

June 2026

Glen Eira Community Voice: May 2026

Engagement report



**GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL**

BENTLEIGH, BENTLEIGH EAST, BRIGHTON EAST, CARNEGIE, CAULFIELD, ELSTERNWICK,
GARDENVALE, GLEN HUNTLY, MCKINNON, MURRUMBEENA, ORMOND, ST KILDA EAST

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Executive summary

This report presents the findings from a Community Voice survey held from 18 May to 7 June 2026.

The survey included one topic, and invited responses to help us shape Council's next **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)** for 2026–28.

As of June 2026, the Community Voice panel included 356 Glen Eira residents, representing a wide cross-section of our community by age, gender, suburb, housing situation and cultural background. A total of 114 members participated in the survey, giving a response rate of 32 per cent.

What we heard

Developing our next Reconciliation Action Plan

- **Awareness of Reconciliation Action Plans is mixed**
Around half of respondents have some familiarity (46 per cent), while a larger proportion report low or no familiarity (58 per cent).
- **Reconciliation is linked to relationships, recognition and understanding**
Almost half of respondents (46 per cent) see reconciliation as building strong relationships between First Nations peoples and the wider community, along with visible recognition and truth-telling (44 per cent) and greater cultural understanding (42 per cent).
- **Many have limited direct engagement with reconciliation initiatives**
30 per cent have not taken part in any initiatives. Among those who have participated, most engage through other organisations such as community groups, schools or workplaces, rather than Council.
- **Council's role is most visible through formal recognition and events**
This includes Acknowledgement of Country (85 per cent), marking significant dates such as NAIDOC Week (82 per cent), and public displays like signage, artwork and flags (64 per cent).
- **Broad support for Council playing a role, with some reservations**
69 per cent consider it important for Council to play an active role in reconciliation, though some question whether it is a local government responsibility.
- **Top priorities focus on truth-telling, culture and Country**
Respondents identified acknowledging history and supporting truth-telling (47 per

cent), caring for Country (43 per cent), and opportunities to learn about culture and history (42 per cent) as top priorities for the next RAP.

Who we heard from

A total of **114 Community Voice members** took part in the May 2026 survey. Their responses reflect a broad cross-section of Glen Eira's community.

	Age We heard from residents across all age groups, with the highest participation from: • 55–64 years (27 per cent) • 65–74 years (22 per cent) • 35–44 years (17 per cent)
	Gender Responses were almost evenly split • 50 per cent identified as men • 47 per cent identified as women • A small number identified as non-binary or preferred not to say.
	Suburb Respondents came from every Glen Eira suburb except Brighton East and Gardenvale. The highest participation came from: • Carnegie (12 per cent) • Elsternwick (12 per cent) • Caulfield South and Bentleigh East (11 per cent each).
	Identity Many respondents (33 per cent) did not identify with any of the listed demographic groups. Among those who did: • 33 per cent were born overseas • 29 per cent identified as being from a multicultural background

Background

This report presents the findings of the May 2026 Community Voice survey, including each question, and the responses received.

About Community Voice

Community Voice is Council's online panel of Glen Eira residents who regularly share their views on a variety of topics through online surveys. The goal of the panel is to gather feedback that reflects the diverse experiences and perspectives of our community.

Launched in early 2018, Community Voice was a key commitment in the *Council and Community Plan 2017–2021*. It was created to improve transparency in decision-making, better understand the diverse needs of our community and explore ideas together with residents.

Engaging with residents online allows Council to gather representative feedback on important issues. This feedback is analysed and shared with relevant Council teams and Councillors, where it helps guide their decisions.

Panel membership

From February 2024, the membership of the panel was refreshed and updated

through a recruitment drive of both new and returning members. This update aimed to ensure the panel remains representative of Glen Eira's community, with membership based on the 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data. The update also aimed to increase the diversity of the panel with the additional collection of housing and cultural background information.

As of June 2026, the panel includes 356 Glen Eira residents. These members represent the diversity of our community in terms of age, gender, suburb, housing and cultural background information. We continue to recruit panel members with the aim of achieving over 400 members.

Survey and participation

A total 114 Community Voice members responded to the survey, giving us a response rate of 32 per cent.

The survey included one topic, and invited responses to help shape our next **Reconciliation Action Plan** for (RAP) for 2026–28.

Developing our next Reconciliation Action Plan

We're developing Council's next Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for 2026–28, which sets out how we will continue to support reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community.

Our approach is focused on building respectful relationships, increasing understanding, and creating meaningful opportunities for First Nations peoples.

Through Community Voice, we wanted to understand:

- what reconciliation means to members
- how they hear about or engage with reconciliation initiatives
- what Council should focus on next

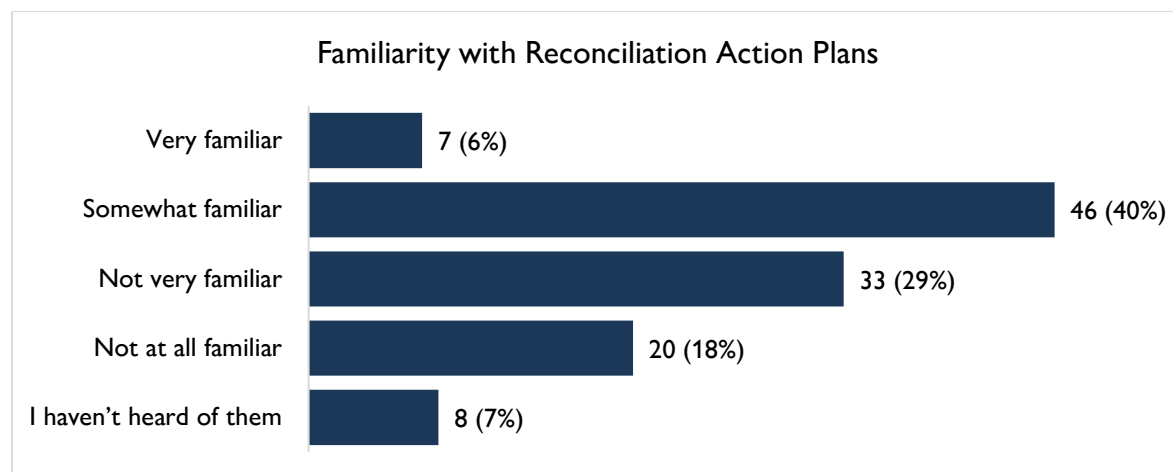
We're at the very beginning of drafting our next plan, and this feedback will help guide practical actions that strengthen respect, understanding and stronger connections in our community.

