



# LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OTHER THAN ENGLISH, 2006

This bulletin reports the results of the census of students of language background other than English in New South Wales government schools undertaken by the NSW Department of Education and Training on Friday, 10 March 2006. A student of language background other than English is defined as one in whose home a language other than English is spoken.

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## INTRODUCTION

In Term 1 2006, 206,296 students enrolled at government schools were identified as being of Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE). This represented 27.4 percent of all government school enrolments compared to 27.0 percent in 2005.

### TABLES 1 AND 2: ENROLMENTS OF STUDENTS OF LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OTHER THAN ENGLISH BY REGION AND LEVEL/YEAR OF SCHOOLING, TERM 1 2006

LBOTE student enrolments represented 27.6 percent of all primary enrolments and 27.3 percent of all secondary enrolments in government schools.

From 1998 to 2003 enrolments were reported by District. In 2004 the reporting unit was changed to School Education Area (SEA) and to Region in 2005.

Regions varied widely in the number and percentage of LBOTE students. South Western Sydney Region had the highest enrolment with 80,804 LBOTE students, representing 62.0 percent of the Region enrolment. For Hunter/Central Coast, New England, North Coast, Riverina and Western NSW Regions, LBOTE students represented less than 10 percent of Region enrolments.

The largest increases in the number of LBOTE enrolments occurred in South Western Sydney and Western Sydney Regions:

- In Riverina Region, the LBOTE increased 4.8 percent from 1,712 students in 2005 to 1,795 students in 2006.
- In North Coast Region, the LBOTE increased 2.9 percent from 2,494 students in 2005 to 2,566 students in 2006.

- In Western Sydney Region, the LBOTE enrolment increased 1.9 percent from 34,280 students in 2005 to 34,926 students in 2006.
- In South Western Sydney Region, the LBOTE enrolment increased 1.8 percent from 79,381 students in 2005 to 80,804 students in 2006.
- In Northern Sydney Region, the LBOTE enrolment increased 1.7 percent from 29,130 students in 2005 to 29,618 students in 2006.

Year 11 (29.6%) and Year 12 (34.1%) had the greatest proportions of LBOTE enrolments. Of the 2,933 LBOTE students in secondary support classes, 62.9 percent were enrolled at Intensive English Centres.

Year 12 was the year of schooling with the greatest increase in the proportion of LBOTE enrolments, from 32.7 percent in 2005 to 34.1 percent in 2006.

### TABLE 3: ENROLMENTS OF STUDENTS OF LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OTHER THAN ENGLISH BY LANGUAGE AND LEVEL OF SCHOOLING, TERM 1 2006

Chinese, with 36,594 students in 2006, has been the most common language background other than English in government schools since 1997. This year information on Cantonese and Mandarin language backgrounds has been reported in addition to those students whose Chinese language background is not further resolved. Students from the Chinese language group background represented 17.7 percent of all LBOTE students in 2006, a decrease from 18 percent in 2005.

Arabic, with 25,946 students in 2006, was the most common language background from 1988 to 1996. The proportion of LBOTE students of Arabic background increased from 12.4 percent in 2005 to 12.6 percent in 2006.

Farsi, increased from 4,006 in 2005 to 4,697 in 2006, an increase of 17.2 percent, the largest percentage increase. Korean, increased from 5,598 in 2005 to 5,932 in 2006, an increase of 6.0 percent.

Urdu, increased from 2,010 in 2005 to 2,123 in 2006, an increase of 5.6 percent. Punjabi, increased from 1,718 in 2005 to 1,792 in 2006, an increase of 4.3 percent. Hindi, increased from 7,147 in 2005 to 7,419 in 2006, an increase of 3.8 percent. Indonesian, increased from 2,705 in 2005 to 2,795 in 2006, an increase of 3.3 percent.

The number of students of Vietnamese language background increased from 12,268 in 2005 to 12,812 in 2006, an increase of 4.4 percent. The number of students of Arabic language background increased from 25,194 in 2005 to 25,946 in 2006, an increase of 3.0 percent.

The number of students of Polish language background decreased from 1,322 in 2005 to 1,205 in 2006, a decrease of 8.9 percent.

