

## CULTURALLY & LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE EMPLOYEES

One of Pride in Diversity’s strategic initiatives is to dive a deeper into the world of intersectionality, for the purposes of understanding some of the unique experiences and challenges faced by LGBTIQ people within the workplace who come from a culturally or linguistically diverse (CALD) background.

In this publication, we will look at some of the survey findings presented by our CALD respondents. In a later edition, we will focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ employees.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

We had 4,455 respondents from a CALD background respond to the 2019 AWEI survey. Although all states and territories were represented, the majority resided in NSW and Victoria.

68% of respondents spoke English at home. The top 10 languages spoken outside of English were:

**Top 10 languages spoken  
(n=1870; 41% of respondents)**

Mandarin	279
Cantonese	258
Spanish	239
Hindi	231
Italian	188
French	177
German	155
Greek	149
Vietnamese	110
Portuguese	84

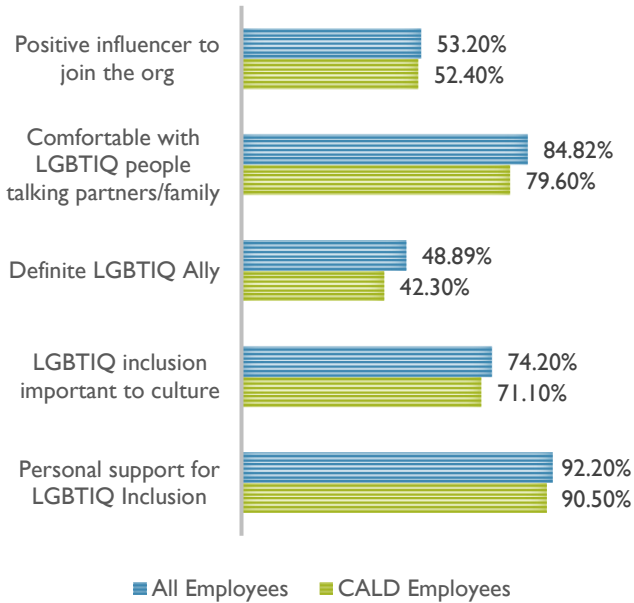
The diversity of languages spoken at home by respondents is depicted within the word cloud below with text size representative of language frequency.



## OVERALL SUPPORT FOR INCLUSION

Of all 4,455 respondents, regardless of how they identified, support for LGBTIQ workplace inclusion was high. Given that a significant number of CALD employees (certainly not all) may come from cultures, faiths or backgrounds that have not traditionally been as supportive or open about LGBTIQ inclusion, we were interested in comparing views of CALD employees against the overall survey population to see whether the assumption of this impacting support of inclusion held any weight.

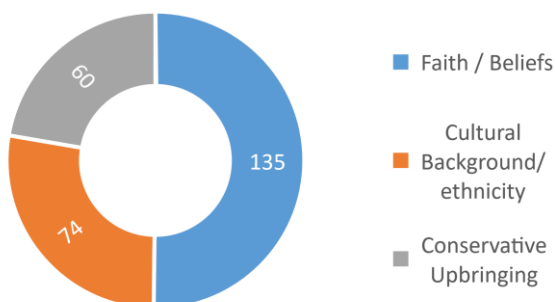
### SUPPORT FOR LGBTIQ INCLUSION



The above charts shows that there is little difference between the views of CALD employees and the general population when it comes to LGBTIQ workplace inclusion.

When it came to reasons stated for not supporting LGBTIQ workplace inclusion, while the number was small, the majority cited faith/beliefs.

Number of respondents citing the following reasons for supporting LGBTIQ Workplace Inclusion



## CALD LGBTIQ EMPLOYEES

17.26% of all CALD respondents identified as an LGBTIQ person (n769) of which the breakdown was:

CALD LGBTIQ Employees (n=769)	
Diverse Sexual Orientation	718
Trans History/Gender Diverse	45*
Intersex	9
Men	450
Women	241
Trans/Gender Diverse	34*
Other/Prefer not to respond	10

Many with a trans history identify as men and women, not someone who is gender diverse; hence the difference in numbers.

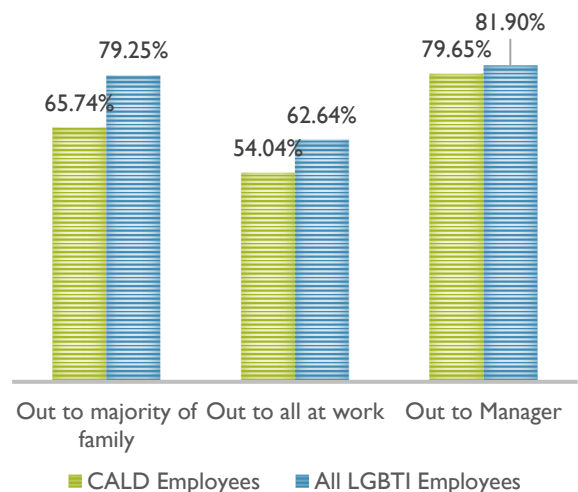
### SEXUAL ORIENTATION: IDENTITY

In terms of sexual orientation, 718 CALD employees identified as:

Diverse Sexual Orientation (n=718)	
Gay/Lesbian	527 / 73.4%
Bisexual	116 / 16.16%
Queer	26 / 3.62%
Pansexual	35 / 4.87%
Asexual	10 / 1.49%
Prefer not to respond	1 / 0.56%

### SEXUAL ORIENTATION: BEING OUT

CALD Employees are slightly less likely to be out to all at work and to the majority of family members than our overall population.



