

The Missing Link?

YOUNG PEOPLE FROM MIGRANT AND REFUGEE
BACKGROUNDS, SOCIAL CAPITAL AND THE
TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT



Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Key findings	5
3. Background	6
3.1 Youth unemployment.....	6
3.2 Unemployment amongst young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.....	6
3.3 Social capital and transition to employment	7
3.4 Young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, social capital and employment.....	9
3.5 Enablers of social capital	10
4. Methodology	11
5. Summary of survey findings	13
6. Discussion	14
6.1 Bonding social capital and transitions to employment	14
6.1.1 Community and culture	15
6.1.2 Family	17
6.2 The role of peers – bonding and bridging networks	18
6.3 Bridging social capital and transitions to employment.....	20
6.3.1 Contact with services, mentors and education providers	20
6.3.2 Community participation.....	21
6.3.3 Volunteering.....	22
6.3.4 Work experience and internships	23
6.4 What impacts upon young people’s access to bridging networks.....	24
6.4.1 Individual capacity	25
6.4.2 Community capacity	27
6.4.3 Socio-political factors - racism and discrimination	29
7. Where to from here?	30
8. Recommendations	31
10. References	33
11. Appendices – detailed survey findings	37

Acknowledgements:

CMY would like to thank the young people who gave their time to be interviewed and share their experiences for the purpose of this paper. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the time and contributions of the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL), Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley Local Learning Employment Network (MMVLLLEN), Diversitat, Victorian Settlement Youth Network, Australian Karen Foundation, and members of the Somali community in Melbourne.

Recommended citation:

Kellock, W. (2016) *The Missing Link? Young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, social capital and the transition to employment*. Carlton: Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY).



Copyright Statement

This work is protected under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Australia licence: You may not reproduce or copy photographs. You may download, share, display, print and reproduce this material in unaltered form for non-commercial uses as long as you acknowledge CMY (and any other nominated parties) as the source. Full terms at: creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/au/ or www.cmy.net.au/copyright



About CMY

CMY is a Victorian not for profit organization supporting young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to build better lives in Australia. CMY believes diversity is a cornerstone of Australia's success; respect for everyone's human rights is essential for a fair and equal society; and that everyone should be able to feel like they belong and can participate fully. This is reflected in CMY's 25 years of working with young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, in order that they might become connected, empowered and influential Australians.

Centre for Multicultural Youth
304 Drummond St, Carlton VIC 3054

T (03) 9340 3700 • F (03) 9349 3766
info@cmy.net.au • cmy.net.au

1. Introduction

Youth unemployment is a growing concern in Australia, with the unemployment rate for those aged 15 to 24 more than twice the national figure (BSL, 2016). Additionally, economic changes are radically changing job opportunities through globalisation, automation and more flexible work (FYA, 2016), highlighting the importance of complex, multifaceted responses.

Traditionally, research on youth unemployment has tended to focus on either structural issues (such as the economy) or on human capital factors, such as a lack of work readiness or relevant qualifications (Yan, Lauer & Chan, 2012). However, Granovetter (1974 in Yan et al., 2012) argues that social networks are at least equal to, if not more important in facilitating access to meaningful employment. Yet policy responses often overlook the importance of social capital in supporting young people to gain employment, including the impact of the quality and diversity of a person's social networks (Graham et al., 2015). Additionally, access to social capital is unequal (Verhaeghe, Van der Bracht & Van de Putte, 2015). Yet surprisingly there appears to be minimal research about the inequalities in access to social capital amongst people seeking employment in the Australian context.

Young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds can often lack connections with those who are professionally employed, leaving them at a disadvantage when it comes to making this key life transition. Bonding relationships (close connections with those of similar backgrounds) and intra-cultural connections are important for creating strong, supportive networks and a sense of identity for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds. However these relationships alone may not be enough to enable young people to step out into the broader society for the purpose of finding employment. Bridging social networks (connections with those of dissimilar backgrounds) become important at these points of transition, enabling young people to move beyond the resources of their close connections.

Additionally, it is important to consider what might facilitate or obstruct young people's access to social capital, such as individual capacity, community capacity and socio-political factors (Pittaway, Bartolomei & Doney, 2015).

What then, is the experience of young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds with regards to social capital and employment? How and where do these bridging networks form? How do we best support young people and their families to create and access the kind of networks that can assist them to not just 'get by', but to also use their skills and education to 'get ahead'?

This paper aims to develop a deeper understanding of the way in which young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds experience social capital in relation to work transitions, particularly for those who are tertiary educated. This is with the intention of exploring how best to support the breadth and quality of young people's networks to facilitate the transition to meaningful work. Access to bridging capital for the purposes of employment is an issue of equity – an essential link that is often missing for young people with a refugee or migrant experience. It is all of our responsibility to ensure these connections can be made and that meaningful work is accessible to all. The future of both our young people and our society depends on it.

2. Key findings

- Young people's bonding relationships (with those of similar backgrounds to themselves) appear to provide a strong foundation of support and identity, important elements for securing and maintaining work. For the most part, young people¹ describe having close connections to those of similar cultural backgrounds (85 per cent).
- Young people often lack the kind of bridging networks that can assist them in the transition to work, despite overwhelmingly reporting that they have friendships with those of culturally diverse backgrounds (90 per cent) and know people from different 'walks of life' (95 per cent).
- Many young people, families and communities from refugee and migrant backgrounds lack a) information regarding employment pathways b) professional contacts c) understanding of the current job market in Australia and d) knowledge around what kind of skills and experience are required.
- Many young people are turning to peers for help with employment, with friends identified as the most helpful person in their employment search (25 per cent).
- A number of young people don't know who can help or where to go to find assistance with employment. Of survey respondents, 15 per cent had not sought help with finding work. They did not know who to ask (40 per cent), didn't think anyone would help (20 per cent), did not know anyone with the skills to help (20 per cent), were not confident to ask for help (13 per cent), or felt they didn't need it (7 per cent).
- Being actively involved in community activities appears to help young people develop both confidence and diverse bridging networks with people who may be able to support them with employment-related goals.
- Teachers, community workers and services can be a critical first link in being able to connect young people with opportunities, and to develop connections with members of the broader community.
- Volunteering can help expand young people's social networks and assist with the development of important life skills. However care needs to be taken to ensure it is a meaningful, supported and valuable experience.
- Young people are struggling to gain relevant work experience to meet the demands of the current job market, and need greater support to access this.
- Young people's access to bridging social capital can be affected by a number of factors, including confidence, resilience, motivation, racism and discrimination.

This highlights the need for a broad two pronged approach:

a) Community-level response

Firstly, there is the need to support greater diversity of social connections and networks at the community level, bringing together people from diverse ages, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The emphasis needs to be not just on young people and families from migrant and refugee backgrounds to build these networks, but on the broader community to also create these relational 'bridges'. Opportunities to connect across communities through local

¹ Where the term 'young people' is used in relation to findings, this should be understood as young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

initiatives such as homework clubs, welcome dinners, sports, arts, youth programs, leadership opportunities, and voluntary work should be promoted as spaces where intercultural and diverse connections can be fostered. Additionally, there is need for further in research and local initiatives around how to best create diverse social connections across culture and socio-economic divides in the community.

b) Institutional level response

Secondly, there is a strong need for a targeted approach that actively supports young people to build employment related networks with those who have industry knowledge or who can broker opportunities. This could be in the form of mentoring, career advice, volunteer work or work experience. This requires strong partnerships and collaboration between education providers, business, services, and government. These sectors all have a key role to play in building bridging relationships for young people who lack them; connections that can sustain and support their transitions into the future.

3. Background

3.1 Youth unemployment

Young people aged 15-24 face higher risk of unemployment than other age groups, with the global crisis of 2008 having a significant negative impact on their chances of employment in Australia (BSL, 2016). As of January 2016, Australia's youth unemployment rate was more than twice that of the overall unemployment figure (BSL, 2016).

Unemployment is particularly affecting young Victorians aged between 20-24; the past six years has seen an upward trend of those unemployed in this age bracket who are looking for full time work (VicHealth & CSIRO, 2015). The job market is increasingly competitive for young people, due to a combination of "rising skills and educational levels in emerging economies, plus the rise of computing power, device connectivity and artificial intelligence" (VicHealth & CSIRO, 2015: 12).

Traditionally, completing tertiary education has been seen as a safe ticket to securing a good job, and the transition from university to work has been assumed to be relatively straightforward. However, since 2010, unemployment amongst tertiary educated young people has been on the increase (BSL, 2015), and linear transitions to work in the current labour market are no longer guaranteed (Denny & Churchill, 2016). Over the past six years, there has been a decrease in the amount of higher education graduates securing full time employment within a few months after completing their course (Stanwick et al., 2014 in VicHealth & CSIRO, 2015), and in 2012, 25 per cent of those who were unemployed held a diploma, advanced diploma, degree or post graduate degree (BSL, 2015).

"With employers now placing a premium on education, skills and work experience, securing that first step on the job ladder has become a harder and more complex task. The current labour market is a tough environment for all young people to negotiate, particularly those who are disadvantaged" (BSL, 2014).

3.2 Unemployment amongst young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds

There are considerable inequalities related to socio-economic and ethnic background when

it comes to accessing employment (Verhaeghe et al., 2015). In OECD countries, foreign-born immigrants aged between 15-34 take longer to make the transition from school to work (Kuchenhoff & Lourie, 2016).

In the Australian context, employment outcomes for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds are poorer when compared with their peers (MYAN, 2014a). According to 2011 ABS data, youth unemployment is higher among young people from households where a language other than English is spoken, and where young people were born outside Australia (ABS 2011, in CMY, 2014a). A 2014 study also revealed that youth unemployment in areas where high numbers of ethnic minorities live could be as high as three times the national average, and twice as high in terms of youth unemployment overall (BSL, in Jakubowicz et al., 2014). On a more local level, young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds² aged between 18-24 in Victoria are also far more likely to be unemployed than their non-culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Australian born peers (MYAN, 2014).

Some communities of refugee background in Victoria have observed and documented these concerning trends. For example, community members from the Horn of Africa community have highlighted challenges for a number of years with regards to their young people's transition to employment. A 2010 report of a Melbourne based Horn of African employment project reported that many new graduates end up in the taxi industry, or are forced to travel overseas in search of work (Farah, 2010).

3.3 Social capital and transitions to employment

Although the barriers to employment for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds are well documented (CMY, 2014), little attention has been previously given to the often 'unseen' dynamics of social networks and social capital. This is despite the fact that research has demonstrated that many people find employment through unofficial channels (Flap & Boxman, 2000). Verhaeghe et al. (2015, p. 175) also cites multiple sources (Fernandez et al., 2000; Lancee, 2012; Granovetter, 1995; Lin, 2001) that reveal that social capital is positively connected with securing employment.

Social capital is understood as a person's ability to access and mobilise resources that reside in social relationships (Lin, 2000; Coleman, 1990 in Graham, Shier and Eisenstat, 2015: 3). Social capital theory argues that people's social networks are an important contributor to their personal development and to the attainment of personal goals (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2015; Graham et al., 2015). The extent of a person's social capital is thought to be dependent on the size of their social network and on the extent of economic, cultural or symbolic capital these connections hold (Bourdieu, 2001 in Graham et al., 2015).³ Social capital is a contested concept, however, with varying perspectives as to its definition, how it works, who benefits and whether it always assists (Pittaway et al., 2015).

