

Schools: Language diversity in NSW, 2019

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation

This bulletin summarises the diversity of students with language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) who were enrolled in NSW government schools in March 2019.

Introduction

In March 2019, 64.1% of students enrolled in NSW government schools came from homes where English was the only language spoken. More than a third (35.9%) of students came from homes where languages other than English were spoken (Figure 1).

The proportion of LBOTE students (refer to definition on page 13) rose by 0.8 percentage points from 2018, and by 1.7 percentage points from 2017.

Figure 1

Language background of students in NSW government schools, March 2019

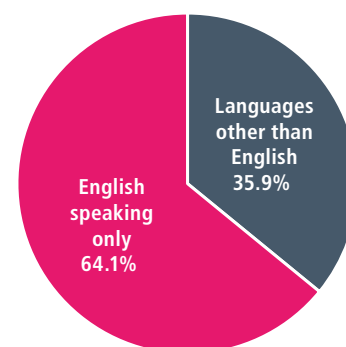
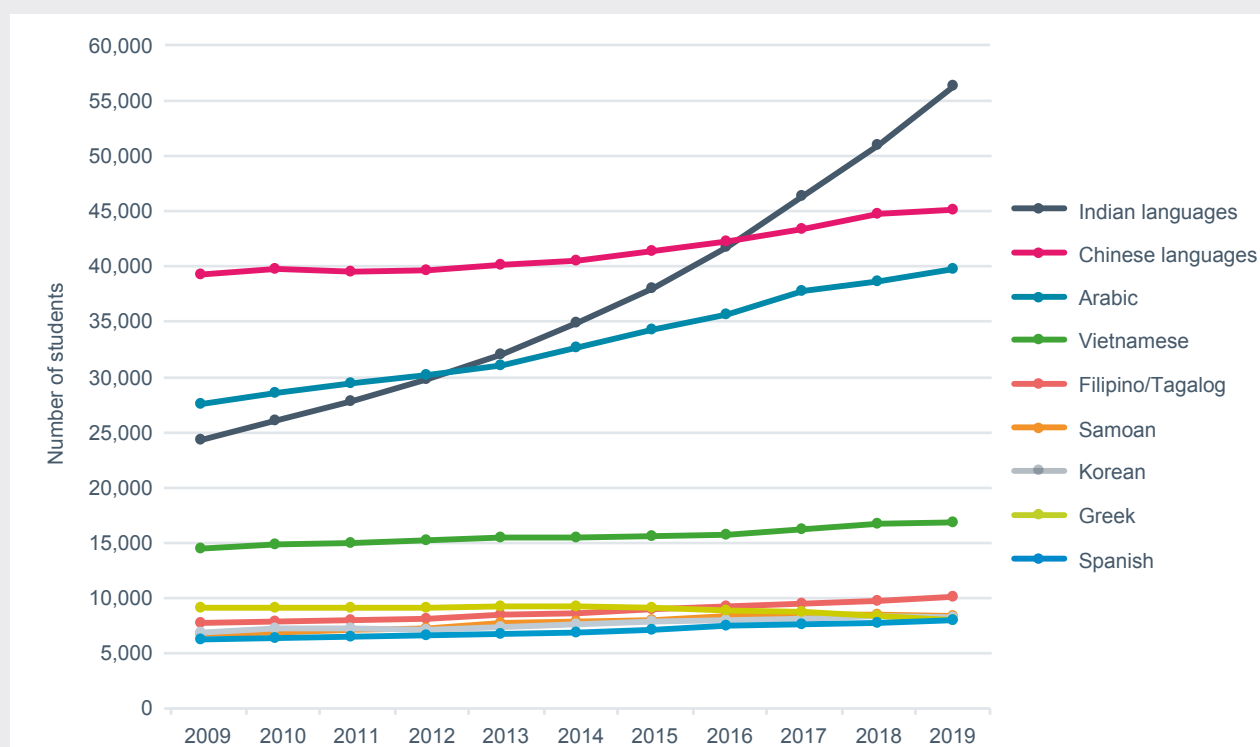


Figure 2

Largest language backgrounds other than English, 2009-2019



Note:

This chart shows languages or language groups with more than 5,000 students.

Largest language backgrounds of LBOTE students in NSW government schools

In March 2019 68.9% of LBOTE students were from the nine largest languages and language groups. There were at least 5,000 students in each of these languages/language groups (Figures 2 and 3).

Indian languages

The ‘Indian languages’ group continued to be the largest language group with 56,306 students, representing 19.3% of all LBOTE students in 2019. Of the Indian languages, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Tamil and Punjabi each represented the backgrounds of more than 5,000 students. There are eleven specific languages (each with over 1,000 students), and an additional grouping of ‘Other Indian’ languages (Table 1).

Since 2009 the combined ‘Indian languages’ group has more than doubled, from 24,349 students to 56,306 students in 2019 (Figure 2).

In the last two years the proportion of students from ‘Indian languages’ backgrounds increased by 1.2 percentage points, from 18.1% in 2018 to 19.3% in 2019.

Chinese languages

The second most common language background of LBOTE students was ‘Chinese languages’, with 45,123 students enrolled in 2019.

Between 2018 and 2019 the number of students from a Chinese language background rose from 44,742 to 45,123. However, due to a greater increase in other language backgrounds, the proportion of LBOTE students from a Chinese language background fell slightly from 15.8% in 2018 to 15.5% in 2019.