Awareness and understanding

Question 1: Before today, how familiar were you with Reconciliation Action Plans?

This was a required question. It received 114 responses (100 per cent).

- Familiarity with Reconciliation Action Plans is mixed.
- Around half of respondents have some familiarity (46 per cent), including 40 per cent 'somewhat familiar' and 6 per cent 'very familiar'.
- A larger proportion (58 per cent) report low or no familiarity, including 33 per cent 'not very familiar', 18 per cent 'not familiar at all', and 7 per cent who have not heard of Reconciliation Action Plans.

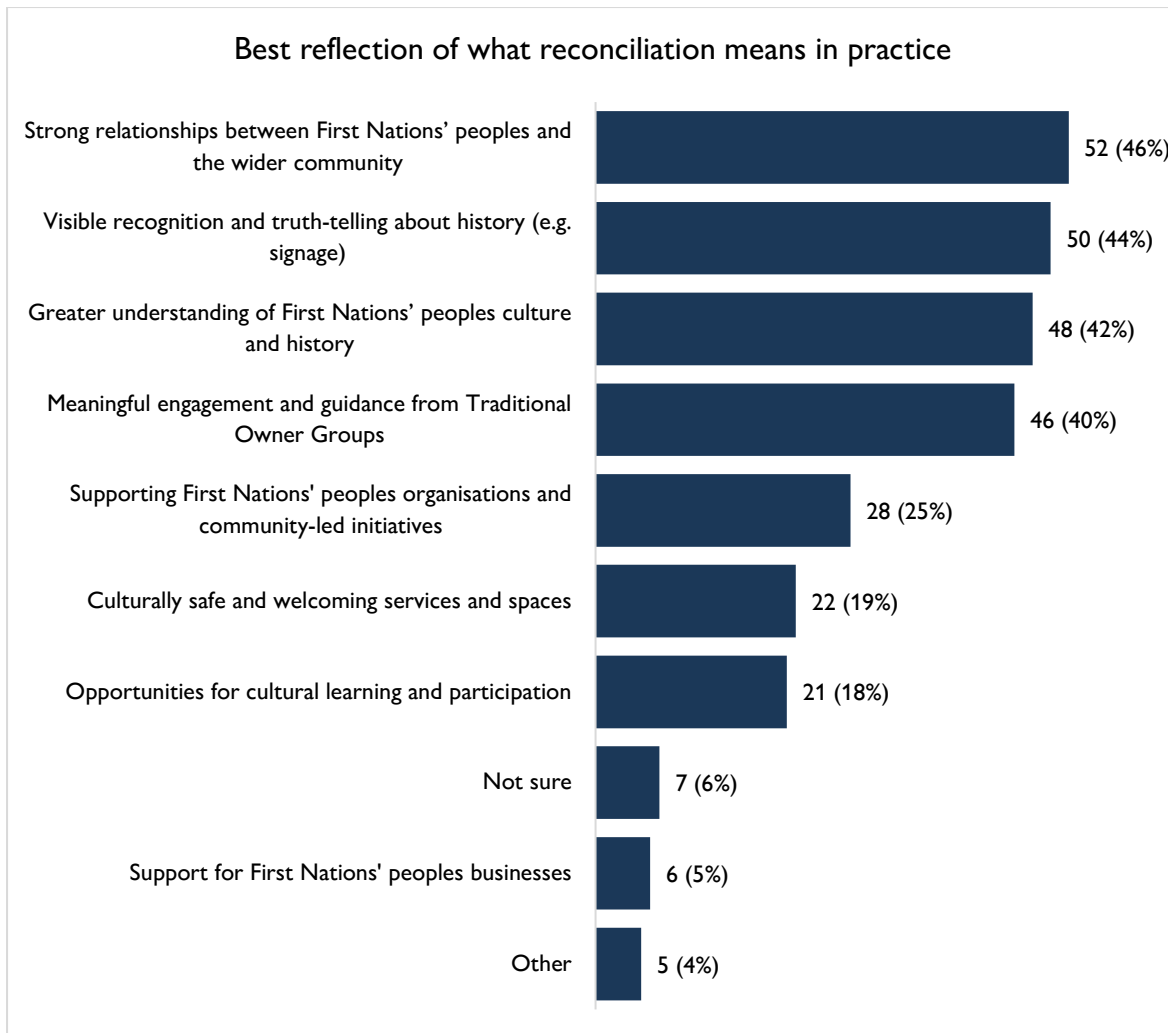


What reconciliation looks like in practice

Question 2: In your view, which of the following best reflect what reconciliation means in practice?

This was a required question. It received 114 responses (100 per cent). Respondents could select up to three options.

- Almost half of respondents (46 per cent) said reconciliation means building strong relationships between First Nations peoples and the wider community.
- This was followed by visible recognition and truth-telling (such as signage, public art, and acknowledging past experiences) (44 per cent) and greater understanding of First Nations peoples culture and history (42 per cent).