The number of students of Maltese language background decreased from 1,955 in 2005 to 1,827 in 2006, a decrease of 6.5 percent.

**TABLE 4:  
ENROLMENTS OF STUDENTS OF LANGUAGE  
BACKGROUND OTHER THAN ENGLISH BY REGION  
AND LANGUAGE, TERM 1 2006**

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There were high numbers of students from particular language backgrounds in the following Regions.

- South Western Sydney: Arabic (17,095), Chinese (10,552), Vietnamese (10,061), Hindi (2,975), Italian (2,129), Samoan (3,620), Croatian (723), Fijian (537), Khmer (1,966), Lao (1,003), Polish (291), Serbian (2,041), Spanish (2,526), Tongan (1,581), Turkish (1,962), Urdu (873).
- Sydney Region: Arabic (4,450), Chinese (10,665), Russian (696), Greek (4,840), Vietnamese (1,657).
- Northern Sydney Region: Chinese (9,623), Dutch (376), French (778), German (926), Japanese (1,044), Korean (2,599). Khmer and Lao were the languages with the highest concentration in one Region, with 90.1 percent of students of Khmer language background and 88.6 percent of students of Lao language background in schools in South Western Sydney Region.

**TABLE 5**

**ENROLMENTS OF PRESCHOOL STUDENTS OF  
LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OTHER THAN  
ENGLISH BY LANGUAGE, TERM 1 2006**

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Government preschools enrolled the equivalent of 873.5 full-time students of Language Background Other Than English in 2006, representing 35.4 percent of all government preschool enrolments, compared with 39.3 percent in 2005. Vietnamese, Arabic and Cantonese were the most common language backgrounds, representing 17.9 percent, 16.2 percent and 7.2 percent respectively, of all Language Background Other Than English preschool students.

The following graphs can be found after the tables:

**FIGURE 1:  
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS OF LANGUAGE  
BACKGROUND OTHER THAN ENGLISH BY  
REGION, TERM 1 2006**

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**FIGURE 2:  
STUDENTS OF LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OTHER  
THAN ENGLISH, 1989-2006: SELECTED  
LANGUAGE BACKGROUNDS**

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*Notes:*

From 1996, information on LBOTE students has been collected in Term 1 with comparative enrolment information extracted from the School Entitlement System. In prior years, LBOTE information was collected in the midyear census, with comparative enrolment information collected at the same time.

For information on languages, refer to Australian Standard Classification of Languages, Australian Bureau of Statistics (catalogue 1267.0).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION  
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Statistical publications produced by the Department of Education and Training can be obtained on the Internet at:

[http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/reports\\_stats/stats](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/reports_stats/stats)

**Table 1. Enrolments of Students of Language Background Other than English by Region and Level of Schooling, Term 1 2006**

REGION	Primary		Secondary		SSP		Total 2006	
	Students	As % of Enrolment	Students	As % of Enrolment	Students	As % of Enrolment	Students	As % of Enrolment
Hunter/Central Coast	3,551	5.6%	2811	5.9%	41	7.0%	6,403	5.7%
Illawarra and South East	4,434	10.7%	3113	10.2%	32	8.7%	7,579	10.5%
New England	261	2.1%	204	2.0%	0	0.0%	465	2.0%
North Coast	1,475	3.9%	1091	3.4%	0	0.0%	2,566	3.7%
Northern Sydney	16,563	33.8%	12974	41.3%	81	14.9%	29,618	36.6%
Riverina	1,005	5.1%	778	5.1%	12	5.1%	1,795	5.1%
South Western Sydney	47,915	63.0%	32373	61.1%	516	43.1%	80,804	62.0%
Sydney	23,366	47.4%	17602	48.8%	174	28.8%	41,142	47.8%
Western NSW	623	2.7%	374	2.1%	1	0.5%	998	2.4%
Western Sydney	20,346	34.1%	14443	35.7%	137	17.2%	34,926	34.6%
<b>State</b>	<b>119,539</b>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>85,763</b>	<b>27.3%</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>21.1%</b>	<b>206,296</b>	<b>27.4%</b>

