural and multifaith focus group (mostly from Indian and Pakistani background; MB.1) prepared a written account which she read out during the discussion. Her experiences with racism at the workplace are citing in its entirety:

> 'When I arrived in Australia in July 2022, I was optimistic and saw life through rose-coloured glasses all the time. My husband obtained a Global Talent Visa, and we came to Down Under. I saw beauty everywhere. The community around us was very good.
>
> I had to find a job quickly since we did not get any government assistance, and also we didn't aim for it. I saw an ad on Facebook for a pharmacy assistant, so I applied. I have a background in Science, I have a PhD actually. I submitted my resume and got the job. When I went to get my uniform, I realised I was not the only one who was hired at that same time. There was another woman, she is fantastic. The manager asked me about my background, and I answered that I was an academic, my last job being a postdoctoral assistant a university in Malaysia. I also mentioned that I might need some support to understand the Australian accent.
>
> Anyway, I shouldn't have mentioned that I have a PhD. This had bad consequences. I suffered for four months from bad attitudes from her and all staff around. I did not get the vest as part of my uniform, while the other woman [who had started with me] did. I was not adequately trained. They did not treat me well. Treated me pretty bad, some information was withheld from me. And I experienced bad looks from others. When seeking clarification and information, they looked at my like "why do you ask me this?". But how should I know, I was new to the country and new to everything.
>
> I noticed a striking difference in how I was treated compared to the woman who started at the same time as me. On one occasion, I was humiliated in front of a costumer about a price tag that had been removed. A Vietnamese co-worker showed me a form about my employment rights, and I realised she should not be treated like this. But I had to tolerate this mistreatment for a long time. This was all a big shock for me, I cried many times actually. I should have informed someone but I did not. The real issue wasn't the mistreatment but the way she [the manager] spoke ill about me to my colleagues, leaving them to treat me poorly, giving me extra hard work or burden me with lots of tasks to do in one day). I tried to make it stop but it persisted for four months…Then comes a meeting with the branch manager, who said to me, "some people are not meant to be in retail". And he meant me. They wanted to destroy me. When they said I was not supposed to be here, I left crying during work hours. Because I did my job perfectly, but really, they did not want me there. Maybe it all started with me mentioning my doctoral; degree…it shocked me. After four months I quit and found another job, in my field actually, a university. Now it's better.'

Experiences with **racist insults** and **casual or everyday racism** from clients and co-workers at the workplace have also been raised several times.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

A young Somali-background man (B.4) shared how he has been *'ridiculed for not being able to lift a very heavy box and was called "monkey" …They said, your parents were slaves, they could pick up 10 times more'.*

A participant in a multicultural (mostly Asian background) focus group (G.5) referred to a very recent incident: *'Just this afternoon a bunch of teenagers were racist towards me in Frankston: they yelled at me and was saying "fucking ching chong" to me. Even though I didn't say anything – I was just doing my work in the food court and a bunch of white kids come to me and were like "ching chong" – nothing I can do about it.'*

A hijab wearing Muslim woman (B.3) who works in community health care sector was verbally abused by a client. *'She said to me "Take that shit off your head". These things happens all the time, absolutely, wherever you go.' In the same focus group, a Muslim woman shared how her co-worker refused to believe that it was 'my choice to wear the scarf' and 'assumed my father or brother forced me to wear it. I was so offended and tried to explain, but she just dismissed me. I had no one to tell this incident to. I just kept it to myself … it hurts your self-esteem'.*

A man of Somali background (B.4) recalled a racist encounter with a costumer: *'I work in a call centre. There was this call that went really super well at first, then the client asked me for my name and background.…I told him I was African Muslim background, and he then started to ask questions: That's not Caucasian… why do you sound like that? Are you supposed to not speak proper English…? I was gobsmacked … client hung up on me, and this impacted me really... I spoke to my manager about it, but he couldn't really help. Just realised how hard I was trying to fit in.*

Some focus group participants also criticised how their employer refused to **accommodate basic religious needs** and discussed whether the practice of 'mandatory days off' on Christian holidays amount to religious discrimination.

A Muslim participant (MB.1), who works in the security industry, shared how he has always had problems to be allowed attending Friday midday prayers. He accepted that, but *'when Eid came up, they refused to give me my annual leave so I could attend Eid. That was very painful because I'm a practicing Muslim. I've always been very accommodating, even interrupting my prayers if I had to. But this was clearly religious discrimination—everyone else can take holidays whenever they want.'*

A participate in another focus group (H.2.) asked about *'mandatory days off over Christmas but not during other non-Christian holidays. Is this a from, of racism? Australia is supposed to be a secular country!*

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Shopping centres, public transport and in the streets: everyday racism and verbal abuse

Across all focus groups, participants shared numerous experiences with racism in shopping centres, on public transport or in the streets. This included, among other forms of racism, being followed around by security or staff and singled out for bag-checks in shops, as well as being racially abused and insulted by strangers.

Several participants shared experiences of racist abuses from random people on trains, trams or busses.

Public transport

'A guy on the train was shouting at me: "Go back to your country, you come here and steal our jobs!" I laughed at him in disbelief… to experience direct racism like this in Australia was a bit of a shock.' (G.1)

'I walked out of the train station, and two teenagers behind me started shouting "Go back to your home!". I was walking out alone, and I was scared, so I asked a man whether he can walk with me. God bless him! He walked me almost to my house. After that I was scared to take the train by myself. My husband and I decided I would take the taxi if I'm coming home after dark.' (MB.2)

'My neighbour, a Somali lady, wanted to get on the bus but was pushed and told she was not allowed on the bus. No one stood up for her. She called police, but police did not respond for an hour, so she had to leave.' (D.2)

One of the most frequently mentioned locations of racism were **shops, shopping centres and other retailers**. As the examples below illustrate, many participants felt they were singled out by staff or security guards and suspected of stealing or faced other forms of discriminatory treatment. The account of a focus group participant, a young Somali man (B.1), who works in retail security, highlight the prejudiced basis of these racist practices. He shared the following conversation with a shop manager:

> ***I work in security, protection of assets in a shop. When I started working there, the manager showed me the security monitors and images of people who have stolen something in the past. 80% were Caucasian and 20% were black. It really shook me, when he said to me: "When you see an African person entering the store, make sure you follow them around and you apply pressure, because at the majority of the time, they are the ones that steal". I was really shocked, because it was like 80% white people who were stealing. The confidence he said that that to me, I was clearly in a position of less power. That was blatant racism.***

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Stores, shopping centres, and other retailers

A female participant of African background said (B.3): 'Shopping centres are the biggest problem, especially for Somali boys, but also the girls. **Security follow us** and other Somali kids all the time, and when we approach the security guards and ask why, they say nothing.'

A young man of African background recalled the following incident: *'There was a time when my **bag was searched**. I had come from a different shop, as soon as I was about to leave, they said, "oh, hang on a second, mate! ... I need to search you". So, I think that, for me as a black person, I felt that I was singled out because that was not a normal thing that I see every day.'* (G.6)

A Somali woman shared an *'incident with security guards at a large local shopping centre [name redacted], holding forcefully a Somali kid. He didn't do anything wrong. He was very upset. The security guard said he was just "checking on him". The kid was crying, his friends were all very upset.'* (D.2)

A Muslim woman said: *'When you walk out of shops, there is an assumption that you are hiding things in your clothing or hijab. I have had a cashier shout at me in front of the whole shop.'* (MB. 2)

In a gender-mixed Somali focus group (D.5) several participants shared similar experiences: *'When we go shopping, we are **suspected to be stealing**, it happens all the time. Stopped by security, people stare at me.'* Another one confirms: *'Same, in shopping centres, they check my gets bags, while others are not asked. This has happened to me quite a few times.'*

A female participant in a mixed multicultural focus group (Chinese, Indian and Sri Lankan; D.4) said: *'When I go shopping especially in those upmarket stores, I often get this look as if to say "can you really afford that thing?". When I go shopping now, I make sure I'm well dressed, but I feel I'm being judged because of my colour … they think I might be shoplifting.'*

Two asylum seekers (G.2) experienced racism when shopping at an op-shop, using the gift cards to buy basic household items. They felt that the op-shop staff were unwelcoming and looked down on them and even prevented them from selecting the better-quality good, telling them that the better-quality items were not for them, and that they should return to their country.

A participant in a multicultural focus group (G.1) shared the following experience: *'I was going to fill up my car at a **petrol station** and the attendant said I would need to pay before I fill up. So, I asked why, because everyone else was paying after they've fill up. The attendant just looked at me and said in front of everyone: "Because your kind of people steal petrol." I didn't know what to say, I looked around for support, no one said anything, and he refused to let me pump the petrol.'*

A Somali mother shared how her 16-year-old son and his friends 'get followed around everywhere, shops, movies': *'My son once went the **cinema** with four friends. They were watching the movie…and others in the cinema said they don't feel safe with these boys. Security comes and tells the five African kids they have to leave simply because someone says they are not feeling safe. But why? They all bought tickets, and the Black kids have to leave.'* As they refused to leave, thew police was called and the situation escalated as two of the Somali kids were handcuffed. *'Then police checked in the system and couldn't find any records about our kids. They said: "you are lucky. If you had had anything in the system on you, we would have taken you"* (D.2)

Blatant racist abuse by random people also occurs in **public space**, as the accounts of several participants (predominately women in our analysis) illustrate.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

A woman of Asian background (G.5) shared two incidents that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic: *'I was buying bubble tea, and there was a random guy – he had an Australian accent – and he suddenly said, "Fucking China". And another time when we were walking down the street to the beach, someone pulled down the window in their car and yelled: "Fucking Chinese".'*

A Muslim woman (MB.2) recalled an incident during her very first week after they had arrived in Australia: *'Someone shouted from a car: "Go back to your country". We were new and didn't want to cause any trouble or get deported, so we didn't say anything.'*

A Muslim woman in another focus group (H.4) shared how 'an older lady circling my car' while I was loading my groceries into the car. The woman *'then finally started to abuse me because of where I have parked. She said stuff like "you come into the country and think you can do what you like".'*

A female participant of African background (Y.2) spoke about having only recently been called the *'f-word and "nigger" in the street in front of my kids. I was confused… I didn't do anything. I don't know why. My daughter was scared'.*

Education

Racism in schools was another much-discussed topic in the focus groups. Many young people shared their own previous experiences and parents spoke about racist incidents that happened to their children at school. Most accounts refer either to racially discriminatory treatment by school staff or blatant racist abuse and insults by other students and in some cases also by teachers. In relation to the latter, one focus group participant (MB.1) said:

> ***At school, we close our eyes to this kind of [racist] language, but kids get in trouble for not wearing the right kind of uniform. That to me doesn't make sense! That's hypocritical. I was once told by a teacher: "If we had to pick on kids using the n-word, we would be there all day".***

Racist abuse at school

A female Muslim participant in a multicultural focus group (MB.2) shared: *'I once walked my kids to school, and the whole kids were shouting "ninja, terrorist". Where have they learned this from?'*

A young African-Australian man (B.4) recalled his own experiences at school: *'At school I was called monkey, porch monkey, rat, black face, black dog…anything.'*

Racist commentaries at school were also discussed in a multicultural focus group with women from Iraq, Eritrea, Philippines and India (H.5). One participant told the group that her *'son has been bullied because of his skin colour and one day came home from school saying he "wants to be white".'* Another woman shared that her son has been teased at school for his Indian lunch and now wants to have different food.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

A Muslim woman of African background (Y.3) shared that a high school teacher said the 'N-word' to her daughter. 'My daughter went to the school principal, but he didn't do anything about it.'

'At schools it's a big issue', one Somali Muslim mother (B.3) said, also at her daughter's school: *'When something happens, teachers always blame the Arabic or African kids, it's always their fault. Teachers say things like "there is so much darkness in the classroom", ridiculing the Black students in the classroom. The kids hear that every single day. They are put down because of their colour. Some teachers even call them black dogs.'*

Discriminatory and racist treatment by school staff

A young Muslim man of Sudanese background (D1) shared an experience that illustrates how racist abuse by students and discriminatory treatment by staff can interplay in school settings. *'I was in Grad 9, I had been called the n-word and other racial abuse by other kids, and then one day it got physical, and I got one on the chin. Literally. Four against one, in front of the supervisors office, punched in the face. I reported it but nothing happened. Actually, I got in trouble because I tried to fight back.'*

A Muslim mother of African background (Y.2) shared a similar story about a school fight between her daughter and a white student: *'Only the Black student, my daughter, had to stay home for a day as punishment. The white student was at school the next day. I went to the office to ask why. I asked them what's the difference between my daughter and the other girl? But they gave no answers. They said to me to calm down. I said, "no, I'm not calming down". I told them, "you are racist"'.*

A young African-Australian man (Y.4), who recently finished high school, said: *'At school, most kids from African background have gone through it, also myself. The school applies different rules. For example, I got detention for being late, the other kids get a warning. Reporting to the school? No, it seems school is not helping you at all.'*

Discriminatory treatment by teachers can also affect educational opportunities and pathways: A Muslim woman of Somali background (B.3) said: *'The teachers tell them [Black kids], "You can't do this [subject], why don't you do that?" They don't let them take the subject they want to do, like biology, because they say that's too hard for them. In some schools, they ask them to not sit the Y12 exams. And this is happening until today.*

University

Some focus group participants also shared experiences of racism at university, from students and/or staff. A Muslim woman of African background (Y.3), who studies for her PhD said, *'the teacher is okay, but during research group work with other students, they seem to think I'm not on the same level. I have to explain all the time that I have a Master's…and this kind of experience happens everywhere'.*

Another participant in a multicultural focus group (G.1) shared how he has been frequently confronted with stereotypes about 'Asians' at university: *'I've had people say to me, you are not like the other Asians. You are a cool Asian. I mean what does that mean. And this is usually coming from a university setting. … It happens in my supervision meetings too, compared me to other Asians. I can't report it because it could affect the relationship I have with my superior. They say things like, "your English is good, where did you learn your English". It always come across under the guise of compliment, so when you say anything, it looks bad on us! Like you are the one who can't take a joke.'*

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Systemic–institutional racism

While the focus group discussions mostly revolved around individual accounts of interpersonal racism, some participants also raised the issue of systemic-institutional racism that create and maintain barriers for racially marginalised communities. Among other examples, these accounts referred to Australia's refugee and asylum seekers policies, but also to structures and practices that have an indirectly discriminatory effect on new migrants or 'people who are not white' (G.3).