Social capital has been defined as being made up of bonding, bridging and linking capital (Putnam, 2000; Ager & Strang, 2008). Bonding capital is thought to exist amongst social relationships of similar people, promoting reciprocity, support and solidarity (Putnam, 2000). In contrast, bridging capital amongst people of dissimilar backgrounds are useful for connecting

² The CALD census youth report 2014 (which uses 2011 ABS data) identifies young people with at least one parent born in a CALD or 'refugee' country as being included in this group, as having refugee or CALD ancestry.

³ Author's note: In the literature, social capital is at times used interchangeably with other terms such as 'networks', 'ties' or 'social connections'. Although these terms can all be used to refer to people's social relationships, social capital explicitly refers to the resources that are contained in these connections. For the purposes of this paper however, we use the terms interchangeably in order to make the language more accessible.

with external information and resources, creating broader social identities and reciprocity as we get to know those different to us (Putnam, 2000). Bonding social capital has been referred to as helpful for 'getting by', whereas bridging capital is essential in 'getting ahead' (de Souza Briggs, 1998 in Putnam, 2000). Linking capital is about the connection between people and institutions, such as government and services (Ager & Strang, 2008).

Strong bonding capital is thought to be foundational to bridging capital, particularly in the settlement process (Pittaway, 2015). Positive feelings about one's own cultural identity "can foster psycho-social wellbeing, prevent problematic behaviour and encourage civic engagement" (Flanagan & Faison, 2001 in Mansouri & Skrbis, 2013: 18). Personal confidence and connection to cultural identity is often a forerunner to the confidence and trust needed to build broader social connections (Pittaway, 2015).

Yet bridging ties play a critical role in transitioning from study to work (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2005). Bridging capital, or ties that link to people outside your own social circles are thought to be of more value in employment seeking than close connections with friends and relatives from social circles similar to your own (Granovetter, 1973; Lin & Dumin, 1986; Hasmath, 2013). Bridging ties are closely related to a person's opportunity and 'integration' into the broader community, and are an important aspect of community social cohesion (Granovetter, 1973). They also play a significant role at points of transition – such as finding employment after graduation – as they can enlarge the possibilities and opportunities available to people (Jokisaari & Nurmi 2005:425). Bridging ties are also particularly critical for people with low levels of socio-economic status in the broader community, as they can provide better access to professional employment and a wider range of occupations (Lin & Dumin, 1986).

The quality of the social tie is also of great importance, including the resources that can be accessed through the relationship, emphasising the quality of personal networks rather than the actual size (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2005; Verhaeghe et al., 2015). Access to social capital is affected by social resources – the higher the social status of the person (such as occupational prestige and socio-economic background) the greater the potential they are able to assist a contact to achieve a goal, such as enabling access to resources like information and social influence (Lin & Dumin, 1986; Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2005).

Social capital, then, is particularly significant for young people in terms of making key life transitions. Billett (2011) highlights this fact:

"Social capital allows young people in their immediate present to 'get on' in life through networking, by finding ways to overcome the structural and economic challenges which the majority of young people in western society face. Social capital also allows young people to 'get ahead', by providing opportunities which the young person can use in order to gain advantages in their life" (Billett, 2011: 13)

The type of social capital a young person can access can impact upon their hopes for the future, and beliefs about the opportunities available to them. Limited social and professional networks can even impact on the ability to find work experience (Dhanki, 2009). Urbis' survey of 1,801 young people revealed only that just under half (46 per cent) of students in secondary school are able to access work experience (Urbis, 2011), often as a result of their families lacking connections (Cook, 2015).

3.4 Young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, social capital and employment

Social capital for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds has a unique context, as a result of the migration and refugee journey. The experiences of migrants and refugees can differ greatly, however. For instance, those from migrant backgrounds have most often made the choice to leave home (although young people in the family unit may not have had a say in the matter), whereas refugees are forced to flee due to war or persecution which can at times erode trust or lead to wariness of 'outsiders' (Pittaway et al., 2015). Additionally, those from refugee backgrounds have often lost family members and friends as a result of the refugee experience. Despite these differences, the process of migration for both groups can fragment important social resources that may have once been available through networks of family, friends and community members in countries of origin.

The broader socio-political context in Australia can also impact upon young migrant and refugee's experience of social capital. Policies aimed to prevent asylum seekers from arriving onshore, and negative media coverage of people of particular faiths or ethnicity can alienate young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds (CMY, 2014b; Strang and Ager, 2010 in Pittaway et al., 2015).

International research in Canada, Belgium and the USA all highlight the way in which migrant and refugee young people's unequal access to social capital negatively effects their transition to employment (Graham et al. 2015; Yan et al., 2012; Verhaeghe et al., 2015; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). In the Australian context, the Refugee Council of Australia (2012) also found that young people from refugee backgrounds are significantly disadvantaged in terms of lacking professional and social networks beyond their immediate community. As a result, unequal access to social capital has the potential to reinforce inequality of life opportunities and create an 'ethnic penalty', particularly in terms of access to professional careers (Hasmath, 2013).

Family play an important role when it comes to the relationship between social capital and employment, in that they can strongly influence what young people will go on to achieve (Graham et al., 2015). Previous studies have highlighted the importance of informal knowledge about post-secondary educational system and career pathways, accessed through the knowledge of parents, family members, peers or other informal mentors (Graham et al., 2015).

Research suggests that young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds do not frequently use family ties to find employment (Yan et al., 2012). Parents of migrant and refugee young people are immigrants themselves, often lack information on the options available and how to succeed in the Australian labour market context, and can be limited in their ability to pass on useful social networks to their children (Yan et al., 2012). This is particularly the case for young people who have studied at tertiary levels, where family members may lack the cultural and social capital to help their children find jobs related to their career ambitions and that may offer social and economic mobility (Yan et al., 2012). Due to the nature of the jobs tertiary graduates seek, "many immigrant parents may not even be able to offer useful advice to their children in respect to finding desired work... not to mention connecting them with potential employers" (Yan et al., 2012: 111).

Peers are another significant form of social capital for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds (Bottrell, 2008 in Yan et al., 2012), and given that family are often limited in the help they can offer in gaining relevant work, turning to friends is often the only option (Yan et al., 2012). Previous studies suggest 'ethno-racial' young people are "the least likely to ask family but the most likely to ask friends for help in their job search" (Yan et al., 2012: 108). Yet friends

are often new to the job market themselves and are often only able to provide limited support, tending to assist with advice rather than concrete help or direct links to professional jobs (Yan et al., 2012). It appears that if young people's peer relationships are predominately 'bonding' forms of social capital with other young people from ethnic-minority or similar socio-economic backgrounds, their usefulness in terms of securing relevant employment may be limited.

This has ramifications, given both international and Australian research suggests that young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds are likely to socialise with other ethnic-minority youth (Mansouri & Skribis, 2013; Yan et al., 2012). This is despite the fact that much of the intercultural interaction that does occur in Australia takes place among migrants and second generation migrants, with Anglo-Australians less likely to have intercultural relationships (Inglis, 2010 in Dandy & Pe-pua, 2013).

Yet positive intercultural contact has been identified as a critical driver for all dimensions of social cohesion (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2013), and is especially important for those from refugee or migrant backgrounds in their transition to employment. Ager and Strang's (2008) research identified that shared activities' such as sport, university, religious worship, community groups and political activity are all sites where integration occurs. 'Social spaces' and community activities are important in that they provide opportunities to build intercultural relationships, and enhance participation and a sense of belonging (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2013).

The tendency to associate with those from similar backgrounds led Yan et al. (2012) to conclude that young people from a migrant and refugee background are potentially disadvantaged when it comes to accessing 'mainstream' jobs.

"... judging from the relatively low number of cross-ethnic close and associational ties that the ethno-racial minority respondents had, the resource embedded in their "peer-capital" may not be rich enough to help them tap into mainstream society... Rather than offering ethno-racial minority youth a way to connect with employment resources and potential employers within mainstream society, they may instead reinforce the boundaries and limits of the marginalised status of their ethnic group" (Yan et al., 2012: 111-112)."

Relatedly, some suggest that the strong bonding ties that can exist within immigrant communities may inadvertently work against young people's social mobility (Portes, 1995b in Yan et al., 2012). In the context of resettlement, overly developed bonding capital could potentially weaken bridging capital, by creating isolated ethnic communities (Pittaway et al., 2015). For instance, relying on family or bonding peer relationships alone can result in people from refugee and migrant backgrounds at times becoming 'stuck' in undesirable 'secondary labour-market niches', such as cleaning, aged care, transport and meat processing (Oliff, 2010; Tomlinson and Egan, 2002). Research suggests that while seeking employment through family or ethnic community contacts may help in the immediate term, in the long-term it can result in a cycle of inadequate employment and being employed in industries below qualifications and capabilities (Tomlinson and Egan, 2002).

3.5 Enablers of social capital

When exploring how to help young people build social capital for the purposes of employment, it is important to consider the issue of access (Pittaway et al., 2015). In their research among resettled refugee communities in New South Wales, Pittaway et al. (2015) highlight that social capital is inseparable from the elements that enable it.

They identify three social capital 'enablers':

- individual capacities
- community capacities
- socio-political factors

Individual characteristics such as self-confidence, feeling safe or education levels can impact on a person's ability to access social capital. For example, a person who is experiencing a lack of safety or security, or lacking in confidence would be unable to make use of existing social networks and relationships compared to someone who feels safe and confident (Pittaway et al., 2015).

Secondly, community capacities also impact upon the ability to access social capital. This includes 'cultural fluency', which is the level of understanding of Australian culture and ability to operate in the broader context (Pittaway et al., 2015).

Thirdly, socio-political factors such as inclusive political, social and legal structures are critical to strengthening social capital. For instance, if a community experiences racism or culturally-based marginalisation, they will find it more challenging to access social resources or build broader networks both with other communities, and social and political institutions (Pittaway et al., 2015).

This has strong implications for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, given they often encounter barriers such as racism and discrimination in relation to employment (CMY, 2014; Graham et al., 2015). This not only has severe implications for the individual, but racism and discrimination also threaten broader social cohesion, disrupting a sense of belonging, inclusion and participation (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2013).

4. Methodology

CMY undertook a mixed methods approach to exploring the relationship between social capital and employment for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. This included a survey to explore young people's experiences of social capital as it relates to employment, 10 semi-structured interviews with young people, and seven semi-structured interviews with services and community representatives. Survey findings were used to help develop two sets of interview questions; one for young people and one for services and community representatives.

Surveys were available only in English, which may have limited the participation of those not confident in written English. The survey was promoted through CMY's networks, and was posted on Facebook, Twitter and the CMY website. Survey respondents were invited to go into the draw to receive a \$200 gift voucher as an incentive for their participation.

Young people were sourced for interviews through CMY's existing networks and through leads from other services. Interviewees were provided with a \$20 gift voucher in recognition of their time.

Interviews were analysed by two CMY staff members to identify key themes. Where possible, interviewees were provided with transcripts of interviews to check accuracy, and were invited to provide feedback on key findings and recommendations.

