



Victorian Government report on multicultural affairs 2024–25

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Premier
and Cabinet

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Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Government acknowledges Victoria's First Peoples and their ongoing strength in practising the world's oldest living culture. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Victoria is a proud, multicultural state. We value diversity, including the 65,000 years of living First Peoples culture. We recognise that since time immemorial, First Peoples in Victoria have practised their law and lore, their customs and languages, and have nurtured Country through their spiritual, cultural, material and economic connections to land, water and resources.

We acknowledge the strength and resilience of First Peoples in the face of historical and ongoing injustices and the survival of their living cultures, knowledges and traditions.

We will all have a brighter future if we continue to learn about and value Aboriginal culture, practices and ways of working.

Acknowledgement of Treaty and Truth

Treaty gives us a pathway to change what is not working — to give First Peoples a say on issues that impact their communities.

The work of the Yoorrook Justice Commission helps us understand our history from the perspective of Aboriginal people — how it impacts on their present and how Treaty can be the pathway to practical changes and solutions. Learning more about the history of First Peoples in this state will help us build a shared future and connection to the Aboriginal heritage and living cultures of this land we all love, and which is our home.

We started on the path to Treaty a decade ago, and we have made significant progress in this journey.

Through Treaty, we can bring Victorians together and share pride in Aboriginal heritage, history and culture.

Acknowledgement of language services

Victorians represent more than 300 ancestries, 290 languages and 200 faiths.

We recognise that language services (interpreting and translating) play a vital role in supporting multicultural communities by ensuring information is accessible in language, enabling equitable access to services, opportunities and empowering multicultural communities to fully take part in Victoria's economic, social and civic life.

Thank you

The Victorian Government acknowledges the important role of government partners, including local councils and service agencies, in delivering the programs and initiatives reflected in this report. We thank all community leaders and volunteers who have contributed to supporting multicultural communities across our state.

We also thank our government colleagues for their assistance in collating the data for this report as well as all the community members who shared their powerful stories.

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Message from the Minister for Multicultural and Multifaith Victoria

It is my privilege to present the Victorian Government
Report on Multicultural Affairs 2024–25.



In 2024–25, the Victorian Government committed **\$60.5 million** for programs, initiatives and communications activities that support our multicultural and faith communities. This included **\$6.3 million** for culturally significant infrastructure upgrades and new projects, supporting community spaces across Victoria.

The Victorian Government took important steps to address racism and discrimination in 2024–25 with the launch of **Victoria's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024–2029**. The strategy sets out a five-year plan to prevent race and faith-based discrimination, and strengthen outcomes for First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians.

This commitment was reinforced through targeted investment in community-led responses to antisemitism and Islamophobia. In the 2023–24 State Budget, **\$6.0 million** was allocated to these initiatives, with **\$2.0 million invested in 2024–25** to support education, reporting pathways and wellbeing supports.

Victorians were supported to come together and celebrate cultural identity through continued investment in multicultural festivals and events. **\$3.687 million** was allocated to support 393 organisations, along with 85 regional organisations, to deliver festivals and events across the state, strengthening community connection across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

More than **\$36 million** was invested across government in interpreting, translating and language services, helping ensure multicultural Victorians can access information and services in language.

I would like to thank the Victorian Multicultural Commission for their ongoing leadership and advocacy. I also acknowledge the many multicultural and multifaith organisations, community leaders and volunteers whose work strengthens community connection and supports participation across Victoria. Finally, I thank all government departments and staff who have contributed to this report.

Looking ahead, the Victorian Government remains committed to strengthening social cohesion, addressing inequality and working in genuine partnership with multicultural and multifaith communities. Together, we will continue to build a stronger, fairer and more inclusive Victoria where everyone belongs.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ingrid Stitt'.

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Multicultural and Multifaith Victoria

Introduction

Victoria is one of Australia’s most culturally and linguistically diverse states. About one-third of our growing population was born overseas.

According to the 2021 census, Victorians:



Come from more than 300 ancestries



Speak 290 languages and dialects



Follow more than 200 faiths

This report is a snapshot of the Victorian Government’s commitment to multicultural and multifaith communities. It shows the progress of multiculturalism across the state.



Legal and policy frameworks underpinning this report

This report fulfils the Victorian Government's requirement in the **Multicultural Victoria Act 2011** to report annually to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and to the Victorian Parliament on programs and initiatives that support Victoria's multicultural communities.

Table 1 lists legislative and policy documents that guide the government's mission to build an inclusive, engaged and cohesive Victoria.

Table 1: Victoria's multicultural frameworks

Type	Description
Acts of Parliament	<p>The Multicultural Victoria Act is the framework for a whole of government approach to multiculturalism in Victoria. It establishes the Victorian Multicultural Commission as a statutory authority. It also sets out reporting requirements for departments and ministers. It requires Victorian government departments to develop and implement cultural diversity plans.</p> <p>The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 requires all Victorian departments and service providers to take reasonable and proportionate measures to identify and eliminate discrimination.</p> <p>The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 sets out the basic rights of Victorians to live with freedom, respect, equality and dignity. It also requires public authorities to follow the Charter.</p> <p>The Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 prohibits behaviours that incite or encourage hatred, serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule against another person or group of people because of their race or religion.</p>
Victorian Government Multicultural Statement	A publicly available policy statement that sets out the Victorian Government's vision and commitment to multiculturalism in Victoria. ¹
Departmental cultural diversity plans	Plans created by government departments to facilitate diversity and multiculturalism both internally and when delivering services and programs to the Victorian community.
Individual departmental policies, plans and strategies	Departments undertake ongoing reviews of policies, strategies and planning frameworks. These reviews respond to the changing needs of culturally diverse communities and reflect the government's commitment to multiculturalism.

¹ The policy statement can be found on the Victorian Government website's [Multicultural policy statement page](#).

Working to achieve positive outcomes

The Multicultural Affairs Outcomes Framework² sets out the Victorian Government's approach to multiculturalism.

The framework groups programs and initiatives according to 5 goals (**Table 2**).

Table 2: Goals of the Multicultural Affairs Outcomes Framework

Goal	Desired outcomes for Victorians
Victorians are safe and secure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Victorians live free from abuse, violence and fear.• Victorians have suitable and stable housing.
Victorians are healthy and well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Victorians have good physical and mental health.• Victorians have equitable access to health and human services.
Victorians are able to participate fully.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Victorians participate in learning and education.• Victorians participate in and contribute to the economy.• Victorians have financial security.• Victorians understand, are empowered by and exercise their rights.• Victorians have access to an environment that promotes liveability, sustainability and inclusion.
Victorians are connected to culture and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Victorians are socially engaged and live in inclusive communities.• Victorians can safely identify with and connect with their culture and identity.
Victorians have equal rights and opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Victorians live free from discrimination.• Opportunities to participate in the workforce are available to all Victorians.



This report does not capture the full range of activities Victorian government departments and portfolio agencies have undertaken. Instead, it provides a snapshot of activities and achievements supporting multicultural and multifaith communities between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025 across the Victorian Government. It includes case studies to highlight the positive impact of initiatives on local communities.

² Victorian Multicultural Policy Statement, p. 25. Available from the Victorian Government website's [Multicultural policy statement page](#).

Terminology, abbreviations and frequently used terms

Language statement

Language is important and can change over time. Words can have different meanings for different people.

We recognise the diversity of First Peoples communities and culture throughout Victoria. While the terms 'Koorie' or 'Koori' are commonly used to describe First Peoples of southeast Australia, we use the terms 'First Peoples' and 'Aboriginal' to include all people of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent who live in Victoria.

The term 'multicultural community' refers to the vast number of diverse cultural and ethnic groups in Victoria.

The term 'multifaith community' refers to the diverse faith groups in Victoria.

The words 'our' and 'we' in this document refer to the Victorian Government.

The phrase 'racism and discrimination' in this document includes all forms of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, cultural background, country of origin and faith.

List of government departments

Abbreviation	Department
DE	Department of Education
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
DGS	Department of Government Services
DH	Department of Health
DJCS	Department of Justice and Community Safety
DJSIR	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DTF	Department of Treasury and Finance
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning



Victorians are safe and secure

Keeping communities safe

The Victorian Government strengthens safety outcomes for multicultural communities through dedicated projects and government actions.

The Department of Transport and Planning's (DTP) **Road Safety for New Arrivals** delivered a range of activities to improve road safety for multicultural and disadvantaged communities under the **\$1.5 million Community Road Safety Grants Program**.

These include the Wimmera Driver Education Initiative, CALD Green Light Initiative, Safe Driver, Changing Gears and multicultural communities radio safety advertisements. Other activities include the Know Your Vehicle program for the Nepalese community, 2 cycling-safety programs — the Safer Cycling for Nepalese Community Language School Students and Living and Learning Kids Summer Bike Program — and the Safer Pedestrians: Stepping Out in Safety project for the Karen community (**DTP: \$240,000 in 2024–25**).

The **TAC L2P program** helps young learner drivers without access to a supervising driver or a suitable vehicle to complete the mandatory 120 hours of driving practice. The program connects young people with fully licensed driver-mentors. Individual program providers support learners from multicultural backgrounds to access culturally appropriate driver mentors to help young people get the driving practice needed for a driver's licence. **Around 21% of participants are EAL (English as an Additional Language) learners.** In 2025 DTP translated a series of L2P documents to remove barriers for young people and their families, improving understanding, trust and engagement with the program. As a first for L2P in Victoria, this initiative promotes equity and inclusion by ensuring more learners can benefit from the support available (**DTP: \$9 million in 2024–25**).

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action's (DEECA) **Farming Safe and Well Program** is a statewide initiative improving health, safety and wellbeing for Victoria's farming communities while promoting multicultural inclusion. In 2024–25 the program focused on increasing access to farm safety education and mental health support in regional areas where

multicultural communities contribute to the agricultural workforce.

Partnering with industry groups such as Fruit Growers Victoria, the program produced 2 safety induction videos, translated into 5 languages (Bahasa Indonesia, Bislama, Fijian, Mandarin and Samoan). The program also analysed publicly available safety resources for multicultural communities to identify gaps and inform new resources about safe work practices and cultural safety on farms.

By delivering multilingual resources and engaging trusted community leaders, the Farming Safe and Well program is improving safety outcomes and fostering inclusion and social cohesion across Victoria's diverse farming regions (**DEECA: \$75,000 in 2024–25**).

Case study

Leyla* is a young woman from a refugee background who took part in the TAC L2P Program delivered by Laverton Community Integrated Services. Leyla migrated from Turkey with her mother. As a newly arrived refugee with no extended family or established support networks in Australia, obtaining a driver's licence was a major obstacle to her independence, education and employment opportunities.

Through the program, Leyla accessed a vehicle, trained volunteer mentors and culturally responsive coordination. This enabled her to complete supervised driving hours, build road safety knowledge and develop confidence.

Since getting her licence, Leyla can travel independently to attend classes, look for work and help her mother with daily activities.

Leyla describes the program as life-changing, highlighting the support of her mentor and L2P coordinator.

* Name changed to protect the person's identity.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing's (DFFH) **Supporting Multicultural and Faith Communities to Prevent Family Violence** program supports culturally tailored, community-led primary prevention initiatives delivered by Victorian multicultural, faith and settlement organisations.

Since 2021 the program has supported 33 organisations and implemented projects that have reached more than 35,000 people across more than 80 multicultural and faith communities. These projects have also strengthened community capability to identify early signs of violence, challenge harmful norms and promote gender equality.

In 2024–25 the Victorian Government extended the program, supporting broader statewide reforms to strengthen culturally appropriate responses to family and sexual violence, including workforce capability building; better access to specialist services for migrant and refugee communities; and initiatives to embed culturally safe practice across the family and sexual violence sectors **(DFFH: \$2.1 million in 2024–25)**.

DFFH's **Working Together** program strengthens collaboration between multicultural community organisations and specialist family and sexual violence services to improve safety and support provided to migrant and refugee communities.

The program began in 2021–22 with Commonwealth funding through the Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses 2023–25 Federation Funding Agreement.

Phase 2 funded 17 partnerships. This included 10 projects focused on family violence and 7 focused on sexual violence in multicultural communities.

The partnerships involve a broad range of services and organisations in regional and metropolitan Victoria. They support established and newly arrived migrants and refugee communities to deliver targeted interventions for women from South Asia, South-East Asia, the Pacific, African communities, and Muslim women and children.

The program includes capability building, workforce development and program coordination activities delivered by peak bodies **(DFFH)**.

In the 2023–24 State Budget, the government allocated \$6 million to deliver **community-led antisemitism and Islamophobia projects**. Funded organisations include the Jewish Community Council of Victoria, Zionism Victoria, Melbourne Holocaust Museum, Melbourne Grand Mosque, Islamic Museum of Australia, Islamic Council of Victoria, Board of Imams Victoria and the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights. They are funded to deliver a range of projects including awareness campaigns, reporting services, mental health supports and educational programs **(DPC: \$2 million in 2024–25)**.

Case study

In 2024–25 DFFH’s **Supporting Multicultural and Faith Communities to Prevent Family Violence** program funded AMES Australia to expand its Preventing Violence Against Women Leadership Program into the regional communities of Ballarat and Mildura. This extension supported emerging leaders from Afghan, Arabic-speaking, Indian, Korean, Nepalese, South Sudanese, Sri Lankan and other multicultural backgrounds. Regional participants often experience limited access to culturally safe services and local prevention programs. Across 2024–25 participants took part in multi-week training on gender equality, respectful relationships, bystander action and the drivers of violence.

Low initial male participation prompted AMES to adapt its curriculum, introducing a culturally relevant module addressing men’s experiences of loneliness, conflict and gendered expectations. This shift deepened engagement and ensured the program resonated across diverse cultural groups. One participant reflected, ‘This is the first time I’ve seen content that really speaks to men’s experience in this space. It was powerful and resonant.’

The program delivered strong quantitative results:

- There were 24 graduates across Ballarat and Mildura.
- Participants more than doubled their understanding of key prevention concepts, including the drivers of violence and prevention approaches, based on pre- and post-program surveys.
- Participants showed a 98.6% improvement in understanding bystander action.
- Participants showed a 63–68% improvement across prevention skills (planning action, public speaking, workplace and community action).

The course has inspired regional community-led prevention projects in both locations. By embedding lived experience and adapting to regional realities, the program strengthened local leadership and created sustainable pathways for ongoing, culturally informed gender-based violence prevention work.

Equal access to secure accommodation

The Victorian Government helps multicultural communities access safe, reliable housing by investing in programs that strengthen long-term housing security.

