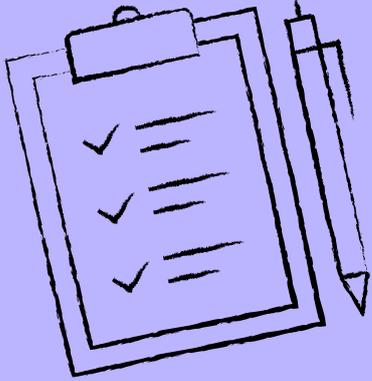




Australian Government



2025 NATIONAL YOUTH SURVEY

SUMMARY REPORT





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The document must be attributed as the *2025 National Youth Summary Report*.

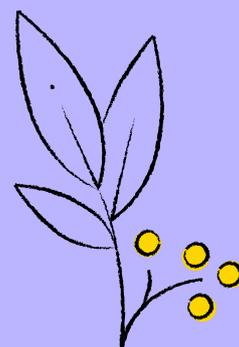
Use of the Coat of Arms

The terms under which the Coat of Arms can be used are detailed on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website at pmc.gov.au/government/commonwealth-coat-arms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Australian Government acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia where we gather, live, work and stand. We acknowledge all Traditional Custodians, their Elders past and present, and we pay our respects to their continuing connection to their culture, community, land, sea, water and skies.

We extend this respect to all First Nations young people and acknowledge the importance of First Nations young people having a strong connection to their culture and Country. We also recognise and support the right of First Nations young people to self-determination and to share decision-making with the Australian Government.





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Image (Left): Attendees at the 2025 National Youth Forum held at Old Parliament House, Canberra.



INTRODUCTION

We heard from **2,333** young people from across Australia through the 2025 National Youth Survey!

The National Youth Survey is a commitment of the Australian Government's youth engagement strategy, *Engage! A strategy to include young people in the decisions we make (Engage!)*.

Engage! outlines how the Australian Government will consult with young people, and commits to valuing their experiences and contributions in decision-making processes.

Through the survey, young people had the chance to:

- highlight the issues that are most important to them
- share their views to improve how young people are included in government decision-making.

Thank you to every young person who took the time to share their views with us! Your voice will help ensure young people in Australia are empowered, valued and contribute to shaping the future of our country.

WHAT WE DID

The National Youth Survey was designed in collaboration with the Youth Steering Committee. Their feedback informed the focus, questions and response options of the survey (see Appendix A).

The Office for Youth consulted other Australian Government agencies to inform the survey design, ensuring alignment with priorities across government.

We also consulted with First Nations young people on the design of a First Nations-specific youth engagement question.

The National Youth Survey ran from 26 August 2025 - 21 November 2025 through Qualtrics and was hosted on the Digital Youth Hub website. The survey was promoted through the Office for Youth's social media channels, with support from the youth sector across Australia.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE YOUTH STEERING COMMITTEE



The National Youth Survey provided an opportunity for young people across Australia to connect with the Australian Government and share what matters most to us and how we want to be involved in shaping our future. A massive thank you to the young people who took part and shared their perspectives.

Responses show a desire for young people to be genuinely engaged with government. We want an increase in communication and knowledge around diverse opportunities for young people to contribute to policies that impact us. These insights demonstrate the importance of listening to young people in the development of policies and programs which matter to us.

As Youth Steering Committee members, the National Youth Survey is a positive step in stronger partnerships between the Australian Government and the young people. There is more work to be done, however, the results provide a way forward when continuing our collaboration with the Office for Youth. This shows a positive step toward a future where young people are valued and considered in the decision-making process. There is still room to grow since we have only started!