'Racist' refugee policies

A focus group participant (D.4) who has worked with asylum seekers took aim at Australia's refugee and detention policies: *'The policy itself that makes it so hard to come to Australia by boat is a racist policy. It's racist in every single part of it, and it has huge ripple effect on housing, health, employment and other areas.'* She also described the '*current detention system',* and in particular the risk of indefinite detention for stateless people, as *'incredibly racist'.*

The account of a married couple in legal limbo

A married couple, who have been subject to Australia's refugee policies and who have lived in Australia with their visa status in limbo, have shared their experiences (G.2). The facilitator captured their story; part of their account is shared in the following:

'The couple were in their 20s when they arrived in Australia by boat in 2013. On arrival, they only had a suitcase. They now have three businesses and – despite their significant limitations due to their uncertain legal visa status – have built a life in Australia.

After they endured hardship in a detention centre on Christmas Island and since their arrival in mainland Australia, they felt the treatment of authorities and service providers tasked with supporting them has been mixed with elements of racism and prejudice. For example, when [name redacted] was pregnant with her first child, she reached out to the caseworker assigned to them to request a bulk billed sonography. Not only was the request denied, but she was also being questioned for falling pregnant in her circumstance thereby relying on a taxpayer funded service.

Despite being housed in the outer southwest of Melbourne, the case worker assigned to them and who they had to report to in person on a weekly basis, was located in the Northern suburbs. The assignment of the case worker was in the full knowledge of their limited financial capacity (both were given limited monthly allowance barely enough to provide for their daily needs). Their repeated requests for either a financial assistance with travel or a change to a case worker in the Werribee office were ignored.

They both feel betrayed by authority and the system. In their opinions, Medicare, Centrelink, and Immigration Department treat them like second-class citizens every time they seek information, they feel ignored or treated with disrespect. They blame the Federal court and the Immigration Department for being in indefinite limbo.'

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Systemic barriers

A focus group participant of Filipino background (G.3) referred to additional systemic barriers migrants face in their social mobility and career:

'I wondered why the system is so bad for people who are new, I don't want to compare myself to people who have been born here or grew up, they have so much privilege – they end up in a top-tier firm. And you wonder, how did they get there? Why I'm working so hard for nothing? Until someone explained how elite high schools in Melbourne sometimes serves a pipeline to those law firms. And so, they are all white and super Anglo-Celtic. I mean, it's not a problem as long as they value other people and don't treat people badly. However, the system itself is not catered for people who are not white. The power structure is so bad that you can't even crack a ceiling.'

Racialised conflicts within and between marginalised communities

A topic the survey did not cover but which several focus groups raised, revolves around conflicts within and between racially marginalised communities. Several participants referred to these conflicts as manifestations of racism, often rooted in tense relationships originating from people's country of origin. Our analysis suggests that, while these accounts of intra-community tensions often reflect group prejudice and, in some cases, discriminatory actions, they may not always amount to racism, which is based on historically rooted and deeply entrenched racial hierarchies, injustices and power imbalances. Without exploring these sensitive, yet important issues in depth here, it was raised by so many participants that it should not be ignored in this report.

The tensions within and between different non-white communities were typically described in the focus groups as either anti-Black racism or 'colourism' (H.2), or religious conflicts, for example between Muslim and Christian Middle Eastern communities or Hindus and Muslims in the Indian community, or as forms of caste-based discrimination, imported from South Asia. In one focus group, participants raised that some migrants, in particular those from a socially privileged background in their country of origin, 'carry over their politics, their prejudice [and] lack empathy for people who are not that fortunate'. They often seek to be 'model immigrants', as one focus group participant stated, 'who want to be seen as one of them [white Anglo-Saxon Australian] and don't associate with poor or refugees, other migrants. So, they do tend to discriminate against their own.' (D.4.)

The most detailed discussion on this topic was recorded in a multicultural focus group with participants mainly from India and Sri Lanka (D.4).

Intra-community prejudice and discrimination

'Australia is getting this elite group of people [from India] who practice their own form of racism, who carry over their politics, prejudices, often from a privileged class who lack empathy for people…I have seen a very heightened level of that in the last decade among the Indian community: Islamophobia and against anyone who is critical of the Indian government and from another religion other than Hindu… If you are not Hindu, especially an upper cast Hindu, if you are a Muslim, Sikh or Chrisian Indian, you are seen as not loyal to your country [India].'

The group (D.4) also discussed caste discrimination, with one participant describing it as a *'very vicious form of racism in the Hindu communities, but also into other south Asian communities. It's quite normal for those from a higher caste to look down on people from so-called lower castes. And that's carried over here to Australia, and it can translate into workplace discrimination here too. And even more, this affects how some see and treat other migrant communities that are less educated, not so good English, even Indigenous communities. That's a serious problem in Australia and needs to be addressed.'*

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

These selected accounts of experiences with racism shared in the focus groups, together with the qualitative survey findings on key social areas and types of racism help paint a picture of the nature and scope of racism in Victoria. But these empirical insights are also indispensable to examine the alignment of experiences of racism with existing legal anti-racism protections mechanism, and respective reporting pathways and support services.

It appears, for example, that many experiences of racism (e.g. forms of casual racism) would not reach the threshold of discrimination or vilification as defined in the Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act 1975, the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010 or the Victoria Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001. Accordingly, the support services provided by specialised statutory agencies whose mandate is based on these legal frameworks, such as the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) or VEOHRC, may be insufficient or inadequate to address many of these experiences of racism.

Similarly, most incidents do not appear to meet the criminal threshold. This limits the extent to which Victoria Police could investigate and respond to reports of (non-criminal) forms of racism, or in the terminology of Victoria Police, 'prejudice motivated incident' (despite the fact that 'obscene, indecent, threatening language and behaviour etc. in public' considered a crime, according to the Victorian Summary Offences Act 1966). The next chapter of this report discusses in greater detail the nature and implications of that mismatch between legal protections and statutory support infrastructure, on the one hand, and the experiences of racism on the ground, on the other.

4.2 SPEAKING OUT: THE (NON-)REPORTING JOURNEY

One of the key goals of this project is to gain a deeper, evidence-based understanding of the '(non)-reporting journey' (Peucker et al. 2023) of Victorians affected by racism. Based on community input collected in the survey and focus groups, the research sheds light on the interplay between reporting barriers, reasons or motives for reporting, preferred modes of reporting, awareness of existing pathways and – for those who have reported an incident of racism – how they experienced the reporting process. These community insights can serve as the foundation for the enhancement of existing, and development of alternative, reporting pathways.

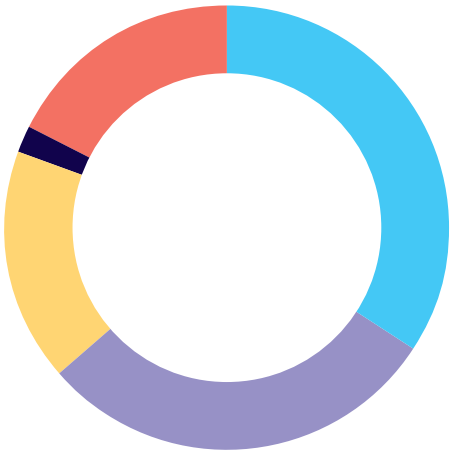
(Under-)Reporting racism

Confirming previous research in Victoria, Australia and overseas (EU-FRA 2017; Doery et al. 2020; Kamp et al., 2024; Peucker et al. 2024), this study found that the vast majority of those who have experienced racism may speak to their family or friends about the incident but do not formally report it (i.e., report to an organisation). As a consequence, these incidents remain unrecorded and invisible to most others, and the person who faced racism has no access to specialised support, be it legal or emotional-psychological support.

Before discussing reporting and under-reporting in more detail, it is worth noting that those survey respondents who stated they had never experienced racism in Australia (just under one quarter), may overestimate their own reporting if they were to experience racism. Almost two-thirds believe they would 'definitely' (34.3%) or 'probably' (29.5%) report (Graph 9). This stands in stark contrast to the realities of those who have experience racism: Only 15.5% of them have ever reported a personal experience of racism to an organisation or community group, while the majority of 63.4% have only told their family, friends and/or a colleague; 21.1% never told anyone (Graph 10).

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

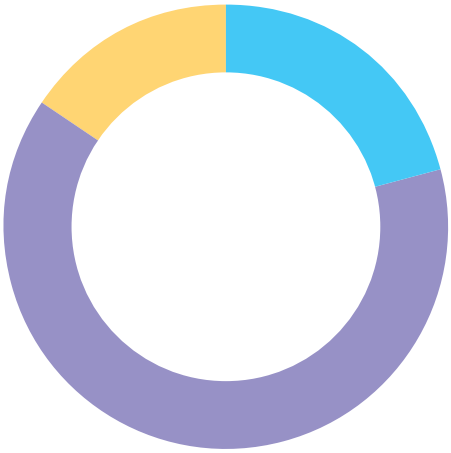
GRAPH 9: WOULD YOU REPORT RACISM? (THOSE WHO NEVER EXPERIENCED RACISM IN AUSTRALIA)



Yes, definitely	**34.3%**
Probably	**29.5%**
Probably not	**16.9%**
Definitely not	**1.8%**
Not sure	**17.5%**

N= 166 (those who have never experienced racism in Australia)

GRAPH 10: HAVE YOU EVER REPORTED RACISM? (THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED RACISM IN AUSTRALIA)



No, I have never told anyone about it	**21.1%**
Yes, but I only told family, friends and/or colleagues	**63.4%**
Yes, I did report it to an organisation or a community group	**15.5%**

N=536

Only very few of those who have ever formally reported racism (n=83) have connected with a service specialised in responding to racism. Instead, a relative majority of them have reported their experience with racism within the organisational setting where the incident occurred. This includes those who have reported or complained to their employer and/or supervisor (39.8%) and those who raised the issue within the school or university (31.3%). This response may reflect the individual's desire to resolve the issue internally without involving an external agency or escalating it further, but it may also be due to the individual's lack of awareness of (more) specialised and independent support services such as the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC).

Moreover, 30.1% (25 in total numbers) of those who have ever reported racism have contacted Victoria Police and 19.3% (16 in total numbers) the VEOHRC – two specialised agencies with a legal mandate to support victims of racial and/or religious discrimination or prejudice motivated crimes. Only very few have approached and reported to their local council (n=9), the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC; n=9), the Jewish Community Security Group (CSG; n=9), Islamophobia Register Australia (n=8), the eSafety Commissioner (n=4) and/or the ICV Islamophobia Support Service (n=3). Around 30% have reported to another organisation (e.g. unions) or community group (often not further specified).

The focus group analysis paints a similar picture: Those few who have formally reported racism have predominately done so either within the context where the incident happened (e.g. at work or school) or reported to police. Only very few focus group participants have heard of the VEOHRC, and none had ever reported racism to them. Others mentioned reporting to the unions or the Fair Work Commission.

"THERE IS LOTS OF DISCRIMINATION IN SCHOOLS. MY SON WAS TOLD A 'BLACK DOG' BY HIS CLASSMATE. WE REPORTED TO THE PRINCIPAL, AND THE BOY GOT THREE DAYS SUSPENSION."

Somali Muslim woman (D.2)

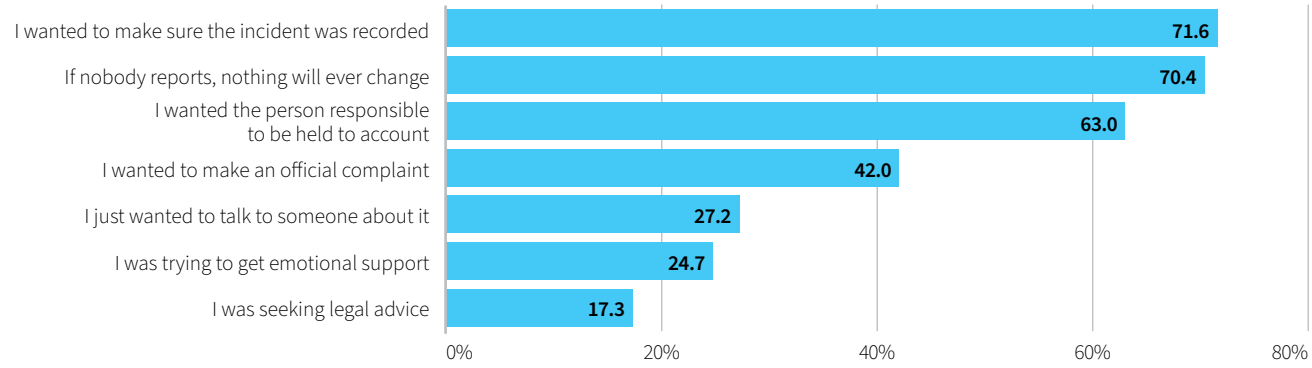
4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Reporting motives and experiences

If the goal is to encourage more people to speak out and report their experiences of racism, it is important to understand their actual or potential **motives and reasons for reporting**. The survey explored these motivational factors with two questions: One of them was directed only at those who previously reported racism to an organisation, examining their *personal* reasons for doing so. The other one asked *all* survey participants about their views what the main reasons for reporting would be more *generally*.