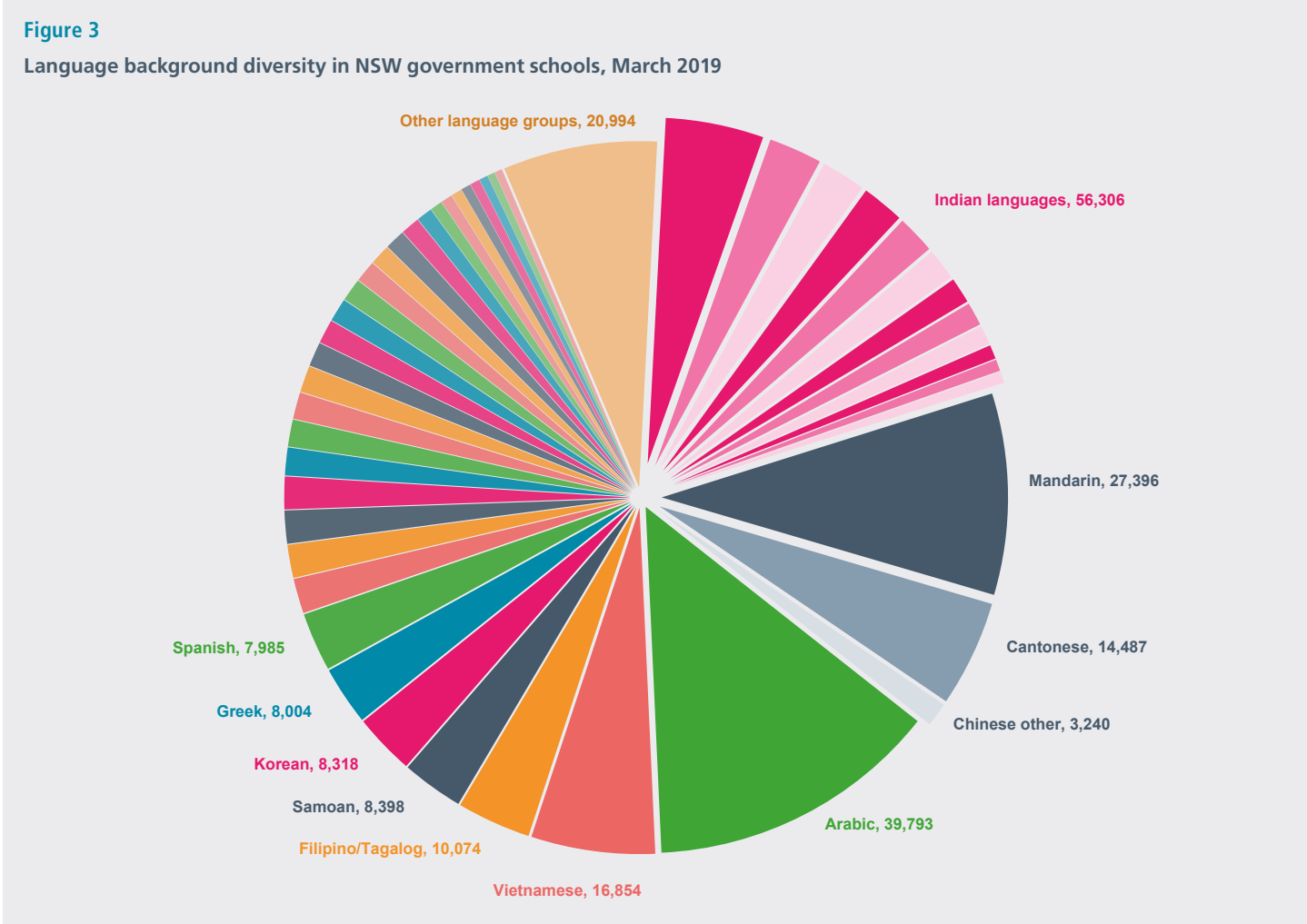
Other language backgrounds

The largest single language of LBOTE students in March 2019 was Arabic (39,793 students), followed by Mandarin (27,396 students) and Vietnamese (16,854 students).

Two European language backgrounds, Greek and Spanish, also featured in the largest language backgrounds, with 8,004 and 7,985 students enrolled respectively (Figure 3).

After Indian languages, the second largest growth in absolute number of students was in Arabic, which has increased by 44%, followed by Filipino/Tagalog and Spanish which grew 29.1% and 28.2% respectively since 2009.

With the exception of Indian languages, the percentage of students from all large languages/language groups either remained unchanged or decreased. While the proportion of students from Arabic and Greek backgrounds diminished 0.1 percentage points and 0.3 percentage points between 2018 and 2019 to 13.6% and 2.7% respectively, the number of students from an Arabic language background increased. Greek is the only major language background with enrolments decreasing since 2009, from 9,188 to 8,004 students in 2019.



What are the language backgrounds of our students?

There are 240 different language backgrounds of LBOTE students at NSW government schools. Table 1 lists the 45 languages where there were more than 1,000 students enrolled.

The remaining languages, representing fewer than 1,000 LBOTE students, are included in the 'Other language groups' or in the 'Other' category of Indian or Chinese languages. There were 25,782 students in these categories.

Kurdish entered this list for the first time in 2019, with 1,031 students enrolled, up from 783 students in 2018.

There were 291,544 primary and secondary students identified as having a language background other than English, which comprised 35.9% of the 811,802 NSW government school students overall. This was an increase of 9,012 LBOTE students from 2018.

Table 1

Enrolments of students of language background other than English by language in NSW government schools – 2018 and 2019

Language	2018		2019	
	Students	% LBOTE	Students	% LBOTE
Indian	51,064	18.1%	56,306	19.3%
<i>Hindi</i>	12,465	4.4%	13,348	4.6%
<i>Urdu</i>	6,418	2.3%	7,250	2.5%
<i>Bengali</i>	5,487	1.9%	6,054	2.1%
<i>Tamil</i>	5,426	1.9%	5,783	2.0%
<i>Punjabi</i>	4,758	1.7%	5,225	1.8%
<i>Gujarati</i>	3,898	1.4%	4,334	1.5%
<i>Nepali</i>	2,986	1.1%	3,513	1.2%
<i>Telugu</i>	2,692	1.0%	3,181	1.1%
<i>Malayalam</i>	2,298	0.8%	2,590	0.9%
<i>Sinhalese</i>	1,865	0.7%	1,909	0.7%
<i>Marathi</i>	1,424	0.5%	1,571	0.5%
<i>Indian (other)</i>	1,347	0.5%	1,548	0.5%
Chinese	44,742	15.8%	45,123	15.5%
<i>Mandarin</i>	26,569	9.4%	27,396	9.4%
<i>Cantonese</i>	15,031	5.3%	14,487	5.0%
<i>Chinese (other)</i>	3,142	1.1%	3,240	1.1%
Arabic	38,629	13.7%	39,793	13.6%
Vietnamese	16,758	5.9%	16,854	5.8%
Filipino/Tagalog	9,813	3.5%	10,074	3.5%
Samoa	8,497	3.0%	8,398	2.9%
Korean	8,387	3.0%	8,318	2.9%
Greek	8,416	3.0%	8,004	2.7%
Spanish	7,810	2.8%	7,985	2.7%
Italian	4,987	1.8%	4,747	1.6%
Assyrian/Chaldean	4,335	1.5%	4,515	1.5%
Indonesian	4,474	1.6%	4,500	1.5%
Tongan	4,382	1.6%	4,442	1.5%
Turkish	3,776	1.3%	3,795	1.3%
Thai	3,530	1.2%	3,681	1.3%
Japanese	3,527	1.2%	3,641	1.2%
Macedonian	3,679	1.3%	3,618	1.2%
French	3,188	1.1%	3,303	1.1%
Dari	3,025	1.1%	3,254	1.1%
German	3,102	1.1%	3,182	1.1%
Persian (excluding Dari)	3,059	1.1%	3,114	1.1%
Russian	2,871	1.0%	2,953	1.0%
Serbian	2,891	1.0%	2,806	1.0%
Khmer	2,695	1.0%	2,758	0.9%
Portuguese	2,450	0.9%	2,586	0.9%
Maori (New Zealand)	2,153	0.8%	2,160	0.7%
Fijian	1,633	0.6%	1,676	0.6%
Afrikaans	1,510	0.5%	1,565	0.5%
Croatian	1,540	0.5%	1,480	0.5%
Polish	1,276	0.5%	1,337	0.5%
Dutch	1,358	0.5%	1,335	0.5%
Maori (Cook Island)	1,167	0.4%	1,183	0.4%
Hebrew	1,018	0.4%	1,033	0.4%
Kurdish	783	0.3%	1,031	0.4%
Other language groups	20,007	7.1%	20,994	7.2%
NSW total	282,532	100.0%	291,544	100.0%
No. of languages	243	–	240	–

