



# Understanding our workforce: Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in the Australian Public Service

December 2021

Research Note 38-21



# Cultural and linguistic diversity comprises a number of elements captured within HR and employee survey data

Cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD) is a characteristic comprised of multiple aspects.

Human resources (APS Employment Database) and employee survey (APS Employee Census) data included three categories to assess CALD in the APS workforce:

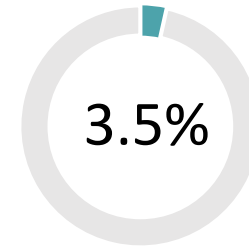
- Identification as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
- Country of birth
- First language spoken / Language spoken at home\*

These categories align with guidance provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on how to collect CALD information. The Australian Public Service Commission, however, is continuing to review how CALD can be best and most appropriately measured for the APS workforce.

\*The APS Employment Database records first language spoken while the 2021 APS Employee Census captured main language spoken at home.

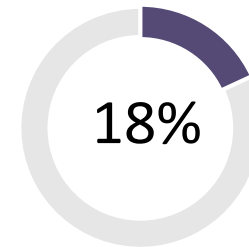
# A considerable proportion of APS employees identified as having cultural and linguistic diversity

3.5% of APS employees identified as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.



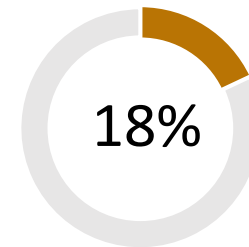
Identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person

18% of APS employees were born outside of Australia.



Born outside of Australia

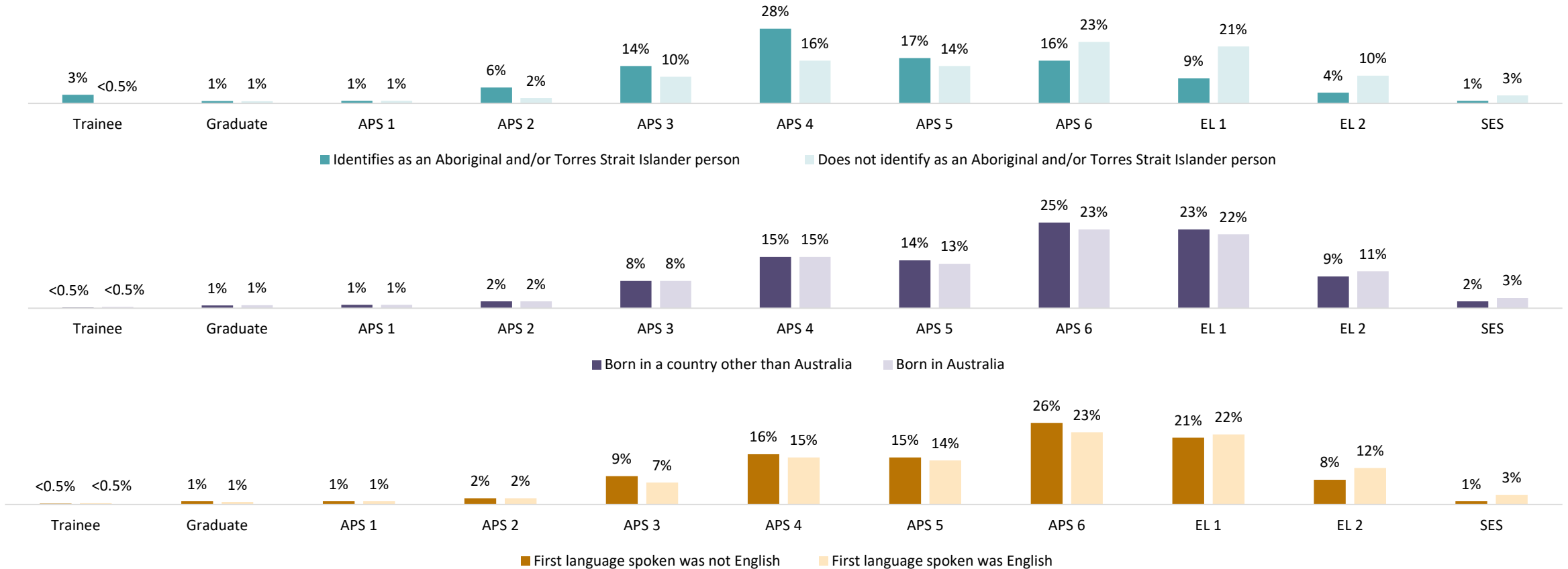
18% of APS employees first spoke a language other than English.