While these two questions revealed some differences between ***personal*** and suspected ***general*** reporting motives, the analysis highlights that two reasons were particularly central across both questions. First, for a substantial majority, reporting an incident of racism was driven by the motivation to contribute to change by raising awareness that racism continues to be a significant problem in society. Almost eight out of ten respondents (78.2%) regard this be one of the main *general* reasons for reporting (Graph 12). Similarly, the most common ***personal*** reasons for those who previously reported racism was 'to make sure the incident was recorded' (71.6%), and 70.4% stated that 'if nobody reports, nothing will ever change' (Graph 11). The second most frequently mentioned motive for reporting, captured by both survey questions, was related to holding the perpetrator to account. This applies to 63.0% of those who have previously reported racism (Graph 11) and 66.5% of all survey respondents who shared their views on general reasons for reporting (Graph 12).

GRAPH 11: MAIN PERSONAL REASONS FOR REPORTING

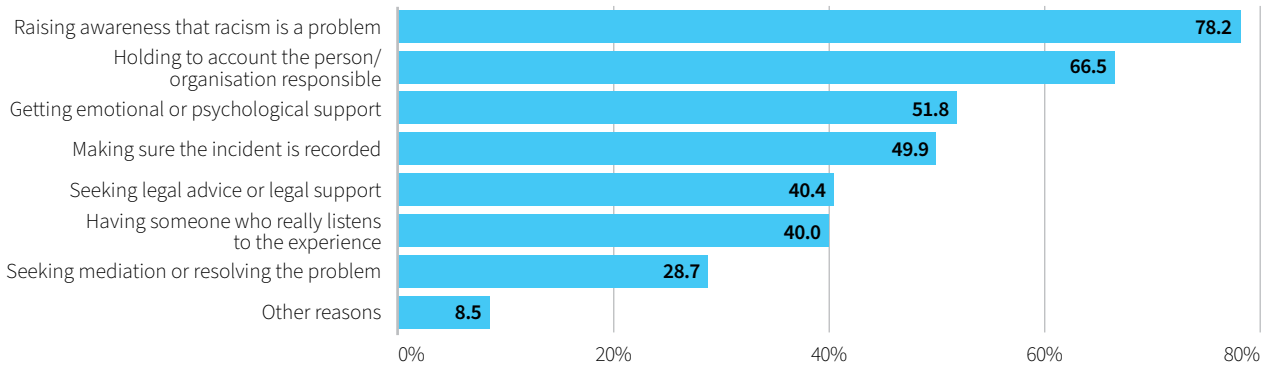


N=81 (only those who have reported in the past), respondents could select more than one response

Other personal reporting motives were to 'get emotional support' and 'talk to someone' about the incident; each of these two were mentioned by around one quarter as their main personal reason (Graph 11), while 40% of ***all*** respondents think that this would be one of the main motives for reporting in general ('having someone who really listens to the experience') (Graph 12). Seeking legal advice was the least frequently stated personal reason for reporting (17.3%), although four in ten survey respondents (40.4%) think this would be a main reason in general. Seeking mediation with the perpetrator was considered one of the main general reasons for reporting by only 28.3% of all respondents.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 12: GENERAL REASONS FOR REPORTING



N=683 (Respondents could selected more than one response)

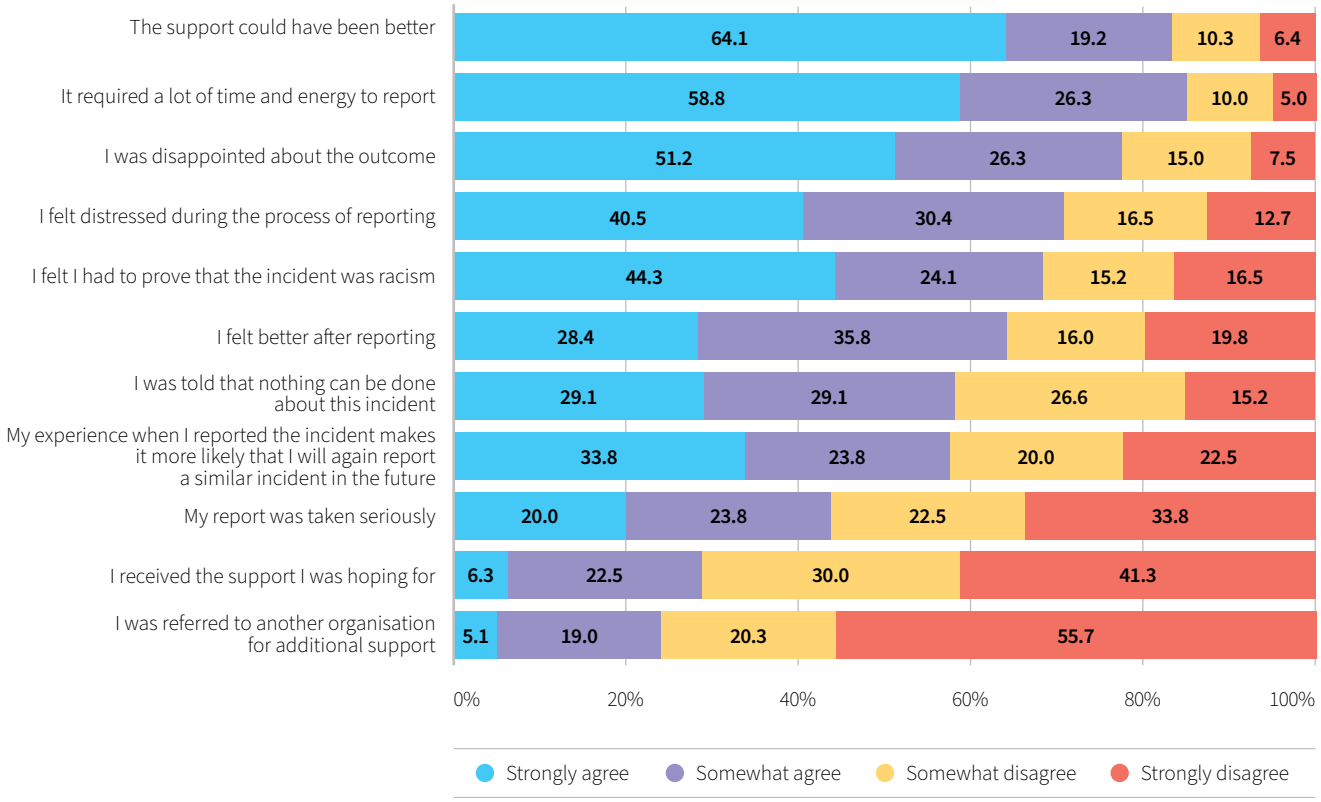
While the proportion of survey respondents who have ever formally reported an experience of racism was small (N=83), their personal **reporting experiences** provide important insights that can help identify strengths and weaknesses in the existing reporting pathways and infrastructure. Such an empirical evidence base is essential for improving these reporting services.

Overall, the analysis underscores that reporting racism can often be described as a high-input but low-outcome process (Graph 13). A significant majority of those who have reported in the past stated it required a lot of time and energy (85.1% agreed strongly or somewhat) and that they felt distressed during the process (70.9%); 77.5% were disappointed with the outcome. Fewer than three in ten (28.8%) received the support they were hoping for, and 56.3% felt their report was not taken seriously. Fewer than a quarter (24.1%) were referred to another organisation for additional support.

Despite the overall negative reporting experiences, the findings also show that reporting can still have a positive impact on the person, with 64.2% stating that they felt better after reporting. One (partial) explanation for this may be related to individuals' sense of pride in breaking the silencing effect of racism and speaking out against it – as a contribution to their goal of raising awareness (see Graphs 11 and 12). Moreover, 57.6% declared that their experiences of reporting racism, as dissatisfactory as it may have been, would still make it more likely for them to report a similar incident again in the future. For the remaining 42.5%, however, their reporting experience was so bad that it would deter them from reporting racism again.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 13: REPORTING EXPERIENCE (AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS)



N=78-81

In the focus group discussion only very few participants spoke about how they formally reported racism. Some have had good experiences, while for others the process felt disempowering, or it led to no or even negative outcomes. One participant described their reporting experience with the words: *'I always feel I don't have an upper hand in these experiences [of reporting]. A fear of not being taken seriously or believed'* (G.1). A young man in a Muslim focus group (D.1) shared how he had once reported a psychical altercation at high school where he was racially abused and then punched by a group of students. He said, *'I reported it [to the school leadership], but nothing happened. Actually, I got in trouble because I tried to fight back'.*

In the same focus group discussion (D.1) another person had a more positive experience, reporting a work-related incident of racism to the Fair Work Commission, although no outcome was achieved: *'They were very helpful. They listen to you, most of them are white people, but they told me that I can lodge a complaint, but if I lose, all the costs will be borne by myself. The unions were useless, I was in the union, no response from them.'*

A young man of Somali background (B.1) shared how he once reported an incident of racism that happened to a colleague:

> ***I have reported something that happened to my team to my manager. That was a positive experience because it was my manager directly, and also because the racism was done by someone external and not the management itself. So I felt I could talk about it.***

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

A participant in a focus group comprised of university students (G.4) recalled how they once reported an incident of racism to the HR manager: '*I only reported it because it was relevant, I had witnesses, and it was blatant. Also, I knew the HR Manager*'. He continued:

> ***The outcome was a D&I [Diversity & Inclusion] training for the entire staff, but I was not aware of the content and how it was managed. There was no communication between me and the person, I don't know what changed for the person specifically or the consequences they had.***

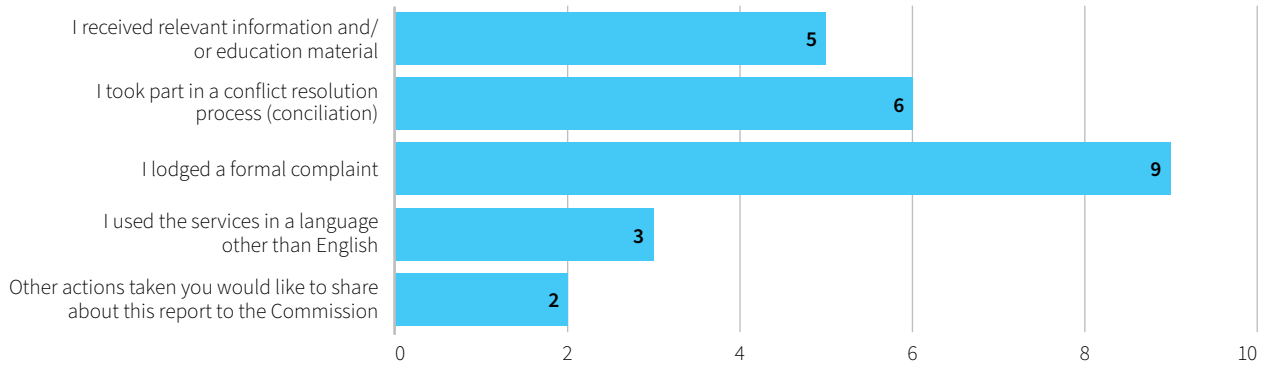
Reporting to VEOHRC

VEOHRC encourages individuals to report experiences of racial or religious discrimination, victimisation or vilification, among others. It offers free information and support, in particular a dispute resolution service. The Commission's main legal mandate in the context of racism is the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001. The former act outlaws direct and indirect discrimination that happens in certain public areas, in particular at work, school, TAFE or university, related to the provision of goods and services, for example in clubs or sporting organisations, shops and restaurants or the rental market. The latter act makes it unlawful to 'vilify a person on the basis of their race or religion' in any public space (see Chapter 2).

Only a total of 16 survey respondents stated they had previously reported an incident of racism to VEOHRC. Although this is a small number, and their reporting experiences are not necessarily reflective or representative, they are presented here as qualitative insights.

While some of the 16 survey respondents seem to have only requested or received information in relation to their experience with racism, nine lodged a formal complaint and six (probably of these nine individuals) took part in a conflict or dispute resolution process. The majority of those 16 people who reported to VEOHRC felt safe in the process (n=11) and stated that they were treated with respect and empathy (n=10).

