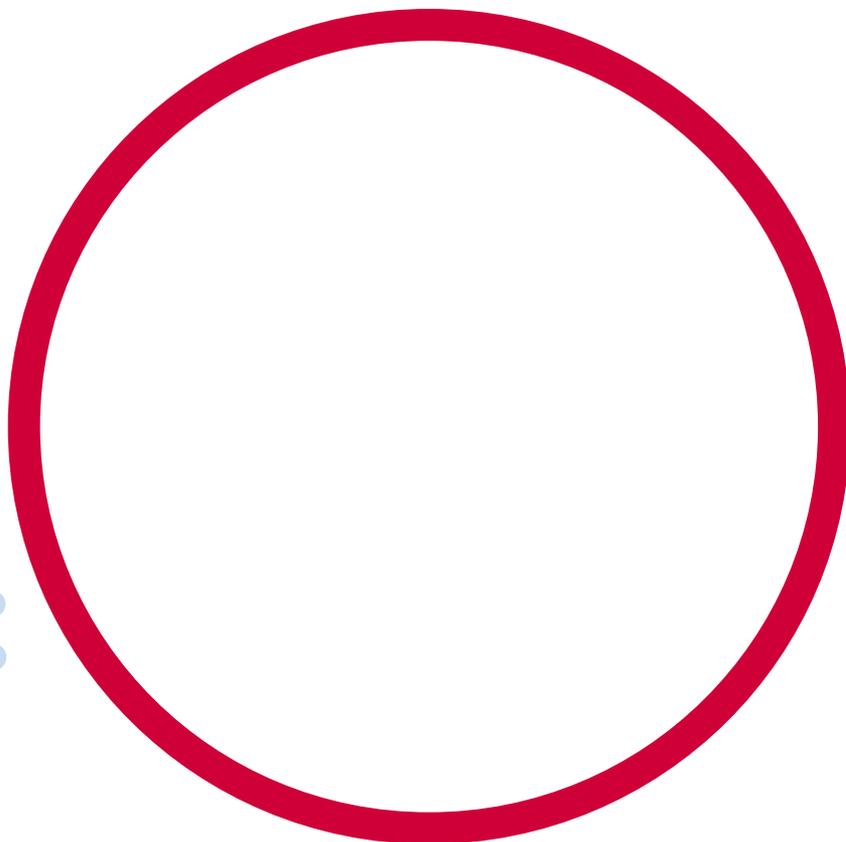
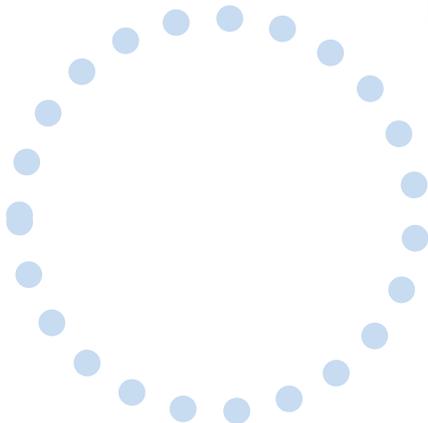
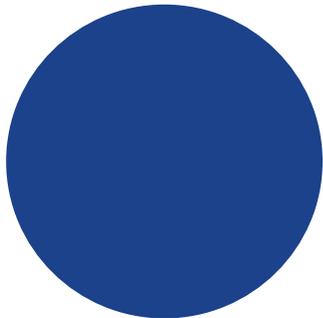


Schools: Language diversity in NSW Government schools, 2022



Language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) enrolments

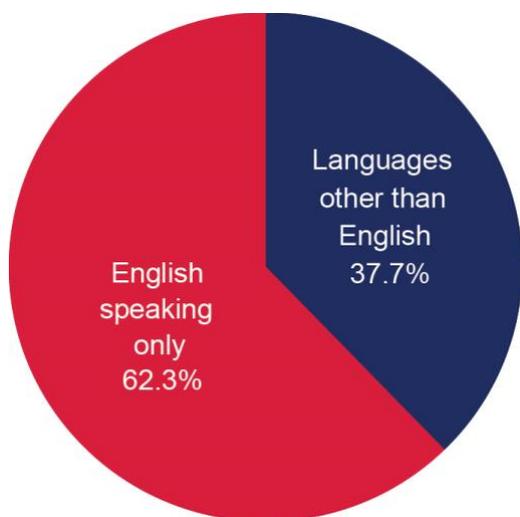
In March 2022, 62.3% (498,430) of students enrolled in NSW government schools came from homes where English was the only language spoken. More than a third (37.7%, 302,154) of students came from homes where languages other than English were spoken (Figure 1) by either the students themselves and/or at least one parent or carer.