First language spoken was not English

# Employees with cultural and linguistic diversity have roles across all APS classification levels

Proportion of employees by actual classification



# Employees in CALD groups were more likely to work full-time than other employees



Ongoing

**89% who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**  
88% who do not identify

**91% who were born in a country other than Australia**  
91% who were born in Australia

**92% whose first language spoken was not English**  
91% whose first language was English



Full time

**82% who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**  
81% who do not identify

**86% who were born in a country other than Australia**  
81% who were born in Australia

**85% whose first language spoken was not English**  
81% whose first language was English

# Employees in CALD groups have a range of representation across gender and people with a disability



**Female**

**68% who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**  
62% who do not identify

**57% who were born in a country other than Australia**  
62% who were born in Australia

**59% whose first language spoken was not English**  
61% whose first language was English



**Disability**

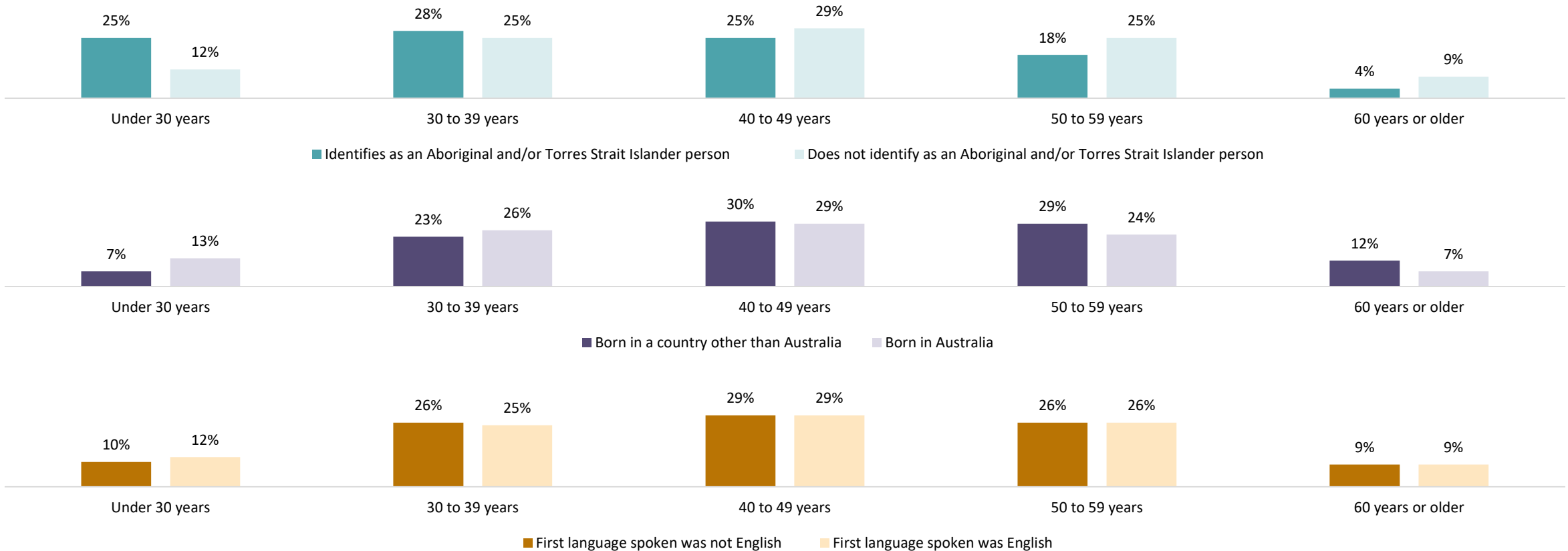
**6% who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**  
5% who do not identify

**4% who were born in a country other than Australia**  
5% who were born in Australia

**3% whose first language spoken was not English**  
5% whose first language was English

# Aboriginal Australian and/or Torres Strait Islander employees were typically younger than those in other CALD groups

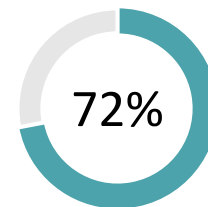
Age distribution of employees



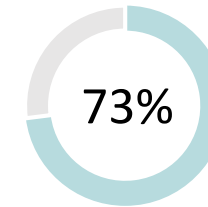
# Employees with cultural and linguistic diversity had high levels of employee engagement

Employee Engagement Index scores reflect whether respondents feel emotionally connected and committed to their organisation.

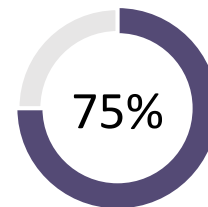
The Employee Engagement Index score for the APS overall is 73%.



