

**MIGRANT INFORMATION CENTRE (Eastern Melbourne)
Multicultural Equity and Access Program**

Filipino Cultural Profile

PLEASE NOTE: This profile provides an overview of some of the cultural information relating to the diverse groups of Filipino people who live in the Eastern Region of Melbourne. This description may not apply to all people as individual experiences may vary. However this profile can be used as a guide to some of the issues that may concern your clients. This is an update of the profile in the Home and Personal Care Kit developed by the MIC in 2004.

Introduction:

At the 2006 Census, there were 27,337 Philippines-born persons in Victoria, an increase of 21.6% from 22,472 persons in 2001 (Victorian Multicultural Commission 2008). The *Philippines* refers to the country. *Filipino* refers to people in general from the Philippines and *Filipina* is used specifically for females from the Philippines.

Migration:

- Prior to the early 1970s there were few Filipinos living in Australia, most were professionals.
- Since 1981, Filipino-born people have featured in the top ten immigrant communities in Australia.
- During the 1980s, Filipino women constituted the largest group of arrivals under the family reunion schemes, joining their Australian husbands and fiancés.
- More recently parents have been sponsored to join their adult children; this has led to an increase in older Filipinos.
- The Filipino community is dispersed throughout Melbourne.

Local Demographics: Filipino-born residents in the Eastern Region

Local Government Area	Total Filipino-born Population	50-59 years	60-69 years	70-79 years	80 years and over	Total number of Filipino-born people aged 65 and over	People aged 65+ as a % of the Filipino-born population
City of Boroondara	326	45	15	4	8	19	6%
City of Knox	896	179	53	18	5	37	4%
City of Manningham	291	72	23	3	4	13	4%
City of Maroondah	366	55	30	4	7	18	5%
City of Monash	806	137	36	14	15	38	5%
City of Whitehorse	569	98	29	17	0	24	4%
Shire of Yarra Ranges	272	53	17	5	3	11	4%
Eastern Region	3526	639	203	65	42	160	5%

(ABS Census 2006 & MAV Data 2006)

- The median age of the Filipino-born population is 39 years compared to 37 years for the total Victorian population (Victorian Multicultural Commission 2008).

Language: Filipino-speaking residents in the Eastern Region

Local Government Area	Total number of people speaking Filipino at home	50-59 years	60-69 years	70-79 years	80 years and over	Total number of Filipino speaking people aged 65 and over	Filipino speaking people aged 65+ as a % of the Filipino speaking population
City of Boroondara	91	14	8	0	0	7	8%
City of Knox	335	87	27	3	3	24	7%
City of Manningham	107	29	13	3	0	6	6%
City of Maroondah	137	27	10	4	3	6	4%
City of Monash	241	49	11	5	3	13	5%
City of Whitehorse	199	47	14	6	0	3	2%
Shire of Yarra Ranges	94	22	9	0	3	3	3%
Eastern Region	1204	275	92	21	12	62	5%

(ABS Census 2006 & MAV Data 2006)

- 2.4% of the Filipino-born population in Victoria identified as speaking English 'not-well' and 0.1% spoke English 'not at all' (Victorian Multicultural Commission 2008).
- 51.2% of the Filipino-born population in Victoria assessed themselves as speaking English 'very well' and 20.3% as 'well' (Victorian Multicultural Commission 2008).
- The national language is Filipino. However there are 169 dialects in the Philippines.
- Filipino language (formerly Pilipino) is based on Tagalog.
- The main languages spoken by Filipino-born people in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne include Cebuano and Ilonggo.
- In general, Filipinos have a very high level of English proficiency. However in stressful situations Filipino people may prefer to speak Filipino or another language other than English.

Religion:

The Filipino-born population in Victoria identified as the following religions in the 2006 Census (Victorian Multicultural Commission 2008):

- Western Catholic – 80.1% (21,890)
- Baptist - 2.7% (742)
- Christian – 2.7% (725)
- Uniting Church – 1.3% (363)
- Churches of Christ – 1.2% (324)
- Other religions – 8.6% (2,359)
- No religion – 1.5% (398)

Attitudes and Issues with Ageing:

- There is an expectation by older Filipino-born people that the family will care for the sick or elderly parents.

Attitudes to Disability and Mental Illness:

- In general there is a poor understanding of mental health as a health issue, and a tendency to categorise those with mental illness as being 'crazy'. As a result Filipino-born people are often reluctant to seek help.
- Anecdotally, local disability organisations find it difficult to access families, as they are reluctant to use mainstream services.

Customs / Values:

- The family is central to Filipino culture. Filipinos have a very wide definition of family, often including a large 'extended family'.
- Family members are often involved in important decision-making processes.
- 'Hiya' encompasses feelings of 'embarrassment', 'shame' or 'loss of face'. Filipino-born people may feel very sensitive to social slight and as a result are very careful of the feelings of others.
- Visitors to a Filipino home are traditionally offered food or refreshments. Filipino-born people may be offended by a refusal of this offer.