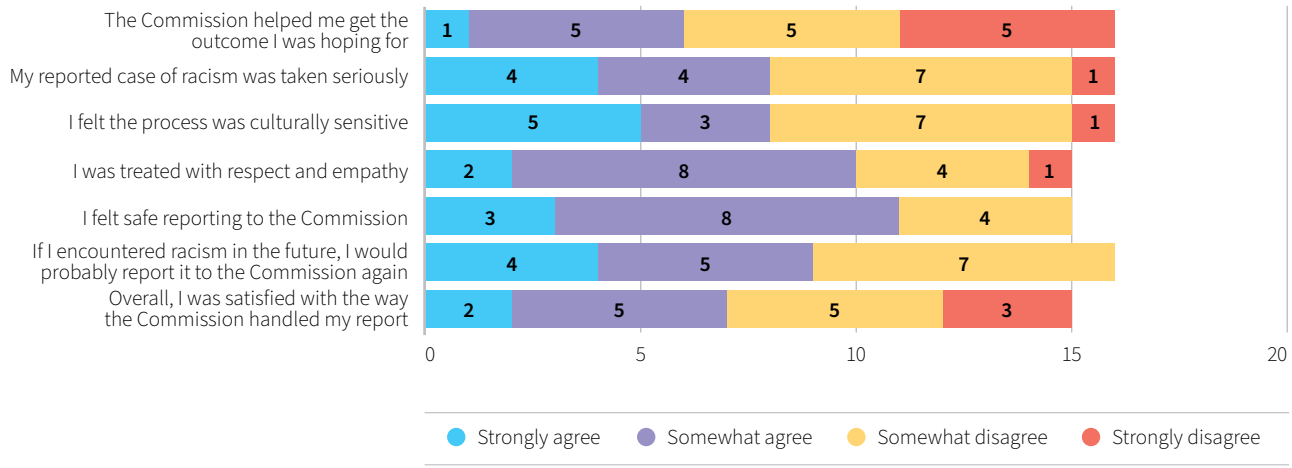
GRAPH 14: REPORTING TO VEOHRC: ACTIONS TAKEN



N=14 (Respondents could selected more than one response)

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 15: REPORTING TO VEOHRC: EXPERIENCES



N=15-16

Half of these 16 respondents felt the process was culturally sensitive and that their report was taken seriously. Although overall satisfaction with the process was mixed at best (seven were satisfied and eight were not) and although many did not get the outcome they were hoping for (n=10), a small majority still stated that they 'would probably report … to the Commission again' if they encounter racism in the future.

None of the focus group participants seemed to have ever reported racism to VEOHRC themselves, and only a few were aware of the services they provide. One Muslim woman shared a very positive experience of one of her friends (D.1):

> ***VEOHRC, they are amazing, people just don't know about them a lot. A female friend told me she has been harassed at work and HR didn't do anything about it. So she went to VEOHRC, that's actually exactly for that. She had no idea it existed, she thought they are about like human rights, but not that every citizen can access it. They took care of everything. This needs to be amplified, people need to know about them!***

Others were more sceptical of the work of human right commission. One participant of Asian background (G.1) stated: *'I know of the VEOHRC, but they feel very bureaucracy heavy, they don't advertise the consequences and the accountability.'* One Muslim woman in other focus group (D.1) was particularly disillusioned, stating:

> ***These organisations only exist to make it look as if they actually care, but they genuinely don't care. I still feel unsupported, and I have lived through this my whole entire life. I'm 33 now, and that's ridiculous! If they were seriously about his, their campaigning or their polices, really caring about Islamophobia in Australia, they would have put together laws that seriously have our back.***

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

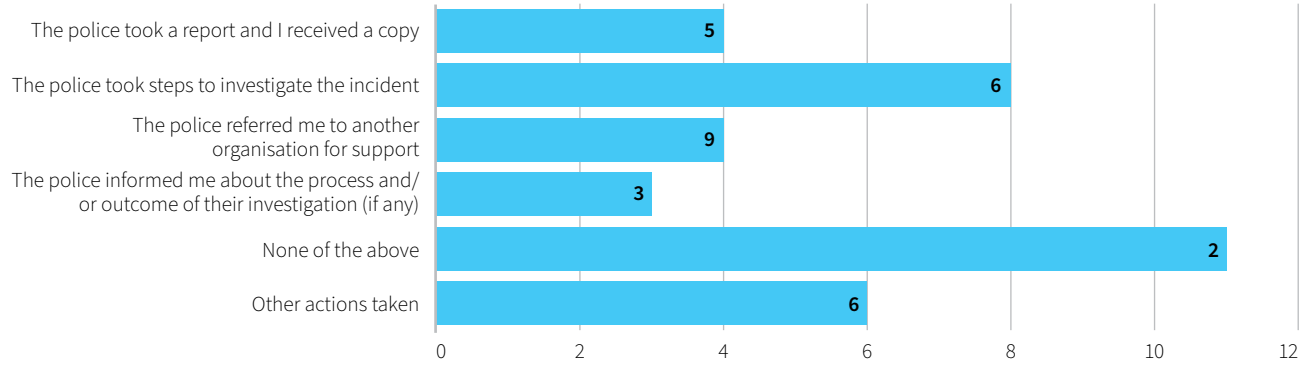
Reporting to Victoria Police

Victoria Police has produced public resources to encourage reporting of racism, calling on individuals to contact the local police state (or Crimestoppers for anonymous reporting) if they have experienced a 'prejudice motivated crime or incident'. Legally, racism as such is not considered a crime in Victoria or Australia[7], but a perpetrator's racist motive can be considered in court as an aggravating factor and result in a high sentence upon conviction (Chapter 2). In practice, this means police investigates the crime itself (e.g. property damage, physical assault), but the investigation should take into account whether racist or religious prejudice or hatred has played a role.

Apart from those among the survey respondents who had reported racism directly to their employer or their child's school, reporting to police was the most frequently chosen pathway among study participants: 25 survey respondents had reported a personal incident of racism to Victoria Police. While their reporting experiences can provide qualitative insights, it is important to keep in mind that these figures are low and not statistically representative.

In only around one quarter of these 25 cases reported to police by survey respondents, the police took steps to investigate the incident. This low rate can have many reasons. Drawing on the insights from the community focus groups, it seems plausible that in at least some cases individuals may be unaware of alternative reporting and support options; they thus report a racist experience to police where the incident does not reach the criminal threshold and, therefore it does not trigger a police investigation. The fact that only four of these 25 survey respondents said the police took a report (and that they received a copy of that report, as would be due process) supports such an interpretation.

GRAPH 16: REPORTING TO VICTORIA POLICE: ACTIONS TAKEN

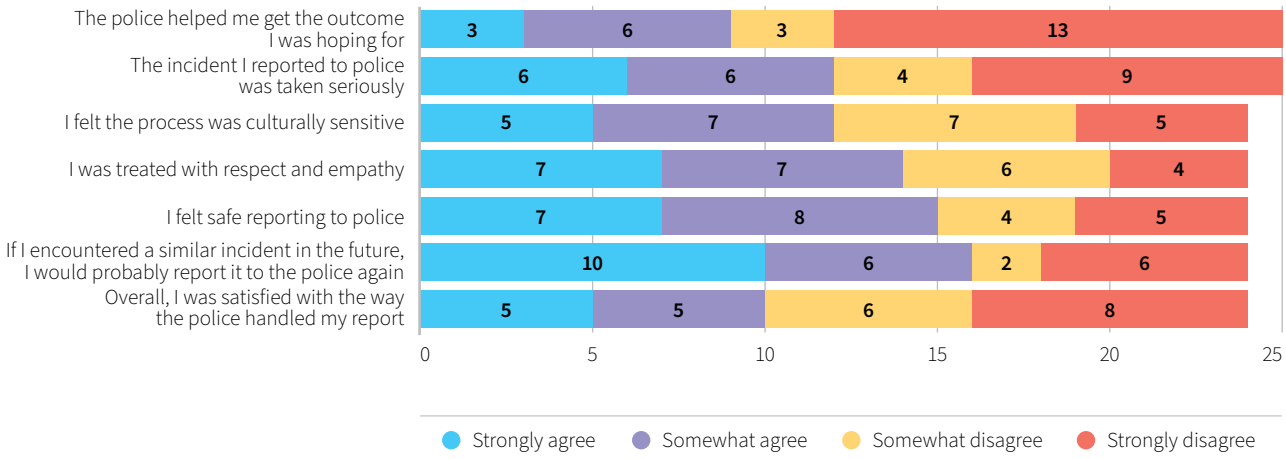


N=25 (Respondents could selected more than one response)

7 Note that serious racial or religious vilification can constitute a criminal offence according to the Victorian Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001, for example when it involves physical threats (see Cottrell v Ross, 2019, VCC 2142).

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 17: REPORTING TO VICTORIA POLICE: EXPERIENCES



N=24-25

Although 16 of those 25 who have reported to police disagree that the police helped them to get the outcome they were hoping for, and only 10 of them were satisfied overall with the way the police handled their report, many stated they would 'probably report' to police again if they were to encounter a similar incident in the future. The majority felt safe during the reporting process, although nine did not, and most agreed that they were treated with respect and empathy by police. Half of the 26 respondents agreed the process was culturally sensitive and that their report was taken seriously.

The focus group analysis highlights that while many participants considered the police as their only option for reporting racism, only a few of them had ever reported. Their accounts highlighted what they consider significant shortcomings in the police response and handling of their reports, most commonly a lack of confidence and that they were not kept informed about the police investigation and the outcomes. One participant in a multicultural focus group (G.5), for example, recalled a traffic incident where another driver 'used all the nasty racist stuff you can image'. The participant recorded the incident with his dashcam and reported to the police, who took the report but did not get back to him:

> ***I got the video tape and gave it to the local police to investigate. They told me they will update me in two or three business days. It's been three years. I have not heard anything from the police. Even my SD card, which was worth some money, I didn't even get it back from the police.***

Similarly, a Muslim woman in another focus groups (D.1) shared how she had reported a racist abuse or threat to police and provided the license plate of the person. She said:

> ***'I believe the police are stretched … I'm still waiting four weeks later to hear what happened to this dude. Is he in handcuffs or is he going to come down to my place. I think about it every single day, and I wonder if it happens again, am I going to bother to report it again?***

In the same focus group, another participant shared a particularly serious incident of anti-Muslim racism, which included repeated threating phone calls at her workplace. This was reported to the local police station as an emergency. '*They [the police] were great*', the participant recalled, *'they took it very seriously, came to my workplace, set up extra police patrols, and they found and charged the person, using the evidence we gave them.'* While satisfied with the immediate police responses, she criticised how long it took to charge the man and that the police did not inform her: *'I asked the police to tell me about the progress, but I didn't hear back from the police. It's been 4 or 6 weeks now. We want closure, we want to know that we are safe'* (D.1).

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Barriers to reporting racism

The vast majority (85.5%) of those who have experienced racism have never formally reported any such incident; and most of those who have done so in the past stated that there have been incidents of racism they did not report. They were all deterred or discouraged by a range of often interconnected factors. While the analysis of the survey helps identify the quantitative prevalence of multiple reporting barriers, the qualitative insights gained through the focus groups highlighted the multifaceted nature of individuals' decision not to report racism.

The survey asked all those who have never reported racism and those who have not reported racism every time they faced it about their personal reasons for not reporting. Most respondents indicated that various barriers operated simultaneously (Graph 18).

Almost all of them – 90.6% – were deterred by a sense of resignation, agreeing with the statement that nothing would change if they reported. More than eight in ten also felt discouraged by what they saw as a 'too difficult' reporting process that 'takes too much effort' (83.2%) and by their concerns their report would not be taken seriously (82.7%).

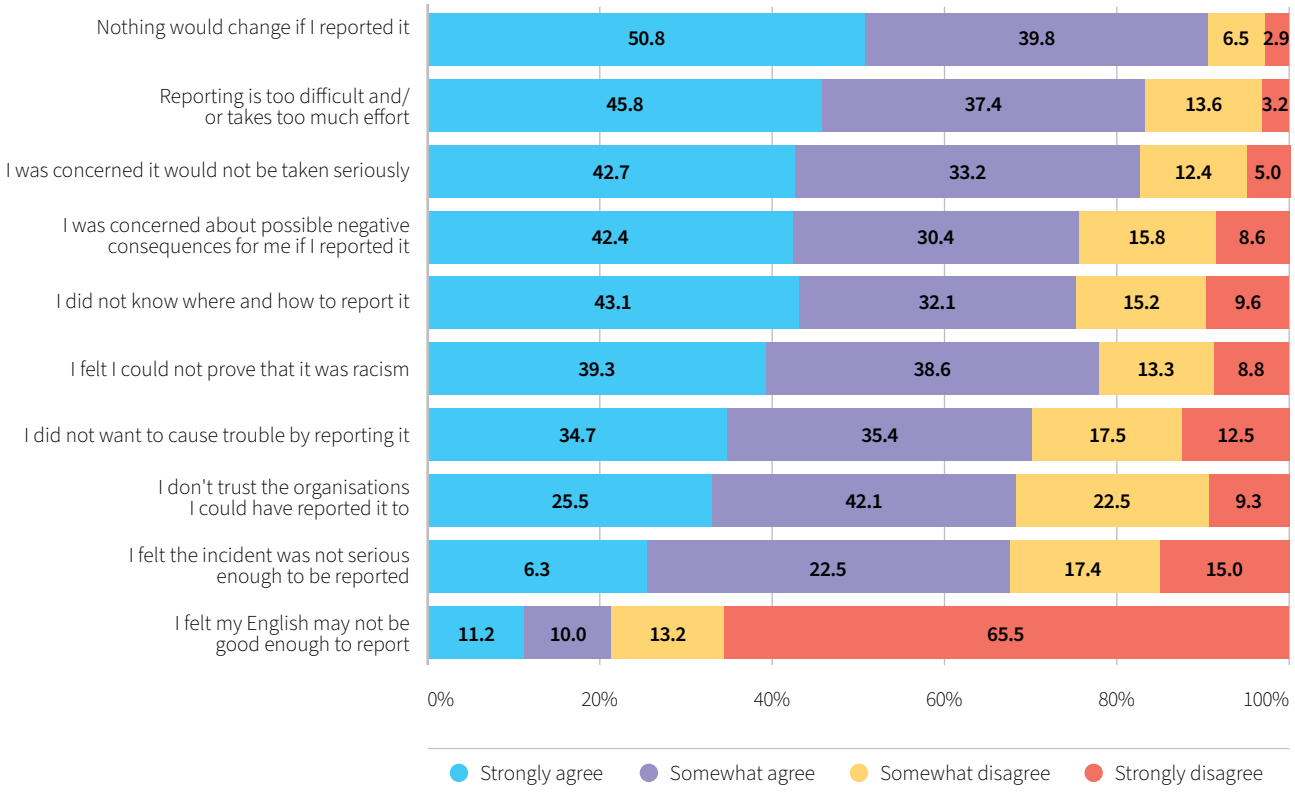
The fourth most common reason for not reporting was related to personal concerns about 'possible negative consequences' that such a report may have for themselves. This is fear of being punished for raising an issue of racism or making a complaint relates to what is described as victimisation, which is made unlawful in Victoria (Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2010).