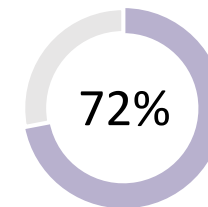
Employees who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



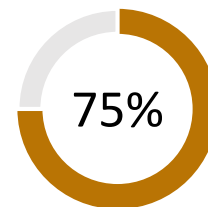
Employees who do not identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



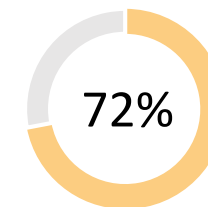
Employees born in countries other than Australia



Employees born in Australia



Employees who speak a language other than English at home



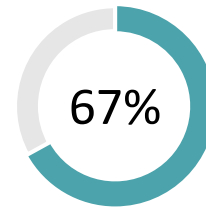
Employees who only speak English at home



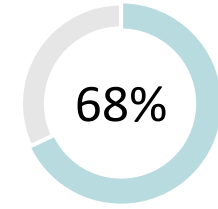
# Employees with cultural and linguistic diversity also reported that their wellbeing was supported

Wellbeing Index scores reflect whether respondents feel their health and wellbeing is supported.

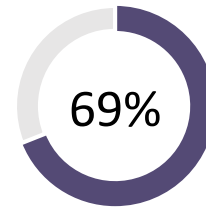
The Employee Wellbeing Index score for the APS overall was 68%.



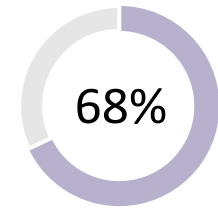
Employees who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



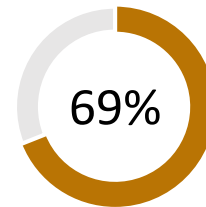
Employees who do not identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



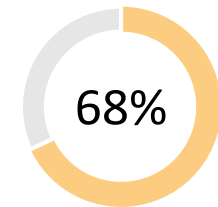
Employees born in countries other than Australia



Employees born in Australia



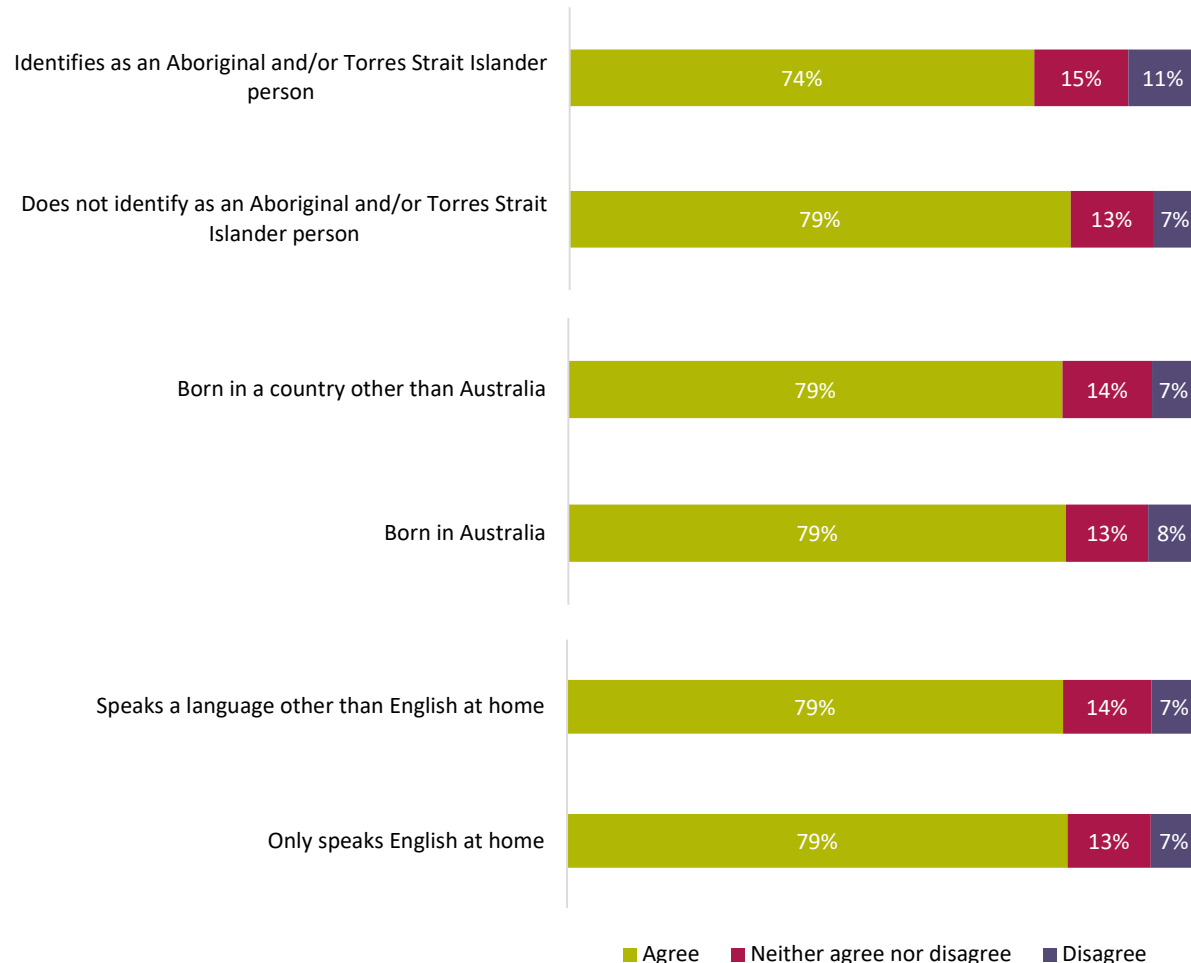
Employees who speak a language other than English at home



