AUSTRALIAN
YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT
INDEX 2020

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities throughout Australia and the input provided by the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait young people and elders for this project. We would like to also acknowledge the contribution of these communities and their elders, past and present, who contribute to the vibrancy and strength of this nation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2019 there were 3.25 million young Australians aged 15–24 years, representing 13 percent of the total population.[1] This period of youth development holds the potential to influence life trajectory for participation in society, personal health, wellbeing, and productivity. During this time, a young person may complete education and training, enter the workforce, commence an active healthy life, and have positive social connections which are all fundamental to individual and also community wellbeing. Tracking youth development data is crucial for the creation of evidence-based policies to address challenges young people face and promote positive development. Identifying the most vulnerable youth in society is particularly important to appropriately target policies and programs, ensuring every young Australian has the opportunity to thrive.

The Australian Youth Development Index (AYDI) analyses the state of youth development across the country, using internationally tested methodology for the Global Youth Development Index (YDI). For the purpose of this report, youth is defined at 15–24 years of age, noting no international agreement has been reached on the definition of youth (see Section 5.2). This report builds on previous work for the AYDI 2016, refined and targeted to reflect current priorities from stakeholders. The AYDI is not an exhaustive measure of youth development but provides a holistic snapshot using 25 indicators split into six domains (see Section 5.5).

While the AYDI focuses on data to 2019, or pre-COVID-19, the impacts of this pandemic have already been felt by youth in Australia. As such, this report includes information on these impacts and that of other economic and health shocks (see Appendix C, Section 12.5). The United Nations (UN)[2] has identified unique impacts of COVID-19 on youth compared to other age-specific populations, suggesting that although youth may display a low rate of symptoms of the virus, the high level of social interaction between youth give young people a special role to play and responsibility in slowing the spread of the virus to more vulnerable members of the community.

A dashboard has been created as supplementary tool to this report and can be found at: https://www.numbersandpeople.com/aydi2020

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[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020, *Australian Demographic Statistics,* (cat. no. 3101.0), Canberra: ABS, available at: abs.gov.au.
[2] United Nations Youth Flash, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020, *Special issue on COVID-19 and Youth, 27 March 2020,* https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/04/YOUTH-FLASH-Special-issue-on-COVID-19-1.pdf

3.0

KEY FINDINGS

This AYDI analysed the improvement and deterioration of youth development across the country between 2015 to 2019. The key findings include:

- Australia saw an overall improvement in the Australian Youth Development Index between 2015–2019, reaching 0.509 in 2019.

- The performance of states and territories varied, with New South Wales (NSW) having the highest AYDI score 0.577 and the Northern Territory (NT) having the lowest score at 0.374.

- The Australian Capital Territory (ACT), Western Australia (WA) and Victoria (Vic) saw a slight decline while allother jurisdictions improved between 2015–2019.

- Community and Culture has seen the largest improvement nation-wide since 2015.

- Education ranked highest in 2019 despite seeing a slight decline between 2015–2019.

- Safety and Security has seen the most significant deterioration over the five years.

- Employment and Opportunity was the worst performing Domain despite seeing an improvement since 2015.

- There were wide variations in performance between domains in each state and territory. For example, Vic ranked first in Health and Wellbeing but last in Safety and Security.

3.1 STATE & TERRITORY HIGHLIGHTS

- NSW ranked first in the AYDI, showing the greatest improvement of all eight jurisdictions, rising to 0.577. NSW also ranked first in Education and Skills in 2019.

- NSW's Health and Wellbeing score improved due to a substantial improvement to Alcohol Lifetime Risk, which more than halved between 2015–2019, declining from 11.50 to 5.23 percent in 2019. All other Health and Wellbeing indicators saw a slight decline with Psychological Distress rising from 15.35 to 19.82 percent in 2019.

- ACT ranked second out of the eight jurisdictions in the AYDI in 2019, despite the sharpest decline of all eight jurisdictions, falling to 0.541 in 2019. ACT ranked first in Employment and Opportunity and Civic and Political Participation.

- The largest improvement in the ACT was seen in Employment and Opportunity. Adolescent Fertility improved, falling from 5.80 to 4.15 per 1,000 in 2019, the lowest in all eight jurisdictions. Difficulty Finding Work also improved falling from 82.01 to 77.95 in 2019. Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) improved, falling from 6.32 to 3.45 percent in 2019.

- South Australia (SA) improved in its overall AYDI score, rising to 0.538, ranking third out of the eight jurisdictions. SA ranked second in 2019 for Health and Wellbeing and Civic and Political Participation Domains.

- Health and Wellbeing was SA's best performing Domain, improving largely due to Alcohol Lifetime Risk, which fell from 11.80 to 6.32 percent in 2019. Psychological Distress also saw improvement, falling slightly from 15.53 to 15.00 percent in 2019.

- Vic showed a slight decline in overall AYDI falling to 0.537 and a ranking of fourth of all eight jurisdictions in 2019. Vic ranked first in Health and Wellbeing but last in Safety and Security in 2019.

- The greatest improvement in Vic between 2015–2019 has been to Community and Culture, due to a rise in Cultural Participation and Humanitarian Migrant Employment. Cultural Participation increased from 53.62 to 93.97 percent in 2019 while Humanitarian Migrant Employment increased from 28.90 to 34.52 percent.

- WA showed a slight decline between 2015–2019 in its AYDI, falling to 0.509, placing it at a ranking of fifth of all eight jurisdictions in 2019.

- WA Civic and Political Participation improved between 2015–2019 due to an increase in Youth Enrolment and despite a fall in Voter Turnout. Youth Enrolment reached 87.30 percent while Voter Turnout fell to 86.08 percent in 2019. WA ranked first of all eight jurisdictions in Have a Say at 22.20 percent in 2019.

- Between 2015–2019 Queensland's (Qld) AYDI fluctuated seeing a slight improvement overall. In 2019 the AYDI was 0.503, ranked sixth out of eight jurisdictions. Qld ranked second out of eight jurisdictions in Safety and Security and Community and Culture Domains.

- The biggest improvement in Qld was in the rise in Community and Culture, largely due to a substantial increase in Cultural Participation from 48.95 to 93.47 percent in 2019. Qld had the highest score in Family and Friends of the jurisdictions at 89.6 percent.

- Tasmania's (Tas) AYDI improved overall between 2015–2019 to a score of 0.488 in 2019, ranking of seventh out of eight jurisdictions. Tas ranked first of all eight jurisdictions in 2019 in Safety and Security, however, last for Community and Culture.

- The greatest improvement in Tas was seen in Community and Culture, largely due to improvement in Cultural Participation, rising from 57.37 to 92.33 percent in 2019. Humanitarian Migrant Employment, however, remained the lowest of all jurisdictions, reaching just 19.23 percent in 2019.

- The greatest improvement in NT was seen in Community and Culture as a result of a rise in Humanitarian Migrant Employment, which rose from 42.37 to 47.77 percent, the best of all jurisdictions in 2019. Cultural Participation also increased from 49.99 to 86.34 percent in 2019.

CHANGE IN AYDI 2015-2019

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY

YDI

HEALTH AND WELLBEING
CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

SAFETY AND SECURITY

4.0
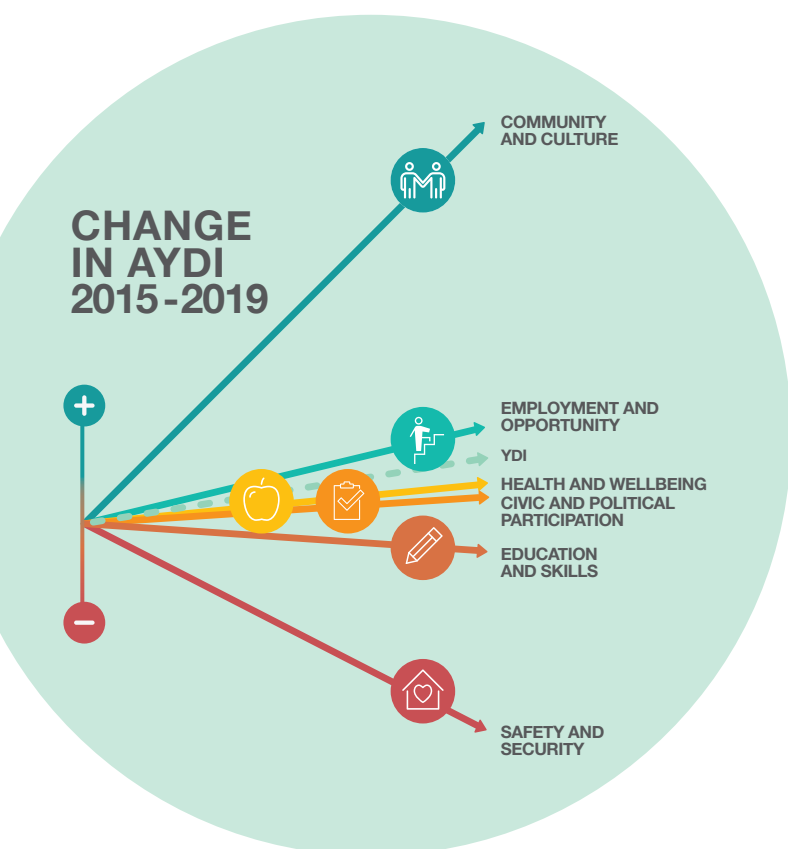
BACKGROUND

Youth Development Indexes provide a rigorous and tested measurement framework. First developed in 2013 by the Commonwealth, they have since been implemented globally, nationally and regionally around the world. The Global YDI and the Commonwealth Plan for Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) were created to drive an evidence-based approach that is expressly linked to human rights, formulated based upon stakeholder consultation, which fosters empowerment, is non-discriminatory and is inclusive of vulnerable youth. The outcome of YDIs is the ability of governments to formulate effective national, regional and local policies that make efficient use of government resources. This includes a framework for monitoring and evaluating policy implementation.

The AYDI is designed specifically to not only empower policymakers, but to provide stakeholders with evidence-based, quality data for youth-related policy development. The toolkit for YDIs, released in 2016, is a blueprint for capacity development and tracking youth development.[3] Evidence-based policy is becoming more commonly used to develop national and regional policies. This kind of policy relies on high-quality evidence and amplifies the need for useable and reliable information which is timely and relevant. Monitoring and evaluating policies, and the evidence which is used to design and

implement them, is an excellent mechanism for highlighting success, improving outcomes and redesign. Being able to track policies and data over time is critical, therefore, instruments like the AYDI are extremely valuable in policy design, implementation and redesign because they do both.

The AYDI, however, is not able to cover all aspects of youth development as it relies on available and quality data of 4-5 indicators in six Domains to remain sensitive to movement overtime of these data sets. The AYDI is intended to identify; areas of concern, drivers of youth development, build evidence of policy impact over time, and make recommendations to address key gaps in data relating to youth development. Further research is suggested to understand the specific data gaps and investigate changes in youth development as identified in this report.

3 The Commonwealth, 2016, *Commonwealth Youth Development Index National and Regional Toolkit,* available at *https://www.thecommonwealth.io/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/National-YDI-Toolkit.pdf*

5.0

AUSTRALIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INDEX AT A GLANCE

5.1 THE AYDI

The AYDI is a composite index of 25 indicators that measure youth development across each state and territory. The AYDI is based upon a set of six Domains of youth development: **Health and Wellbeing, Education and Skills, Employment and Opportunity, Civic and Political Participation, Safety and Security, and Community and Culture.** The index is a tool for policymakers, researchers, civil society and young people to engage in evidence-based discussions and decision-making. Capturing and tracking quality data highlights trends over time and informs an understanding of the interrelationships between the Domains of youth development.

In this iteration of the AYDI data from 2015-2019 has been used to show patterns over this 5 year period. AYDI scores are not comparable between the 2016 and this AYDI due to the improved methodology and extra domains. Patterns in this analysis may not be consistent with longer term trends, although they do provide a picture of recent data points/activity. It is recommended that data sources provided in Table 2, below, and Appendix A, Section 10.2, be used to source the most recent data. Many data sets have regularly updated data in different disaggregation levels which are relevant to policy and program design and review.

5.2 DEFINING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The term 'youth development' in the AYDI aligns with the UN World Program of Action for Youth,[4] enhancing systems that allow youth to live more fulfilling lives with higher levels of participation and decision-making power in society. This includes creating a society that brings out the best of this stage of life in an environment that is economically strong, politically stable, legally supportive, and socially and culturally enriched.

The Commonwealth Secretariat and the Global YDI defines youth as persons between the ages of 15–29, however, the age definition for youth varies between governments, national institutions, and international institutions. The AYDI defines youth as people aged 15–24, a significant period of development that spans from schooling through to young adulthood and, with it, the opportunity for a high level of contribution to society in all aspects of life, including employment, family life and civil and civic participation. The Youth Taskforce is working on better coordinating and improving policies and programs for young people between the ages of 15-24 and on involving more young people in developing these policies.[5]

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4 United Nations, 2010, *World Programme of Action for Youth, Economics & Social Affairs,* available at: *https://www. un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf*

5 Department of Health, 2020, *Youth Taskforce,* available at: *https://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/ youth-taskforce*

Defining youth as a stage of development is a complex task, as the needs of each stage of youth varies significantly. A broad age range, regardless of the selected ages, creates harmonisation issues for comparing data, particularly where policies and programs are targeted at different age cohorts. For example, adolescent pregnancy has challenges that differ from early adolescence to late twenties. As such, subsets of data within the youth age range for specific policy applications are best managed with differing age cohorts. Further discussion on defining youth can be seen in Appendix C, Section 12.1.

TABLE 1: DEFINITIONS OF YOUTH

ORGANISATION	AGE DEFINITION OF YOUTH	REFERENCE
Australian Department of Health	15–24 years	AYDI
Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC)	12–25 years	AYAC
Commonwealth Secretariat	15–29 years	Global YDI
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) / International Labour Organization (ILO)	15–24 years	UN Instruments, Statistics
UN Habitat (Youth Fund)	15–32 years	Agenda 21
World Health Organization (WHO)	10–29 years	Youth Violence
World Bank	15–34 years	Social protection and labour
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Child: until 18 years Adolescence: 10–19 years	The Convention on the Rights of the Child

5.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE AYDI

The AYDI seeks to achieve three key objectives. Firstly, to present data and evidence on the status of youth development in Australia, including the identification of gaps in particular sectors. Secondly, to identify opportunities for policy interventions. Thirdly, to propose evidence-based policy recommendations.

The AYDI brings together an aggregation of the main Domains of youth development into a comprehensive and holistic presentation of youth. The research and methodology for the preparation of the AYDI identifies the key gaps in the data and also where there is a need for greater data quality and which data to gather.

5.4 INTERPRETING THE AYDI

The AYDI score is a number between 0 and 1. A perfect score of one for a jurisdiction would represent the highest level possible for youth development relative to other jurisdictions, with zero reflecting little to absolutely no youth development. This is the same scoring system as the Human Development Index (HDI), as prepared by the UN. In some cases, states and territories may be separated by small differences in their score, which may give the impression of greater differences than is the case.

The consistency of data across jurisdictions is dependent upon the data that has been collected and either publicly disseminated or provided by data custodians. The aggregation of data highlights opportunities for additional data collection to build a like-for-like comparison where gaps may be identified. The AYDI provides stakeholders including governments, NGOs, researchers and civil society with a common framework on how to collaborate.

5.5 CHOSEN INDICATORS

The indicators and Domains which make up the AYDI have been selected by subject matter experts from across the Australian Government, civil society, academia and young people themselves. Indicators are aligned to the priorities in the PAYE,[6] the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY),[7] which is a process run by the United Nations Division of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the Global YDI,[8] and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[9] An understanding of the Australian context was provided by Domain experts to gauge locally appropriate measures. The Domains, indicators, and data sources used in this AYDI are shown in Table 2. Further explanation of data caveats and links to explanatory notes can be found in Appendix A, Section 10.2.

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[6] The Commonwealth, 2006, *The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) 2006-2015,* available at: *https://www.youthpolicy.org/library/wp-content/uploads/library/2006_Commonwealth_PAYE_Eng.pdf*
[7] United Nations, 2010, *World Programme of Action for Youth, Economics & Social Affairs,* available at: *https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf*
[8] The Commonwealth, 2016, *Global Youth Development Index 2016,* available at: *https://thecommonwealth.org/youthdevelopmentindex*
[9] United Nations, 2015, *Sustainable Development Goals,* available at: *https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/*

TABLE 2: LIST OF INDICATORS FOR THE AYDI 2020

DOMAIN NAME	INDICATOR	AGE	UNIT	ORGANISATION	SOURCE	WEBSITE
Civic and Political Participation	Youth Enrolment	18–24	Percent	AEC	Federal Election Data	Data on Request from AEC
Civic and Political Participation	Voter Turnout	18–24	Percent	AEC	Federal Election Data	Data on Request from AEC
Civic and Political Participation	Volunteering	18–24	Percent	ABS	General Social Survey	Data on request from ABS
Civic and Political Participation	Have a Say	18–24	Percent	ABS	General Social Survey	Data on request from ABS
Community and Culture	Cultural Participation	15–24	Percent	ABS	Participation in Selected Cultural Activities	www.abs.gov.au
Community and Culture	Family and Friends	18–24	Percent	ABS	General Social Survey	Data on request from ABS
Community and Culture	Humanitarian Migrant Employment	15–24	Percent	ABS	Census-linked data	Data on request from ABS
Community and Culture	Carer Status	15–24	Percent	ABS	Disability, Ageing and Carers	Data on request from ABS
Education and Skills	NAPLAN Numeracy Participation	15	Percent	ACARA	Numeracy - NAPLAN	https://reports.acara.edu.au/Home/Results
Education and Skills	Bachelor Degree	20–24	Percent	ABS	Characteristics of Employment	www.abs.gov.au
Education and Skills	Participation in VET	18–24	Percent	Productivity Commission	Report on Government Services	https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/report-on-government-services
Education and Skills	NAPLAN Reading Achievement	15	Percent	ACARA	Reading - NAPLAN	https://reports.acara.edu.au/Home/Results
Employment and Opportunity	Difficulty Finding Work	15–24	Percent	ABS	Participation, Job Search and Mobility	www.abs.gov.au
Employment and Opportunity	Adolescent Fertility	15–19	Rate per 1,000	ABS	Births Australia	www.abs.gov.au
Employment and Opportunity	NEET (not in employment, education or training)	15–24	Percent	ABS	Education and Work	www.abs.gov.au
Employment and Opportunity	Underemployed	15–24	Percent	ABS	Participation, Job Search and Mobility	www.abs.gov.au
Health and Wellbeing	Self-Harm	15–24	Rate per 100,000	ABS	Causes of Death	www.abs.gov.au
Health and Wellbeing	Alcohol Lifetime Risk	15–24	Percent	ABS	National Health Survey	Data on request from ABS
Health and Wellbeing	Psychological Distress	18–24	Percent	ABS	National Health Survey	Data on request from ABS
Health and Wellbeing	Mortality	18–24	Rate per 100,000	ABS	Causes of Death	www.abs.gov.au
Safety and Security	Specialist Homelessness Services	15–24	Percent	AIHW	Specialist Homelessness Services	www.aihw.gov.au
Safety and Security	Safe at Home	18–24	Percent	ABS	General Social Survey	Data on request from ABS
Safety and Security	SHSC Domestic Violence	15–24	Percent	AIHW	Specialist Homelessness Services	www.aihw.gov.au
Safety and Security	Sexual Assault	15–19	Rate per 100,000	ABS	Recorded Crime	www.abs.gov.au
Safety and Security	Robbery	15–19	Rate per 100,000	ABS	Recorded Crime	www.abs.gov.au

RESULTS

6.1 AUSTRALIA IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

On a global scale, Australia scores relatively high in terms of youth development. In the 2016 Global YDI, it ranked third out of 183 countries. The AYDI uses a similar framework to the Global index but goes beyond it to the jurisdictional level. The AYDI utilises indicators determined to be the best available for the jurisdictions which are also of importance in the current context in Australia. YDI and Domain scores from these separate indexes cannot be compared because the indicators they include are different. The next Global YDI is scheduled for release in 2020, which will allow for comparison between Australia and other countries' youth development over recent years.

Note: This is the second iteration of the AYDI and using improved indicators and additional domains to the 2016 index. This means the two AYDIs are not comparable and localised trend analysis should be done using the years of data provided in the AYDI 2020 only.