The Department of Government Services (DGS) helps fund the **My Tenancy Rights and Responsibilities: Empowering Victorian Renters Project**, delivered by **Tenants Victoria**. This project uses targeted education to help multicultural renters better understand their rental rights and responsibilities. Under the project, a bicultural community engagement team works with renters in urgent need to link them into existing support programs, including the Tenancy Assistance and

Advocacy Program managed by Consumer Affairs Victoria. The program developed communication materials and delivered information sessions with tenants from multicultural backgrounds (**DGS: \$260,000 in 2024–25**).

The **Rental Stress Support Package**, an initiative under the Housing Statement, began delivering services to Victorians from 1 July 2024. The package has increased access to rental support services, including information and advice, advocacy and legal assistance. It also prioritises support for multicultural communities. In 2024–25 it supported 4,094 clients including 20% of clients from multicultural communities (**DGS: \$4.1 million in 2024–25**).

Case study

Consumer Affairs Victoria’s (DGS) **Fundamentals** campaign raised awareness of changes to Victoria’s rental laws before they were introduced in November 2025.

The campaign focused on short, clear messaging educating renters about their rights when renting, including rental property minimum standards, how to resolve a rental dispute and how to report issues with advertised rental properties. The campaign

also advised rental providers about their obligations to meet the standards.

Fifteen per cent of the media spend was allocated to multicultural audiences. This included multicultural press, social media and outdoor placements using in-language translated materials. All translation work was delivered to metro and regional Victorian renters and rental providers. Content was translated into Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Mandarin and Vietnamese.



diverse talent to effectively communicate with people living in high-rise social housing and surrounding neighbourhoods.

The team developed in-language radio and social media ads in 7 languages and cast multicultural talent to reflect the communities we wanted to reach. Languages included Arabic, Indonesian, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Turkish and Vietnamese. The campaign ran for 2 weeks and accounted for 15% of the campaign's media expenditure.



Case study

Homes Victoria's **Big Housing Build** public understanding campaign aims to increase awareness and understanding of the Big Housing Build and High-rise Redevelopment program.

Formative research highlighted the need to develop in-language materials and feature

Emergency management

The Victorian Government understands the distinct challenges multicultural communities face during emergencies, providing support through preparation, response and recovery.

The Department of Justice and Community Safety's (DJCS) **High-Risk Weather Season Preparedness Briefing — Multicultural leaders and connectors briefing** helped strengthen the connection between the emergency management sector and multicultural communities.

This tailored session brought together multicultural community representatives to raise awareness on the potential risks for the high-risk weather season. The session was hosted by the Emergency Management Commissioner and reinforced the commitment to work together to keep the community safe. In all, 51 people attended from 31 organisations **(DJCS)**.

DFFH and Park Towers residents in South Melbourne worked together to set up **Park Towers Community Pantry Ltd** to address the ongoing challenge of food insecurity exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The South Melbourne Community Capacity Building Initiative funds the now resident-run community pantry.

The program provided food to more than 240 Park Towers households and to 40 households in Emerald Hill Court, supporting between 450 and 600 residents every fortnight. A high proportion of Park Towers and Emerald Hill Court renters come from multicultural backgrounds, including Ethiopian, Somali and Vietnamese.

Since the program's inception, Park Towers residents report greater connection with each other as well as an improved sense of community and safety **(DFFH: \$250,000 in 2024–25)**.



Victorians are healthy and well

Supporting physical and mental health

The Victorian Government acknowledges that multicultural communities experience health and mental-health issues differently and offers tailored services to enhance wellbeing.

The government plays a significant role in supporting humanitarian entrants and people seeking asylum. In 2024–25 we funded a range of settlement programs providing tailored support to humanitarian entrants and people seeking asylum, including the **Support for Asylum Seekers initiative**. This initiative funded the Australian Red Cross and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre to deliver critical services to people seeking asylum who do not qualify for national support programs (**DPC: \$2.65 million for 2024–25**).

In 2024–25 the Department of Health (DH), under the **Patient Support Units** program, funded 23 health services to ensure all patients are ready for surgery or directed to alternative care pathways. The units also support improvements to enable timely access to planned surgery.

To improve access to timely planned care for patients from multicultural backgrounds, DH developed a range of communication materials in different languages, targeting the specific needs of diverse communities (**DH**).

The **Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Scholarship and Bursary Program** supports registered nurses with midwifery qualifications to complete a postgraduate MCH nursing course. Scholarships are offered annually at La Trobe University and Federation University. This program ensures universities target students in priority groups, including applicants who identify as multicultural.

At the start of 2025, 71 priority scholarships were awarded. By prioritising applicants from underrepresented groups, these scholarships are strengthening workforce diversity and contributing to an MCH workforce that better reflects Victoria's diversity (**DH: \$500,000 in 2024–25**).

DH also funded **Multicultural Storytime**, an initiative that strengthens connections for children from multicultural and First Peoples communities by fostering language, identity and cultural pride. Sessions give communities culturally appropriate, evidence-based health information, including details about local health services.

By funding 25 organisations, the initiative expanded access to include early learning opportunities and promoted health literacy. This investment reached thousands of families in 2024–25, helping build strong cultural ties while supporting children's development and wellbeing. Multicultural Storytimes were offered in 37 languages (**DH: \$1.5 million for 2024–25**).

The government is committed to supporting African Victorian communities to have a sense of belonging and to thrive.³ For example, the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) is implementing the **Victorian African Communities Action Plan (VACAP)**, a 10-year plan initiated in 2018. The plan was developed by and for Victoria's African communities to provide culturally tailored programs and services that support social and economic outcomes.

VACAP's **Project Sunrise** is an alcohol and other drugs initiative that provides targeted education programs and outreach services across 8 priority local government areas. In 2024–25 Project Sunrise delivered more than 100 episodes of care and treatment to young people and their families; delivered more than 70 alcohol and other drugs counselling sessions, case management and family support; and engaged more than 4,000 community members through community events (**DPC: \$510,000 in 2024–25**).

Under **VACAP**, DPC also supports a mental health initiative that funds 3 community organisations to deliver supports, including services for young people and people experiencing homelessness (**DPC: \$200,000 in 2024–25**).

³ The 2024–25 State Budget provided \$17 million over 4 years for VACAP.

Case study

Goulburn Valley Public Health Unit, in partnership with Wise Well Women and Meryula Clinic, delivered 7 in-language targeted outreach education programs to support women from multicultural backgrounds to prioritise their health. Sessions focused on cervical, breast and bowel cancer screening. In all, 115 women across 10 language groups took part.

The clinics provided a welcoming and safe environment where women could ask questions, raise concerns and access cervical screening on the day. Sessions were tailored to community needs and delivered in languages such as Cantonese, Filipino, Mandarin, Pashto, Punjabi, Sinhalese and Tongan. All clinics offered childcare, ensuring participants could fully engage in the sessions. As the program expanded across the region, it reached even more women and empowered them to take charge of their health.

The Western Public Health Unit (WPHU) promoted translated INFANT program resources, including booklets that provide mums, dads and carers with evidence-based advice on feeding and play for babies aged up to 12 months. This included partnering with 9 council libraries and baby and toddler programs, enabling them to reach more than 320 families, share around 100 booklets, link to digital copies and explore opportunities to embed INFANT resources into library systems. WPHU also delivered 4 capacity-building sessions for 16 library staff to help ensure INFANT information and resources are shared.

WPHU also strengthened the Victorian health educator workforce through a partnership with the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health by training 15 bilingual health educators to deliver in-language sessions. These sessions reached 103 multicultural families across 4 languages (Arabic, Easy English, Mandarin and Vietnamese) and distributed translated INFANT resources in Arabic, English, Mandarin, Punjabi, Urdu and Vietnamese. WPHU also worked with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre in Footscray to provide resources and raise awareness of local programs among 20 refugee and asylum seeker families.



Victorians are able to participate fully

Victorian Multicultural Review

The government works to ensure all Victorians can take part fully and have their voices heard.

As part of measures announced by the Premier in December 2024 to strengthen social cohesion across the state, the Victorian Multicultural Review examined how government support for multicultural and multifaith communities could be better delivered to ensure Victoria's multicultural policies, institutions and personnel are equipped to resolve conflicts and find connection.

The review heard from 640 Victorians through 57 targeted and open consultation sessions and 159 written submissions. The review provided 41 recommendations for how the government could better address social cohesion challenges, strengthen community harmony and support multicultural and multifaith communities to thrive. These include forming a new statutory body — Multicultural Victoria — to bring together the engagement role of the Victorian Multicultural Commission with the department's policy and grants functions and a new funding stream to strengthen the capacity and sustainability of multicultural organisations to deliver for their communities **(DPC)**.

Communicating with multicultural communities

Culturally and linguistically appropriate communication creates valuable and meaningful program outcomes. Effective communication helps break down barriers, improves access to services and achieves better outcomes for multicultural and multifaith communities.

In 2024–25 DPC worked with the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) and other states and territories to develop the **NAATI Language Services Provider Endorsement Model**. The model will deliver a national quality assurance framework to promote sector-wide consistency across Australia. By imposing baseline requirements such as using NAATI-credentialed practitioners, a shared code of conduct and new data reporting processes, the endorsement model will help ensure language services are higher quality, more consistent and more accessible for those who rely on them **(DPC)**.

The **Interpreter Scholarship Program** offers scholarships to study a tertiary qualification for interpreting and translating at RMIT University. The program addresses the shortage of qualified interpreters and translators in priority community languages.

In 2024–25 DPC funded more than 100 students to become qualified interpreters in more than 30 priority languages including new and emerging languages. DPC also worked with program partners RMIT, NAATI and LanguageLoop to create a pathway into the language services industry by inviting graduates to apply for work and mentoring opportunities and by offering extra support to achieve NAATI certification **(DPC: \$320,000 in 2024–25)**.

Case study

The Karen people are one of many ethnic refugee groups from Myanmar (formerly Burma), having arrived in Australia from the early 2000s. Many of Victoria's Karen-speaking population live in Greater Bendigo where Karen is the second most popular language spoken at home after English.

In recent years, several regional service providers have identified a critical shortage of Karen interpreters in the City of Greater Bendigo, creating significant negative consequences for the local community and service delivery providers. This impacted the ability of health providers to address complex health issues and provide continuity of care.

At the same time, several Karen-speaking residents expressed interest in becoming qualified interpreters. But course fees and travel to undertake an interpreting course in Melbourne were a significant barrier.

In early 2024 Multicultural Affairs (DPC) funded a Diploma of Interpreting course for the Karen language in Bendigo. The course began in July 2024 with 21 students. The Karen-speaking instructor is a former Interpreter Scholarship Program graduate and is teaching the students to translate terminology used in a range of specialist settings, including health.

In 2025, 19 students graduated from the program. Graduates receive specialised support from NAATI to practise their language skills and prepare for the NAATI certification test to become a qualified interpreter.



Table 3: Multilingual publications and resources, 2024–25

Department	Publication/resource	Description	Languages
DFFH	Emergencies in Victoria: Managing your emotional wellbeing and accessing Emergency Relief Payments guide	<p>This guide will support affected people to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> take action to restore their emotional wellbeing find out how to access financial support through the Personal Hardship Assistance Program. 	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Greek, Hindi, Italian, Punjabi, Vietnamese
DFFH	The Orange Door brochure: 'Men who use abusive or controlling behaviour at home or in a relationship'	<p>This brochure outlines the help and support The Orange Door offers to men who use abusive or controlling behaviour at home or in a relationship. It is specific to each area of the state and includes local The Orange Door contact information.</p> <p>The brochure was first available in 2018 and updated in 2021. In the 2021 update, the brochure included input from No To Violence.</p>	Amharic, Arabic, Assyrian, Bengali, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Dari, Dinka, Dutch, Falam Chin, Farsi, Filipino, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hakha Chin, Hazaragi, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Karenni, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Korean, Macedonian, Maltese, Mizo, Nepali, Nuer, Pashto, Polish, Punjabi, Russian, Sinhalese, Spanish, Somali, Swahili, S'gaw Karen, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Woi-wurrung, Zomi
DFFH	The Unsaid Says A Lot	<p>The Unsaid Says A Lot campaign was Australia's first government-led awareness campaign created with and for trans and gender diverse communities.</p> <p>The campaign highlights the many instances of discrimination the trans and gender diverse community face. The campaign encourages all Victorians to take meaningful steps towards inclusion and allyship.</p>	Languages include Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Vietnamese
DFFH	Big Housing Build public understanding campaign – multicultural audiences	Homes Victoria's Big Housing Build public understanding campaign aims to increase awareness and understanding of the Big Housing Build and High-rise Redevelopment program.	Languages included Arabic, Indonesian, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Turkish, Vietnamese
DH	Child and Maternal Health Survey	Information for survey participants promoted on social media in 10 languages.	Chinese, Punjabi, Vietnamese, Hazaragi, Dari, Burmese, Khmer, Arabic, Chin (Hakha), Pashto

Department	Publication/resource	Description	Languages
DH	My Surgical Journey	Information for consumers was translated into 5 extra languages.	Additional translated languages include Dari, Hazaragi, Italian, Karen, Turkish
DH	Urgent Care Services Victoria	A factsheet about Victoria's 3 free urgent care services — Nurse-on-Call, Urgent Care Clinics and Virtual Emergency Care — was translated into 8 languages.	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Greek, Italian, Punjabi, Turkish, Vietnamese
DH	Urgent Concern Helpline Pilot	Posters and a flyer with information about the Urgent Concern Helpline Pilot were translated into 10 languages for pilot sites to print and display.	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Greek, Hazaragi, Italian, Khmer, Punjabi, Turkish, Vietnamese
DH	Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals (MHWL)	Translated web content in 10 languages and in-language videos of community leaders promoting MHWL.	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Nepali, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese
DH	Annual influenza campaign — Don't Risk It	In-language webpages, radio, social media tiles and copy.	Arabic, Cantonese, Hazaragi, Hindi, Mandarin, Punjabi, Urdu, Vietnamese
DH	Information about the RSV Mother and Infant Protection Program (RSV-MIPP) included on the Vaccine Side Effects factsheet	Updated the Vaccine Side Effects factsheet to include the new RSV-MIPP program for newborns.	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Greek, Italian, Turkish, Vietnamese
DH	Factsheet: Residential Aged Care — research information for residents and families	Translated factsheet on the ELUCIDAR project occurring in aged care facilities on using UV light to combat airborne pathogens.	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Greek, Italian, Korean, Sinhalese
DJCS	Assistance to apply for the Financial Assistance Scheme	Website content communicated in 20 languages other than English.	Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Dari, Farsi (Persian), French, Greek, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Nepali, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish, Vietnamese