**Table 2.1 Enrolments of Students of Language Background Other than English by Region and Year of Schooling, Term 1 2006**

REGION	Primary								SSP	Total
	Kinder	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Support	Total	
Hunter/Central Coast	530	469	499	489	498	509	521	36	3,551	41
Illawarra and South East	541	608	651	642	691	618	649	34	4,434	32
New England	39	36	43	49	25	31	37	1	261	0
North Coast	199	218	212	215	209	202	213	7	1,475	0
Northern Sydney	2,158	2,409	2,377	2,377	2,380	2,430	2,346	86	16,563	81
Riverina	155	143	154	157	123	128	139	6	1,005	12
South Western Sydney	6,700	6,768	6,577	6,760	6,971	6,748	6,774	617	47,915	516
Sydney	3,377	3,561	3,328	3,305	3,256	3,225	3,127	187	23,366	174
Western NSW	91	92	89	95	75	95	82	4	623	1
Western Sydney	2,757	2,918	2,884	2,929	2,928	2,856	2,838	236	20,346	137
<b>State</b>	<b>16,547</b>	<b>17,222</b>	<b>16,814</b>	<b>17,018</b>	<b>17,156</b>	<b>16,842</b>	<b>16,726</b>	<b>1,214</b>	<b>119,539</b>	<b>994</b>
<b>As % of Enrolment</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>28.0%</b>	<b>27.7%</b>	<b>28.1%</b>	<b>28.3%</b>	<b>27.7%</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>21.1%</b>

**Table 2.2 Enrolments of Students of Language Background Other than English by Region and Year of Schooling, Term 1 2006 (Continued)**

REGION	Secondary							Region	As % of	
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Support	Total	Region	
Hunter/Central Coast	432	483	513	557	446	362	18	2,811	6,403	5.7%
Illawarra and South East	461	532	550	541	551	407	71	3,113	7,579	10.5%
New England	36	32	32	35	34	34	1	204	465	2.0%
North Coast	171	189	193	184	183	162	9	1,091	2,566	3.7%
Northern Sydney	1,960	2,009	2,027	2,164	2,319	2,232	263	12,974	29,618	36.6%
Riverina	140	142	135	122	130	100	9	778	1,795	5.1%
South Western Sydney	5,075	5,334	5,336	5,392	5,066	4,515	1,655	32,373	80,804	62.0%
Sydney	2,651	2,901	2,735	2,892	3,017	2,874	532	17,602	41,142	47.8%
Western NSW	58	70	49	75	52	64	6	374	998	2.4%
Western Sydney	2,155	2,432	2,335	2,509	2,444	2,199	369	14,443	34,926	34.6%
<b>State</b>	<b>13,139</b>	<b>14,124</b>	<b>13,905</b>	<b>14,471</b>	<b>14,242</b>	<b>12,949</b>	<b>2,933</b>	<b>85,763</b>	<b>206,296</b>	<b>27.4%</b>
<b>As % of Enrolment</b>	<b>24.0%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>25.3%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>34.1%</b>	<b>34.0%</b>	<b>27.3%</b>	<b>27.4%</b>	

**Table 3. Enrolments of Students of Language Background Other than English by Language and Level of Schooling, Term 1 2006**