Demographics

Key activity	Description
Quantitative	
Survey of young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds (n = 126).	<p>A total of 126 young people (aged 16 – 30 years of age) completed the survey (mostly online, some via hardcopy). However not all young people answered all questions.</p> <p>Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over half (54 per cent) were female, whilst just under half (46 per cent) were male. <p>Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Just under half (48 per cent) were aged 16 – 21 years, one quarter (25 per cent) were aged 22 – 25 years, and just over a quarter (27 per cent) were aged 26 – 30 years. <p>Overseas born & length of time in Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of respondents were born overseas (88 per cent), in contrast to only 12 per cent born in Australia. Just over half (52 per cent) had lived in Australia for less than 5 years; over one quarter (28 per cent) had lived in Australia between 5 – 10 years; 13 per cent had lived in Australia between 10-15 years; and 7 per cent had lived in Australia for over 15 years. <p>Cultural backgrounds & country of birth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respondents were from 45 self-identified different cultural backgrounds, spanning Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the Pacific region. Respondents were from 33 different countries of birth, including Australia. <p>Education and employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high number of young respondents were still studying (59 per cent); just under half (45 per cent) were working; and a similar number (44 per cent) were looking for work. Over one quarter (28 per cent) were volunteering. Over half of those working (57 per cent) believed their work was 'very' or 'a little relevant' to their area of study, whilst just under half (43 per cent) reported it was 'not relevant', or 'not at all relevant'. A small number (4 per cent) left school before completing year 12; 15 per cent were still in secondary school; just under a third (30 per cent) had finished year 12 or equivalent; whilst half (50 per cent) had finished a tertiary level qualification.⁴

⁴ These figures have been rounded up from two decimal places. Of those who finished a tertiary qualification, 9 per cent completed a Certificate; 16 per cent a Diploma; 15 per cent a University degree; and 10 per cent a postgraduate qualification.

Qualitative	
Interviews with young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds (n = 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 young people from Somali, Iraqi, Afghan, Iranian, Zimbabwean and Ethiopian backgrounds were interviewed, aged between 21 – 26. • Participants ranged from having been born in Australia to arriving as recently as five years ago. • The group was evenly divided along gender. • Five of the interviewees were employed and five were looking for work. • Six interviewees had completed University degrees.⁵ • One was a year 12 graduate. • One young person was undertaking a Business Traineeship at a workplace. • Two had graduated with Certificate or Diploma qualifications in Community Services and Dental Hygiene.
Interviews with services and community representatives (n = 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several services and community representatives were consulted, including Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley Local Learning and Employment Network (MVLLEN), the Refugee Council of Australia, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Diversitat, the Australian Karen Foundation, and two contacts from the Somali community in Melbourne. Additionally, survey findings were taken to the Victorian Settlement Youth Network (convened by CMY) for further feedback and observations.

5. Summary of survey findings

- Young people report having friendships with both people of diverse cultural backgrounds (90 per cent) and their own cultural backgrounds (85 per cent).
- Almost all young people reported knowing people from different backgrounds, ages, experiences and 'walks of life' in Australia (95 per cent), and that their family is supportive of them having friendships with people of other cultural and faith backgrounds (94 per cent).
- The majority of young people (80 per cent) reported that they know people who have the skills to help them with finding work.
- Young people identified people outside their own cultural communities as most helpful to them in the search for work (74 per cent). Relatedly, they are slightly more confident to ask for help with employment from people outside their own cultural community (86 per cent) compared with someone from within their own cultural community (74 per cent).
- Young people reported peers to be the most helpful when looking for work (25 per cent), followed by youth/community workers (22 per cent); and family members (13 per cent).
- A smaller number of young people (15 per cent) are not receiving employment related help from anyone. These young people reported that did not know who to ask (40 per cent), didn't think anyone would help (20 per cent), did not know anyone with the skills

⁵ Interviewees had degrees in Arts/ Law, Accounting, Health Science (x 2), Biomedical Science and Exercise and Sports Science. Of the two graduates from Health Sciences, one was completing a Masters in Community Development, and another had finished an additional Certificate in Dental Technology.

- to help (20 per cent), were not confident to ask for help (13 per cent), or felt they didn't need it (7 per cent).
- Key barriers young people identified to successful work transitions include: 1) lack of experience (63 per cent); 2) not knowing anyone in that area of work (52 per cent); and 3) feeling unsure how to present in an interview (37 per cent).
 - The three key things young people identified as helping them transition to work were related to their connections with people and gaining relevant experience. These were: 1) knowing people who can point them in the right direction (65 per cent); 2) receiving help or advice from someone in a specific industry (50 per cent); and 3) volunteering (50 per cent).
 - Young people identified the following areas as most needed in supporting their transitions to work (in order of prevalence):
 - ◊ Skilled volunteering, internships and work experience opportunities
 - ◊ Work ready skills (resumes, interview preparation, understanding the Australian job market)
 - ◊ Personal skills (confidence, perseverance, interpersonal skills)
 - ◊ Mentoring (both general help with getting work ready and industry specific coaching)
 - ◊ One on one support and guidance
 - ◊ Developing new networks and connections
 - ◊ Government and services working with employers to create opportunities, and matching young people
 - ◊ Education and training

6. Discussion

Although the survey findings suggest that young people are relatively well connected and have both bonding and bridging networks, the survey was unable to reveal the quality of these connections or the type of jobs they were supported to access through these relationships. Interestingly, the qualitative interviews revealed quite different findings regarding the quality and breadth of social connections that young people had access to.

6.1 Bonding social capital and transitions to employment

Family and close relationships with those from similar backgrounds were seen to play an important supportive role, laying the foundations for overall wellbeing and day to day living. Both young people and service/community representative interviewees highlighted that family and cultural communities provide a foundation of identity, support and sense of belonging, which are important for young people in providing a solid basis to finding and maintaining relevant work. Many young interviewees appeared to have strong 'bonding' capital in terms of connection to their own families and cultural community.

General feedback from young people and services was that although they experienced strong bonding networks, these were limited in the support they could provide in supporting skilled employment transitions, given that communities, families and peers often lacked professional Australian employment experience themselves or knowledge of pathways.

“My son’s friends are Pakistani, Somali – based around a similar shared religion. There are tremendous positives in that – great internal social capital, a drug free peer group – but... if they wanted to get a referee for a job from someone with influence, it’s impossible. I know because they come to me asking me to be their referee. I’m one of their only contacts with professional work experience” – mother of Somali/Australian young man

Additionally, there were instances where young people or community representatives highlighted that there were times where ‘too much’ bonding capital might at the expense of developing bridging relationships, impacting on employment outcomes.

“I think it’s because there is – I wouldn’t say distrust, but a lack of exposure to people outside of their [the Somali] community. They’re very kind of sheltered... a lot of them, they go to private schools with their people... that makes it hard for them to branch out and like I said, build rapport with employers” – young man, Somali/Australian background

6.1.1 Community and culture

The importance of young people’s cultural communities in supporting their transitions to employment was highlighted by several interviewees, including needing to take a whole of community approach.

*“The whole community needs to know and understand [how to find employment].”
– young woman, Afghan background*

Many interviewees articulated that they felt there was a distinct lack of knowledge in their communities regarding employment pathways in Australia, and that this had a detrimental impact on their attempts to find relevant work. Some young people identified that they are the first generation to seek professional employment, and experienced this as a disadvantage in terms of trying to navigate a world that they, their communities and families were unfamiliar with.

“Like I don’t know a single person... I can’t even find a single dentist, a therapist to talk to about how to get my foot in the door, like just no one... like, no one who could possibly help me” – young woman, Ethiopian background

Young people and community representatives interviewed repeatedly highlighted the way that a lack of professionally employed role models within their communities can negatively impact on young people’s sense of hope and motivation, and access to pathways advice. This supports existing research that suggests joblessness within families and communities is a key factor that can impact on young people’s aspirations and educational achievement, resulting in unemployment (AIHW 2011 in VicHealth & CSIRO, 2015; Verhaeghe et al., 2015; Graham et al., 2015).

“There is lack of successful role models in the community employment-wise... they haven’t seen the role models here in Australia. I think this is something government can do, to employ qualified people to help provide positive role models for the younger generation. In Somali culture we have a saying – ‘a camel that walks behind imitates the camel in front’” – Somali community representative

To compensate for this lack of community capital, several young people suggested that there is a need for more structured initiatives (such as holding community forums) to connect professionals within cultural communities or from migrant and refugee backgrounds to young people, in order to provide positive role models and share knowledge.

Those who are the first generation of tertiary educated graduates in their communities appeared to feel particular weight of paving the way and being a good role model for the younger generation. They expressed that as the first graduates in their community, their success in finding relevant work would affect the motivation and aspirations of the generation below them.

"The young Afghan refugees or young boys or girls, they will learn from us... something that they can look up to. But if [we do not find work] they will look at us and say 'No I'm not going to get an education', because there is no example. It is for everyone [finding a job] – it will affect our whole community." – young woman, Afghan background

At times the lack of employment related social capital and knowledge resulted in adults actually seeking help from young people with finding work. One Afghan young woman who was unemployed and struggling to find work herself, yet was highly active in the community, explained that she was being approached by adult community members asking her to help them find jobs. Her explanation for this was that *"I'm the only person in the community that has broader connections."*

Only one young interviewee identified his cultural community as a helpful resource to him in finding skilled work. He appeared to have professional networks within his community who were able to inform him of position openings, and provide specialised advice, which highlights the importance of the quality of networks when it comes to employment transitions.

"Both [professional] positions I got through people who are from my cultural (Somali/Muslim) community" – young man, Somali background

For some young people, cultural barriers appeared to hinder them from seeking help from their networks, believing "it's 'up to me" and feeling that they should not involve others in their attempts to find work.

"In our culture, in my experience, you try to do things by your own self without seeking help – or without using connections or involving a person that you know in order to get a job or help you... You might feel bad [using connections]" – young man, Hazara background

In some cultural contexts, there may be negative associations with seeking help or using 'networks' to find employment, given high levels of nepotism or corruption in their countries of origin. This highlights that the way employment is secured can be highly contextual and culturally defined, and that certain cultural communities, families and young people may require additional support to both understand the importance of developing networks in the Australian job context and to access them.

Cultural perceptions of gender roles can also impact on young women's ability to develop diverse social networks. Several young men and women raised the fact that girls can be disadvantaged when it comes to building broad and diverse networks for the purpose of

employment, as their families or communities may have expectations of them to remain at home when they are not studying or working.

This was particularly highlighted by several young female Afghan interviewees, who articulated that they were battling against strong cultural expectations that women's role should be primarily in the home, and felt the pressure of being a good role model for other women in the community.

"We are the first to come out, to try and do something. We are trying but nothing is happening. If you don't have any job, if you don't show a successful story, so how are the other women should learn from us in our community? So if we tell our story to all the women they will be empowered and they also will want to get education – get out of their home and make networking. But I don't have a job, so how can they?" – young woman, Afghan background

6.1.2 Family

The role of family in particular was highlighted as being important in terms of encouragement to pursue employment opportunities, and to persevere. This was the case for both newly arrived young people and for those who had grown up in Australia. Family was also seen to be strongly supportive of their children's education as a pathway to employment.

"Well, family is always very supportive towards your efforts. Always try to motivate you and encourage you to keep going with what you're doing" – young man, Iranian background

Parent's education levels and understanding of the Australian education and employment system was recurrently highlighted as having a strong impact upon young people's transitions and understanding of what opportunities exist and how best to pursue them.

"It's a huge privilege if your parents have been educated, even if it's in a different context. It's really helpful and I only notice that now, because my parents are both, I guess you could say 'uneducated'. But I've got friends whose parents have participated in the education system here and it really makes a demonstrable difference in the way my friends' family all engage with their education – the support they can offer them. It's quite tangible I think." – young woman, Ethiopian background

Young people, who had educated family members, particularly if they were working in Australia, saw this as an important asset to their own employment journey. Conversely, young people whose parents had low levels of education expressed that they felt disadvantaged in terms of their access to educational and employment related advice compared with peers, even if the young person was born in Australia. This was particularly the case if they were the oldest child, given no one in their family had paved the way before them.

"There's literally no one [educated people in family], and being the oldest child it was like 'Oh my god' – I had to kind of navigate that all by myself and it was hard... I'd be in a different place now if I had a bit of advice, because I just didn't have that kind of support" – young woman, Ethiopian background

Some experienced their parent's lack of understanding around the Australian education and employment system, including the current challenges of the job market particularly for young

people, as creating further misunderstanding between the generations.