Employees who only speak English at home

# The majority of employees with cultural and linguistic diversity perceive respect and inclusion in their workplaces

## My agency supports and actively promotes an inclusive workplace culture



Source: 2021 APS Employee Census

A majority of employees with and without cultural and linguistic diversity agreed their agency supports and actively promotes an inclusive workplace culture.

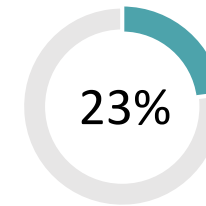
A smaller proportion of those who identify as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, however, held this view than those who did not identify as Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

# A larger proportion of respondents in CALD groups perceived discrimination over the last 12 months than other employees

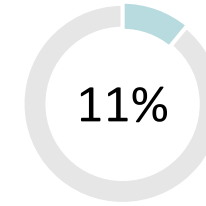
Nearly one in four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees perceived discrimination on the basis of their background or a personal characteristic in the course of their employment over the previous 12 months.

The most common form of discrimination was on the basis of identification as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person (43%).

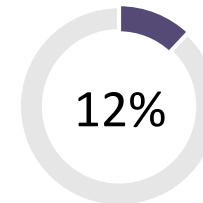
12% of those born overseas and 14% of those who speak a language other than English at home perceived discrimination.



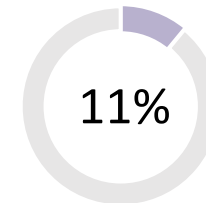
Employees who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



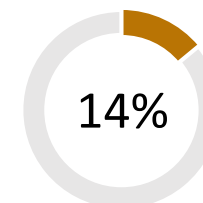
Employees who do not identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



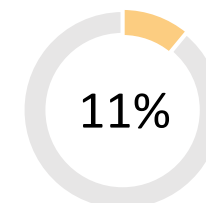
Employees born in countries other than Australia



Employees born in Australia



Employees who speak a language other than English at home

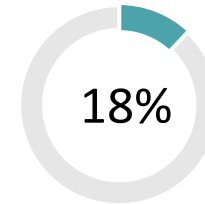


Employees who only speak English at home

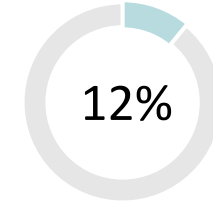
# A larger proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees perceived harassment or bullying

Nearly one in five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees perceived that they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their current workplace during the previous 12 months.

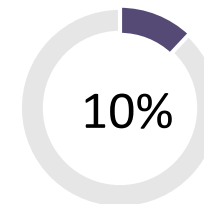
10% of those born overseas and 11% of those who speak a language other than English at home perceived harassment or bullying.



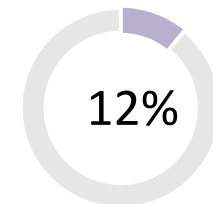
Employees who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



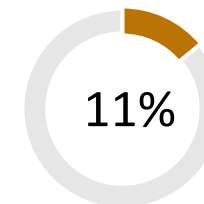
Employees who do not identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person



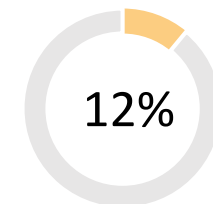
Employees born in countries other than Australia



Employees born in Australia



Employees who speak a language other than English at home



Employees who only speak English at home

For further information please contact:

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