Enrolment figures stayed relatively stable between 2021 (37.2% or 302,779) and 2022. LBOTE percentages grew slightly, despite numbers falling, due to the drop in overall enrolments in NSW government schools.

2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data shows that in NSW 28.2% of the population spoke a language other than English at home. 71.8% only spoke English.

The proportion of LBOTE students has grown from 30.3% in 2012, an increase of 7.4 percentage points in ten years. LBOTE enrolments increased by 0.5 percentage points in 2022. The last three years have seen smaller increases compared to each of the five years prior to 2020, which ranged from 0.8 to 1 percentage point increases. This is likely to be largely the result of reduced immigration due to COVID-19.

Figure 1: Language background of students in NSW government schools, March 2022



A student's country of origin cannot be inferred by their language background, as country of origin is where the student was born, while language background refers to the languages spoken by the student and their families. French, for example, is the official language of approximately 30 countries, with many more countries, including Australia, having French speakers as citizens and migrants.

Language breakdown

Students from language backgrounds other than English in NSW government schools came from 247 different language backgrounds.

59.6% of all LBOTE enrolments came from five language backgrounds. Indian and Chinese (both comprised of several languages) accounted for 22.1% and 15.3% of students from a language background other than English respectively.

Arabic

In 2022, the largest single language spoken by LBOTE students and/or their parent/carers was Arabic with 40,929 enrolments (13.5% of all LBOTE students).

Indian languages

Collectively, Indian languages accounted for 22.1% of all LBOTE students. Of the 24 Indian languages reported, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Tamil, Punjabi and Gujarati each represented the backgrounds of more than 5,000 students.

There were six other Indian languages with more than 1,000 LBOTE students at NSW government schools in 2022 - Nepali, Telugu, Malayalam, Sinhalese, Marathi and Kannada. Refer to Note 2 for a list of Indian languages with fewer than 1,000 students.

Chinese languages

Students from a Chinese language background made up 15.3% of LBOTE students in 2022 (46,230 students), with the largest number of these students (29,228 or 9.7%) coming from a Mandarin speaking background. There were also 13,838 students from a Cantonese background and 3,164 students from other Chinese language backgrounds including Hakka, Min Nan, Wu, Hokkien, Teochew and Chinese other.

Notable increases

Seven language backgrounds with more than 1000 enrolments in 2022 increased by more than 5% and 100 enrolments from 2021. They were: Mongolian (17.3%), Nepali (11.6%), Dari (11.2%), Aboriginal English (8.9%), Persian (Excluding Dari) (7.2%), Bengali (5.3%) and Telugu (5.2%).

Of the Indian Languages, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Tamil, Malayam and Urdu also increased by more than 100 enrolments. However this represented less than a 5% increase in their respective populations.

Mandarin recorded the greatest numerical increase of 652 enrolments, or 2.3%.