Note:

The table shows languages representing the background of 1,000 or more students enrolled in March 2019.

Where are LBOTE students in NSW?

Nearly 60% of all LBOTE students were located in Sydney-West, Sydney-South or Sydney-South West. However, there were significant pockets of students from various language backgrounds located in other areas as shown in Table 2.

Students from Chinese, Korean, Japanese, French, German, Portuguese, Afrikaans, Polish and Dutch language backgrounds were more likely to be located in **Sydney-North**. In comparison, students from Hebrew, Russian and Italian language backgrounds were more likely to be enrolled in schools in **Sydney-Inner**.

Over 40% of students with an Indian language background were located in **Sydney-West**. This area had the largest proportions of students for nine out of the eleven Indian language backgrounds. Sydney-West also had the largest proportion of students from Filipino/Tagalog, Tongan, Turkish, Persian (excluding Dari), Dari, Fijian, Maori (Cook Island) and

Kurdish language backgrounds. Almost all students from Assyrian/Chaldean (92.4%) and Khmer (81.3%) language backgrounds were enrolled in schools in **Sydney-South West** (Figure 4). This area also had a significant proportion of the students with Vietnamese (54%), Serbian (48.9%), Samoan (47.8%), Croatian (25.3%) and Spanish (23.5%) language backgrounds.

Sydney-South had the largest proportions of the students from Macedonian (41.2%), Arabic (35.9%), Bengali (26.8%), Nepali (23.8%) and Indonesian (23.3%) language backgrounds. Almost half of the students from a Greek background were attending NSW schools in this area (47.3%).

The only language background with a significant concentration of students outside the Sydney metropolitan area was Macedonian, with 26.3% of these students located in **South East NSW**.

Figure 4

Distribution of LBOTE enrolments by Statistical Area 4 groupings for selected languages, 2019