6.2 2020 AUSTRALIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Results in this section of the report are from the data collected as indicators for the AYDI only (see Section 5.5). Imputations have been used where datasets are missing values. Methodology for imputations can be found in Appendix A, Section 10.2. Where imputed figures have been used in these results they should be taken as estimated values.

All graphs use imputed, normalised and weighted data. AYDI and Domain scores are between 0 and 1 with 0 being the worst score of any division over the timeframe and 1 being the best. The aim, therefore, in all indicators is to move towards 1 for better levels of youth development.

The AYDI and Domain scores are an average of the jurisdictional results as not all indicators had national figures available. Therefore, these results do not take the population size of the jurisdictions into consideration.

6.3 NATIONAL RESULTS

Australia saw an overall improvement in the AYDI, from 0.490 in 2015 to 0.509 in 2019. In 2019, NSW (0.577) ranked first of the jurisdictions, followed by ACT (0.541), SA (0.538), Vic (0.537), WA (0.509), Qld (0.503), Tas (0.492) and NT (0.374). ACT, WA and Vic saw slight decline while all other jurisdictions improved between 2015–2019.

FIGURE 1-AYDI NATIONAL AND JURISDICTION SCORES
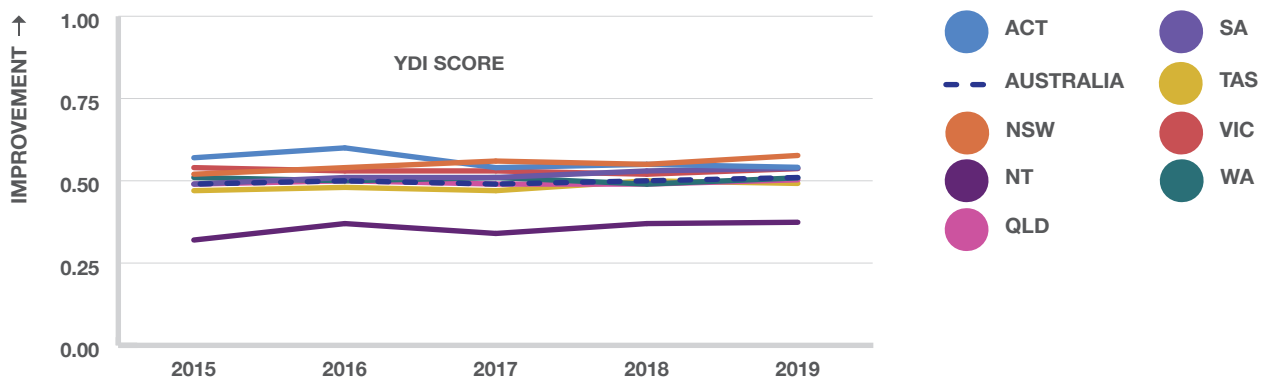
Education was the highest ranked Domain in 2019 despite seeing a slight decline between 2015–2019. Community and Culture saw the largest improvement of the Domains between 2015–2019 and was the second ranked Domain in 2019. Safety and Security saw the largest decline of the Domains between 2015–2019. Employment and Opportunity was the worst performing Domain in 2019 despite seeing improvement between 2015–2019.

FIGURE 2 - AUSTRALIA TREND AYDI AND DOMAINS
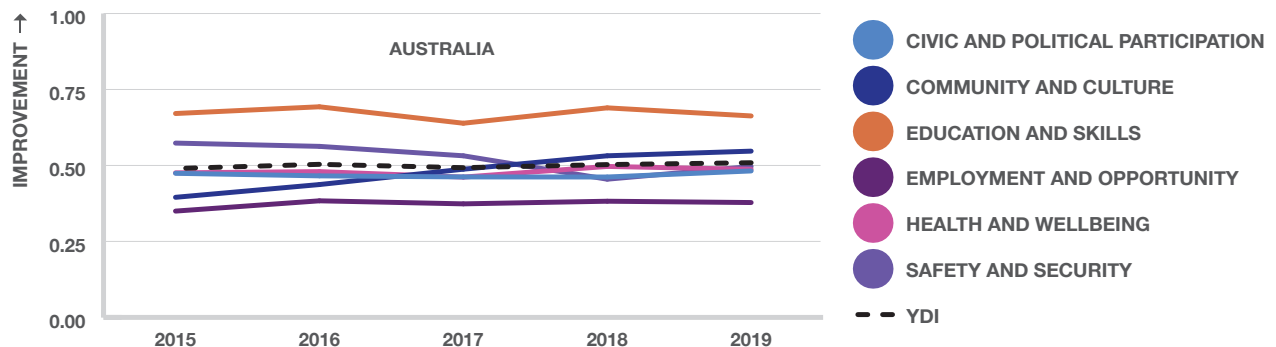
6.3.1 CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Australia saw an overall improvement in Civic and Political Participation, reaching 0.482 in 2019. In 2019, ACT (0.594) ranked first of the jurisdictions despite a decline between 2015–2019. NT (0.033) ranked eighth, far below the other jurisdictions. Tas saw the largest improvement between 2015–2019.

FIGURE 3 - CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION NATIONAL AND JURISDICTION SCORES
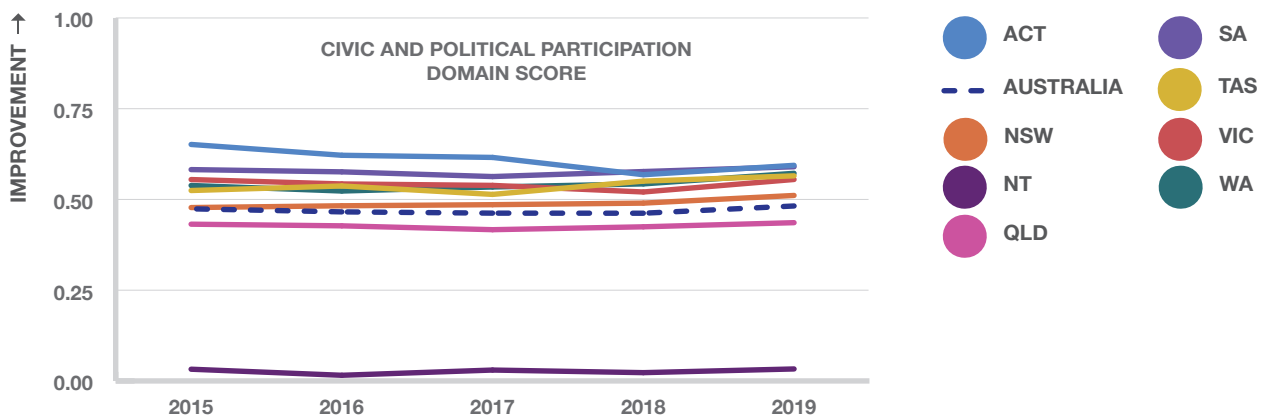
6.3.2 COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Australia saw an overall improvement in Community and Culture, reaching 0.547 in 2019. In 2019, NT (0.791) ranked first of the jurisdictions. Tas (0.351) ranked eighth, despite seeing improvement between 2015–2019. NSW showed the largest improvement between 2015–2019.

FIGURE 4 - COMMUNITY AND CULTURE NATIONAL AND JURISDICTION SCORES
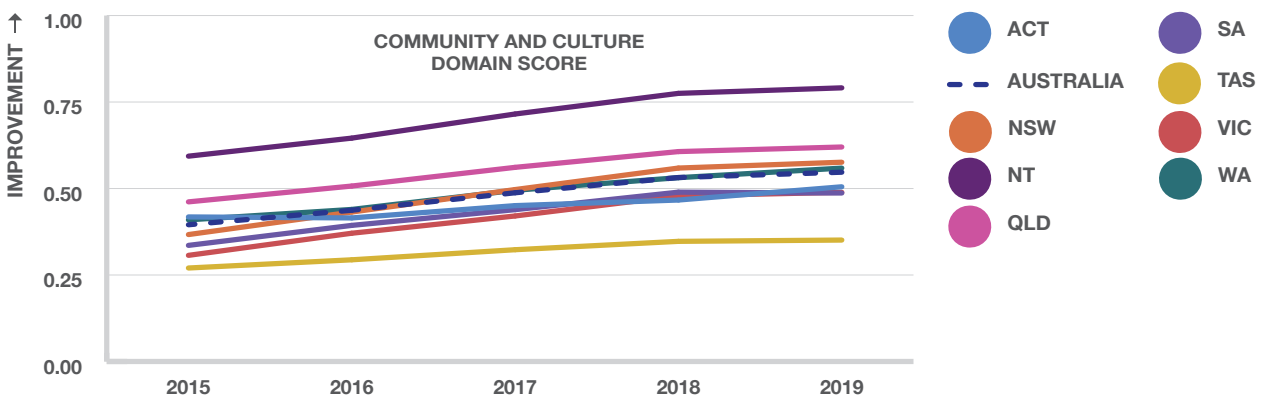
6.3.3 EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Australia saw an overall decline in Education and Skills, reaching 0.663 in 2019. In 2019, NSW (0.788) ranked first of the jurisdictions. NT (0.465) ranked eighth, despite seeing improvement between 2015–2019. NT showed the largest improvement between 2015–2019.

FIGURE 5 - EDUCATION AND SKILLS NATIONAL AND JURISDICTION SCORES

EDUCATION AND SKILLS DOMAIN SCORE

Legend: ACT, AUSTRALIA, NSW, NT, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC, WA
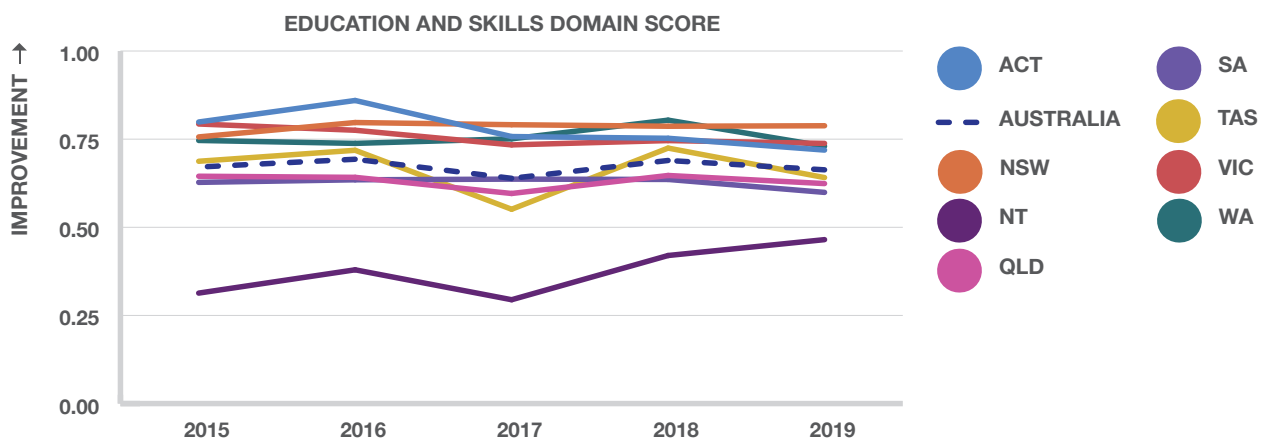
6.3.4 EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY

Australia saw an overall improvement in Employment and Opportunity, reaching 0.378 in 2019. In 2019, ACT (0.507) ranked first among the jurisdictions, also having the largest increase between 2015–2019. NT (0.246) ranked eighth, far below the other jurisdictions. WA saw the largest decline between 2015–2019.

FIGURE 6 - EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY NATIONAL AND JURISDICTION SCORES

EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY DOMAIN SCORE

Legend: ACT, AUSTRALIA, NSW, NT, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC, WA
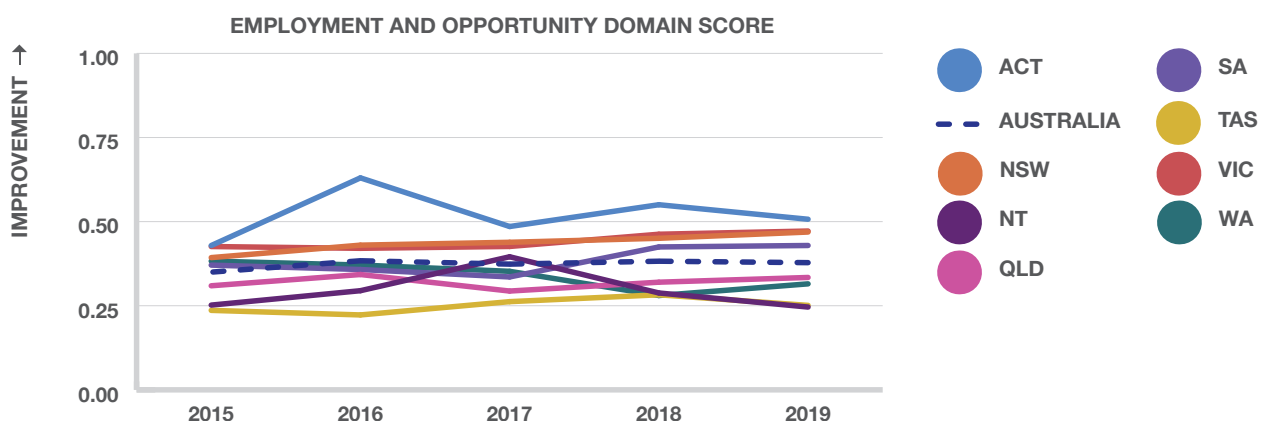
6.3.5 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Australia saw an overall improvement in Health and Wellbeing, reaching 0.478 in 2019. In 2019, Vic (0.620) ranked first, despite seeing a slight decline between 2015–2019. NT (0.345) ranked eighth but saw the largest improvement between 2015–2019. ACT saw the largest decline between 2015–2019.

FIGURE 7 - HEALTH AND WELLBEING NATIONAL AND JURISDICTION SCORES.
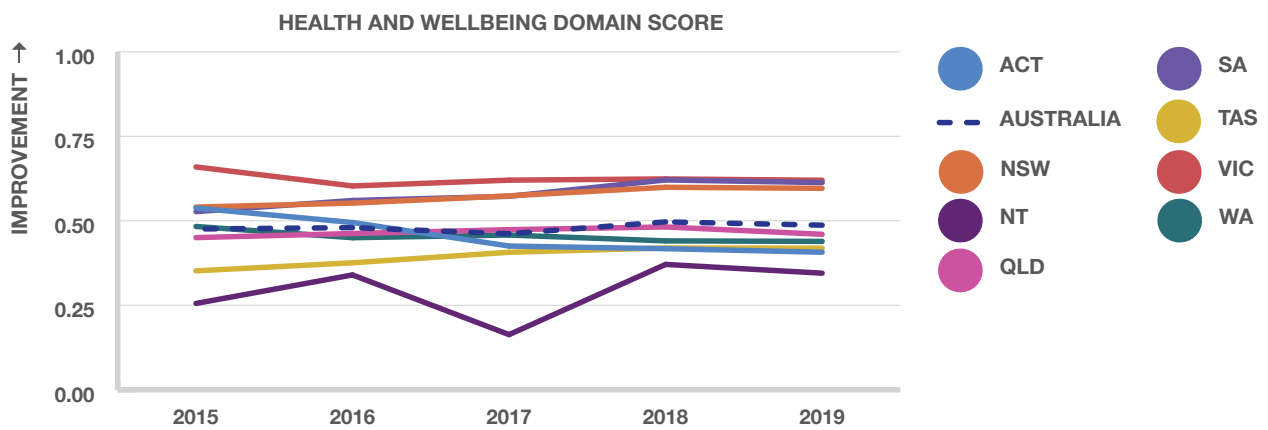
6.3.6 SAFETY AND SECURITY

Australia saw an overall decline in Safety and Security, reaching 0.440 in 2019. In 2019, Tas (0.726) ranked first, despite seeing a slight decline between 2015–2019. Vic (0.351) ranked eighth and saw the largest decline between 2015–2019.

FIGURE 8-SAFETY AND SECURITY NATIONAL AND JURISDICTION SCORES
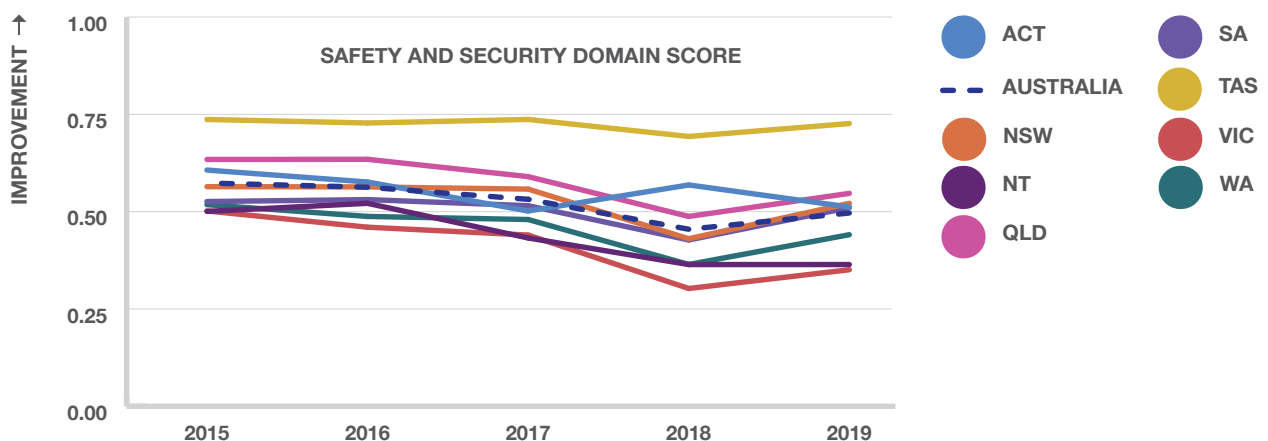
NEW SOUTH WALES

NSW ranked first in its overall AYDI in 2019, showing the greatest improvement of all jurisdictions between 2015–2019, rising to 0.577. NSW also ranked first in 2019 in Education and Skills.

The greatest improvement in NSW was in Community and Culture due to a substantial increase in Cultural Participation, which rose from 48.96 to 92.34 percent in 2019. Carer Status also improved, dropping from 7.90 to 5.93 percent in 2019.

Health and Wellbeing improved due to substantial improvement in Alcohol Lifetime Risk, which more than halved between 2015–2019, declining from 11.50 to 5.23 percent in 2019. All other Health and Wellbeing indicators saw a slight decline. Psychological Distress worsened, rising from 15.35 to 19.82 percent in 2019.

Employment and Opportunity in NSW also improved as a result of NEET, which fell from 10.44 to 7.00 percent in 2019. Difficulty Finding Work also improved, falling from 79.87 to 75.55 percent in 2019.

Education and Skills improved overall in NSW. This was as a result of improvement in Participation in VET, which rose from 13.40 to 16.35 percent in 2019, and in the Bachelor Degree, which rose from 19.74 to 20.13 percent in 2019.

The only Domain decline in NSW was in Safety and Security, largely due to a rise in Specialist Homelessness Services to from 1.41 to 1.81 percent in 2019. Sexual Assault was the worst of all jurisdictions, increasing from 414.98 to 615.98 per 100,000 youth in 2019. Robbery was the only indicator in this Domain to see improvement, falling from 100.75to 93.72 per 100,000 youth in 2019.

Civic and Political Participation improved due to an increase in Youth Enrolment from 88.70 to 93.00 percent in 2019.

NSW may benefit from targeted policies on Psychological Distress, Specialist Homelessness Services, and Sexual Assault.

FIGURE 9 - NSW TREND AYDI AND DOMAINS

- CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
- COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
- EDUCATION AND SKILLS
- EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY
- HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- SAFETY AND SECURITY
- - - YDI

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The ACT ranked second out of the eight jurisdictions in the AYDI in 2019, despite the sharpest decline between 2015–2019 of all eight jurisdictions, falling to 0.541 in 2019. ACT ranked first in Employment and Opportunity and Civic and Political Participation.

The largest decline in the ACT was in Health and Wellbeing, where Self-Harm rose from 16.60 to 20.66 per 100,000 youth in 2019, the highest of all eight jurisdictions. There was also a decline in Mortality, rising from 31.40 to 40.22 per 100,000 youth in 2019. Psychological Distress also rose from 19.95 to 27.22 percent in 2019 the second largest of the jurisdictions.

The largest improvement in the ACT was seen in Employment and Opportunity. Adolescent Fertility improved, falling from 5.80 to 4.15 per 1,000 in 2019, the lowest in all eight jurisdictions. Difficulty Finding Work also improved, falling from 82.01 to 77.95 percent in 2019. NEET improved, falling from 6.32 to 3.45 percent in 2019.