Figure 2: Language backgrounds in NSW

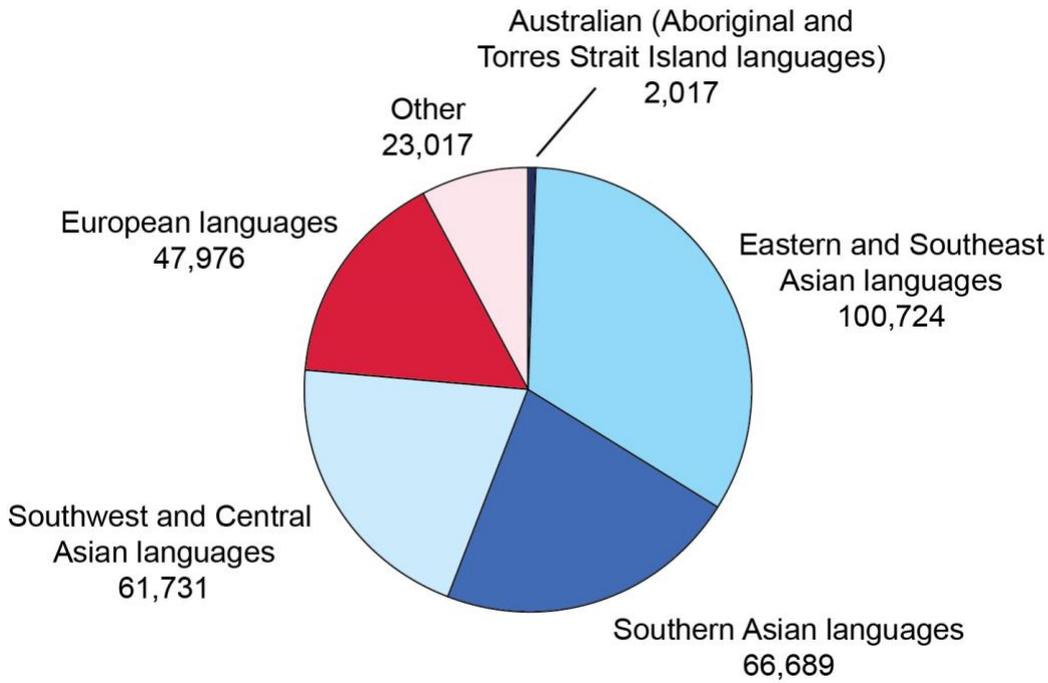


Figure 3 (a): Language backgrounds in NSW government schools – languages with over 1,000 speakers.