Department	Publication/resource	Description	Languages
DJSIR	Business Victoria website	Translated public holiday hours information on the Business Victoria website.	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Croatian, Greek, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Macedonian, Persian (Farsi), Polish, Russian, Sinhalese, Spanish, Thai, Turkish, Vietnamese
DJSIR	Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)	The DJSIR Customer Contact Centre uses translating services to help deliver various programs. Customers can initiate calls through the TIS number or the contact centre can bring in an interpreter or call with one.	Many languages offered Most used: Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Vietnamese
DTP	Translation services for telephone customer support	A customer service line is available for people needing support in their native language (e.g. assistance with myki card enquiries).	Mandarin is the most requested language
DEECA	Cat Management Strategy: Actions 1 & 2 Responsible cat ownership	Factsheets for communities and councils in English and key multicultural languages that promote responsible cat ownership. The material encourages microchipping, desexing, cat containment and positive attitudes towards cats.	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Vietnamese
DEECA	The Future Will Thank You publications	The Future Will Thank You online video and radio publication was advertised to reach multicultural communities. It promotes biosecurity practices on farms.	Filipino, Mandarin, Punjabi, Vietnamese
DGS	Stay safe online: in-language content to help multicultural communities stay safe online	The 'Stay safe online' web presence supports multicultural communities to develop strong online habits including through cyber-safety. The languages selected were based on Census data of the top languages spoken at home by Victorians with nil-to-low English proficiency.	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Khmer, Punjabi, Vietnamese
DGS	Know the Fundamentals: information on new rental reforms	The Consumer Affairs Victoria Fundamentals campaign raised awareness of changes to Victoria's rental laws prior to their introduction in November 2025.	Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Mandarin, Vietnamese

Interpreting and translation services

Table 4: Expenditure on interpreting, translating and language allowance services, 2024–25

Department	Expenditure (\$ excluding GST)	Percentage of reported government expenditure on interpretation and translation (%)
Department of Education	3,428,958	9.58%
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	8,971	0.03%
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing	4,957,080	13.85%
Department of Government Services	252,112	0.70%
Department of Health	21,002,379	58.68%
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	1,681,734	4.70%
Department of Justice and Community Safety	3,025,176	8.45%
Department of Premier and Cabinet	1,301,283	3.64%
Department of Transport and Planning	133,129	0.37%
Department of Treasury and Finance	0	
Total	35,790,822	

Multicultural media campaigns

In 2023–24 Victorian Government policy required that departments and agencies spend at least 15% of their campaign media budget on multicultural media (Table 5 and Table 6 show Victorian Government multicultural media campaign expenditure as a percentage of total media campaign expenditure from 2016–17 to 2024–25).⁴

DH's **Right Care, Right Time** campaign aimed to raise awareness of urgent care services for non-life-threatening healthcare needs, including Nurse-on-Call, Virtual Emergency Care and Urgent Care Clinics.

The department worked with Optimum Media Direction to identify effective multicultural media outlets and created translated materials in Arabic,

Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Mandarin, Punjabi, Turkish and Vietnamese.

Using a mix of media channels and tailored messaging, the campaign improved awareness and access to urgent care services across diverse communities. The campaign website housed translated factsheets for more detailed information on the services.

DH's **Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals** are free services for people aged 26 or older. They provide treatment, care and support for mental health and wellbeing. DH worked with Optimum Media Direction to identify effective multicultural media outlets and created translated materials in Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Nepali, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese.

⁴ Prior to 2023–24 the Victorian Government required departments and agencies to spend at least 5% of their campaign advertising budget on multicultural media.

DTP's **Passenger Safety** campaign is part of a long-term strategy to reduce unwanted sexual and antisocial behaviour on and around our public transport network. A key focus is encouraging the most vulnerable communities to report incidents using Victoria Police's STOPIT tool. Materials were developed in Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Dari, Karen, Khmer, Korean, Punjabi, Turkish and Vietnamese for radio, social media and digital display.

In 2025 the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) ran the latest phase of the **Learn Local** campaign. Around 200 community organisations deliver Learn Local courses — inclusive, locally based and government-subsidised training programs designed to help adults build the skills they need for work, study and everyday life. The campaign aimed to promote Learn Local providers and courses to potential learners from across Victoria, including multicultural and First Peoples communities.

To help raise awareness of these opportunities, particularly among those aged 35 to 64 from diverse backgrounds, DJSIR implemented a statewide social media ambassador campaign.

Nine influencers and community leaders developed bespoke content for their channels and audiences, including in-language content. Influencers generated 45 unique pieces of content, resulting in more than 2.2 million views and 2,800 interactions.

DPC's **Real Help. Right Now.** campaign raised awareness of more than 90 government savings benefits to ease cost-of-living pressures including energy bill relief, education assistance and transport savings.

The campaign encouraged Victorians to visit the Savings Finder page on the Service Victoria website to learn about benefits. The campaign was translated into Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Mandarin, Punjab, Tagalog, Turkish and Vietnamese (**DPC: \$790,000 in 2024–25**).

Table 5 details departmental multicultural media campaign expenditure as a percentage of total media campaign expenditure in 2024–25 compared with 2023–24.

Table 5: Departmental multicultural media campaign expenditure as a percentage of total media campaign expenditure⁵

Department	2024–25 expenditure (%)	2023–24 expenditure (%)
Department of Education	16.4	16.2
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	12.7	14.9
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing	17.1	15.2
Department of Government Services	10.1	n/a
Department of Health	21.3	16.6
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	22.6	29.6
Department of Justice and Community Safety	17.6	16.6
Department of Premier and Cabinet	16.4	50.1 ⁶
Department of Transport and Planning	17.9	21.4
Department of Treasury and Finance ⁷	n/a	n/a

⁵ These figures only include departmental expenditure (not portfolio agencies) for campaign advertising. They also exclude expenditure on interstate and international advertising because the government's 15% multicultural campaign expenditure policy only applies to advertising within Victoria.

⁶ This value includes the 'Gig Workers Awareness campaign', run by DPC in 2024–25.

⁷ DTF did not undertake any campaign advertising during 2023–24 or 2024–25. Translations for budget papers are funded by DPC.

Table 6 shows Victorian Government multicultural media campaign expenditure as a percentage of total media campaign expenditure from 2016–17 to 2024–25.

Table 6: Total Victorian Government multicultural media campaign expenditure as a percentage of total media campaign expenditure⁸

Financial year	Multicultural expenditure (%)
2024–25	15.6
2023–24	15.0
2022–23	6.7
2021–22	10.4
2020–21	9.6
2019–20	7.6
2018–19	5.0
2017–18	5.2
2016–17	6.0

Opportunities to learn and grow

The Victorian Government helps multicultural communities build confidence, explore new pathways and reach their potential.

In 2024–25 DE continued to fund 26 local councils to take part in the kindergarten **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Outreach Initiative**.

Outreach workers addressed barriers to kindergarten access and participation and supported engagement with other early childhood services and transition to school.

Almost 4,000 children were supported to register and enrol in kindergarten in 2024–25 (**DE: \$2.2 million in 2024–25**).

DE’s \$20.1 million, 4-year **Refugee Education Support Initiative** was delivered in partnership with the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (Foundation House) and the Centre for Multicultural Youth. It continues to support positive learning and

wellbeing outcomes for children, students and families from refugee backgrounds. In 2023–24 the initiative expanded its reach and innovation across 4 program streams:

- The Refugee Education Support Program engaged 38 schools across 7 geographical clusters to build the capacity of school staff in culturally responsive and trauma-informed practice.
- The School Support Program delivered professional development sessions to more than 3,000 school staff. The program also created 12 resources for the flagship School’s in for Refugees website.
- Learning Beyond the Bell delivered more than 140 tailored consultations with learning support programs across the state.
- Learning Beyond the Bell provided professional learning, advice and resources to more than 360 learning support programs across the state.
- The Early Years Program builds the capacity of early childhood education and care services to work effectively with children and families of refugee backgrounds and promote their full inclusion.

In 2024–25 the initiative’s Early Years Program established Communities of Practice in 7 local government areas. These Communities of Practice implemented strategies to improve the inclusion and participation of children and families from refugee backgrounds (**DE: \$5.4 million in 2024–25**).

DE’s **Place-based Partnerships to Support School Engagement and Completion Initiative 2024–2026**

offers targeted support for at-risk African and Pasifika young people, with the goal of supporting school engagement and completion, helping to prevent youth offending and reducing antisocial behaviour. The initiative funds grants to schools in the south-west, north-west and south-east of Melbourne to deliver targeted supports and free school holiday programs.

26 schools use grant funding to employ community liaison officers who support young people to engage with their education, deliver targeted intervention programs and help strengthen family–school connections. Free school holiday programs are delivered in partnerships with Victory Football Club, North Melbourne Football Club (The Huddle) and Melbourne Storm Rugby League Club (Storm Waka).

⁸ This includes departments and agencies combined.

In 2025, 3,750 daily participants attended school holiday programs.

The initiative also funds the Pasifika Schools Network and Vaka Pasifika Student Leadership Program. The Vaka program is delivered in partnership with the Pasifika Schools Network, the Oceania Institute, the Pacific Islands Student Association and the University of Melbourne's Engagement and Partnerships Office. It provides an opportunity for Victorian Pasifika Year 10 students to become familiar with university learning. The program aims to empower students to view higher education as their 'vaka' or vessel in navigating career and educational aspirations **(DE: \$3.5 million in 2024–25)**.

DJSIR's **TAFE Student Support Services** includes a component for services aimed at supporting access, participation and completion into vocational education for priority cohorts, including multicultural communities. Through this fund, Victoria's TAFEs support access, participation, education pathways and qualification completion with direct, tailored and culturally appropriate support including:

- English language support
- one-on-one tutoring and learning support
- counselling, welfare and wellbeing support including referrals to internal and community-based services
- advice on recognition of qualifications and training gained overseas
- career and job support.

TAFEs also use part of this funding to build and embed systems to improve outcomes for priority cohorts, including multicultural communities, through policy development, student-led consultation, student inclusion groups, resource development, improvements to enrolment and learning processes, and partnerships with local community groups **(DJSIR: \$57 million in 2025⁹)**.

DJSIR's **Asylum Seeker VET (ASVET) Program 2024–25** supports refugees and asylum seekers to access free or subsidised training, helping them to gain meaningful employment and build new lives in Victoria.

The 2024–25 ASVET program provided access to skills and training for people forced to flee their home countries, helping them succeed in Victoria. By supporting refugees and asylum seekers to enrol, the program gave them access to vocational training like Free TAFE and Skills First courses.

Since December 2024 the Victorian Government has supported more than 950 asylum seekers to study at TAFE, supporting their job search and financial independence.

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre has supported more than 250 people in the past year to study at a TAFE, university or training provider **(DJSIR: \$80,000 in 2024–25)**.

Delivered through TAFEs, Learn Locals and community service organisations across Victoria, DJSIR's **Reconnect Program** helps Victorians overcome barriers to education, training and employment. It also provides support into further study or employment pathways.

Tailored, one-on-one support services include counselling, mentoring, housing support, education opportunities, health and wellbeing services, and foundation and employability skills.

Since the program began in 2016, Reconnect has supported thousands of people to transition into further study, complete pre-accredited and accredited training, and achieve sustainable employment.

Across 2024–25 the program supported 1,444 participants. Of these:

- 42% were from a multicultural background
- 50% engaged in education and training
- 4% engaged in employment.

(DJSIR: \$12 million in 2025⁹)

⁹ TAFE budgets are set by calendar year.

Case study

On 3 June 2025 DE hosted its annual Government Schools Principals Conference at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, themed 'Excellence in Every Classroom'. The event brought together more than 3,000 Victorian school leaders for professional learning and networking and included the launch of the Preventing and Addressing Racism in Schools policy, announced by the Minister for Education in his opening address. The statewide mandatory policy communicates a zero-tolerance of racism in government schools and suggests ways to strengthen school culture and practices to prevent and address racism, religious intolerance and racial and religious vilification.

To support the launch, the department presented to school leaders and hosted a panel discussion on racism, featuring diverse perspectives including a young person from a refugee background (a Centre for Multicultural Youth Shoutout speaker), an assistant principal and a Koorie Engagement Support Officer. Through panel discussion and audience engagement, participants reinforced the critical role of school leadership in fostering safe, inclusive environments and the importance of partnering with students, families and communities to promote cultural safety and inclusion — reflecting key elements of the policy.

The panel showcased Braybrook College's whole-school approach to anti-racism, which centres student voice, staff capability building and community engagement. The school's student-led Power Collective provides a safe space for students to raise concerns and report incidents of racism, supporting proactive, student-centred prevention and response.

The discussion also underscored the value of strong community partnerships. Through sustained collaboration with local First Peoples communities, the Cardinia Network Marrung Steering Committee delivered its annual Deadly Day event, bringing together students, families, community members and leaders from more than 20 school networks to celebrate, learn from and strengthen connections with First Peoples cultures.



Members of the Power Collective at Braybrook College

DJSIR funds **pre-accredited training** via the **Adult Community and Further Education board**. This training includes accessible education programs for adults and communities across the state. It strengthens foundational skills and builds the educational capacity of culturally and linguistically diverse Victorians.

Programs are delivered through Learn Local providers, offering inclusive, community-based learning opportunities. The programs develop literacy, numeracy, English language, digital and employability skills and support pathways to further study, work and community life.

In 2024, 28,200 learners took part in pre-accredited training, with 14,120 (50%) from multicultural backgrounds and another 500 (2%) identifying as First Peoples (**DJSIR: \$29.3 million for 2024–25**).

DFFH continued funding to 6 **Community Support Groups** (CSGs) through 2024–25. The CSGs support multicultural young people through individual support, group activities and referrals to community services and relevant agencies. CSGs are community co-designed and lead locally targeted prevention and early intervention initiatives. CSGs employ bicultural youth and social workers from the communities they work in.

The CSGs work with young people to address disengagement and antisocial behaviour that can lead to offending. They do this through delivering:

- sports and recreation activities
- community and cultural activities
- educational engagement programs
- youth leadership programs
- youth-led advisory groups.

In 2024–25 the CSGs supported more than 2,500 Afghan, Somali and South Sudanese young people (**DFFH: \$6.7 million for 2024–25**).

The **VACAP¹⁰ Homework Clubs and School Community Liaison Officers** are funded and delivered through DE. Homework Clubs deliver culturally tailored education support to African young people and their families. School Community Liaison Officers support bicultural workers in schools to keep students and their families engaged with their education.

In 2024–25 these programs supported more than 5,380 African students and their families (**DPC/DE: \$300,000 in 2024–25**).

¹⁰ The 2024–25 State Budget provided \$17 million over 4 years for VACAP.

Case study

In 2025 DE delivered the third annual African Australian Student Conference in partnership with African Youth Alliance and Safe Space Media, with strong contributions from African-Australian professionals and community leaders.

