

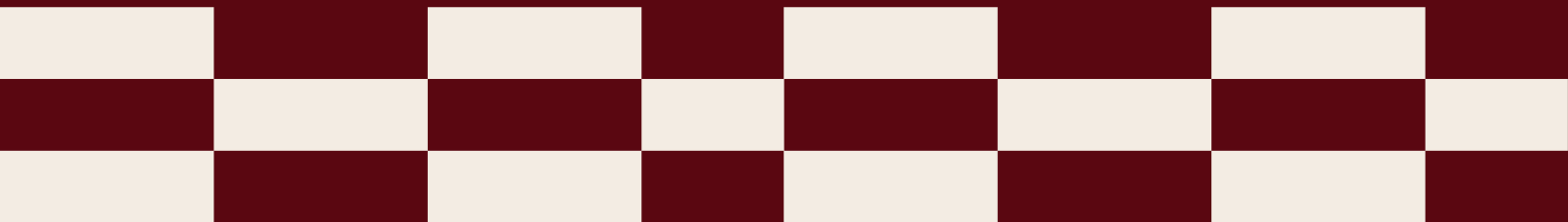
Anti-Palestinian Racism Preliminary Report April 2026

This report summarises the preliminary results from the Anti-Palestinian Racism national register. The register is the first of its kind in Australia, and this report investigates incidents of anti-Palestinian racism perpetrated from 30 November 2025 to 28 February 2026. The report was conducted in line with the Australia Palestine Advocacy Network's (APAN) efforts to combat anti-Palestinian racism.



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Introduction



The Australia Palestine Advocacy Network (APAN) acknowledges that this report was written on unceded, stolen Aboriginal Lands and we hold ourselves accountable to the Peoples whose Lands we live on. APAN pays our respect to Elders past and present. We respect the sovereignty of First Nations peoples and their relationships to Country, community, rivers, seas and each other. We are proud to note the rich and longstanding history of Blak-Palestinian solidarity.

APAN launched the Anti-Palestinian Racism register on 30 November 2025 to assess the prevalence and impacts of anti-Palestinian racism on Palestinians, those perceived to be Palestinian, and allies across Australia. The national register was developed following the findings of egregious and harmful racism in the ‘Anti-Palestinian Racism in Australian Schools’ report launched in September 2025.¹

As noted in the ‘Anti-Palestinian Racism in Australian Schools’ report, anti-Palestinian racism is not a new phenomenon and it is rooted in settler-colonial forms of oppression. Since October 2023 and the ongoing genocide² of Palestinians in Gaza by Israel³, anti-Palestinian racism - which has long existed - has surged as an overt, visible, and systemic form of racism. This racism pervades Australian political and social spheres, including and not limited to workplaces, public institutions, commercial centres, media outlets, schools, universities, on public and private property, in legislation (such as Hate Speech Laws) and through random targeted interactions on the street.

The Anti-Palestinian Racism Project was developed in consultation with local and global contexts and prior efforts of the Arab Canadian Lawyers Association and the US-based Institute for the Understanding of Anti-Palestinian Racism. APAN has also engaged with other local and government organisations including the Islamophobia Register Australia, the Australian Human Rights Commission, and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission as part of the project. APAN also acknowledges the Victorian Government's support for this project.

In addition, an independent Advisory Committee was developed consisting of nine members encompassing leaders in the Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, and anti-Zionist Jewish communities, as well as experts across anti-racism frameworks, law, education, and community development. The purpose of the voluntary Advisory Committee is to provide strategic advice and guidance on effective approaches to preventing and combatting anti-Palestinian racism.

Research on anti-Palestinian racism is limited or under-reported due to varied factors. Often conflated with Islamophobia,⁴ anti-Palestinian racism should be treated as a distinct form of discrimination. Anti-Palestinian racism occurs through the suppression, denial, silencing, and exclusion of Palestinian culture, heritage, and liberatory movement practices carried out by Palestinians and their allies.⁵ But because it has not been made visible, people often do not know to report it. People also do not report because there is a lack of trust in reporting mechanisms in general: the entrenched nature of anti-Palestinian racism means that people believe that justice is permanently unreachable. Thus more education, taken on by more sectors of society, is one of the actions that is needed. We hope that this preliminary report sheds light on the need to recognise anti-Palestinian racism as a distinct phenomenon to be investigated and researched for use in policymaking, legal cases, advocacy, and activism, working within broader anti-racist and anti-colonial projects and frameworks.⁶

What is Anti-Palestinian Racism?