Education and Skills declined between 2015–2019 due to a substantial fall in Participation in VET, from 19.80 to 12.50 percent in 2019. NAPLAN Reading Achievement remains the highest of all jurisdictions at 92.90 percent in 2019, while NAPLAN Numeracy Participation declined slightly from 89.60 to 87.40.

Safety and Security also saw a decline due to a substantial rise in Sexual Assaults, which more than doubled between 2015–2019 from 142.20 to 359.10 per 100,000 youth in 2019. There was substantial improvement to Specialist Homelessness Services, falling from 2.37 to 1.47 percent in 2019.

ACT also ranked first out of the eight jurisdictions for Civic and Political Participation. Despite a slight decline in Youth Enrolment, the rate remained the highest of the jurisdictions at 93.40 percent.

Community and Culture improved slightly overall due to Cultural Participation rising from 59.34 to 97.41 percent in 2019. There was, however, a decline in Carer Status, which reached 9.17 percent in 2019.

ACT may benefit from targeted policies on Participation in VET, Sexual Assault, Psychological Distress and Self-Harm.

FIGURE 10 - ACT TREND AYDI AND DOMAINS

Legend:
- CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
- COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
- EDUCATION AND SKILLS
- EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY
- HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- SAFETY AND SECURITY
- YDI
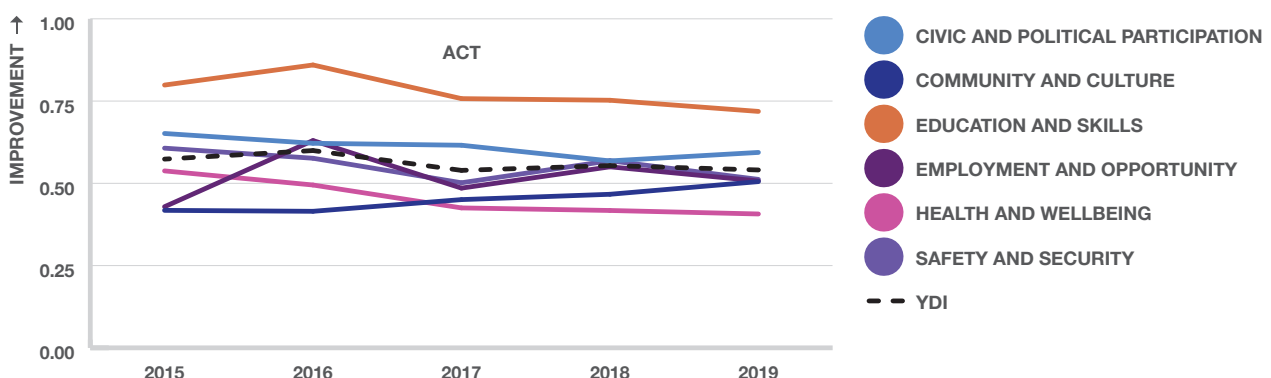
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SA showed improvement between 2015–2019 in its overall AYDI rising to 0.538, and ranking third out of the eight jurisdictions. SA ranked second in 2019 for the Health and Wellbeing and Civic and Political Participation Domains.

Health and Wellbeing was SA's best performing Domain, improving largely due to Alcohol Lifetime Risk, which more than halved from 11.80 to 6.32 percent in 2019. Psychological Distress also saw improvement falling from 15.53 to 15.00 percent in 2019.

There was also improvement to Employment and Opportunity due to a reduction in Adolescent Fertility, falling from 10.90 to 6.85 per 1,000 youth in 2019. SA, however, ranked last of all eight jurisdictions for Difficulty Finding Work at 86.04 percent in 2019.

There was improvement to Community and Culture largely due to Cultural Participation, which increased from 47.65 to 88.80 percent in 2019. Humanitarian Migrant Employment also improved, reaching 28.54 percent in 2019.

There was a slight decline in Safety and Security in SA due to a rise in SHSC Domestic Violence, which rose from 11.19 to 16.70 percent in 2019. Robbery improved by more than in any other jurisdiction, dropping by more than two-thirds between 2015–2019 to 39.47 per 100,000 youth in 2019. SA ranked last of all eight jurisdictions in Safe at Home, with 79.80 percent in 2019.

Education and Skills also declined slightly, largely due to a fall in NAPLAN Reading Achievement, which dropped slightly to 90.20 percent in 2019. Participation in VET was the lowest of all jurisdictions falling from 14.90 to 11.85.

Civic and Political Participation improved due to increases in both Youth Enrolment and Voter Turnout. Voter Turnout was equal best of the jurisdictions at 91.80 percent in 2019.

SA may benefit from targeted policies on Participation in VET, Safe at Home, and Difficulty Finding Work.

FIGURE 12 - SA TREND AYDI AND DOMAINS
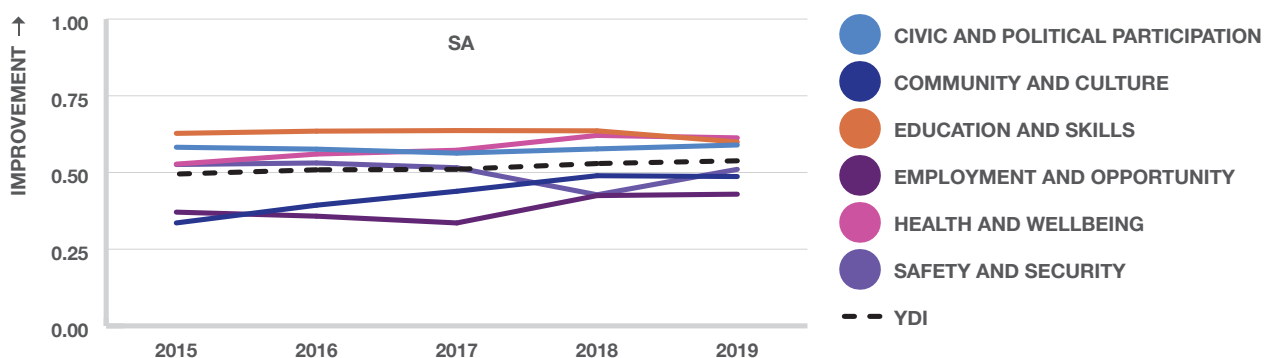
Vic showed a slight decline between 2015–2019 in its AYDI, falling to 0.537 and a ranking of fourth of all eight jurisdictions in 2019. Vic ranked first in Health and Wellbeing but last in Safety and Security.

Safety and Security saw a decline due primarily to sharp increases in both Sexual Assault, which rose from 276.35 to 428.62 per 100,000 youth in 2019, and Robbery, which rose from 118.48 to 196.53 per 100,000 youth in 2019.The Robbery Rate was the worst of all jurisdictions.

There was a slight improvement to Employment and Opportunity in Vic between 2015–2019, largely due to improvement in NEET, which fell from 8.78 to 6.89 percent in 2019.

Civic and Political Participation remained relatively stable between 2015–2019. There was a slight decline in Youth Enrolment, falling to 88.50 percent and a slight improvement in Voter Turnout, reaching 91.80 percent in 2019. This was tied highest Voter Turnout of the jurisdictions.

The greatest improvement in Vic between 2015–2019 has been to Community and Culture, due to a rise in Cultural Participation and Humanitarian Migrant Employment. Cultural Participation increased from 53.62 to 93.97 percent in 2019 while Humanitarian Migrant Employment increased from 28.90 to 34.52 percent.

Vic ranked second of all eight jurisdictions in Education and Skills in 2019. There was improvement in the Bachelor Degree, which rose from 17.38 to 21.77 percent in 2019. However, Participation in VET declined from 21.10 to 12.10 percent in 2019.

Health and Wellbeing saw a slight decline between 2015–2019, largely due to an increase in Alcohol Lifetime Risk rising from 6.60 to 10.39 percent in 2019. There was improvement between 2015–2019 to Psychological Distress, which fell from 13.13 to 11.00 percent in 2019. This was the lowest rate of the jurisdictions for Psychological Distress. Mortality also improved, falling from 29.40 to 23.70 per 100,000 youth.

Vic may benefit from targeted policies on Participation in VET, Alcohol Lifetime Risk, Sexual Assault and Robbery.

FIGURE 11 - VIC TREND AYDI AND DOMAINS
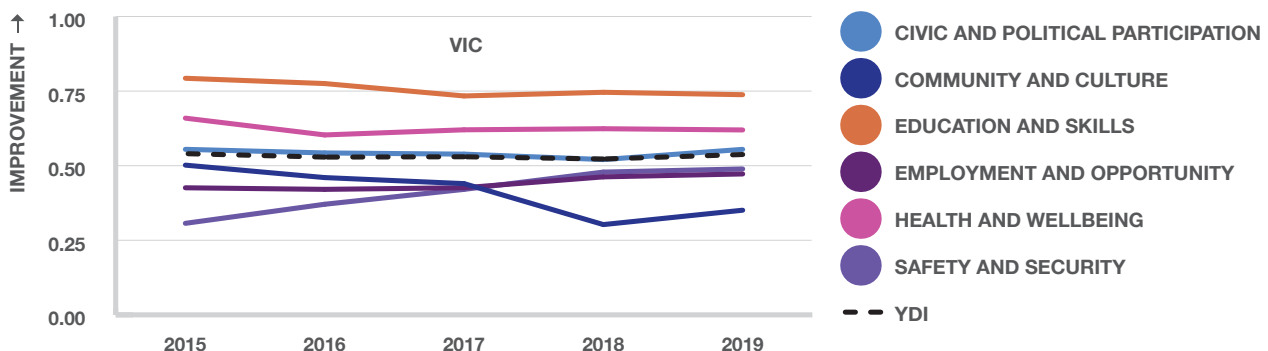
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

WA showed a slight decline between 2015–2019 in its AYDI, falling to 0.509 and a ranking of fifth of all eight jurisdictions in 2019.

WA saw a slight declined in Education and Skills, largely due to NAPLAN Numeracy Participation, which fell to a still relatively high 92.40 percent in 2019. NAPLAN Reading Achievement improved slightly to be the best of all jurisdictions at 93.60 percent.

The greatest decline in WA was in Safety and Security due to a sharp increase in Sexual Assault and SHSC Domestic Violence. Sexual Assault rose from 288.26 to 510.82 per 100,000 youth in 2019, the sharpest increase in all eight jurisdictions between 2015–2019. SHSC Domestic Violence rose from 21.16 to 28.34 percent in 2019. WA had the lowest rate of Specialist Homelessness Services, at 1.25 percent 2019.

Employment and Opportunity also declined, with the sharpest decline between 2015–2019 in all eight jurisdictions. This decline was largely due to Underemployed, which rose

from 17.72 to 24.31 percent in 2019. NEET also declined, rising from 8.91 to 11.19 percent which was the highest rate of all jurisdictions.

Health and Wellbeing in WA declined slightly due to Psychological Distress rising from 15.43 to 22.23 percent in 2019.

Community and Culture improved due to Cultural Participation and Humanitarian Migrant Employment. In 2019, Cultural Participation increased from 50.21 to 92.26 percent and Humanitarian Migrant Employment from 35.86 to 42.19 percent. WA ranked last of all eight jurisdictions in Family and Friends, with 73.9 percent in 2019.

Civic and Political Participation improved between 2015–2019 due to an increase in Youth Enrolment and despite a fall in Voter Turnout. Youth Enrolment reached 87.30 percent while Voter Turnout fell to 86.08 percent in 2019. WA ranked first of all eight jurisdictions in Have a Say at 22.20 percent.

WA may benefit from targeted policies on NEET, Psychological Distress, Sexual Assault, SHSC Domestic Violence and Family and Friends.

FIGURE 13 - WA TREND AYDI AND DOMAINS

Legend:
- CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
- COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
- EDUCATION AND SKILLS
- EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY
- HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- SAFETY AND SECURITY
- YDI
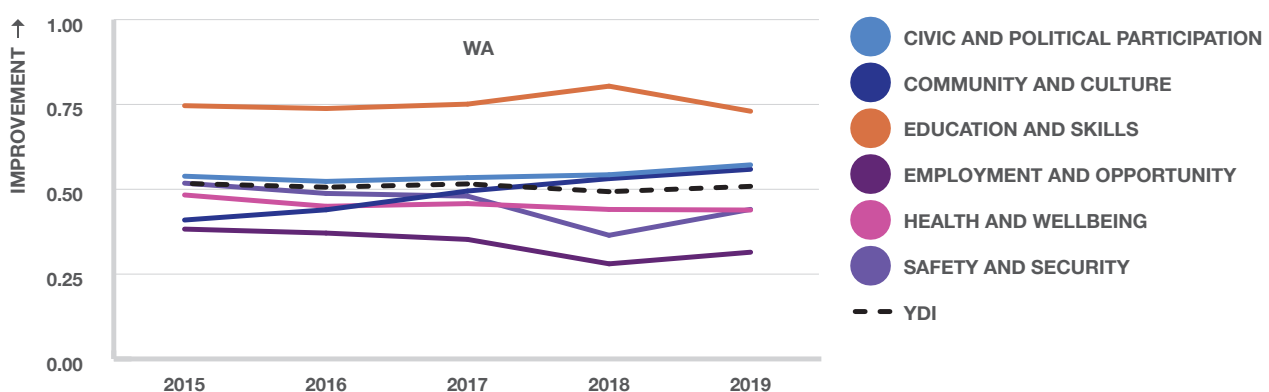
QUEENSLAND

Between 2015–2019 Qld's AYDI fluctuated seeing a slight improvement overall. In 2019 the AYDI was 0.503, ranked sixth out of eight jurisdictions. Qld ranked second out of eight jurisdictions in Safety and Security and Community and Culture Domains.

The biggest improvement in Qld was in the rise in Community and Culture, largely due to a substantial increase in Cultural Participation from 48.95 to 93.47 percent in 2019. Qld had the highest score in Family and Friends of the jurisdictions at 89.6 percent.

The biggest decline in Qld between 2015–2019 was in Safety and Security. This is attributed to a sharp increase in Robbery, nearly doubling to 132.54 per 100,000 youth in 2019. Qld ranked second of the jurisdictions in Specialist Homelessness Services at 1.26 percent in 2019.

Education and Skills also declined slightly. This was largely due NAPLAN Numeracy Participation, which fell by the largest amount of any jurisdiction, from 88.40 to 84.10 percent. There was, however, an improvement in Bachelor Degree, rising from 14.29 to 17.12 percent in 2019.

The improvement in Employment and Opportunity was largely due to the drop in Adolescent Fertility from 16.40 to 12.35 per 1,000 in 2019. Underemployed worsened, rising from 19.49 to 20.87 percent.

Civic and Political Participation saw a slight improvement due to the increase in Youth Enrolment, from 83.00 to 86.10 percent in 2019. Despite this increase the Voter Turnout fell from 89.37 to 87.20 percent.

Health and Wellbeing improved slightly due to a decline in Alcohol Lifetime Risk, which fell from 11.90 to 9.22 percent in 2019. Qld saw a decline in Psychological Distress rising from 17.42 to 20.82 percent.

Qld may benefit from targeted policies on Robbery, Underemployed, NAPLAN Numeracy Participation, Psychological Distress and Voter Turnout.

FIGURE 14 - QLD TREND AYDI AND DOMAINS

Legend:
- CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
- COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
- EDUCATION AND SKILLS
- EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY
- HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- SAFETY AND SECURITY
- YDI
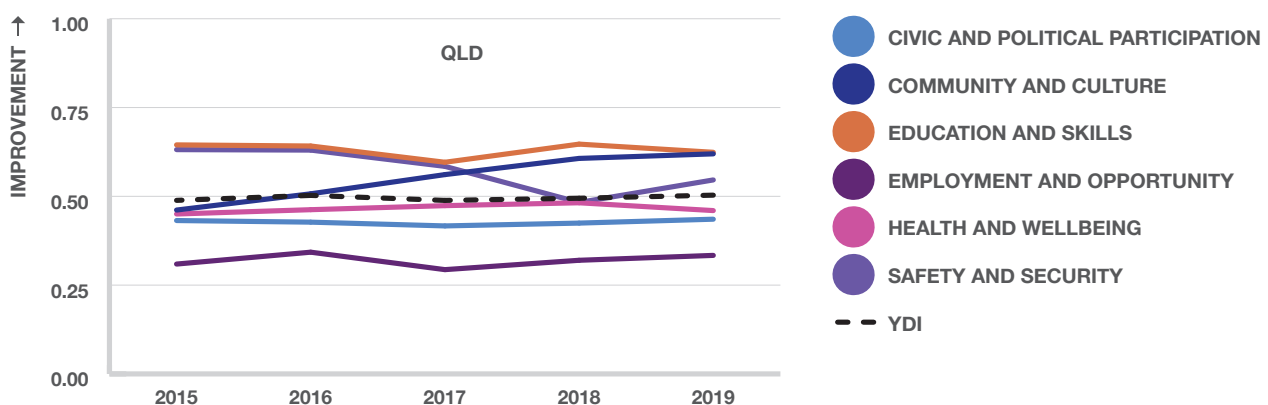
TASMANIA

Tas AYDI improved overall between 2015–2019 to a score of 0.492, ranking of seventh out of eight jurisdictions. Tas ranked first of all eight jurisdictions in Safety and Security, however, it ranked last for Community and Culture.

Tas had the highest Safe at Home of the jurisdictions at 93.30 percent. It also had the lowest rate of Sexual Assault, despite an increase from 143.23 to 185.33 Rate per 100,000.

Education and Skills in Tas fluctuated between 2015–2019, declining slightly overall by 2019 with all four indicators declining. The sharpest decline was in NAPLAN Reading Achievement, which fell from 91.40 to 89.30 percent in 2019. Tas had the lowest rate of Bachelor Degree in 2019, at 11.49 percent.

Health and Wellbeing in Tas improved slightly between 2015–2019, largely due to an improvement in Alcohol Lifetime Risk falling from 14.00 to 10.15 percent in 2019. Mortality also improved, with the rate falling from 64.40 to 41.59 per 100,000 youth. The results are mixed, however, as Tas showed the sharpest

deterioration in Psychological Distress of the jurisdictions, reaching 27.58 percent in 2019.

Between 2015–2019 Employment and Opportunity in Tas improved, with the greatest improvement in all eight jurisdictions in Adolescent Fertility, which fell from 16.80 to 11.15 per 1,000 youth in 2019. However, Underemployed declined, reaching the highest rate of all jurisdictions at 25.94 percent in 2019.

The greatest improvement in Tas was seen in Community and Culture largely due to improvement in Cultural Participation, rising from 57.37 to 92.33 percent. Humanitarian Migrant Employment, however, remained the lowest of all jurisdictions, reaching just 19.23 percent in 2019.

Civic and Political Participation improved at the fastest rate of all jurisdictions between 2015–2019. This was largely due to the improvement in Youth Enrolment, rising from 83.95 to 89.60 percent in 2019.

Tas may benefit from targeted policies on Bachelor Degree, NAPLAN Reading Achievement, Psychological Distress, Underemployed and Humanitarian Migrant Employment.

FIGURE 15 - TAS TREND AYDI AND DOMAINS

Legend:
- CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
- COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
- EDUCATION AND SKILLS
- EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY
- HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- SAFETY AND SECURITY
- YDI
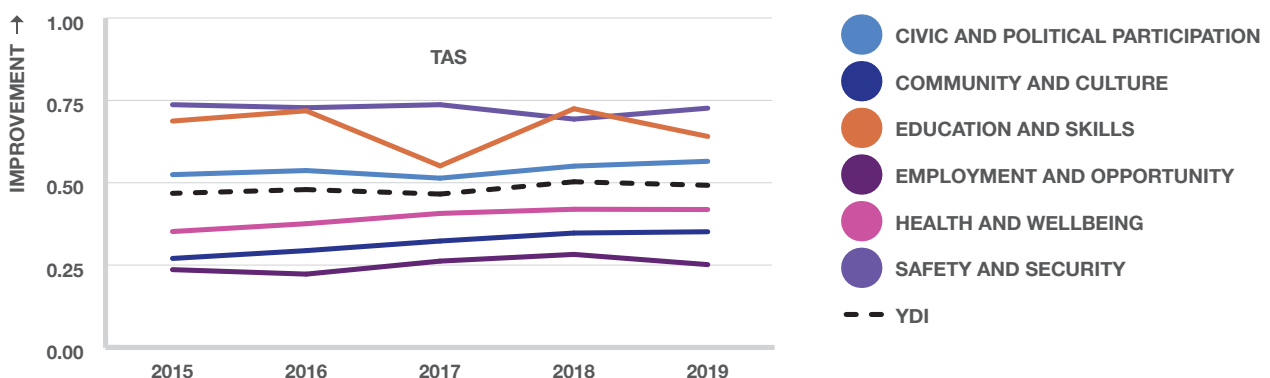
NT saw an overall improvement between 2015–2019 in its AYDI, which rose to 0.374 in 2019. However, NT ranked last in the AYDI of all eight jurisdictions each year between 2015–2019. In 2019, NT ranked last in the Employment and Opportunity, Education and Skills, Health and Wellbeing, and Civic and Political Domains. In contrast, NT ranked first out all eight jurisdictions in Community and Culture.

