



**Public Consultation on
Tasmania's Multicultural
Action Plan 2024-26
Summary
Strategic Directions
Report
DECEMBER 2023**

Multicultural Council of Tasmania, Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania, and
Migrant Resource Centre North

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Acknowledgment of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and custodians of Lutruwita's (Tasmania) land, sea, and waterways.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present, for they hold the memories, the knowledge, and the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Tasmania. The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities in Tasmania and the individuals involved in this consultation project are grateful for the opportunity to settle, work, and pursue education on this land.

We are also grateful to all participants involved in the consultation project.

Their input and insights are valuable contributions to shaping the new Multicultural Action Plan, and their involvement is essential to the plan's implementation and success.

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1. Executive summary

1.1 Key Findings

Nearly half (47.8%) of the CALD individuals surveyed are financially insecure.

- However, 76.9% of the CALD individuals have attained educational qualifications at the university (e.g., bachelor, diploma) or post-graduate level.

CALD communities experience difficulties accessing essential services such as healthcare, housing and education.

- In terms of healthcare, CALD individuals describe experiencing challenges related to the inability to see a doctor or healthcare provider due to new patient admission issues and long waiting lists, language barriers that hinder understanding and lack of qualified interpretation services, access to health information for new arrivals, and cost of basic and additional healthcare that changes based on their visa categories.
- The housing instability issue was highlighted by consulted participants, and they wish the government could address concerns related to stringent requirements for renting a property for new migrants, housing availability, CALD members' lack of knowledge on tenancy rights and financial literacy, poor urban planning, and high rent prices and stamp duty fees.
- CALD individuals discussed education challenges in view of their situations and their children's situations. Highlighted issues in education include the lack of culturally responsive teaching and diversity in schools, the lack of support for migrant students and their families, the diminishing purpose of higher education for migrants, and, importantly, the quality, availability, and affordability of education.
- Government services that provide support in some of the challenge areas highlighted above are difficult to access mainly due to reasons related to a lack of translated materials and interpreters, inadequate customer service specific to catering to CALD members' unique needs and situations, limited public transportation that restricts access to the services, and systemic discrimination embedded in some government policies and practices.

CALD member's economic participation is deterred by various factors and, consequently, puts them at risk of further financial insecurity.

- Factors that hinder CALD members' economic participation include biased recruitment practices, inadequate local work experience, difficulty attaining language skills and required qualifications, rejection of overseas qualifications, and limited networking opportunities.
- Nearly half of the CALD individuals surveyed (47.5%) indicated that finding employment that utilises their skills and qualifications is either difficult or very difficult.

Discrimination and outright racism thwart CALD member's sense of belonging in Tasmania.

- CALD individuals reported experiencing more discrimination because of their culture, ethnicity, and/or religion.

- CALD communities hope that their safety can be more seriously guarded, and measures are taken to enable their social, cultural, and political participation in the larger Tasmanian community.

CALD communities request the government to prioritise employment opportunities, health and wellbeing, and housing in making Tasmania a better place for migrants to live. They also expressed that a truly multicultural Tasmania is achieved when:

- racism in all forms is reduced,
- safety is improved, and
- equal opportunities are evident in many areas of society where no one is unfairly disadvantaged at the outset.

1.2 Recommendations

In light of these findings, MCOT, MRC Tas, and MRC North collectively recommend the following key actions:

Recommendation 1. Appoint a Minister for Multicultural Affairs

In recognition of the commitment to serve Tasmania's CALD communities, create a Multicultural Affairs portfolio and appoint a Minister dedicated solely to this portfolio, to advise the Government about the development of evidence-based policies and programs that promote cultural diversity and matters relating to multicultural affairs.

Recommendation 2. Governance Structure

Establish a Strategic and Community Partners Group to assist the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and guide and monitor the implementation of the MAP. This Group will comprise representatives from key non-government organisations, local, Tasmanian and Australian governments to provide strategic advice and exchange information on issues affecting CALD individuals and communities. This Group's input will influence the design of funded programs and initiatives and inform the government's strategic directions for the MAP.

Recommendation 3. Strategic Alignment

Where practical ensure the MAP and its implementation is aligned to key State and Federal frameworks, strategies and standards. In order to reflect intersectionality, this should reflect specific multicultural frameworks, as well as those aligned to the broader community. Examples include the Settlement Council of Australia's Road to Belonging, the National Settlement Outcomes Standards (NSOS), the Federal Government's Multicultural Framework (in development), Rethink Mental Health Framework, National Anti-racism Framework, Australia's Disability Strategy, Tasmanian Women's Strategy and so on.

Recommendation 4. Discrimination, bias and racism

Develop a whole of Government response to address systemic bias, discrimination, racism and significant community safety and security concerns through a prevention, intervention and postvention approach, with evidence-based strategies at each level. Investing in targeted initiatives

that address the cultural bias within business, education, health, housing sectors, underpinned by the implementation and oversight of access and equity policies.

Recommendation 5. Financial commitment and collaboration

The MAP must be adequately funded to ensure long term sustainable outcomes. Future funding must move being a one-year commitment and be developed in consultation with relevant partners, demonstrating collaboration across Government, community, business sectors.