Around three quarters (75.2%) did not report the incident because they did not know where and how to do so. Other reasons for not reporting, expressed by a majority of respondents, included not being able 'to prove that it was racism' (77.9%), not wanting to 'cause trouble' (70.1%), not trusting the organisations they could have reported to (68.2%) and the feeling the incident was not serious enough (67.6%).

> "EVERYONE SAYS "REPORT, REPORT, REPORT" AND THEN NOTHING HAPPENS. WE WANT THE CHANGE!"
>
> Somali Muslim woman (B.3)

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 18: PERSONAL REASONS FOR NOT REPORTING



N=438-448

Insufficient English proficiency did not feature prominently as a reporting barrier in the survey, but this is likely due to the fact that most survey respondents completed the survey in English (although it was also available in other community languages) and were either native speakers (i.e. born in Australia) or had a (very) good command of English as an additional language. The analysis of the focus groups, some of which were held in various community languages, painted a different picture, highlighting that language barriers were a significant reason for not reporting racism. *'The language barrier is always an issue with reporting'*, one focus group participants stated (D.3), and another person recalled how they experienced racism at work and *'wanted to speak to my manager about it, but I couldn't because of my English language skills'* (Y.1.).

Many of the reporting barriers that were highlighted in the survey were also raised during the focus group discussions. Issues that were mentioned frequently revolved around not knowing where to report to, mistrust in organisations (in particular, but not exclusively the police), lack of confidence the report would be treated appropriately or lead to any satisfying outcomes, as well as concerns to be seen as 'ungrateful' troublemakers and fears of negative implication for their career or even their residence status.

> "WE THOUGHT WE COULD ONLY CALL THE POLICE. WE DIDN'T KNOW THERE WERE OTHER ORGANISATIONS THAT WE COULD TALK TOO."
>
> Muslim woman (H.4)

> "...AND WHAT IF THE PERSON I ACCUSE [OF RACISM] THEN GOES TO THE POLICE. AND HE SPEAKS MUCH BETTER ENGLISH AND TELLS THEM THAT I LIE..."
>
> Muslim women of African background (Y.2)

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Many individual accounts illustrate how different factors often interplay and mutually reinforce people's reluctance to speak out and report racism. One common pattern was, for example, that many did not know about any reporting pathways other than police but had low levels of confidence and/or general trust in the police. The limited awareness of existing reporting and support options, particularly the services of the VEOHRC, also led some to believe they could not report racism *'unless it's something very serious, a crime, like someone physically assaulted you'* (H.2). This meant that some would not even consider reporting racist verbal abuse and discriminatory treatment.

The following selection of accounts from the focus groups illustrate the multitude of often interconnected reporting barriers.

Interplay between multiple barriers

Asked why he has never reported racism, a young man in a multicultural youth focus group (H.2) listed several barriers: *'I would not know where to go first. So, not knowing what channels or avenues are available [is one reason]. And the feeling that nothing would be done, or it's not serious enough or that others, the authorities, may not take it seriously. The biggest reason is probably not knowing. The obvious is the police station, but then, well, many of us already feel that police won't do much. But what else is out there?'*

A participant in a mixed Muslim focus group (D.1) stressed the issue of accountability, or the lack thereof, and how previous negative experiencing can deter people from reporting again: *'There is no immediate accountability, and all the energy and effort you are exerting [when reporting racism] … You are not going to get anywhere with it. Especially if you have tried in the past and you have been left …half-way, and nothing has been done about it, then you will never do anything about it ever again.'*

Many focus group participants mentioned concerns that reporting racism could have **negative effects** on their employment, their residence status or even their acceptance in society.

'Don't rock the boat'

A participant in a Chinese focus group (G.7) explained how they tend to accept racism as they *'want to and try to fit in. We come to accept a little bit of tough treatment. It's part of a learning curve and we also don't know our rights.'* A Somali-born woman (Y.2) was even more explicit: *'Don't talk bad, don't talk about racism in this country. They might hate you, it's not my country'.*

A woman in a Muslim focus group (D.1) referred to others in the community: *'I know from others: so much goes unreported because their English isn't good, they don't want to go to court, they don't want the government to think they are bad and complaining.'*

Another participant in the same focus group agreed that she and others in her community have refrained from reporting and how this is starting to change: *'No, no, no. We don't rock the boat. We don't want them to hate us. And this [sentiment] has been embedded in us as we were growing up here. "Don't make trouble, keep quiet, it will go away". But now we are rising up, and we can see that in the younger generation. And when my mum now says, "don't make a big deal", I say, no, I will make a big deal, I know my rights'.*

While many focus group participants called for greater accountability and consequences for the perpetrator of racism, other expressed different concerns that discouraged them from reporting: A woman of Middle Eastern background explained that she was reluctant to report also *'out of shame as they do not want to do something that affects the other person [i.e. the perpetrator]. Sometimes we leave that to God. He will take care of him.'* (H.1). Similarly, and referring to racism at work, a young man of African background (B.1) expressed concerns about *'the consequence for the person who was racist',* adding, *'They could lose their job'*.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Driven by personal negative experiences with police in Australia or in their country of birth or by their general sentiments towards police, several focus group participants were particularly reluctant to **report racism to Victoria Police**. This affects people's propensity to report at all given that, first, many were not aware of any reporting pathways other than police, and second, the police may be the only one who can help (e.g. where the incident constitutes a prejudice motives crime). Some expressed the view that the police themselves have an internal problem with racism.

Not reporting to police

A female participant in a focus group with people of African background elaborated: *'I think with the police, within their structures, they've got a big problem with racism. I myself have had multiple interactions with police. I know a lot of African people, friends and family, who have had multiple interactions with police. Every time I have been in public with a group of African or Black people – the train station or in the city – the police will just question us, "what are you doing?" It just makes people feel uncomfortable, so it just makes me think that if I have experienced racism, why I'm I going to report to the police, the perpetrators? It kinda creates a system where people who experience racism do not trust the police.'*

A participant in a mixed focus groups with young people of mostly Asian background (D.1) said: *'I find police to be racist as well because I have seen them pick on people of ethnic backgrounds as opposed to Caucasians. I will not report racist experience because they might just brush it off.'*

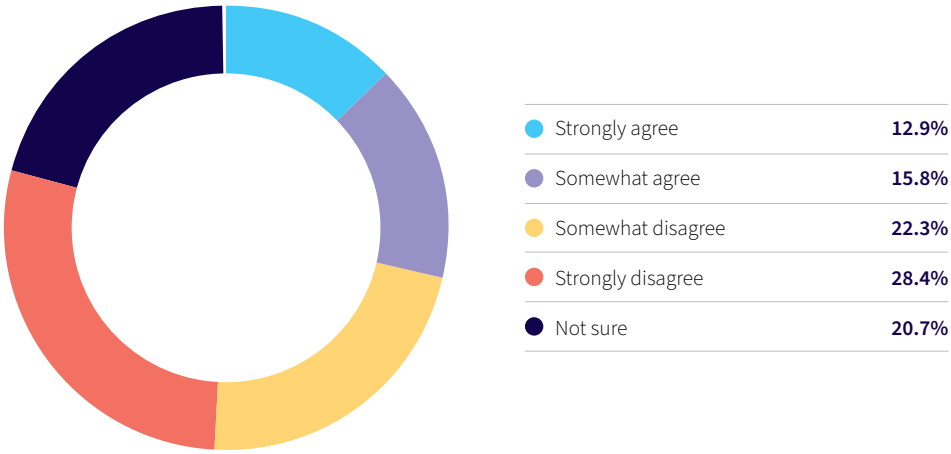
Existing and preferred reporting pathways

Closely tied to the issue of reporting barriers are the participants' views on existing reporting pathways and their level of awareness of different reporting options.

Only 28.7% of survey respondents strongly or somewhat agree that there are enough adequate reporting options for people in Victoria who have experienced racism. Just over half (50.7%) disagree strongly or somewhat, and 20.7% are unsure (which may suggest insufficient knowledge of reporting pathways to make such an assessment). An analysis of the responses to this question found that those respondents who have never experienced racism assess the existing reporting options significantly more positively than those who have experienced racism. The difference was statistically significant ($p<.001$) and large (Cohen's $d = 1.21$). In other words, those who have faced racism consider the existing reporting options substantially less adequate than graph 19 shows.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 19: THERE ARE ENOUGH ADEQUATE REPORTING OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE IN VICTORIA WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED RACISM (AGREEMENT LEVEL)



N=691

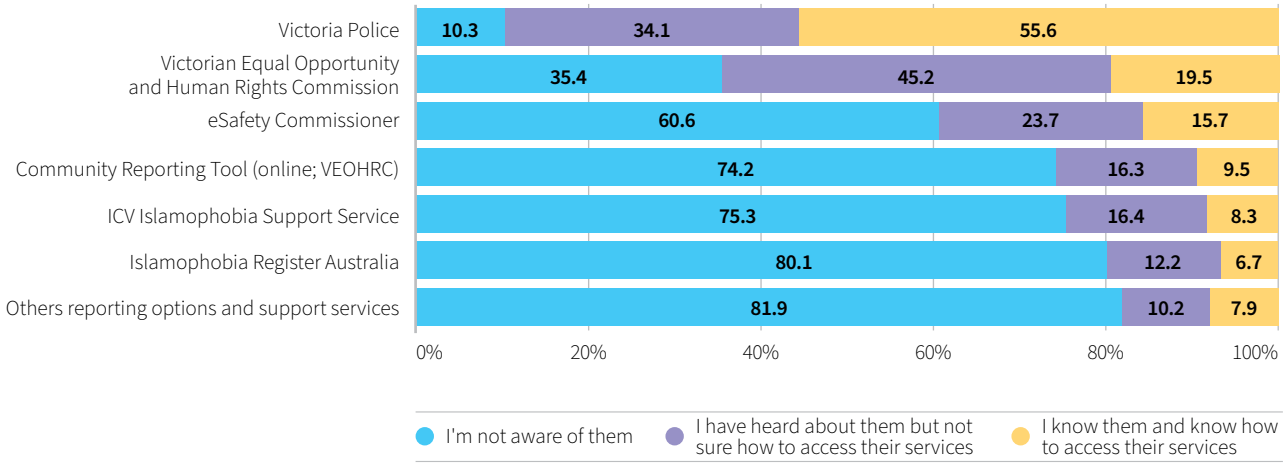
The abovementioned finding that around three-quarters of respondents did not report racism because they did not know where and how to do so draws attention to the level of community awareness of key agencies and community organisations tasked with receiving and responding to reports of (certain types of) racism-related experiences.

The only relevant organisation that a majority of participants (both in the survey and the focus group) are aware of was Victoria Police (Graph 20). This is even though most experiences of racism (e.g. everyday racism, discrimination) sit below the criminal threshold, which means the police would have very limited power to take decisive actions and investigate (other than possibly taking an information report).

A majority of survey respondents have also heard about VEOHRC but only one in five stated they knew how to access their services (19.5%), while 35.4% had never heard about it. Other reporting pathways and support services were much less known. Fewer than one in ten (9.5%) knew how to use the online Community Reporting Tool (CRT), developed and administered by VEOHRC, which allows individuals to report racism online and, if desired, connect with VEOHRC for free follow-up consultation and potentially lodging a formal complaint. The eSafety Commissioner, who has (limited) powers based on the Online Safety Act to request social media to take down highly abusive online material targeting individuals, was also not widely known with only 15.7% knowing how to access their support. Very few participants were aware of reporting options and anti-racism support services of specialised community organisations, such as the Victoria-based ICV Islamophobia Support Service or the national Islamophobia Register Australia, set up specifically for Muslim community members.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 20: AWARENESS OF ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR ANTI-RACISM SERVICES



N=491 (others) – 673 (VEOHRC)

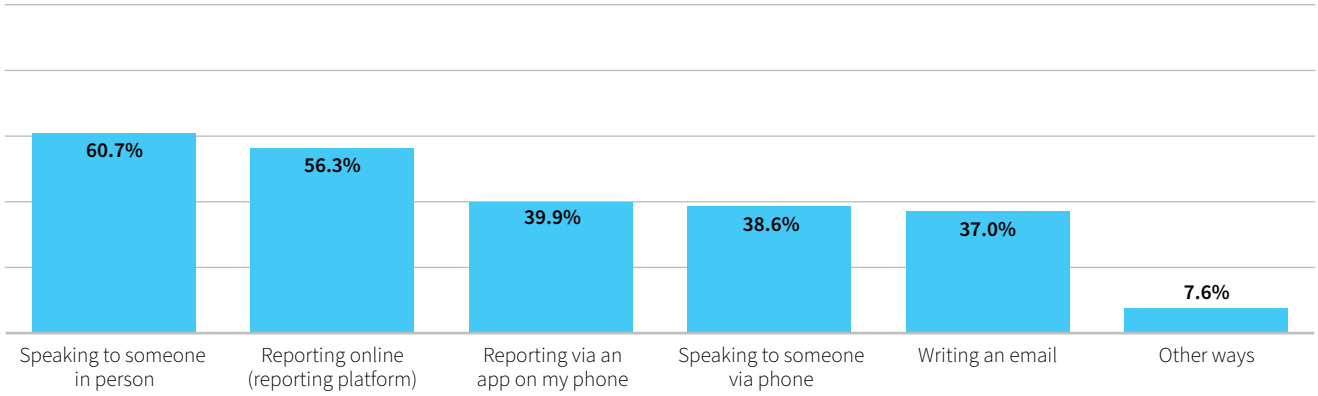
While promoting these existing services more actively across communities affected by racism could be an effective measure to improve reporting and access to support, it appears also crucial to better align reporting pathways with individuals' preferences of ***how*** to report racism. Almost all survey participants considered it very important (71.2%) or somewhat important (24.5%) to have the option of reporting an incident of racism anonymously. This does not mean that everyone wants to remain anonymous, but there was a widely shared view that such an option should be available.