“They don’t understand. They don’t understand. They never feel us. They think if you do study you [will] find a job – ‘What for you went to study?’” – young woman, Afghan background.

“They don’t know what’s going on sometimes. They think they know, but they don’t really. They mean well. But the world has changed” – young woman, Zimbabwean background

Additionally, parents may not always understand growing forms of employment in Australia, such as freelancing (Vic Health & CSIRO, 2015), as legitimate forms of work.

“No one in my family’s ever been self-employed. So every time I talk about it they’re like ‘Oh that’s really lovely – so are you getting any interviews?’ and I think – ‘You don’t understand what I’m trying to do here’” – young woman, Zimbabwean background

Some young people also experienced misguided advice, out of their parent’s struggle to understand why their child was still unemployed despite graduating from study. One young woman explained how her parents were encouraging her to pay several hundred dollars to have her resume improved by ‘professionals’. Other tips from parents included attempting to change their child’s appearance:

“She said...you have to straighten your hair for every interview”. She could see how despondent I was getting. Like I swear, if my hair is the problem – I’ll straighten it. Oh my goodness. But when she brought up that, I thought, this is getting ridiculous.” – young woman, Ethiopian background

A lack of understanding around the challenges and requirements of the current labour market also appears to be impacting on parent’s sense of helplessness and disillusionment:

“I was talking to the mothers. They were saying ‘What is going on? We got our kids to Uni, paid for tutoring, they did really well. But none of them have worked in their fields of study. Some of the young people are getting really depressed’” – mother of Somali/Australian young man

At times, some young people explained that their parents were painfully aware of their inability to support their children’s education and employment transitions, leading to a sense of helplessness:

“My mum would always say ‘I don’t understand anything about the system. I can’t help you. I can’t help you study. All I can do is put a roof over your head and feed you and give you, you know, the energy and necessities to be able to navigate your education...’It used to break my heart when she’d say that. But that’s a lot of people’s parents. That’s all they can literally do – support you.” – young woman, Ethiopian background

“There was a really bright boy in the community – on the Dean’s list at [University] – who did a double major. He went for 33 jobs, and now is smoking shisha in [suburb]. His mother is devastated” – mother of Somali/Australian young man

6.2 The role of peers – bonding and bridging networks

Due to the limitations of what parents are often able to provide in terms of advice and support

with finding employment, a number of young interviewees emphasised the importance of peers in terms of providing both support and transferral of knowledge around finding work. It is important to note that peers can make up either bonding or bridging relationships, although the distinction was not always easily made throughout the survey or interviews.

“Friends for our age group is the main thing, you know what I mean? ... Your main network is going to be your friends” – young woman, Ethiopian background

Given that, in the words of one interviewee, “older people don’t know what young people need”, and the tendency to seek advice from one another, some young people advocated for using peer educators to inform other young people about the paths they took and what is required to enter the workforce in a systematic way, such as in schools and educational institutions.

Currently the sharing of information appears to be happening amongst peers on a more informal, ad hoc basis. Some interviewees who were professionally employed explained that they were now able to share the knowledge they’d gained with their friends.

“I did not receive a lot of help with finding a job from friends... maybe they received help from me because I’d already been in the professional working environment... they ask me questions and I give them advice about their resumes... cover letter, how to address selection criteria and things like that” - young man, Hazara background

The usefulness of friends in terms of accessing information and assistance with finding work was again dependent upon the quality of the young person’s peer networks, such as whether they had friends who were already employed, and what type of work they were engaged in. Peers were often seen as helpful with accessing entry level or unskilled jobs.

“It kind of depends how informed your friend is and what sort of job he has. If he’s working at a Coles then he might be able to give you some information about how to get a job there... But it’s a completely different thing to try and get a job in a professional area” – young man, Iranian background

“Normally you get help from your friends or social connections. But your friends might not happen to be professional workers” – young man, Somali background

Additionally, the education levels of friends’ parents, and whether they were working in relevant industries, also appeared to impact on how useful peers could be to employment transitions. A young law graduate spoke of the way his connection with a certain friend was particularly useful, based on the fact that this friend’s mother was a practicing lawyer. He perceived that this not only advantaged her own law-graduate daughter, but that he could also benefit from this connection.

“Even through knowing [a particular friend] I have an upper hand, because she’s linked in to that profession she can give good advice about looking for work” – young man, Somali background

Additionally, peers were also seen to be influential on a more fundamental level by setting a ‘norm’ in terms of employment expectations and motivation to work. One young man spoke of the fact that many of his peers and cousins were unemployed, despite having studied

post-school at TAFE or University. He explained that unemployment had become normalised amongst this peer network, affecting aspiration.

“See for them [my cousins] it’s more acceptable to not be employed – to just have youth allowance. ‘Cause they don’t know people who are working, they just hang around at home. . . . Just having friends who are employed makes a huge difference” – young man, Somali/Australian background

6.3 Bridging social capital and transitions to employment

Overwhelmingly, the interviews with young people revealed that they viewed bridging social capital as important in terms of providing information and opening up employment opportunities. A number of young people interviewed identified that bridging relationships had assisted them greatly in making transitions to employment, and that being exposed to a variety of people through different channels was strongly beneficial.

“It is all about social connections. You need to be really connected. . . . That’s what I’ve done, been connected to lots of programs and people. I learnt by connecting with people” – young man, Iraqi background

“If I hadn’t been exposed to the various networks that I have now, I don’t think I would be where I am today” – young man, Hazara background [professionally employed]

Conversely, many interviewees expressed that they felt they lacked connections with people who had the knowledge to help them. This is reinforced by previous research which suggests relatively low numbers of young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds are accessing help or a specific service from their existing networks (Mansouri & Skrbis, 2013a).

6.3.1 Contact with services, mentors and education providers

People such as teachers, youth/community workers, lecturers and mentors were cited as providing important bridging roles for a number of the interviewees. Several young people discussed the way they were still in touch with lecturers who would help look over their resumes or give them tips related to their industry. Teachers in particular were often highlighted as being that first critical link to broader support, networks and opportunities.

“I think it started at school. One day I was missing from classes and I couldn’t get to school on time so I’d been referred to the welfare coordinator. I had a chat with her, went through the difficulties I was facing. She learnt my story and she started helping me more, exposing me to different opportunities” – young man, Hazara background

A number of these relationships built upon one another, and those who seemed to benefit from these points of contact appeared to be proactive in using these relationships as a springboard to create further networks. This resulted in a snowball effect or ‘connections tree’, as one young person referred to it. For example, a school welfare worker referred a young person to a council run youth leadership program, who then assisted the young person to gain work experience, which led to further education and employment opportunities. Some of these young people expressed how they had been active on social media, using Twitter, Facebook or email to stay in touch with various contacts and be informed about upcoming opportunities.

Some also viewed community workers, mentors and teachers as having more knowledge around employment and the ability to assist when compared with friends or family.

“Friend will show you jobs they’ve seen on websites. But I think the youth or community worker will help you more as they know more – they are better linked to more support. Mostly I went to my teacher. My mentor he also helped me a lot” – young man, Iraqi background

This highlights perhaps just how critical these initial points of contact can be for a young person. Some may have very few bridging relationships, and their only contact outside of their bonding networks may be with a teacher or community worker. This contact then can provide a key to linking the young person and family into further opportunities and supports –enabling them to broaden and build their networks.

Additionally, services consulted highlighted the way in which bridging relationships can be critical in vouching for a young person who may be struggling to get their foot in the door, such as being a referee.

“If someone is able to tap into people who have some kind of influence, they are much more likely to be given a chance, because it is that person or relationship that is being a bridge – knocking down one of the barriers in terms of that person being an unknown. A bridging person says: ‘They’re not that unknown – I’m willing to give them a chance’” – RCOA representative.

6.3.2 Community participation

Several young people emphasised that being involved in social, youth, community and political activities had assisted them greatly in terms of forming relationships with people who could assist them and inform them of upcoming opportunities. One young man had joined the Australian Labour Party after a friend was involved with the local MPs office, and observed that this was a good way of building broader networks. Similarly, a RCOA representative observed that a group of young women who had connected with Rotary around fundraising for an international project had also professionally benefitted from the individual relationships formed.

Participating in youth leadership opportunities also appeared to provide several interviewees with exposure to networks and opportunities, whilst also building their confidence and interpersonal skills.

“It’s helpful to be engaged in youth organisations who have all these programs and opportunities you can access as a participant – and on the way you can build your connections and other networks” – young man, Iraqi background

“And then after doing that first participation in a youth leadership program through council, I really thought ‘Okay – these are the people who can help me. I should get in touch with them more and more’” – young man, Hazara background

Young interviewees who were active as participants in youth initiatives were strong advocates for ‘getting involved’ as of a way of building up bridging networks and being exposed to information and potential opportunities.

“I know people because I’ve gotten involved... because of that I now have networks and connections... Yeah, it’s definitely because I’ve gotten involved.” – young woman, Zimbabwean background

These activities also play a strong role in building up young people's confidence and interpersonal skills. One settlement service in a regional area noted that the young people they observed who were finding employment were often the same young people who were engaged in a wide range of activities, such as sport, art, homework and leadership programs.

This raises questions around the way settlement activities and programs are often run with young people from refugee backgrounds. For instance, are activities purely focussed on those from refugee and migrant backgrounds or do they also have strong links with members of the broader community – such as involving volunteers, mentors, tutors or other Australian born young people? It also raises questions as to how service providers operate collectively in this space to support linkages and create access to diverse networks for young people.

6.3.3 Volunteering

Volunteering emerged as a strong theme in the interviews with both young people and services as an important means to develop bridging networks, gain fundamental work experience, and 'give back'. In the words of one survey respondent, "Volunteering is a great way of finding help and making connections." The majority of the young people interviewed had actively volunteered in some way, whether in community-based work (both within their own cultural communities and/or in the broader community) or in an area related to their study. Some were strong advocates of the importance of young people getting involved.

"I'm so pro-volunteering – just do it. You learn a lot of skills and get to meet people, and get networks just because you're there – so, it's a natural environment to build networks, that's what it is" – young woman, Zimbabwean background

However a number of barriers to volunteering were highlighted including a lack of relevant opportunities, financial pressures, lack of confidence, gender barriers, and lack of understanding around the importance of its relationship to employment transitions by both young people and family members. Several young people observed that their peers were unaware of how important it was to gain experience through volunteering, and just how proactive they need to be.

"Trust me, young people are not picking up the phone and saying 'Hey I want to volunteer my time'. We just, we don't have time for that – we're taking too many selfies – or else we don't think that people will actually take us on" – young woman, Zimbabwean background

Young women from certain communities were also seen to be disadvantaged compared to young men when it came to volunteering and gaining the experience required to find work. This was related to them often being at home more than young men within their families' sight, including having more household responsibilities.

"Like especially with the females, they struggle more than the guys. Guys have a lot more freedom, you know, young guys are able to go out more whereas the girls are... it's encouraged when they're not studying or working to stay home with the family. It would be harder for them to volunteer, because they'd have to convince their parents that they should" – young man, Somali/Australian background

This raises the issue around the fact that many parents/guardians may lack understanding as

to the importance and role of volunteering in the broader community. Many young people emphasised that their families are unaware of how competitive the current job market is, and don't understand the importance of gaining local experience through volunteer work.