Recommendation 6. Achievable and 'Fit for Purpose'

The MAP must be attainable and implement evidence-based solutions with measurable outcomes with an annual report card to monitor progress toward agreed targets. There must be clear recognition that there is no 'one size fits all' and acknowledge the differing needs amongst CALD communities who should be clearly represented in the framework.

Recommendation 7. A fair share of Australia's migration intake

The Tasmanian Government to advocate for long term migration policy with a scaled increase in the humanitarian, family and skilled streams over the next 5 years, aligned with a funding commitment that supports improved infrastructure and equitable services.

2. Consultation Process

The Multicultural Council of Tasmania (MCOT), Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania (MRC Tas), and the Migrant Resource Centre North (MRC North) were commissioned by the Tasmania State Government to provide a Strategic Directions Report to inform the development of the next Multicultural Action Plan.

The collaborative consultation project includes data collected using multiple methods, including an online survey, community forums, roundtable discussions, and written submissions. Table 1 presents the data collection methods of this report and the participants involved in each consultation phase.

Table 1. Methods of consultations and participants involved in each consultation phase.

	Host	Participants
Online survey	MRC and MCOT– survey designed and distributed by DPAC, MRC, and MCOT.	792 valid respondents. Detailed descriptions of the respondents are provided in Section 2.
Community forums and roundtable discussions	MCOT organised two discussions.	33 CALD individuals who were, predominantly, skilled migrants attended a forum workshop. LGBTIQ+ community with CALD backgrounds were consulted in a separate session.
	MRC North organised 3 workshops.	Approximately 10 CALD individuals per workshop (total ~30), representing a wide age range between 20 to 65 years.
	MRC Tasmania organised 2 workshops with support of bi-cultural workers who facilitated discussion and recorded/translated participants' feedback.	Workshop 1: 19 women identified as humanitarian entrants. They were from Farsi, Nepali, and Karen language backgrounds. Workshop 2: 25 humanitarian entrants of Nepali, Dari, Farsi, Tigrinya and Amharic language backgrounds.
Community submissions	MCOT invited services providers working with multicultural communities to provide written submissions.	6 community organisations provided feedback. <i>Hereafter, the submissions are referred to as Community submissions.</i>

3. Respondents' Profile

792¹ individuals responded to the online survey. 72.9% of the respondents were born outside of Australia.

- Countries with the highest count include Nepal (7.4%), India (7.3%), China (4.0%), Columbia (3.8%), United Kingdom (3.3%) and Bhutan (3.0%).
- A large proportion came from Asia (43.3%), followed by Oceania (19.6%), and relatively equal distributions between Europe (9.6%), Africa (8.8%) and South America (8.3%).
- 70.2% speak one or more additional languages. The top five spoken additional languages include Nepali (13.5%), Spanish (9.7%), Mandarin (7.2%), Hindi (5.8%), and Farsi and Tigrinya (3.2% respectively) sharing the 5th place. Overall, 72 languages and dialects were reported by those who indicated being bi- or multi-lingual.
- Multiple faiths are represented in the responses, Christianity is the largest religious group (32.3%). Hinduism (12.2%), Islam (8.7%), and Buddhism (6.2%) each make up a significant proportion. 29.8% of respondents identified with no religion.



¹ Note that 255 responses were removed prior to analysis for being either incomplete (not answered beyond providing demographic information) or located interstate.

Respondents were grouped into the following: skilled migrants, humanitarian entrants, international students, permanent culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) residents, and non-CALD residents. 1.3% of respondents could not be categorised due to a lack of information. Table 2 describes each subgroup.

Table 2. Subgroup descriptions and percentage of individuals in each subgroup out of total respondents.

Descriptions	
Skilled migrants n = 232 (23.3%)	We arrived in Australia as skilled workers. A little less than a third of us (30.0%) have been granted a permanent residence status, a minority has a Business visa (1.3%), and the rest are either on a temporary skilled migrant visa or a bridging visa intended for skilled workers. 50% of us arrived in Tasmania between 2 and 5 years ago.
Permanent CALD residents n = 192 (24.2%)	Most of us are Australian citizens born outside Australia (64.1%), Australian-born (12.0%), and those who indicated they are in one of those former categories without specifying their birth country (4.7%). The rest of us are on a permanent family visa. We are considered CALD because we speak an additional language other than English and/or were born in a non-major English-speaking country. About half of us (51.6%) arrived in Tasmania 10 or more years ago. Those who arrived within the last five years are mostly on a permanent spousal/family visa. A small percentage (6.8%) are Tasmanians.
Non-CALD residents n = 187 (23.6%)	We are Australian citizens or citizens of the major English-speaking countries (MESC) and speak only English. 42.2% of us are Tasmanian-born. Of those born outside Tasmania, 60.2% arrived in Tasmania a decade or more than a decade ago.
Humanitarian entrants n = 118 (14.9%)	We arrived in Australia as a refugee. Most of us arrived in Tasmania within the last 20 years: 2-5 years ago (19.5%), 5-10 years ago (27.1%), and 10-20 years ago (31.3%).
International students n = 53 6.7%	We arrived in Australia as an international student. We are currently studying or have recently graduated. Most of us (86.8%) arrived in Tasmania within the last five years.