The greatest improvement in NT was seen in Community and Culture as a result of a rise in Humanitarian Migrant Employment, which rose from 42.37 to 47.77 percent, the best of all jurisdictions in 2019. Cultural Participation also increased from 49.99 to 86.34 percent.

NT improved at the fastest rate of the jurisdictions in Education and Skills. This was due to the Bachelor Degree, which increased substantially from 13.33 to 20.51 percent and the rise in Participation in VET from 14.90 to 19.75 percent in 2019.

Health and Wellbeing fluctuated over 2015–2019, improving slightly overall due to an improvement in Self-Harm and Mortality, which dropped to 27.84 and 92.26 per 100,000 youth, respectively. Alcohol Lifetime Risk also saw improvement,

falling from 12.30 to 8.31 percent in 2019.

Employment and Opportunity fluctuated between 2015–2019, peaking in 2017 before falling again due to Difficulty Finding Work, which rose substantially from 57.45 to 80.33 percent. Despite seeing a slight decrease, Adolescent Fertility was the worst of all jurisdictions falling from 37.90 to 35.75 per 1,000 in 2019. This was more than 3 times that of the next poor performing jurisdiction.

Civic and Political Participation was NT's worst performing Domain, significantly lower than all other eight jurisdictions, particularly for Voter Turnout, which declined from 69.07 to 65.80 percent in 2019. Youth Enrolment rose from 62.50 to 66.40 percent, however, it remains significantly lower than other jurisdictions.

Safety and Security declined between 2015–2019 largely due to an increase in SHSC Domestic Violence rising to 35.23 percent in 2019. Specialist Homelessness Services also rose from 3.79 to 5.77 percent, the worst by more than double of any jurisdiction. NT was the only jurisdiction to see improvement in Sexual Assault, which fell from 514.43 to 441.58 per 100,000.

The NT may benefit from targeted policies towards Adolescent Fertility, Difficulty Finding Work, Voter Turnout, Specialist Homeless Services and SHSC Domestic Violence.

FIGURE 16 - NT TREND AYDI AND DOMAINS

- CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
- COMMUNITY AND CULTURE
- EDUCATION AND SKILLS
- EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY
- HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- SAFETY AND SECURITY
- - - YDI

7.0
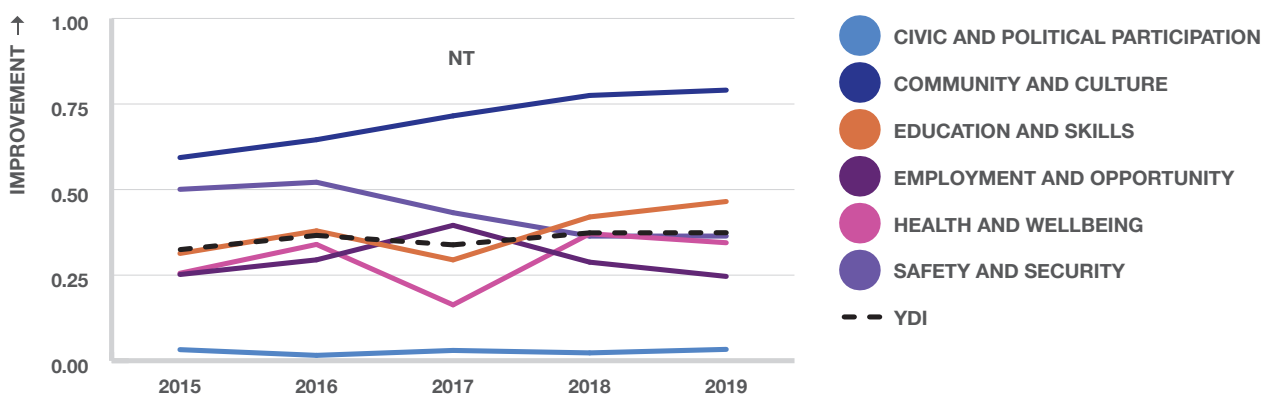
CONTEXT OF AUSTRALIAN DOMAINS OF THE AYDI

The AYDI is intended to reflect international norms in youth development as well as localised priorities identified through consultation. The AYDI is a measure of the progress of young people across the six Domains:

1. Civic and Political Participation

2. Community and Culture

3. Education and Skills

4. Employment and Opportunity

5. Health and Wellbeing

6. Safety and Security
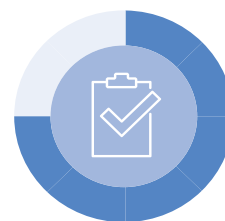
7.1 CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises the rights of young people to participate in civic and political life.[10] Youth participation in the political sphere is an indication of the extent of which youth are empowered to engage in the political process. Active contribution and participation in political processes strengthens society and ensures greater representation of priorities within policy development. Youth who feel empowered to participate in society are more likely to have an active political life and societies with a politically active citizenry are less likely to suffer from corruption and are more likely to guarantee the provision of goods and services.[11]

Political disenchantment by youth can be confused with political disengagement.[12] Research indicates that Australian youth are not indifferent to issues of democratic governance but rather express scepticism over the legitimacy of democratic representation in a different way than older Australians.[13] Australian youth confirm principles of democracy and wish to see it strengthened through policy mechanisms that provide forms of direct democracy and that remove influence from powerful special interest groups, give greater participation by citizens in decision-making, and allow elected representatives more freedom to vote independently of party preferences or to abstain from voting.[14]

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[10] UNICEF, 1989, Convention on the Rights of the Child, available at *https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text#*
[11] The Commonwealth, 2016, *Commonwealth Youth Development Index National and Regional Toolkit,* available at *https://www.thecommonwealth.io/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/National-YDI-Toolkit.pdf*
[12] Stoker, G, Li, J, Halupka, M and Evans, M, 2017, *Complacent young citizens or cross-generational solidarity? An analysis of Australian attitudes to democratic politics, Australian Journal of Political Science,* 52(2), pp. 218–235.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
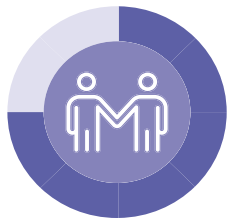
7.2 COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

UNESCO describes culture as the heart of human identity and, as such, underpinning the heart of policy development.[15] Outcomes of youth consultation for the development of the AYDI indicate a strong desire for increased connection with Community and Culture as a priority. Goal 11 of the UN SDGs seeks to make human settlements resilient and inclusive. For youth, culture and community can be a protective factor for emotional and social wellbeing.[16]

Connection to culture and a community is paramount to a young person's sense of belonging. Young people in Australia value friendships and family above all other priorities, with 84.50 percent of youth in 2019 considering friendship to be extremely important or important and 84.40 percent considering family to be extremely important or important.[17] The importance of cultural expression and connection to culture cannot be underestimated for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. There is growing evidence to show that strong connections to culture and a cultural identity improve mental health and create positive life outcomes.[18]
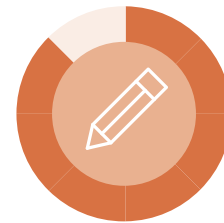
7.3 EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) recognises education as a human right comparable to the right to food and shelter due to the ability of education to substantially shape lifelong health outcomes and economic wellbeing. Australia, together with all nations of the UN, is a signatory to goals in education under the SDGs.[19] Other international goals and commitments fall under the UN HDI,[20] and the Education 2030 Agenda.[21]

Despite ranking relatively high on global assessments of education access, a report by the Australian Government identifies that Australia's ranking in education has dropped since 2000 on all three scales of reading literacy (from fourth place in 2000 to 16th place in 2018), mathematics (from seventh place in 2000 to 25th place in 2018) and science (from fourth place in 2000 to 14th place in 2018).[22] Youth in remote parts of Australia are far less likely to complete Year 12 or attain an equivalent qualification, with 67.7 percent completion in remote areas as compared to 90.00 percent in urban areas in 2018.[23]

Young people require skills for the workplace now and into the future. Digital technologies, automation and globalisation are all changing the nature of work for Australian young people. The World Banks stresses that a skilled young workforce is crucial to countries' economic transformation.[24] By improving skills that match with best practice, the OECD projects productivity can increase up to 7 percent in countries like Australia.[25]

15 The UNESCO, 2017, *Culture: at the heart of the SDGs,* available at: *https://en.unesco.org/courier/april-june-2017/culture-heart-sdgs*
16 Collin, P, Giordano, M, Matthews, I, Conomos, F, Acheson, K ,2020, *Snapshot of the NSW Youth Sector 2020, Youth Action, Sydney,* available at: *https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/youthaction/pages/1603/attachments/original/1587268867/YA_Snapshot2020_Report.pdf?1587268867*
17 Mission Australia, 2019, *Youth Survey Report 2019,* available at: *https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/youth-survey/1326-mission-australia-youth-survey-report-2019/file*
18 Shepherd, S M, Delgado, R H, Sherwood, J, Paradies, Y, 2017, *The impact of indigenous cultural identity and cultural engagement on violent offending,* BMC Public Health, 50.
19 United Nations, 2015, *Sustainable Development Goals,* available at: *https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/*
20 United Nations Development Programme, 2019, *Human Development Index (HDI),* available at: *http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi*
21 United Nations, 2015, *Sustainable Development Goals: 4 Quality Education,* available at: *https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/*
22 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), PISA 2000 database available at: *https://www.oecd.org/pisa/data/*
23 Ibid.
24 World Bank, 2018, *World Bank Education Overview: Skills,* available at: *http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/806751541081039061/World-Bank-Education-Overview-Skills*
25 OECD, 2015, *Labour Market Mismatch and Labour Productivity: Evidence from PIAAC Data*, available from: *https://www.oecd.org/eco/growth/Labour-Market-Mismatchand-Labour-Productivity-Evidence-from-PIAAC-Data.pdf*
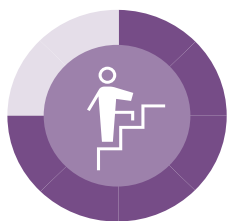
7.4 EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY

Employment and opportunity is a key priority of international agreements and institutions, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that 'everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment.'[26] The right to paid work, including equal pay for equal work, is recognised as a cornerstone of human progress and development. The UN SDG focuses on employment and opportunity as the means by which to economically resource and support country goals and outcomes.[27]

Unemployment of youth aged 15–24 in Australia has fluctuated for the past 20 years, with a previous peak at 19.3 percent in 1992 and reaching as low as 8.7 percent in 2008.[28] The employment landscape is different for today's youth compared to the conditions generations ago.[29] Despite 20 years of economic growth in Australia, youth unemployment remains persistently high and out of step with the national unemployment rate, which fluctuated around 4 percent pre-COVID-19.[30]

Previous policies to address youth unemployment and increasing opportunity have focused on education, skills development, and the development of work ethics.[31] Demands in the labour market indicate a shift in the in-demand sectors, such as aged care, and the need for higher rates of youth VET completion in those industries in order to meet this demand.[32]
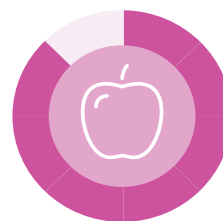
7.5 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Health and wellbeing are foundational to the development of not just youth but all people. This is recognised in international agreements and institutions, including the Constitution of the World Health Organization (WHO), which states 'the highest attainable standard of health as possible is a fundamental right of every human being.'[33] Health and wellbeing are a major goal of Agenda 2030 in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), to which Australia is a signatory.[34] With a life expectancy of 81 for males and 85 for females and 9.4 percent of GDP spent on health, Australia is in a strong position to support youth for a healthy and thriving life.[35]

All states and territories in Australia are committed under the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Health Care Agreement that all youth remain healthy, which is

26 United Nations, 1948, Universal declaration of human rights. *UN General Assembly,* available at: *https://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr_booklet_en_web.pdf*

27 United Nations, 2015, *Sustainable Development Goals,* 2015, available at: *https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/*

28 The World Bank, *Unemployment: youth (% of labor force age 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate) Australia,* available at: *https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS?locations=AU*

29 Cuervo, H and Wyn, J, 2016, An unspoken crisis: The 'scarring effects' of the complex nexus between education and work on two generations of young Australians. *International Journal of Lifelong Education,* 35(2), pp. 122–135.

30 Brotherhood of St Laurence, 2019, Prosperity's Children Youth Unemployment in Australia, available at: *http://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/11694/1/BSL_Prosperitys_children_youth_unemployment_Dec2019.pdf*

31 Denny, L and Churchill, B, 2016, Youth employment in Australia: A comparative analysis of labour force participation by age group, *Journal of Applied Youth Studies,* 1(2), p. 5.

32 Brotherhood of St Laurence, 2019, *Prosperity's Children Youth Unemployment in Australia, http://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/11694/1/BSL_Prosperitys_children_youth_unemployment_Dec2019.pdf*

33 World Health Oorganization, 1946, *Preamble to the constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference,* New York, 1946. Entered into force on 7 April 1948. New York, pp. 19–22.

34 United Nations, 2015, *Sustainable Development Goals,* available at: *https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/*

35 World Health Organization, 2020, *Australia Statistics,* available at: *https://www.who.int/countries/aus/en/*

consistent with the vision of the *Healthy Safe and Thriving: National Strategic Framework for Child and Youth Health.*[36] Youth are recognised as a vulnerable subpopulation within the *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020.*[37] *The National Drug Strategy 2017–2026*[38] and the *National Alcohol Strategy of 2018–2026*[39] highlight the need for early intervention strategies with young people.

Youth mental health and suicide prevention is a key focus for the Australian Government and was also identified by AYDI youth consultation as a major priority for Health and Wellbeing. In 2014, male youth aged 15–24 were more than two-and-a-half times more likely to commit suicide compared to female youth,[40] and for every death by suicide an estimated 100-200 attempted suicides have been undertaken.[41] Mental health also has a major impact on education attendance, with 60 percent of youth experiencing anxiety and depression and 50 percent of those experiencing first episode psychosis while completing high school.[42] Lack of completion for those with presenting or emerging mental health issues are placed at a significant long-term disadvantage, such as significantly reduced economic wellbeing and diminished options.[43]
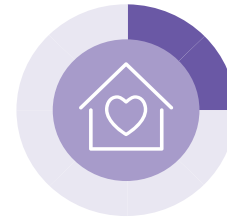
7.6 SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and security is recognised by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[44] The UN SDGs recognises safety and security as a priority that is foundational to living within a community. A safe and supportive community is a key element to creating positive youth development.[45]

For youth in Australia, insecure housing and the risk of homelessness have been a persistent unmet need for the past 10 years.[46] Financial pressure from the cost of living, the completion of education and housing instability mean that young people can find themselves in a state of short or long-term homelessness.[47] The causes of youth homelessness also often involve multiple factors present at one time, including intergenerational poverty, chronic shortage of affordable housing, discrimination, family-related violence, long-term unemployment, mental illness, and economic and social exclusion.[48]

36 Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council, 2015, *Healthy, Safe and Thriving: National Strategic Framework for Child and Youth Health,* available at: *http://www.coaghealthcouncil.gov.au/Portals/0/Healthy%20Safe%20and%20Thriving%20-%20National%20Strategic%20Framework%20for%20Child%20and%20Youth%20Health.pdf*
37 Commonwealth of Australia, 2011, 2010-2020 *National Disability Strategy,* available at: *https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/national_disability_strategy_2010_2020.pdf*
38 Commonwealth of Australia, 2017, *National Drug Strategy 2017-2026,* available at: *https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/national-drug-strategy-2017-2026_1.pdf*
39 Commonwealth of Australia, 2019, *National Alcohol Strategy 2019-2028,* available at: *https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2019/12/national-alcohol-strategy-2019-2028.pdf*
40 World Health Organization, 2020, *Australia,* available at: *https://www.who.int/mental_health/suicide-prevention/country-profiles/AUS.pdf*
41 Australian Government, 2020, *Youth Suicide, Department of Health,* available at: *https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/youth-suicide*
42 Bowman, S, McKinstry, C, and McGorry, P, 2017, Youth mental ill health and secondary school completion in Australia: time to act, *Early intervention in Psychiatry,* 11(4), pp. 277–289.
43 Ibid.
44 Assembly, U G, 1948, *Universal declaration of human rights.* UN General Assembly.
45 The Commonwealth, 2016, *Global Youth Development Index 2016,* available at: *https://thecommonwealth.org/youthdevelopmentindex*
46 ARACY, 2015, *Better System, Better Chances: A review of research and practice for prevention and early intervention,* Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth.
 Youth Action, 2020, *Snapshot NSW Youth Sector,* available at: *https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/youthaction/pages/1603/attachments/original/1587268867/YA_Snapshot2020_Report.pdf?1587268867*
47 Farrugia, D, Smyth, J and Harrison, T, 2016, Moral distinctions and structural inequality: homeless youth salvaging the self, *The sociological review,* 64(2), pp. 238–255.
48 Steen, A, 2018. The many costs of homelessness. *The Medical Journal of Australia,* 208(4), pp. 167–168.

DATA AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GAPS

The main limitation of the AYDI, and measurement indexes more generally, is the challenge of localised application versus scalability. Scaling aggregate data provides substantial benefits for policymakers wanting to ensure that outcomes are balanced and equitable across geographical territories. The drawback is that this inhibits the ability of the AYDI, as a tool, to find appropriate and comparable data. What is possible, however, is for the data and results to be captured and reported at a local scale. There is also scope for developing additional local measures that may reflect priorities, as a compliment to the AYDI results. Where datasets may be too small to be meaningful or missing altogether, imputations can be used to incorporate averages from larger population sizes.

Consultation with young people across each jurisdiction highlighted a number of areas of high priority that could not be included in the AYDI due to data availability and jurisdictional restrictions in the project timeframe. The themes included climate change, the urban/rural divide, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, gender, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) young people, young people with disability, LGBTQIA+ young people, and young people in juvenile detention. Expert commentary has been included to provide additional insights and recommendations on specific issues absent from the AYDI and can be found in Appendix C.

It is recommended in future AYDIs that finer level of disaggregation be used, should it become available. If national and jurisdictional data collectors and custodians design collections to include finer levels of age, sex, gender and cultural identifications it would be possible to make comparative indexes, such as a male/female, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander/other or refugee/other. These types of comparators help to delve deeper into the different lived experiences of different cohorts of young people and identify potential program and policy needs. The changing priorities and needs of young people warrants review of Indicators and Domains used in AYDIs in the future so that data collection can be encouraged, collected, disseminated widely and used by researchers, governments, NGOs and young people themselves to improve youth development across the country.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

While Australia is performing well in many aspects of youth development, there are areas where there is opportunity for improvement.

Many of the issues identified as priorities for young people did not have quality data publicly available at the levels of disaggregation needed. In future years it is hoped that more and better data will become available for use in future iterations of the AYDI.

While Australia has a substantial data holdings of relevant statistics on youth, there are some outstanding issues that are currently not captured or could be captured more regularly in the data. The major issues with current data are consistent demographic disaggregation including age, sex, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, CALD, refugee and migrant, disability, gender and LGBTQIA+.

Policy sessions explaining how and where to best use this type of index and the development data throughout the report could benefit both national departments and jurisdictional governments.

The main opportunities for improvement at the jurisdictional level for targeted policies shown in the AYDI are:

- NSW may benefit from targeted policies on Psychological Distress, Specialist Homelessness Services, and Sexual Assault.

- ACT on Participation in VET, Sexual Assault, Psychological Distress and Self-Harm.

- SA on Participation in VET, Safe at Home and Difficulty Finding Work.

- Vic on Participation in VET, Alcohol Lifetime Risk, Sexual Assault and Robbery.

- WA may benefit from targeted policies on NEET, Psychological Distress, Sexual Assault, SHSC Domestic Violence and Family and Friends.

- Qld on Robbery, Underemployed, NAPLAN Numeracy Participation, Psychological Distress and Voter Turnout.