Communication Styles:

- There is a tendency among Filipino-born people not to answer questions unless they are obviously relevant.
- Some Filipino-born people may consider it impolite to stare or look directly at the person with whom you are talking.
- It is common for Filipinos to touch the person they are involved in conversation with on the hand or shoulder.

Naming Conventions:

- Filipinos do not usually have middle names. However the 'middle' name may be their mother's surname.
- Nicknames for Filipino-born people are common. However they may not be obviously based on their first name. It is important that individuals are asked what they would like to be called.

Health Beliefs and Practices:

- Filipino-born people may use western medicines concurrently with traditional, herbal and religious healing practices.
- Some Filipino-born people may associate bathing with the draining of strength from the body, particularly for those who are ill.
- Devotion to Saints and other religious practices may be seen as an important part of the healing process.

Greetings:

- Remember there are many other dialects.

English Greeting	Filipino	Closest English Pronunciation
Hello	helo	HELLO
Good Morning	magandang umaga	MA-GUN-DUNG UM-AGA
Good Afternoon	magandang hapon	MA-GUN-DUNG HA-PON
Goodbye	paalam na po	PAA-LAM-NA- PO
Yes	Oo (opo)	OH-OH
No	hindi po	HIN -DAY- PO
Thankyou	salamat	SAL-LA-MUT

Key Filipino Festivals / Significant Dates:

- Independence Day *12th June*
- Main Catholic Observations *Lent, Easter, Christmas etc*

* For other significant dates related to religious observances, refer to the Christian religious profile.

* To search for exact dates of key cultural and religious events, festivals and national days for this year, visit: <http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/calendar-australia/>

Local services useful for Filipino-born residents in the Eastern Region

Settlement Services

Provide information, referral and casework for refugees and family migrants who arrived in the last five years.

Name	Address	Contact
Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)	Suite 2, Town Hall Hub, 27 Bank Street, Box Hill, 3128	Ph: 9285 4888
New Hope Migrant and Refugee Centre	18 Chester Street Oakleigh, 3166	Ph: 9563 4130

Aged Care & Disability Support Services

Migrant Information Centre Aged Care & Disability Services

Address: Suite 2, Town Hall Hub, 27 Bank Street, Box Hill, 3128

Ph: 9275 6905

The aged and disability team aims to increase access to aged care and disability services for CALD communities in the EMR through working with CALD communities to promote those services, provide information and referral and supporting organisations to provide culturally appropriate care. The team also receives funding for specific projects in this area.

Name of Organisation & Contact Details	Venue	Time / Day
Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia Inc. (CPCA) Community based group session with dementia focus Ph: 9791 8366	29 Silver Grove Nunawading	Fridays
Wesley Do Care Social Support Group for Filipino Seniors Ph: 9762 5211	Suite 1, 168 Boronia Road, Boronia, 3156	

Other Support Services

Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia Inc. (CPCA)

Ph: 9791 8366

A state-wide organisation of Filipinos in Victoria committed to a culture of community service, respect for difference and shared vision and knowledge by representing issues and advocating for a strong voice and active participation by Filipinos in the whole community. The organisation auspices the Filipino-Australian Volunteers Network and the Filipino Carers Support Group.

Filipino Community Council of Victoria

Address: 93 Cowper Street, Footscray, 3011

Ph: 9687 9011

Provides advocacy and support for people from the Filipino community in Victoria.

Senior Citizens Groups

For more information please contact local councils or the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) on 9275 6905.

Name of the Club	LGA	Venue	Time / Day
Filipino Elderly Association South East Region (PEASER)	Monash	Sundowner Hall 24 Sundowner Ave Clayton South, 3169	1:30pm – 4:30pm Thursday

References:

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006, *Census of Population and Housing*, viewed 1 March 2010, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/census>>.

Collins, J., Mondello, L., Brehencey, J. & Childs, T., 2001, *Cosmopolitan Melbourne: Explore the World in One City*, Big Box Publishing Pty Ltd, Sydney, pp.243-250.

Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia (VIC), 2003, *Pilipino Kami, We are Filipino: A Practical Guide to Promoting HACC Services to Filipino Seniors*, viewed 20 April, <www.miceastmelb.com.au/documents/pdaproject/PilipinoKami.pdf>.

Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services ACT, 2003, *The Cultural Dictionary*, viewed 20 April 2010, <http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/5282/Cultural_Dictionary.pdf>, pp. 135-136.

Jupp, J (ed.), 2001, *The Australian People: An Encyclopaedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 256-273.

Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), 2008, *Seniors from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds*, Demography on the 50 years plus Victorian population from the 2006 census, Victoria, Australia.

The State of Queensland (Queensland Health), 2003, *Philippines: A Guide for Health Professionals*, viewed 20 April 2010, <www.health.qld.gov.au/multicultural/health_workers/philippn.pdf>

Victorian Multicultural Commission, 2008, *The Philippines-Born Community in Victoria*, Fact Sheet No. A-48, viewed 20 April 2010, <<http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/images/stories/pdf/philippinesfs-24apr08.pdf>>.