

CHALLENGING RACISM: THE ANTI-RACISM RESEARCH PROJECT

National level findings

These national level findings provide a clear picture of the perspectives of everyday Australians (n=12512) on the issues of racism, ethnic-relations and cultural diversity. Detail on the survey method, question wordings and sample can be found in the Survey and Method section of this website.

The results here are organised by Attitudes; Experiences of Racism; and Cross Cultural Contact.

Attitudes

Australians are largely tolerant people who are accepting and welcoming of other cultures.

The survey data indicate that a large majority of Australians are positive about living in a multicultural country.

Most Australians feel secure and comfortable with cultural difference.

The data also indicate that most Australians recognise that racism is a problem in society.

Too many Australians (41%) have a narrow view of who belongs in Australia.

About one-in-ten Australians have very problematic views on diversity and on ethnic difference. They believe that some races are naturally inferior or superior, and they believe in the need to keep groups separated. These separatists and supremacists are a destructive minority.

Table 1: Attitudes to racism, cultural diversity and the recognition of racism, Australia, 2001-8

SURVEY QUESTION:	AGREE:	DISAGREE:
It is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures	86.8%	6.5%
You feel secure when you are with people of different ethnic backgrounds	78.1%	9.4%
Australia is weakened by people of different ethnic origins sticking to their old ways	41.2%	42.1%
You are prejudiced against other cultures	12.4%	80.1%
There is racial prejudice in Australia	84.4%	8.0%
Australians from a British background enjoy a privileged position in our society	40.9%	40.2%
Humankind is made up of separate races	77.7%	14.7%
It is NOT a good idea for people of different races to marry one another	11.2%	79.3%
All races of people ARE equal	84.4%	10.7%
Are any cultural groups that do not fit into Australian society?	41.4%	52.6%

From a 2006 survey of 4010 Australians on the experience of racism and on attitudes to anti-racism the Challenging Racism Project found that:

Most Australians want action against racism.

Table 2: Attitudes to anti-racism, Australia, 2006

SURVEY QUESTION:	AGREE:	DISAGREE:
Something should be done to minimise or fight racism in Australia	85.6%	5.2%
Nothing can be done to minimise or fight racism in Australia	9.4%	82.2%

Experiences of racism

The most common forms of racism are everyday incivilities such as racist insults, disrespectful treatment, or mistrusting someone, because of their ethnic background.

Table 3: Experiences of racism, Australia, 2001-8

Place of discrimination*	Total survey respondents % (n: 12512)
In the workplace	17.5
In education	16.6
When renting or buying a house	6.8
In any dealings with the Police	7.3
At a shop or restaurant	17.8
At a sporting or public event	16.4
Type of discrimination**	
You are treated less respectfully	23.4
People act as if you are not to be trusted	15.6
You are called names or similarly insulted	27.0

Question wordings: *How often have you experienced discrimination because of your own ethnic origin in the following situations? **How often do you feel that because of your own ethnic origin ...

Cross Cultural Contact

Table 4: Cultural mixing, Australia, 2001-8

	Never %	Hardly ever %	Sometimes %	Often %	Very often %	All* %
In workplace	11.4	6.2	15.3	22.2	33.8	89.0
In social life	8.0	12.7	29.6	26.3	22.8	99.4
In sporting circles	19.8	10.8	20.3	17.7	14.5	83.1

Question wording: How often do you mix with members of other cultural groups in the following circumstances?

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Industry Partners

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission of Australia
Equal Opportunity Commission South Australia
Victoria Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
Multicultural SA
Human Rights Commission ACT
VicHealth (The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation)
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