2025-26 YOUTH STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Azuki, SA



Caleb, NSW



Charolette, ACT



Issy, QLD



Izabella, WA



Jaida, NSW



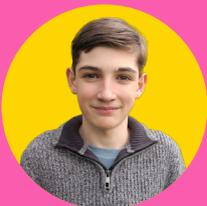
Jet, TAS



Joel, NT



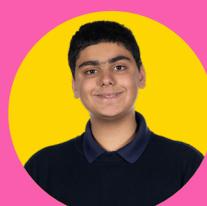
Max, QLD



Nathaniel, SA



Rachel, VIC



Ruben, WA

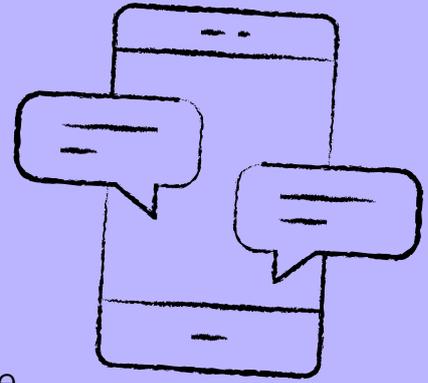


Tracey, NT



Zane, VIC

WHO WE HEARD FROM



A total of **2,333** young people from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences responded to the National Youth Survey.

AGE

30%

12 - 15 years old

39%

16 - 19 years old

31%

20 - 25 years old

GENDER

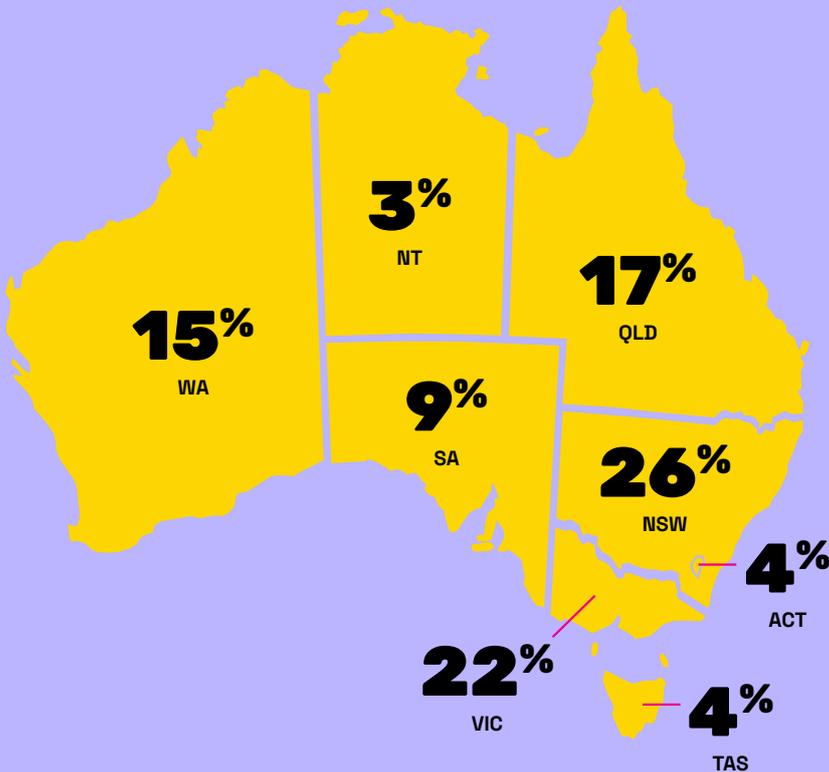
57% Female

39% Male

02% Non-binary

02% Other

STATE/TERRITORY BREAKDOWN OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



DEMOGRAPHICS

12% First Nations

12% with disability

17% from Regional, Rural and Remote areas

19% LGBTIQ+

17% Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse

SNAPSHOT SUMMARY

2,333

young people responded to the survey

98% of young people think it's important the Australian Government considers their views when making decisions.

TOP ISSUES

Top issues for young people

1. Cost of living (**47%**)
2. Mental health (**28%**)
3. Climate change (**23%**)
4. Housing affordability (**22%**)
5. Education and training (**19%**)

How young people would like to hear about what the Australian Government is doing for them

1. Social media (**73%**)
2. The news (**35%**)
3. Youth organisations / Events / Posters in community spaces (**28%**)

How young people would like to be engaged in government decision-making



40%

Events at school, TAFE or university

38%

Filling out a survey

36%

Social media

35%

Face to face events

33%

Youth organisations

What the Australian Government should consider when engaging with First Nations young people