The African Australian Student Conference is funded under VACAP, alongside complementary education initiatives including the School Community Liaison Officer initiative and Homework Club Grants, which together support engagement, aspiration and educational success for African-Australian students and families across Victoria.

More than 500 African-Australian students from about 30 Victorian government and Catholic schools came together over 2 days for the 2025 conference, with the theme of 'Dreaming Out Loud: Our Future in Focus'. The conference supported students to build career aspirations, broaden their understanding of diverse and non-traditional pathways and imagine bold futures grounded in purpose, confidence and possibility.

The conference was held at Mission Whitten Oval in Footscray (October) and Bunjil Place in Narre Warren (November). Students brought high levels of energy, curiosity and engagement, actively participating in workshops, presentations and discussions throughout the day.

Through interactive workshops and presentations, students heard directly from African-Australian speakers working across a range of industries. The sessions highlighted the importance of representation, showing that success across diverse pathways is both visible and achievable.

Case study

Junubi Wyndham CSG is one of 3 South Sudanese CSGs established in 2018. The CSG model is unique in that it takes a place-based and community partnership approach. Bicultural staff work locally with community members, local councils, service providers, schools and community organisations. Junubi operates in Melbourne's west, engaging and supporting South Sudanese young people and their families in the Wyndham area. It employs bicultural workers who come from the communities the CSG supports.

Junubi delivers targeted supports designed to prevent and address youth disengagement before it becomes more serious. They also complement the work of youth justice staff by providing culturally appropriate support to youth justice clients and their families.

In 2024 Junubi supported a young man in contact with the youth justice system who had disengaged from school. He was not returning home and had missed several court appearances. Junubi's bicultural youth worker helped the young man to access legal advice and transported him to court multiple times to ensure he met his legal obligations.

Through the youth worker's intensive one-on-one mentoring and family engagement support, the young man reconnected with his family and eventually returned home. He began to engage in Junubi's youth programs, including a basketball program. This helped him develop positive social connections to his community and minimised his risk-taking behaviour.

Junubi continues to support the young man by helping him engage positively with his youth justice care team and map his education and employment goals. This highlights the importance of culturally appropriate support for young people and their families to reduce the risk of offending and reoffending.

Case study

Victoria's multicultural business precincts are hubs of economic activity shaped by successive waves of migration, business and government investments and sustained community effort.

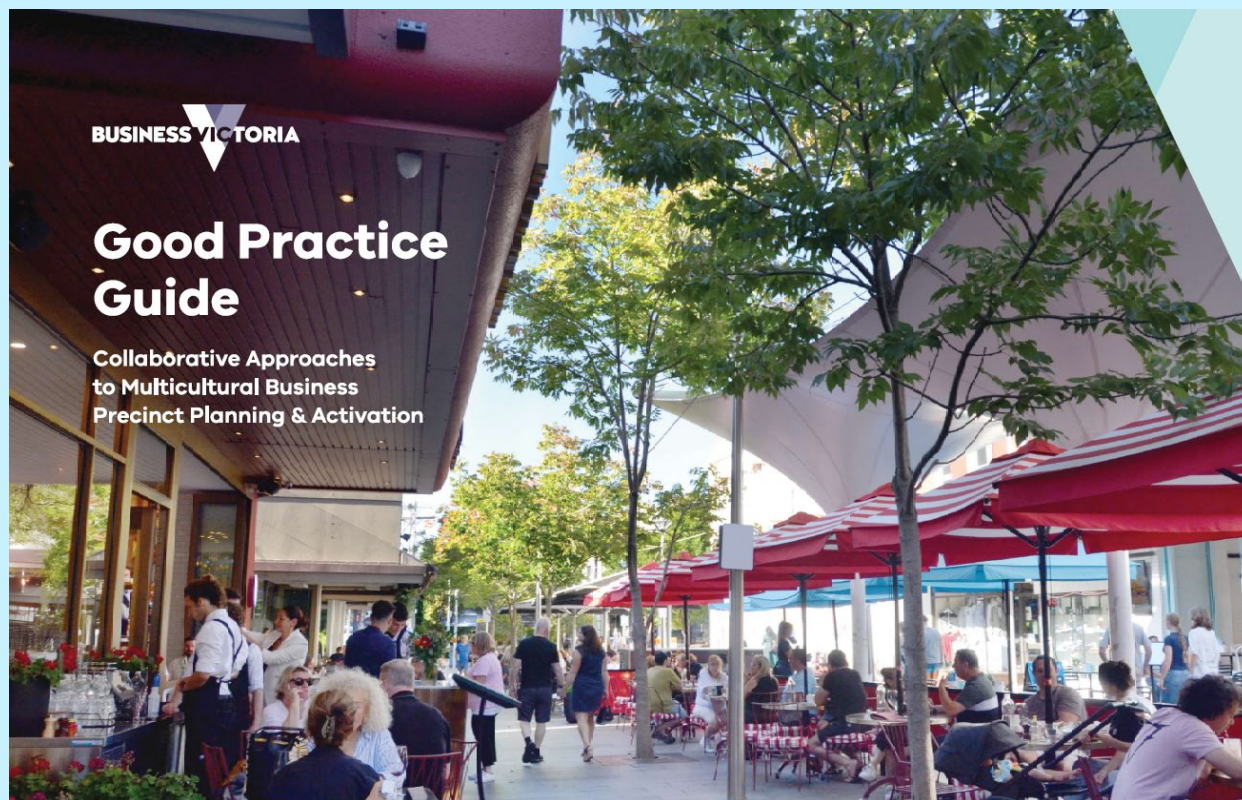
The Good Practice Guide offers practical advice to assist business associations, local councils and other partners to strengthen these precincts.

As the first of its kind in Australia, the guide encourages collaboration to attract visitors, increase trade and create more vibrant and welcoming places for everyone to enjoy.

It showcases the many ways this can be achieved, drawing on real examples from across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria, including areas renowned for strong multicultural businesses such as Coburg, Footscray, Lalor, Mildura, Richmond, Springvale, St Albans, Sunshine and more.

Engagement with businesses associations, councils, local businesses and government agencies involved in precinct development and activation informed the guide.

Filled with useful insights and real-life case studies, the guide helps shape and activate business precincts. It focuses on ways to create and build enduring partnerships, how to boost activity in business precincts and ways business associations and councils can achieve common aims for a precinct's success.



Good Practice Guide

Employment assistance and career development

The Victorian Government offers programs that connect communities with meaningful work and pathways for advancement.

DGS's **Women Leading Locally** supported the government's goal of achieving 50% women councillors and mayors in local government by 2025. Delivered by the Institute of Community Directors Australia in partnership with Women for Election and Politics in Colour, the program engaged 125 people, 53% of whom were women identified as having at least one diversity characteristic, including 37 women from multicultural backgrounds and 5 First Peoples women. Overall, 39 graduates contested the 2024 elections, with 18 successfully elected to council (**DGS: \$15,000 in 2024–25**).

DPC's **VACAP Employment Brokers** program funds 8 community-based employment brokers to provide tailored support, education and training to jobseekers. In 2024–25 more than 630 people received one-on-one employment support and more than 170 people secured a job. Over 50% of participants were between 15 and 24 years old (**DPC: \$951,000 in 2024–25**).

DTP's **Engineering Pathways Industry Cadetship** program aims to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce on Big Build major transport infrastructure projects through entry-level employment pathways.

The program employs engineers exclusively from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds. Over 18 months, cadets undertake full-time employment with a participating employer and complete part-time study with Swinburne University, completing a postgraduate Graduate Certificate in Infrastructure Engineering Management.

The most recent program began in October 2024, with cadets representing 15 countries of origin. A 2024 social valuation report outlined a social value of \$8 million generated by the program.

Fifteen participants who started in October 2024 are on track to complete the program in April 2026 (**DTP: \$250,000 in 2024–25**).

Case study

The Employment Brokers program, which is part of the Victorian African Communities Action Plan, supports community organisations to deliver culturally aware employment and job readiness programs for African Victorians.

Anne,* a 49-year-old mother of a large family, faced overwhelming challenges at work and home. After losing her job in the disability sector and struggling with financial pressures, she turned to the program for support.

The broker worked with Anne to address key barriers such as understanding her contract, improving her confidence when job searching and expanding her access to resources.

With tailored support, Anne gained a clearer understanding of her rights and responsibilities, learned how to navigate Centrelink support and updated her résumé.

Anne also set short-term and long-term goals to secure a new job and build her skills through study. She gained valuable experience by volunteering at a local church and in January 2024 started work with another employer. As part of her journey, Anne organised a women's group to support other people in similar situations and enrolled in further study.

Today, Anne is thriving in her new role and now her son uses the Employment Brokers program to develop his professional skill set. This story highlights the transformative impact of personalised support, helping Victorians break through barriers and build brighter futures that align with their career aspirations.

* Name changed to protect the person's identity.

Victorians are connected to culture and community

Victorians are socially engaged and live in inclusive communities

The government helps communities connect and thrive by supporting culture and community initiatives.

DJSIR's **Multicultural Arts Victoria's NEWPRINT** program empowers black, Aboriginal, people of colour or culturally and racially marginalised-identifying event producers to design, curate and deliver live music events.

Each year, producers work in pairs with full creative freedom to deliver dynamic events, supported by mentorships and training. In 2024–25 NEWPRINT empowered 16 producers, delivered 30 events and showcased more than 200 artists.

By fostering inclusion and amplifying diverse voices, NEWPRINT is shaping a more representative and vibrant live music culture in Victoria **(DJSIR: \$200,000 in 2024–25)**.

DPC's **Multicultural Festivals and Events Program** supported 393 organisations to deliver multicultural festivals and events across the state during 2024–25 **(DPC: \$2.5 million in 2024–25)**.

The **Regional Multicultural Festivals and Events Fund** supported 85 regional multicultural organisations to hold events in regional Victoria **(DPC: \$1.187 million in 2024–25)**.

In 2024–25 the **Multicultural Seniors Support Program** supported close to 1,000 multicultural seniors' organisations, reaching more than 142,000 members across 46 local government areas. The program helped fund social and cultural activities, improved seniors' digital accessibility and literacy, provided practical support and purchased essential equipment and resources for members **(DPC: \$2 million in 2024–25)**.

DJCS funded the Australian Vietnamese Women's Association to deliver the **Indo-Chinese Prisoner Support Program**. The program offered culturally responsive individual and family support through information and advocacy to Indo-Chinese prisoners both pre- and post-release. The service aims to assist people in prison to maintain, establish or re-establish links with family, friends and the community through assertive outreach, case management and, based on need, supplying material aid to improve reintegration **(DJCS: \$195,000 in 2024–25)**.



Case study

Indian Film Festival of Melbourne — celebrating diversity through cinema

The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) brings together Victoria's vibrant Indian and South Asian communities, local audiences and emerging filmmakers. It provides a platform for cultural exchange and industry connection, benefiting both established and emerging talent, supported by VicScreen's funding and initiatives.

Victoria is home to one of Australia's largest Indian communities, yet diverse voices in cinema often face barriers to visibility and representation. IFFM addresses this by showcasing authentic storytelling and creating opportunities for under-represented filmmakers.

Held annually in Melbourne, IFFM celebrated its 15th festival in 2024–25 with an in-person audience of 33,840 and 113,250 plays online. IFFM featured more than 70 films in more than 30 languages, alongside flagship events such as the flag-raising ceremony, dance competition and the IFFM Awards Night. Highlights included the premiere of the VicScreen-supported film *My Melbourne* and the Regional Rhapsody program launch, expanding screenings to Geelong, Bendigo and Shepparton. Initiatives like the Emerging Talent Support Fund and the film *My Melbourne* amplified diverse voices, including LGBTQIA+ communities, people with disabilities and female filmmakers.

IFFM strengthens cultural inclusion and industry diversity. By championing authentic storytelling and fostering cross-cultural dialogue, IFFM has become a cornerstone of Victoria's multicultural arts calendar.



Indian Film Festival of Melbourne – Awards Night, 2025

Connecting communities to culturally significant spaces

The Victorian Government recognises the importance of multicultural communities having safe, accessible and culturally appropriate places in which to gather.

DPC allocated \$6.3 million in 2024–25 to 38 multicultural community organisations for infrastructure projects. These included election commitments and projects supported through the **2024–25 Chinese Community Infrastructure Fund** and the **Jewish Community Security Infrastructure Program (DPC: \$6.3 million in 2024–25)**.

Case study

Through the 2024–25 Chinese Community Infrastructure Fund, the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo received more than \$390,000 to support the schematic design and function brief to redevelop the museum. The activities are a key step in the museum's \$40 million project to expand and refurbish as it transitions to the new National Chinese Museum of Australia.

Built in 1991, the Golden Dragon Museum holds a collection of about 30,000 items, including 'Loong', thought to be the oldest complete imperial dragon in the world. Over time, the museum has outgrown its facility, placing items in the collection at risk. The redevelopment project will address space and storage issues, improve opportunities for researchers and students through enhanced conservation and research facilities and improve the visitor experience.

Completing the schematic design and function brief is an important stage in the project. Pairing the schematic design and function brief with the museum business case will ensure the project is viable while also meeting the needs, requirements and expectations of the museum and the wider community.

Victorians have equal rights and opportunities

Anti-racism and anti-discrimination

The Victorian Government works to ensure every Victorian is treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

In 2024–25 the government launched **Victoria's Anti-racism Strategy 2024–2029**. The strategy provides a 5-year plan for preventing and addressing race- and faith-based discrimination and strengthening outcomes for First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith Victorians.

The Anti-Racism Taskforce, co-chaired by Sheena Watt MP and Iwan Walters MP, played an integral role in developing the strategy and continues to offer expert guidance during implementation.

In 2024–25 the government began implementing several flagship actions:

- allocating \$2.4 million through 2024–26 to the **Local Anti-Racism Initiatives Grants Program**, which is supporting 30 First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith organisations to deliver grassroots responses to racism
- engaging the Centre for Multicultural Youth, in partnership with Koorie Heritage Trust and Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd, to co-design a **statewide anti-racism campaign in community sport**, working with 7 state sporting associations (AFL, basketball, cricket, football, netball, NRL and tennis), Vicsport and VicHealth
- appointing the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) to design training that **builds the capacity of frontline police to take human rights-centred approaches** when engaging with First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith communities
- appointing the VEOHRC to deliver the anti-racism pilot, **Better than That: Building anti-racist workplaces** to recognise workplaces that are culturally safe and inclusive (**DPC: \$2 million in 2024–25**).

