

Conclusion

Establishing the location and concentration of cultural groups can help ensure services are accessible and appropriate by identifying potential familial, religious and community resources that can supplement existing services. The relative size of the culturally and linguistically diverse population within the wider population changes from city to city, with projections for 2011 ranging from 9% for Hobart to 38% for Melbourne.

Analysis of the older culturally and linguistically diverse population within Australian capital cities shows that not only does the size of particular communities vary from place to place, but so too does the mix, with different communities being prominent in different cities. However, Italy is projected to be among the top three countries of birth in 2011 for seven of the eight capital cities, and Germany is expected to be among the top three for six of the cities. Greece and the Netherlands will also be common birthplaces in several of the capital cities. Three Asian countries are projected to be the birthplace of significant numbers of older people in particular cities: in Sydney, in the coming years China will be among the top three birthplaces for older people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; India and Indonesia will be similarly placed for Perth and Darwin respectively.

Growth rates within the communities vary significantly within and between cities, with some birthplace groups currently experiencing rapid growth, whereas others are contracting. The Greek-born and Croatian-born older communities are among the top three fastest growing communities in a majority of the capital cities, but Polish-born communities are shrinking in most capital cities. Other countries of birth with rapidly growing older communities in a number of cities include Vietnam (among the top three in three cities) and Malaysia, South Africa, Germany and the Netherlands (each among the top three in two cities).

The above results reflect the migration patterns experienced since World War II. Some countries, such as Poland, provided large numbers of migrants in the 1950s and early 1960s, with these numbers then declining. Other countries were an increasing source of migrants in the late 1960s and 1970s, especially Asian countries following the official end of the White Australia Policy in 1973. The findings presented in this bulletin illustrate that the cultural mix of older Australians will be continually changing as a consequence of developments in Australian migration policy, and as changes in the living conditions in different countries lead people to leave their country of birth.



Diversity among older Australians in capital cities 1996–2011

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