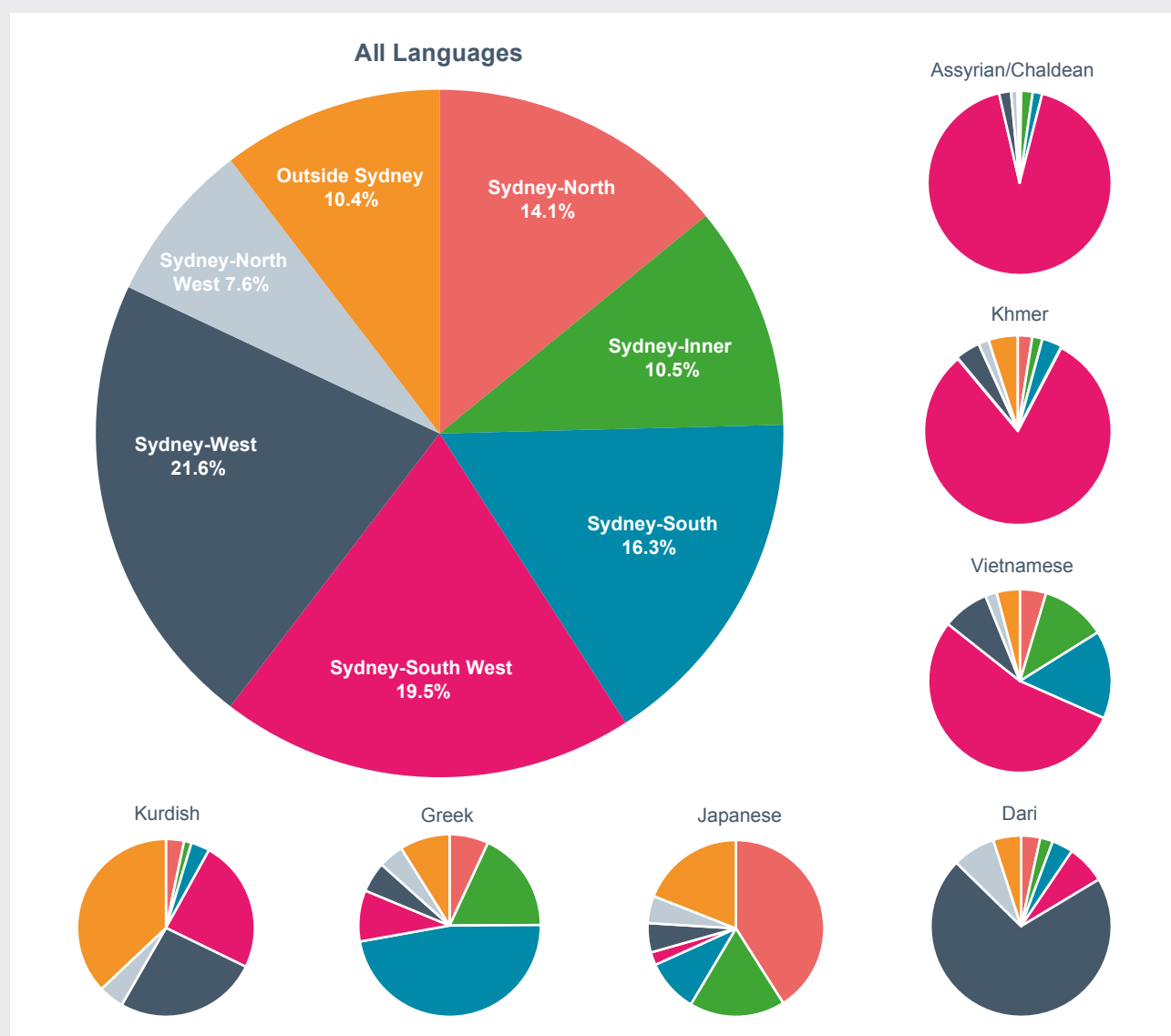


Table 2

Enrolments of students of language background other than English by language and Statistical Area 4 groupings, March 2019

Language	Sydney-North	Sydney-Inner	Sydney-South	Sydney-South West	Sydney-West	Sydney-North West	North East NSW	North West NSW	South West NSW	South East NSW	Central Coast, Newcastle	NSW total	As % of total LBOTE
Indian	5,876	3,996	5,620	7,837	22,803	6,771	491	425	771	762	954	56,306	19.3%
Hindi	1,930	827	745	2,434	5,106	1,719	48	62	90	162	225	13,348	4.6%
Urdu	470	381	1,446	1,039	2,754	778	25	64	72	113	108	7,250	2.5%
Tamil	307	670	1,624	1,554	1,256	321	15	62	70	74	101	6,054	2.1%
Bengali	609	610	187	329	2,964	886	10	34	37	29	88	5,783	2.0%
Punjabi	301	140	200	493	2,619	762	307	48	192	89	74	5,225	1.8%
Gujarati	256	149	136	134	2,953	518	14	18	65	41	50	4,334	1.5%
Nepali	354	375	835	543	827	219	11	42	167	72	68	3,513	1.2%
Telugu	375	337	118	203	1,653	371	6	24	19	34	41	3,181	1.1%
Malayalam	370	171	134	418	918	354	26	30	14	70	85	2,590	0.9%
Sinhalese	393	95	51	119	542	525	20	25	27	51	61	1,909	0.7%
Marathi	263	111	74	333	575	160	5	7	5	7	31	1,571	0.5%
Indian (other)	248	130	70	238	636	158	4	9	13	20	22	1,548	0.5%
Chinese	14,532	6,952	7,268	3,499	6,938	4,263	147	155	146	507	714	45,123	15.5%
Mandarin	9,811	4,199	4,087	1,095	4,311	2,984	69	89	55	282	414	27,396	9.4%
Cantonese	4,101	2,335	2,819	1,504	2,197	1,047	42	49	51	132	210	14,487	5.0%
Chinese (other)	620	418	362	900	430	232	36	17	40	93	90	3,240	1.1%
Arabic	851	1,734	14,266	10,398	9,676	1,097	91	110	135	972	463	39,793	13.6%
Vietnamese	779	1,936	2,615	9,107	1,383	342	83	85	57	236	231	16,854	5.8%
Filipino/Tagalog	1,115	761	1,000	1,265	2,790	1,044	295	452	332	480	536	10,074	3.5%
Samoaan	60	96	594	4,018	2,279	689	23	67	240	110	222	8,398	2.9%
Korean	3,163	1,486	376	74	1,845	930	29	21	22	83	289	8,318	2.9%
Greek	554	1,440	3,784	726	430	358	68	63	58	326	197	8,004	2.7%
Spanish	1,203	1,221	919	1,876	736	640	280	86	96	463	465	7,985	2.7%
Italian	720	1,164	578	816	249	333	111	68	147	342	219	4,747	1.6%
Assyrian/Chaldean	13	91	75	4,174	94	51	0	1	1	5	10	4,515	1.5%
Indonesian	696	938	1,047	397	569	313	107	42	28	148	215	4,500	1.5%
Tongan	191	340	514	1,210	1,358	274	31	36	165	128	195	4,442	1.5%
Turkish	207	630	388	491	1,502	258	19	16	41	203	40	3,795	1.3%
Thai	572	628	518	415	304	190	229	139	118	260	308	3,681	1.3%
Japanese	1,493	638	354	86	195	182	237	46	53	139	218	3,641	1.2%
Macedonian	86	140	1,490	549	77	63	4	16	10	950	233	3,618	1.2%
French	1,105	630	309	144	169	160	228	73	57	181	247	3,303	1.1%
Dari	111	74	123	225	2,309	250	32	6	20	13	91	3,254	1.1%
German	868	573	259	100	83	226	327	101	56	329	260	3,182	1.1%
Persian (excluding Dari)	870	134	118	223	1,030	573	14	6	32	63	51	3,114	1.1%
Russian	708	754	467	164	238	225	53	45	32	85	181	2,953	1.0%
Serbian	259	215	257	1,373	171	123	10	16	16	308	58	2,806	1.0%
Khmer	68	48	95	2,242	118	49	24	13	21	32	48	2,758	0.9%
Portuguese	684	535	426	242	163	113	106	38	17	150	112	2,586	0.9%
Maori (New Zealand)	80	105	366	373	429	195	101	82	104	187	138	2,160	0.7%
Fijian	52	132	279	361	392	60	60	62	117	55	97	1,676	0.6%
Afrikaans	428	48	102	97	88	252	60	120	108	104	158	1,565	0.5%
Croatian	163	139	211	375	173	156	32	18	14	131	68	1,480	0.5%
Polish	271	202	157	145	120	152	33	26	13	106	112	1,337	0.5%
Dutch	437	219	104	36	43	87	92	48	44	118	107	1,335	0.5%
Maori (Cook Island)	26	64	260	229	315	69	7	18	80	93	22	1,183	0.4%
Hebrew	279	565	22	2	12	23	73	11	6	15	25	1,033	0.4%
Kurdish	34	14	35	249	269	48	139	88	132	13	10	1,031	0.4%
Other language groups	2,538	1,980	2,554	3,348	3,578	1,630	990	941	811	1,264	1,228	20,994	7.2%
Grand total	41,092	30,622	47,550	56,866	62,928	22,189	4,626	3,540	4,100	9,361	8,522	291,544	100%
% LBOTE	14.1%	10.5%	16.3%	19.5%	21.6%	7.6%	1.6%	1.2%	1.4%	3.2%	2.9%	100.0%	–
No. of languages	171	177	178	177	188	169	147	140	141	165	158	240	–

Note:

The 'Grand Total' includes Norfolk Island which is not included in SA4 groups' numbers.