Language	Primary		Secondary		SSP		Total	
	Students	As % of Total LBOTE	Students	As % of Total LBOTE	Students	As % of Total LBOTE	Students	As % of Total LBOTE
Arabic	14,693	12.3%	10,970	12.8%	283	28.5%	25,946	12.6%
Chinese (Cantonese)	11,295	9.4%	9,079	10.6%	56	5.6%	20,430	9.9%
Chinese (Mandarin)	8,700	7.3%	5,786	6.7%	25	2.5%	14,511	7.0%
Chinese (Other)	772	0.6%	869	1.0%	12	1.2%	1,653	0.8%
Croatian	1,268	1.1%	878	1.0%	7	0.7%	2,153	1.0%
Dutch	887	0.7%	605	0.7%	0	0.0%	1,492	0.7%
Farsi	2,292	1.9%	2,390	2.8%	15	1.5%	4,697	2.3%
Fijian	780	0.7%	560	0.7%	7	0.7%	1,347	0.7%
French	1,579	1.3%	963	1.1%	8	0.8%	2,550	1.2%
German	2,036	1.7%	1,359	1.6%	7	0.7%	3,402	1.6%
Greek	6,348	5.3%	2,883	3.4%	49	4.9%	9,280	4.5%
Hindi	4,552	3.8%	2,841	3.3%	26	2.6%	7,419	3.6%
Indonesian	1,671	1.4%	1,113	1.3%	11	1.1%	2,795	1.4%
Italian	4,671	3.9%	2,597	3.0%	29	2.9%	7,297	3.5%
Japanese	1,322	1.1%	678	0.8%	3	0.3%	2,003	1.0%
Khmer	1,195	1.0%	982	1.1%	4	0.4%	2,181	1.1%
Korean	2,979	2.5%	2,934	3.4%	19	1.9%	5,932	2.9%
Lao	609	0.5%	520	0.6%	3	0.3%	1,132	0.5%
Macedonian	2,583	2.2%	1,815	2.1%	16	1.6%	4,414	2.1%
Malay	320	0.3%	278	0.3%	1	0.1%	599	0.3%
Maltese	1,149	1.0%	669	0.8%	9	0.9%	1,827	0.9%
Polish	627	0.5%	573	0.7%	5	0.5%	1,205	0.6%
Portuguese	870	0.7%	550	0.6%	12	1.2%	1,432	0.7%
Punjabi	1,082	0.9%	706	0.8%	4	0.4%	1,792	0.9%
Russian	932	0.8%	742	0.9%	5	0.5%	1,679	0.8%
Samoan	3,809	3.2%	2,510	2.9%	28	2.8%	6,347	3.1%
Serbian	2,265	1.9%	1,780	2.1%	6	0.6%	4,051	2.0%
Sinhalese	719	0.6%	534	0.6%	0	0.0%	1,253	0.6%
Slovenian	107	0.1%	87	0.1%	1	0.1%	195	0.1%
Spanish	3,868	3.2%	2,512	2.9%	38	3.8%	6,418	3.1%
Tagalog	4,052	3.4%	3,471	4.0%	51	5.1%	7,574	3.7%
Tamil	1,568	1.3%	1,252	1.5%	13	1.3%	2,833	1.4%
Tongan	2,275	1.9%	1,507	1.8%	30	3.0%	3,812	1.8%
Turkish	2,590	2.2%	1,821	2.1%	23	2.3%	4,434	2.1%
Urdu	1,362	1.1%	754	0.9%	7	0.7%	2,123	1.0%
Vietnamese	7,384	6.2%	5,345	6.2%	83	8.4%	12,812	6.2%
Others	14,328	12.0%	10,850	12.7%	98	9.9%	25,276	12.3%
<b>Total LBOTE</b>	<b>119,539</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>85,763</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>206,296</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 4. Enrolments of Students of Language Background Other than English by Region and Language, Term 1 2006**