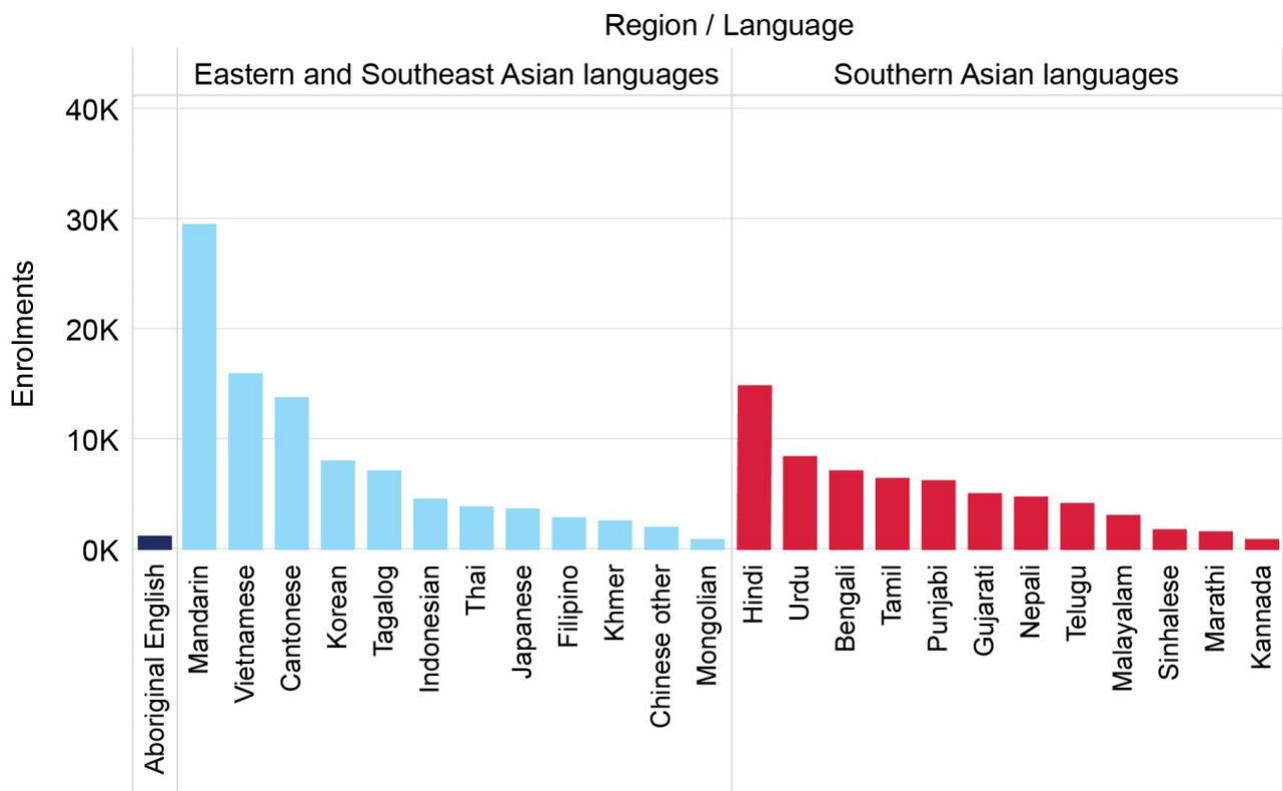
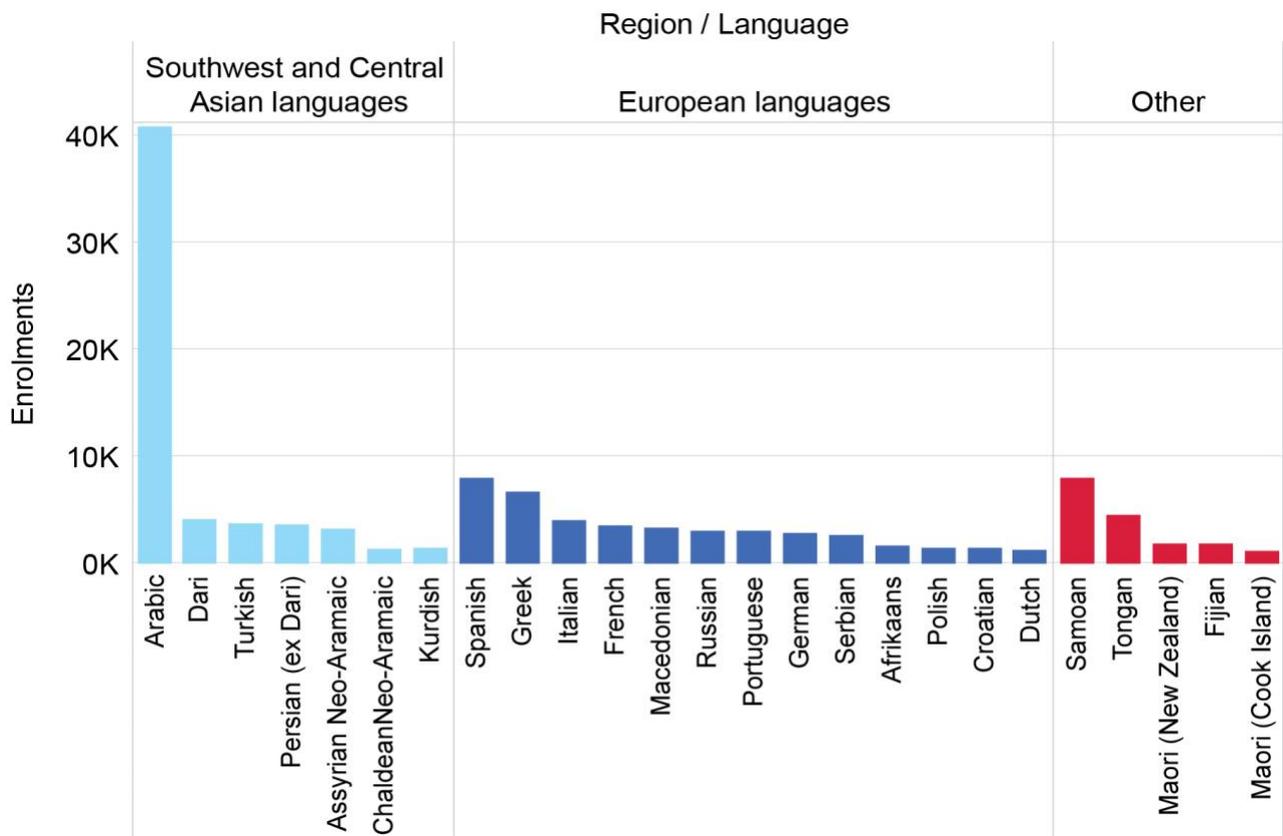


Figure 3 (b): Language backgrounds in NSW government schools – languages with over 1,000 speakers.



Diversity in language background of students has remained relatively stable since 2012, fluctuating between 232 language backgrounds in 2013 to 247 in 2022.

For more information visit [‘Enrolments of LBOTE government school students by largest language groups’](#) on the NSW Education datahub.