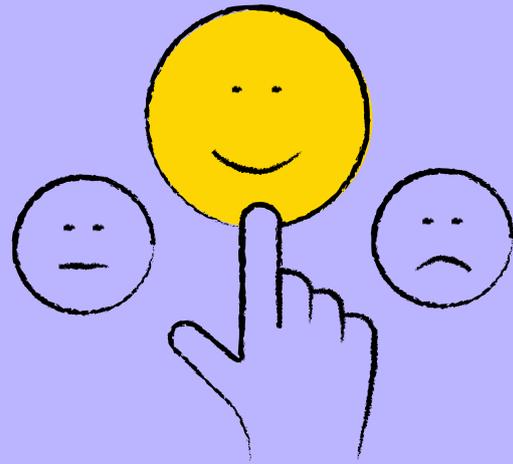
1. Respect cultural duality (**53%**)
2. Empower First Nations young people's voices (**51%**)
3. Meaningfully acknowledge Country / Ensure to hear from First Nations young people's diverse perspectives (**47%**)

BARRIERS

Barriers that prevent young people from engaging with the Australian Government

1. I don't know how to (**39%**)
2. I don't have enough time (**34%**)
3. I won't be listened to (**33%**)

WHAT WE HEARD



Here are some of the things young people told us through the National Youth Survey:

THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER YOUNG PEOPLE IN DECISION-MAKING.

While a majority (98%) of young people believe it is important for the Australian Government to consider their views when creating a policy or program, only 35% feel that the government does.

98% of young people think it's important the Australian Government considers their views when making decisions.

Young people's views of the Australian Government are influenced by the decisions it makes.

67% of young people report having a reasonable-to-strong understanding of how Australian Government decisions are made.

"The future of this nation lies in the youth of today."

- Survey response from a young person

PERCEPTIONS

Young people's perceptions of the Australian Government

46% Neutral

30% Positive

24% Negative

YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN DECISIONS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO THEM.

The key issues for young people remain consistent with those identified through *Engage!*. Young people want the opportunity to influence the government's responses to these issues.

TOP ISSUES

Top issues for young people

1. Cost of living (**47%**)
2. Mental health (**28%**)
3. Climate change (**23%**)
4. Housing affordability (**22%**)
5. Education and training (**19%**)

“Young people’s engagement with climate change and water issues is essential for transformative change. If change is to be led by young people, we must take action now. It’s our future, and if we don’t speak up today, we’ll be the ones facing these challenges on an even more extreme level in the future.”

- Survey response from a young person

YOUNG PEOPLE WANT TO BE KEPT INFORMED IN WAYS THAT WORK FOR THEM.

Social media is the preferred communication channel for young people in Australia.

The news, youth organisations, events and posters in community spaces are other ways that young people would like to receive government information.



How young people would like to hear about what the Australian Government is doing for them

1. Social media (**73%**)
2. The news (**35%**)
3. Youth organisations / Events / Posters in community spaces (**28%**)

* This survey was conducted before the Social Media Minimum Age restrictions came into place in December 2025.



YOUNG PEOPLE WANT TO BE ENGAGED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS.

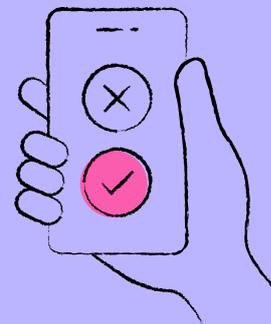
Young people want a range of ways to engage with Australian Government on issues that are important to them. This includes a mix of in-person and online opportunities.

How young people would like to be engaged in government decision-making

1. Events at school, TAFE or university (**40%**)
2. Filling out a survey (**38%**)
3. Social media (**36%**)
4. Face to face events (**35%**)
5. Youth organisations (**33%**)

“Australia is incredibly diverse in its culture and identities. What works for Melbourne CBD might not work for rural Queensland.”

- Survey response from a young person



A NUMBER OF BARRIERS PREVENT YOUNG PEOPLE FROM ENGAGING WITH THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT.

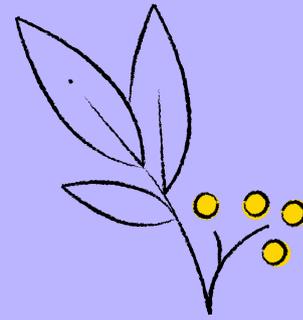
Barriers such as lack of awareness, availability and trust prevent young people from engaging with the Australian Government.