<b>REGION</b>	<b>Hunter/Central Coast</b>	<b>Illawarra and South East</b>	<b>New England</b>	<b>North Coast</b>	<b>Northern Sydney</b>	<b>Riverina</b>	<b>South Western Sydney</b>	<b>Sydney</b>	<b>Western NSW</b>	<b>Western Sydney</b>	<b>State Totals</b>	<b>As % of Total LBOTE</b>
Arabic	292	392	22	60	762	69	17,095	4,450	79	2,725	<b>25,946</b>	12.6%
Chinese (Cantonese)	254	171	25	78	5,361	44	6,004	5,755	35	2,703	<b>20,430</b>	9.9%
Chinese (Mandarin)	167	140	32	30	4,014	27	3,513	4,628	9	1,951	<b>14,511</b>	7.0%
Chinese (Other)	7	16		5	248	2	1,035	282	1	57	<b>1,653</b>	0.8%
Croatian	115	211	6	31	261	21	723	325	31	429	<b>2,153</b>	1.0%
Dutch	214	179	8	132	376	37	96	176	42	232	<b>1,492</b>	0.7%
Farsi	37	57	1	18	1,026	92	1,559	161	14	1,732	<b>4,697</b>	2.3%
Fijian	82	41	5	15	82	72	537	240	17	256	<b>1,347</b>	0.7%
French	213	148	20	187	778	29	338	565	17	255	<b>2,550</b>	1.2%
German	361	427	39	328	926	54	272	572	80	343	<b>3,402</b>	1.6%
Greek	394	392	8	57	706	55	1,948	4,840	38	842	<b>9,280</b>	4.5%
Hindi	95	58	20	29	990	37	2,975	714	24	2,477	<b>7,419</b>	3.6%
Indonesian	159	73	18	77	479	9	618	988	11	363	<b>2,795</b>	1.4%
Italian	438	642	14	136	1,150	356	2,129	1,488	69	875	<b>7,297</b>	3.5%
Japanese	88	61	13	61	1,044	2	136	495	8	95	<b>2,003</b>	1.0%
Khmer	16	17		1	40	1	1,966	67	2	71	<b>2,181</b>	1.1%
Korean	58	49	5	5	2,599	3	1,249	947	2	1,015	<b>5,932</b>	2.9%
Lao	12	10	11	12	29	19	1,003	18	1	17	<b>1,132</b>	0.5%
Macedonian	312	1,210		11	112	3	1,181	1,434	12	139	<b>4,414</b>	2.1%
Malay	35	25	6	14	164		110	124	1	120	<b>599</b>	0.3%
Maltese	100	135	4	37	46	1	480	129	3	892	<b>1,827</b>	0.9%
Polish	97	82		13	257	4	291	232	10	219	<b>1,205</b>	0.6%
Portuguese	48	193	2	23	176	7	318	528	4	133	<b>1,432</b>	0.7%
Punjabi	13	9	2	195	213	85	324	106	6	839	<b>1,792</b>	0.9%
Russian	74	50	13	18	335	3	276	696	30	184	<b>1,679</b>	0.8%
Samoan	192	47	7	14	74	131	3,620	288	16	1,958	<b>6,347</b>	3.1%
Serbian	132	408	1	14	407	22	2,041	562	18	446	<b>4,051</b>	2.0%
Sinhalese	29	26	7	12	419	12	119	127	6	496	<b>1,253</b>	0.6%
Slovenian	18	9		6	39	4	46	44	5	24	<b>195</b>	0.1%
Spanish	356	464	12	102	752	55	2,526	1,251	33	867	<b>6,418</b>	3.1%
Tagalog	498	331	41	198	739	75	1,724	1,028	91	2,849	<b>7,574</b>	3.7%
Tamil	33	22	3	5	522	20	838	257	10	1,123	<b>2,833</b>	1.4%
Tongan	139	65	2	25	285	88	1,581	657	23	947	<b>3,812</b>	1.8%
Turkish	53	275	2	10	199	54	1,962	697	20	1,162	<b>4,434</b>	2.1%
Urdu	37	29	2	5	189	16	873	231	18	723	<b>2,123</b>	1.0%
Vietnamese	80	129	6	27	334	5	10,061	1,657	2	511	<b>12,812</b>	6.2%
Others	1,155	986	108	575	3,485	281	9,237	4,383	210	4,856	<b>25,276</b>	12.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,403</b>	<b>7,579</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>29,618</b>	<b>1,795</b>	<b>80,804</b>	<b>41,142</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>34,926</b>	<b>206,296</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 5. Enrolments of Preschool Students of Language Background Other than English by Language, Term 1 2006**