DJCS led anti-vilification reform, strengthening anti-vilification laws to protect more Victorians from hate speech through the *Justice Legislation Amendment (Anti-vilification and Social Cohesion) Act 2025*, which was enacted in April 2025. Extensive consultation with the Victorian community (including with multicultural and multifaith communities) on potential reforms to anti-vilification laws took place throughout 2024. A consultation paper outlining an overview of the proposed reforms appeared on the Engage Victoria website in September 2024. The reforms will protect and promote human rights by:

- extending anti-vilification protections to protect more Victorians
- improving how serious vilification offences and civil protections operate
- expanding the powers of the VEOHRC to better respond to vilification (**DJCS**).

In December 2024 the Victorian Government announced several measures designed to confront antisemitism, protect religious worship and restore social cohesion.

This included setting up the **Local Escalation and Help group (LEAH)** with the support of DPC. LEAH includes representatives of Jewish community groups, government departments and local councils to provide a direct communication channel on critical issues between government and the community. LEAH was established in April 2025, focusing on community safety, combating antisemitism, improving experiences in key sectors such as creative industries, advancing anti-vilification and protest reforms and strengthening community resilience.

Through LEAH, the government has established a communications protocol that provides timely information flow and can bring LEAH together, if required, after a major incident (**DPC**).

Case study

In 2024 the VEOHRC launched a guideline on race discrimination in the workplace as an early action under Victoria's Anti-racism Strategy. The guideline provides a practical tool to help employers prevent and respond to race discrimination in the workplace and comply with the Equal Opportunity Act.

Alongside the guideline VEOHRC has produced anti-racism resources to help organisations meet their obligations. These include guidance on racial literacy, how to be an active bystander, developing a workplace race discrimination prevention plan and developing a workplace anti-racism policy. There are also factsheets on employee rights and employer responsibilities around race discrimination at work.

VEOHRC is also leading an anti-racism pilot for employers titled, *Better than That: Building Anti-racist Workplaces*, building on the guideline. The scheme will create an anti-racism framework for workplaces, develop free audit and capability tools and build anti-racism capability among employers.

In 2024–25 DPC supported the **Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria's** (ECCV) core operations, a peak body representing multicultural communities. ECCV advocates for multicultural communities, including in the areas of human rights, access and equity and by improving services.

Government funding supports ECCV's management and governance, communications and policy and advocacy activities.

ECCV enhances the government's engagement with multicultural communities, multicultural sector capacity building and community participation and embeds intersectional approaches to service delivery.

Four longstanding policy advisory committees inform ECCV's work. In 2024–25 the committees:

- established the new Victorian CALD Community Aged Care Provider Network
- facilitated 116 stakeholder organisations to attend meetings
- convened 15 policy and advisory committee meetings
- facilitated 12 network meetings.

ECCV also published 9 reports and policy submissions in the areas of racism and discrimination, disability, digital access, elder abuse, housing and Victoria's bicultural workforce. This work is on top of ongoing Victorian parliamentary and statewide multicultural policy engagement **(DPC: \$875,000 in 2024–25)**.

The work of the **South Sudanese Australian Youth Justice Expert Working Group** was delivered by a partnership between DJCS and the Commission for Children and Young People. The working group addresses the over-representation of young South Sudanese Australians in the youth justice system. In 2024–25 this working group undertook extensive consultation with the South Sudanese Australian community through its adult and youth advisory groups and Interagency Committee to inform a final report of recommendations to address the drivers of over-representation of South Sudanese Australian young people in the youth justice system **(DJCS)**.

Promoting human rights in government departments

The Victorian Government is building multicultural capacity within our departments and embedding human rights knowledge and practices at every level of government.

All government departments have been part of the VEOHRC-led Charter Education Program. The program is helping to build a culture of human rights across the public service.

The following section sets out initiatives from each department.

Department of Education

DE is committed to upholding the principles enshrined in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities by actively implementing, promoting and supporting human rights, including for multicultural communities. DE supports its staff to increase their capacity to make decisions and provide advice consistent with the Charter through tailored learning guides, events and activities.

To better understand the Charter, DE hosted 3 Charter Leadership briefings facilitated by the VEOHRC.

Also, all staff complete a mandatory e-learn introducing them to the Charter and its relationship to their work during their induction.

Throughout the year, DE builds on this foundational knowledge by acknowledging and encouraging participation in events and days that promote diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness.

Over the reporting period, DE published staff communications to promote inclusive and respectful workplaces, Cultural Diversity Week, Human Rights Week and Human Rights Day through its Corporate News. DE encouraged staff to celebrate these events by taking part in the VEOHRC's week of daily actions and attending relevant events and training. These communications help foster a culture of respect, diversity and inclusion.

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

DEECA is committed to upholding the principles enshrined in the Charter by actively implementing, promoting and supporting human rights, including for multicultural communities.

DEECA took part in the VEOHRC Charter Education Program in 2024–25. This included delivering tailored sessions to senior leaders and teams, with modules focused on the following learning objectives:

- understanding how the Charter operates
- building knowledge of the protected human rights
- journey mapping decision-making under the Charter and identifying actions to embed and improve practice
- identifying public sector obligations and how human rights can be lawfully limited
- exploring relevant scenarios to apply human rights in day-to-day work
- knowing where to go for more information and resources.

During 2025 DEECA worked with the VEOHRC to deliver the Charter Capability Program with the First Peoples Self Determination Division. This focused on building a human rights culture so all Victorians are treated equally and with dignity and respect. The program deepened knowledge on rights and obligations under the Charter, including how to identify and manage risk. Staff are also supported to develop actions for embedding the Charter within their teams.

The Charter of Human Rights in Victoria online education program is available through the department's Learning Management System. These e-learning modules address the rights and obligations under equal opportunity and human rights laws. The modules build general awareness of human rights and discrimination in workplaces and develop awareness of the benefits of embedding a culture of human rights at work.

DEECA also acknowledges key events that celebrate human rights including Cultural Diversity Week, Human Rights Week and the International Day of Human Rights.

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

DFFH has a mandated e-learning module during induction to introduce staff to the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and its relationship to their work. Anti-racism training is mandatory for people leaders and is delivered in an instructor-led format. All executives have a diversity performance outcome in their personal development plans to embed diversity and inclusion across the department.

DFFH also takes part in annual events that celebrate human rights, including:

- Cultural Diversity Week
- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- Human Rights Day
- International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia
- International Day of People with Disability
- International Women's Day
- NAIDOC Week
- Reconciliation Week.

Department of Government Services

In partnership with the VEOHRC, DGS ran the Charter of Human Rights Education Program for staff in 2024–25, including:

- a series of briefings for executive leaders on their responsibilities under the Charter, with a focus on thematic topics such as privacy, Aboriginal cultural rights and housing
- promoting the VPS Charter webinar series for all staff, which considers the Charter in relation to specific topics such as advancing disability rights and gender equality
- an intensive Charter Capability Program for staff from Births Deaths and Marriages and Consumer Affairs Victoria to deepen their understanding and implementation of the Charter.

DGS has also mandated that all staff complete the VEOHRC's Charter e-learn.

Department of Health

DH is committed to upholding the principles enshrined in the Charter by actively promoting and supporting human rights considerations and obligations in the design and implementation of policies and procedures.

DH supports senior leadership to increase their understanding and capacity to make decisions and provide advice consistent with the Charter through the Charter Leadership Briefings and the Charter and Human Rights and Responsibilities e-learn (managers, legal and policy officers). All staff complete mandatory e-learns in onboarding and every 2 years thereafter.

The following sessions were completed in 2024–25:

- Charter Education Program (instructor-led)
- Charter Leadership Briefings (instructor-led)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities for managers and legal and policy officers (e-learn)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (e-learn)
- Unconscious Bias (e-learn).

The Charter Guide for Public Sector Workers, Human Rights in Focus webinars and public sector implementation information is available on the DH intranet to help staff understand their responsibilities and to guide implementation in their work.

DH also acknowledges key events that celebrate human rights including Cultural Diversity Week, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Human Rights Week and the International Day of Human Rights. Other aligned and supporting days of significance are also acknowledged or celebrated.

Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions

DJSIR actively supports human rights, including for multicultural communities. DJSIR staff have access to tailored learning, guides and resources, events and activities that help them act in line with Victoria's Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

DJSIR encourages all staff to complete the first 3 modules in the VEOHRC's online education program, which cover:

- introducing the Charter
- rights and obligations under the Charter
- embedding a human rights culture in Victoria.

DJSIR also provides staff with the Charter guide for public sector workers to help them understand their responsibilities and how to implement human rights.

DJSIR celebrates annual human rights events such as Cultural Diversity Week, Refugee Week, Human Rights Week and the International Day of Human Rights.

The department also supports the right for every person in Victoria to take part in public life without discrimination, including in the conduct of public affairs such as participating on the boards of Victorian Government entities. DJSIR has taken active steps to ensure diversity and skills information has been updated across the entities to help identify gaps when considering potential appointments to boards. Diversity information has also been collected from potential candidates through expression of interest processes conducted for entities in the Tourism, Sport and Major Events (TSME) portfolio. This helps to identify people with certain diversity characteristics within the candidate pool.

People from diverse backgrounds were represented on the following TSME boards and committees:

- Australian Grand Prix Corporation
- Kardinia Park Stadium Trust
- Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust
- Melbourne Cricket Ground Trust
- Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Board
- Puffing Billy Railway Board
- State Sport Centres Trust
- Victorian Convention and Event Trust
- Victorian Institute of Sport
- Visit Victoria
- Yarra Park Advisory Committee.

Diverse representation on TSME boards and committees has steadily progressed. For example, 47% of members identify as women, 44% were born overseas (or have a parent born overseas) and 23% identify as culturally, religiously or linguistically diverse.

Board members across the Game Management Authority and Victorian Fisheries Authority include diverse groups. For instance, 65% of board members identify as women, 53% identify as being from a diverse multicultural background and another 53% live regionally.

Across 15 creative industries boards, 37 positions were appointed or renewed during 2024–25. These appointments were made via a 2024 Creative Victoria expression of interest to improve the diversity of candidates. The process resulted in 15 of the 37 appointments representing a multicultural background.

Department of Justice and Community Safety

DJCS is committed to upholding the principles enshrined in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities by actively implementing, promoting and supporting human rights, including for multicultural communities.

The department upholds the Victorian public sector values, including the human rights value.

DJCS's learning and capability agenda supports a focus on human rights. This includes:

- implementing the Charter e-learn education program covering 6 modules, of which 3 are for all staff and 3 are for legal and policy staff and managers
- taking part in the VEOHRC's Charter Education Program
- staff accessing free VEOHRC-run seminars
- a range of respect in the workplace e-learns (mandatory) and facilitated in-person sessions
- Aboriginal Cultural Safety workshops.

DJCS's diversity action plans contribute to a focus on human rights. In addition to the Multicultural and Multifaith Action Plan 2023–2027, DJCS's Gender Equality Action Plan 2021–2025, the Disability Action Plan 2022–2026 and the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan 2025–2028 contribute to upholding human rights, taking an intersectional approach.

Department of Premier and Cabinet

In partnership with the VEOHRC, DGS ran the Charter of Human Rights Education Program for staff in 2024, which included:

- briefings for executive leaders on their responsibilities under the Charter, with a focus on thematic topics such as privacy, Aboriginal cultural rights and housing
- promoting the VPS Charter webinar series for all staff, which considered the Charter in relation to specific topics such as advancing disability rights and gender equality
- an intensive Charter Capability Program for staff from the Treaty team to deepen their understanding and implementation of the Charter
- a mandatory e-learn on the Charter.

Department of Transport and Planning

DTP uses the VEOHRC-developed modules. These modules build awareness of human rights and responsibilities under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities within Victorian public authorities.

The 6 modules are:

- Module 1: An overview of the Charter
- Module 2: Protected rights and obligations under the Charter

- Module 3: What it means to build a culture of human rights in Victoria
- Module 4: Complaints and remedies
- Module 5: The legislative process
- Module 6: Courts and tribunals.

The training is part of DTP's Mandatory Compliance Curricula.

All staff, including contractors, must complete the first 4 modules, and managers must complete all 6 as part of their mandatory compliance training. Retraining is every 2 years.

Department of Treasury and Finance

In partnership with the VEOHRC, DGS ran the Charter of Human Rights Education Program for DTF staff in 2024. This included:

- briefings for executive leaders on their responsibilities under the Charter, with a focus on thematic topics such as privacy, Aboriginal cultural rights and housing
- promoting the VPS Charter webinar series for all staff, which considers the Charter in relation to specific topics such as advancing disability rights and gender equality
- an intensive Charter Capability Program for staff from the Treaty team to deepen their understanding and implementation of the Charter
- a mandatory e-learn on the Charter.

Progress on departmental cultural diversity plans

Cultural diversity plans (CDPs) help Victorian government departments provide more inclusive, accessible and responsive services to multicultural and multifaith communities. They cover many areas, including:

- workforce diversity
- engagement
- participation
- inclusion
- cultural competency in service delivery.

Departments report their progress on their CDPs every year, in line with the Multicultural Victoria Act. Table 7 shows the status of departmental CDPs as of 30 June 2025.

Table 7: Status of departmental cultural diversity plans, 30 June 2024

Department	Relevant plan and status
Department of Education	2023–27 Cultural Diversity Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019–2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing; plans to update this strategy are underway
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing	Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2022–2027 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing	Anti-racism Action Plan 2024 to 2027 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing
Department of Health	Multicultural Health Action Plan 2023–27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing
Department of Government Services	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Roadmap 2024–2026 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	Cultural Diversity Plan 2018–2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing
Department of Justice and Community Safety	Multicultural and Multifaith Action Plan 2023–2027 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing
Department of Premier and Cabinet	Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019–2021 ¹¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing
Department of Transport and Planning	Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2020–2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing
Department of Treasury and Finance	Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2021–2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing; plans to update this strategy are underway

¹¹ A new strategy has been updated in 2025.

Departmental cultural diversity plans

Department of Education's 2023–27 Cultural Diversity Plan

Vision

DE's CDP identifies 4 focus areas for delivering culturally sensitive services:

- early childhood education participation
- student learning and wellbeing
- intercultural capability in schools
- workforce diversity and professional learning.

The focus areas bring together DE's work under current strategic reforms to improve outcomes for children and young people with multicultural and multifaith backgrounds.

Goals

The 4 objectives of the CDP align with the plan's focus areas:

- Early childhood education participation: Support improved participation in early childhood education for multicultural, children, families and carers.
- Student learning and wellbeing: Foster a culturally safe and equitable school education system.
- Intercultural capability in schools: Build the intercultural capability of school leaders, teachers and students.
- Workforce diversity and professional learning: Support cultural diversity, equity and inclusion in our early childhood, school education and corporate workforces and promote professional learning.