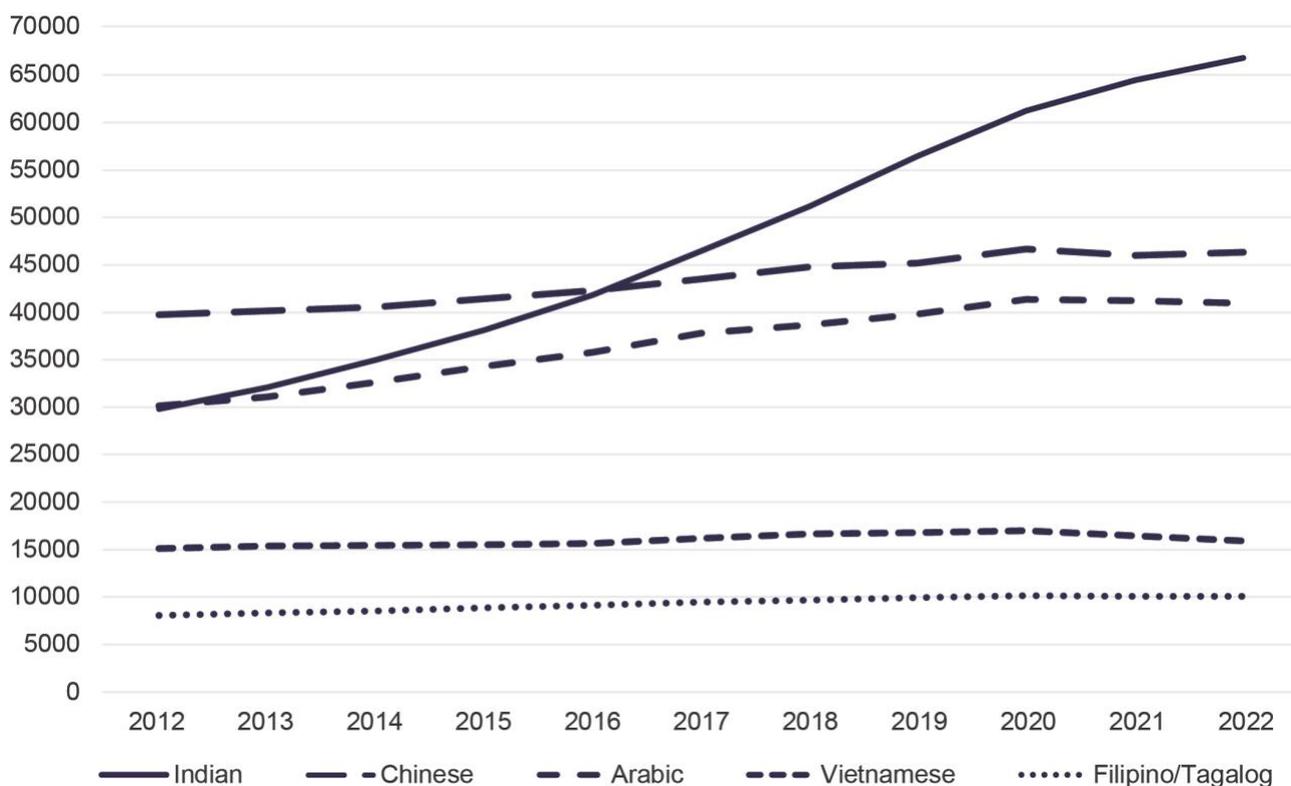
Largest language backgrounds other than English, 2012-2022

According to ABS census data, 26 language backgrounds accounted for more than 1% of all language backgrounds other than English across all NSW schools in 2022.

In March 2022, NSW government school students came from 29 language backgrounds that each accounted for more than 1% (or approximately 3,000) students, and 50 languages which more than 1,000 students identified as their language background.

Furthermore, enrolments of students from Indian language backgrounds rose by 2,373 students, or 3.7%. Indian languages was the only one of the five largest language backgrounds to rise by more than 500 students. Both Arabic and Vietnamese language background enrolments fell for the second year running.