Concentration of LBOTE students across NSW

Map 1 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 55.3% of the students were from language backgrounds other than English.

Students from language backgrounds other than English represented 69.9% of the 90,045 students enrolled at schools in **Sydney-West**, the highest percentage in NSW. Of these students, the majority had an Indian, Arabic or Chinese language backgrounds.

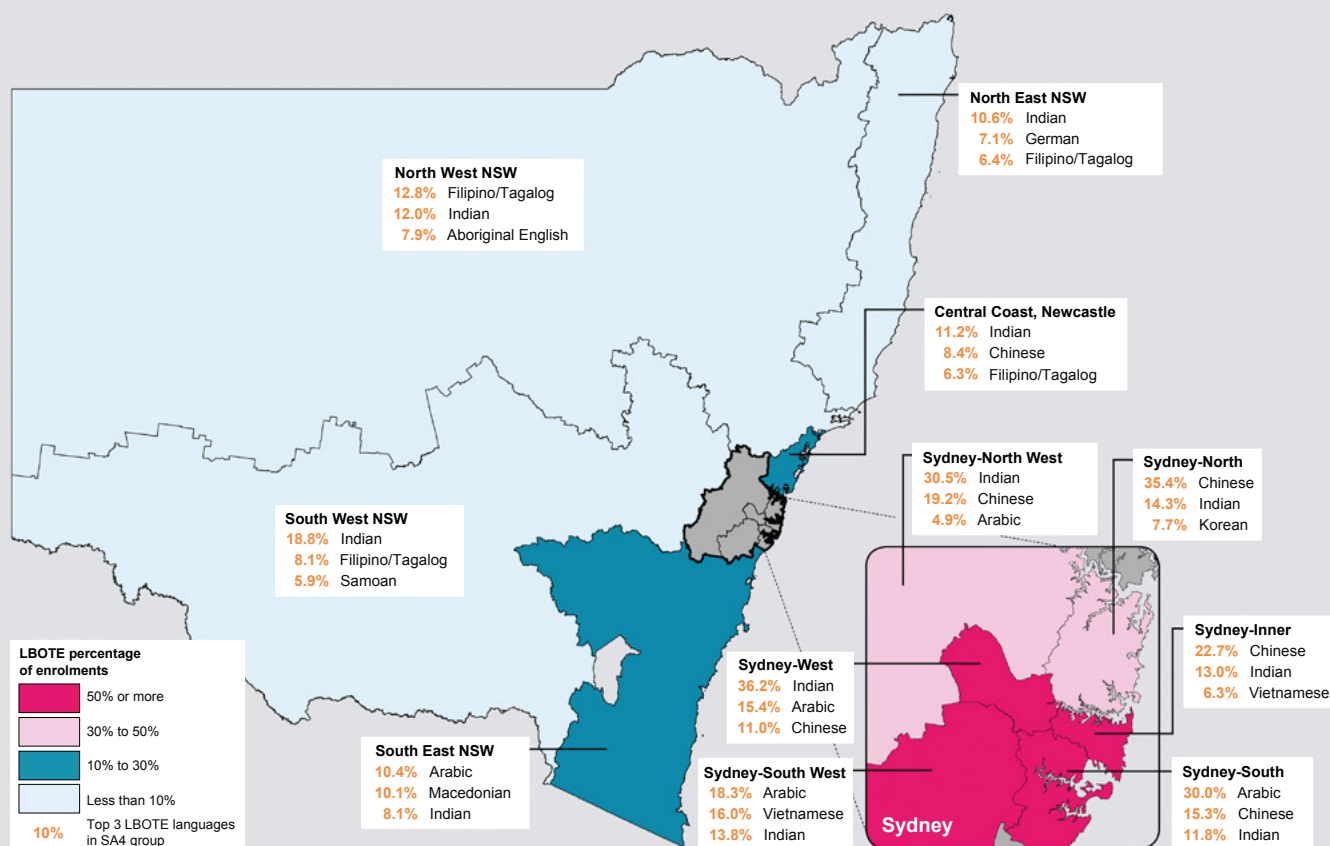
Conversely, **North West NSW** had the lowest percentage of students from language backgrounds other than English. While there were over 67,000 enrolments in government schools in this area, only 5.3% were LBOTE students. More than one third of these 3,540 students had a Filipino/Tagalog, Indian or Aboriginal English language background.

Map 2 and Map 3 illustrates the concentration of LBOTE students in more specific geographic areas across NSW and in the Sydney metropolitan area respectively. In NSW, the highest concentrations of LBOTE students are located in Sydney, Newcastle, the Central Coast and Wollongong. There are also smaller concentrations of LBOTE students in regional centres such as Albury, Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Queanbeyan and Coffs Harbour.

In the Sydney metropolitan area, the highest concentration of LBOTE students were in Sydney-West, Sydney-South West and Sydney-South. Smaller concentrations of LBOTE students were enrolled in schools in Sydney-North and Sydney-Inner.