Additional comments were provided by five respondents who selected “Other”. These are summarised below:

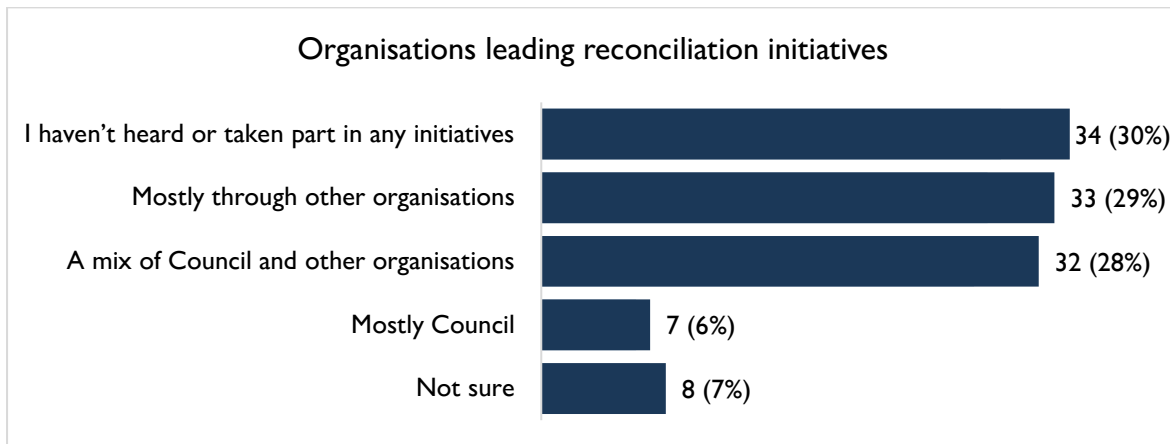
- Compensation or “Pay the Rent” style contributions
- Clear understanding of whose Country people are on
- Reconciliation seen as a two-way process of mutual understanding
- Support for Closing the Gap and a Victorian Treaty
- Some concern that reconciliation may create division

Awareness of reconciliation in the community

Question 3: Thinking about any reconciliation initiatives you’ve seen or been involved in, who usually runs or organises these?

This was a required question. It received 114 responses (100 per cent).

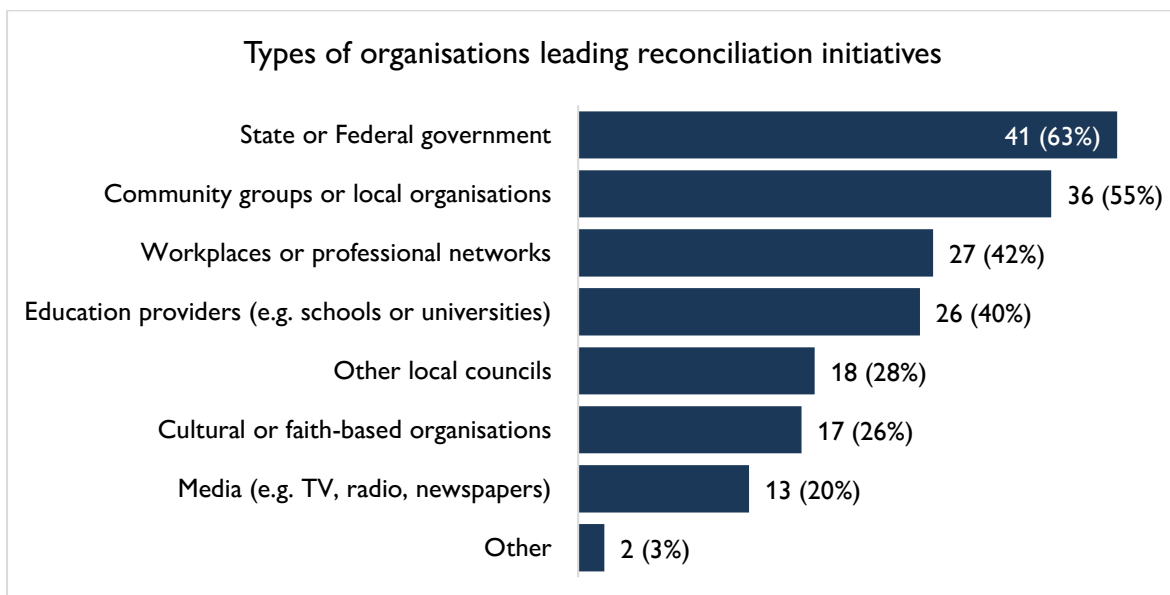
- One third of respondents haven't taken part in any reconciliation initiatives (30 per cent).
- Of those who have, most respondents engage with reconciliation initiatives through other organisations, such as community groups, schools or workplaces (29 per cent), or a mix of other organisations and Council (28 per cent).
- A small number engage mostly through Council (6 per cent).



Question 4. If mostly other organisations or a mix of both — what types of organisations are these?

This was a required question for those who selected other organisations or a mix of both Council and other organisations. It received 65 responses (57 per cent).

- State or federal government bodies were most commonly identified (63 per cent).
- This was followed by community groups or local organisations (55 per cent) and workplaces or professional networks (42 per cent).