Asked about their preferred way of reporting an experience of racism, two main preference types emerged from the analysis (Graph 21): The most favoured reporting mode, preferred by 60.7% of the respondents, is speaking to someone in person, followed by an almost equal proportion of people who wish to report online via a reporting platform. Fewer, but still a notable proportion of, respondents stated they would (also) like to have an app on their phone to report racism (39.9%), speak to someone on the phone (38.6%) and/or write an email (37.0%).

> "HAVING DIFFERENT [REPORTING] OPTIONS – ONLINE BASED, PHONE, IN-PERSON – TO RESPOND TO PEOPLE`S DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COMFORT IS IMPORTANT."
>
> Survey respondent from Brazil (open text response)

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 21: PREFERRED MODES OF REPORTING RACISM



N=685 (Respondents could selected more than one response)

In the focus groups, several participants called for *'quicker and easier means of reporting'* (G.1), for example, through an online reporting system, an app, via phone, or even a Chat bot. Some of them suggested setting up a dedicated multilingual racism reporting hotline that can be reached via a phone number that *'people don't have to google to find out, something everyone can remember, like 1800Racism'* (G.1). Some saw these easy reporting pathways also as an opportunity to connect with in-personal support, while others explained how they just want to report and *'be done with it,'* as a young Muslim man said (D.1):

I don't want to spend a lot of time going to the police or anything like that. It takes aware my concentration. I want to do a 2-minute survey and report and be done with …maybe an app. Quickly, be done with it. I don't want to relive the experience. I want it submitted and acknowledged and that it's been taken care of. But I don't want phone calls and stuff. That's my generation, we just want to be done with it.

Similarly, in response to the survey question about what kind of support is needed, a survey respondent of Middle Eastern origin noted: '*None, don't want to draw attention and make it a big deal. Rather say what I experienced, then continue on normally.*'

Overall, the survey and focus group findings indicate that there is **no one-size-fits-all reporting mode** and that reporting pathways need to be diversified in order to cater for individual preferences and the specific nature of the reported incident.

4.3 SUPPORT SERVICES AND NEEDS

The survey data analysis highlights that a particularly common reason for formally reporting racism is to help raise awareness that racism continues to be an issue. At the same time, one of the most important ***benefits*** for the individuals is that reporting typically enables the person to access certain support services. A key premise of this project was that one way of encouraging more reporting is to improve support services and bring them more in line with the support expectations of those who face racism.

This section explores the question: How do people from culturally and racially marginalised communities in Victoria assess the current support infrastructure in this space – and how well aligned are existing support offers with their support needs?

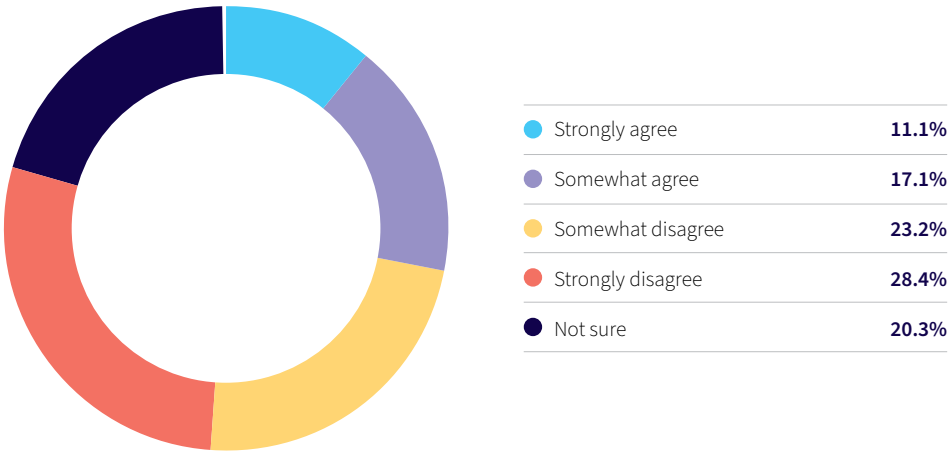
4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Views of support services

Similar to the assessment of reporting pathways, a majority of survey respondents (51.6%) do not think that the currently available support services for those who experience racism in Victoria are appropriate and sufficient. Only 28.2% are of the view that there are enough adequate anti-racism support services. The remaining 20.3% were not sure, which may indicate they were not sufficiently familiar with such services to assess their appropriateness.

The survey data analysis further revealed that those who stated they had never experienced racism in Australia had a more positive view of the support infrastructure than those who have experienced racism. These differences were statistically significant (p<.001) and large (Cohen's d = 1.19).

GRAPH 22: THERE ARE ENOUGH SERVICES AND ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDE APPROPRIATE SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE IN VICTORIA WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED RACISM (AGREEMENT LEVEL)



N=686

Like the survey findings, the focus group analysis indicate that many are dissatisfied with what they regard as the current support services. A participant in a focus group of Somali women (B.3) said, for example, *'I don't think we have enough support services.'* A Chinese focus group participant (G.7) concluded that *'the current system does not really help us at all.'* Asked about the strengths and gaps of current support, a young man in a multicultural youth focus group (H.2) responded sarcastically, *'What support services?'.*

Some criticised the support infrastructure as *'bureaucracy-heavy'* (G.1) and *'too entrenched, institutionalised or under resourced to engage at a personal level with those subjected to racism'* (G.2). Others pointed to the 'lack of lived experience' within these support services (D.1): *'They don't understand',* as a participant in a Muslim focus group maintained (D.1). Another participant in a multicultural (predominantly Asian background) focus group (G.5) directed their criticism in particular towards government-led support services:

> ***I am getting hopeless about the Australian government protecting us from racism. In general, the people working in those departments are locals – people from [white, Anglo-Saxon] cultural background. Even with support services, there are mainly the locals working there, so basically, they don't see the problem itself.***

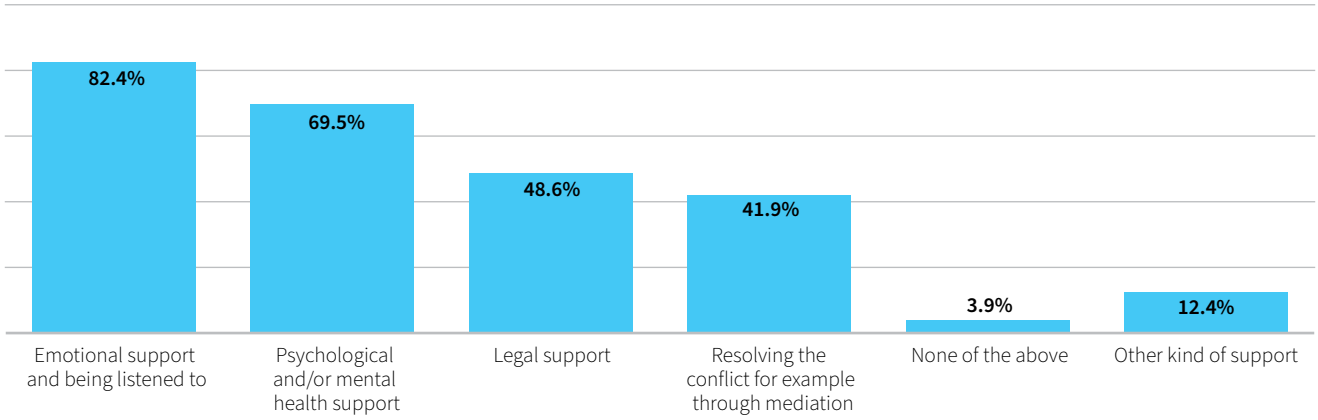
4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Support needs

The low level of awareness about existing support services and how to access them (see Graph 20) is likely to factor in the widespread views that the support service infrastructure in Victoria is inappropriate. Another potentially significant factor is the frequently observed mismatch between existing support services and the type of support that individuals seek after experiencing racism. As discussed above, apart from raising awareness and holding the perpetrator to account, the next most common motivation to report is to get emotional and psychological support and to find someone 'who really listens'. Around 52% and 40% respectively consider these to be among the main reasons for reporting (see Graph 12).

This **need for empathy and emotional support** in the reporting process was further highlighted in the responses to the question that asked what kind of support people usually seek after an experience with racism. More than eight out of ten (82.3%) regard 'emotional support and being listened to' as crucial, and seven out of ten (69.5%) believe that 'psychological and/or mental health support' was what individuals need after an experience of racism. Seeking 'legal support' (48.6%) or conflict resolution through mediation (41.9%) were mentioned significantly less often.

GRAPH 23: MAIN TYPES OF SUPPORT NEEDED AFTER HAVING EXPERIENCED RACISM



N=693 (Respondents could selected more than one response)

The qualitative analysis of the open text responses in the survey as well as the focus group discussion further underscore the primacy of emotional support immediately after an experience of racism. Several participants expressed the desire for **validation and acknowledgment** of what happened to the individual and for a space where they can regain a **sense of safety**. A Fiji-Indian survey respondent wrote, for example: *'People usually don't seek legal help straight away after facing racism. It's more about being heard; emotional support; expressing anger; disbelief; how to protect oneself. Lots of questions and doubts as well. Questioning as to why it happened to you.'* A female Chinese wrote in the survey: *'I want follow-up care afterwards and create a safety plan!'*

An African-Australian survey respondent articulated the need for 'validation', which, she argued, should be provided by people with lived experience:

> ***Validation; sometimes outsiders might never understand the little nuances of racism. Instead of gaslighting us and making us think that we are overthinking things, we need to be validated a lot more as only us know what these kinds of experiences feel, look and sound like.***

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Some of the discussions in the focus group also highlighted the needs for emotional support and empathy after an experience of racism. A Somali woman (B.2), who was 'not satisfied with the experience of reporting racism to the Department of Education and to the police, asked, for example: *'So what else can I do, where can I go, is there another organisation I can go just to tell how I feel about living in the community, about being seen and treated differently compared to others'*. A participant in a Chinese focus group (G.7) shared a similar view: *'People need a place to talk, possibly even need professional support and help to recover from the trauma of the incident. If no support and no reporting, racism becomes bigger and bigger.'*

4.4 COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES: WAYS TO ENCOURAGE REPORTING AND IMPROVE SUPPORT SERVICES

The survey and focus groups provided a platform for communities affected by racism to share their views on how reporting and support services can be improved in order to encourage more reporting and to ensure support is more responsive to the needs and expectations of those who face racism.

Survey findings: Adequate services and trusted organisations

The survey invited participants to think about what would need to change to 'make it more likely for [them] to report experiences of racism and seek support' (Graph 24). The most highly ranked feature of such an improved system is that 'the person who reports the incident needs to be kept informed about the process and outcome of their case'; 71.8% of respondents considered this of utmost importance, giving it a 10 on a 'importance scale' from 1 to 10. This is followed by the need for these services to be (more) culturally sensitive (70.3%) and calls to further promote existing services within affected communities (70.3%). Other characteristics that were seen as highly important by a majority of respondents include:

- that services should be offered by trusted organisations (66.5%),
- be provided in different community languages (65.3%) and
- be 'better qualified to respond' (60.3%).

Many survey respondents also stated they would be more likely to report racism if the support services were provided locally and if the support were run by 'people from the respective community'. While these two features were considered important by many, they seem to be less of a priority for some respondents than the other factors mentioned above (Graph 24).