Anti-Palestinian Racism refers to conduct, policies, or institutional practices that, by intent or effect, produce unequal, exclusionary, or harmful outcomes for Palestinians. It also impacts those who support and/or advocate for human rights, justice and liberation/freedom for the Palestinian people.

Anti-Palestinian Racism silences, excludes, erases, stereotypes, defames, punishes, withholds rights from, or dehumanises Palestinians and/or their narratives.⁷ It is demonstrated in three forms: Individual, institutional and structural.

Anti-Palestinian Racism may be indicated by one or more of the following patterns:

1

Racial Vilification and Dehumanisation

The toleration or normalisation of language, conduct, or associations that portray Palestinians as inherently violent, extremist, deceptive, or collectively responsible for acts of violence, resulting in loss of dignity or safety.

2

Suppression of Political, Cultural, or Community Expression

The restriction, removal, cancellation, or disproportionate scrutiny of Palestinian expression, participation, or representation—cultural, political, or communal—on grounds such as “divisiveness,” “security,” “reputational risk,” “cultural sensitivity,” “community safety,” or “appropriate timing” without equivalent standards applied to other racialised or protected groups. Other forms of suppression include the treatment of Palestinian cultural symbols - including the kuffiyeh, the Palestinian flag, watermelon, and Palestinian words and slogans - as antisemitic.

3

Denial of Peoplehood, Identity, Equal Rights, or Participation

The refusal to recognise, support, or resource Palestinian identity, community activity, or cultural expression on the basis that such identity is inherently illegitimate, political, or uniquely problematic, including the denial that Palestinians are a group as such and/or the denial that they are indigenous.

4

Differential Standards and Selective Enforcement

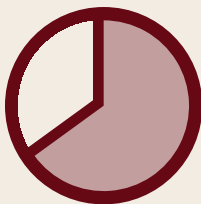
The application of institutional rules, codes of conduct, or safety policies in a manner that treats Palestinian-related speech, symbols, or assembly as more threatening, disruptive, or unacceptable than functionally comparable expression by other groups.

Key Findings

Between 30 November 2025
and 28 February 2026



264
incidents
were reported



65%
saying this was **not their**
first incident of APR

Between 30 November 2025 and 28 February 2026, 264 incidents were reported, with 159 respondents completing the survey in full (60% completion rate).

Respondents may not complete the survey for various reasons, including but not limited to, exhaustion despite wanting to engage because of the ongoing genocide in Gaza, fear of reprisal due to ongoing and current changes in laws, including newly launched Hate Speech Laws. Literature shows that people of colour experience exhaustion, fear retaliation, and so on.⁸