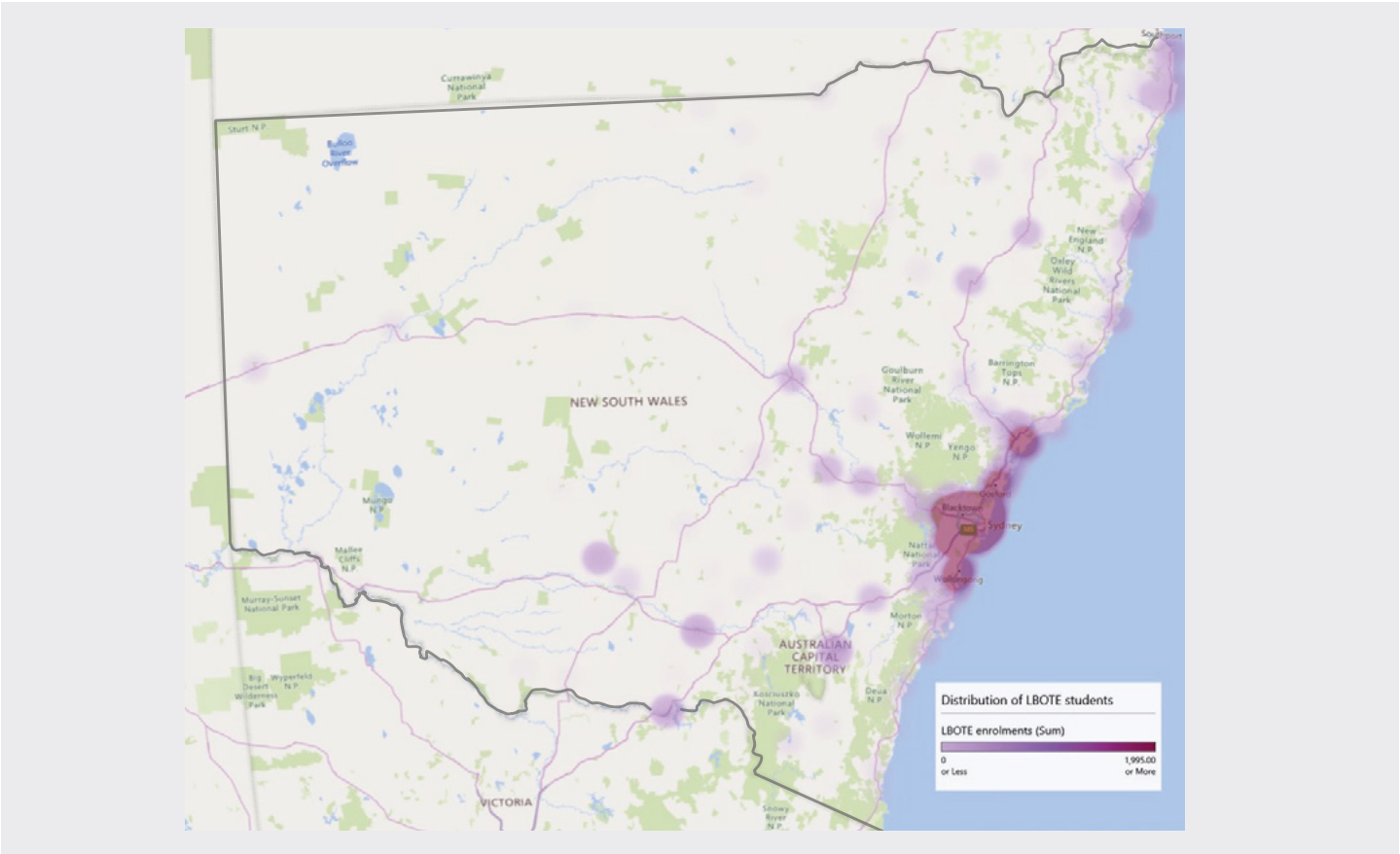
Map 1

LBOTE as percentage of enrolments in Statistical Area 4 groupings, March 2019



Map 2

Distribution of LBOTE students in NSW, March 2019



Map 3

Distribution of LBOTE students in the Sydney metropolitan area, March 2019

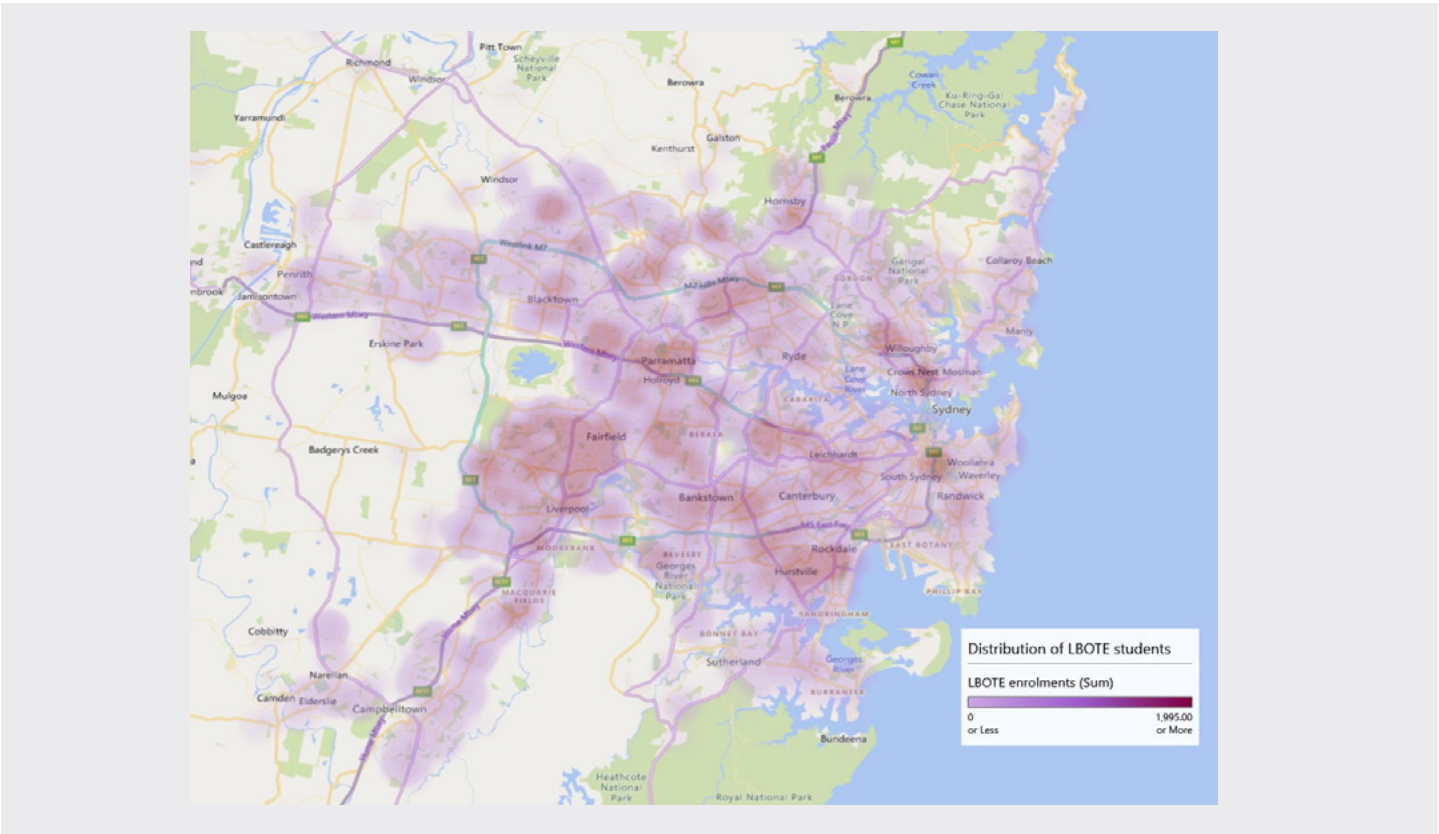


Table 3

Enrolments of students of language background other than English by language and level of schooling, March 2019
(by largest language groups)