Other demographic characteristics of the respondents to the online survey:

- Excluding those who prefer not to answer or were unsure of how to describe their gender and sexual orientation (10.9%), over half are women (54.0%), slightly below a third are men (31.4%), and a small percentage belong to the LGBTQI community (3.7%).
- Most respondents can be categorised within the young- and middle-aged adult category, with their age ranges from 25 to 44 years old (56.3%), 21.6% are aged 55+, 16.9% 45 to 54 years and 5.2% 24 years or younger.

4. Experience with Government Services

4.1 Ratings of government services

Online survey respondents were asked to rate several government services from 1 to 5 stars if they have used or had experience interacting with the services - Figure 1.

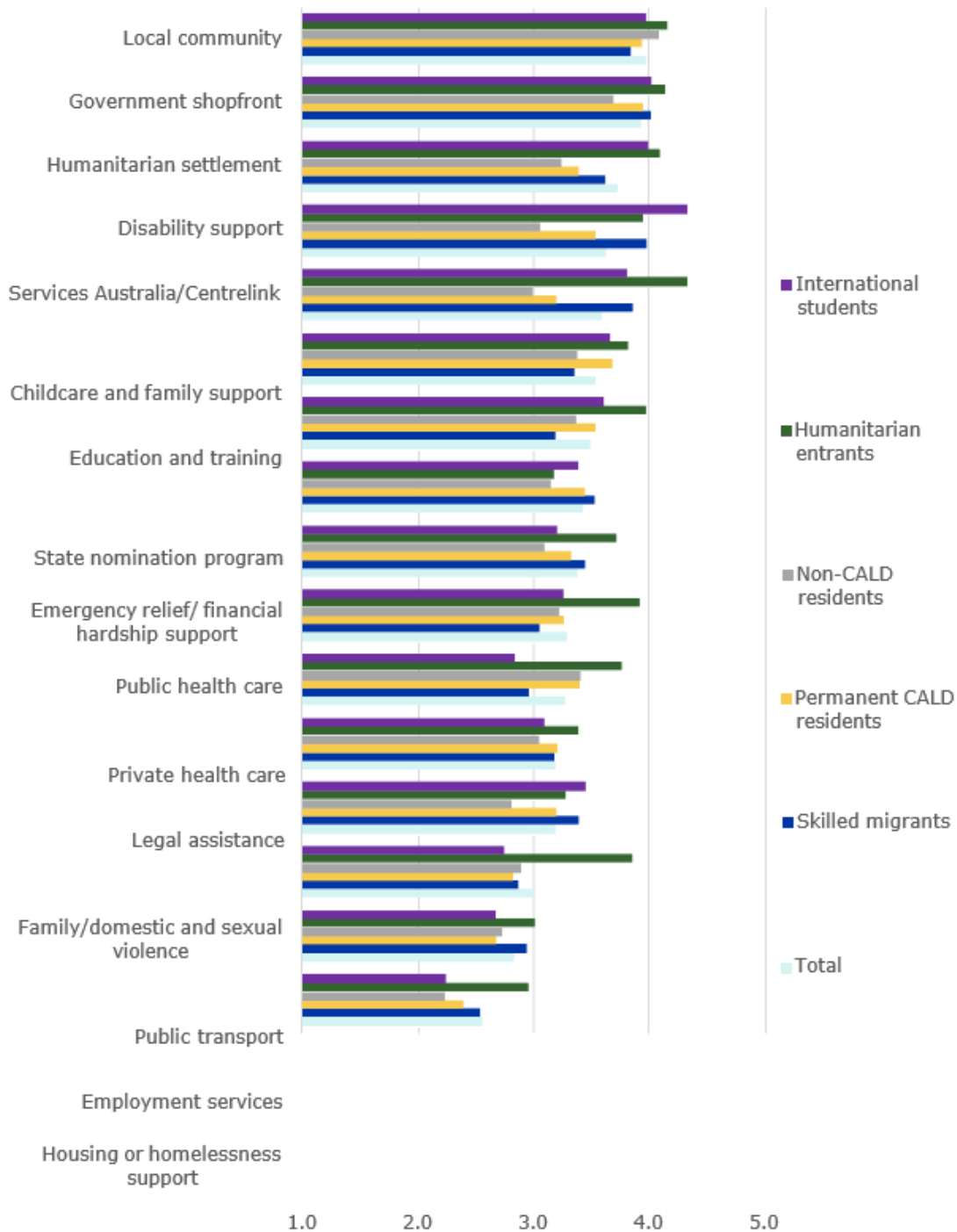


Figure 1. Average rating (1 to 5 stars) of each government service by subgroup.

Overall, respondents were highly satisfied (averaged at 4 stars) with local community services such as public libraries and community houses and government shopfront services such as renewals, licensing, registration, bills, and fines.

Relatively highly rated services (averaged between 3.5 and 3.8 stars) include humanitarian settlement support, disability support, Services Australia/Centrelink, Childcare and family support, and Education and training. The three low-rated services include public transport, employment services, and housing or homelessness support.

Overall, government services were rated more highly by all CALD respondents than non-CALD residents. The subgroup with the highest average rating of government services were humanitarian entrants and lowest for non-CALD residents. A possible reason is that humanitarian entrants (and migrants generally) may have a lower or no benchmark in comparing services they received due to their previous experiences with services in their country of origin.