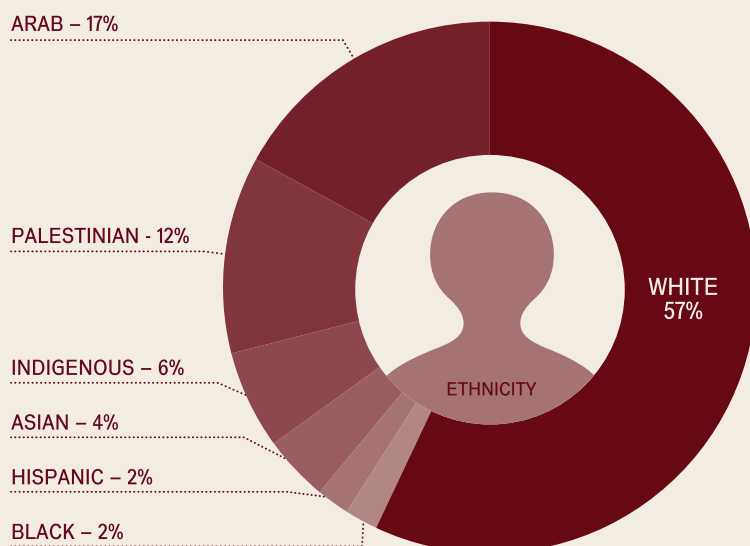
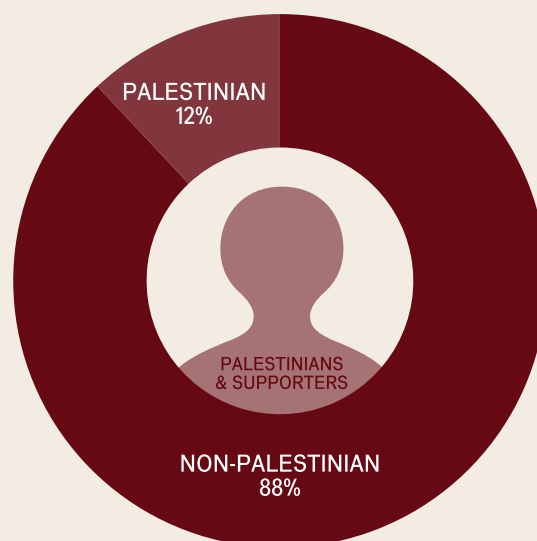
This poses a challenge, and more research and funding are needed to better understand the additional support requirements required to ensure respondents are confident and empowered enough to fully and comprehensively report their experiences, including by completing all the survey questions.

The national register questions sought to assess the occurrence, experiences, and impact of anti-Palestinian racism, and included questions such as:

- 1 Was this your first experience of anti-Palestinian racism?
- 2 What did this form of racism involve?
- 3 Where did this incident of anti-Palestinian racism occur?
- 4 What is the prevalence and/or impact that had negative effects as a result of anti-Palestinian racism?

The majority of respondents identified as **non-Palestinian**

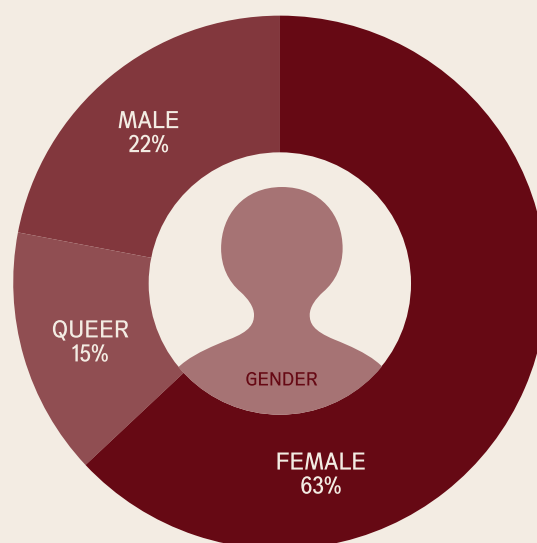
The majority of respondents identified as non-Palestinian (88%), affirming the widescale impact of anti-Palestinian racism across the country, and further highlighting the urgent need for institutional and policy change when addressing anti-Palestinian racism within holistic dehumanisation and anti-racism frameworks. The findings also reflect the broader trend of affected communities not self-reporting due to fatigue or cynicism; fear over surveys and data collection; or exhaustion from surviving a genocide.