"They'd [parents] be like 'Why are you doing this if you're not getting paid?' They'd think it's ludicrous, that they're [young people are] wasting their time. They don't understand that if you really want a career, you're going to have to put in time that's not necessarily rewarded with money immediately. They think you come to Australia, there's an abundance of opportunity... they think there's jobs everywhere... they just think that you finish uni then you'll get a job. Just like that" – young man, Somali/Australian background

6.3.4 Work experience and internships

Interviews revealed that many young people were struggling to gain relevant work experience, and saw bridging relationships, whether that be through individual contacts or services, as essential to addressing this. This was also highlighted by the survey. Young people frequently were unsure how or where to gain this experience, who to approach, or lacked confidence to broker it themselves due to limited social and professional networks, echoing research by Dhanki (2009).

Finding relevant work experience was not always easy to come by. One young woman undertaking work experience at a dental clinic was only called in very infrequently (once a month or so) when they required extra help, however all the 'entry level' positions she saw advertised required two to three years of experience: "That's the hardest thing. It is impossible to get that [experience]." Others also emphasised that there were not enough opportunities for internships for young graduates, and described the process as "fighting for experience".

Some also raised the issue that undertaking long-term work experience without gaining employment can actually result in more frustration and despondency. Several interviewees raised the issue that they felt that the time they had spent undertaking work experience had not translated into finding a relevant job. This highlights the importance of the quality of work experience or internships, such as having strong supervisor support and mentoring (McHugh, 2016).

"I've met a lot of young people who don't want to work for free anymore, because they've been promised so many things and haven't seen any outcomes" – representative from MMVLEEN

A number of young people expressed that gaining work experience needs to be better supported and structured into the educational system. Not all courses require students to undertake placements, resulting in many graduates qualifying without any practical experience in their field. Young people then must seek out their own work experience opportunities if they are to be competitive in the job market. This places a large responsibility on young people's shoulders, and assumes they have the skills, confidence and networks to find this experience themselves.

"If experience is mandatory when you're applying for an entry level role, then it should be mandatory that you get that experience when you're an undergrad" – young man, Somali background

Some young people provided experiences of completing ‘condensed’ courses with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) that provided no work experience, where the equivalent course run at TAFE provided a substantial amount of work placement over the course of a full year. This left them feeling considerably disadvantaged when it came to seeking employment.

“I had zero placements – which is not very good. I wouldn’t recommend the course to anyone if they were serious about learning” – young woman, Ethiopian background

Other courses may require students to complete work placements, however fail to provide adequate support in terms of brokering these opportunities for students and supporting them to access them. In some instances this leaves students unable to complete their qualifications, given undertaking placements are a requirement of the course.

“Some people aren’t doing placements as they can’t find them. They’re just left because they don’t have a placement, and then they can’t get a qualification” – young woman, Afghan background

The equity of a job market that now requires young people to undertake unpaid work in order to gain essential experience was also raised. One survey respondent articulated the fact that requiring all young people to work for free in order to gain work experience unfairly disadvantages those who lack financial support, or who are strongly reliant on income from part-time work, highlighting concerns raised that the rise of internships could potentially exacerbate inequality (McDonald, Oliver & Grant-Smith, 2016).

“Sometimes I feel ‘white people’ have it easier by being able to do internships or work for free to get a foot in the door while people I know from migrant backgrounds are working three jobs to help support their families, especially if their parents have limited English and are struggling to find work. Therefore the playing field is not even. Having a system where you need to work for free to get experience means only the wealthy can afford to get ahead” – survey respondent

This highlights the importance of providing paid internship and work experience opportunities that recognise young people’s skills and time whilst also providing the opportunity for learning in the workplace.

“Provide them with opportunities. Not just voluntary but paid work... Develop partnerships with major organisations and companies where they can have designated roles for young people from CALD backgrounds and not limited to just administration positions” – young survey respondent

6.4 What impacts upon young people’s access to bridging networks

Interviews with young people and services attempted to uncover what it is that enables certain young people to access bridging social capital, whilst others struggle to access it. This was for the purpose of learning how to best support access to useful bridging networks, and is framed by three social capital ‘enablers’, identified by Pittaway et al. (2015) - individual capacities, community capacities and socio-political factors. Themes that emerged through the interviews were grouped according to these enablers, and included personal factors such as confidence

and resilience, understanding the labour market, knowing where to go for help, and racism and discrimination.

Interestingly, two of the interviewees who appeared to have strong bridging relationships that had helped them with work transitions had arrived in Australia as unaccompanied minors. It appears that their circumstances required them to strongly rely on and connect with agencies and members of the broader community, given they were unable to look to family to provide those supportive bonding relationships in the context of Australia.

“I came to Australia by myself, when I was 17. It [having diverse social networks] started from the beginning when I lived with an Australian lady who was like my second mother. Then I took it from there” – young man, Iranian background

6.4.1 Individual capacity

Several issues related to individual capacity were raised by young people as impacting on access to bridging social capital and employment, including:

- Confidence
- Resilience; and
- Motivation

Interviewees often cited the issue of individual traits, such as how confident a person was, as to why some seek help and are able to build bridging networks and why some are not. Services also highlighted that some young people require more help than others to build their confidence and interpersonal skills in order for them to make the most of opportunities around them.

Confidence was viewed as an important factor as to why some young people seek help and draw upon the social capital available to them, and conversely a lack of confidence was often cited as to why others may not reach out. Some used phrases such as “feeling unworthy” or having a “lack of faith” in themselves and their abilities.

“I’m not that kind of person who goes and asks for help. I don’t know. I feel tiny” – young woman, Afghan background

English language ability was often cited as being linked to issues of confidence, with interviewees from more newly arrived backgrounds (in this case Afghan and Iraqi backgrounds) citing lack of confidence with English as a common reason that they or their friends are afraid to seek help with employment.

One young man identified several factors that helped build his confidence, which he believed impacted greatly on him securing professional work. These included being offered leadership roles, and being supported by an adult who took the time to learn about his situation, believed in his potential, and exposed him to various opportunities.

“When I became vice-captain in the school as well in my second year, that really helped me improve my confidence. When I started having that relationship with someone, not just as a teacher, but someone who kind of really teaches you beyond curriculum, like life skills (such as the welfare coordinator). She referred me to this [employment] cadetship, asked me to apply for a scholarship at the university and helped me with choosing my course, and that really improved my confidence” – young man, Hazara background

The importance of resilience was also raised in the context of experiencing rejection and the negative impact of unemployment on mental health. Multiple young people spoke about fearing that people might not want to help them or may refuse their requests for help, experiencing this as a form of personal failure.

“I apply somewhere, when I get rejected I pretty much – my world blacks down. I have no where to go” - young woman, Afghan background

Experiencing rejection in the search for employment seemed to have a powerfully negative impact on some young people, making them reluctant to reach out again or seek help. This is supported by research that suggests that prolonged unemployment has a serious impact on both mental and physical health, often leading to social exclusion (VicHealth & CSIRO, 2015).

“Last night I was telling my fiancé and my mum and dad – I need to go to Headspace, I feel like I have an anxiety and depression, because I could not sleep at night – I was thinking, ‘Why?’ You know we work hard [to study] – but you see no result” – young woman, Afghan background

Even young people who demonstrated confidence, motivation and strong interpersonal skills spoke about being ‘worn down’ by ongoing rejection.

“When I finished Uni I did not get a single interview to this day – dude, trust me, I lost my mind” - young woman, Zimbabwean background

Supporting young people to build resilience is therefore critical in terms of encouraging them in their employment journey, and to build the kind of connections they will need for the future. Individual resilience encompasses both personal traits – social competence, problem solving skills, sense of agency, and a sense of hope or meaning (Benard, 2002 in Cahill, Beadle & Farrelly et al., date unknown) and environmental factors – such as family, school, the broader community (Cahill, Beadle & Farrelly et al., date unknown). Thus it is important that interventions are targeted at both the individual and broader community and societal levels.

“It’s scary to build networks... It’s about building their resilience... their confidence. Some feel like they don’t belong. They’ve been knocked back. It’s about them feeling that they have that agency, that there are trusted people, that they can make informed decisions. And having high expectations of them. These elements build young people’s resilience. Then you can stay strong, and come back from the knock backs” – BSL representative

Despite many young people describing the difficulties of ‘bouncing back’ when they’ve experienced rejection in the job market, other young people once again highlighted the resilience of young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to persevere through the numerous challenges they encounter. As one young Iranian man who arrived in Australia as an unaccompanied minor explained, “I like challenges”.

Personal motivation seemed to play an important role in perseverance and whether young people were willing to seek help with finding work. Several young people highlighted that coming from a refugee background was actually a strong motivating factor to pursue all avenues to find employment, given the same opportunities were not available in their countries of origin.

“If you’re coming from an unsafe and very uncomfortable government, then you would appreciate things more than others would... You want to make the most of your opportunities” – young man, Iranian background

“When we look at how they live there [in Afghanistan], it makes us more active” – young woman, Afghan background

Some highlighted that they had strong financial imperatives to find work, such as having to support their family, paying rent (or a family mortgage) and supporting siblings, all of which made them persevere. Additionally, for some young women, the limitations some community members placed on the fact that they were female became a motivating factor to try and succeed in the area of employment.

“Some of the men still think that here [in Australia]. You’re not allowed to go out, you’re not allowed to drive. That’s why we need to show them, I am a woman and I can do it” – young woman, Afghan background

Motivation also appeared to be affected by young people’s peer group and the employment status of those around them.

“Just having friends who are employed makes a huge difference. You know what I mean? ... When you’re around people that are employed, you are more likely to be driven” – young man, Somali/Australian background

Additionally, some raised the fact that a lack of motivation might be linked to not being aware of the kind of opportunities available, or failing to understand that the current job market requires them to be extremely active to get their foot in the door, rather than just “waiting for something to kind of grab them”.

6.4.2 Community capacity

Anecdotally, the interviews suggested that not only does the level of bridging social capital vary amongst individuals, but some cultural communities appear to possess more than others. Some of this may be due to how newly arrived a particular community is, but there may be additional factors. Other influencing issues appear to be education and English language levels; their degree of ‘cultural fluency’ and ability to adapt to and understand Australian systems; the level to which that particular culture shares similar norms and practices with those of the ‘Western’ world; and the extent to which the broader Australian community embraces that particular cultural group or views them as ‘different’.

- ***Understanding the labour market and what is required***

A key factor as to whether young people appeared to understand the importance of bridging relationships and were accessing them for employment purposes was related to their and their family’s understanding of the current labour market in Australia and what is required. Many expressed it was only once they’d graduated and started searching for work that they discovered how competitive the job market was and the degree of skills and experience required.

“We’re just not in touch with reality, and how tough it really is and how switched on we actually need to be” – young woman, Zimbabwean background

For example, some young people observed that their peers were not taking up opportunities to volunteer or attend networking opportunities due to not understanding the importance of these activities to their future employment.

“They don’t spend time building these connections initially. This is due to thinking it’s a waste. It’s afterwards that they realise that they should have made these connections” – young man, Somali background

The interviews revealed that many young people appear to be focussed on their studies rather than thinking about future employment, and have failed to take advantage of opportunities such as industry network opportunities, work experience or volunteer work whilst studying. At times this can be due the fact of being newly arrived and not understanding the employment system in Australia.

“If you haven’t lived in Australia, you haven’t been in contact a lot with people who know how things work in Australia. So they would think that once they graduate they will find a job. So they’re not proactive while they’re studying – like summer cadetships – you do not know about them. You’re so immersed in your studies” – young man, Hazara background

However this issue was also raised by ‘second-generation’ young people from communities that have lived in Australia for a number of years.

“I think people don’t see the importance of being involved in your career before you finish your degree” – young man, Somali/Australian background

One young woman highlighted that educating people around what is required needs to begin in schools, where young people have the time to build up experience and networks.