4.1.1 How are respondents finding information about services?

Besides the humanitarian entrants, most respondents indicated they find information they need online using search engines, social media, and government and official websites – Figure 2. The second most popular method is through word of mouth, hearing from family members, friends, or community members.

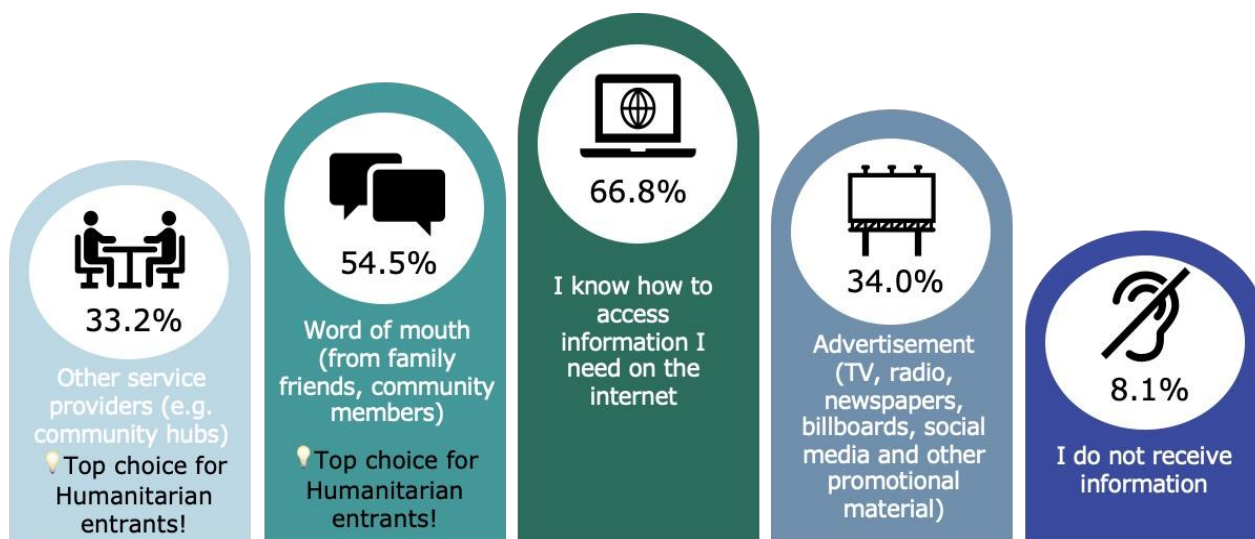


Figure 2. Common methods of finding information about services.

4.2 Barriers related to accessing services

Forum participants highlighted several obstacles that hinder access to government services. The barriers include systemic discrimination, limited access to public transportation, a lack of translated materials and interpreters that resulted in language barriers, and inadequate customer service for CALD members, where there is a lack of understanding of migrants' unique situations.

Regarding housing support, forum participants highlighted issues related to high rent prices and stamp duty fees for certain visa types, and stringent property renting requirements, which put newly-arrived migrants at a disadvantage. Participants also discussed inadequate financial literacy among new migrants, a lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, and a lack

of housing in general. Participants added that renting in some suburbs that are relatively far from the Central Business District could be a challenge due to those suburbs lacking an adequate public transportation system.

Concerning transportation issues, online respondents and forum participants expressed frustrations with the prolonged problem of inadequate services and poor transportation networks in the state. Participants highlighted issues of racism on board public transportation, with bus drivers from CALD communities being targeted and antisocial behaviours being directed toward CALD commuters


either in the form of verbal harassment or covert or overt behaviours. There are also issues related to language or digital support for using public transport or managing the MetroTas mobile application and card balance recharge.



4.3 Suggestions for improving government services

Combining forum data and open-ended responses on the survey, participants highlighted three broad areas on how the government could improve its services – Table 3.

Table 3. Participants' suggestions for improving government services.

	<p>Improve public transportation and commuter experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the number of buses and routes.• Provide more reliable services, especially in frequently affected areas.• Provide concessions and subsidies, make public transportation cheaper or free for vulnerable groups, and provide concession taxi fares.• Increase cultural awareness among bus drivers, MetroTas staff and the general public, along with community education on summoning aid when security is threatened.• Improve streetlights or footpaths to support transport by foot and make public spaces safer to commute at night.• Provide financial support for driver-learner lessons or make the lessons accessible for vulnerable groups.
	<p>Improve housing availability and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Streamline the rental process, revise the minimum requirements for rentals, and cap rent and rent increases.• Set up a compulsory education program for real estate agencies to raise awareness about the importance of providing equal opportunities to migrants and refugees, emphasising fair housing practices and anti-discrimination policies.• Enhance urban planning (e.g., new housing development, and building more large family dwellings, affordable housing, and social housing).• Reserve a portion of public housing for vulnerable CALD members.• Establish state-owned houses for cultural diversity, where people from different cultural backgrounds can live together. This approach fosters cultural exchange, understanding, and community cohesion.• Supply affordable gas and electricity for houses.• Strengthen tenancy protections and offer training on tenancy rights and responsibilities and reduce stamp duty fees for temporary visa holders.
	<p>Establish culturally responsive services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the number of staff from multicultural backgrounds in government agencies.• Raise awareness of specific cultural requirements of CALD communities among government service employees.• Offer access to interpreters and translated documents while quality-ensuring the language support CALD members receive.