Language	LBOTE primary		LBOTE secondary		All LBOTE students		Cumulative
	Students	% of primary LBOTE	Students	% of secondary LBOTE	Students	% of total LBOTE	
Indian	39,143	21.9%	16,882	15.2%	56,306	19.3%	19.3%
Hindi	8,784	4.9%	4,500	4.0%	13,348	4.6%	n/a
Urdu	5,118	2.9%	2,089	1.9%	7,250	2.5%	n/a
Bengali	4,136	2.3%	1,853	1.7%	6,054	2.1%	n/a
Tamil	3,744	2.1%	2,012	1.8%	5,783	2.0%	n/a
Punjabi	3,804	2.1%	1,399	1.3%	5,225	1.8%	n/a
Gujarati	3,259	1.8%	1,072	1.0%	4,334	1.5%	n/a
Nepali	2,537	1.4%	962	0.9%	3,513	1.2%	n/a
Telugu	2,532	1.4%	642	0.6%	3,181	1.1%	n/a
Malayalam	1,875	1.1%	704	0.6%	2,590	0.9%	n/a
Sinhalese	1,169	0.7%	727	0.7%	1,909	0.7%	n/a
Marathi	1,070	0.6%	493	0.4%	1,571	0.5%	n/a
Indian (other)	1,115	0.6%	429	0.4%	1,548	0.5%	n/a
Chinese	27,587	15.5%	17,410	15.7%	45,123	15.5%	34.8%
Mandarin	17,482	9.8%	9,857	8.9%	27,396	9.4%	n/a
Cantonese	7,938	4.4%	6,495	5.8%	14,487	5.0%	n/a
Chinese (other)	2,167	1.2%	1,058	1.0%	3,240	1.1%	n/a
Arabic	23,626	13.2%	15,756	14.2%	39,793	13.6%	48.4%
Vietnamese	8,367	4.7%	8,382	7.5%	16,854	5.8%	54.2%
Filipino/Tagalog	5,429	3.0%	4,560	4.1%	10,074	3.5%	57.7%
Samoan	4,650	2.6%	3,687	3.3%	8,398	2.9%	60.6%
Korean	5,060	2.8%	3,237	2.9%	8,318	2.9%	63.4%
Greek	4,883	2.7%	3,072	2.8%	8,004	2.7%	66.2%
Spanish	5,021	2.8%	2,913	2.6%	7,985	2.7%	68.9%
Italian	2,740	1.5%	1,956	1.8%	4,747	1.6%	70.5%
Assyrian/Chaldean	2,575	1.4%	1,915	1.7%	4,515	1.5%	72.1%
Indonesian	2,649	1.5%	1,829	1.6%	4,500	1.5%	73.6%
Tongan	2,657	1.5%	1,756	1.6%	4,442	1.5%	75.1%
Turkish	2,163	1.2%	1,594	1.4%	3,795	1.3%	76.4%
Thai	2,259	1.3%	1,403	1.3%	3,681	1.3%	77.7%
Japanese	2,319	1.3%	1,312	1.2%	3,641	1.2%	79.0%
Macedonian	2,087	1.2%	1,507	1.4%	3,618	1.2%	80.2%
French	2,138	1.2%	1,148	1.0%	3,303	1.1%	81.3%
Dari	1,854	1.0%	1,380	1.2%	3,254	1.1%	82.4%
German	2,013	1.1%	1,162	1.0%	3,182	1.1%	83.5%
Persian (excluding Dari)	1,792	1.0%	1,300	1.2%	3,114	1.1%	84.6%
Russian	1,988	1.1%	947	0.9%	2,953	1.0%	85.6%
Serbian	1,575	0.9%	1,226	1.1%	2,806	1.0%	86.6%
Khmer	1,600	0.9%	1,148	1.0%	2,758	0.9%	87.5%
Portuguese	1,728	1.0%	848	0.8%	2,586	0.9%	88.4%
Maori (New Zealand)	1,214	0.7%	935	0.8%	2,160	0.7%	89.1%
Fijian	935	0.5%	727	0.7%	1,676	0.6%	89.7%
Afrikaans	961	0.5%	601	0.5%	1,565	0.5%	90.3%
Croatian	899	0.5%	570	0.5%	1,480	0.5%	90.8%
Polish	914	0.5%	417	0.4%	1,337	0.5%	91.2%
Dutch	817	0.5%	515	0.5%	1,335	0.5%	91.7%
Maori (Cook Island)	644	0.4%	528	0.5%	1,183	0.4%	92.1%
Hebrew	733	0.4%	297	0.3%	1,033	0.4%	92.4%
Kurdish	629	0.4%	398	0.4%	1,031	0.4%	92.8%
Other language groups	12,907	7.2%	7,928	7.1%	20,994	7.2%	100.0%
NSW total	178,556	100.0%	111,246	100.0%	291,544	100.0%	—

Note:

All LBOTE students includes SSP students, which are not included in primary or secondary students' numbers.

Students' language backgrounds by level of schooling

Table 3 shows variations between primary and secondary enrolments. Students from Indian language backgrounds comprised 21.9% of the LBOTE primary enrolments, compared with 15.2% of the LBOTE secondary enrolments, which suggests that Indian languages will continue to increase as a proportion of all LBOTE students.

The proportion of LBOTE students from an **Arabic** language background was at 13.2% for primary school students and 14.2% for secondary students. Students from Chinese language backgrounds represented a slightly higher proportion of the LBOTE secondary enrolments (15.7%) compared with the LBOTE primary enrolments (15.5%).

Although students from a **Vietnamese** language background comprised 5.8% of enrolment of all LBOTE students, they represented 4.7% of primary enrolments and 7.5% of secondary enrolments.