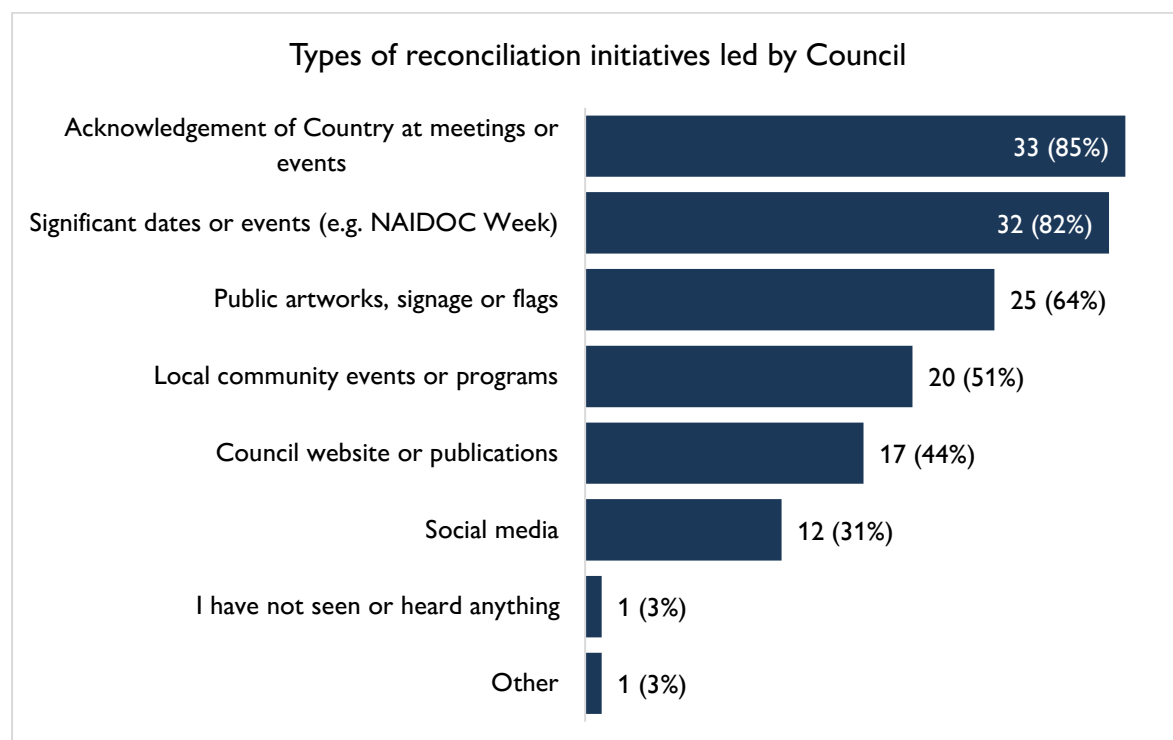
Additional comments were provided by two respondents who selected “Other”. These are summarised below:

- Cultural institutions (e.g. Royal Botanic Gardens and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra)
- Sporting organisations

Question 5. If mostly Council or a mix of both — where have you seen these?

This was a required question for those who selected mostly Council or a mix of both Council and other organisations. It received 39 responses (34 per cent).

- Council-led reconciliation initiatives are most commonly seen through Acknowledgements of Country (85 per cent) and recognition of significant dates, NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week, National Sorry Day (82 per cent).
- This was followed by public displays, such as artwork, signage or flags (64 per cent) and community events (51 per cent).



An additional comment was provided by one respondent who selected “Other”. This is summarised below:

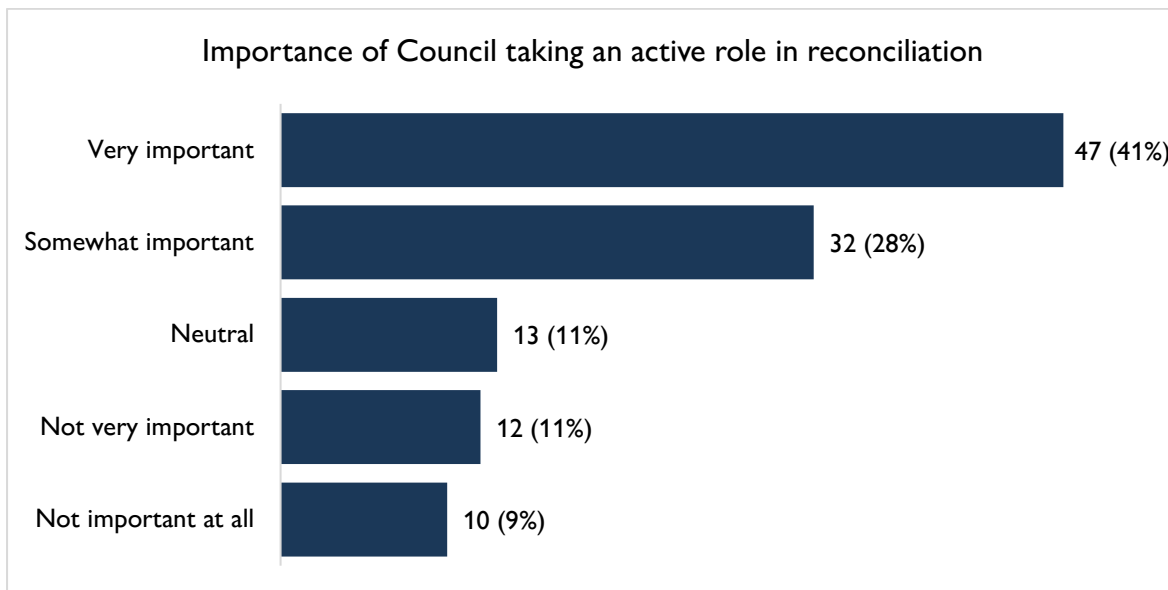
- Art exhibition or events (e.g. Torch exhibition, weaving workshops).

Council's role and priorities for the next RAP

Question 6: How important is it for Council to take an active role in reconciliation?

This was a required question. It received 114 responses (100 per cent).