BARRIERS

Barriers that prevent young people from engaging with the Australian Government

1. I don't know how to (**39%**)
2. I don't have enough time (**34%**)
3. I won't be listened to (**33%**)

CULTURAL SAFETY IS ESSENTIAL TO ENGAGEMENT WITH FIRST NATIONS YOUNG PEOPLE.



First Nations young people want the government to engage with them in ways that respect cultural duality and empower their voices. Respecting cultural duality means supporting First Nations young people to navigate both their cultural obligations and Western systems. It is important to be culturally aware and, where possible, involve facilitators who have experience working with First Nations communities.

First Nations young people told us that Country should be meaningfully acknowledged when engaging with First Nations young people, and that a range of views are heard and valued.

What the Australian Government should consider when engaging with First Nations young people

1. Respect cultural duality (**53%**)
2. Empower First Nations young people's voices (**51%**)
3. Meaningfully acknowledge Country / Ensure to hear from First Nations young people's diverse perspectives (**47%**)

“As First Nations young people, we are not just voices to be heard, but stories carried through generations. Grounded in culture, connected to Country, and guided by those before us. True engagement is a commitment to listen deeply, respect our cultural duality, and honour the diversity of our experiences. When we are meaningfully included, our voices don't just echo, they shape pathways forward, carrying knowledge and change into the future.”

- First Nations Youth Advisory Group member



Image: Young people speaking at the 2025 National Youth Forum.

WHAT WE WILL DO



The 2025 National Youth Survey highlights the importance of *Engage!* and the work of the Office for Youth to create opportunities and strengthen engagement between young people and the Australian Government.

The Office for Youth will use the insights from the survey to guide our programs, events and advice to the Minister for Youth and the Australian Government throughout 2026.



These findings have already informed the topics for the 2026 National Youth Forum and the focus of 2026 Youth Advisory Groups. Through these opportunities, young people can contribute to solutions on the issues that matter to them. We will keep offering a mix of in-person events, online activities and partnerships with the youth sector so that young people can engage in a variety of ways.



Making it easier for young people to access Australian Government information and services remains a key priority. We will increase our communication with young people in clear, accessible and engaging ways. We will keep “closing the loop” by showing young people how their ideas are being used to shape advice and decisions.



Reducing barriers to participation also continues to be central to our work. We will continue to involve young people in designing and delivering engagement opportunities. We will also strengthen the Australian Government’s capability through the implementation of the Youth Engagement Toolkit.



Supporting First Nations young people to lead and contribute to decisions that affect their communities will remain a strong focus. We will continue to prioritise this work through a dedicated First Nations Youth Advisory Group and partnerships with youth organisations.

Image (right): Youth Advisory Group member being interviewed during the 2024 National Youth Forum.



DEFINITIONS

Australian Government Youth Engagement Model	The Australian Government's vision to ensure all young people across the country can have a say on issues that impact them.
Australian Public Service	The Australian Public Service (APS) refers to Australian Government departments and agencies. The staff within the APS deliver services, develop policies, and support the Australian Government in serving the public.
Barriers	Obstacles (such as physical, emotional, cognitive, or structural) that prevent people from actively participating.
Closing the loop	To follow up on a task to ensure that it is completed (or on track to being completed). This might look like communicating with young people about how their feedback has been used in policy and program development.
Cultural duality	The experience of identifying and navigating life with two distinct cultures at the same time.
Decision-making	The process of making choices about government policies and programs.
Departments and agencies	Organisations and groups in the Australian Government who are responsible for different policies and programs.
Digital Youth Hub	The Digital Youth Hub (youth.gov.au) is a website that helps young people find government information and services.
Engaged	Actively involving young people to contribute their ideas, experiences, and perspectives.
First Nations	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Government	The Australian Government which is the federal government of Australia.

LGBTIQ+	An abbreviation which is used to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer or any other sexually or gender diverse people.
Lived experience	Personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand involvement or experience.
Policies and programs	Initiatives of the Australian Government to address different issues or provide support to people.
Program participants	Unless another program is stated, the use of the term 'program participants' in this report refers to young people who took part in an Office for Youth program.
Self-determination	The fundamental right of people to shape their own lives.
Social Media Minimum Age Restrictions	The established changes on social media minimum age requirements. It also includes the obligation on some platforms to take reasonable steps to prevent age-restricted users from having an account with them.
Strategy; Engage!	Released in 2024, <i>Engage!</i> sets out the Australian Government's vision to ensure all young people across Australia can have a say on issues and policies that impact them.
Young people	People who are between the ages of 12-25.
Youth sector	The youth sector consists of non-government organisations, services, and professionals who work with young people.