5. Health and Wellbeing

5.1 Physical and mental health

5.1.1 Ratings of overall health

Online respondents were asked to rate their overall physical and mental health between 1 and 5, with a higher score indicating better overall health. The average physical health ratings for the subgroups were:

- International students 4.27;
- Skilled migrants 4.07;
- Permanent CALD residents 3.67;
- Humanitarian entrants 3.51;
- Non-CALD residents 3.49.

In terms of mental health ratings:

- International students 4.18;
- Skilled migrants 3.93;
- Humanitarian entrants 3.73;
- Permanent CALD residents 3.68; and
- Non-CALD 3.48.

5.1.2 Access to a doctor or health support

Overall, respondents seemed to be between neutral and finding it difficult to see a doctor or access the health support they need with an overall average score of 2.79. The average score for subgroups:

- Humanitarian entrants 3.06;
- Non-CALD residents 2.97;
- Permanent CALD residents 2.85;
- Skilled migrants 2.56; and
- International students 2.44.

Online survey respondents were mostly neutral to satisfied with how well their doctor and health services support their cultural needs. Community submissions suggest that refugee- specialised medical practitioners are more culturally sensitive when working with clients of refugee background, despite such practitioners lacking in number in the state.

5.1.3 Participation in recreational activities

Online respondents were asked to rate their levels of participation in recreational activities in sports, group recreation, fitness, hobbies, community events, and volunteering activities, individuals were asked to evaluate their participation from 0=never, 1=sometimes, or 2=regular.

Overall, highly participated activities include hobbies, group recreation, and community events. There were no significant group differences in participation in sports and community events. In comparison to all of the other groups:

- Humanitarian entrants participated in fewer group other fitness activities and volunteering activities.
- Hobbies are much more often enjoyed by the longer-term CALD and non-CALD residents.

5.2 Housing

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction level with their housing from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). The average scores were:

- Own house outright 4.53;
- Own house with mortgage 4.17;
- Staying with family 3.87;
- Living in share house 3.65;
- Homelessness support 3.50;
- Living in social housing 3.46;
- Rental 3.36; and
- Living in residential care 3.00.

When asked about what could improve the housing situation, most indicated the same sentiment shared by the broader Tasmanian community that is, wanting cheaper rent (42.8%), more properties available for rental (27.8%), and better quality or bigger house (23.9%). Other relatively popular suggestions include wanting help to apply for a mortgage (18.9%), a house that is closer to services such as schools, public transport, and healthcare (16.8%), and more social housing (12.8%).

The absence of bigger rental homes for larger, sometimes multigenerational families was raised as an issue by forum participants.

5.3 Barriers related to healthcare and wellbeing

Forum participants discussed the challenge of accessing psychologists or mental health professionals who are culturally competent. Participants expressed difficulties in conveying their situations and feelings in English and, simultaneously, felt uncertain if the practitioners understood or took account of their background circumstances. Aside from this issue, community submissions indicate that cultural stigma and shame may play a role in CALD people's lack of contact with mental health professionals and that some CALD individuals may have a different understanding of mental health.

Language and cultural barriers were also identified as impediments to accessing healthcare and understanding health-related information. Access to a language interpreter, whether for health or other support at a GP clinic or other healthcare providers, is generally seen as a problem.

Respondents to the online survey also indicated several barriers to participating in the above recreational activities. The most common factors include:

- not having enough time or being too busy with work, family, or caring responsibilities (61.0%),
- affordability (21.3%), and
- not knowing where to go for such activities (20.6%).

Community submissions indicate that some migrants and refugees struggle to meet their basic needs and have no time or energy to pursue connections through volunteering or group activities.

5.4 Suggestions for improving CALD members' experience with healthcare

Participants' suggestions for improving the health and wellbeing of CALD communities are identified - Table 4.

Table 4. Participants' suggestions for improving healthcare access and experience.

	<p>Comprehensive information dissemination program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure new arrivals are promptly provided with information regarding available services and support networks. • Utilise various channels such as community centres, online platforms, and multilingual resources, as well as provide interpreter help for those requiring language support.
	<p>Improve patients' admission and access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase funding from state and federal governments to ensure CALD members' access to affordable healthcare. • Make it mandatory for practices to accept new patients and provide bulk billing services. • Provide interpreting services with general practitioners (GPs).
	<p>Culturally sensitive health campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop culturally sensitive health campaigns that raise awareness and understanding of specific physical or mental health diagnoses among CALD communities. • Involve interpreters and community leaders to ensure proper comprehension and interpretation of health-related information.
	<p>Mental health support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural service providers to build a mental health hub and trauma-informed spaces for migrants. • Increase access to tailored mental health services for the LGBTIQ+ CALD community.
	<p>Subsidies and assistance program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equip Tasmania's medical facilities with modern resources to enhance delivery. • Explore assistance programs to reduce the financial burden on those needing extra medical aids (e.g., hearing aids).
	<p>Employment in the healthcare sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise healthcare employment to encourage more sector workers while retaining local healthcare professionals and recruiting more doctors to the state. • Encourage individuals to seek training in the healthcare sector by providing a specialised training pathway. • Recognise overseas qualifications or support transfer of those qualifications to expedite employment.
	<p>Promote social inclusion and cohesion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate expanding the Ticket to Play program, which aims to increase the affordability of sports participation among vulnerable groups. • Encourage social participation by promoting community fairs that introduce CALD community members to local recreation activities and groups to increase knowledge and support participation.