- Tas on Bachelor Degree, NAPLAN Reading Achievement, Psychological Distress, Underemployed and Humanitarian Migrant Employment.

- NT may benefit from targeted policies towards Adolescent Fertility, Difficulty Finding Work, Voter Turnout, Specialist Homeless Services and SHSC Domestic Violence.

10.0

APPENDIX A – METHODOLOGY

The Commonwealth (2013) defined youth development as 'enhancing the status of young people, empowering them to build on their competencies and capabilities for life. It will enable young people to contribute and benefit from a politically stable, economically viable, and legally supportive environment, ensuring their full participation as active citizens in their countries.'

The methodology to develop and populate the AYDI has been designed in line with other prominent global indicators, and substantial effort has been made to use the best existing data. However, the major challenge to developing a harmonised YDI is in attempting to overcome the paucity of consistent and comprehensive data across the diversity found at the jurisdictional level. They vary significantly in terms of population, level of economic development, and regional location.

This report builds on previous work for the AYDI 2016 using the best available timely and relevant data. As a result of this improved data new indicators, and new domains, have been added to this iteration of the AYDI. As with all YDIs developed using different methodologies this AYDI should not be used to compare to Global YDI or AYDI 2016 scores.

Jurisdictional focus groups provided information on what youth currently perceive as the biggest barriers to their development. A summary of these issues can be seen in Appendix B. It is hoped that the issues raised can be investigated further with evidence-based policy and program development.

10.1 THE LACK OF DATA AND IMPUTATION METHODS

The issue of low availability for current or historical data has been a factor in several of the methodological decisions made, from what indicators to include, to how to calculate the final scores. There are many empirical and statistical techniques that can be employed to deal with these missing data issues when creating a composite index.

In using primarily hot deck and trend imputation methods, the AYDI used the best possible data without an overly complex methodology. Hot deck is assigning missing data the value of a 'similar' data point and observed historical data were used to impute data. In calculating Domain and final scores, each indicator was weighted in terms of its relative importance to the other indicators. Below, in Table 1 is an overview of the method used for each indicator, in alphabetical order, that required imputations.

TABLE 1: IMPUTATION METHODS

INDICATOR	IMPUTATION METHOD
Adolescent Fertility	Adolescent fertility rate is measured for females aged 15–19. Trend data from observations for 2015–2018 were used to impute 2019 values.
Alcohol Lifetime Risk	Observations from 2015 and 2018 were used to impute values for 2016–2017 and 2019.
Carer Status	Data is only available for 2012, 2015 and 2018, therefore, trend data was used to impute 2016-2017 and 2019.
Cultural Participation	Observations from 2013-2014 and 2017-2018 to impute 2014-2016 and then held constant from 2017-2019.
Family and Friends	Data is only available for 2010 and 2014, therefore, 2014 data was held constant across 2015–2019.
Have a Say	Data is only available for 2010 and 2014, therefore, 2014 data was held constant across 2015–2019.
Humanitarian Migrant Employment	Observations from 2011 and 2016 were used to impute values for 2015 and 2017–2019.
Mortality	Trend data from observations for 2015–2018 were used to impute 2019 values.
Participation in VET	Trend data from observations for 2015–2018 were used to impute 2019 values.
Psychological Distress	Observations from 2014 and 2017 were used to impute values for 2015–2016 and 2018–2019.
Robbery	Trend data from observations for 2015–2018 were used to impute 2019 values.
Safe at Home	Data is only available for 2010 and 2014, therefore, 2014 data was held constant across 2015–2019.
Self-Harm	Self-harm measures the mortality rate from self-harm. Trend data from observations for 2015–2018 were used to impute 2019 values.
Sexual Assault	Trend data from observations for 2015–2018 were used to impute 2019 values.
Volunteering	Data is only available for 2010 and 2014, therefore, 2014 data was held constant across 2015–2019.
Voter Turnout	Observations from Senate elections in 2013, 2016 and 2019 were used to impute values for 2015 and 2017–2018. More information on Voter Turnout can be seen following this table.
Youth Enrolment	Trend data from observations for 2016-2019 were used to impute 2015 values.

10.2 DATA CAVEATS

Table 2 in Section 5.5 shows the source websites where indicators and data sources used in this AYDI were collected. Below links are provided to methodologies and explanatory notes on specific indicators and collections.

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) provided non-public data on request. Below are the caveats provided with that data.

Where data according to the financial year was provided, it has been included as the later full year data (e.g. 2017–2018 data has been used as 2018 data).

10.2.1 ADOLESCENT FERTILITY

Adolescent Fertility is publicly available with explanatory notes at:
https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/births-australia-methodology/2018.

10.2.2 ALCOHOL LIFETIME RISK

The ABS provided data on Alcohol Lifetime Risk. This data is collected in the National Health Survey.

Data provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data. Discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals. Explanatory notes can be found at: *https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4364.0.55.001Explanatory%20 Notes12017-18?OpenDocument*

a) National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 2009 guideline 1 for the consumption of alcohol which recommends no more than 2 standard drinks per day. For more information see Glossary.

b) Total excludes not known.

c) NHMRC 2009 guideline 3 recommends no alcohol consumption for persons aged 15 to 17 years. Data presented shows lifetime risk as defined by guideline 1 for persons aged 18 years and over to drink no more than 2 standard drinks per day.

10.2.3 BACHELOR DEGREE

It is important to note that this indicator measure highest level of education by jurisdiction of usual residence not place of study. Explanatory notes can be found at: *https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology/jul-2020*

10.2.4 CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

Cultural Participation topic (also referred to as the Cultural Participation Survey) and presents details about participants in selected cultural activities including performing arts, singing or playing a musical instrument, dancing, writing, visual art activities and craft activities. It is collected by the ABS in the Multipurpose Household Survey (MPHS) conducted throughout Australia. Explanatory Notes can be found at: *https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4921.0Explanatory%20Notes12017-18* Observations from 2013-2014 and 2017-2018 to impute 2015-2017 and then held constant from 2018-2019.

10.2.5 CARER STATUS

ABS provided data on request for this indicator as the public release did not disseminate at the age disaggregation required. Explanatory notes can be found at *https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/2018*

10.2.6 DIFFICULTY FINDING WORK

Difficulty Finding Work is publicly available with explanatory notes at: *https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia-methodology/feb-2020*

10.2.7 FAMILY AND FRIENDS

The ABS provided this data. Family and Friends measures the frequency of face-to-face contact with family or friends external to the household at least once a week. It is measured from the General Social Survey, which was conducted in 2010 and 2014. Care should be taken in making assumptions in the current day from these older data points. Only data for 18–24 was provided for 2010, so this age was used for the 2014 value as well.

Data provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data. Discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

Continuous variables provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data.

10.2.8 HAVE A SAY

The ABS provided this data. Have a Say measures whether a person feels able to have a say within the general community on important issues all or most of the time. It is measured from the General Social Survey, which was conducted in 2010 and 2014. Care should be taken in making assumptions in the current day from these older data points. Only data for 18–24 was provided for 2010, so this age was used for the 2014 value as well.

Data provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data. Discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

Continuous variables provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data.

10.2.9 HUMANITARIAN MIGRANT EMPLOYMENT

The ABS provided this data. Humanitarian Migrant Employment uses Census-linked data to measure the employment-to-population ratio of permanent migrants aged 15–24.

Data provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data.

10.2.10 MORTALITY

Mortality is publicly available with explanatory notes at:
https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/causes-death-australia-methodology/2018

10.2.11 NAPLAN NUMERACY PARTICIPATION

NAPLAN Numeracy Participation is publicly available with explanatory notes at:
https://reports.acara.edu.au/Home/Results

10.2.12 NAPLAN READING ACHIEVEMENT

NAPLAN Reading Achievement is publicly available with explanatory notes at:
https://reports.acara.edu.au/Home/Results

10.2.13 NEITHER IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING (NEET)

NEET is publicly available with explanatory notes at:
https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/education-and-work-australia-methodology/may-2019

10.2.14 PARTICIPATION IN VET

Participation in VET is publicly available in the Report on Government Services with explanatory notes at:
https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/report-on-government-services

10.2.15 PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

The ABS provided this data. Psychological Distress is collected in the National Health Survey.

Data provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data. Discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals. Explanatory Notes can be found at:
https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4364.0.55.001Explanatory%20Notes12017-18?OpenDocument

a) Levels of psychological distress are derived from the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10). Denominator includes a small number of persons for whom levels of psychological distress were unable to be determined.

b) ACT's 2017–2018 estimate has a high margin of error and should be used with caution.

10.2.16 ROBBERY

Robbery is publicly available with explanatory notes at:
https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/recorded-crime-victims-australia-methodology/2019

10.2.17 SAFE AT HOME

The ABS provided this data. Safe at Home measures feelings of safety at home alone after dark as being safe to very safe. It is measured from the General Social Survey, which was conducted in 2010 and 2014. Care should be taken in making assumptions in the current day from these older data points. Only data for 18–24 was provided for 2010 so this age was used for the 2014 value as well.

Data provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data. Discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

Continuous variables provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data.

10.2.18 SELF HARM

Self harm mortality rate is publicly available with explanatory notes at:
https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/causes-death-australia-methodology/2018

10.2.19 SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual Assault is publicly available with explanatory notes at:
https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/recorded-crime-victims-australia-methodology/2019

10.2.20 SHSC DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

SHSC Domestic Violence measures the percentage of Specialist Homelessness Services Clients who needed Domestic Violence Assistance. This indicator captures data where the agency worker identified a need for assistance for domestic or family violence only. The Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) describes the characteristics of clients of specialist homelessness services, the services requested, outcomes achieved, and unmet requests for services. More information and the latest data can be found at:
https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/shsc-data-cubes/contents/specialist-homelessness-services-collection-shsc-data-cubes

10.2.21 SPECIALIST HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

Specialist Homelessness Services is measured as clients aged 15-24 captured in the SHSC over the Estimated Resident Population (ERP) for 15-24 year old from ABS. More information and the latest data can be found at:
https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/shsc-data-cubes/contents/specialist-homelessness-services-collection-shsc-data-cubes

10.2.22 UNDEREMPLOYED

Underemployment is publicly available with explanatory notes at:
https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia-methodology/feb-2020

10.2.23 VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering measures whether a person did unpaid voluntary work in last 12 months through an organisation. It is measured from the General Social Survey, which was conducted in 2010 and 2014. Care should be taken in making assumptions in the current day from these older data points. Only data for 18–24 was provided for 2010 so this age was used for the 2014 value as well.

Data provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data. Discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

Continuous variables provided have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data.

10.2.24 VOTER TURNOUT

The turnout by age data are synthetic estimates of Senate age turnout rates, based on AEC research on voter mark-off. The estimates on Senate data is used because it provides a clearer picture of voter behaviour. Care should be taken in comparing turnout rates from 2013 and earlier with turnout rates from 2016 onwards, as the introduction of new enrolment processes caused a break in series. Turnout numbers have been higher compared to the estimated eligible population since 2016, but due to the rise in enrolments the turnout rates have lowered. More detail can be found in the AEC's research paper, *Voter Turnout: 2016 House of Representatives and Senate elections.*[49]

The AEC suggest the following caveats on data generation and use:

- The data have been prepared for research purposes only
  - The data are not an official product and do not replace any officially reported statistics
  - While the data are as complete and accurate as possible, no warranty or fitness is implied
- The data cover the 2013 through to 2019 full federal elections
  - By-elections and referendums are not covered
- The data are a synthetic estimate of age and gender-based turnout, using voter mark-off as a proxy for turnout
  - The AEC defines turnout as the number of votes (i.e. the number of ballot papers counted for an election) compared to the enrolled population, in accordance with international definitions
  - Voter mark-off is a record of electors marked as voting and is used by the AEC as a proxy for indicating population traits related to turnout
  - AEC research tends to use Senate data for turnout, rather than House of Representatives data, as it is more indicative of voter-initiated behaviour
    - Senate turnout is higher than House of Representatives turnout due to the inclusion of partial admissions
    - Partial admissions occur when an elector has returned a declaration vote with a Senate ballot paper for the state they are enrolled in, but a House of Representatives ballot paper for a division other than the one they are enrolled in
    - Partial admissions are included because turnout is usually used as an indicator of voter behaviour, rather than administrative admission
- There was a break in series for enrolment in 2016, compared to previous events, largely due to the implementation of the Federal Direct Enrolment and Update, which increased enrolments
  - The break in series has resulted in lower turnout rates for 2016 and 2019 compared to previous events
  - This is due to the turnout rates' denominator being enrolled electors, while the numerator (votes counted) has not increased at the same rate (although it has increased)
- Regardless of the turnout rate (calculated with enrolment), the number of electors turning out to vote has increased as a proportion of the voting eligible population.

49 Australian Electoral Commission, 2016, Voter Turnout 2016, available at: https://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/research/files/voter-turnout-2016.pdf

10.2.25 YOUTH ENROLMENT

Jurisdictional disaggregation was provided by the AEC. The indicator measures the percentage of eligible electors between 18 and 24 years old currently enrolled compared to the total number estimated to be eligible to enrol.

The national youth enrolment rate target is 80 percent.

10.3 STANDARDISED DATA PROCESSES

The full range of datasets for all indicators were normalised so that they could be added together in a statistically valid way and weighted so that they attribute the correct amount to the overall index score.

There are many methods of normalising or standardising data. The simple methods of banding or ranking are often effective and require less statistical knowledge. Banding data in the case of the AYDI is a way of dealing with comparing otherwise incongruous information. It takes each indicator and scales it to a score between 0 and 1 relative to the whole dataset. To do this, appropriate minimum and maximum values for the dataset are decided such that anything below the minimum is assigned zero, and anything above the maximum is assigned 1, and everything else is scaled evenly between the two.

TABLE 2: DATA OVERVIEW				
Domains *(j)*	**Indicators *(i)***			
	Indicator$_1$	**Indicator$_2$**	**...**	**Indicator$_n$**
Domain$_1$	y_{11}	y_{12}	...	y_{1n}
Domain$_2$	y_{21}	y_{22}	...	y_{2n}
...	...	...	...	...
Domain$_m$	y_{m1}	y_{m2}	...	y_{mn}

When developing a YDI it is important to consider the nature of the data. The nature of the data has positive meaning if the data has positive correlation between the indicator and the meaning of youth development; it has negative meaning if the data has negative correlation between the indicator and the meaning of youth development. Every single indicator has to be standardised by using Equation One for positive data and Equation Two for negative data.

EQUATION 1: BANDING EQUATION

$$Banded_{ji} = \frac{Indicator\ Value\ y_{ji} - Minimum\ Cut\ Off_{ji}}{Maximum\ Cut\ Off_{ji} - Minimum\ Cut\ Off_{ji}}$$

The fact Cultural Participation is banded this way indicates the implicit assumption that more years of schooling is inherently better for youth development. However, higher levels of some indicators, such as mortality rates, represent a less desirable case for youth. In such cases, the banded score is reversed and is calculated by Equation 2.

EQUATION 2: REVERSE BANDED EQUATION

$$Reverse\ Banded_{ji} = 1 - \frac{Indicator\ Value\ y_{ji} - Minimum\ Cut\ Off_{ji}}{Maximum\ Cut\ Off_{ji} - Minimum\ Cut\ Off_{ji}}$$

Once a banded score has been calculated for each indicator, the Domain score is calculated in a similar fashion as is done for indicators and adding the weights. The score for the j-th Domain is calculated by Equation 3.

EQUATION 3: DOMAIN SCORE CALCULATION

$$Domain\ Score_{j} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} Weighted\ Indicators_{ji} \times Banded\ Score_{ji}}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} Weighted\ Indicators_{ji}}$$

Once a Domain score has been calculated, the AYDI index is calculated in a similar fashion as is done for Domains and adding the weights. The score for AYDI is and the average of the Domain scores. The score of AYDI for data is segregation by jurisdiction using Equation 4 and the Australian score is an average of all jurisdictions.

EQUATION 4: FINAL AYDI SCORE CALCULATION

$$YDI\ Score = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{m} Weighted\ Domain_{j} \times Domain\ Score_{j}}{\sum_{j=1}^{m} Weighted\ Domain_{j}}$$

The final AYDI score in Equation 4 is used to measure the AYDI for national and divisional levels and also disaggregation by gender.

10.4 INDICATOR WEIGHTING

In calculating Domain and final scores, each indicator can be weighted in terms of its relative importance to the other indicators by using available methods. It is important to have agreement on the weights for the Domains and indicators.

The AYDI has to be measured by a suitable approach and method. Table 3 lists the Domain weightings that have been chosen by the Commonwealth for the Global YDI.[50] These weightings were used to inform the weighting in the AYDI. In the 2016 Global YDI three Domains were chosen as primary indicators as they aligned best with the Human Development paradigm of Health, Education and Employment. Other Domains were weighted equally with the remainder. Table 4 lists the previous weightings of Australian Domains.

TABLE 3: THE WEIGHTING DOMAIN MEASURING YDI BY THE COMMONWEALTH (2016)		
REFERENCE OF YDI	**DOMAIN**	**% WEIGHT**
The Global YDI (2016)	Domain 1: Education	25%
	Domain 2: Health and Wellbeing	25%
	Domain 3: Employment	25%
	Domain 4: Political Participation	12.5%
	Domain 5: Civic Participation	12.5%

TABLE 4: 2016 WEIGHTINGS OF AUSTRALIAN DOMAINS.		
REFERENCE OF YDI	**DOMAIN**	**% WEIGHT**
The Australian YDI 2016	Domain 1: Education	25%
	Domain 2: Health and Wellbeing	25%
	Domain 3: Employment and Opportunity	25%
	Domain 4: Political Participation	12.5%
	Domain 5: Civic Participation	12.5%

Since the Global YDI in 2016 the understanding of the complex nature of youth development has further evolved and the AYDI recognises this by including additional Domains.[51] In the 2020 AYDI equal weighting for all Domains has been used as well as equal weighting for each indicator within the Domains. These Domain weights are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5: 2020 WEIGHTINGS OF AUSTRALIAN DOMAINS.		
REFERENCE OF YDI	**DOMAIN**	**% WEIGHT**
Australian YDI 2020	Domain 1: Civic and Political Participation	16.67%
	Domain 2: Community and Culture	16.67%
	Domain 3:Education and Skills	16.67%
	Domain 4: Employment and Opportunity	16.67%
	Domain 5: Health and Wellbeing	16.67%
	Domain 6: Safety and Security	16.67%

50 The Commonwealth, *Youth Development Index 2016,* available at: *https://thecommonwealth.org/ youthdevelopmentindex*
51 Ibid.

11.0

APPENDIX B – SUMMARY OF AYDI YOUTH CONSULTATION OF STATES AND TERRITORIES

11.1 SCOPE

Youth consultations were undertaken in January and February 2020 by youth peak bodies and youth workers to obtain input from young people in each state and territory (see Table A below) for the AYDI. The inclusion of young people in the process of the design of the AYDI was a priority for NAPS and AYAC.

Workshops were conducted to investigate other YDI Domains, indicators, and priorities and to evaluate their appropriateness in Australia. Young people in the consultations were asked two open questions. Firstly, 'What is the world you want to see for young people?' Secondly, 'What needs to change to make that happen?' These questions were asked to find the theme or Domain areas of highest priority.

A summary of the results is presented below listing the top six Domains identified by youth and a list of priorities within each Domain.

11.2 DOMAINS

This process generated the following Domains in order of priority:

1. **Civic and Political Participation**

2. **Community and Culture**

3. **Education and Skills**

4. **Employment and Opportunity**

5. **Health and Wellbeing**

6. **Safety and Security**

11.3 PRIORITIES FOR POTENTIAL INDICATORS

The following lists of priorities identified through consultation are organised firstly into those priorities put forward by multiple (more than two) consultation groups, ranked in order of most frequently listed to least. Below the ranked priorities within each of the Domains is a list of priorities listed once only by the consultation groups.

11.4 CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

A more inclusive multicultural society where governance institutions are trustworthy, transparent and accountable were key priorities in this Domain. Strong youth representation both in elected positions and through genuine input through consultation is sought after to ensure laws that protect youth. Changes impacting on youth should be communicated to them before they are made. The young people reported this can be achieved by: raising civic and political education through schools; tracking the number of youth in positions with decision-making power; creating formal positions for youth and advocacy; establishing a minister dedicated to equality and the needs of vulnerable and marginalised youth; and awareness-raising programmes dedicated to priority youth concerns.

