

# Living Arrangement and Well-Being of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Older Adults

**Author/s:** Khoo, Siew-Ean | **Year:** 2011 | **Publication type:** Journal article | **Peer reviewed:** | **Topic area/s:** Social Inclusion

## **Reference:**

## **Key Words:**

## **Research aim:**

The study aims to improve knowledge and understanding of the ageing experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) older adults by analysing data from the 2006 Australian population census on their living arrangements and social and economic well-being.

## **Results/Conclusion:**

The conclusion from an examination of these five measures of social and economic well-being is that as a group older people of CALD background are not doing as well as older people from English-speaking background. The aged from countries such as Lebanon, Turkey and Vietnam have lower levels of social and economic well-being than the other CALD groups according to the measures examined. The social and economic well-being of older people of Western and Eastern European origins is more similar to that of older people of English-speaking background and the Australianborn. There are also differences among the Asian birthplace and ethnic groups. Older people from Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, India and Sri Lanka are generally more proficient in English because English is widely spoken in those countries that are part of the British Commonwealth. Older adults from CALD countries as a group have a lower rate of participation in paid work than Australian-born older adults and those from English-speaking countries. Participation in volunteering is also lower among older men and women of CALD background than those of English-speaking background or born in Australia. Men and women aged 65 and over from CALD countries have a higher proportion caring for children compared to the Australian-born aged and others from English-speaking countries. There is not much difference in the proportion caring for someone who is old, ill or disabled between the older people from CALD countries and the Australian-born and others from English-speaking countries. The data show that older people from some of the Southern European and Asian countries and the Pacific region are more likely to help with the care of children or an older, sick or disabled person.

## **Implications:**

The findings indicate that ethnicity appears to contribute to productive ageing that is focussed more within the family than in the broader community. While mainstream health and welfare systems will remain important to the health and economic well-being of CALD older adults, their social well-being is much more dependent on their families and ethnic communities. This is particularly the case when they do not speak English very well or they have a tradition of strong family networks that encourage co-residence and co-dependence across generations. Families and CALD communities therefore have an important role in enhancing the ageing experiences of their older members.

## **Cultural Group(s):**

CALD and top 25 CALD COB for people aged 50+

## **Location of study:**

## **Age group:**

50+

## **Number included in study:**

N/A

## **Type of participants:**

## **Research approach:**

Quantitative

## **Type of data:**

Secondary

## **Secondary data sources used:**

ABS Census data

## **Specific scales or analytical techniques used:**

## **Implications/ Recommendations:**

## **Notes:**

Many useful findings discussed in terms of CALD v Australia born and then disaggregated further by COB group