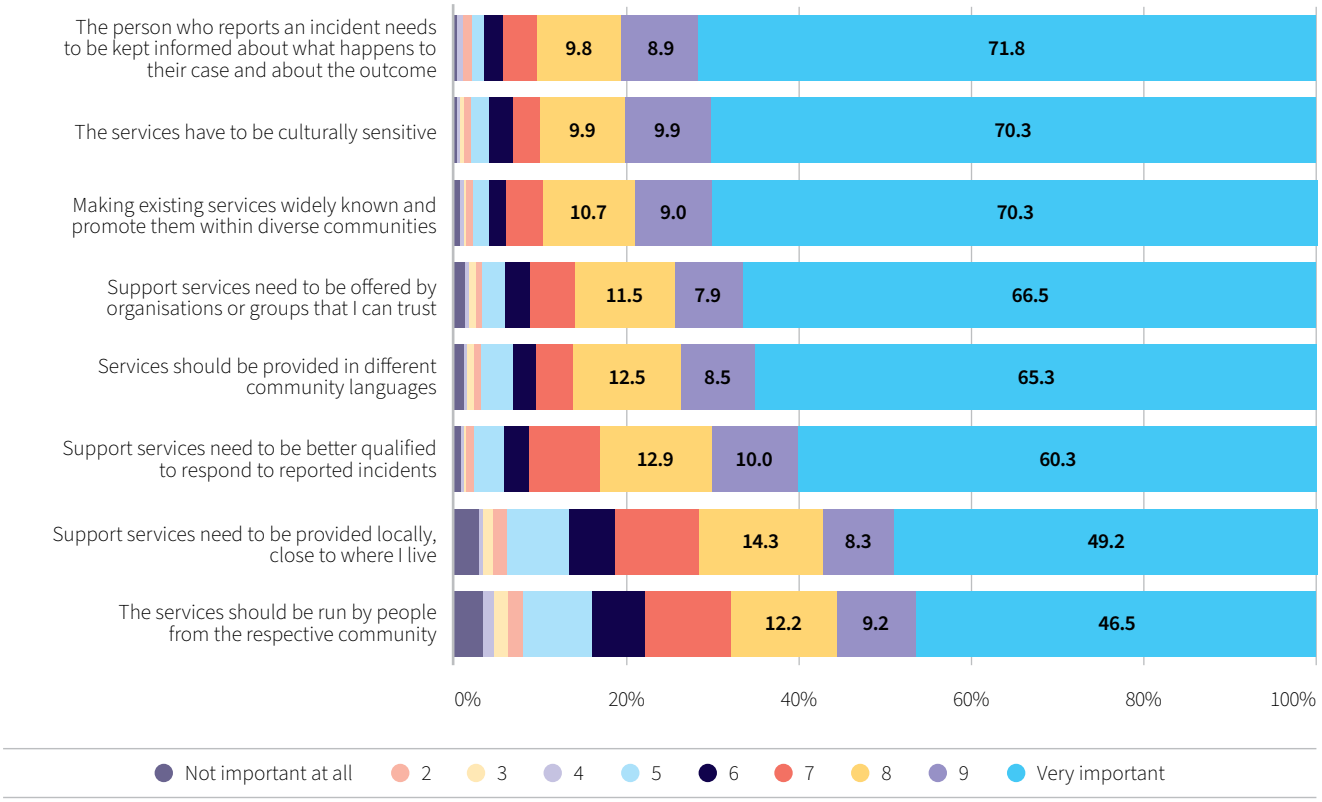
Respondents were asked what organisations they would feel comfortable speaking to about an experience of racism (Graph 25). The responses provide instructive insights about which organisations are generally considered trustworthy – a very important feature of an improved reporting and anti-racism support system (see Graph 24).

Rating different organisations on a five-star scale, the survey responses show that the two statutory human rights agencies, VEOHRC and, on the national level, the AHRC, received the most favourable assessment. Almost 60 percent would feel comfortable reporting to VEOHRC[8] (5 stars: 41.9%; 4 stars: 17.4%) and/or the AHRC (5 stars: 37.9%; 4 stars: 19.3%), while around one in six expressed they would feel uncomfortable (1 or 2 stars) reporting to these agencies.

8 In relation to this overall positive rating for VEOHRC, it is worth noting, as outline earlier (see Graph 20), that less than one in five respondents knew how to access VEOHRC's services.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 24: FEATURES THAT WOULD MAKE REPORTING MORE LIKELY



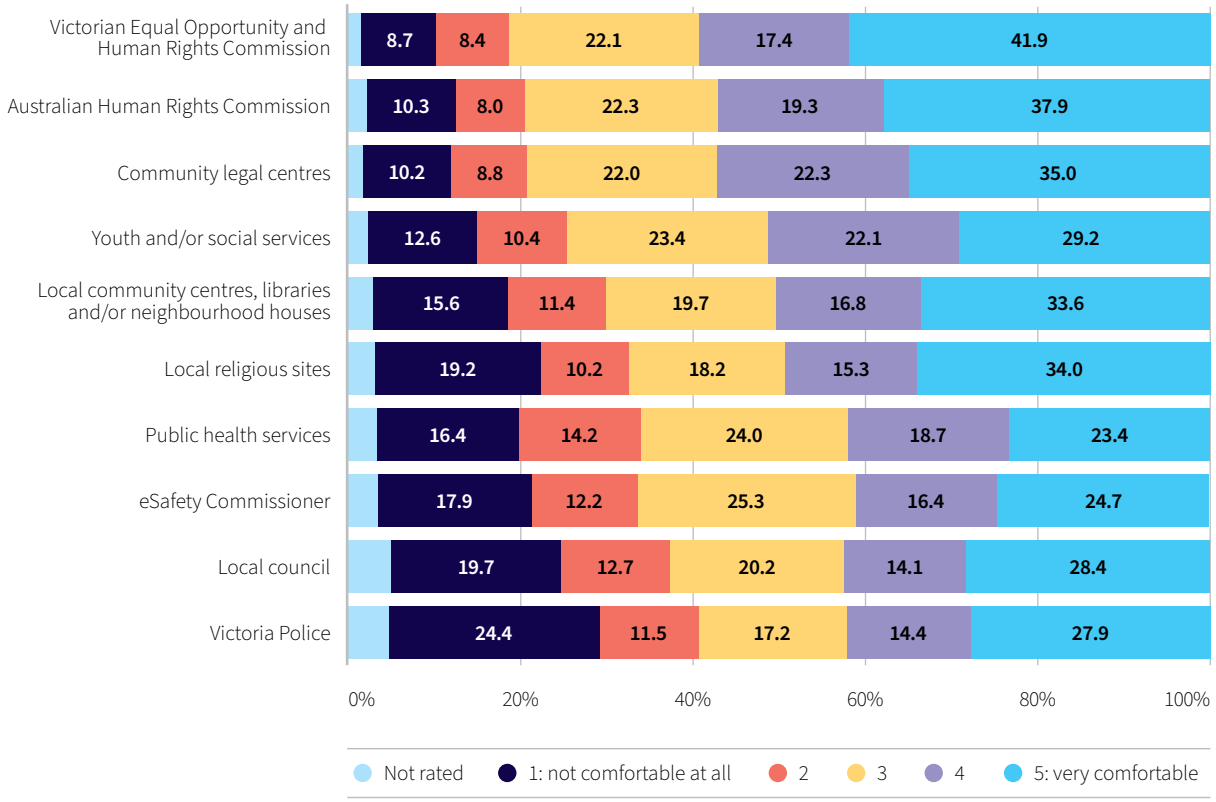
N=668-639

A majority of respondents also felt comfortable speaking to a community legal centre (4 or 5 stars: 57.5%), youth and/or social services (51.3%) and/or their local community centre, library or neighbourhood house (50.4%). Local religious sites, such as the local mosque or temple, seemed to be trusted sites where many respondents would feel comfortable speaking to about their experiences of racism with 49.7% rating them highly (4 or 5 stars). Given that not all respondents were of a particular faith, this finding suggests high levels of trust in local religious organisations among those of respective faith communities.

Survey respondents appear more divided when it comes to reporting racism to their local council or to Victoria Police. Although around 42% would feel comfortable doing so (4 or 5 stars), 32.4% and 35.9% respectively ranked these two organisations low (1 or 2 stars). Almost a quarter of respondents (24.4%), for example, give the lowest rating for Victoria Police, pointing to high reluctance among significant segments to report to police.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 25: ORGANISATIONS PEOPLE WOULD FEEL COMFORTABLE SPEAKING TO ABOUT AN EXPERIENCE OF RACISM



N=601-565

Community voices: how to improve reporting and support services

In their open text responses in the survey and during the focus groups many participants mentioned various (sometimes locally specific) organisations that could act as first points of contact for people who experience racism. Largely confirming the quantitative survey findings, these included community-based organisations, local community centres, libraries and neighbourhood houses, and public health and other service providers, but also internal workplace-related services such as the Employment Assistance Program (EAP) or the offices of their local Members of Parliament.

In line with the quantitative survey findings, the qualitative analysis of the open text responses and the focus groups found a relatively widespread **reluctance to report to police** (unless, as many stated, the incident involved physical harm). As an alternative, many expressed the need to have a **trusted go-to person or organisation in the community** where they feel safe and 'understood'.

> "YOUTH WORKERS AND YOUTH SERVICE! THEIR JOB IS IT TO HELP, RIGHT. TO EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE. SO THAT WOULD BE A GREAT TOOL TO USE."

Young African-Australian man (Y.4)

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Some focus group participants stressed that such a go-to person would not need to be from the same cultural, ethnic or religious background but called for culturally safe spaces, for example proposing certain local service providers (e.g. public health service), community hubs or other community groups to take on such a role. Several participants, for example, suggested that bicultural workers or other social or youth workers, ideally with bilingual skills, would be well placed to provide initial support. Others preferred establishing anti-racism support within their own community where *'they understand the language, they understand our journey, we don't have to explain everything, they went through the same things'* (focus group participant of Middle Eastern background, H.1). A Somali focus group participant (D.5), for example, stated:

> ***As a [Somali] community we need a platform where people can come to and report… go to someone in the community who can help you … we need to organise within the community, a place where community members, also our women, can go to for help.***

The survey invited respondents to share their suggestions on how to improve reporting and support service in Victoria. Over 100 respondents used this open text box to make substantial comments. The analysis of these comments, together with the focus group discussions, identified several areas where affected communities called for improvement. The four most salient community recommendations are outlined in the following subsections.

Promoting existing services

It is not surprising that one of the key request form communities was to better promote existing services, given how many people did not report racism because they didn't know where and how to do so (75% of survey respondents agreed this was one of their reasons for not reporting, Graph 18) and given the low level of awareness of exiting reporting and support services (Graph 20). Many participants called on government to demonstrate their commitment to addressing racism by 'putting out flyers' (D.5) or running social media campaigns. Others emphasised the active role of communities, urging greater engagement with communities to raise awareness of reporting pathways and support services and to strengthen *'authentic community voices that tell the community that a certain service is available if or when you experience racism'* (D.5).

The participants' calls on government to ramp up their promotion efforts reflect the sentiment that the lack of community awareness of exiting services should not be seen as a community deficit or their failure to obtain information. Instead, the onus was put on the government and pertinent agencies to increase their efforts to promote these services within affected communities. *'The government needs to take responsibility in this area and deliver awareness sessions … about what is racism and that it is unlawful in Victoria',* as one participant of Middle Eastern background (H.1) demanded. Others suggested more proactive measures within employment or at school to make sure everyone knows what to do when facing racism. A young Somali-Muslim man (B.1), for example, saw a duty of care at work or school: *'So, for employment or schools, they should tell everyone when you come on board who and how to contact when you experience racism.'*

> **"IF GOVERNMENT SENT A CLEAR SIGN OF SUPPORT AND THAT THEY CARE AND TAKE IT SERIOUSLY, MORE PEOPLE WOULD REPORT"**
>
> Muslim focus group participant (D.1)

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Greater accountability and consequences for racist conduct

Reflecting the prevalent concern that reporting racism would do little to change the problem, many participants argued (both in the open text sections of the survey and the focus group) that people's inclination to report would increase if there were greater accountability and real consequences for the perpetrators. Currently, many of them argued, there are few repercussions for racist behaviour.

A young Muslim man of African background stated (B.1): *'The biggest problem is to appropriately communicate with the communities. How to better promote the existing services? It's just not spoken about in public or on social media. So, it's a lack of awareness and communication.'*

A Somali focus group participants (D.5) expressed a similar view: *'Put out flyers and more [communication] with the community: "If you face racism, this is where you can go to, this is who you can call!" But we don't know any of that. Maybe promote through social media. They should tell the people in our community if you face racism, this is the number you can call. These are the people you can report to. Or even just the link to the website where you can report. I don't know any of that. So, tell the community about the website or whatever service there is.'*

Survey respondents used the open text option to make similar suggestions:

- *'Engage with local communities and organizations to promote reporting and support initiatives.'*
- *'I think informing and providing awareness to the community through local council is very important. Knowing about the rights of people and information about different mechanism and support system that are available for locals will substantially help to reduce the occurrence and response to discrimination such as racism.*
- *'I think people need to know the process, e.g. how the complaint will be investigated, will there be consequences and follow-up?'*
- *'More awareness that there are programs and ways that their report can be anonymous and confidential'*

Recalling an incident where his friend, a Muslim woman, was attacked by someone in the supermarket who tried to pull off her hijab, a focus group participant said: *'Police doesn't do anything. It's a hopeless situation because people usually get away with that shit. Also at the workplace, you have to tolerate a lot of nonsense from your colleagues, like they call you a "curry muncher"'* (D.4). A young man of African background shared a similar view on the lack of 'appropriate consequences' and argued, in relation to racism at school, that this would discourage him from reporting:

> ***I rather talk to the person himself instead of [reporting] to the coordinator, because I think, from experiences, the person doesn't get the appropriate consequences. It keeps on going, so we have to put it into our own hands to resolve the issue instead of reporting it or going to the school or whatever… At the moment, they just don't get the appropriate consequences for their actions, they are let off easy and they can keep doing it.***

While participants had different ideas of what constitutes adequate consequences, there was a widely shared view that reporting would need to result in meaningful actions, responses and accountability. Otherwise, the high personal costs of reporting would be in vain. One survey respondent wrote:

> ***We need to know that the mental and emotional sacrifice of reporting will be worth it. That it will result in an outcome. Why would I report racism if nothing will be done. There needs to be repercussions***

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

> ***and penalties for racist behaviours, and even for microaggressions. Even if it's just launching an investigation into an organisation… Something that will actually help. Otherwise, I have no use to report.***

Several participants wanted to see *'actual repercussions for being blatantly racist or even covertly'*, identifying *'a lack of consequences'* as the main problem: *'I believe the consequences should be more serious but as we know it is usually a business decision'* (G.4). Another participant in a Muslim focus group captured the sentiments among their group when they stated: *'I haven't seen enough people who face consequences… there needs to be more than a slap of the wrist'.* This would not only increase reporting but also leads to a reduction in racism in the first, they argued (D.1). In the same focus groups, participants also expressed criticism of the current legal protection against racism. *'The law does not give a crap!'*, one participant said, and others called for stronger laws against vilification and other forms of racism.

