



At a glance:

Multicultural youth snapshot

The Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) works in partnership with culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities, community sector organisations, government agencies and the private sector to ensure that young people from CaLD backgrounds are empowered, valued, and are supported to reach their full potential.



Major facts and trends

11.3 per cent of Western Australians aged between 12 and 24 years were born in non-English speaking countries

The top 10 birthplaces were Malaysia, China, India, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Hong Kong and Vietnam

The most common ancestry responses of CaLD young people were Chinese, Indian, English, Filipino, Australian, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Malay, Afghan and Korean

The top 10 languages other than English spoken at home were Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Indonesian, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Punjabi, French, Filipino and Gujarati

44 per cent were affiliated with Christianity, 12.8 per cent with Islam, 10.1 per cent with Buddhism and 6.4 per cent with Hinduism

Between 2006 and 2011, the number of CaLD youth increased at a faster rate (4.4 per cent/year) than the total WA (1.9 per cent) and Australia-born youth population (0.9 per cent)

Almost two-thirds (61.3 per cent) migrated between 2005 and 2011

Most (93.3 per cent) lived in the Perth metropolitan area mainly in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Canning, Stirling, Gosnells, Wanneroo, Melville, Joondalup, Swan, Victoria Park, Cockburn and South Perth

Regional LGAs with more than 100 CaLD youth were Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Derby/West Kimberley, Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton/Greenough, Roebourne, Broome, Capel, Busselton and Harvey

71 per cent of CaLD youth who spoke a language other than English at home also spoke English very well or well, and 6 per cent did not speak English well or at all

73.7 per cent were enrolled as full/part-time students; 26 per cent had technical (13.8 per cent) or tertiary qualifications (12.2 per cent)

One-quarter were employed part time, 13.4 per cent full time, and 6.8 per cent were unemployed

56.4 per cent of CaLD young adults (18–24 years) had a weekly income of less than \$300 or no income at all

Key issues of concern

Employment: High unemployment and low income

- limited access to or awareness of career guidance
- limited job preparation
- employer discrimination—sometimes linked to limited English language proficiency
- lack of local work experience
- vulnerability to exploitation in the workplace.

Education: Retention and performance

- discrimination, racism and bullying in schools
- limited parental support
- difficulties accessing resources to assist study
- transport and financial challenges.

Identity and belonging

- intergenerational conflict
- impact of experiences of torture and trauma on family relationships
- peer pressure
- racism.

Health: Mental and sexual health and substance abuse

- lack of awareness of/reluctance to access relevant services
- lack of knowledge about sporting organisations and clubs
- lack of reporting due to cultural barriers such as shame and stigma.

OMI initiatives

- Delivered a youth leadership program to build capacity as community advocates and future leaders—four workshops delivered in 2015 (media, events management, project management, facilitation).
- Funded 20 CaLD young people to undertake Youth Focus youth mental health first aid training.
- Funded the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network WA (MYANWA) auspiced by the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) for the Catalyst Youth Forum, 3–5 February 2016, to skill CaLD young people to identify and advocate on issues to key decision makers.
- Provided \$79,920 through OMI's Community Grants Program to support two community events and four small projects targeting CaLD young people.
- Manage a Community Language Program, which provides more than \$1.1 million to the community languages sector, to teach languages other than English for CaLD children from Kindergarten to Year 12.
- Partnered with YACWA to secure \$45,000 through the Department of Finance Fostering Partnerships program to build the capacity of not-for-profit service providers to effectively service CaLD young people.
- Collaborated with DLGC on youth initiatives to enhance participation of CaLD young people in local and State-level activities and opportunities.
- Participated on the reference group for the Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP) CaLD Consultation Project, which aims to increase understanding about the needs of CaLD children and young people.

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