Governance and ownership

DE's Culture, People and Integrity Committee and Executive Board oversee the CDP. DE has established a companion action register to track actions across the CDP's focus areas. Each CDP action includes an acquittal measure to identify annual progress of CDP services. The CDP's focus areas and objectives will be assessed by collectively reviewing all actions.

Cultural competence training

DE provides a range of information and resources to help staff build their knowledge and capability about cultural diversity, including via a well-promoted internal collaboration page. This includes a range of ways that staff and managers can foster cultural competency and tackle racism at work.

The department is a member of Diversity Council Australia. As well as ongoing internal training, DE stages events and provides resources to help staff create a respectful, safe and inclusive workplace.

DE offers the Respectful Workplaces Program as e-learn modules. The modules form part of the staff induction program (in corporate and schools), and DE encourages staff to complete these at regular intervals thereafter. The modules include:

- Respectful workplaces
- Human rights and responsibilities
- Equal opportunities
- Addressing workplace bullying
- Understanding the DE values.

The following modules are also offered to support inclusive workplace behaviours and recruitment practices and to encourage staff to raise concerns when they have them:

- Sexual harassment
- Leading a respectful workplace, addressing concerns, complaints and serious behaviours (for managers)
- Inclusive recruitment
- Anti-racism — a self-paced course provided by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Facilitated training sessions are also available for staff who want to further develop their cultural competence. They include:

- Active bystander training
- Anti-racism empowerment
- Human rights training
- Aboriginal cultural awareness
- Aboriginal cultural safety.

Decision-making processes and program evaluation

DE has a register of community stakeholders and organisations for consultation on program and policy development. The department has established internal processes for consulting directly with multicultural community stakeholders and organisations.

For example, DE engages and consults with its staff networks including the Women of Colour and the African Australian networks and seeks their guidance on related policies and processes.

Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019–2022

During 2024–25 DEECA developed the **Diversity and Inclusion Framework (2026–2029)**. Development included deep consultation with a wide range of staff, reflecting their voices and lived experiences. The framework describes how the department integrates fairness, accessibility and a sense of belonging into all aspects of its work.

Vision

DEECA aims to create a culture that embraces individual differences in all forms and fosters innovation and inclusion to support:

- liveable, inclusive and sustainable communities and thriving natural environments
- all staff to achieve their full potential and to work in a flexible way that meets their needs
- a community charter that emphasises the diversity and inclusion values of building enduring and genuine partnerships.

Goals

The goals of DEECA's Strategy are to:

- improve service delivery and decision-making through strong, inclusive leadership and training and development opportunities
- foster attitudes and practices that better support diversity and inclusion
- create opportunities to recruit and retain staff from diverse groups in the community
- adopt an intersectional lens when developing diversity and inclusion initiatives that are fit for purpose in addressing systemic barriers to social cohesion and equity.

Governance and ownership

The People and Culture Division consults broadly on decisions relating to the strategy including proposed changes to whole of department policies, procedures and processes. Key departmental stakeholders include:

- DEECA's staff-led networks
- People and Culture's leadership team and Stewardship Committee
- the Organisational Development Culture Partner Network
- the Executive Board
- the Manager, Diversity and Inclusion, who drives key commitments in the strategy
- 2 voluntary staff-led networks — the Multicultural Network and the Women of Colour Network — to inform and progress the strategy and related action plans.

For an intersectionality lens, DEECA also consults with other staff-led networks, including:

- Place of Pride
- All Abilities Network
- Emerging Professionals Network
- Aboriginal Staff Led Network
- Women in STEM.

The department also confers with broader public service networks.

Cultural competence training

DEECA delivered the following initiatives to support increased cultural competence:

- promoted diversity and inclusion learning opportunities to new staff through the new starter induction program
- delivered Charter of Human Rights training and resources through the VEOHRC's Charter Education Program
- delivered the DEECA Women of Colour Network mentoring program
- delivered safe and respectful workplaces training
- provided the Navigating Recruitment e-learn to embed knowledge of bias, discrimination, inclusion and diversity throughout the recruitment and onboarding process
- promoted SBS Inclusion and Cultural Competency training modules for all staff
- offered the Cultural Inclusion Program e-learn via the department's Learning Management System

- provided the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training e-learn via the Learning Management System, making it mandatory for all staff.

Decision-making processes, program evaluation and public engagement

DEECA's Community Charter helps the department build better relationships with stakeholders and communities, including:

- Traditional Owner groups
- Aboriginal Victorians
- local councils
- catchment management authorities
- water corporations
- the building industry
- environment groups.

The department uses local networks, processes, tools and resources to improve interactions and engagement in policy planning and to deliver programs and projects.

The Community Charter reflects the department's unique relationship with First Peoples as rights holders and embodies a strong commitment to self-determination. This requires staff to be culturally capable and safe and to recognise and embrace Aboriginal decision-making.

DEECA aligns its community engagement approach, enabling:

- more confident and effective engagement
- communities to be involved in decisions that interest them
- stronger relationships with multicultural communities
- more informed decision-making.

DEECA also uses Engage Victoria for online consultations. Engage Victoria is the government's centralised online consultation platform provided by DGS. It offers a range of tools to enable the community to take part in policy and program development and to share their ideas and opinions on a range of issues and topics.

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing's Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2022–2027

Vision

DFFH is a proactive leader in diversity and inclusion. DFFH commits to:

- empowering people to express their identity and to belong
- removing structural and systemic barriers so everyone can reach their full potential in a safe, equitable and respectful workplace
- creating a department that embodies inclusive leadership, celebrates diversity of thought and reflects the diversity of the communities served to better support them.

Goals

- DFFH's leadership profile, governance structures and workforce reflect the community's diversity, and all staff are accountable for creating an inclusive workplace.
- DFFH empowers the voices of its diverse workforce, values diversity of thought and creates a workplace where all staff are supported to develop and progress their careers.
- Diverse people's lived experience is core to policy, programs and services, to improve business practices and outcomes for the diverse communities served.
- Culturally safe actions are embedded into systems and practices as the norm, and work environments are accessible and safe, with prevention, early intervention and suitable response to discrimination and inappropriate behaviours.
- DFFH has transparency, accountability and measurable targets to achieve outcomes.

Governance and ownership

The department's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee focuses on organisational diversity and inclusion, including gender equality.

The committee:

- oversees the Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Gender Equality Action Plan
- ensures DFFH is taking coordinated action and holding itself to account
- oversees the Diversity and Inclusion Framework implementation and acts if progress is not being made

- provides a report to the DFFH Board annually against relevant outcomes, strategies and measures
- authorises changes to the Diversity and Inclusion Framework and implementation plan, in consultation with the diverse staff community of practice.

The committee comprises:

- executive members from each division accountable for progressing diversity, inclusion and gender equality
- staff members from staff networks and other priority groups, including Aboriginal staff, staff with disability, LGBTIQ+ staff, staff from multicultural and multifaith backgrounds and older adult staff.

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing's Anti-racism Action Plan 2024 to 2027

Vision

DFFH is a proactive leader in:

- eliminating all forms of racism
- empowering people to express their identity
- fostering a sense of belonging in the department
- dismantling structural and systemic barriers so everyone can reach their full potential
- ensuring the workplace is psychologically healthy, safe, inclusive and respectful.

Goals

The plan aims to build a more inclusive and equitable work environment by addressing systemic and individual racism. It focuses on increasing racial literacy, eliminating bias and enhancing workplace culture. With a commitment to a psychologically safe workplace, it includes reporting mechanisms and data collection to drive informed improvements in fairness and inclusivity across all levels of the organisation.

The plan offers resources and support to help everyone contribute to a more inclusive workplace, focusing on 6 main drivers:

- develop and measure racial literacy
- remove racial bias
- create systems and processes to call out racism
- improve recruitment processes
- strengthen workplace culture
- ensure transparency and accountability.

Governance and ownership

The plan is reviewed yearly, with progress tabled at the People and Culture subcommittee of the Executive Board. The Action Plan is also a standing item for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Executive Committee. Progress is monitored through the following channels:

- DFFH People and Culture Committee:
 - Yearly paper to the committee on progress as part of the Diversity and Inclusion Framework
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee:
 - Review and report on progress at committee meetings every quarter.

The committee may decide to evaluate programs or strategies. These are reported in line with the relevant timetable.

After each report the People and Culture Committee, relevant staff and employee network representatives are updated.

Cultural competence training

All departmental staff must complete the mandatory Workforce Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Aboriginal Cultural Safety e-learning training. These courses increase staff understanding and knowledge of priority areas for building diverse workforces, including:

- Aboriginal peoples
- people with disabilities
- people from culturally diverse backgrounds
- LGBTIQ+ employees.

Unconscious bias training is given to staff in both e-learning and instructor-led formats.

Anti-racism training is mandatory for people leaders and is delivered in an instructor-led format.

All executives have a diversity performance outcome in their personal development plans to improve diversity and inclusion across the department.

The following projects were completed in 2024–25:

- rolled out multifaith prayer space guidelines
- launched the Multicultural Staff Network
- developed the Lived Experience Policy Guide
- developed and began rolling out dedicated Anti-racism & Diversity and Inclusion workshops
- delivered People Leader Training to more than 1,000 staff to build capability and accountability.

Decision-making processes, program evaluation and public engagement

The department has established a Multicultural Staff Network and Women of Colour Network. Key members of employee-led networks are supported by a senior Executive Champion to drive organisational inclusion.

DFFH supports culturally diverse communities to make decisions through policies, guidelines and approaches. This includes:

- consulting with stakeholders on policy and program design
- developing in-language resources
- ensuring translators are provided where required
- supporting bicultural workers to engage with communities
- building the capacity of departmental staff to better engage diverse communities.

DFFH launched the Diverse Women in Leadership Fast Track Program in 2024. The program aims to strengthen the leadership of diverse women working across DFFH with 2 streams — manager and executive. It is designed to support the careers of diverse women and to elevate their impact on our organisation and on the communities served. Key elements of the one-year program are:

- on-the-job learning and skills development
- executive mentoring
- senior leader shadowing or project shadowing
- one-on-one career coaching sessions
- support to create a customised leadership development plan
- an opportunity to take on an acting role at the next VPS level for the last 6 months of the program.

At the end of the program, participants should have:

- built on the foundations of strong leadership skills
- developed rational approaches to building a leadership profile that uncovers their values, skills, cultural knowledge and capabilities
- developed vision and leadership approaches that support and lead to innovation, confidence and capability to perform at the manager or executive level
- first-hand, significant and on-the-job experience at the VPS-6 level for VPS-5 participants and at the executive level for VPS-6 participants.

In 2024–25, 10 participants took part in the program.

Department of Health's Multicultural Health Action Plan 2023–27

Vision

DH's vision is that Victorians are the healthiest people in the world. To achieve this, DH has developed its Multicultural Health Action Plan 2023–27. The plan's vision is to ensure multicultural communities can access culturally competent health care and experience equitable health outcomes.

Goals

The plan has 6 improvement goals:

- Invest in targeted policies, programs and services that improve health equity.
- Design and deliver accessible and culturally competent mainstream policies, programs and services.
- Provide language services and accessible communications.
- Strengthen community engagement, capacity building and lived experience representation.
- Enhance cultural competency through workforce capability and inclusive leadership.
- Build evidence-based approaches through data, research and evaluation.

Improvement goals are interconnected. Collective advancement across all goals is essential to improve health outcomes for multicultural communities and to achieve the department's vision.

Governance and ownership

The department's Executive Board oversees the plan, including ensuring it is embedded in core business.

Cultural competence training

DH implements workforce strategies to build a diverse workforce that reflects the community it serves. These strategies also aim to create a positive, inclusive and culturally competent workplace to create a comfortable and productive environment for staff.

All staff must complete 'Creating an inclusive, respectful, culturally and psychologically safe workplace' e-learning training. This course increases understanding and knowledge of priority areas for building diverse workforces, including:

- diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in everyday interactions
- recognising and responding to workplace bullying

- understanding each person’s role in preventing sexual harassment
- knowing what to do if faced with inappropriate behaviour
- Aboriginal cultural safety (mandatory for all staff)
- unconscious bias training.

Staff can access 5 cultural competency education sessions covering topics that reflect the plan’s improvement goals and good practice principles including across the following domains:

- providing language services, accessible communications and translation
- strengthening community engagement, capacity building and lived experience
- enhancing cultural competency through workforce capability.

Decision-making processes and program evaluation

DH engages multicultural communities to shape the programs and policies that impact them as consumers, carers and communities through a range of approaches. This includes:

- consulting stakeholders on policy and program design
- developing in-language resources
- ensuring translations are provided where required
- supporting bicultural workers to engage with communities
- building the capacity of staff to better engage diverse communities.

DH also facilitated the CALD Health Advisory Group, which met quarterly in 2024–25. The group:

- advised on public health policy, research, programs and services, as well as current and emerging issues impacting multicultural communities
- advised and supported emergency preparedness, response and social recovery efforts
- helped deliver public health messages and advised on best practice for communication and engagement with multicultural and multifaith communities.

Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions' Cultural Diversity Plan 2018–2025¹²

Vision

The action plan's vision is to:

- foster a culturally diverse and inclusive workplace that reflects the sectors and communities it works with
- provide inclusive service delivery to culturally diverse clients and communities that fosters greater inclusion in Victoria's economy.

Goals

The plan has 3 goals:

- **Leadership:** Leaders will champion the CDP to foster engagement at all levels. We will all support cultural diversity through ownership at all levels.
- **Information building:** We will build our understanding of internal cultural diversity. We will build our understanding of the cultural diversity of the communities we work with.
- **A culturally diverse workforce:** We will support opportunities to grow cultural diversity at all levels of the organisation. Our workforce will reflect the communities we work with.

Governance and ownership

The Executive Director, People and Culture, oversees the CDP, which is part of the department's Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Framework. The Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Committee, a subcommittee of the Executive Board, monitors the framework's progress.

Cultural competence training

All staff are encouraged to develop cultural competence through professional development opportunities.

In 2024–25 cultural competence training opportunities included:

- a cultural competence e-learning program on the DJSIR learning management system
- online cultural diversity courses from LinkedIn Learning
- presentations and panel discussions organised by the staff-led People of Colour Network.

All hiring managers and selection panels must complete online unconscious bias training before conducting job interviews.

Decision-making processes and program evaluation

DJSIR's CDP requires that all business areas consult with the community when evaluating programs and services, including by:

- consulting with culturally diverse communities and advisory boards when making decisions about programs, policies and services that directly affect culturally diverse communities
- using available demographic and service data on cultural diversity to support decision-making for programs, policies and service delivery
- embedding cultural diversity considerations when designing, implementing and evaluating policies, programs and services.