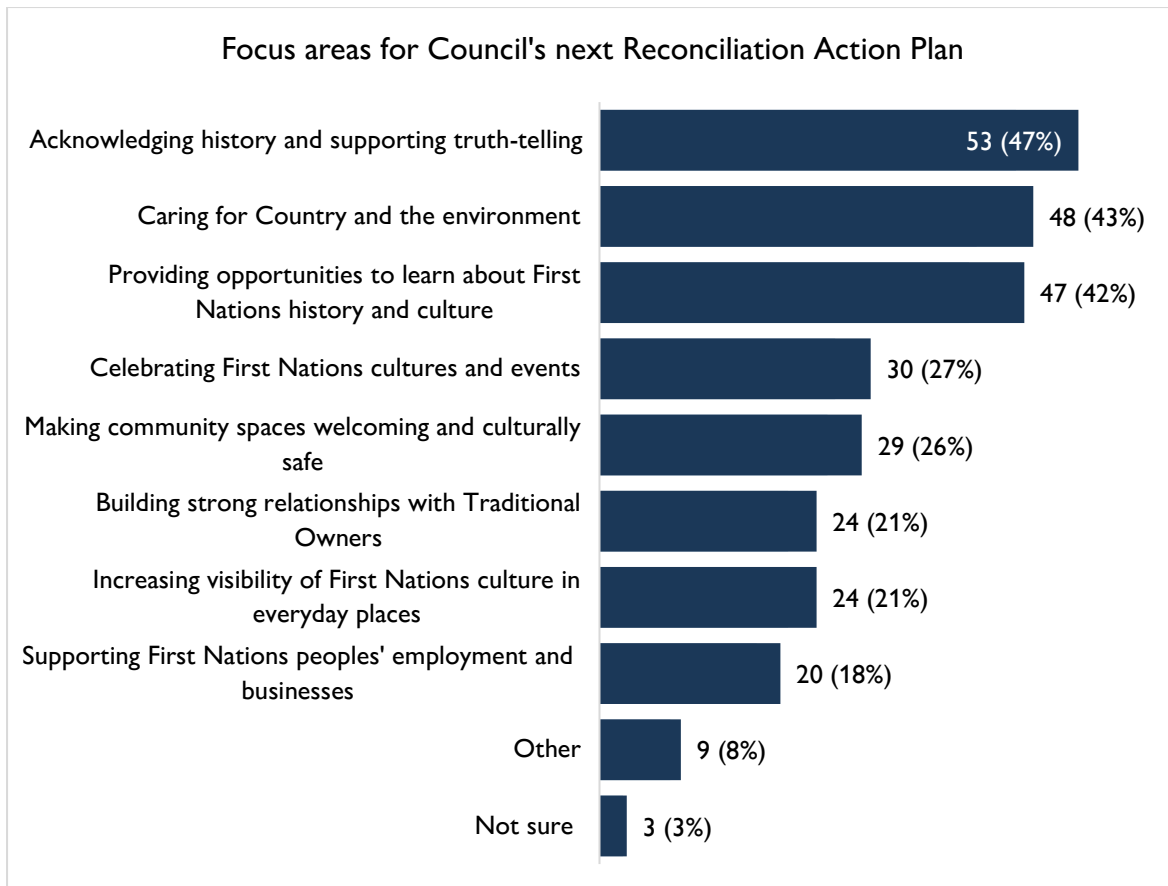
- Most respondents consider Council playing an active role in reconciliation to be important, with 41 per cent rating it as “very important” and 28 per cent as “somewhat important”.



Question 7. Thinking about Council's role, what should we focus on most for our next Reconciliation Action Plan?

This was an optional question. It received 112 responses (98 per cent).

- Nearly half of respondents selected acknowledging history and supporting truth-telling as the top priority (47 per cent).
- Caring for Country and the environment (43 per cent) and providing opportunities to learn about First Nations history and culture (42 per cent) were also key focus areas.



Additional comments were provided by nine respondents who selected “Other”. These are summarised below:

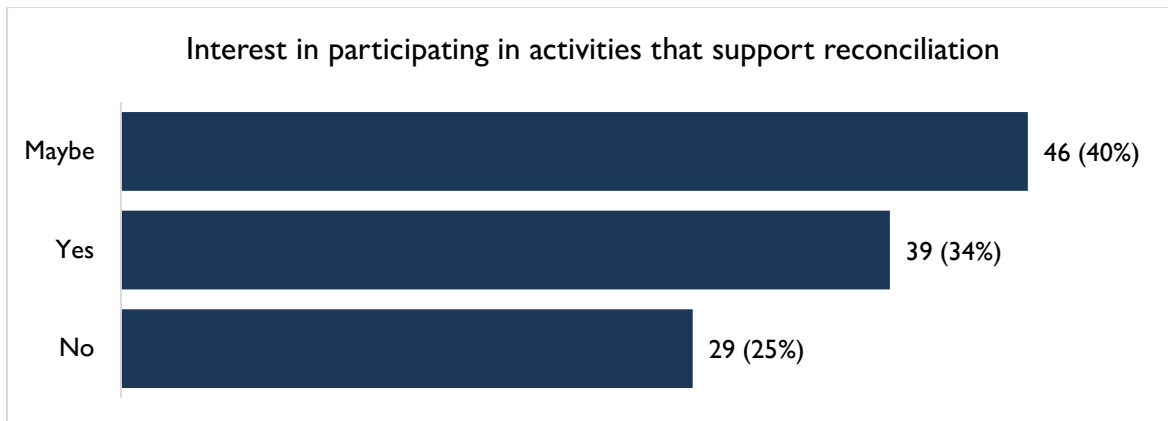
- Do not support Council being involved in reconciliation activities and believe it is not a local government responsibility.

Participation and involvement

Question 6. Would you be interested in taking part in activities that support reconciliation?

This was a required question. It received 114 responses (100 per cent).