Some were generally concerned with what they regarded as a lack of accountability. A Muslim woman (D.1), for example, shared an experience of racist harassment at a car park saying she wanted to see 'immediate accountability'. After having passed on the perpetrator's number plate to police, she would have expected the police to act:

> ***The police should have called the guy and told him and [I wanted] reassurance from the police. They should have at least called him and given him a warning. That would have made you feel better. But if the police has not validated it the first time, what's the use [of reporting again].***

Another participant responded by highlighted how a lack of action in responses to reporting racism can discourage people from reporting again:

> ***I agree, and there is no immediate accountability. And all the energy and effort you are exerting, you tell yourself, you are not going to get anywhere with it. Especially if you have tried in the past and you have been left …half-way, and nothing has been done about it, then you will never do anything about it ever again.***

One of the few positive accounts indicate that the reporting experience is much more positive if it results in consequences for the perpetrator. A young Somali man (B.1) shared how he was racially bullied and beaten up at school in Year 8. He reported the perpetrators to the school leadership: *'They were given suspensions and what not, at the time I thought it was enough in terms of consequences and to stop them from doing it again. Reporting experience was pretty good.'*

In addition to calls for accountability and consequences, several participants also suggested that in cases where there were repercussions for the perpetrator, these outcomes needed to be better communicated to the individual but also to the wider community. This would send a message that racism is not accepted whilst encouraging more people who face racism to report it.

A participant in a mixed-Asian focus group (G.1) stressed the *'need for the outcomes to be communicated back, so we can see some meaningful change from reporting it.'* Other participants in the same focus group suggest that *'mainstream media or social media'* should report more about racism and especially about the outcomes of racism complaints *'so people are aware there are consequences for racism, but it's always swept under rug'.* Similarly, participants in a Muslim focus group (D.1) suggested that *'the media should report about the consequences for the perpetrator, not only about the incident itself.'*

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Cultural safety

The need for reporting and support services to provide a culturally safe experience has been highlighted in the survey responses – and it was also consistently described as a key feature of improved services in the focus groups. This was discussed from various perspectives. Some highlighted the importance of personal connection and trust or that the service is provided by someone 'who speaks our language' (D.2). Many expressed the desire for deep empathy for and understanding of experiences of racism.

A focus group participant of Middle Eastern background (H.1) said: *'We would have to feel we are in a safe space in order to express what we feel, a culturally safe place, where we can be supported'*. Another participant suggested a specific community organisation to play such a role and added, *'because they understand the language, they understand our journey, we don't have to explain everything, they went through the same things'*.

Others similarly proposed that alternative places should be established within the community where people can find support. A young Somali-Muslim woman (B.2), for example, asked for a community space 'where we can go, where they can understand and being in my shoes. A third party from our community that can understand, and alternative… so I don't have to go to the police.'

Many focus group participants emphasised the support should be provided locally or referred to specific **local community organisations** or community centres as a place they trust and would be comfortable speaking to about their experiences of racism. A participant in a Somali women's focus group (D.2) said: *'We have to talk to someone when this happens. Get some help, in the local area. Where we don't have to be scared and can just say that it was not fair and ask for help, in the community.'* Another participant in this group added:

> ***If we could report to Your Community Health, we would be more comfortable. Also here at East Preston Community Centre, that's our comfort zone and we can talk to them. They are familiar with us, and I am comfortable to come here. We can't go to Darebin local police unless violence is involved. Even if we can just report here at the community centre, even if they can't do anything. Someone should be employed who speaks our language, our culture, who understands us.***

> **"PROVIDE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT! COMMUNITY-BASED AND PROFESSIONAL AND CULTURALLY SENSITIVE."**
>
> Chinese-Australian focus group participant (G.7)

4. FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? (CONTINUED)

Advocacy-focused support to navigate the system

Related to these calls for culturally safe community spaces to complement existing reporting and support services, participants shared different views on the roles of such community-based support. An important expectation revolves around advocacy. Several participants shared how they felt 'helpless' and 'unsupported' when trying to report or resolve an incident of racism through existing channels. Against the backdrop of such experiences, many expressed the need for help from someone who 'has our back basically' (D.1) and can assist in navigating the reporting and support system and advocate for meaningful outcomes.

A Muslim woman (D.1.) put it bluntly: *'I don't care whether it's a Muslim service. Any service, Muslim and non-Muslim. I got my English skills. I'm not afraid to speak out. I want something done! Some who can represent us to make sure something is done'*.

Several others emphasised that this support should be provided by a trusted person or group (Y.4), *'someone who can advance this and get something done, to help you with what you need, someone who cares'*. Some proposed that local libraries or community hubs could train a staff member who can support people who experience of racisms by referring them to specialised services.

Participants in an Arabic-speaking focus group (H.1) suggested that the local priest could also assist. One person said: *'go and report to the priest. We can go to him, and he can, through his connections, pass the report on to others. [There are also] community groups who could do that…they can help navigate the system.'* Similarly, participants in a Chinese focus group (G.7) argued that the current support system should be *'complemented by Chinese grassroots community [group] that can help people navigate the system and explain where to get support.'*

A woman in a Somali focus group (D.5) called for community-based advocacy and support, which would also include assistance in reporting to specialised services such as the VEOHRC on behalf of the individual:

> ***As a (Somali) community we need a platform where people can come to and report, and we can then pass this on to them [VEOHRC]. We also need to educate our community, we often don't talk about these things, people are scared. We should say, "listen, you should not be scared, go to someone in the community who can help you". They can then send the report to them [VEOHRC]. We need to organise within the community, a place where community members, also our women can go to for help.***

> **"IF THERE IS A PROBLEM AT SCHOOL, FOR EXAMPLE, AND THEY DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE MANAGEMENT, THEY CAN COME TO THE CASE MANAGER, FOR EXAMPLE AT ARABIC WELFARE, WHO CAN ADVOCATE ON THEIR BEHALF WITH THE SCHOOL."**
>
> Arabic speaking focus group (H.1)

5. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION: MOVING FORWARD

One main purpose of this project was to understand community experiences and sentiment in relation to speaking out against and reporting racism and support needs for those who experience racism. Another was to systematically capture what needs to change to better align Victoria's anti-racism reporting and support infrastructure with community expectations and needs. This final chapter synthetises what we have learned from communities, proposing a series of concrete actions for different stakeholders to consider in order to move towards reporting pathways and support services that better cater for the diverse needs of Victoria's communities affected by racism.

1. AWARENESS RAISING: RACISM, RIGHTS, EXISTING REPORTING PATHWAYS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

A consistently raised community demand revolves around building greater awareness about the persistence of racism and the various ways in which racism can manifest and harm individuals and communities. Workplaces and especially schools were regarded as ideal sites for such **racial literacy** trainings and workshops, which should be offered to people with and without lived experience of racism. One example that was suggested several times was to run school incursion sessions similar to existing programs such as on cyber safety.

In addition, and more closely related to the issue of reporting and support, there is a great need for more (and more effective) engagement with grassroots communities to build awareness of their **legal rights** in relation to racism as well as existing **reporting pathways and pertinent support services**. This should not be seen as a one-off effort but requires ongoing commitment. Regular community-led forums and workshops, social media campaigns as well as offline poster and flyer campaigns are some of the ways in which such awareness raising measures could be implemented by various stakeholders (e.g. local and state government, community organisations). They need to be transparent in highlighting what services are best placed for different types of racism, what they can offer and what outcomes can be expected.

One concrete step that could be taken quickly is to promote the VEOHRC's online **Community Reporting Tool (CRT)** more extensively. Making it widely known and accessible to Victoria's communities is important, given how many people from affected communities would prefer an online platform to report racism and how few of them seem to be aware of the CRT.

2. IMPROVING EXISTING REPORTING PATHWAYS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Many participants expressed critical views of existing reporting pathways and support services. The shortcomings, according to community perspectives, relate mainly to the imbalance between high costs of reporting (e.g. time investment, emotional stress) and the expected, often unsatisfactory outcomes. The imbalance can be addressed in different ways.

First, communities called for **greater accountability** for the perpetrators of racism. This may include tightening anti-racism legislation (as is currently planned in the context of vilifications) and more

consistent enforcement of existing legislation (e.g. positive duty in the Equal Opportunity Act or investigating racist verbal abuse as a criminal offence with a prejudiced motivation).

Secondly, the **'costs' of reporting** can be reduced by making the reporting process easier, less burdensome and more empowering. This can be accomplished by, for example, building more culturally safe spaces, providing more services in community languages by qualified staff with lived experience of racism. Moreover, reporting and support should be made available in-person wherever possible to cater for community preferences. Another feature of adequate reporting and support services, stressed by most participants, is that the person who reports their experience of racism must be kept informed of any follow-up activities and outcomes of these processes.

We also identified a need for **empathetic, partisan support and advocacy** for those who experienced and report racism. Statutory agencies such as VEOHRC and Victoria Police are mandated to remain impartial and independent; they are therefore not well positioned to fulfill such an advocacy role. This points to the need for alternative community-led services to complement the existing reporting pathways and support infrastructure (see No.3).

One important step towards improving reporting experiences and access to adequate support within the existing system is to address the **overreliance on police**. Many community members are not aware of any reporting options other than police. Consequently, they often end up not reporting at all (e.g., considering the incident as not serious enough) or reporting an incident where police are not well placed to provide adequate support (e.g., the incident is below the criminal threshold). This can often result in disappointment with police response.

One way to address this problem is, as mentioned above (No.1), to strengthen community awareness of different reporting pathways and what service is most suitable to provide support in their particular case. Another approach is to ensure that any local police station that receive a report about an allegedly racist incident (that is not a crime) can encourage the reporting person to contact the VEOHRC and possibly hand out an information sheet about anti-racism support services (see No. 4). Implementing such an informal referral practice would require training and leadership commitment in the individual police stations.

3. ESTABLISHING ALTERNATIVE COMMUNITY-LED ANTI-RACISM SERVICES

Community organisations and community service providers usually have greater flexibility in how they can respond to reports of racism and provide assistance to their clients or community members. This flexibility would often allow them also to advocate for those who report an experience of racism to them and seek support. These organisations often enjoy **high levels of trust** among parts of local multicultural or multifaith communities, which many regarded as a very important feature of anti-racism support provision. What organisations and service providers are best placed to act as a first go-to contact for people experience racism depends on the local context. The project findings identified, however, certain types of organisations which people would generally feel comfortable reporting racism to. These include community legal centres, youth and/or social services, local community centre, library or neighbourhood house as well as local religious sites.

Against this backdrop, a key issue for consideration for improving current reporting and support structures is to identify trusted (local) community organisations, build their capacity to respond to reports of racism from their community members or clients, and promote these alternative anti-racism services in the community. This would require resourcing these community organisations to enable them to establish themselves as **local anti-racism hubs** and/or build **local anti-racism support networks**. These organisations or networks could also explore how to set a system for collecting racism-related complaints and incidents, possibly with a specific focus on a certain local area (e.g. local government areas), which could be used for advocacy purposes and as an evidence base for targeted anti-racism actions in the local area.

4. BUILDING BROAD ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON ANTI-RACISM SUPPORT

In addition to improving existing support services (No.2) and establishing alternative community-led support (No.3), we propose building the capacity of various actors to **provide basic information** (e.g., referral suggestions) to community members about existing reporting options and anti-racism support. This role would require less commitment than forming an anti-racism hub or joining a local anti-racism network (see above), and it could be fulfilled by, among others, local councils, the offices of local members of parliament, various service providers and community grassroots organisations who may not have the capacity to commit to becoming an anti-racism hub. Representatives from these organisations could take part in a basic training to build their capacity to offer directions to their clients or community members who have experienced racism on reporting and support options.

In this context, we also propose developing a concise **anti-racism support booklet** with key information about anti-racism protection, reporting pathways and support services available in Victoria, including basic information about when to contact which service and how. Such a booklet should be made available and promoted both online and offline, in various community languages and continuously updated. Ideally, it would be published with locally specific information, for example about local services (e.g. local community legal centre), local police stations and, once established, local community-led anti-racism hubs. The booklet forms part of the awareness raising efforts, mentioned above (No.1).

5. IMPROVING ANTI-RACISM SUPPORT WHERE IT HAPPENS: SCHOOLS, WORKPLACES, SHOPPING CENTRES AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In Victoria, employers, schools, clubs and sporting organisations as well as providers of goods and services have a positive duty under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 to take measures to prevent discrimination, victimisation and harassment and respond appropriately when it happens. Given the prevalence of racist incidents including discrimination especially in employment, schools, shopping centres and on public transport, we recommend working with these duty holders to enhance their **awareness of their 'positive duty'** and build of their capacity to prevent and respond appropriately to racism within their sphere of influence. This could encompass a range of measures such as internal anti-racism training and awareness raising programs (see above), but also establishing adequate response structures and clear reporting pathways for those who experience racism, especially in schools or in employment. This would provide greater opportunities for those experiencing racism to efficiently resolve the issue within the organisational context where it has happened, such as the workplace or the school, where this is possible and preferred by those affected.

Given how frequently racist incidents and practices occur in **shopping centres and on public transport**, an issue for consideration is to work directly with the shopping centre and retail management as well as public transport providers to develop anti-racism campaigns (e.g. posters or announcements), review internal practices and provide targeted anti-racism training and by-stander intervention training (e.g. security services, staff, bus/tram drivers).

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