Social Issues and Diverse Young Australians
A Summary of Key Challenges and Young People’s Concerns

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This is a summary of our full paper which can be found on our website.

We evaluated existing evidence in academic research, policy documents, and grey literature to find the most significant issues.

We asked government, organisations, academics and young people what they thought over 6 roundtables.

Over 50 representatives

4 key issues for culturally diverse and Indigenous young people

- Racism and Discrimination
- Education
- Employment
- Health
Racism and friendliness can exist at the same time in young people's intercultural relationships. The pandemic exacerbated racism for CALD and Indigenous youth. Schools and online settings are key sites for racism and discrimination. Online racism increased during the pandemic. Racism and discrimination became more important for all young people during the pandemic. This complicates our existing ways of managing diversity. Experiences of racism. Finding better definitions. Mainstream media effects on young people's wellbeing. Strategies to manage online racism. Better reporting tools. Consolidation of existing research. COVID-19. Further Research. Barriers to reporting and addressing racism.
Young people worry that quality education is not equally accessible to all.

Recently arrived youth are more likely to experience challenges to education.

CALD youth are well represented in school education, and more likely than those from English speaking backgrounds to pursue further education.

Indigenous youth are under-represented in school and tertiary education.

Young women are more concerned than young men about school & study problems.

Inequalities in digital technology access and proficiency exacerbated educational disadvantage during the pandemic.

Recently arrived youth are more likely to experience challenges to education.

COVID-19

Online education has posed significant challenges for young people.

Long-term effects of government changes to education trajectories of young people.

Further Research

Changes to family dynamics due to home learning.

Social, educational and financial consequences of disruptions to education during the pandemic.
Employment

Lack of educational opportunities and labour market marginalisation affect social and economic inclusion, although with great variation within this group.

High levels of un- and under-employment are longstanding issues.

CALD and Indigenous Youth

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Pre-migration trauma

Family pressures to attain tertiary qualifications

Lack of English language proficiency

Lack of experience and confidence

Lack of local experience in Australia

Discrimination and racism

Further Research

The labour market has deteriorated significantly for young people due to the Global Financial Crisis and the pandemic.

COVID-19

Young people (especially young women) bore the brunt of job losses in industries most affected by lockdowns, including the hospitality, retail, entertainment and tourism industries.

Barriers to sustainable employment

Long term ‘scarring’ effects of under- and un-employment during the pandemic.

Barriers and enablers of employment for CALD and Indigenous youth during the period of recovery from the pandemic.

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Discrimination and racism

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Young adults in Australia have reported the most significant increase in severe psychological distress from pre-pandemic levels.

The pandemic focussed attention on usefulness of online services.

They face increased levels of racism, and have hypervigilance and concern about re-engaging in public settings.

The pandemic exacerbated poor mental health among young refugees and migrants.

But they often demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity.

For newly-arrived CALD youth, sport can increase sense of belonging and can facilitate physical health, wellbeing and settlement in Australia.

LGBTIQA+ youth, young people with pre-existing mental health conditions, unpaid caregivers, and essential workers experience worse mental health.

Rates of psychological distress are much higher for young women than young men.

Affordability/access to professional support/online mental health services.

New forms of mental health support (e.g. online communities, new hobbies/interests).

Further Research.

Place-based initiatives.
Read the full review at crisconsortium.org/publications