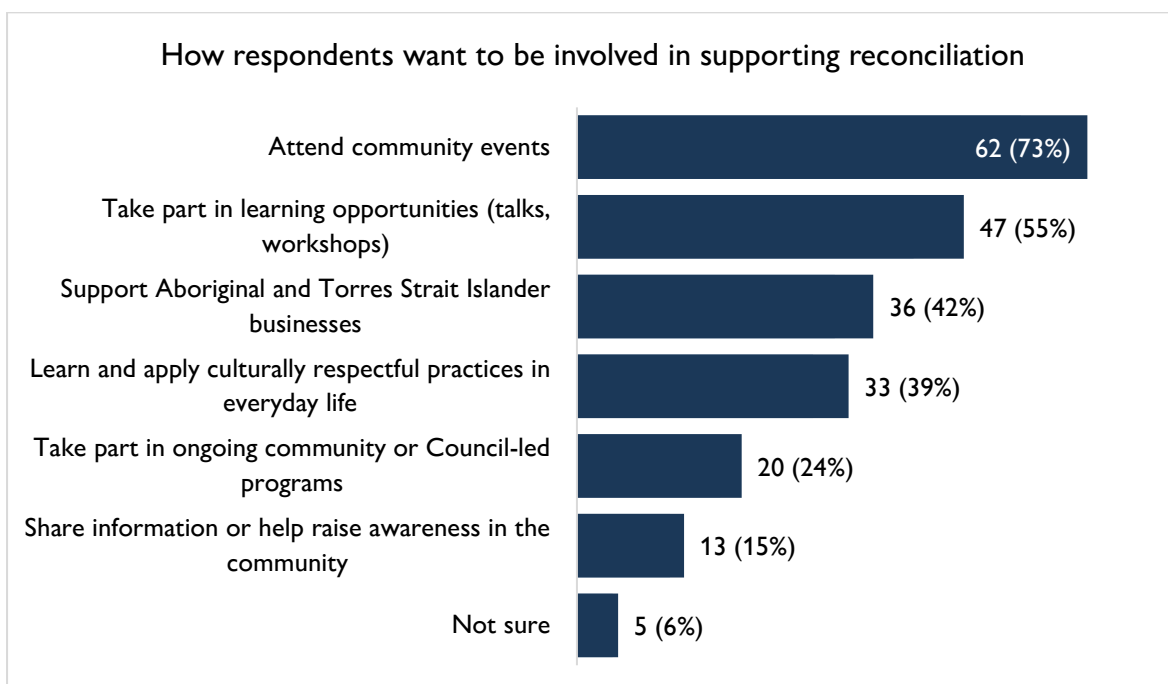
- Around one-third of respondents said they are interested in taking part (34 per cent), with a further 40 per cent indicating they may be interested.



Question 7. How would you prefer to be involved?

This was a required question for those who said they may be interested in participating in activities that support reconciliation. It received 85 responses (75 per cent).

- The most commonly selected activities were attending community events (73 per cent), taking part in learning opportunities such as talks, workshops, or events (55 per cent), and supporting First Nations peoples' businesses (42 per cent).



Final comments

Question 8. Do you have any other suggestions for how Council can better support reconciliation in our community?

This was an optional question. It received 52 responses (51 per cent).

- Many respondents said they would like First Nations culture and history to be more visible in everyday community spaces (29 per cent).
- There is a strong focus on education, truth-telling, and working in partnership with Traditional Owners and First Nations communities (22 per cent respectively).
- Some respondents questioned whether reconciliation activity sits within local government responsibilities.

Theme	Description	Mention count
Visibility in public spaces	• Want more visible First Nations culture in everyday places (art, signage, place naming, events).	15 (29%)
Reconciliation seen as outside Council's role	• Some respondents see reconciliation as outside Council's role.	12 (24%)
Education and truth-telling	• Want more opportunities to learn about First Nations history, culture and local stories, and truth-telling.	11 (22%)
Work in partnership	• Emphasise working with Traditional Owners, Elders and First Nations communities.	11 (22%)
Community-building approach	• Emphasise that reconciliation work should bring people together and build a united community.	9 (18%)
Practical actions	• Want clearer actions, outcomes, and measures of success.	6 (12%)
Concerns about division	• Support in principle but worry about tokenism or divisive approaches.	4 (8%)
Ongoing support for reconciliation	• General support for Council to continue this work.	3 (6%)

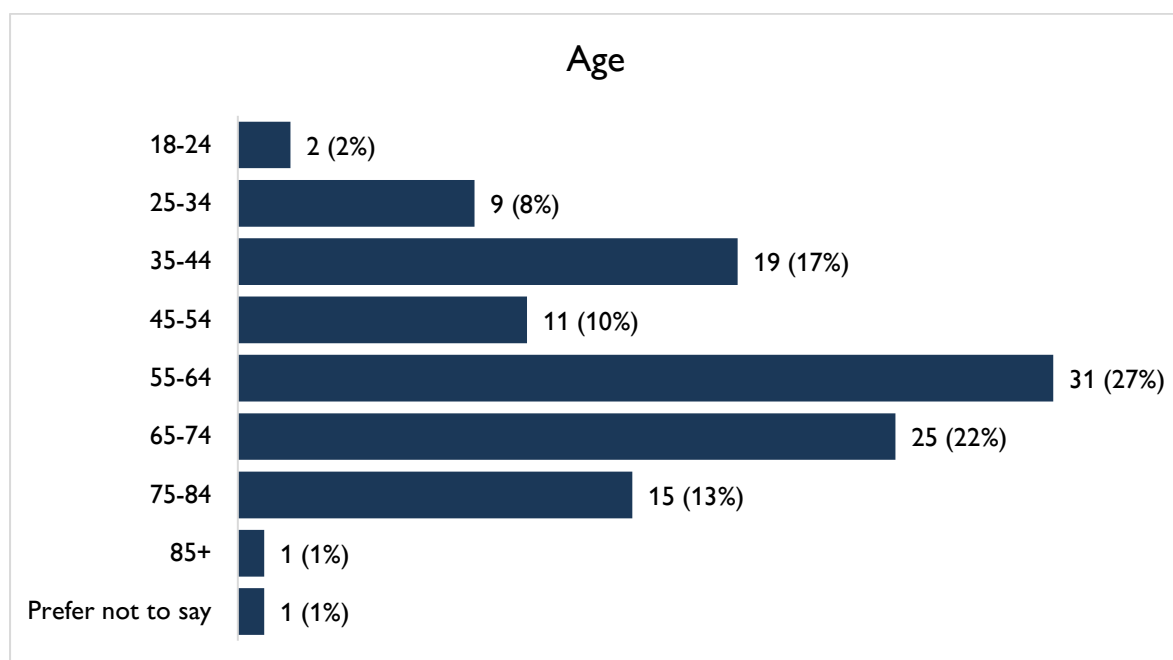
Demographics

Demographics

The following demographic questions were asked to help understand who we're hearing from and whether it is representative of our broad and diverse community. All questions had a 100 per cent response rate (114 respondents).