DJSIR aims to improve diverse representation in leadership by:

- affirming the department's commitment to diversity, inclusion and flexibility in all job advertisements
- requiring all panel members to complete unconscious bias and best practice recruitment training
- prompting hiring managers to select a balanced panel that reflects the diversity of the candidate pool
- requiring rigorous candidate assessment processes in line with VPS merit and equity principles
- applying the Diversity on Victorian Government Boards Guidelines when recruiting board members
- delivering inclusive leadership development programs for culturally diverse staff aspiring to progress their careers
- improving understanding of workforce diversity by encouraging staff to complete the annual anonymous People Matter Survey and self-identify their diversity details in the confidential HR system
- analysing diversity data and partnering with the department's staff-led People of Colour Network to identify workplace barriers and implement improvements.

¹² Cultural diversity will be a key focus area in the department's upcoming Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan.

Progress in 2024–25 included:

- improving representation of culturally and racially marginalised staff at the VPS-5 level, from 26% in the 2024 People Matter Survey to 31% in 2025
- discussing diversity issues, trends and committing to actions in executive committees, including a project to increase understanding of diversity across the executive workforce
- providing 32 culturally responsive career coaching sessions to staff from multicultural backgrounds through a tailored Employee Assistance Program pilot
- delivering a pilot leadership development program for 15 culturally diverse staff aspiring to progress to more senior roles
- evaluating leadership and coaching pilots to inform evidence-based actions for the upcoming Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan.

Department of Justice and Community Safety's Multicultural and Multifaith Action Plan 2023–2027

Vision

A justice and community safety system that is inclusive, equitable, culturally responsive and values people from multicultural and multifaith communities.

Goals

The plan has 6 priority focus areas:

- Improving data: Improve the collection and analysis of client and staff experiences to ensure evidence-based reform of systems, structures and practices, and improve outcomes for people from multicultural and multifaith communities.
- Building capability and capacity: Enhance departmental capability and capacity to create a more inclusive and equitable culture and environment for clients and staff.
- Equitable pathways to career development and leadership: Support career pathways and opportunities for progression and development for staff from multicultural and multifaith communities.
- Creating a safer, empowering and inclusive culture: Build an organisational culture and justice and community safety system where people from multicultural and multifaith communities feel safe, respected, included and valued.

- Partnering with communities to build stronger policies and programs: Partner with communities in a robust and appropriate way to ensure policies, programs and services are designed and delivered to the intended outcomes.
- Cultural responsiveness and inclusion are built into all programs and services: Build inclusive and culturally responsive programs, services and systems so the department achieves its intended outcomes for clients from multicultural and multifaith communities.

Governance and ownership

DJCS's Inclusion and Intersectionality team is responsible for the plan. The team liaises with business units on implementation, monitoring and reporting against plan activities.

The department set up a governance structure in early 2024 to oversee diversity strategies, including the plan. The structure includes a Senior Executive Steering Committee and an officer-level working group to oversee implementation. The structure supports a holistic approach to embedding intersectionality across DJCS while meeting commitments under each strategy.

Cultural competence training

Role-specific training such as induction programs, mandatory e-learning and professional development programs include cultural competency and awareness training. Topics include cultural diversity and human rights awareness. Other available learning includes unconscious bias and building multicultural relationships.

Learning programs are promoted via the monthly Justice Learning newsletter and in people leader communications. Leaders can assign programs to staff and staff can opt in via the Learning Management System.

Cultural competence training is also being embedded at the branch level. For example, the Victim Services, Support and Reform branch introduced a Workforce Capability Framework to reflect the specialist skills and knowledge required of its workforce.

Decision-making processes and program evaluation

DJCS has an engagement framework that supports its commitment to a just and safe Victoria. The framework ensures the department engages with its stakeholders in a consistent, meaningful, effective and inclusive way, reflecting DJCS's commitment to embedding partnerships throughout the justice and community safety system.

Department of Premier and Cabinet's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019–2021¹³

Vision

DPC's workforce is inclusive and reflects the diversity of the communities it serves. DGS supports DPC to develop, implement, monitor and report on its commitments under workforce inclusion.

DPC is committed to diversity, inclusion and equity to ensure all people:

- are treated with dignity and respect
- have equitable access to employment opportunities and outcomes
- can take part in all aspects of work life
- can achieve their full potential.

Goals

Across the various diversity and inclusion plans, the department aims for:

- visible leadership and accountability for diversity and inclusion
- attracting, developing and retaining a diverse, gender-balanced and talented workforce
- creating a safe (including culturally safe), respectful and inclusive workplace
- facilitating and promoting a flexible and accessible workplace
- measuring, monitoring and reporting on diversity and inclusion.

Governance and ownership

DPC is committed to implementing a diversity, equity and inclusion strategy underpinned by strong leadership, governance, accountability and reporting. Strategy implementation is a shared responsibility that requires a collaborative effort across the department:

- The Board of Management drives the strategic direction for diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Executive Champions provide visible leadership for diversity, equity and inclusion and champion diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.
- People Committees coordinate the monitoring and implementation of department-led actions.

- DGS People and Culture coordinates the monitoring and implementation of People and Culture-led actions and reports on progress against the strategy.
- Groups/Divisions integrate diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives into their annual business plans to support implementation.

Cultural competence training

The DGS People and Culture team offers opportunities for staff to:

- understand their rights and responsibilities to create an inclusive environment free from negative behaviours, including discrimination and harassment, and how to report negative behaviours in the workplace
- understand the complex and varied experiences of diverse communities
- identify and address unconscious bias and their effect on work practices and decisions
- understand and embed the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities in their work
- build First Peoples cultural competency.

Decision-making processes and program evaluation

In developing the strategy, DGS People and Culture engaged with staff experiences in a variety of ways:

- an analysis of 2024 People Matter Survey data related to diversity cohorts
- a series of workshops available to all staff
- a workshop with the Combined Enablers Network
- workshops specifically for culturally diverse staff
- interviews with various Executive Champions for diverse cohorts
- playback workshops with staff to co-design and prioritise actions.

¹³ This strategy is in review, and DGS is developing a new diversity and inclusion strategy that will cover DGS, DPC and DTF, planned for release in late 2025. This strategy remains in place until a new plan is approved and published.

Department of Transport and Planning's Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2020–2024

Vision

Inclusion is embedded into DTP's workplace culture so staff feel a sense of belonging and are empowered to contribute fully to the organisation's success. DTP represents the rich and diverse needs of the Victorian community.

Goals

Goals include the following:

- **Leader awareness/participation:** Leaders attend awareness-raising initiatives such as training and events.
- **Employee understanding:** Staff recognise bias, stereotypes, exclusion and inappropriate behaviour and feel confident to take effective bystander action.
- **Employee engagement:** People who identify as belonging to one of 5 priority diversity groups are equally engaged as the overall workforce.
- **Workforce composition:** The workforce reflects the diversity of the Victorian community.
- **Absenteeism, resignations, promotions, seniority:** The proportion of staff from the 5 priority diversity groups mirrors overall trends for the department.
- **Zero tolerance towards bullying and discrimination:** A decrease in the number of bullying and discrimination complaints (both formal and informal) is achieved over the duration of the strategy.
- **Benchmarking results:** DTP's rankings in national benchmarking indexes improve over the duration of the strategy (such as the Australian Workplace Equality Index, the Australian Network on Disability's Access and Inclusion Index and Diversity Council of Australia's Inclusion@YourWork Index).
- **Community perception:** DTP is seen as an employer of choice for people from the 5 priority diversity groups. DTP's services are relevant and responsive to the needs of the Victorian community.
- **Intersectional lens:** DTP works towards staff applying an intersectional lens to their work (for example, an audit of the DTP website shows the information is accessible to people with disability and people who speak a language other than English).

Governance and ownership

The Inclusion and Organisational Development branch partners with a variety of internal stakeholders to help implement and track progress against DTP's aim of creating a more inclusive and diverse workplace culture.

DTP previously reported to an Inclusion and Diversity Council. This helped accelerate the strategy's impact and encourage collaborative work to address problems and remove individual, organisational and systemic barriers. Going forward, a new Inclusion and Diversity Implementation Committee will oversee delivery of actions under DTP's new Inclusion, Equity, Diversity and Belonging Strategy.

Cultural competence training

From July 2020, core foundation training called 'Inclusion fundamentals and unconscious bias' has been delivered to DTP staff. This 5-hour training includes modules on:

- unconscious bias
- bystander action and inclusive leadership
- fostering cultural humility
- cultural awareness
- the impact of racism on culturally diverse staff in the workplace.

DTP encourages staff to complete e-learning modules on cultural competency. The Cultural Diversity e-learning module covers key topics, including:

- cross-cultural communication — navigating conversations and interactions with people from diverse cultural backgrounds
- cultural adaptation — understanding how cultural differences influence behaviour and learning how to adapt
- population trends and their impact — exploring demographic shifts and implications for society and the workplace.

Staff have other training opportunities through LinkedIn Learning courses that complement internal programs, such as:

- cultivating cultural competency
- supporting allyship and anti-racism at work.

These modules provide foundational knowledge to build more inclusive and respectful work environments.

Decision-making processes, program evaluation and public engagement

Community engagement includes multicultural communities affected by departmental decisions. DTP uses the International Association of Public Association's spectrum of public participation and a range of engagement methods, including:

- social media
- website project updates
- surveys
- community meetings
- consultation committees
- translator services.

In developing workforce-focused policies, processes and programs, feedback and contributions are sought from the CALD Employee-led Network (Employee Resource Group) to ensure lived experience input.

Department of Treasury and Finance's Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2021–2025

Vision

DTF's Diversity and Inclusion Framework aims to embed a diverse and inclusive culture across the department that reflects the diversity of the Victorian population.

Goals

The framework complements other whole of government initiatives including the Getting to Work disability employment plan and the Barring Djinang Aboriginal employment plan.

The framework has 6 goals:

- acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land across Victoria, value self-determination for Aboriginal peoples and support reconciliation
- remove barriers so people with disability can fully participate and excel
- promote a culture of gender equity, diversity and respect where people of all genders are supported to succeed
- ensure the LGBTIQ+ community is visibly recognised and included
- celebrate cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, and create a workforce that reflects the diverse Victorian community served
- enable people of all ages to participate and pursue career development opportunities.

Governance and ownership

DTF's People Committee oversees the framework. This committee reports to the DTF Board.

Cultural competence training

All staff complete mandatory training on ensuring fair workplaces, preventing sexual harassment, the code of conduct and human rights and disability awareness as part of corporate induction.

The department supports its staff to take part in employee-led networks. These networks give staff an opportunity to connect with peers across the public service and improve cultural capabilities.

Decision-making processes and program evaluation

DTF consults with key stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to monitor and evaluate programs.

Department of Government Services' Diversity Equity and Inclusion Roadmap 2024–2026

Vision

DGS is committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace where all people feel like they belong, are treated with dignity and respect, have equitable access to employment opportunities and outcomes and can achieve their full potential.

Goals

The roadmap outlines DGS's commitment to a safe, diverse, equitable and inclusive working environment that:

- acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land across Victoria, values self-determination for Aboriginal people, provides a culturally safe work environment and supports reconciliation
- removes barriers so people with disability and their carers can fully take part and reach their full potential
- promotes a culture of gender equity, diversity and respect where people of all genders are supported to succeed
- ensures the LGBTIQ+ community is visibly recognised and included
- celebrates cultural, religious and linguistic diversity and creates a workforce that reflects the diversity of the Victorian community
- enables people of all ages, and with various caring responsibilities, to take part and pursue career development.

DGS prioritises inclusion and accessibility.

This includes:

- visible leadership and accountability
- attracting, retaining and developing a diverse and culturally safe workforce
- ensuring equity in the workplace
- creating a respectful, inclusive and safe workforce
- measurement, progress and reporting.

Governance and ownership

In 2024–25 the Deputy Secretary, Corporate Shared Services had oversight of the roadmap.

Progress was monitored using DGS employee data and annual People Matter Survey data.

Reporting on progress was undertaken via the:

- DGS Board of Management
- DGS Annual Report
- Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
- Victorian Secretaries Board, via a consolidated report coordinated by the Victorian Public Sector Commission on progress against the Getting to Work plan
- Self-Determination Reform Framework.

Cultural competence training

DGS provides opportunities for staff to:

- understand their rights and responsibilities to create an inclusive environment free from negative behaviours, including discrimination and harassment, and how to report negative behaviours in the workplace

- understand the complex and varied experiences of diverse communities
- identify and address unconscious bias and its effect on work practices and decisions
- understand and embed the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities in their work
- build First Peoples cultural competency.

These opportunities were available through several means, including mandatory e-learns, department- and VPS-wide webinars, Employee Hub and Manager Hub content and LinkedIn Learning courses.

Decision-making processes and program evaluation

DGS consults with staff, leaders and other stakeholders in developing diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

In developing the new Diversity Equity and Inclusion Strategy for launch in 2026, DGS People and Culture engaged in broad consultation to better understand the experience and needs of the diverse workforce, including through:

- an analysis of 2024 People Matter Survey data related to diversity cohorts
- a series of workshops available to all staff
- a workshop with the Combined Enablers Network
- workshops specifically for culturally diverse staff
- interviews with various Executive Champions for diverse cohorts
- playback workshops with staff to co-design and prioritise actions.

Appendix A: Multicultural representation on government boards, authorities and committees

Table A1: Composition of Victorian Government boards as of 30 June 2025¹⁴

Composition	Number/percentage
Number of boards as at June 2025	407
Board appointments	3,448
Culturally diverse appointments	1,315
Culturally diverse percentage of boards	38.13%

Table A2: Appointments and reappointments to Victorian Government boards as of 30 June 2025

Appointment	Number/percentage
Number of boards with new appointments or reappointments in 2024–25	308
New appointments or reappointments	3,188
Culturally diverse appointments or reappointments	1,259
Culturally diverse percentage of appointments and reappointments	39.49%

¹⁴ Data for Tables A1 to A2 provided by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. Data excludes cemeteries, school councils and small committees of Crown Land Management. Where the *Public Administration Act 2004* status is neither public entity nor special body, and where DPC classification is not applicable, the data is not reported. This data is self-reported by government departments and agencies. We take relevant data from the database and use it without additional validation. Figures may change over time as organisations update their data, improve completeness or choose to share more or less information. Machinery of government changes can also affect department-level figures compared with earlier reports.