6. Economic Participation

6.1 Financial circumstances

Most respondents described their financial circumstances as either secure (*I'm able to pay bills and usually have money spare for savings or buying luxuries*) or struggling a bit (*I have to watch my budget to make sure there's enough for all the bills*) - Table 5. For humanitarian entrants and international students, there are higher proportions of individuals in the bottom two financial classes who are either struggling a bit or in serious financial difficulty where, for the latter, being able to pay all of their bills is a regular concern.

Table 5. Financial circumstances by subgroup

Group	Financially comfortable/secure	Financially struggling/insecure
Humanitarian-entrants	30%	70%
International students	42%	58%
Non-CALD	68%	32%
Permanent CALD	61%	39%
Skilled migrants	52%	48%
National average (Aug, 2023) ²	52%	48%

6.2 Education

6.2.1 Education level

Excluding the humanitarian entrants, about 40 to 50% of individuals in each subgroup have completed a postgraduate qualification. More than 80% of skilled migrants and international students have completed either a university or a postgraduate qualification. The education levels of the humanitarian entrants are much more varied, with most respondents having completed a high school certification.

6.2.2 Challenges to attaining education

When discussing CALD members' challenges in education, one theme that emerged is participants' concern regarding the lack of culturally responsive teaching and diversity in schools. Parents of migrant children are worried about losing their cultural heritage when cultural differences are not celebrated, accommodated, or discussed positively in schools.





Additionally, a concern was raised about the diminishing purpose of obtaining an education, particularly at the higher level, because that is now viewed as a pathway for obtaining permanent residency or migrating to Australia rather than a means for professional development.

6.2.3 Suggestions for improving education

Proposed solutions for addressing the education challenges faced by CALD members span four areas: in-school support, government collaboration with education providers, provision of English classes, and diversity in the education sector, including fostering culturally responsive teaching – Table 6.

² Essential Research, [Cost of Living](#), August, 2023.

Table 6. Participants' suggestions for addressing education challenges.

	<p>In-school support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide hot meals or breakfast to students at their school/ university to enhance student attendance rates and learning readiness. • Establish a peer-to-peer support system within schools to pair local students with migrant students to foster a sense of support and integration. • Waive school fees for children of international students or low- income migrants to attend government schools.
	<p>Government collaboration with education providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with higher education providers to identify areas where specific training programs or short courses are lacking. • Take initiatives to introduce relevant courses that cater to the needs of local and CALD students. • Monitor education providers' practices to prevent exploitations related to migrants' visa situations and to ensure the provision of high-quality programs.
	<p>Provision of English classes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to English courses (e.g., at Tasmania's Technical and Further Education - TaFE), which could be funded by the local government and made available to all migrants, including those already employed.
	<p>Staff diversity and culturally responsive teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the representation of CALD community staff within the education sector. • Provide cross-cultural awareness training for school staff members and professional learning and development opportunities focusing on culturally responsive teaching.

6.3 Employment

6.3.1 Employment status

The majority of individuals in the skilled migrant and non-CALD groups are working full- time, 58.6% and 46.0% respectively. Those working part-time comprise about 25 to 30% of individuals in the same groups. For permanent CALD residents, the difference between those working full-time and part-time is about 10%, with full-timers recording a higher percentage.

Most humanitarian entrants and international students work part-time or as casual staff. There is a very low number of Humanitarian entrants working full-time (11.9%), which reflects their financial insecurity.

27.2% of humanitarian entrants are studying either full-time or part-time. Studying in this context often means enrolling in Adult English Language programs. More than half (56.6%) of international students study full-time or part-time.

6.3.2 Employment by industry

Overall, the top three industries with the highest total percentage of employment among the survey respondents are healthcare and social assistance (24.7%), education and training (13.5%), and administrative and support services (12.4%). These top three industries are identical for skilled migrants, permanent CALD residents, and non-CALD residents.

For the non-CALD group, one other industry that reached more than 10% of individuals is professional, scientific, and technical services (11.3%). The top industries for the humanitarian entrants are accommodation and food services (16.1%), healthcare and social assistance (11.3%), and agriculture, forestry, mining, and fishing industries (11.3%). Other than the top three industries, accommodation and food services also employed a notable percentage of international students (17.3%).

6.3.3 Challenges to securing employment

Respondents also rated how easy it was to find employment that utilises their skills or qualifications. Aggregating across industries and focusing on CALD individuals only, 47.5% of them indicated that finding employment that matches their skills and qualifications is either difficult or very difficult.

The six industries that scored, on average, “difficult” for respondents to find employment that matches their qualifications include arts and recreation services; agriculture, forestry, mining, and fishing; construction; administrative and support services; financial and insurance services; and accommodation and food services. As raised in community submissions, job availability in those industries (e.g., agriculture) may be high, but CALD members working in those industries may be in that field out of financial necessity as they are finding it difficult to find employment that utilises their actual skillset and qualifications.