Figure 4: Largest language backgrounds other than English, 2012-2022



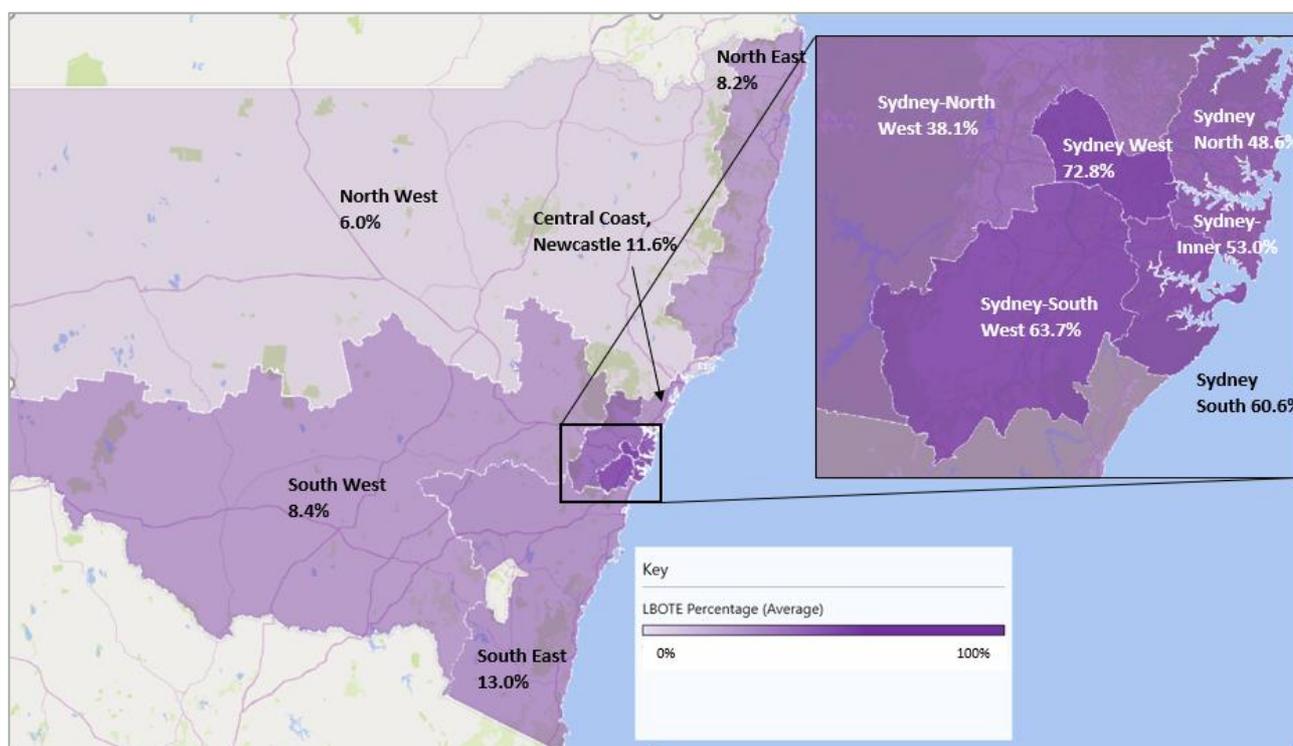
For more information visit [‘Schools: language diversity in NSW’](#) on the NSW Education datahub.

Enrolment of LBOTE students in NSW government schools by Statistical Area 4 groupings, 2022

The map below shows the concentration of LBOTE students across NSW. There were greater concentrations of LBOTE students in the Sydney metropolitan area than in other parts of NSW. Across all Sydney schools, 57.2% of the students were from language backgrounds other than English compared with 9.7% of enrolments in regional NSW.

Details of the SA4 groupings are included in the notes at the end of the factsheet.

Figure 5: Map, LBOTE as percentage of enrolments by SA4



At 72.8%, Sydney-West remained the area with the largest percentage of students from a language background other than English. The areas with the next largest percentages of students with a LBOTE background were Sydney South-West (63.7) and Sydney South (60.6%).

Table 1: LBOTE enrols by Statistical Area 4 & Education Level

SA4 Group	Primary total	Secondary total	All enrols	Percentage LBOTE
Sydney-Inner	16,429	13,363	29,792	53.0%
Sydney-North	27,228	15,465	42,693	48.6%
Sydney-South	26,749	18,476	45,225	60.6%
Sydney-South West	32,552	25,110	57,662	63.7%
Sydney-West	45,170	22,413	67,583	72.8%
Sydney-North West	15,788	9,879	25,667	38.1%
Sydney total	163,916	104,706	268,622	57.2%
North East NSW	3,083	1,835	4,918	8.2%
North West NSW	2,392	1,512	3,904	6.0%
South West NSW	2,712	1,608	4,320	8.4%
South East NSW	5,520	3,706	9,226	13.0%
Central Coast, Newcastle	5,215	3,879	9,094	11.6%
Regional total	18,922	12,540	31,462	9.7%
Grand total	182,838	117,246	300,084	37.7%

For more information visit [‘Enrolment of LBOTE students in NSW government schools by SA4 groupings’](#) on the NSW Education datahub.

