

German Cultural Profile

PLEASE NOTE: This profile provides an overview of some of the cultural information relating to the diverse groups of German-born 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:

There are German speaking people living in the Eastern Region of Melbourne from Germany as well as from Austria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Switzerland, parts of Denmark, Poland, some former Yugoslavian countries and other countries. The majority of statistics available relate to the German-born population.

Migration:

- There is a long history of migration to Australia by people born in Germany. However, in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Victoria, they largely arrived post World War II.
- 76% of the German-born community in the Eastern Region are aged over 65 years (ABS Census 2016).
- The median age of the German-born population was 67 years compared to 37 years for the total Victorian population (ABS Census 2016).

Local Demographics: German-born residents in the Eastern Region

Local Government Area	Total number of German Born Residents	50-59 years	60-69 years	70-79 years	80 years and over	Total number of German-born people aged 65 and over	People aged 65+ as a % of the German-born population
City of Boroondara	423	78	150	126	70	318	75%
City of Knox	951	111	119	352	274	775	81%
City of Manningham	414	47	133	149	92	345	83%
City of Maroondah	492	72	166	139	97	371	75%
City of Monash	533	66	126	209	135	441	82%
City of Whitehorse	525	78	163	163	124	402	76%
Shire of Yarra Ranges	919	177	309	263	173	634	69%
Eastern Region	4259	611	1261	1417	956	3264	76%

(ABS Census 2016)

Language: German-speaking residents in the Eastern Region

Local Government Area	Total number of people speaking German at home	50-59 years	60-69 years	70-79 years	80 years and over	Total number of German speaking people aged 65 and over	German speaking people aged 65+ as a % of the German speaking population
City of Boroondara	299	90	59	85	66	181	60%
City of Knox	809	107	106	296	302	658	81%
City of Manningham	258	38	38	80	91	189	73%
City of Maroondah	307	67	40	98	94	215	70%
City of Monash	398	67	59	132	147	309	77%
City of Whitehorse	386	77	81	97	102	263	68%
Shire of Yarra Ranges	559	131	119	118	123	369	66%
Eastern Region	3004	577	508	983	938	2190	72%

(ABS Census 2016)

- The national language of Germany is German.
- In the German-speaking area of Europe, various dialects are spoken in different regional areas. For example, Swiss, Austrian German and Frisian (North Germany), Bavarian and Schwabian in Germany.
- The English proficiency of the German-born population in Melbourne is very high. However, as individuals age conditions (such as dementia) can contribute to a loss of English capacity and a reversion to the mother tongue.
- 79.5% of the German-born population in Victoria assessed themselves as speaking English 'very well' and 15.9 % as 'well' (ABS Census 2016).
- 3.1% of the German-born population in Victoria identified as speaking English 'not-well' and 1.3% spoke English 'not at all' (ABS Census 2016).

Religion:

The German-born population in Victoria identified as the following religions at the 2016 Census (ABS Census 2016):

- Western Catholic – 48.3% (19,613)
- Lutheran – 25.3% (10,304)
- Anglican – 16.7% (6,813)
- Judaism – 4.1% (1,699)
- Presbyterian – 4.4% (1,809)
- Other religions – 1.0% (421)

Attitudes and Issues with Ageing:

- Older Germans prefer to stay in their own homes as long as possible. They highly value their independence.
- German-born people are very reluctant to enter nursing homes and would rather pay for services or depend on support of family members.

Attitudes to Disability and Mental Illness:

- In Australia, German-born people have similar attitudes to mental illness as Anglo-Australians. There is still some stigma attached to mental illness, but generally German-born Australians are accepting of people with mental illness.

Customs / Values:

- German-born people may ask visitors to their home to remove their shoes.
- Punctuality is considered a virtue.
- Cleanliness and order in actions and life are valued.
- Family structure is organised around the nuclear family.
- German-born people have a relatively open attitude towards equal roles for men and women, but more so among the younger generation.

Communication Styles:

- German-born people will almost always let you know what they really think.
- German - born people can use a very direct style of communication.
- Assertive.
- Hand shaking is practiced whenever people meet or part.

Naming Conventions:

- German-born people prefer if titles are used when addressing them. For example, Mr, Mrs or Dr. unless otherwise directed.

Health Beliefs and Practices:

- Western model of medicine is used in conjunction with alternative therapies.
- Homeopathy or Naturopathy may be used as alternatives.
- German-born people are disinclined to complain and therefore medical conditions may go undetected. They are also reluctant to go to hospital.

Greetings:

English Greeting	German	Closest English Pronunciation
Hello	Hallo	HALLO
Goodbye	Auf Wiedersehen / Tschuess	AUF VEEDERSEIN / SHUSS
Good Morning	Guten Morgen	GOOTEN MORGEN
Good Afternoon	Guten Tag	GOOTEN TAAG
Yes	Ja	YAA
No	Nein	NINE
Thankyou	Danke Schoen	DANKE SHERN
Please	Bitte	BITTE

Key German Festivals / Significant Dates:

- Tag der Arbeit (Workers Day) 1st May
- Tag der Deutschen Einheit (National Day) 3rd October
- Allerheiligen (All Saints Day) 1st November
- Heiligabend (Christmas Eve) 24th December
- Sylvester 31st December

Local services useful for German-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, Vic 3128 <u>and</u> 18 Bond Street, Ringwood Vic 3134	Ph: 9285 4888 (Box Hill) 9870 1351 (Ringwood)
New Hope Foundation	Grattan Gardens Community Centre, 40 Grattan Street, Prahran Vic 3181	Ph: 9510 5877

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: 9285 4888

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.

Tabulam and Templer Homes for the Aged (TTHA)

Address: 31-41 Elizabeth Street, Bayswater, 3153

Ph: 8720 1333

Website: <https://ttha.org.au/>

Tabulam and Templer Homes for the Aged is strongly committed to the principle of ensuring that all older German speaking individuals have access to and are provided with services relevant to their needs and choices, including those with special needs.

Other Support Services

Martin Luther Homes

Address: 67 Mount View Rd, The Basin, VIC, 3154

Ph: 9760 2100

Website: <https://martinlutherhomes.com.au/>

A not-for-profit organisation with a proud history of looking after seniors for the past 50 years. A leader of Senior's Housing and integrated aged care services for the community, with an emphasis on German culture and providing spiritual care for its residents and professional support and training for all its staff.

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
German Senior Citizens Club	Boorondara	St Christopher's Hall 595 Riversdale Road, Camberwell, 3124

References:

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