The following were listed by two or more consultation groups as a priority for Civic and Political Participation listed in order of priority:

1. Politics, law and civics education rates
2. Rate of politically active and involved young people/rallies, local councils
3. Number of young people in government/politics (federal, state or local)
4. Direct youth influence on policy
5. Volunteering – rate/hours.

Each of the following were identified by one consultation group as a priority for Civic and Political Participation (in alphabetical order):

Accessibility to participate in voting for marginalised populations – LGBTI, migrants, rural and regional, low SES

Advocacy of youth

Affordability of community events and activities

Age of registration

Are there avenues to express your opinions have you expressed

Australian/global politics classes offered in secondary schools

Being involved politically

Community service

Cultural event

Debating activities

Do you have the right to vote?

Eligible Australian enrolled

Engagement with young parties

First Nations self-determination

Helping each other

How policies will change the future (e.g. climate change)

Influence ability to affect

Justice

Local community groups and support services

Lower age to vote 14/15

Meaningful consultation with decision makers

Media has a huge impact into splitting our community, there needs to be more focus in bringing people closer together and what are the good things happening in the community than what's going wrong. Negativity breeds negativity

No prisons

Number and access to community meetings

Number of community events

Number of free opportunities

Number of political events and attendance rates

Number of young voters

Number youth attending protests (e.g. climate strike)

Numbers at marches

Parliament youth sessions/programs/leadership stuff/group attendance/participation

Proportion of voters

Protest and activism

Quotas for representation

Rate of people who believe they are being heard

Satisfaction with government

Social opportunities

Sporting opportunities

Transport availability and costs

Understanding of legal rights

Violence

Voting participation

Young people as victims of crime

Young people in any position of power

Youth ability to express views

Youth ability to express voices

Youth advisory committees

Youth crime

Youth interest in politics

Youth parliament, youth councils and advisory committees

Youth representation on committees/boards

Youth voting rates

11.5 COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

With respect to Community and Culture, the respondents sought to be part of a community that comes together, displays compassion towards one another and appreciates diversity. This includes recognition of its Indigenous and cultural heritage.

The following were listed by two or more consultation groups as a priority for Community and Culture listed in order of priority:

1. Social and Family Network

Each of the following were identified by one consultation group as a priority for Community and Culture (in alphabetical order):

Diversity and Inclusion

Equity/social equality

Indigenous culture

Indigenous rights

Intergenerational equity

Aboriginal languages taught in schools

Number of activities on country

Boys going through lore

More access to culture

Culture in schools

Incidence of workplace racism

Number of cultural events

Number of youth spaces (e.g. youth foyers, sports facilities)

Volunteer hours

Youth attendance at non-education activities (e.g. events, festivals)

Truthful education about colonisation

No government intervention in First Nation Lives.

11.6 EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Accessibility of education in terms of proximity to home and at no cost was a key priority. Respondents would like education to be more diverse with a range of academic and non-academic options, including practical skills such as how to prepare resumes and taxes. There is also an interest in both modernising the education system and also incorporating more holistic learning that acknowledges cultural heritage.

The following were listed by two or more consultation groups as a priority for Education listed in order of priority:

1. Student wellbeing measurement/development
2. Free/affordability of education and expenses
3. Alternative education enrolment – number of students in VCE, VCAL, VET, tertiary institutions, TAFE + alternative education
4. Highest level of education
5. Literacy
6. Level of funding for schools proportional to educational disadvantage, between public/private
7. Tertiary enrolment/graduation
8. Hands-on practical experience opportunities
9. Attendance
10. Real life learning (adulting, not just facts, CPR, RSA, food handling, first aid)
11. Numeracy.

Each of the following were identified by one consultation group as a priority for Education (in alphabetical order):

Accessing school services

AOD and sexual health education

Attitudes to school/school climate

Behaviours and social behaviour

Better decision-making training

Connect them to real life work experiences where they get their welfare money, and opportunities to secure jobs

Dependence on technology

Disengagement ages

Education funding

Equity in education

Exclusion

Extracurricular activities (opportunities to cater students' interests)

Extracurricular opportunities (e.g. committees and clubs)

FLO program for different learning styles

Graduating Year 12

Graduation rates

Invest into TAFE as a positive pathway after high school, similar to colleges in the USA.

Length of time to complete tertiary study

Level of youth engagement/interest in education courses/subjects

More access to culture/religion

NAPLAN

NEET

Number of regional courses

Number of supports available within educational settings (e.g. counsellors, chaplaincy, CALD supports)

Opportunity to engage in extracurricular activities

Political education

Post-education employment rates

Quality of schools/teachers

Quality teachers who are trauma informed

Rate/quality of sex education and LGBTQIA+ education in schools

Rates of higher education or employment or NEET

Retention rates

School attendance

School engagement

Self-sufficiency training – are young people educated to be independent?

Student contribution to their education, decisions in their school, student voice

Student satisfaction

Study-to-school ratio – life balance

Success rate

Successful completion rates

Teacher and students understanding each other

Teacher diversity

Teacher retention at schools

Traineeships and apprenticeships

Transition into employment

Truthful history taught

11.7 EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITY

Young people in the consultations proposed improved matching of available employment to the education and training of the individual, a fairer rate of pay, and to possess higher job security and stability. Youth in rural and remote locations identified a need for improved job opportunities closer to home and greater access to employment for youth with disabilities. The young people sought to know their workplace rights and legal entitlements as employees in highly competitive job markets.

The following were listed by two or more consultation groups as a priority for Employment and Opportunity listed in order of priority:

1. Job availability/employment opportunities
2. Unemployment rate or ratio
3. Underemployment rate
4. Cost of living/affordability on wages
5. NEET
6. Financial literacy
7. Rate of pay – minimum wage/salary rates/hourly rate.

Each of the following were identified by one consultation group as a priority for Employment and Opportunity (in alphabetical order):

Accessibility of public housing services

Accessible childcare

Age/pay rate ratio

Are employment opportunities available where you are

Aspiration versus reality (i.e. Maccas

Centrelink and Newstart against cost of living and inflation)

Competition for available jobs

Cost of TAFE and university

Crime rate – young people offending and young people as victims

Do you have the education and training the job requires?

Employment and education ratio (wellbeing of people doing both)

Entry-level requirements for positions

Equal opportunity

Exploitation in workforce

Exploitation of junior staff (reduction in hours at casual rates)

Financial independence

Government housing applications/approval Housing

Income/cost of living ratio

Industry types available in rural areas

Interaction with justice system (i.e. cautions, mentions, custodial sentencing)

Interest in career path

Intergenerational NEET

Job providers – declaring how many young people are hired at this workplace

Job skill building within schools and education

Lack access to computer and internet

Lack of opportunity

licence-to-employment ratio

Life skills held in high regard

Number of businesses involved in hiring young people and giving opportunities

Number of work experience

Pay rates for youth

Proportion of youth as employees

Rate of Youth Allowance and Newstart

Ratio of stable work (e.g. full and part-time vs casual positions)

Resilience of young people

Retention rates, casualisation of the workforce

Safeguards for youth in workforce (e.g., union)

Skills

Skills shortage

Unemployment by qualification

Union protections

Welfare dependency

Welfare rate against CPI and inflation

Work placements, opportunities and courses are needed in Tasmania

Youth debt

11.8 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

A peaceful and compassionate society where young people can be happy, confident in their own abilities, and live disease-free in a clean and healthy natural environment was the top issue for young people in the consultations. The most pressing goal for this Domain is improved education and support services for mental health. This includes learning about emotional wellbeing and interpersonal skills, such as how to resolve issues and build resilience. Young people identified improved access to health services in terms of geographical location, diversity of services, and access to services at no cost as possible ways to improve outcomes for health and wellbeing. Additional priorities include: addressing drug and alcohol addiction through methods such as parent education; consistency of care through higher retention of health professionals, particularly in remote locations; and improved access to affordable, nutrient-rich whole foods.

The following were listed by two or more consultation groups as a priority for Health listed in order of priority:

1. Alcohol or drug abuse
2. Access to and engagement with health services including remote areas
3. Suicide rates
4. Rates of mental health
5. Social and family network
6. Cost/affordability, including private cover
7. Healthcare services
8. Mortality rate
9. Awareness of services
10. Mental and physical health
11. Mental health services access.

Each of the following were identified by one consultation group as a priority for Health (in alphabetical order):

Balanced eating

BMI

Climate change – drought

Depression/anxiety

Doctor numbers in rural areas

Doctor visits

Education in schools

Employ more youth workers in community to work in schools and other places where young people hang out and provide immediate support to those who would benefit.

Environment health

Experience of disability/experience of chronic illness

Fertility education (sexual safety education)

Funding of services

Generational trauma

Global wellbeing index

LGBTIQA+ specific service

Liveability/affordability

Look at wait times for services

Low self-worth

Mental health, access to mental health education

Mental health, understanding and early intervention

Number of young people able to engage in everyday activities

Obesity rates in youth

Poverty

Pregnancy rates

Prevalence of mental health education

Preventative services and availability

Quality of life

Quality of youth mental health services

Rates of domestic violence/abuse involving young people

Rates of emergency presentation

Rates of mental health first aid training

Recycling

Self-harm

Sex education

Sexual health support

STI

Suicide prevention

Support

Understanding generational trauma

Vaccination rates

Victim of assault

Violence

Youth Happiness Index

Sexual health

Teenage pregnancy rate

11.9 SAFETY AND SECURITY

Across the states and territories, young people sought to be free to enjoy a happy period of youth, that is fun and free from worry. Overwhelmingly, the young people shared a solidarity to receive help in securing safe and affordable housing options. Safe shelter and the identification and management of rates of youth homelessness is a major priority. The young people also seek a society free from violence, including police violence.

The following were listed by two or more consultation groups as a priority for Safety and Security listed in order of priority:

1. Racism
2. Housing.

Each of the following were identified by one consultation group as a priority for Safety and Security (in alphabetical order):

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander incarceration rates

Assault

Gender equity and attitudes

Gender safety

Housing – access to healthy foods

Housing – areas available

Housing – availability and accessibility

Housing – diversity of choices

Housing – opportunity and discrimination of young tenants

Housing – rental costs

Housing – safety and crime of affordable areas

Housing – vaccinations and disease rates

Level of protections available for victims of assault

More people around and happy in their communities make you feel safer

Number of children in out-of-home care

Participation in community – more community involvement, the safer we feel

Rates of bullying

Rates of DFV

Sexual assault rates

Synergy with health and wellbeing

Youth recidivism rates in detention

TABLE A – CONSULTATION GROUPS BY LOCATION							
Location	Number of Youth	Age Range	First Nation	LGBTQIA+	Young People with Disability	Multicultural	Other
Perth, Western Australia	12	11–25		2	4	3	2
Karratha, Western Australia	15	17–22	15		1		
Adelaide, South Australia	15	14–24			6	3	
Adelaide – Glenunga, South Australia	20	14–17		1	12		
Australian Capital Territory	6	15				2	
Australian Capital Territory	3	16–24		1			
Hobart, Tasmania	12	14–23	1	1	1	1	
Burnie, Tasmania	9	12–24	1	3	1	1	
West Tamar, Tasmania	10	13–22					
Hobart, Tasmania	6	17–18				1	
Parramatta, New South Wales	19	16–25		2	1	17	7
Moree, New South Wales	26	16	19				
Mount Isa, Queensland	15	15–24	10	2	1	2	
Brisbane, Queensland	9	13–18	9				
Brisbane, Queensland	8	15–23	8				
Maribyrnong, Victoria	9	14–24		1	2	7	
Macedon Ranges, Victoria	8	19–25		1	4	4	8
Sunshine, Victoria	19	12–18	1	2	4	4	
Yuendumu Community, Northern Territory	7	17–22	7				
Total Number of Youth	**228**						

12.0

APPENDIX C - EXPERT COMMENTARY ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The AYDI analysis of the state of youth development across the country is limited to data availability across Domains and jurisdictions. The AYDI youth consultations and the expert panel highlighted a number of areas that could not be included in this index. The following expert commentary has been included to provide additional insights and recommendations on specific issues absent from the AYDI.

12.1 COMPLEXITY IN DEFINING 'YOUTH' (DR JUSTIN BARKER, YOUTH COALITION OF ACT)

The definitions and divisions of age that constitute 'youth' are disputed and contested. The varying views of what constitutes 'youth' are framed by biological and sociocultural factors. These are both dynamic factors that have changed over time as expectations and social structures shift and our knowledge of the human brain has become more robust. Both biological and sociocultural perspectives present good arguments for us to expand our understanding, definitions and the implications of 'youth.'

Youth has often been seen as beginning with puberty and physical transitions to adulthood. However, recently it is our understanding of the changes in cognition and neurobiology that have most clearly contributed to our understanding of 'youth.' Characteristics often attributed to adolescence across the ages, such as increased impulsivity, risk-taking behaviours and the increased importance of peers, are now seen to be clearly linked to cognitive and neurobiological changes. Developmental neuroscience has highlighted the unique developments in the brain that can start as early as 10 and continue into the late twenties. Moreover, it appears that brain changes that occur during 'youth' are among the most dramatic and important to occur during the life span. The brain remains sensitive to environmental conditions and provides the potential for personality change late into the twenties, prompting us to rethink definitions and categories of ages defining youth.

Sociologists have often pointed out that the life stage of 'youth' emerged at a point in time and is culturally and historically constructed. Youth was regarded as a training ground or waiting room in preparation for adulthood. Therefore, youth has been linked to the prolonged period of training and education needed to fully participate in the economy. Changes from an industrial to an information-based economy has seen an increase in the need for post-secondary education, further postponing transitions to adulthood. The contemporary nonlinear pathways or transitions though youth show limitless diversity and are no longer seen to end in the version of adulthood that was previously expected. 'Emerging adulthood' has become a term used to describe the extended period of development lasting from around 18 into the late 20s that captures these new patterns. The exit point of adulthood no longer looks the same and is happening much later than for previous generations. Many traditional transitions, such as moving out of home, giving birth, and forming long-term relationships, are happening later in life, leading to many countries and systems defining youth up to and even occasionally beyond 35.

Young people are seen to create their own sense of style, culture, and ways of adapting to sociocultural conditions. The cultural norms and expectations regarding youth change as young people are constrained, negotiate and redefine themselves. Youth cultures have become the subject of academic study and the site of marketing inspiration as well as a key marketplace. Youth cultures and young people shape our economy and are shaped by it. The age of economic and cultural participation continues to get lower as we market to young people in response to their increasingly visible participation through diverse media. The age range of participation in youth cultures appears to be getting young.

'Youth' remains a dynamic and contentious category. Like most properties attached to individuals that show continuous distribution, any discrete divisions by age can appear as a mere statistical artefact. As seen above, there are grounds for us to change the age range that defines youth, based on contemporary rethinking of youth based on theoretical and empirical understandings. However, while there is no consensus on when youth begins or ends, it is necessary for us to draw limits based on available information at any point in time. Determining where the chronological dividing line is drawn varies considerably across policy Domains, context, and location. While there is variation among individuals in changes experienced linked to factors that define youth, averages are still used to delineate groups for study, investigation, and the creation of policies and responses. Any defining of boundaries will always be imperfect but necessary. In the meantime, we will continue to watch the research and always reconsider our definitions and categories.

12.2 ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER YOUNG PEOPLE: IDENTITY AND RACISM (DR MARNEE SHAY AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR GRACE SARRA)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under the age of 25 make up 53 percent of the total Indigenous population, in comparison with 31 percent of the non-Indigenous population being under the age of 25 years.[52] For many reasons, Indigenous people are a young population and nurturing and ensuring the wellness of Indigenous young people is of critical importance as they are the future knowledge-holders and custodians of a culture that is recognised as being over 65,000 years old.[53]

There is increasing evidence that Indigenous young people who have positive cultural identities and who are connected to culture have a stronger sense of self and experience better health outcomes.[54] Furthermore, there is also increasing evidence that strong identities in school settings lead to better engagement of Indigenous students, improved self-esteem and a stronger sense of belonging.[55]

A recent study, funded by the Lowitja Institute,[56] engaged with over 100 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to privilege their voices on identity, wellbeing and schooling. The young people represented voices from urban, regional and remote communities in Queensland and Western Australia. Key themes emerged from the study regarding how Indigenous young people

52 Australian Government, 2017, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. 2071.0 – *Census of population and housing: reflecting Australia – stories from the census,* 2016. Available at: *https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20 Features~Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20Population%20Article~12*
53 Australian Government, 2018, *Closing the Gap Prime Minister's Report 2018,* available at: *https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/reports/ closing-the-gap-2018/sites/default/files/ctg-report-20183872.pdf?a=1*
54 Commisioner for Children and Young People Western Australia, 2011, *Aboriginal children and young people speak out about culture and identity,* available at: *https://www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/media/1305/policy-brief-wellbeing-research-aboriginal-children-on-culture-and-identity-june-2011.pdf.*
55 Zubrick S R, Dudgeon P, Gee G, Glaskin B, Kelly K, Parades Y et al., 2004, The Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey: Social Determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing', Perth: Curtin University and Telethon Institute for Child Health Research; Shay, M, Sarra, G and Woods, A (in press) Strong identities, Strong Futures: Indigenous identities and wellbeing in schools. In M. Shay & R.Oliver (Eds) *Indigenous Education in Australia: Learning and Teaching for Deadly Futures,* Routledge.
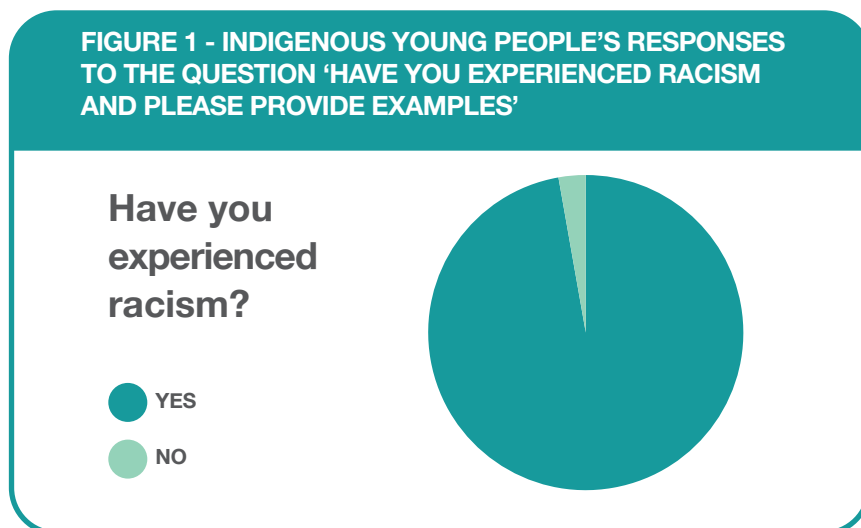56 Lowitja Institute, 2019, *Lowitja Institute project information,* available at: *https://www.lowitja.org.au/page/research/research-categories/family-and-community-health/young-people/projects/our-stories-our-way*

represent their identities, included culture, Country or Place (where you are from), physicality, and role models. There was also a group of young people in the project who were still exploring who they were, as well as young people who had been impacted by the Stolen Generation.

Indigenous young people talked about underpinning values that inform their identities, such as pride, succeeding, being a collective, staying true, and family responsibilities. When asked to create artefacts of their identities, Indigenous young people expressed 'Our Pride, Our Culture' and 'Young, Aboriginal and Proud' as phrases they wanted to reflect who they are in their broader communities.[57]

Although Indigenous young people in this study did identify many aspects of their identities as being a source of strength, there was an overwhelming amount of data that consistently reported a range of negative associations that continue to persist in relation to their identities as Indigenous young people. The pervasiveness of stereotyping and racism continues to permeate into identity constructs for Indigenous young people, in spite of the positive associations identified across the study.

While the data suggested that identity representations were positive, further data from this study outlined that racism is an issue that Indigenous young people endure in their daily lives.

FIGURE 1 - INDIGENOUS YOUNG PEOPLE'S RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION 'HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED RACISM AND PLEASE PROVIDE EXAMPLES'

Have you experienced racism?

● YES
● NO

The data revealed that 97 percent of Indigenous young people in this sample have experienced racism. They provided many examples of the types of racism they experienced and where these incidents took place. The most common places for Indigenous young people to experience racism was in shops and shopping centres, with shopkeepers and security mentioned frequently in the examples, by the police, often in public spaces and in school settings.