Language	Preschool Students		As % of
	Students	FTE	Total LBOTE
Arabic	270	141.1	16.2%
Chinese (Cantonese)	117	63.0	7.2%
Chinese (Mandarin)	51	30.3	3.5%
Chinese (Other)	48	24.1	2.8%
Croatian	10	5.2	0.6%
Dutch	5	3.0	0.3%
Farsi	16	7.8	0.9%
Fijian	2	0.9	0.1%
French	13	10.1	1.2%
German	8	6.4	0.7%
Greek	19	12.9	1.5%
Hindi	62	31.1	3.6%
Indonesian	24	16.6	1.9%
Italian	39	22.5	2.6%
Japanese	7	5.8	0.7%
Khmer	34	19.6	2.2%
Korean	16	9.0	1.0%
Lao	4	2.2	0.3%
Macedonian	26	12.9	1.5%
Malay	4	1.9	0.2%
Maltese	10	4.3	0.5%
Polish	3	1.3	0.1%
Portuguese	4	2.5	0.3%
Punjabi	19	9.7	1.1%
Russian	7	4.9	0.6%
Samoan	89	55.5	6.4%
Serbian	20	11.1	1.3%
Singhalese	9	4.5	0.5%
Slovenian	1	0.4	0.0%
Spanish	31	18.6	2.1%
Tagalog	68	33.9	3.9%
Tamil	31	15.5	1.8%
Tongan	18	10.5	1.2%
Turkish	23	14.5	1.7%
Urdu	39	22.1	2.5%
Vietnamese	299	156.7	17.9%
Others	147	81.1	9.3%
<b>Total LBOTE</b>	<b>1,593</b>	<b>873.5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>FTE LBOTE as % of FTE Enrolment</b>		<b>35.4%</b>	