The key reasons *for being out at work* align with the reasons reported by the majority of those with a diverse sexual orientation:

- The desire to be authentic at work; and
- Having the freedom to talk about life/partner/community

78% of all sexually diverse CALD respondents felt it was important to be out at work, by varying degrees.

49.45% of those who were out regarding their sexual orientation reported being extremely comfortable with peers and colleagues as a result and equally reported positive impacts to the engagement of productivity, innovation, engagement and inclination to stay.

64.8% reported that LGBTIQ workplace inclusion initiatives have had a positive impact on how they feel about their orientation.

The top two reasons for *not being out at work* were again consistent with the overall population of LGBTQ respondents:

- Not wanting to be labelled
- Just not being comfortable enough to be out at work

## TRANS & GENDER DIVERSE CALD EMPLOYEES

45 CALD people identified as gender diverse or someone with a trans history.

48.89% of this population believed that the organisation was supportive of gender diverse employees, 26.67% disagreed.

70% of respondents felt that LGBTIQ workplace inclusion initiatives have had a positive impact on how they feel about their gender identity at work and 73% felt that workplace inclusion initiatives were important to their level of engagement.

Responses from trans and gender diverse CALD employees differed insignificantly from those of the broader trans/gender diverse population.

## INTERSEX EMPLOYEES

9 CALD employees identified as being intersex. While this is too small a number to draw any significant conclusions, findings again were very much aligned to

the broad intersex population of respondents.

62.5% felt that their organisation was inclusive of intersex employees and that current LGBTIQ initiatives were of benefit to intersex employees. 44% were open about being intersex at work.

## WHAT OUR CALD EMPLOYEES SAY

*"I think it's great we make everyone feel comfortable to be themselves within the workplace, not just the LGBTIQ community but gender & race inclusion also."*

*"How about real/genuine CALDS, i.e. first generation immigrants (as opposed to Australian born and raised persons from non-European background). The discrimination is worse than LGBTIQ".*

*"I am a Hazara originally from Afghanistan and married to a beautiful wife with one 9 months old boy and if I can support LGBTIQ considering my upbringing in one of the most conservative societies in the world, I think others should easily accept it and support it."*

*"I did not like the use of your term conservative values/beliefs. This implies that my beliefs and values are flawed. So often these days if one has a differing view or belief that does not fall in line with another person's they are a labelled - which is not different to what your organisation is trying to fight. As previously stated if one treats all people with respect they should not be labelled for the religious, cultural values and beliefs."*

*"I think policy on LGBTIQ workplace inclusion needs to be more sensitive to employees' religious beliefs"*

*"Although I do not actively support due to religious beliefs I think it is a great initiative that the organisation takes on in order to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. I think that inclusion is extremely important regardless of what your beliefs are and everyone has a right to be who they are and not be judged"*

*"I follow the Islamic belief and to be a person in the LGBTIQ Community it can be very scary. My current employer has made me feel comfortable with who I am and I admire the support that my team members have shown."*

## CONSIDERATIONS

- There were many comments within the freeform text from CALD employees opposing being asked whether conservative backgrounds, faith or beliefs were reasons for not supporting LGBTIQ workplace inclusion. For many, it was a personal view to stand for or against, not necessarily one informed by cultural heritage or faith.

This view was supported by our findings in that there was very little difference in the numbers supporting LGBTIQ inclusion between CALD and non CALD employees.

- Being sensitive and respectful to people of different faiths/beliefs while promoting LGBTIQ inclusion was raised often. While many people participating within this survey fully supported LGBTIQ inclusion, they felt there was an assumption of non-support based on their culture/faith which was clearly not the case. Many felt that the same sense of inclusion was not given to them as was being given to their LGBTIQ colleagues.
- Overall, we found very little difference between the support for, and lived experiences of LGBTIQ people from a CALD background. However, the survey looked only at the perceptions and views of employees in terms of LGBTIQ workplace inclusion and the overall lived experience of LGBTIQ employees; it did not dive deeper into the unique challenges faced by CALD people of diverse sexuality and gender at work. Does the intersectionality of culture, faith and sexuality and/or gender identity impact one's experience at work? Do people feel that tackling unconscious bias or discrimination in terms of race or religion more difficult than that being faced as an LGBTIQ person (or the reverse)?

Pride in Diversity is currently undertaking two projects with both DCA and UTS to look at some of the unique challenges faced by CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ employees. If you would like more information about these initiatives, or would like to participate in this research, please contact your Relationship Manager or the Pride in Diversity office.

© 2019 AWEI (PRIDE IN DIVERSITY, ACON), [WWW.PID-AWEI.COM.AU](http://WWW.PID-AWEI.COM.AU)

This data may be used if referenced as above.

The Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) is Australia's national benchmark for LGBTI Inclusion within the workplace. The accompanying AWEI Employee Survey captures lived experience, perceptions and views of those working within workplaces active in this space. 2019 AWEI Employee Survey captured 27,347 results responses. These data sheets, designed to inform practice, along with videos and blogs are published regularly by Pride in Diversity.