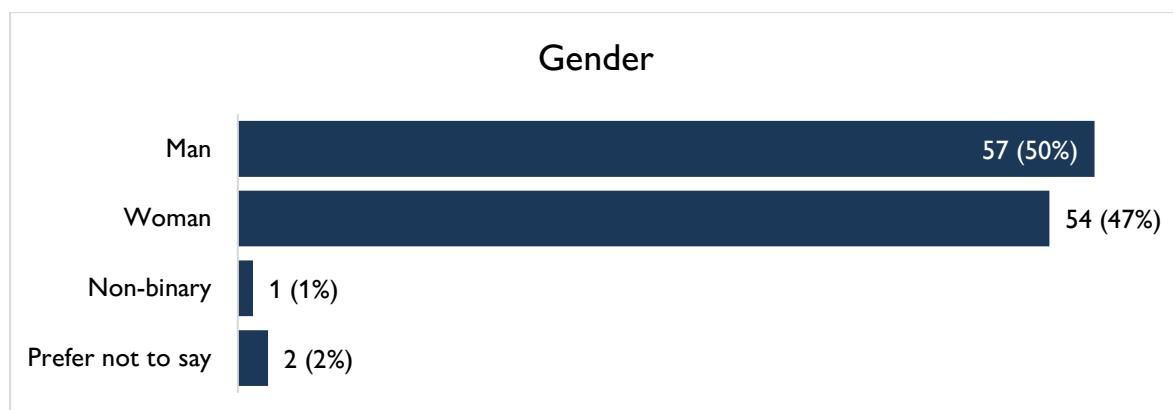
What is your age?

All age groups are represented in the survey results. We mostly heard from respondents aged 55–64 (27 per cent each), followed by those aged 65–74 (22 per cent) and 35–44 (17 per cent).



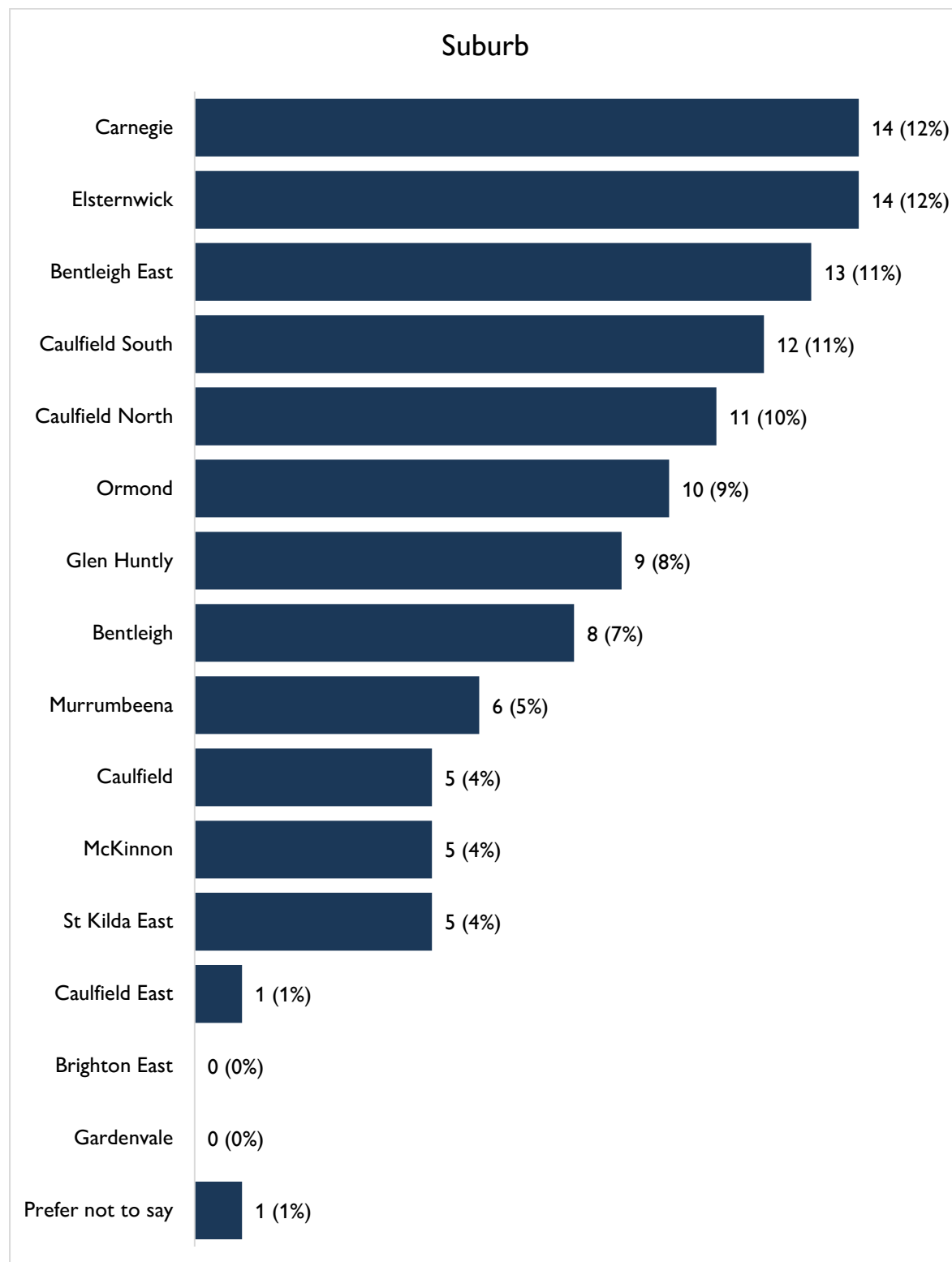
What is your gender?

Responses were almost evenly split between men and women, with a slightly higher proportion from men (50 per cent) compared to women (47 per cent).



