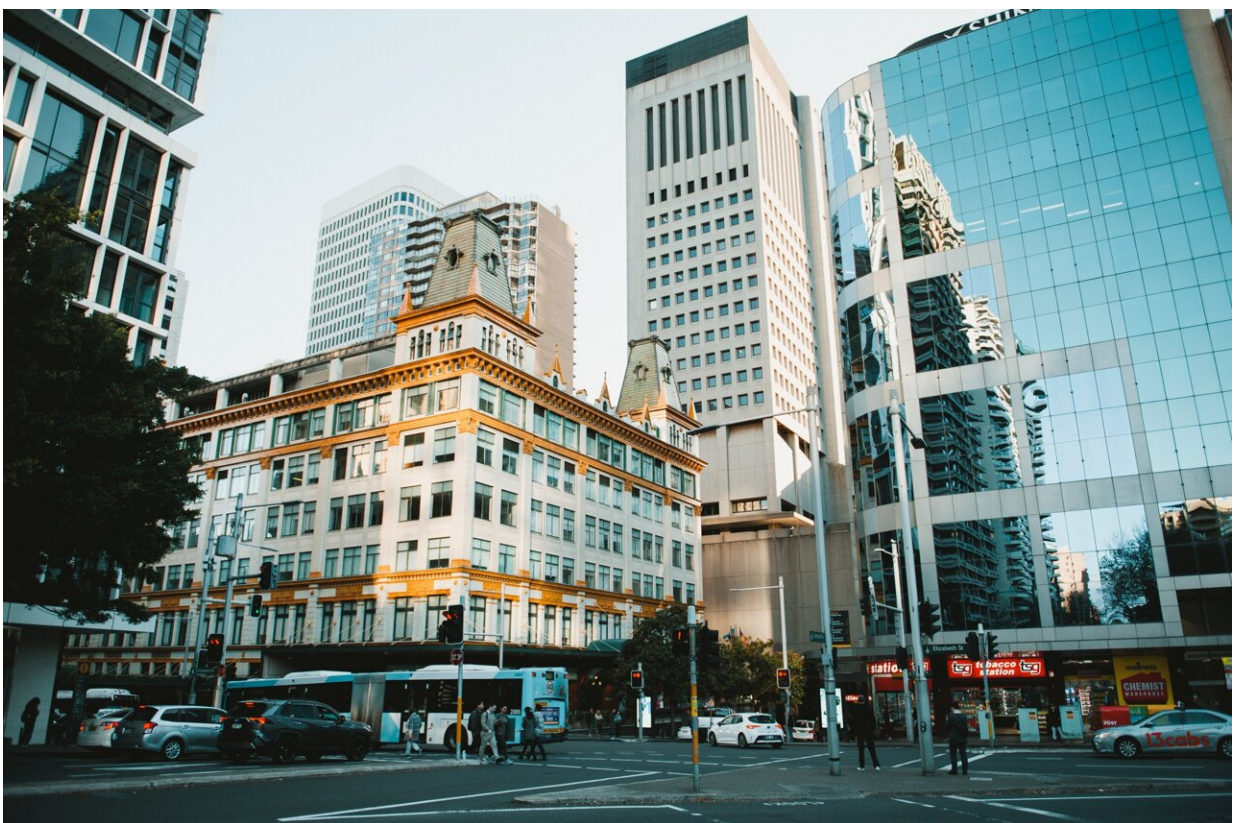


# Young Australians call for immediate action on housing stability, employment opportunities, climate change

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Credit: Rohi Bernard Codillo from Pexels

Research finds young Australians are calling for immediate action on housing stability, employment opportunities and climate change.

The annual [Australian Youth Barometer](#) is developed by the Monash Center for Youth Policy and Education Practice (CYPEP), in the Faculty of Education at Monash University and gauges the pressures experienced by young Australians in society.

The comprehensive national study, which examined the views of more than 500 young Australians aged 18–24, found:

- 9 in 10 young Australians experienced some level of financial difficulty in the last year
- 40% felt that they may not have a comfortable place to live in the next 12 months
- 1 in 5 experienced food insecurity
- 44% experienced unemployment in the last year
- 50% of young Australians reported participating in the gig economy at some point in the last 12 months
- More than 4 out of 5 young Australians are seeking additional training or advice to improve their odds of getting a meaningful job
- 71% have taken some form of informal online class.

Director of CYPEP and lead author of the report, Professor Lucas Walsh, said [young people](#)'s views of "being healthy" no longer just relate to physical and [mental health](#) but now also include financial security and access to housing.

"This year's Australian Youth Barometer highlights wider concerns about the rising costs of living, housing unaffordability and the lack of stable and sufficient employment. Ninety percent of young people reported experiencing [financial difficulties](#) in the past year."

"In 2022, 53% of young Australians thought they will be financially worse off than their parents. This increased to 61% in 2023," Walsh

said.

"I'd say [financial security], maybe having enough money to cover everything, and a bit more, and start investing and having all those sort of different avenues, I think. So, yes, just having enough money to sort of progress to that next stage of adulthood," said a 23-year-old male participant from South Australia.

The study also found that young Australians had a clear vision for their future employment. The three most [important factors](#) young people considered when thinking about the type of work they want to undertake was the location (70%), a high salary (68%) and long-term security (67%).

"Young people, like most of us, seek security. Secure accommodation. Secure employment. Secure relationships. A secure planet. All of these are currently challenged by multiple disruptions in recent years," Walsh said.

The study found that young Australians' understanding of health is expansive and holistic, also including lesser-recognized aspects such as [financial security](#) and access to secure housing.

"For me it's being financially independent. That's one thing, financial independence is kind of a healthy thing. I think that knowing that you could afford your rent, knowing that you can afford food ... if you need to go into the office [knowing] you can afford to go get a coffee and lunch ... knowing that you have a roof over your head is something that I measure for healthiness," reported a 24-year-old male participant from New South Wales.

Only 52% often or very often felt like they belonged when they spent time with friends in the past 12 months.

CYPEP researcher and co-author of the report, Blake Cutler, said young people are bearing the brunt of the challenges that are making news headlines on a daily basis.

"There seems to be a never-ending series of crises that make our headlines—the climate, housing, insecure work, cost of living. While these concerns affect us all, the 2023 Australian Youth Barometer indicates that young people are actively taking matters into their own hands. It's a crucial time for us all to listen and take action," Cutler said.

The report identified that young people are politically engaged, in the form of protesting and awareness raising, rather than through formal politics.

"I think for me, young people need to realize that that is an avenue with which they can actually create change. You don't have to just sit on the sidelines, you can do something about it, you do have an agency. You can get involved with charity and even if you only do a little bit it does matter. Individual bricks make up a house right? That's my perspective," reported a 21-year-old male participant from the Australian Capital Territory.

The 2023 Australian Youth Barometer shows that for many young Australians, their sense of control over their own lives is slipping through their fingertips. Nearly all (97%) survey respondents reported having at least one feeling of anxiety or pessimism. Many (41%) feel like they are missing out on being young, worry about their ability to live a happy and healthy life (41%), and their ability to cope with everyday tasks in the future (41%).

The 2023 Australian Youth Barometer highlights an opportunity for [decision makers](#), economists, journalists and educators, to better understand young people and the societal challenges they're facing.

**More information:** Monash Centre for Youth Policy and Education Practice (CYPEP) et al, The 2023 Australian Youth Barometer, Monash University (2023). [DOI: 10.26180/24087186](https://doi.org/10.26180/24087186)

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