Overall, forum participants identified pre-employment requirements as a major obstacle to finding employment. The challenges include discriminatory hiring practices, a lack of relevant local work experience, little to no English language proficiency, rejection because of overseas credentials, and difficulties obtaining the necessary credentials.

Forum participants discussed networking issues and difficulties aligning their abilities to the needs of the industry. Forum participants also discussed the shortcomings of job-seeker programs, which some participants perceive to be more symbolic than helpful for CALD individuals.

6.3.4 Suggestions for addressing employment challenges

The first step to address CALD members’ employment challenges must be establishing a support structure to facilitate CALD members’ access to volunteer, job, and social opportunities, and transitions into employment. These and the other suggestions can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7. Participants' suggestions for addressing employment challenges.

	<p>Support structure to facilitate access and transitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with organisations offering human resource services with specialised resources for CALD job seekers. Provide free or low-cost training in high-demand industries, and language training for CALD members with low English proficiency. • Improve guidance in navigating employment opportunities and legal rights.
	<p>Inclusive recruitment practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer education and training programs for employees to foster greater understanding and appreciation of the skills and potential that CALD individuals bring to the workforce. • Establish a Tasmanian skilled migrant employment register to connect migrants with employers. • Incentivizing companies to hire individuals with limited English proficiency and lacking local experience and qualifications.
	<p>Strengthen industry connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher education providers to build partnerships with industries to offer their students more opportunities for practical work experience. • Government and private sector to collaborate in creating more job opportunities across various industries. This approach could include incentivizing businesses and startups to establish in Tasmania and investing in sectors that align with the state's strengths.
	<p>Entry level positions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for removal of experience requirements for entry-level positions. • Encourage employers to focus on skills, potential, and aptitude rather than previous experience. This approach can lead to a more inclusive and diverse workforce.
	<p>Qualification assessment panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a qualification assessment panel comprising experts in various fields to evaluate qualifications. This panel should provide a fair and comprehensive evaluation of foreign qualifications while considering equivalency and relevancy to local standards. • Invite individuals for interviews or practical assessments to inform judgement and enable recognition of international qualifications.

7. Life in Tasmania

7.1 Life satisfaction in Tasmania

To measure respondents' satisfaction with their life in Tasmania, they were asked to rate their agreement to the statement "I am happy living in Tasmania" from a scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

Although respondents generally agree that they are happy in Tasmania, statistical analysis showed that the non-CALD residents (average 4.27) are happier than the skilled migrants (average 3.86) and international students (average 3.84).

Investigation into the factors that would make respondents feel happier living in Tasmania reveals a handful of primary factors. These factors included having better employment opportunities (40.8%), better access to transport, schools, and healthcare (39.6%), safer communities (33.7%), more community events and celebrations (33.6%), friendlier people (33.3%), and better housing (33.3%).

Skilled migrants appeared to mostly identify with tangible factors such as better employment (56.0%), access to services (44.4%), and housing (47.0%). In contrast, humanitarian entrants appeared to mostly identify with relational factors, including having more friends from their community (50.8%), safer communities (48.0%), and friendlier people (48.0%).

7.2 Sense of belonging

Five dimensions of individuals' sense of belonging were examined from the survey responses. All groups felt equally welcomed, known, and supported. However, there are differences in respondents' sense of connectedness and inclusion. Compared to skilled migrants, the humanitarian entrants felt less connected to Tasmanian society due to feeling less convinced of their ability to contribute.

Overall scores of the five dimensions indicate that the two lowest rated dimensions are feeling included (average 3.24) and supported (average 3.81). Issues of racism stemming from prejudicial attitudes, stereotypes, and systemic discrimination are raised in forum discussions. MCOT forum participants and community organisations' written submissions discussed the lack of support in allowing CALD members to practice their various religions and cultural beliefs due to needing more adequate spaces.

MRC forum participants highlighted citizenship (or the lack thereof) as a direct barrier to a genuine sense of belonging, as though one is not a member of the Tasmanian society if they are not Australian.

7.2.1 Racism in Tasmania

On a scale between zero being non-existent to 4 being very common, respondents' ratings of the frequency of racism averaged at 2.75, suggesting a somewhat common occurrence of racism in Tasmania. Forum participants highlighted prejudice-motivated bullying in public directed toward them and their children.

There is no clear single factor that contributes to racism in Tasmania. Respondents mostly recognised that lack of community educational campaigns (40.5%), lack of cultural education in the

workplace (38.8%), and lack of opportunities for social integration (37.9%) were common contributors to racism. Other factors considered somewhat important include media representation (26.8%) and structural barriers such as in the workplace and government service policies (25.1%).

7.3 Planned duration of stay

When asked about their planned duration of living in Tasmania, about half of the humanitarian entrants (55.1%), and permanent CALD residents (48.4%) wish to live in Tasmania for all of their life. For skilled migrants and international students, a little less than a third of individuals in their group wish to do the same.

7.3.1 Factors for migrating to Tasmania

The survey asked respondents to select the main factors that influenced their decision to come to Tasmania. Overall, economic and non-material factors were valued fairly equally across all groups.

The top three factors influencing international students were: to study here, to improve chance of receiving permanent residency, and low population density.