Table A3: Year-on-year proportion of Victorian government department board appointments or members with culturally diverse backgrounds

Department	On 30 June 2025 (%)	On 30 June 2024 (%)
Department of Education	27.89	24.70
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	40.06	38.73
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing	33.62	30.00
Department of Government Services	25.64	18.37
Department of Health	37.85	36.75
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	43.42	40.37
Department of Justice and Community Safety	40.00	36.71
Department of Premier and Cabinet	72.30	72.88
Department of Transport and Planning	39.50	39.81
Department of Treasury and Finance	25.64	20.80

Appendix B: Multicultural-related indicators

Benefits of diversity

Table B1: Number of children and students being funded to learn languages in Community Language Schools (CLS), 2022 to 2024

Year	Number of funded CLS	Number of languages being learned	Total children or students
2024	182	47	41,528
2023	176	48	40,712
2022	178	52	37,240

Table B2: Top 20 government-funded languages being learned in Victorian CLS in 2024¹⁵

Language	Number of children or students funded
Chinese (Mandarin)	16,748
Arabic	4,202
Greek	4,119
Vietnamese	3,779
Tamil	1,731
Sinhala	951
Japanese	904
Bangla	736
Dari	672
Punjabi	665
Assyrian	599
Korean	525
Russian	492
Cantonese	467
Somali	455
Urdu	436
Nepali	403
Persian	381
Serbian	359
Shona Ndebele	265

¹⁵ Chinese comprises Chinese First Language, Chinese Second Language, Chinese Second Language Advanced and Chinese Language, Culture and Society; Japanese comprises Japanese First Language and Japanese Second Language; Indonesian comprises Indonesian First Language and Indonesian Second Language; Korean comprises Korean First Language and Korean Second Language; Vietnamese comprises Vietnamese First Language and Vietnamese Second Language. Overseas schools and interstate schools are excluded.

Table B3: Students enrolled in VCE language studies (unit 4, top 20) in Victorian schools in 2024¹⁶

Language	Number of enrolments	Language	Number of enrolments
Chinese	1,669	Arabic	107
French	1,497	Persian	102
Japanese	1,128	Hindi	74
Italian	546	Punjabi	74
Vietnamese	464	Turkish	69
German	376	Tamil	46
Indonesian	328	Korean	44
Latin	257	Khmer	39
Greek	181	Hebrew	36
Spanish	134	Sinhala	35

¹⁶ Source: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2023 Satisfactory completion of VCE Units. Enrolments in VCE language studies (Unit 4) in Victorian schools in 2023.

Social cohesion and participation

Table B4: Proportion of survey respondents who 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger, 2018 to 2025¹⁷

Year	Survey respondents (%)
2025	67
2024	71
2023	78
2022	78
2021	76
2020	74
2019	71

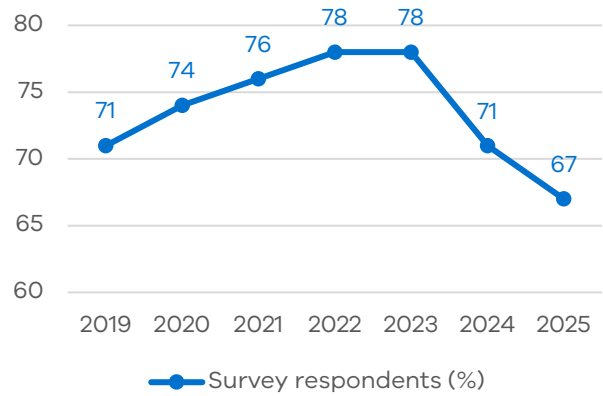
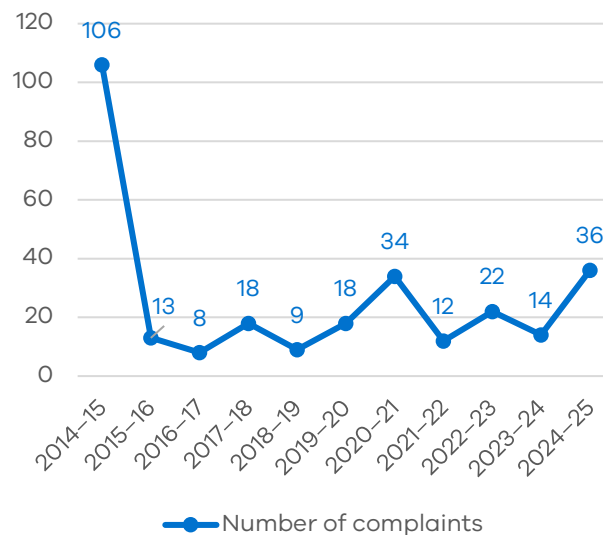


Table B5: Number of complaints made to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission under the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act, 2014–15 to 2024–25¹⁸

Year	Number of complaints
2024–25	36
2023–24	14
2022–23	22
2021–22	12
2020–21	34
2019–20	18
2018–19	9
2017–18	18
2016–17	8
2015–16	13
2014–15	106

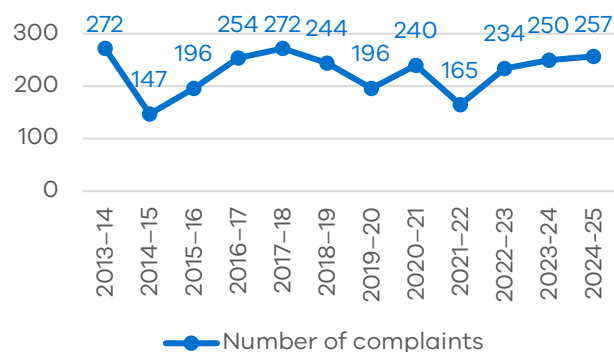


¹⁷ Source: The Scanlon Foundation's Mapping Social Cohesion Survey reports. The surveys are conducted annually. Results collected earlier than 2018 are not included for comparison because a different survey mode was used.

¹⁸ Source: Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission. The data is collected annually.

Table B6: Number of complaints made to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission in relation to discrimination on the basis of race and religious belief under the Equal Opportunity Act, 2013–14 to 2024–25¹⁹

Year	Number of complaints
2024–25	257
2023–24	250
2022–23²⁰	234
2021–22	165
2020–21	240
2019–20	196
2018–19	244
2017–18	272
2016–17	254
2015–16	196
2014–15	147
2013–14	272



¹⁹ Source: Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission. The data is collected annually.

²⁰ Lockdowns during COVID-19 impacted the number of complaints made. The 2022–23 figure is consistent with pre-COVID levels.

Table B7: Proportion of Victorians from a non-English speaking background (NESB) who feel multiculturalism at least sometimes makes life better in their area, 2014 to 2024²¹

Year	ESB (%)	NESB (%)
2024	74.9	84.0
2023	65.2	70.4
2022	65.0	67.5
2021 ²²	n/a	n/a
2020	63.6	62.7
2019	54.8	58.1
2018	51.8	60.3
2017	51.1	58.2
2016	46.7	56.6
2015	50.1	55.7
2014	54.0	59.2

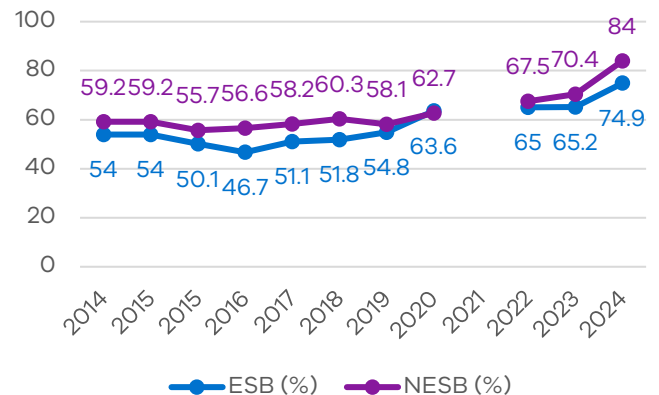
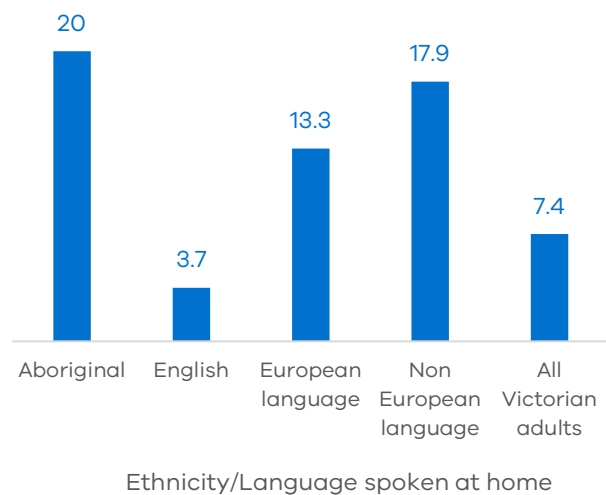


Table B8: Proportion of adults who felt they experienced discrimination or were treated unfairly by others in the past year because of their skin colour, nationality, race, ethnic group or identifying as Aboriginal²³

Ethnicity/language background of adults who experienced racism	Proportion (%) of adults who experienced racism in the past 12 months
Aboriginal	20.6
English-speaking background (only speak English at home)	3.7
Spoke a EUROPEAN language other than English at home	13.3
Spoke a NON-EUROPEAN language other than English at home	17.9
All Victorian adults	7.4

Proportion (%) of adults who experienced racism in the past 12 months



²¹ Source: Department of Health, Victorian Population Health Survey 2024.

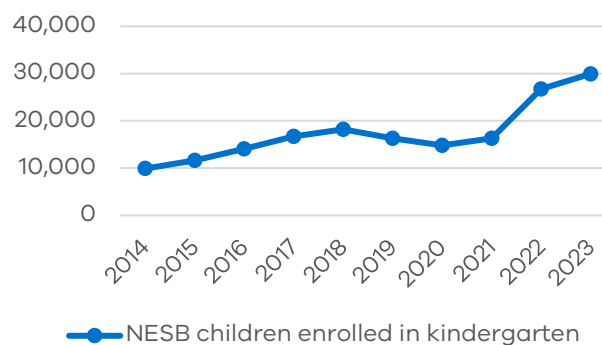
²² The Victorian Population Health Survey was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey resumed in 2022.

²³ Source: Department of Health, Victorian Population Health Survey 2024. The language of this heading has changed from the previous report.

Accessible and responsive services

Table B9: Number of Victorian children from a non-English speaking background (NESB) enrolled in a Victorian government-funded kindergarten program, 2014 to 2024²⁴

Year	NESB children enrolled in kindergarten
2024	30,698
2023	29,941
2022	26,703
2021	16,305
2020	14,818
2019	16,303
2018	18,195
2017	16,741
2016	14,044
2015	11,657
2014	9,904



²⁴ Source: Department of Education Kindergarten Census Collection. Data is collected annually. The large increase in 2022 is due to the statewide rollout of 3-year-old kindergarten. The data represents the number of children who were enrolled in a funded kindergarten program and whose family indicated that they speak a main language at home other than English. It is not feasible to calculate a kindergarten participation rate for NESB children because there is no suitable NESB population denominator for children eligible to enrol in 3-year-old or 4-year-old kindergarten. In 2019, 2020 and 2021 there was a system error in the Kindergarten Information Management System. This error removed the ability for service providers to select 'other' under the question for 'Main language spoken at home (if not English)'. Kindergarten services that would have usually entered data in this field may have left this blank. (In 2018 almost 3,500 children had 'other' entered in this field.)

Table B10: Unemployment rate of Victorians born in non-main English-speaking countries compared with the unemployment rate of all Victorians, 2017–18 to 2024–25²⁵

Year	NMESC-born (%)	All Victorians (%)
2024–25	4.9	4.5
2023–24	4.3	4.0
2022–23	4.0	3.7
2021–22	5.1	4.3
2020–21	7.7	6.2
2019–20	7.3	5.4
2018–19	6.0	4.7
2017–18	7.3	5.7

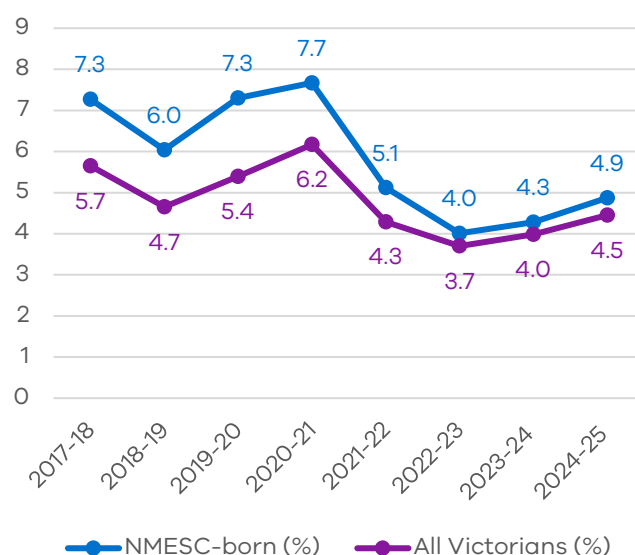
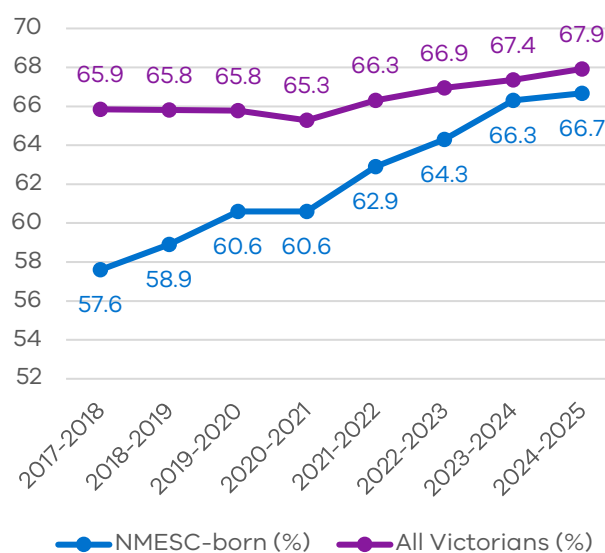


Table B11: Workforce participation rate of Victorians born in non-main English-speaking countries compared with the workforce participation rate of all Victorians, 2017–18 to 2024–25²⁶

Year	NMESC-born (%)	All Victorians (%)
2024–25	66.7	67.9
2023–24	66.3	67.4
2022–23	64.3	66.9
2021–22	62.9	66.3
2020–21	60.6	65.3
2019–20	60.6	65.8
2018–19	58.9	65.8
2017–18	57.6	65.8



²⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (December 2024), 'Table 2: Labour force status by State, Territory, Greater capital city, Rest of state (ASGS) and Sex, Australia', accessed 17 February 2025, <<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/dec-2024#labour-force-status>>.

²⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (December 2024), 'LM7: Labour force status by elapsed years since arrival, main English-speaking countries, sex, state and territory, January 1991 onwards', Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, accessed 17 February 2025, <<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/dec-2024#labour-force-status>>.

