



JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Intercultural Plan

2027–2031

Fact Sheet

Interculturalism in Ballarat

Belonging Begins Here!

Together, We Are Ballarat

Ballarat is a growing regional city with a long history of cultural diversity, shaped by First Nations communities and successive waves of migration. Today, multiculturalism is an important part of Ballarat's identity, community life and local development.



113,763

City of Ballarat
Population



11.2%

Population
born overseas
(representing 89
different nationalities)



29%

of residents had
at least one parent
born overseas



7%

of people in Ballarat
residents speak a
language other than
English at home

(more than 30 languages
reported across the
community)



89

different
countries
of birth

- 4% practice a non-Christian faith
- Common languages spoken at home other than English include Mandarin, Punjabi, Malayalam, Filipino/Tagalog, Hindi, Urdu, Spanish and Nepali.
- The main overseas birthplaces in Ballarat include the United Kingdom, India, New Zealand, China, the Philippines, the Netherlands, the United States, Germany, South Africa, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Nepal.
- Recent migration has been an important part of Ballarat's growth, with many newer residents arriving through skilled, family and humanitarian pathways.
- Ballarat became Australia's first recognised Intercultural City in 2016, supporting a local approach that goes beyond diversity to focus on inclusion, participation and social connection.
- The city has also been recognised for initiatives such as Harmony Fest, intercultural programs and partnerships that support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Source: 2021 Census



What Interculturalism means to Ballarat?

Interculturalism helps strengthen Ballarat’s social cohesion, workforce participation, creativity and economic development.

It also supports a more welcoming and inclusive community by recognising the contributions of people from different cultural, linguistic and faith backgrounds. In a regional city experiencing growth and change, Interculturalism is both a community value and a practical foundation for belonging and participation.

Key Focus Areas

Responsive Services

- Improve access to Council services and programs
- Remove barriers to participation

Active Citizenship

- Build strong connections between communities
- Encourage respectful intercultural relationships

Leadership & Advocacy

- Advocate for multicultural communities
- Work with local, state, and national partners

Maximizing and Valuing Diversity

- Recognise and promote cultural contributions
- Deliver community events and festivals

Key Programs and Initiatives

Harmony Fest Ballarat

- Annual cultural celebration with over 5000 participants on average annually

Refugee Week and Cultural Diversity Week

- Promote awareness and inclusion

Intercultural Garden

- Public space celebrating diversity

Cultural Diplomacy and Friendship City Relation

- International partnership and community development (Sister Cities programs and Ainara community development project).

Intercultural Ambassador Program



Outcomes and Impact

- Increasing community participation
- Stronger intercultural understanding
- Growth in intercultural events and initiatives
- Ongoing improvements in service delivery and inclusion

Challenges

- Barriers to participation (language, access, awareness)
- Experiences of exclusion or discrimination
- Need for improved cultural safety in services

Why Intercultural Plan Matters in Ballarat

- Strengthens community harmony and belonging
- Supports economic growth and innovation
- Enhances Ballarat's identity as a welcoming regional city