The top three factors influencing skilled migrants were: to improve chance of receiving permanent residency, employment opportunities, and the natural environment or climate.

7.3.2 Factors for leaving Tasmania

The survey also asked respondents to select the main factors that would lead them to move away from Tasmania. The biggest factor across all groups is employment opportunities (also underscored by participants in the forum discussions).

This factor relates to meeting the high cost of living in the state and is compounded structural factors, such as Tasmania having a small economy and receiving some of the lowest average earnings in the country.³ Accordingly, if better employment opportunities exist in larger economies on the mainland, then there is a natural incentive for secondary migration from Tasmania. Other push factors include discrimination, to be closer to family, and the availability of study or training opportunities.






Issues related to residence visas appeared to be an important factor for international students and skilled migrants only. Humanitarian entrants and skilled migrants viewed the need to be closer to their cultural community as an important factor, but only the humanitarian entrants identified the need to have better access to religious places of worship as one of the main factors that would lead them to move away from Tasmania.

7.3 Suggestions for fostering a more harmonious Tasmania

Participants proposed various solutions to foster a more inclusive and harmonious Tasmanian society – Table 8.

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Average Weekly Earnings Australia](#), 2023.

Table 8. Participants' suggestions for building a more inclusive Tasmania.

	<p>Inclusive Tasmania campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement educational initiatives that focus on raising awareness about the impact of racism. • Increase cultural awareness by launching a branding campaign to promote the existence of CALD community members in Tasmania and their positive contributions to society. • Establish a system that is easy to navigate as newcomers by facilitating better social, cultural, and political participation.
	<p>Appropriate punishment for prejudice-motivated offence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce stricter regulations against harassment and bullying motivated by prejudice. • Ensure perpetrators are held accountable and appropriately punished. • Increase security and surveillance of public spaces. • Revisit and revise the Racial Discrimination Act 1975.
	<p>Community grants and engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the opportunity for community socialising and cultural celebrations open to the general public. • Channel a portion of community grants to finance community projects (e.g., domestic violence, healthy eating) that serve the critical needs of the CALD communities. • Provide grants for expanding or building CALD communities' places of worship. • Implement co-design programs where CALD members are involved in shaping services and policies to ensure their needs are adequately addressed.
	<p>Representative of CALD voices in government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a dedicated Minister for Cultural Affairs or a Commissioner to politically represent CALD communities in Tasmania.
	<p>Citizenship application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease and provide assistance in the process of applying for citizenship.

8. Feedback on the Multicultural Action Plan

8.1 Priority areas

For each area of concern, survey respondents were asked to rate from 1 to 3, whether it is least important, somewhat important, or most important for the Tasmanian government to improve to make the island a better place for migrants to live. The average scores were:

- Employment opportunities 2.89;
- Health and wellbeing 2.84;
- Housing 2.84;
- Education and training 2.75;
- Safety and justice 2.70;
- Inclusive and welcoming communities 2.68;
- Reduce discrimination 2.68;
- Transport 2.64; and
- Language services 2.49.

Responses from forums, the open-ended survey, and submissions are consistent with the statistics. Overall, participants underscore four major areas the government needs to improve: health services, employment opportunities, housing, and affordable cost of living.

8.2 Definition of Multiculturalism

Survey respondents were asked to define multiculturalism in their own words. Most people describe multiculturalism as people of different cultures coexisting in one society. Some emphasised the importance of valuing diversity, acceptance, and respect, and the idea of equitable treatment for all members of community (regardless of skin tone, religious beliefs, or ethnicity) for everyone to flourish and coexist peacefully.

8.3 Key metrics for consideration

The new Multicultural Action Plan's goals and objectives must be attainable and effective in breaking down barriers for multicultural communities in the state.

When questioned about how respondents determine whether Tasmania has truly become multicultural, the replies can be categorised into the following key metrics:

1. Racism in all forms is reduced.
2. Safety is improved.
3. Equal opportunities are evident in many areas of society where no one is unfairly disadvantaged at the outset.

8.4 Key priorities in summary

Four main priorities are identified in reviewing participants' feedback in all areas of the consultation.

Access to essential services. CALD communities have difficulties accessing essential services, including healthcare, housing, and education. The issue of access is about more than just the availability of the services but also their associated costs, which may become a burden for some CALD members under specific visa categories. Improving access to services for those with no or low English language skills should also be considered, as this issue could affect multiple aspects of CALD members' lives in Tasmania.

Economic participation. Employment opportunities play a major role in determining whether CALD members can continue living in Tasmania to support their financial obligations. Being able to economically participate in society would positively influence CALD members' sense of belonging and self-confidence as they meaningfully contribute to society and build connections at the workplace.

Social, cultural, and political participation. CALD communities hoped that the new Multicultural Action Plan would lead to tangible strategies that enable CALD members' social, cultural, and political participation in the larger Tasmanian community. CALD communities want their voices to be taken seriously, be given opportunities to be involved in the development, implementation, and review of policies, programs, and services, as well as be given opportunities to share their culture while integrating with the local community without compromising their unique identity.

Harmonious communities. Participants in this consultation viewed a harmonious multicultural Tasmanian community as one where inclusivity, acceptance, respect, and understanding are valued, and everyone's safety is protected regardless of their cultural backgrounds.