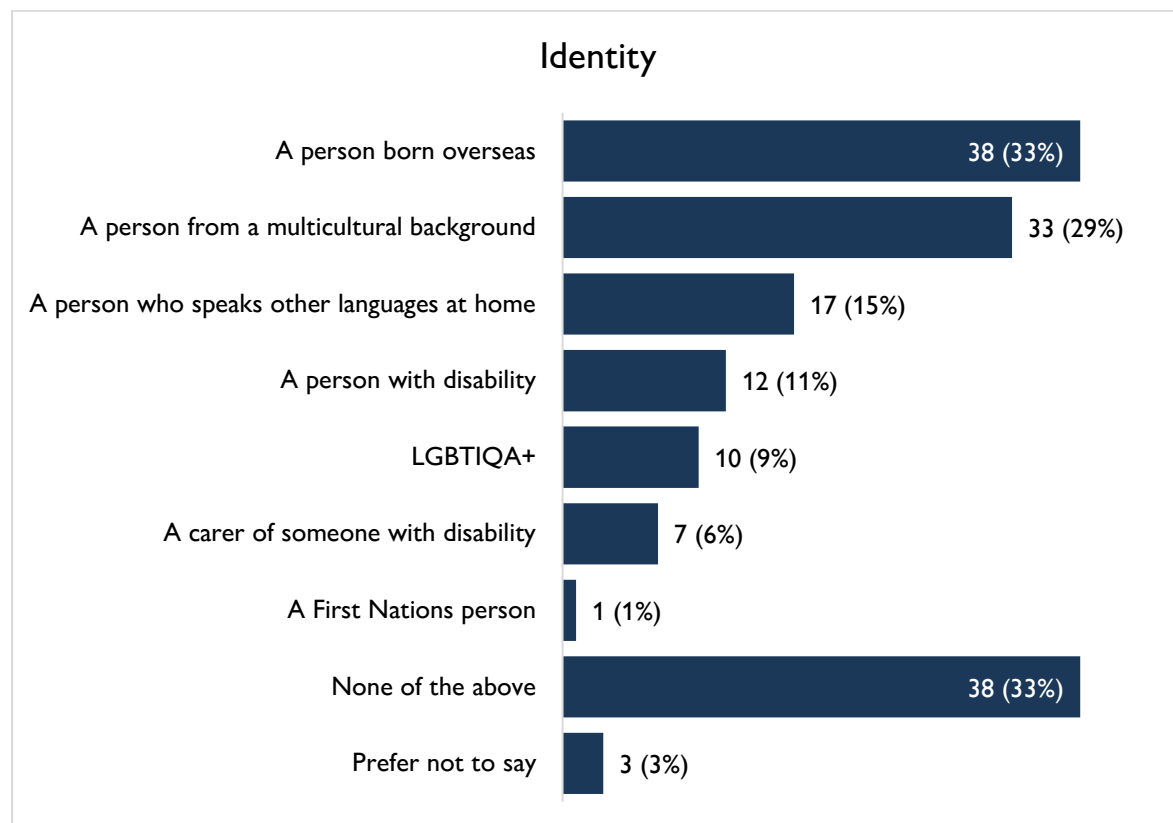
What suburb do you live in?

Respondents from all Glen Eira suburbs are represented in the survey results, except for Brighton East and Gardenvale. The highest responses came from Carnegie and Elsternwick (12 per cent each), followed by Bentleigh East and Caulfield South (11 per cent each).



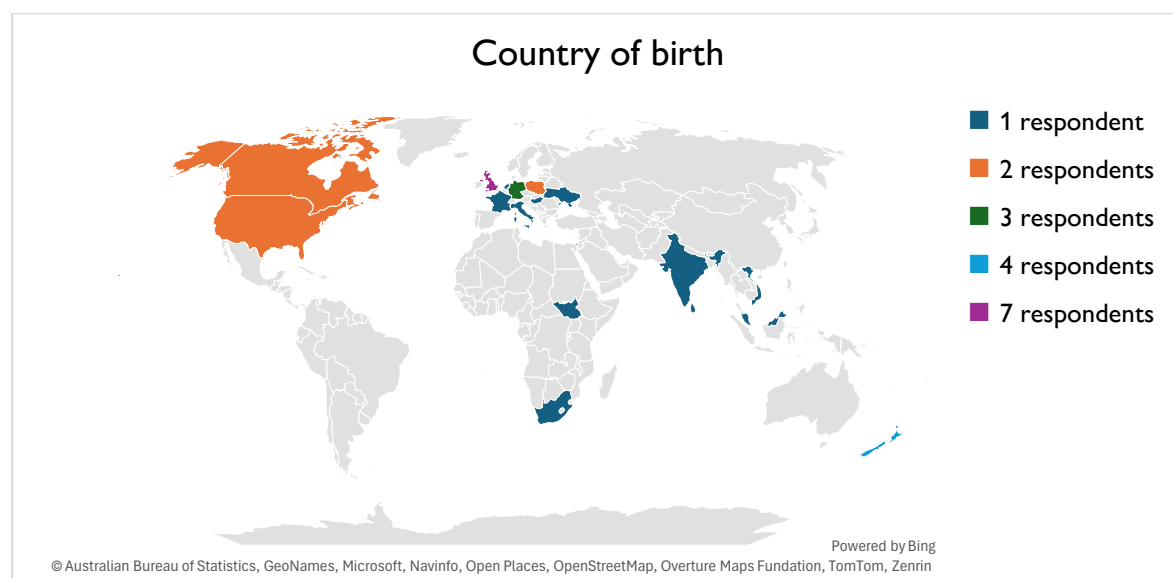
Do you identify as any of the following?

Many respondents (33 per cent) did not identify with any of the listed groups. Among those who did identify, the most common responses were those born overseas (33 per cent) and those from a multicultural background (29 per cent).



Country of birth

Of the 38 respondents born overseas, 35 shared their country of birth.



Languages spoken at home

Of the 17 respondents who speak other languages at home, 14 shared which languages.