> ' Walk into the shop and they follow me around
> treat me like a thief even when I pull my wallet out
> its full of cash and they all full of doubt.
> Quick to judge me like I'm in the courthouse. '
> Aboriginal young man, excerpt from rap song, urban

57 Shay, M, Sarra, A. and Woods, A, 2019, The Imagination Declaration: young Indigenous Australians want to be heard but will we listen? *The Conversation,* available at: *https://theconversation.com/the-imagination-declaration-young-indigenous-australians-want-to-be-heard-but-will-we-listen-121569*

The findings from this study show very clearly that in the face of enduring experiences of racism, many Indigenous young people are representing their identities as a positive strength that assists them in navigating complexities that other young people do not have to deal with.

This evidence reveals the importance of identity as a protective factor for wellbeing, as well as the role of schools and public spaces in challenging the issue of racism and the impact this has on the wellbeing of Indigenous young people. As expressed by young Indigenous women in one community, young people want a place where they can:

> *'Strive with Pride'*
> Indigenous young women,
> remote community, Queensland

12.3 ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER YOUTH: MENTAL HEALTH (ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR PAUL GRAY, JUMBUNNA INSTITUTE FOR INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AND RESEARCH)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth have repeatedly identified the need for improved mental health and wellbeing supports to enable them to thrive. Strengthened connections to community and culture as a foundation for a positive sense of self and belonging is one of the most important issues. For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, this reflects a broader social and political context about the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australian society.

This is hardly surprising. Indigenous Australian social and emotional wellbeing frameworks understand individual wellbeing in terms of connection, to self, family, community, culture and country, embedded within a broader context of social, historical, political and cultural determinants. This includes notions of intergenerational trauma and the enduring impacts of colonisation, experiences of racism, and systemic inequality.

There has been considerable conversation over recent months about the need to face and overcome persistent systemic inequalities and stamp out racism in our society. Meyne Wyatt's powerful monologue in June 2020 emphasised the stress borne by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,[58] including our young people, from experiences of racism in our daily lives, and the cumulative impact of these experiences on our wellbeing. Wyatt's experiences are shared by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. A 2019 report from the Advocate for Children and Young People in NSW noted that almost 60 percent of Aboriginal young people reported not feeling welcome in their local community as a result of discrimination, racism and stereotypes, including in their interactions with police and in the classroom.[59]

58 Wyatt, M, 2020, Q and A monologue, available at: *https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-06-09/meyne-wyatt-delivers-powerful-monologue-on-racism/12333854*
59 Advocate for Children and Young People, 2019, *Report: What Aboriginal children and young people have to say,* available at: *https://www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/aboriginal-consultations-report-2019*

There is a clear link between experiences of racism and discrimination and negative impacts on mental health. Experiences of racism have been associated with poorer social and emotional wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal young people, including anxiety, depression, suicide risk and overall poorer mental health. These experiences sit beneath the surface of persistent and, in some cases, growing gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and their non-Indigenous peers in education achievement and youth detention. The persistent over-incarceration of Indigenous youth, and disproportionate removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families into out-of-home care are also associated with poorer mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

Research focused on achieving better wellbeing outcomes for Indigenous youth and their communities has likewise emphasised the need to address historical, social, and political determinants of wellbeing. This research has identified self-determination and cultural maintenance as the foundation for promoting wellbeing: empowering Indigenous peoples to design and administer their own systems and supports, grounded in their unique cultural perspectives, values and aspirations. Put simply, 'cultural wounds demand cultural medicines.'[60]

Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to thrive must engage with these broader issues. While individually-focused interventions are important, systemic reform is needed to address these broader factors at the collective level of communities and provide equitable access to culturally-embedded wellbeing and mental health services and supports. This means challenging and reimagining systems and practice to address systemic inequalities. It means ensuring access for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth to culturally safe and responsive mental health services and supports. This includes the development of culturally valid assessments and approaches and strengthening the mental health workforce by increasing the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clinicians. It also includes ensuring greater cultural competence and safety across the workforce by valuing Indigenous frameworks and perspectives in training and continuing professional development. It means empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to improve the broader social determinants of health and wellbeing for their communities, including greater control over health, education, and community policing, and to build the evidence base for what works. It means putting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing at the heart of such approaches. Importantly, it means acknowledging our history, and the unique place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and hearing the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their experiences, and their aspirations in the future of their country.

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60 Chandler and Dunlop, 2015, 'Cultural wounds demand cultural medicines', in Greenwood, de Leeuw, Lindsay and Reading (Eds) *Determinants of Indigenous Peoples' Health in Canada: Beyond the Social,* Canadian Scholars' Press.

12.4 LGBTIQA+ YOUNG PEOPLE AND BARRIERS TO MEDICAL SERVICES (YOUTH PRIDE NETWORK)

LGBTIQA+ young people face extensive barriers when accessing appropriate medical and psychological services. This occurs for many different reasons and in many different forms, however, the historic role that medical and psychological institutions have played in the oppression of LGBTIQA+ identities is key to understanding the modern context. The year 2020 marks the 30th anniversary of the World Health Organisation declassifying homosexuality as a 'mental disorder' from the International Classification of Diseases, or the ICD-10, the significance of which is annually remembered by the celebration of the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, discrimination against Intersex people and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT).[61]

The equivalent process for transgender identities, however, only occurred in mid-2019 with the release of the ICD-11.[62] That same release was criticised by intersex advocates, who were disappointed that 'disorders of sex development' was included, deepening the pathologisation of their bodies.[63] The impact of this systemic discrimination can be still be felt in the individual experiences within the medical system. A young trans woman who participated in the 2017 Transpathway report spoke of her experience:

> *'The first two GPs I visited were completely arrogant and refused to help someone in my "condition". They refused to help me as [they claimed] I was just looking for attention, and [said that] this phase would soon stop.'* [64]

The stigmatisation of LGBTIQA+ identities creates fear, distrust of, and disengagement from the service system, which then exacerbates the lack of understanding service providers have of LGBTIQA+ identities. An agender and non-binary participant in the Transpathways report noted:

> **'I spent the appointments explaining what trans and non-binary meant, didn't get much actual counselling.'** [65]

This should be unsurprising, as a 2017 survey of Australian and New Zealand medical schools found that most schools spent an average of 0–5 total hours on LGBTIQA+ specific issues, with most of this focusing on sexuality rather than gender identity or intersex variation.[66]

61 Australian Human Rights Commission, 2019, IDAHOBIT, available at: *https://humanrights.gov.au/about/news/australian-human-rights-commission-marks-idahobit*
62 Haynes, S, 2019, WHO will stop classifying Transgender people as having a 'mental disorder', *Time Magazine,* available at: *https://time.com/5596845/world-health-organization-transgender-identity/*
63 Carpenter, M, 2019, Media statement – International Classification of Diseases 11 and intersex people Intersex Human Rights Australia, available at: *https://ihra.org.au/35321/media-statement-icd11-intersex/*
64 Strauss, P, Cook, A, Winter, S, Watson, V, Wright Toussaint, D and Lin, A, 2017, *Trans Pathways: the mental health experiences and care pathways of trans young people. Summary of results,* Telethon Kids Institute, Perth, Australia.
65 Ibid.
66 Sanchez, A, Southgate, E , Rogers, G, Duvivier, R J, 2017, Inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex health in Australian and New Zealand medical education, *LGBT health,* available at: *doi:10.1089/lgbt.2016.0209*

This lack of understanding is underpinned by a lack of high quality, useful data on the experience of LGBTIQA+ young people. The intersecting and compounding nature of these factors is illustrated in the figure below.

FIGURE 2 - CYCLE OF INVISIBILITY – A MODEL FOR UNDERSTANDING EXCLUSION
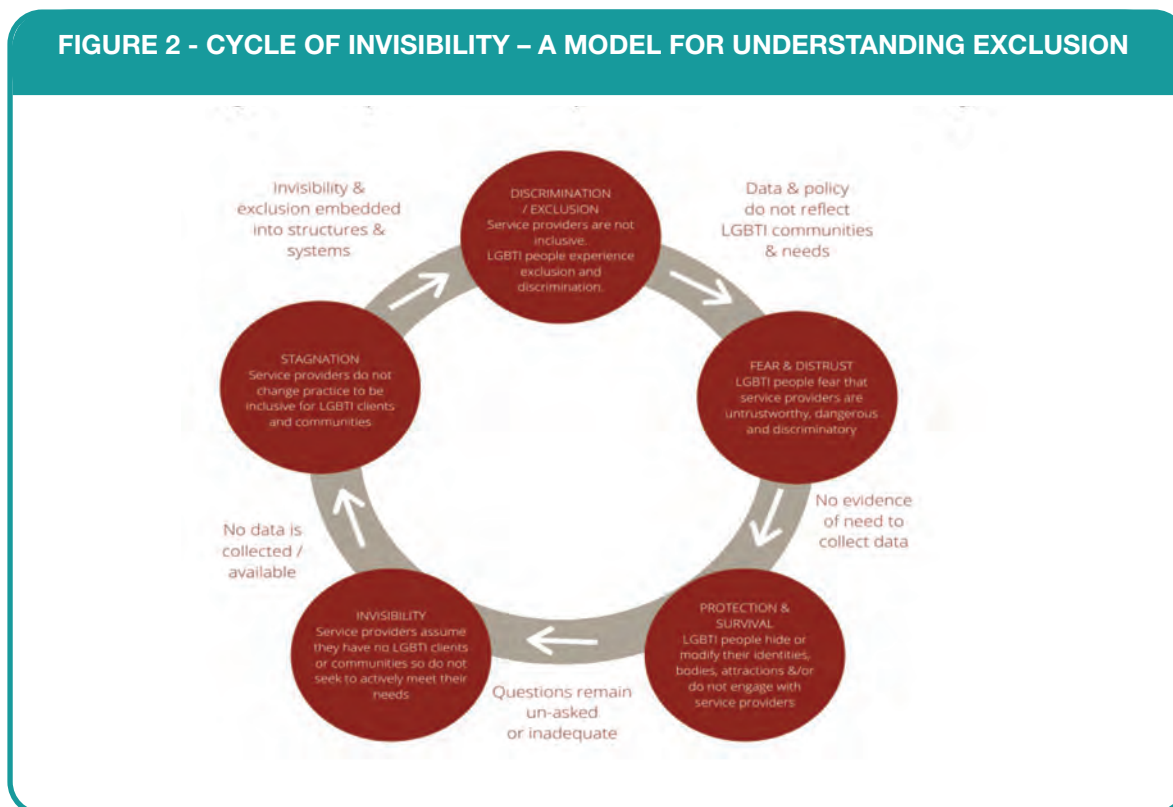
Furthermore, data on the experience of LGBTIQA+ individuals risks masking the diversity of experiences, needs, and barriers. The intersection of different identities (young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, young people of colour, young people with disability and/or young people living regionally or remotely) may increase barriers to accessing services. As such, data on how these may interact is crucial for creating a service system that effectively caters to the needs of young people in Australia.

12.5 COVID-19: ECONOMIC IMPACTS ON YOUTH (GRATTAN INSTITUTE)

Young workers have borne the brunt of the job losses in this crisis, compounding existing high underemployment with casualisation and stagnant wages that were already hurting the incomes of younger Australians.

Youth unemployment is always higher than general unemployment, but the gap tends to widen during economic downturns. Young workers are more vulnerable because they are less likely to have a foot in the door, have less experience, and are making the transition into employment at a time when fewer jobs are being created.[67]

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67 Borland, J, 2020, The next employment challenge from coronavirus: how to help the young, The Conversation, available at: https://theconversation.com/the-next-employment-challenge-from-coronavirus-how-to-help-the-young-135676

Youth unemployment rose to 13.8 percent in April 2020, which was double the headline unemployment rate. With more than 20 percent of Australians aged 15–24 also underemployed, more than one in three younger Australians are without paid work or working fewer hours than they would like to.[68]

Even before the crisis, unemployment and underemployment remained stubbornly high for young Australians.[69] The gap between youth employment (15–24) and 'prime age' employment (25–54) in Australia has been growing since the global financial crisis (GFC) and was already above the OECD average.[70] A study comparing pre- and post-GFC cohorts of young Australians found that even among those who found employment, job quality was inferior for the post-GFC cohort in terms of job security, hours of work, and earnings.[71]

In an already weak youth labour market, the COVID-19 crisis hits doubly hard. Young workers are already more vulnerable; on top of that, the businesses most affected by social distancing restrictions are those most likely to employ young people, including restaurants, bars, retail outlets, gyms, and recreation and tourism businesses.[72]

The biggest concern is the potential for long-term damage to the health, wellbeing, and future earnings of young Australians. The economic gap between young and old was already large and growing, especially in incomes, wealth and spending.[73] This crisis has the potential to substantially exacerbate intergenerational inequality in Australia.

Governments have helped to soften the blow, at least temporarily, through schemes such as JobKeeper and additional financial support for JobSeeker.[74] But if governments attempt to consolidate their budgets too soon, the economic recovery will be slower, hurting job prospects particularly for younger people.

As governments consolidate budgets in future years, not all the hard work should be done through income tax, otherwise, young people will pay twice: first in the initial employment shock, and second with a higher tax burden through their careers. Winding back some of the generous tax breaks for older Australians that serve little policy purpose would be a better way to ensure that the economic cost of coronavirus does not just fall on the shoulders of the young.

68 Cowgill, M and Coates, B, 2020, The modest rise in unemployment hides a much grimmer picture, Grattan Institute, available at: *https://blog.grattan.edu.au/2020/05/the-modest-rise-in-unemployment-hides-a-much-grimmer-picture/*
69 Wood, D and Griffiths, K, 2019, Generation gap: ensuring a fair go for younger Australians, Grattan Institute, available at: https://grattan.edu.au/report/generation-gap/; Borland, J, 2020, The next employment challenge from coronavirus: how to help the young, *The Conversation,* available at: *https://theconversation.com/the-next-employment-challenge-from-coronavirus-how-to-help-the-young-135676*
70 Wood, D and Griffiths, K, 2019, Generation gap: ensuring a fair go for younger Australians, *Grattan Institute,* available at: *https://grattan.edu.au/report/generation-gap/,*
71 Watson, I, 2018, Life Course research using sequence analysis: Insights into the Youth Labour Market, Social Policy Research Centre Seminar UNSW, available at: *http://www.ianwatson.com.au/pubs/watson_sequence_analysis_youth_labour_market_13mar2018.pdf*
72 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020, Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia, available at: *https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6160.0.55.001*
73 Australian Wood, D and Blane, N, 2020, Beware the fiscal cliff: why Australia urgently needs an economic transition plan, *Grattan Institute,* available at: *https://grattan.edu.au/news/beware-the-fiscal-cliff-why-australia-urgently-needs-an-economic-transition-plan/*
74 Wood, D and Blane, N, 2020, Beware the fiscal cliff: why Australia urgently needs an economic transition plan, *Grattan Institute*, available at: *https://grattan.edu.au/news/beware-the-fiscal-cliff-why-australia-urgently-needs-an-economic-transition-plan/*
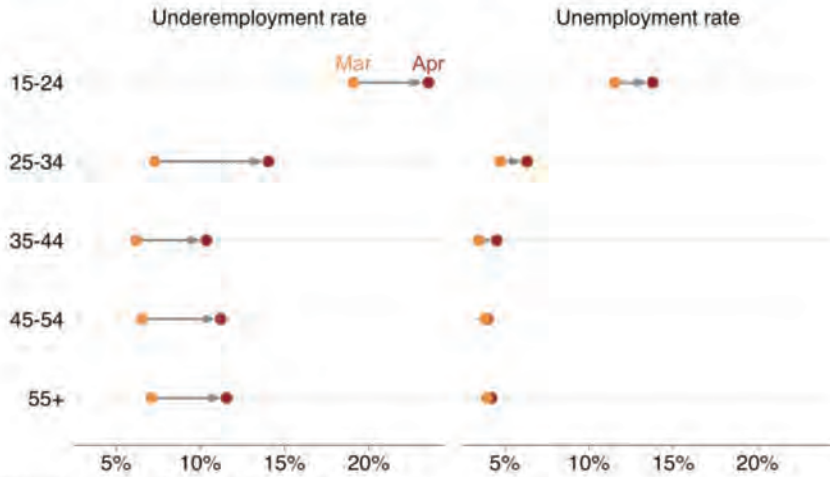
Younger Australians have borne the brunt of the job losses

Underemployment and unemployment rates, per cent of labour force

Source: Grattan analysis of ABS 6202.0 - Labour Force, Australia, Apr 2020.

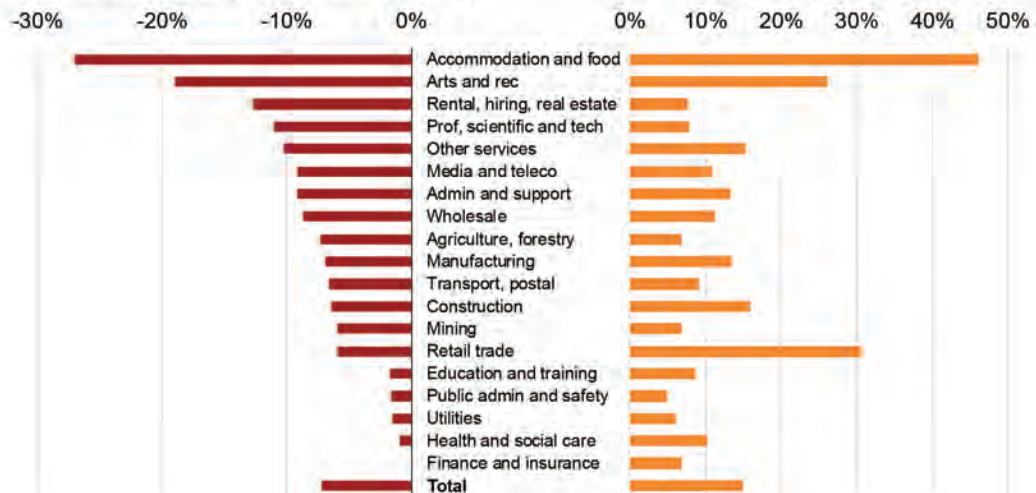**FIGURE 4 - PROPORTION OF JOBS LOST (14 MARCH TO 2 MAY 2020)**

The industries most impacted by COVID-19 are more likely to employ young people

Proportion of jobs lost (14 March to 2 May 2020)

Youth as a share of all employees (2019)

Note: 'Youth' refers to employees aged 15-24. Source: Grattan analysis of ABS weekly payroll jobs and wages (19 May 2020 release) and ABS Characteristics of Employment (2019).

12.6 BARRIERS IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM REFUGEE AND MIGRANT BACKGROUNDS IN AUSTRALIA (MYAN AUSTRALIA)

- **13,759:** the number of young people aged 12–24 granted a permanent or provisional visa to settle in Australia between 2018–2019 under Australia's Migration Program across the family, skilled and humanitarian streams.[75]

- **< 50%:** just under half of Australia's young people are first or second-generation migrants.[76]

- **1 in 4:** the number of Australians aged 18–24 years who were born overseas.[77]

Young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds are an incredibly diverse group,[78] due to country of origin, cultural background, migration experience, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, faith, age on arrival, level of English proficiency, prior education, family structures and workforce experience.[79]

They have enormous strengths and capabilities, including broad international and cross-cultural knowledge, multilingual skills, adaptability, a strong sense of family and community, high educational aspirations, and a desire to enjoy and uphold the rights and responsibilities of Australia's democratic processes.[80] While all young people have particular needs distinct from adults and children, young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds commonly face more complex transitions, and barriers to youth development, than their Australian-born, non-immigrant peers.

Some of these barriers are structural; some relate to the challenges associated with forced migration and settling in a new country. Others relate to increased vulnerability to social exclusion at key transition points during adolescence and young adulthood. These barriers add a layer of complexity and instability to the fundamental transitions that take place during adolescence and young adulthood.[81] Compounded by the developmental tasks of adolescence,[82] and in addition to gender, sexuality, disability, geography, and cultural context, these barriers commonly include:

- Limited or low English language skills

- Different cultural norms and values surrounding help-seeking or accessing government support

- Different cultural values/norms in relation to concepts of youth and adolescence

- Lack of social and cultural capital in the Australian context (e.g. information, networks and conceptual and practical knowledge of the service system or youth-focused programs)

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75 Young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds arriving in Australia between July 2018 and June 2019 with a permanent (or provisional) visa. It is based on data from the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 provided by the Department of Home Affairs, as at 25th October 2017.
76 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016, 2016 Census – Cultural Diversity, TableBuilder. Findings based on use of TableBuilder data, Canberra: ABS.
77 Ibid.
78 Young people (aged 12-24) who are asylum seekers on temporary visas, refugees, or first or second-generation migrants.
79 MYAN (Australia), 2016, *National Youth Settlement Framework,* MYAN Australia, 2nd Edition, p. 13.
80 Ibid, p. 15.
81 Ibid, p. 20.
82 Including but not limited to: identity development and formation; negotiating interdependence with/within family, peers, community and broader society and major social role transitions; emotional, physical and cognitive development, and sexual maturation. MYAN (Australia) 2016, *National Youth Settlement Framework,* 2nd Edition, p. 15.