“Let’s just go to schools, ‘cause they don’t know. And trust me, their parents’ don’t know... we’re clueless” – young woman, Zimbabwean background

This highlights that there is a significant gap between the information young people, families and communities are being exposed to, and the reality of the job market in Australia. Education around the changing face of employment in Australia and skills required needs to be integrated into school and educational provider curriculum, and families must be involved in the process.

- **Knowing where to go for help**

Not knowing who to go to and where to find help with employment related matters was a strong theme among the interviewees, and research among young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds confirms that lacking information about services serves as a barrier to access (Mansouri & Skrbis, 2013a). Many of the young people interviewed did not know who they could go to in order to seek help with career information, employment advice and practical help with preparing resumes and interview skills. Alternately, the systems that do exist, such as jobactive, were not seen to actually help. One young woman spoke of how she had asked her jobactive provider to help her with her resume, and their refusal to assist left her feeling confused and distressed: “I was feeling so sad. I said ‘What for you are here?’”

“People don’t know where to go for help... They don’t know... They need someone to tell them what is out there, that can help them” – young woman, Afghan background

Another interviewee outlined that the young people who may most benefit from employment initiatives are often those who are not necessarily aware of them. Conversely, it seems that those who are most active and connected to youth services or leadership programs, for instance, are the most likely to hear about and to access employment support. She advocated that employment programs need to target school and tertiary students, and that information needs to be more readily accessible for young people in the earlier stages of the job search and to those who may be disconnected from services.

“Why aren’t we seeing this information at schools? ... Young people don’t know. They don’t know. It’s like you’ve got all these lovely programs and then who are you telling? The people who actually really need it? Like do I have to be in [a youth leadership committee] to hear about it?” – young woman, Zimbabwean background

Although educational institutions sometimes do assist with some of these areas, such as help with resumes, one young man described them as being too busy and not having enough flexibility in meeting the needs of students or former students. He advocated having community youth employment ‘hubs’ for graduates that are flexible and responsive to young people’s needs.

“I would say – building some particular places for young people that have just graduated, so they can go there and get some help” – young man, Iranian background

Services also highlighted the responsibility of business, services, community and government working together to facilitate greater access to employment opportunities for young people. This supports the importance of notions such as ‘no wrong door’ in supporting young people to accessing employment support, regardless of what service they first approach.

“It’s about all of us working locally together. . . Particularly with young people not knowing where to go to get help. The idea that there is ‘no wrong door’ – all local services should know who is doing what, that all these opportunities should be accessible. It’s about harnessing that local community effort” – BSL representative

6.4.3 Socio-political factors - racism and discrimination

Encountering barriers such as racism can present further challenges to young people in the search for employment, and impact on their confidence and ability to access social capital (Pittaway et al., 2015). Young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds often encounter racism and discrimination in both their day to day life, political discourse and the media, and this can all impact on their job search experience. For instance, one young person explained:

“Some little things in media, in news, around people, around their community – it can affect or change the view [of employers] a little bit. And that can be where you were born, right? ... That can change things a little bit. For instance, I would apply for a job, and then there is a section (I’ve seen in the hospitals) and it will say ‘Where were you born?’ I’m scrolling down, I see Australia, Chile, blah blah – I can’t find Iran. Where is it? I keep going down the list – oh, ‘Islamic Republic of Iran’. And that little word – ‘Islamic’ that will change the whole scenario. . . Because I’ve seen you know, the media and all that. What’s happening in politics – trust me it will affect. It’s another barrier” – young man, Iranian background

Several young people interviewed felt that in addition to a competitive market and high youth unemployment rates, they were battling against a social context that viewed them as 'different' or 'less desirable' at times due to their appearance or cultural background.

"It's difficult to find work in the private sector sometimes ... they kind of have a mould of the people that they want to work for them. Like I remember studying with a few other girls and they were Australian, white Australians, and we'd applied for the same jobs. I'll never forget - we had more or less the same qualifications, and it came down to a photo. The guy wanted a photo with the application. And she was this really cute blond blue-eyed - ... She got the job" - young woman, Ethiopian background

Others experienced their faith as presenting a barrier at times, although the details of this weren't elaborated on:

"or me finding an employer is really hard because of religious views" - young person, survey respondent

7. Where to from here?

Both bonding and bridging networks are important for young people from migrant and refugee background's transition to employment, and play differing roles. Yet it is bridging social capital in particular that appears to have a crucial role in assisting young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to secure skilled work. This bridging capital appears to often be lacking due to a number of factors, such as the migration and refugee experience; the education, socio-economic background and employment status of their parents; and the limitations of what young people's cultural communities and close social connections may provide.

The findings of this paper suggests that it is important to foster young people's access to bridging networks from the early stages of settlement, and this requires the support and understanding of family, cultural communities, services and the broader community. Broad, community-level responses to building bridging capital are important, as are more targeted, employment focussed interventions.

Getting involved in the local community, whether it be through voluntary activity, sports, art, homework clubs or leadership programs appear to help build these diverse networks. Not only can this help in developing critical networks with the broader community, it can strengthen young people's confidence and interpersonal skills, and contribute towards broader social cohesion as a whole. Thus it is critical that these opportunities are both accessible and available to all young people, and are explicit about bringing together people from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Similarly, the extent to which the local community is open and supportive towards young people and families of migrant and refugee background can have a profound impact on whether these broader networks are able to develop, flourish and assist young people in the future. We need to ensure that our local communities and the broader public discourse embraces cultural and religious diversity, and that there are multiple ways for both those from migrant and refugee backgrounds and those from the 'broader' Australian community to form meaningful connections.

With this in place, there is also much work to be done with young people, families and

communities to help their understanding of the current Australian job market, what skills are required, and to assist them in navigating these complex paths. The better resourced families and communities are with this information, the more confident they can be in supporting their children to engage in the broader community, such as by volunteering, undertaking work experience or getting involved in community activities.

Government and services can also be a strong catalyst to help young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to build social capital that supports access to employment. Supporting social connections (both bridging and bonding) should be integrated into current settlement programs, educational institutions, youth activities and individual support.

Additionally, if gaining professional work experience is dependent on who you know, then education, government, services and employers all have a strong role to play in terms of brokering opportunities for young people to gain access. Supporting young people to gain practical experience in a supportive environment provides them with the tools and relationships to move on independently in the future. There needs to be greater levels of collaboration between government, business and services to broker opportunities for young people that take into account that many lack the social connections required to gain entry to the labour market.

Finally, it is important to also consider what enables access to social capital in the context of employment. For example, how do we support young people's personal resilience and confidence, and remove barriers such as racism and discrimination that might be negatively impacting on their ability to secure work?

Supporting and building young people's bridging social capital ensures that they can capitalise on the resources that are currently available in the community, and sets them up for the future. It helps ensure that the bright and creative contributions of young people from migrant backgrounds in Australia can be effectively harnessed – something that serves to benefit us all.

8. Recommendations

Community-level responses

1. Settlement providers, educational institutions and local government to take a strong role in bringing together young people and communities from refugee and migrant background with members of the broader Australian community.
 - Work must also be undertaken with the broader community to develop cultural competence, and promote opportunities to connect across cultural and socio-economic divides.
2. State and local government and generalist organisations (including youth, sporting clubs, community associations and employment programs) to promote and ensure access to opportunities for community participation.
 - This could include sports, arts, volunteering, homework clubs and youth leadership opportunities. This will help to build broad social connections, whilst building confidence, interpersonal skills and social cohesion.
3. Education, employment and settlement services to work together to educate and inform young people, families and communities around employment pathways, skills required and the current job market in Australia.
4. Explore and resource initiatives that use peer to peer networks in order to provide employment related advice and support to young people in educational settings.

5. Explore and resource models that draw on the expertise and experience of professionals from diverse cultural backgrounds to share their knowledge and provide stronger role models for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.
6. Undertake further research around what kind of community activities and initiatives promote the development of social connections across cultural and socio-economic divides.

Institutional level responses

7. Educational institutions to integrate, broker and support meaningful work experience in educational courses, starting in secondary school.
8. State, local government, employment services and volunteering associations to work with businesses and organisations to broker volunteering, work experience and internship opportunities that are well supported, are focussed on mentoring and skill building, with potential financial reimbursement.
9. State and local government, along with employment and youth services, to create more formal ways to bring young people into contact with professional or employment networks that can assist them – for example through mentoring or networking events etc.
10. Provide greater access and entry points for both adults and young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to gain meaningful work. State and local government to take the lead in terms of access and equity initiatives that increase cultural diversity overall in their workforce.

11. References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2015). *Labour Force Region (SA4) – Area profile data*. October 2015. Accessed 10 December 2015 from <http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/DownloadableData/LabourForceRegionLFR>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2004). *Measuring Social Impact: An Australian Framework and Indicators*. Canberra: ABS. Accessed 10 June 2016 from [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/free.nsf/Lookup/13C0688F6B98DD45CA256E360077D526/\\$File/13780_2004.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/free.nsf/Lookup/13C0688F6B98DD45CA256E360077D526/$File/13780_2004.pdf)
- Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (2014). *Labour Force Participation: Youth At Risk and lower skilled matured aged people – a data profile*. Australian Government, May 2014.
- Billett, P. (2011). *Youth Social Capital: Getting on and getting ahead in life*, Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, School of Social Sciences, Media and Communications, University of Wollongong. Accessed 20 May 2015 from <http://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/3533/>
- Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) (2014). *On the treadmill: Young and long-term unemployed in Australia*. Fitzroy: The Brotherhood of St Laurence.
- Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) (2015). *The teenage dream unravels: Trends in youth unemployment, March 2015*. Fitzroy: The Brotherhood of St Laurence.
- Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) (2016). *Australia's youth unemployment hotspots – snapshot, March 2016*. Fitzroy: The Brotherhood of St Laurence. Accessed 9 June 2016 from http://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/9004/1/BSL_Aust_youth_unemployment_hotspots_Mar2016.pdf
- Cahill, H., Beadle, S., Farrelly, A., Forster, R., & Smith, K. (date unknown) *Building resilience in children and young people: A literature review for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)*. Melbourne Graduate School of Education. Accessed online 9 June 2016 from <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/resiliencelitreview.pdf>
- Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) (2014a). *Facilitating the Transition to Employment for Refugee Young People: A data update and review of recent literature with a focus on 'what works'?* Carlton: CMY.
- Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) (2014b). *Everyday reality: Racism and young people*, Carlton: CMY.
- Cook, H. (2015, 8 August). *Students without connections struggle to find work experience*, The Age. Accessed 10 August 2015 from <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/students-without-connections-struggle-to-find-work-experience-20150807-gito7m.html#ixzz3iN0Y5MNH>
- Dandy, J. & Pe-Pua, R. (2013). *Research into the Current and Emerging Drivers for Social Cohesion, Social Division and Conflict in Multicultural Australia*. Joint Commonwealth, State and Territory Research Advisory Committee (RAC). Accessed from <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/publications/current-and-emerging-drivers-for-social-cohesion-social-division-and-conflict-in-multicultural-australia>
- Dhanji, S. (2009). *Welcome or unwelcome? Integration issues and the resettlement of former refugees from the Horn of Africa and Sudan in metropolitan Melbourne*. The Australasian Review of African Studies, 30(2), 152-188.
- Denny, L. & Churchill, B. (2016). *Youth employment in Australia: A comparative analysis of labour force participation by age group*. Journal of Applied Youth Studies, 1(2), 5-22.
- de Souza Briggs, X. (2003). *Bridging Networks, Social Capital, and Racial Segregation in America*.

John F. Kennedy School of Government Harvard University, Faculty Research Working Papers Series. Cambridge: Harvard University.

Farah, O. M. (2010). *The African Employment Challenge*. Carlton Local Agencies Network: Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre.