**Figure 1. Percentage of Students of Language Background Other than English by Region, Term 1 2006**

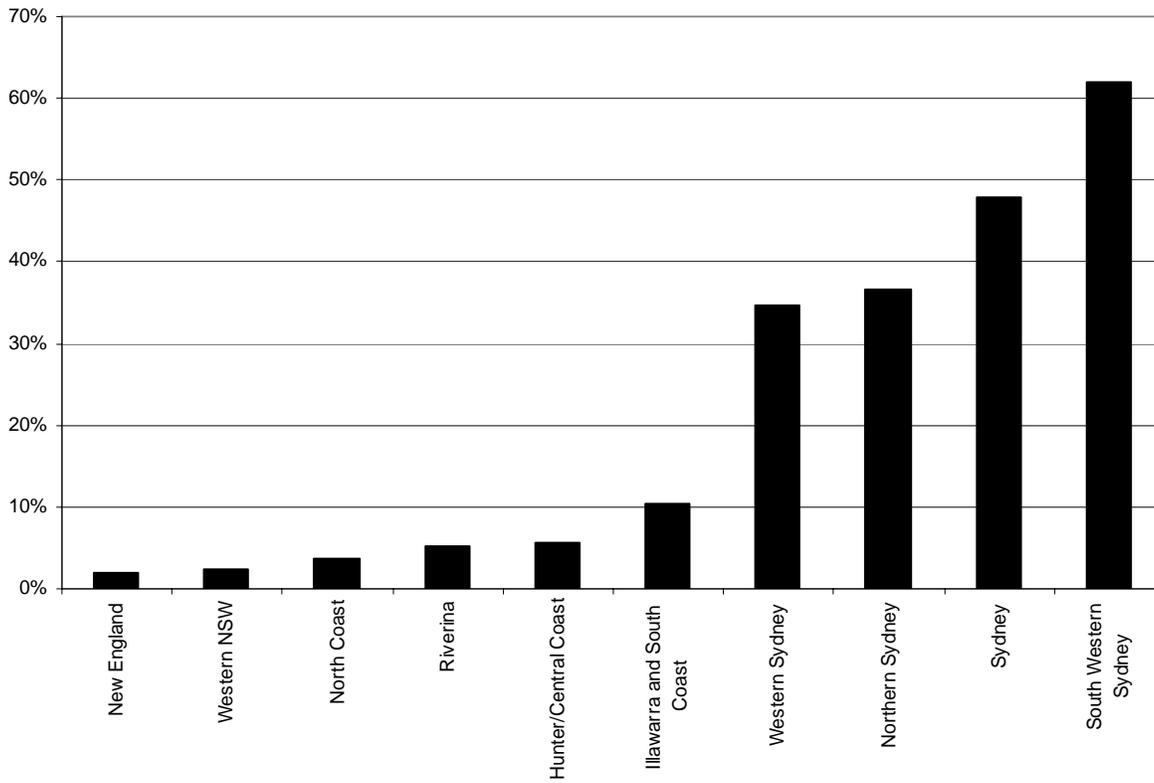
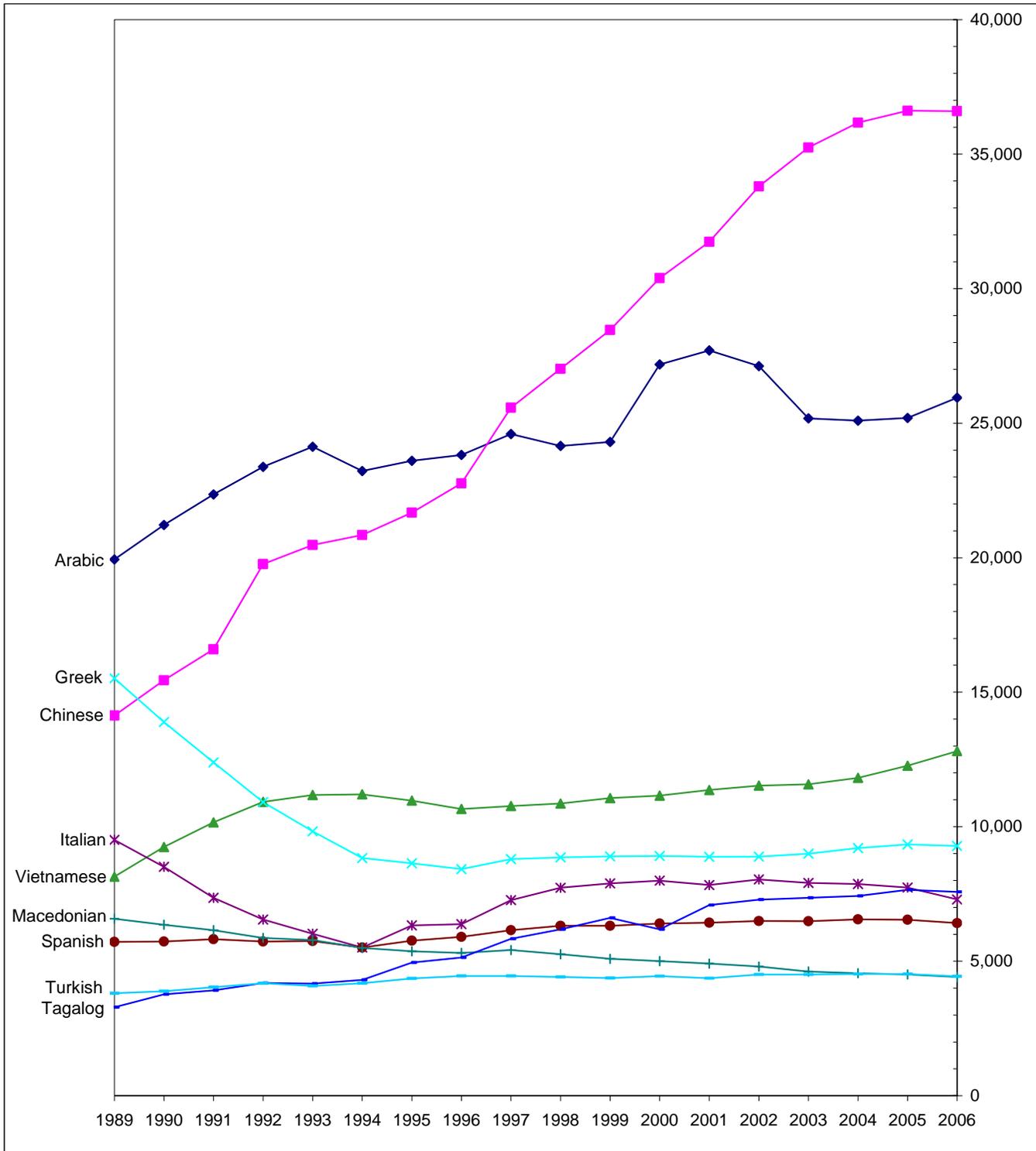


Figure 2. Students of Language Background Other than English, 1989-2006: Selected Language Backgrounds



Notes: Hindi, Samoan and Serbian have been omitted for graph clarity.  
 Chinese includes all languages of that group including Mandarin and Cantonese.