The register sample was **racially and ethnically diverse**

Most respondents identified as **female**

15% of respondents identified as LGBTQI+



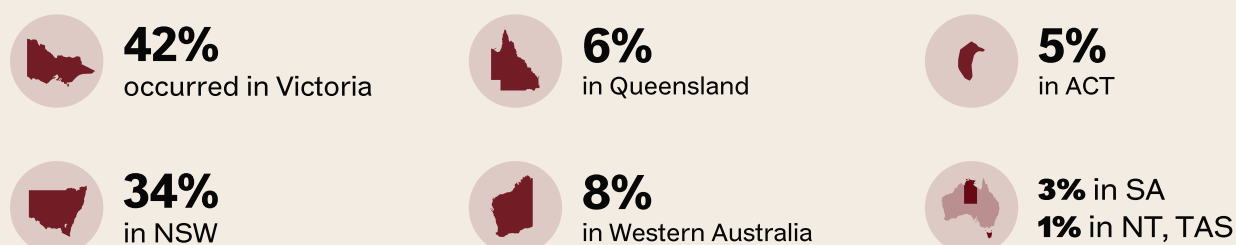
Respondents by Religion

The wider demographic of respondents also indicates the compounding marginalisation of communities already facing hardships as a result of incidents involving anti-Palestinian racism.⁹



Respondents by State

A total of 87 anti-Palestinian racism incidents occurred in the State of Victoria, accounting for 42% of incidents reported.



Register findings also showed a consistent pattern of anti-Palestinian racism that included **smearing, defamation, demonisation, and stereotyping.**

More concerning, **8%** of respondents experienced **physical violence**, and **5%** experienced **death threats.**

Respondent's Experiences

One respondent shared an experience in an urban setting in Victoria which occurred whilst protesting against the Israeli President Herzog's visit in February 2026, detailing how members of the **Zionist group Lions of Zion arrived with weapons**, including a **knife and baton**, and proceeded to **physically and verbally assault multiple protesters**. Whilst the incident was reported to the police, no further actions by the police were reported in this instance.



Another respondent shared their increased hypervigilance and anxiety after being stalked at their private residence since 2024. The respondent described their experience as follows:

“ An **Israeli Zionist male** with status in [the] arts field here in Australia and in Israel has **made my life hell**. He lives not far from where I live and **actively stalked me** from approximately the beginning of 2024.

He initially **stood outside my home** in the back lane which backs on to my bedroom and backyard area. **He would appear whenever I went out**. It was almost like he had **surveillance** on me 24/7 as he seemed to know when I was leaving home.

After the victim reported to the police, they were told that the perpetrator was “**cautioned**”. The victim added, “**The Israeli male still comes out of his place and stares at me if I am walking in the street. He has also filmed myself and friends with me as we go past**”. Such instances of anti-Palestinian racism often escalate to breaches of law, particularly when they are so defined under the Criminal Code Act 1995; Racial Discrimination Act 1975; Work Health and Safety Act 2011; Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986; Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948); Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948); United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (2007), among other local and international human rights acts and laws that Australia is a signatory to.

Of the 264 respondents, 164 answered the question “How has this racist experience impacted you?”

One respondent expressed, “*We are fearful of further repercussions and have since stopped showing our external support for Palestine.*” This represents a dangerous pattern of silencing and intimidation experienced by various individuals across the country. Another respondent echoed this sentiment, saying anti-Palestinian racism “*has made me feel unwelcomed in my community*”.

46%

reported feeling fearful

45%

became hyper vigilant

43%

experienced anxiety

29%

practiced self-censorship

24%

found they were withdrawing
or isolating themselves from
activities or people

26%

experiencing depression

12%

experienced low-self esteem

12%

experienced insomnia

11%

reported worsening other
health conditions

Anti-Palestinian Racism across the social landscape

Regarding the impact of anti-Palestinian racism in the **workplace**, **18%** of the 164 respondents experienced **loss of employment or career opportunities**. Multiple individuals reported being harassed at work, including one ACT government employee who shared their experience:

“ I was **harassed** and **physically intimidated** in my office at ACT Gov by an Israeli-Australian co-worker for wearing my keffiyeh, gifted by a Palestinian friend. He **repeatedly invaded my personal space** as I backed away, whilst spewing out **racist** and **Islamophobic comments**.

Suppression and **silencing** was also experienced in the workplace by various respondents. One respondent expressed having to **leave their workplace due to their experience of anti-Palestinian racism**:

“ I got told off for wearing a watermelon brooch to work, it was framed as an issue of psychological safety of Jewish staff members. My manager was the person who complained and **I ended up leaving the organisation**. I worked in the Victoria Public Service and there was **a lot of repression** of solidarity with Palestine going on at that time.