Further information

The [NSW Education datahub](#) provides further information on LBOTE student enrolments, including data for previous years, data underpinning the figures in this factsheet and additional information such as breakdowns of LBOTE enrolments by scholastic year.

Definitions

LBOTE

Language background other than English: students from language backgrounds other than English are those in whose home a language other than English is spoken by the student, parents, or other primary caregivers. Therefore a student who only speaks English but whose parent or primary caregiver speaks another language, will be included in the collection.

For students where multiple languages are spoken at home, priority is given first to the primary language spoken by the student and then to that spoken by those caregivers recorded on enrolment forms and in the department's Enrolment Registration Number system (ERN) as parent 1 and parent 2 (in that order).

Within groups from particular language backgrounds, students may come from different countries, have varying levels of literacy in their first language; be multilingual; speak English only, as a first language, fluently or with varying levels of proficiency; have differing prior schooling experiences; and represent various socio-economic and family circumstances.

Aboriginal English

Aboriginal English is the name given to dialects of English spoken by many Aboriginal people across Australia. Aboriginal English varies from other dialects of English by way of distinct linguistic features and cultural usages.

Note: The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), through the addition of the 'D' in EAL/D, has intentionally included students who speak a variety of Aboriginal English as their first language, and who do not yet have full proficiency in SAE, as part of the cohort that requires targeted classroom support.

Explanatory notes

The census of students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) was conducted on 18 March 2022 in all NSW government schools, including preschools, intensive English centres and distance education centres.

Since 1996, information on LBOTE students has been collected in the first half of the school year. Until 2012, comparative enrolment information for all students was extracted from the School Entitlement System (February enrolment data) and this was the basis of the LBOTE proportion previously published in *Language diversity in NSW government schools in 2012*. From 2013, comparative enrolment information for all students was extracted from the Enrolment Registration Number (ERN) system during March, at the time the LBOTE data was collected. As comparable information is available for 2012, the March 2012 enrolment has been used to calculate the 2012 LBOTE percentage quoted in this factsheet, leading to a slightly different proportion than was published in 2012 (30.3% vs 30.2%) but one which can be more validly compared to this year's proportion.

1. Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL)

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

2. Combined language groups

The 'Other Chinese' language group includes Chinese, not elsewhere classified (ASCL 7199), Hakka (ASCL 7102), Min Nan, Teochew, Hokkien (ASCL 7107) and Wu (ASCL 7106).

The 'Other Indian' language group includes Tulu (ASCL 5105), Dravidian/Dravidian (Other) (ASCL 5199), Indo-Aryan not further defined (ASCL 5200), Konkani (ASCL 5204), Sindhi, (ASCL 5208), Assamese (ASCL 5213), Kashmiri, (ASCL 5215), Oriya (ASCL 5216), Dhivehi (ASCL 5214), Fijian Hindustani (ASCL 5217), Other Southern Asian languages (ASCL 5999).

Filipino (ASCL 6512) and Tagalog (ASCL 6511) have been combined into one language group.

The 'Assyrian & Chaldean' language group includes Assyrian Neo-Aramaic (ASCL 4206), Chaldean Neo-Aramaic (ASCL 4207) and Assyrian (ASCL 4203).

Other Language Groups are those languages with fewer than 1,000 students in 2022.

3. Statistical Area 4 groupings

Data is presented using a geographical structure based on the ABS Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). ASGS Statistical Area 4 (SA4) have been combined into 11 groups for reporting and publication of department data.

SA4 name	
Sydney-North	Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby, Sydney - Northern Beaches, Sydney - Ryde
Sydney-Inner	Sydney - City and Inner South, Sydney - Eastern Suburbs, Sydney - Inner West
Sydney-South	Sydney - Inner South West, Sydney - Sutherland
Sydney-South West	Sydney - Outer South West, Sydney - South West
Sydney-West	Sydney - Blacktown, Sydney - Parramatta
Sydney-North West	Sydney - Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury, Sydney - Outer West and Blue Mountains
North East NSW	Coffs Harbour - Grafton, Mid North Coast, Richmond - Tweed
North West NSW	Far West and Orana, Hunter Valley exc Newcastle, New England and North West
South West NSW	Central West, Murray, Riverina
South East NSW	Capital Region, Illawarra, Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven
Central Coast, Newcastle	Central Coast, Newcastle and Lake Macquarie