Flap, H. & Boxman, E. (2000). *Getting started: The influence of social capital on the start of the occupational career*. In Lin, N., Cook, K.S., & Burt, R. S. (Eds.) *Social Capital: Theory and Research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Foundation for Young Australians (2016). *The New Work Order: Ensuring young Australians have the skills and experience for the jobs of the future, not the past*. Melbourne: FYA. Accessed online 24 May 2016 from <http://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/fya-future-of-work-report-final-lr.pdf>

Gittins, R. (2015, 24 June). *A generation caught in the attrition trap*, The Age. Accessed 29 June 2015 from <http://www.theage.com.au/comment/young-frozen-out-of-the-job-market-when-times-are-tough-20150623-ghv4kb>

Graham, J., Shier, M., & Eisenstat, M. (2015). *Young Adult Social Networks and Labour Market Attachment: Interpersonal Dynamics that Shape Perspectives on Job Attainment*. *Journal of Social Policy*, June 2015, 1 – 18.

Granovetter, M. (1973). *The Strength of Weak Ties*. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6): 1360-1380. Accessed 25 June 2015 from https://sociology.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/the_strength_of_weak_ties_and_exch_w-gans.pdf

Hajkowicz, S.A., Reeson, A., Rudd, L., Bratanova, A., Hodgers, L., Mason, C., & Boughen, N. (2016). *Tomorrow's Digitally Enabled Workforce: Megatrends and scenarios for jobs and employment in Australia over the coming twenty years*. CSIRO, Brisbane.

Hasmath, R. (2013). *The Ethnic Penalty*. Farnham, GB: Ashgate.

Haesler, D. (2015, 8 June). *We're educating our youth into unemployment*, The Age.

Jakubowicz, A., Collins, J., Reid, C., & Chafic, W. (2014). *Minority Youth and Social Transformation in Australia: Identities, Belonging and Cultural Capital*. *Social Inclusion*, 2(4): 5-16.

Jenson, J. & Commonwealth Secretariat (2010). *Defining and Measuring Social Cohesion*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.

Jericho, G. (2015, 17 February). *Young Australians are not giving up on work, despite high unemployment levels*, The Guardian. Accessed from <http://www.theguardian.com/business/grogonomics/2015/feb/17/young-people-are-by-not-giving-up-on-work-despite-high-unemployment>

Jupp, J., Nieuwenhuysen, J. P. & Dawson, E. (2007). *Social Cohesion in Australia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Jokisaari, M. & Nurmi, J.E. (2005). *Company matters: Goal-related social capital in the transition to working life*. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 67, 413-428.

Kuchenhoff, L. & Lourie, K. (2016). *The Education and Integration of 16-25 year old Refugees and Other Humanitarian Migrants*. Geneva: Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC), May 2016.

Lin, N. & Dumin, M. (1986). *Access to Occupations through Social Ties*. *Social Networks*, 8, 365 – 385.

Mansouri, F. & Skrbis, Z. (2013a). *Social Networks, Belonging and Active Citizenship Among Migrant*

- Youth in Australia*. Carlton: Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY).
- Mansouri, F. & Skrbis, Z. (2013b). *Migrant Youth in Australia: Social Networks, Belonging and Active Citizenship – Summary report*. Carlton: Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY).
- Markus, A. (2014). *Mapping Social Cohesion*. Caulfield East: The Scanlon Foundation.
- Maxwell, J. (1996). *Social Dimension of Economic Growth*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks.
- McDonald, P., Oliver, D., & Grant-Smith, D. (2016, 20 June). *The Growing Cost of Internships Could Add to Inequality, The Conversation*. Accessed 21 June 2016 from <https://theconversation.com/the-growing-cost-of-internships-could-add-to-inequality-60371>
- McHugh, P.P. (2016). *The Impact of Compensation, Supervision and Work Design on Internship Efficacy: Implications for educators, employers and prospective interns*. Journal of Education and Work, Published online 11 May 2016.
- Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) (2014). *The CALD Youth Census Report 2014*. Carlton: Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY).
- OECD (2012). *Education at a glance: OECD Indicators 2012 – Australia*. Accessed 17 November 2016 from <http://www.oecd.org/australia/EAG2012%20-%20Country%20note%20-%20Australia.pdf>
- OECD (2013) *Local Strategies for Youth Employment: Learning from Practice*. Paris: OECD.
- Oliff, L. (2010). *Finding the right time and place: Exploring post-compulsory education and training pathways for young people from refugee backgrounds in NSW*, Refugee Council of Australia. Accessed 17 November 2016 from <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/publications/finding-right-time-place/>
- Oxoby, R. (2009). *Understanding Social Inclusion, Social Cohesion and Social Capital*, Laurier Centre for Economic Research and Policy Analysis, July 2009. Accessed 11 April 2016 from http://lcerpa.org/public/papers/LCERPA_2009-09.pdf
- Pittaway, E., Bartolomei, L., & Doney, G. (2015). *The Glue that Binds: an exploration of the way resettled refugee communities define and experience social capital*. Community Development Journal, 51(3), 401-418.
- Portes, A. & Rumbaut, R. (2006), *The Second Generation in Early Adulthood: New Findings from the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study*, Migration Policy Institute. Accessed 17 November 2016 from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/second-generation-early-adulthood-new-findings-children-immigrants-longitudinal-study>
- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Refugee Council of Australia (2012). *Job Services Australia: Refugee Community and Service Provider Views*. Surrey Hills: Refugee Council of Australia.
- Schaefer-McDaniel, N. (2004). *Conceptualizing Social Capital among Young People: Toward a New Theory*. Children, Youth and Environments 14(1), 140-150.
- Social Ventures Australia (2016). *Fundamental Principles for Youth Employment, SVA*. Accessed 10 May 2016 from <http://www.socialventures.com.au/assets/Fundamental-principles-for-youth-employment-report-FINAL.pdf>
- Tynkkynen, L., Nurmi, J-E., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2010). *Career goal-related social ties during two*

educational transitions: Antecedents and consequences. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 76, 448-457.

Urbis Consulting (2011). *National Career Development Strategy Research Project: Element 2, Synthesis Report*. Accessed 17 November 2016 from <https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/national-career-development-strategy-ncds-research-project-element-2-synthesis-report>

Verhaeghe, P.P., Van der Bracht, K. & Van de Putte, B. (2015). *Inequalities in social capital and their longitudinal effects on the labour market entry.* Social Networks, 40, 174-184.

Victorian Government (2015). *Strategic Framework to Strengthen Victoria's Social Cohesion and the Resilience of its Communities*, December 2015. http://apo.org.au/files/Resource/strategic_framework_to_strength_victorias_socoal_cohesion.pdf

VicHealth & CSIRO (2015). *Bright Futures: Megatrends impacting the mental wellbeing of young Victorians over the coming 20 years.* Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

Yan, M.C, Lauer, S., & Chan, S. (2012). *Double Jeopardy: An Exploratory Study of Youth From Immigrant Families Entering the Job Market.* Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies, 10, 96-115

12. Appendices – detailed survey findings

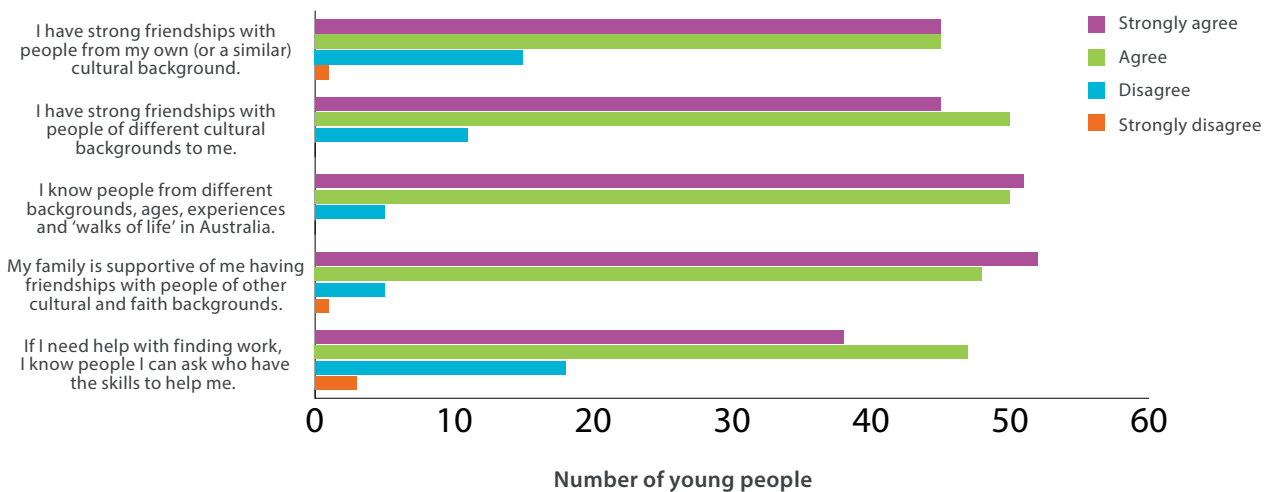
Diversity of social connections (n = 106)

The majority of young people reported that they had strong friendships with people from their own (or similar) cultural backgrounds (85 per cent); whilst an even higher percentage reported having friendships with people of different cultural backgrounds to themselves (90 per cent).

Almost all young people reported knowing people from different backgrounds, ages, experiences and ‘walks of life’ in Australia (95 per cent), and that their family is supportive of them having friendships with people of other cultural and faith backgrounds (94 per cent).

The majority of young people (80 per cent) reported that they know people who have the skills to help them with finding work.

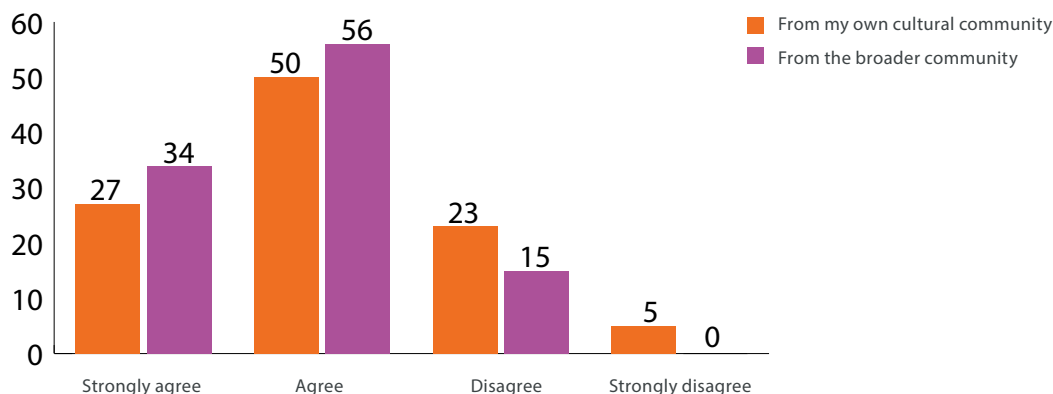
How much do you agree with the following statements?



Confidence to seek help with employment (n = 105)

Although over two thirds (73 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that they are confident to ask for help with employment from someone from own cultural community, and even greater number (86 per cent) reported being confident to seek help with employment from someone from the broader community.