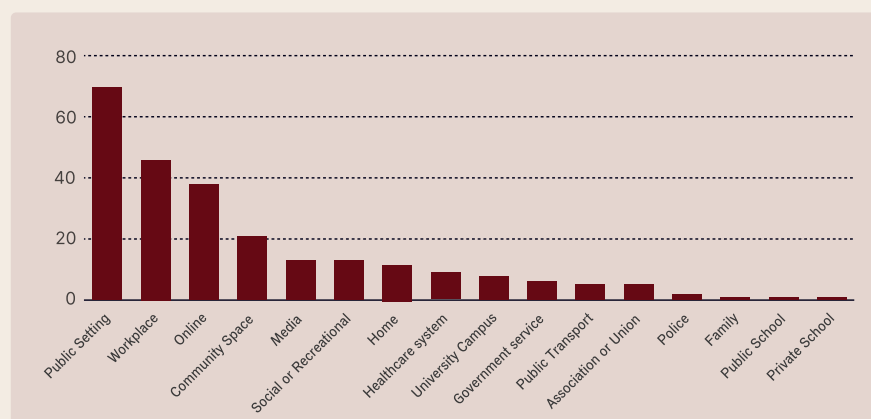
“ We are fearful of further repercussions and have since stopped showing our external support for Palestine ”

Additionally, **3% of respondents reported suspension, expulsion or otherwise being removed** from usual learning activities at universities. A student shared a striking experience of anti-Palestinian racism during their graduation ceremony at a university in Victoria:

“ A Jewish man **attacked me** during my graduation ceremony... because I was wearing my kuffiyeh. He was accusing me of **blood libel** and that I was somehow **responsible for the Bondi attack**. He wanted me to remove my Kuffiyeh, which I refused.

The frequency of anti-Palestinian racism at universities and its severe impact on students, academics, and non-teaching staff is further supported by the recent findings of the Australian Human Rights Commission Racism@Uni Study, which found Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students and staff experienced “hostility, threats, and discriminatory practices” ¹⁰ with a profound 90.2% of Palestinian respondents to the AHRC study stating that they experienced direct racism on university campuses. ¹¹

The high prevalence of anti-Palestinian racism in the workplace and higher education suggests that this insidious form of racism is pervasive and inherent across multiple settings related to the livelihoods and education opportunities of respondents.



Concluding remarks

APAN is releasing this preliminary report in advance of planned complete and final reports at six and 12 month intervals after the launch of the Anti-Palestinian Racism national register. These findings are profound and represent the egregious racism experienced by the wider community on this continent. Anti-Palestinian Racism must be addressed urgently and immediately by elected officials, governmental and non-governmental institutions, unions, corporations, anti-racism initiatives, human resources and diversity, equity, and inclusion offices, as well as universities, schools, hospitals, arts and cultural institutions, and any other institution in which people may be affected on this continent.

More research is needed to further understand anti-Palestinian racism and its impact on individuals within various realms of society and settings. Furthermore, dedicated funding is required to raise awareness of this under-recognised, under-reported, and under-represented form of racism, and to educate schools, universities, policy makers and workplaces on anti-Palestinian racism within holistic anti-racism frameworks that centre and apply anti-colonial First Nations histories, knowledges, approaches and learnings.

APAN seeks to work closely with organisations in the anti-racism and anti-hate spheres to combat the scourge of anti-Palestinian racism as one form of racism in existence in Australia, as well as engaging with stakeholders through education programs and workshops to better understand the impacts this form of racism has on society, and how to address it from an individual, institutional, and structural level.

Working with sovereign Indigenous conceptions of diversity, solidarity, and care¹² to develop alternative policies that better grasp difference and diversity, rather than current social cohesion policies that exceptionalise one group over others is the way forward to combating anti-Palestinian racism. We particularly note that anti-Palestinian racism cannot be tackled in isolation, and all work undertaken must be part of a broader anti-racist and anti-colonial approaches grounded in frameworks that situate this racism within the context of ongoing settler colonial violence.

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