



Why reporting an experience of racism to the local anti-racism support network?

Many people who face racism don't report their experience. This means that only a very small proportion of racist incidents are documented and recorded. In Victoria, less than 16% of those who have experienced racism have ever reported any such incident.

There are many different **reasons for not reporting**. Many people feel the 'costs' of reporting are too high, for example that it takes too much effort, they are worried about negative consequences or that they may not be believed. There is also often the feeling that nothing would change anyway.

But people from communities affected by racism have also highlighted that a key **reason for reporting** is to raise awareness and to help reduce the risk that others have to face similar experiences of racism in the future.

Many want to hold the perpetrator to account. That's another important reason to report. Depending on the circumstances of the incident, this could be possible. The local support networks can discuss with you what options there are.

But one thing is certain: Without speaking out against racism, there is no chance to hold anyone accountable for their racist behaviour. And even if the individual incident cannot be resolved (for example, because the perpetrators are unknown), speaking out can make sure the incident is recorded and can contribute to raising awareness and advocacy.

'In the past I thought nothing can really be done about racism because it's a bigger systemic problem. I had never really looked at racism through a local lens before, but now, after this project, I think actually there is a good chance to make a real impact on racism on the local level. There are better levers on the local level. And everyone can have an impact'

Why speaking out matter

Speaking out and finding someone who really listens and takes you seriously can help you cope and **find empathy, solidarity and support**. Those who have reported racism often told us, they felt better after they reported it, even where the outcome was not ideal. It is still better than remaining silent.

While, unfortunately, it is not always possible to identify and/or **hold the perpetrator to account**, sometimes it is – and the local anti-racism support network can help explore your options. Without speaking out, the perpetrator would definitely get away with their behaviour (again) – and there is zero chance for accountability and justice.

The local anti-racism support network provides a **safe space** for you to speak out and report experiences of racism. They are not there to judge you. They are there to listen, and they are trained to support you. They are 'in your corner' and can discuss possible next steps you may want to take.

Reporting to the local network helps collect better **evidence on racism in the local community**. With your consent, they document your experience of racism (anonymously, of course), which builds a clear picture of how and where racism happens. These local insights can subsequently help **address racism more effectively**. For example, if the network documents several cases of racism in a certain shopping mall, they can raise the problem with the retail management and work, together with other local stakeholders, to address the problems (e.g. trainings for their security and staff or other measures to prevent racism in the future).