APPENDIX A

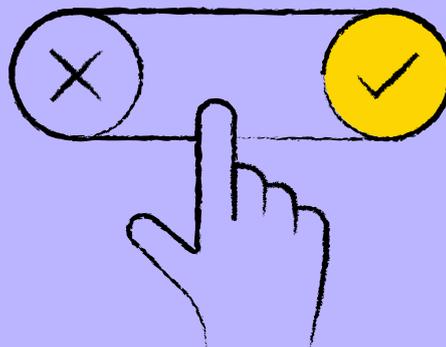
2025 NATIONAL YOUTH SURVEY QUESTIONS

Initial Demographic Questions: (state, age, gender, diversity and experiences).

Question	Response options
<p>The next questions ask about issues you care about. It is important to note that different levels of government have different roles and responsibilities. Some of these issues are Federal government responsibilities; however, others are State/Territory government or local council responsibilities.</p> <p>Which of these issues are most important to you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abuse or misuse of alcohol and other drugs • Arts and creativity • Child protective services • Climate change and the environment • Cost of living • Education and training • Employment • Family and Domestic violence • Gender equality • Homelessness • Housing affordability • Identity and culture • Justice system • Mental health • Physical health • Racism • Sport and recreation • Healthy relationships and consent • Social media and impacts of technology • Other (please describe)
<p>In the previous question, you listed [top choices] as your top three most important issues.</p> <p>If you want to, tell us how the Australian Government may improve these issues.</p>	<p>Open text response</p>

Question	Response options
<p>How would you rate your understanding of how Australian Government decisions are made?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No understanding • A slight understanding • A reasonable understanding • A good understanding • A strong understanding
<p>Overall, how would you rate your perception of the Australian Government?</p> <p>This means what you think about government and the work that it does.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very negative perception • Negative perception • Neutral • Positive perception • Very positive perception
<p>The next questions ask about your views on government engagement. This will help us better understand how you would like the government to work with and listen to young people in decision making.</p> <p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:</p> <p><i>The Australian Government considers the views of young people when creating a policy or program</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly agree • Agree • Neither agree nor disagree • Disagree • Strongly disagree
<p>How important is it that the Australian Government considers your opinions when making decisions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not at all important • Slightly important • Moderately important • Very important • Extremely important

Question	Response options
<p>If you had the opportunity to work with Australian Government on issues that are important to you, how would you like to be involved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory groups or committees • Face-to-face events • Meetings with politicians • Social media • Online events • Meetings with government officials • Filling out a survey • Festivals and community events • Youth organisations • Events at school, TAFE or university • Online at youth.gov.au • Local sport or social clubs • I'm not sure • Other (please describe)
<p>Which of the following barriers, if any, prevent you from engaging with the Australian Government on issues you care about?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know how to • I can't get to different engagement opportunities • I have accessibility needs • I don't have enough time • I won't be listened to • N/A - I don't have any barriers • Other (please describe)
<p>If you want to, tell us how government could make engagement with young people better?</p>	<p>Open text response</p>



Question	Response options
<p>How would you like to hear about what the Australian Government is doing for young people?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • Online at youth.gov.au • Email newsletters • Events • Text messages • News • Formal reports • Posters in community spaces • Meetings with politicians • Through a government service I already use (e.g. NDIS or Services Australia) • Youth organisations • I don't want to be contacted • Other (please describe)
<p>If you want to, tell us more about how government should engage with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people?</p>	<p>Open text response</p>
<p>Is there anything else you would like to share about how the Australian Government should engage with young people in Australia?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
<p>How did you hear about the National Youth Survey?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office for Youth socials • The Digital Youth Hub website • Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) • My local youth organisation • Through the National Youth Consultations • Other (please describe)





Image: Previous Youth Steering Committee members sitting down reading the Australian Government youth engagement strategy, *Engage! A strategy to include young people in the decisions we make.*



youth.gov.au