- Unfamiliarity with, or lack of trust in, youth services and programs, including from parents/ family members

- Racism and/or discrimination (i.e. explicit, implicit, structural, or individual)

- Settlement pressures (i.e. practical demands of building a new life in a new country and responsibility for supporting parents and family members in the settlement journey)

- Lack of culturally competent or responsive practice within organisations (in the mainstream or generalist youth sector, services are commonly designed around the experiences of Australian-born, non-immigrant young people, neglecting the cultural and migration/ settlement experiences of those from refugee and migrant backgrounds and how these impact on their rights and support/service delivery models)[83]

- Limited or lack of digital literacy

- More limited services/opportunities in regional/rural areas.[84]

These barriers mean that the voices of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds are often marginalised in policy, advocacy and service delivery.[85] They face particular challenges in accessing the support and opportunities they need and to which they are entitled. A targeted approach in policy and service design is the most effective way to capitalise on their strengths, address their particular needs, and ensure they are able to exercise their rights and realise their potential.[86]

Data to inform and improve service delivery

In Australia, data collection and disaggregated demographic data on young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, including rights-based indicators, such as ethnicity, disability, self-identified religion, sexual orientation and gender identity, and data on educational attainment, experiences of racism and discrimination, and employment outcomes, is sparse. When data does not accurately capture the specific experiences and insights of this group of young people, there is no sound evidence base on which to design and deliver responses to address their needs and contexts. It can also act as a disincentive to the development of more specialised services for this group.[87]

MYAN recommends the improvement of data collection to ensure the voices and trends of all young Australians, including those from refugee and migrant backgrounds, are accurately represented as a distinct population group at national and sub-national levels to better identify inequity and disadvantage, inform policy, and ensure that services are targeted, funded and resourced accordingly.

Young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds have valuable insights into the design of policies, programs and services that can create a more inclusive Australia.[88] As such, MYAN also recommends that, wherever possible, youth participation is considered in relation to the entire data collection process. Youth participation approaches recognise the right of young people to participate in decision-making that affects and shapes their lives. They are often best placed to identify their needs and should be supported to identify and advocate for solutions,[89] and provide valuable insights into the design of policies, programs and services that meet their needs and create a more inclusive Australian society.

83 MYAN (Australia), 2016, *National Youth Settlement Framework,* MYAN Australia, 2nd Edition, p. 7.
84 Ibid, p. 20.
85 MYAN (Australia), 2018, Not "Just Ticking a Box": Youth participation with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, MYAN Australia, p. 7.
86 Ibid, p. 10.
87 Ibid, p. 16.
88 VicHealth, Data61, CSIRO and MYAN, 2017, *Bright Futures: Spotlight on the wellbeing of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds,* Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne, p. 13.
89 MYAN (Australia), 2016, *National Youth Settlement Framework,* MYAN Australia, 2nd Edition, p. 33.

12.7 YOUTH HOMELESSNESS (DR ANNE JENKINS)

Homelessness, or the lack of adequate housing, is one of the most acute forms of material deprivation. Homelessness is defined as not having a permanent place to live that is adequate to basic needs. Those living temporarily with family or friends, or short stays in emergency accommodation, people sleeping out in the streets without shelter, and those living in non-conventional or improvised dwellings, such as cars or tents, are examples of homelessness where there is a lack security of tenure, adequate shelter, or dwelling facilities. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) also identifies people living in circumstances of severe overcrowding as homeless because they suffer from inadequate control of their living space that affords them sufficient privacy.[90]

Homelessness can be self-perpetuating. Poverty is a key driver of homelessness for young people and homelessness can cause greater financial deprivation and exclusion. For young people, being homeless can mean poorer educational outcomes. Studies have found that young people experiencing homelessness are more likely to be absent from school, find it more difficult to engage when they do attend school, and have more difficulty completing homework.[91] Employment is strongly impacted by homelessness, most particularly because the characteristics associated with homelessness impairs a person's capacity to stay employed.[92] Characteristics, such as poor physical and mental health, substance abuse, family conflict and domestic and family violence, are contributors to and consequences of both homelessness and the inability to keep a job.

The trauma associated with homelessness disrupts mental and social wellbeing. [93] Young people who leave home may do so to escape traumatic situations, such as domestic violence, and in these cases are likely to be suffering trauma-related mental health issues along with the experience of lost or damaged family bonds. [94] Homelessness increases the likelihood of young people experiencing further trauma as victims of physical or sexual assault.[95] The negative impact of these traumas on mental wellbeing and behaviour during childhood may lead some to antisocial behaviour.[96] Contact with the criminal justice system may also result where young people, with little means of support, engage in survival behaviours, such as theft, begging, drug dealing, or prostitution.[97]

Building positive social connections through participation in recreational activities, such as sports or the arts, is much less likely for young people who are homeless.[98] Disengagement from participation in political life is also characteristic of those experiencing homelessness. About one-half of people experiencing homelessness have never voted or stated they did not ever intend to vote again.[99]

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90   Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016, *Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness,* 2016. Cat no. 2049.0.

91   Harker, L, 2006, Chance of a lifetime - the impact of bad housing on children's lives, Shelter England.

92   Swami, N, 2018, *The effect of homelessness on employment entry and exits: Evidence from the Journeys Home Survey,* Applied Economic & Social Research Working Paper Series Working Paper No. 01/18, Melbourne Institute.

93   Bassuk, E, Molly, R, and Tsertsvadze, A, 2015, The prevalence of mental illness in homeless children: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 54 (2), pp. 86–96.

94   Bender, K, Ferguson, K, Thompson, S, and Langenderfer, L, 2014, Mental health correlates of Victimization classes among homeless youth, *Child Abuse & Neglect,* 38(10), pp. 1628–1635.

95   Yoder, J R, Bender, K, Thompson, S J, Ferguson, K M, and Haffejee, B, 2014, Explaining Homeless Youths' Criminal Justice Interactions: Childhood Trauma or Surviving Life on the Streets? *Community Mental Health Journal,* 50(2), pp. 135–144.

96   Heerde, J A and Hemphill, S A, 2013, Stealing and Being Stolen From, *Youth & Society,* 48(2), pp. 265–300

97   Edalati, H, and Nicholls, T L, 2017, Childhood Maltreatment and the Risk for Criminal Justice Involvement and Victimization Among Homeless Individuals: A Systematic Review, *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse,* pp. 1–16.

98   Rutenfrans-Stupar, M, Van Der Plas, B, Den Haan, R, Van Regenmortel, T, and Schalk, R, 2019, How is participation related to well-being of homeless people? An explorative qualitative study in a Dutch homeless shelter facility, *Journal of Social Distress and Homelessness,* 28(1), pp. 44–55; Vandermeerschen, H, Van Regenmortel, T. and Scheerder, J, 2017, 'There are Alternatives, but Your Social Life is Curtailed': Poverty and Sports Participation from an Insider Perspective, *Social Indicators Research* 133, pp, 119–138.

99   Australian Electoral Commission, 2013, *Research Report 6 - Electorally Engaging the Homeless: Research Projects,* available at: *https://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/research/paper6/page03.htm;* Thompson, J, 2004, *Voting and Homelessness in the Australian Context:*

Health issues contribute to homelessness and vice versa. While mental health issues or substance use may cause homelessness, they are also associated with other poor health outcomes, such as cognitive impairment or chronic disease, which further increase the risk of homelessness or make exits from homelessness difficult.[100] In the other direction, homelessness has a direct impact on health. For example, crowded accommodation and shared facilities can expose individuals to communicable diseases. Long periods of sitting, walking, or standing and prolonged exposure to moisture and cold can lead to infections. Treatment and prevention of health issues are often neglected due to competing needs for food and shelter. People experiencing homelessness are more likely to use Emergency Departments rather than primary or preventative health services, reflecting crisis-driven healthcare.[101] Food insecurity is frequently reported by young people experiencing homelessness, putting them at an increased risk of adverse health outcomes.[102]

People who first experience homelessness at a young age are more likely to experience persistent homelessness.[103] Thus, it is important to address homelessness among children and youth. The biggest challenge in tackling youth homelessness is understanding the sheer scale of the problem. Youth are, for a variety of reasons, more likely to be missing from official statistics on homelessness. They may also be less likely to contact support services that would record their details as they may not be considered old enough to access homelessness support on their own or may not be considered a priority for support for compared to children or older people. Homeless youth may also be transiting between living in circumstances that are difficult to capture in official statistics (e.g. in their car, with friends or family) and are known to be underestimated by 'point-in-time' estimates, such as those derived from the ABS *Census of Population and Housing.* While the ABS acknowledge the likely underestimation of youth homelessness, in the absence of a more robust methodology,[104] the five-yearly census remains Australia's best measure of homelessness.

12.8 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION (ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR PHILLIPA COLLIN, YOUNG AND RESILIENT RESEARCH CENTRE)

Young people's civic engagement and political participation matters because it delivers on their basic rights. Political participation also contributes to positive development of individuals and groups, benefits communities, and is good for democracy. The rights of children and young people to participate in civic and political life is established in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.[105] These include the right to association (Article 13), to freedom of expression (Article 15), to non-discrimination (Article 2), and to learning about and expressing their culture (Articles 31 and 32). Importantly, these rights are supported by the right for young people to participate in

100 Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario), Berenbaum E, 2019, *Evidence Brief: homelessness and health outcomes: what are the associations?* Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario.
101 Moore, G, Gerdtz, M, Manias, E, 2007, Homelessness, health status and emergency department use: An integrated review of the literature, *Australasian Emergency Nursing Journal,* 10(4), pp. 178–185.
102 Crawford, B, Yamazaki, R, Franke, E, Amanatidis, S, Ravulo, J, Steinbeck, K, Ritchie, J, and Torvaldsen, S, 2014, Sustaining dignity? Food insecurity in homeless young people in urban Australia, *Health Promotion Journal Australia,* August 25(2), pp. 71–8.
103 Scutella, R, Johnson, G, Moschion, J, Tseng, Y and Wooden, M, 2012, *Journeys Home Research Report No 1. Wave 1 Findings,* Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research.
104 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016, *Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness,* 2016. Cat no. 2049.0.
105 UN General Assembly, 1989, *Convention on the Rights of the Child,* 20 November 1989, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, p. 3, available at: *https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b38f0.html.*

decisions that affect them (Article 12). This right has been legislated in some Australian jurisdictions in relation to particular areas of policy (e.g. the Children and Young Persons [Care and Protection] Act 1998 (NSW)) or the establishment of an Advocate or Commissioner for children and young people (e.g. Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014 (NSW)). The ways in which young people can contribute to setting agendas, proposing change, and making decision can – and does – extend beyond formal institutional mechanisms. Increasingly young people are participating in a diverse range of practices that encompass everyday, informal and collective actions in different Domains and settings of social life, including community, school, local and state government, and online.[106]

Youth participation promotes positive change at the individual, community and societal levels.[107] At the individual level, participation can foster new skills and capacities as well as promote protective factors, such as social connectedness and self-efficacy.[108] At the community level, participation can promote social inclusion through supportive relationships, involvement in group activities and civic engagement.[109] At a societal level, youth participation supports recognition and understanding of the perspectives of diverse citizens and strengthens democracy by promoting ongoing generational renewal at the local and national level.[110]

While many young people today are engaged in civic and political life, even leading movements such as the Global Climate Strikes, a 2019 Report Card on Children's Rights in Australia found that Australians under the age of 18 feel they have no voice in society.[111] There are several reasons why this may be the case. Firstly, young people regularly report that they do not feel heard by authorities. Secondly, young people are often portrayed as lacking knowledge or experience, rather than being recognised for the capacities and views that they possess. Thirdly, the forms of civic engagement and political participation that they do participate in are poorly acknowledged and, therefore, data and reporting on their engagement is partial or inaccurate.

Civic and political participation has significantly broadened from conventional forms of volunteering and community organising, electoral and non-electoral participation and collective action, to a wide range of community or organisationally-led, digitally mediated, individualised and collective practices that are embedded in the local context, communities and cultures of young people. Although traditional indicators and measure are still valid (such as participation in organised cultural activities, school representative councils and enrolment to vote), these are not sufficient and do not fully capture the range of ways in which young people do – and should – take part in civic and political life. Key forms of youth civic and political participation that require new definitions, measurement and data collection include:

106 Third, A, Collin, P, Walsh, L, and Black, R, 2019, Young People in Digital Society, London: Palgrave; Collin, P and McCormack, J, 2019 'Young People and Politics' in N. Barry, J, Butcher, P, Chen, I, Cook, H, Manning, M, Taflaga (Eds), Australia's Politics and Public Policy, University of Sydney Press, Sydney.
107 Baum, F, 2000, The epidemiology of participation: an Australian community study, Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 54(6), pp. 14–423; Collin, P, Rahilly, K, Richardson, I and Third, A, 2011, The benefits of social networking services, Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre, Melbourne; Collin, P, 2015, Young Citizens and Political Participation in a Digital Society: Addressing the Democratic Disconnect, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
108 Glover, S et al., 1998, Social environments and the emotional wellbeing of young people, Family Matters, 49, Autumn, pp. 11–16.
109 Hayes, A, Gray, M, and Edwards, B, 2007, Social Inclusion: Origins, concepts and key themes, Australian Institute of Family Studies, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322160853_Social_Inclusion_Origins_concepts_and_key_themes; Walker, J M T, Wilkins, A S, Dallaire, J R and Sandler, H M, 2005, Parental Involvement: Model revision through Scale development, The Elementary School Journal, 106(2), pp. 85–104.
110 Pratchett, L, 1999, Citizens, Localities and the State: Modernising Democracy? Paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Copenhagen, 14–19 April.
111 Australian Human Rights Commission, 2019 Children's Rights in Australia: a scorecard, available at: file://ad.uws.edu.au/dfshare/ HomesBNK$/30030088/Downloads/ahrc_childrensrights_scorecard2019.pdf

Volunteering: There are many issues with how volunteering is defined and, subsequently, what data is collected on the volunteering practices of Australian young people and which activities are excluded.[112] For example, the way the Census questions are currently framed excludes a range of informal types of volunteering, such as cause-based, spontaneous, one-off and online activities. These and other non-traditional volunteering roles are common among young people, such as e-volunteering, social enterprise, time-banks, and volunteer tourism during a gap year, are also not well evidenced or included in statistics on young people's volunteering.[113]

Political campaigning: Many young people take part in various forms of direct action, from creating and signing online petitions to joining protests and setting up their own campaigns and youth-led organisations.[114]

These manifest at the local level, as well as via online platforms that connect people across place and time, and are increasingly prevalent forms of young action. Youth-led organisations, such as the Australian Youth Climate Coalition, have very large membership bases of more than 150,000 and hundreds of thousands of young people have taken part in the recent School Strike 4 Climate rallies. These forms of participation are poorly captured in national statistics, particularly for people under the age of 18.

Youth participation mechanisms in community and government decision-making:
Specific policies, mechanisms, programs and initiatives that embed youth participation in policy processes support youth participation in civic life and political processes.[115] They are stronger when scaffolded through legislation, policy processes, programs and resources that support adult stakeholders and institutions to adapt to more intergenerational ways of thinking and doing policy and political work. The existence of, and youth participation in, such mechanisms is not routinely captured or reported on.

Individualised collective actions: Young people are increasingly engaging in everyday individual practices that express their views and values and that contribute to collective efforts to address issues and affect social change. These range from micro-practices, such as being vegan in support of sustainability, sharing news and information on particular topics online, to recycling and ethical shopping.[116] Some data sources have collected this information on more than one occasion.[117] Over time, comprehensive data capture could provide a much clearer picture of political participation.

112 Walsh, L and Black, R, 2015, Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Canberra; Walsh, L and Black, R, 2018, 'Off the radar democracy: Young people's alternative acts of citizenship in Australia', in S. Pickard and J. Bessant (Eds), *Young people re-generating politics in times of crises,* Palgrave MacMillan.
113 Ibid, p. 224.
114 Collin, P, 2015, *Young Citizens and Political Participation in a Digital Society: Addressing the Democratic Disconnect,* Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke; Vromen, A, 2017, *Digital Citizenship and Political Engagement: The Challenge from Online Campaigning and Advocacy Organisations,* London, Palgrave Macmillan; Halpin, D, Vromen, A, Vaughan, M and Raissi, M, 2018, Online petitioning and politics: the development of Change.org in Australia, *Australian Journal of Political Science,* 53(4), pp. 428–445; Collin, P and McCormack, J, 2019 ,'Young People and Politics' in N. Barry, J. Butcher, P. Chen, I. Cook, H. Manning, M. Taflaga (Eds), *Australia's Politics and Public Policy,* University of Sydney Press, Sydney.
115 Ibid.
116 Vromen, A, 2003, '"People try to put us down…": Participatory citizenship of 'Generation X', *Australian Journal of Political Science,* 38(1), pp. 79–99; Harris, A, Wyn, J, and Younes, S, 2010, Beyond apathetic or activist youth: 'ordinary' young people and contemporary forms of participation, *Young: Nordic journal of youth research,* 18, pp. 9–32; Collin, P, 2015, Young Citizens and Political Participation in a Digital Society: Addressing the Democratic Disconnect, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke; Vromen, A, Loader, B, Xenos, M and Bailo, F ,2016, Everyday making through Facebook engagement: Young citizens' political interactions in Australia, UK and USA, *Political Studies,* 64(3), pp. 513–533; Fraillon, J, Gebhardt, E, Nixon, J, Ockwell, L, Friedman, T, Robins, M and McAndrew, M, 2017, NAP Sample Assessment, Civics and Citizenship Report, Years 6 and 10: 2016, Sydney, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, available from: *https://www.nap.edu.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/nap-cc-report-2016-final-081217.pdf?sfvrsn=0*
117 Ibid.

Social Enterprise: In addition to the rise of youth-led activist organisations and 'campaign entrepreneurs,'[118] young people are increasingly adopting social enterprise models for addressing the issues they care about. Supported by youth-led initiatives, youth-serving NGO programmes and a growing number of corporate–NGO initiatives, many young people are being trained, mentored and seed-funded to start up 'profit-for-purpose' businesses that aim to create social change.[119]

Accounting for the diverse forms of civic engagement and political participation of young people in contemporary Australia is key to identifying barriers and opportunities that can be overcome through policy and programs to promote greater youth development. Additionally, understanding how some young people are marginalised and excluded from civic and political life is also important for assessing the development potential of these two Domains. While dominant discourses of youth citizenship increasingly construct them as 'active citizens,' many are branded 'failed citizens.'[120] Young people are diverse, and civic and political participation is affected by structural inequality, specifically: level of education; access to economic resources; secure and stable housing; and racism.[121] Laws and practices that discriminate, exclude, or actively dissuade young people from participating also negatively impact on who participates, how and with what consequences for youth development. These can include public space rules that stop groups of young people from congregating, criminalising particular forms of political action, such as the use of Distributed Denial of Service ('DDoS'), and negative media and political portrayal of particular social and cultural practices. Such dynamics disproportionately affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and migrant young people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

118 Vromen, A, 2015, Campaign Entrepreneurs in Online Collective Action: GetUp! in Australia, *Social Movement Studies,* 14:2, pp. 195–213.
119   Walsh, L, 2011, 'Emergent Forms and Tools of Change-Making', in L Walsh and R Black (Eds), In their Own Hands: Can Young People Change Australia, ACER Press, Camberwell; Walsh, L and Black, R, 2018, 'Off the radar democracy: Young people's alternative acts of citizenship in Australia', in S Pickard and J Bessant (Eds), *Young people re-generating politics in times of crises,* Palgrave MacMillan.
120   Harris, A, 2012, 'Citizenship Stories', in N Lesko and S Talburt (Eds), *Keywords in Youth Studies: Tracing Affects, Movements, Knowledges,* pp. 143–53, Routledge, New York and Oxon.
121   Collin, P and McCormack, J, 2019,'Young People and Politics' in N. Barry, J. Butcher, P. Chen, I. Cook, H. Manning, M. Taflaga (Eds), *Australia's Politics and Public Policy,* University of Sydney Press, Sydney.