I am confident in asking people to help me with finding work

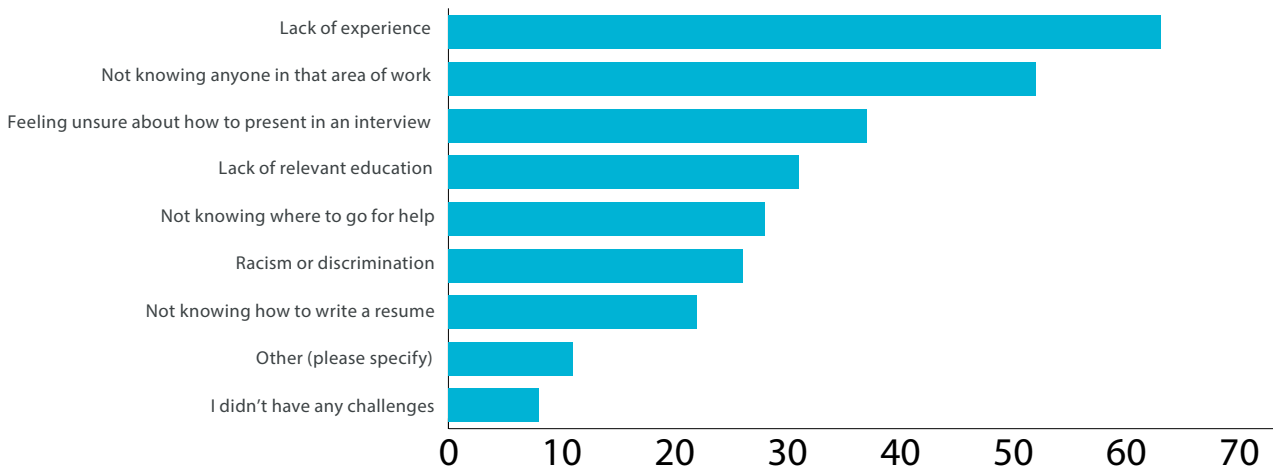


Barriers to finding work (n = 104):

The top three barriers to finding relevant employment identified by young people were:

- Lack of experience (63 per cent)
- Not knowing anyone in that area of work (52 per cent); and
- Feeling unsure how to present in an interview (37 per cent)

What are the main challenges you have experienced when looking for a job?

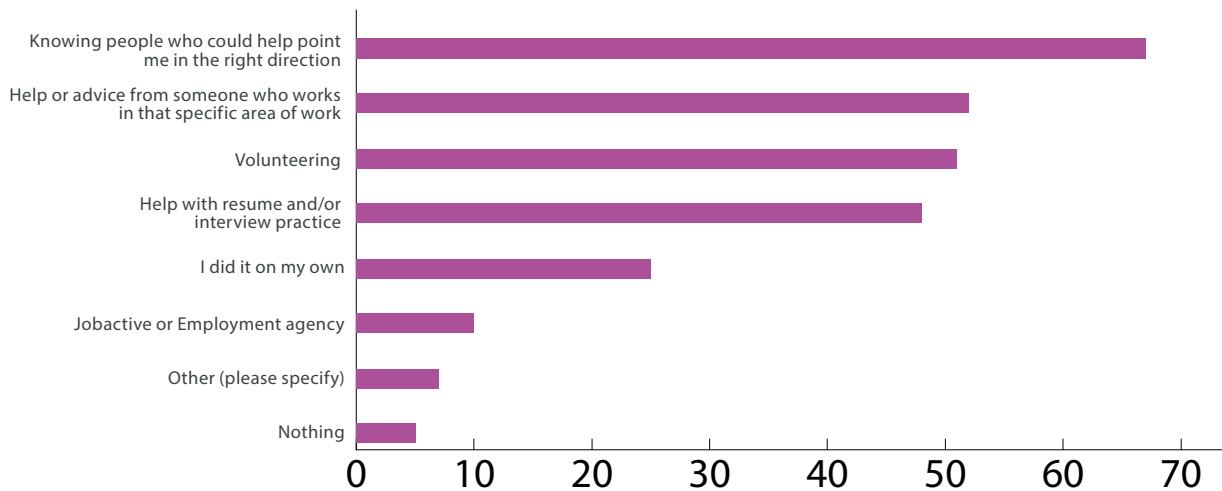


What has helped the most in the search for relevant work? (n = 103)

The top three factors that young people identified as having helped them most in their employment journey were:

- Knowing people to help point in right direction (65 per cent)
- Help or advice from someone working in that area of work (50 per cent)
- Volunteering (50 per cent)

What has helped you most in looking for a job that you want (tick up to three)

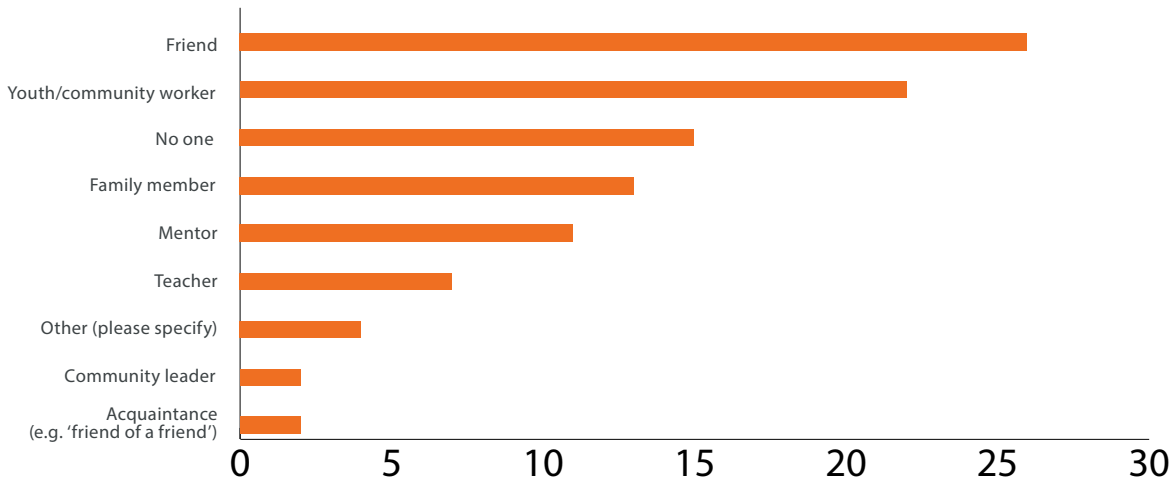


Who has been helpful in the search for relevant work? (n = 102)

Respondents identified friends (25 per cent), followed by youth/community workers (22 per cent) and ‘no one’ (15 per cent) as the key people who had helped them the most in looking for work.

Of the people that had helped them the most, 74 per cent identified this person as being from the broader community, whilst 26 per cent identified this person as being from the young person’s own cultural community.⁶

Who has been most helpful to you in looking for a job?

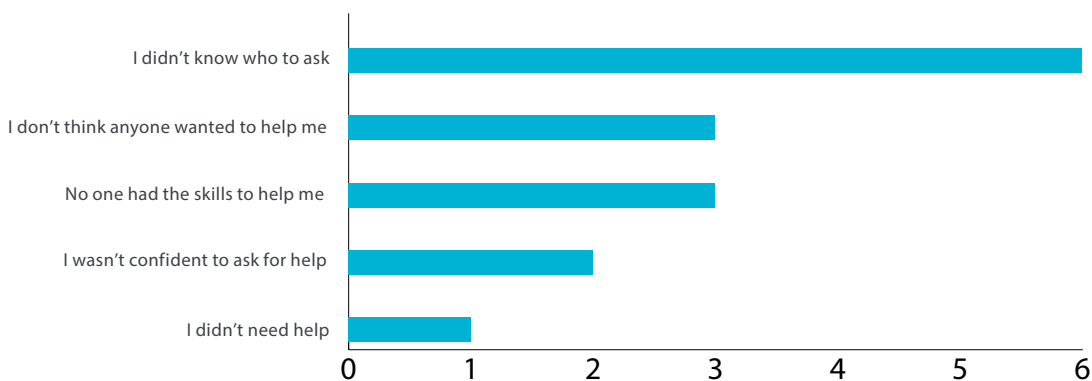


When asked a follow up question as to who was the next most helpful person in their search for employment, the figures changed slightly, with youth/community worker (22 per cent) moving to the front place, followed by family member (21 per cent), friend (18 per cent), mentor (15 per cent), teacher/tutor (7 per cent), no one (7 per cent), community leader (5 per cent), acquaintance (3 per cent) and other (2 per cent).⁷ An even higher percentage of these people were identified as being from the broader community (81 per cent).

For young people who reported that ‘no one’ had helped them in their job search, the top three reasons provided for this were:

- I didn’t know who to ask (40 per cent);
- I don’t think anyone wanted to help me (20 per cent) and
- No one had the skills to help me (20 per cent).

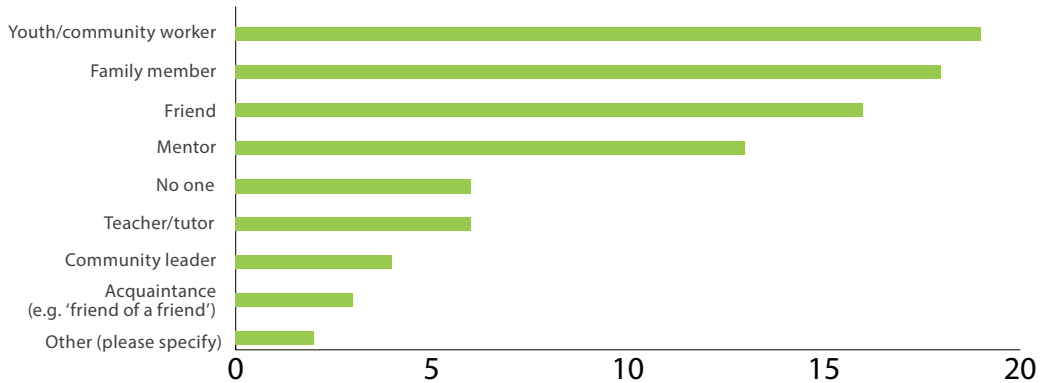
If no one helped you look for work, do you think this was because:



⁶ N = 61

⁷ N = 87

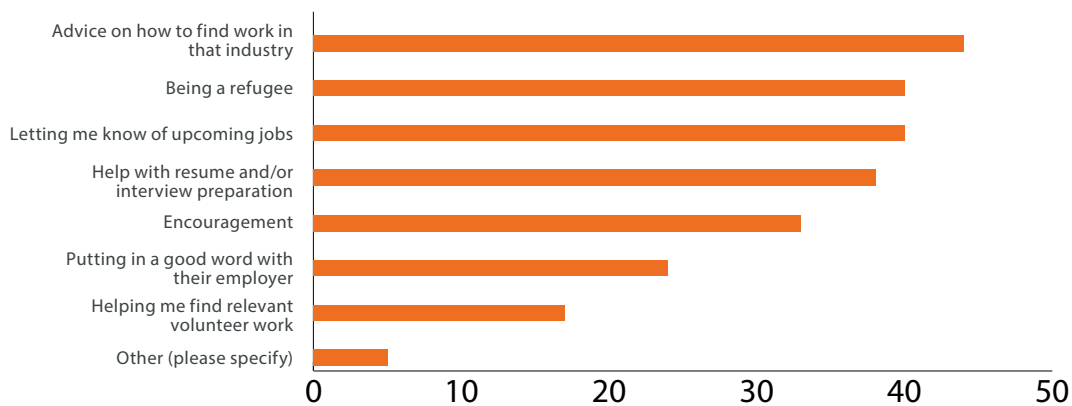
Who has been the second most helpful person to you in your job search?



Type of help received (n = 83):

The number one type of employment help young people reported receiving was advice on how to find work in that industry (53 per cent), followed by being informed of upcoming jobs (48 per cent) and being a referee (48 per cent).

In what ways did these people help you?



(03) 9340 3700
304 Drummond St
Carlton VIC 3053
cmy.net.au