Location of LBOTE students by level of schooling

For schools in **Sydney-Inner** the proportion of LBOTE students as a percentage of enrolments was 14.6 percentage points higher for secondary enrolments than for primary enrolments (Table 4).

Similarly, **Sydney-South West** LBOTE secondary enrolments were 5.2 percentage points higher than primary enrolments. Arabic and Vietnamese are the two largest language groups in this area and both have a higher proportion of secondary enrolments than primary enrolments.

In contrast, the proportion of LBOTE students was 4.5 percentage points higher for primary enrolments than secondary enrolments in **Sydney-West**. This is consistent with LBOTE enrolments by level of schooling for Indian language backgrounds, which is the fastest growing language group in NSW.

Table 4

Enrolments of students of language background other than English, by Statistical Area 4 groupings and level of schooling, March 2019

SA4 groupings	Primary			Secondary			SSP			All students		
	LBOTE students	All students	LBOTE as % enols	LBOTE students	All students	LBOTE as % enols	LBOTE students	All students	LBOTE as % enols	LBOTE students	All students	LBOTE as % enols
Sydney-North	26,372	59,304	44.5%	14,542	30,723	47.3%	178	389	45.8%	41,092	90,416	45.4%
Sydney-Inner	17,215	36,336	47.4%	13,290	21,421	62.0%	117	220	53.2%	30,622	57,977	52.8%
Sydney-South	28,636	46,458	61.6%	18,491	30,675	60.3%	423	699	60.5%	47,550	77,832	61.1%
Sydney-South West	32,259	52,934	60.9%	24,312	36,799	66.1%	295	654	45.1%	56,866	90,387	62.9%
Sydney-West	42,614	59,600	71.5%	19,883	29,685	67.0%	431	760	56.7%	62,928	90,045	69.9%
Sydney-North West	13,196	39,983	33.0%	8,861	25,749	34.4%	132	360	36.7%	22,189	66,092	33.6%
North East NSW	2,890	37,020	7.8%	1,732	26,484	6.5%	4	134	3.0%	4,626	63,638	7.3%
North West NSW	2,191	39,809	5.5%	1,343	27,397	4.9%	6	166	3.6%	3,540	67,372	5.3%
South West NSW	2,505	31,836	7.9%	1,554	21,928	7.1%	41	467	8.8%	4,100	54,231	7.6%
South East NSW	5,572	43,531	12.8%	3,744	29,267	12.8%	45	412	10.9%	9,361	73,210	12.8%
Central Coast, Newcastle	5,031	46,190	10.9%	3,421	33,614	10.2%	70	525	13.3%	8,522	80,329	10.6%
NSW total	178,556	493,152	36.2%	111,246	313,864	35.4%	1,742	4,786	36.4%	291,544	811,802	35.9%

Note:

NSW includes Norfolk Island which is not included in SA4 groups' numbers.

LBOTE students Kindergarten to Year 12

When looking at LBOTE students as a percentage of all enrolments, in **primary** grades, the percentage was highest in Year 1 at 37.8%. The proportion decreased through primary years (Table 5).

This percentage is lowest in Year 7 at 33.5%, then increases for senior **secondary** grades (37.6% in Year 11 and 40.6% in Year 12).

Contributing factors to the high LBOTE percentage in **Year 12** may include full fee paying international students who are predominantly Year 10-12 students and the slightly higher rate of retention of LBOTE students to Year 12 relative to English background students.

The varying proportions by scholastic year largely reflect **historic enrolment patterns**, with the proportion of Kindergarten students from language backgrounds other than English rising from 27.9% in 2008 to 37.5% in 2019.

In **previous years**, LBOTE student enrolments represented a higher proportion of all secondary enrolments than of all primary enrolments. However, as Table 5 shows, this trend has reversed with LBOTE student enrolments representing 36.2% of all primary enrolments and 35.9% of all secondary enrolments in NSW government schools.

Table 5

Enrolments of students of language background other than English, by Statistical Area 4 groupings and scholastic year, March 2019

SA4 groupings	Primary								Total	SSP
	K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Support		
Sydney-North	4,002	4,380	4,056	3,764	3,583	3,258	3,232	97	26,372	178
Sydney-Inner	2,535	2,686	2,541	2,458	2,390	2,287	2,156	162	17,215	117
Sydney-South	4,185	4,205	4,262	3,990	3,898	3,854	3,867	375	28,636	423
Sydney-South West	4,472	4,568	4,557	4,383	4,418	4,586	4,542	733	32,259	295
Sydney-West	6,565	6,668	6,205	6,213	5,749	5,352	5,245	617	42,614	431
Sydney-North West	1,867	2,026	1,936	1,945	1,772	1,745	1,772	133	13,196	132
North East NSW	461	404	395	442	394	383	382	29	2,890	4
North West NSW	356	322	332	288	276	280	301	36	2,191	6
South East NSW	806	826	743	794	783	787	743	90	5,572	45
South West NSW	403	376	368	328	347	330	333	20	2,505	41
Central Coast, Newcastle	748	734	731	691	733	684	642	68	5,031	70
NSW total LBOTE	26,410	27,202	26,138	25,309	24,353	23,556	23,228	2,360	178,556	1,742
NSW total enrolments	70,350	71,871	70,375	69,443	68,531	67,324	67,536	7,722	493,152	4,786
LBOTE as % enrolments	37.5%	37.8%	37.1%	36.4%	35.5%	35.0%	34.4%	30.6%	36.2%	36.4%

SA4 Groupings	Secondary								Primary and secondary		
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Support	Total	Total LBOTE enrols	All enrols	As % SA4 grouping
Sydney-North	2,440	2,352	2,328	2,375	2,439	2,257	351	14,542	41,092	90,416	45.4%
Sydney-Inner	2,170	2,183	2,121	2,144	2,193	2,107	372	13,290	30,622	57,977	52.8%
Sydney-South	3,019	2,919	2,947	3,080	3,145	2,743	638	18,491	47,550	77,832	61.1%
Sydney-South West	4,015	3,775	3,851	3,994	4,160	3,394	1,123	24,312	56,866	90,387	62.9%
Sydney-West	3,508	3,275	3,206	3,217	3,152	2,668	857	19,883	62,928	90,045	69.9%
Sydney-North West	1,459	1,450	1,402	1,362	1,632	1,415	141	8,861	22,189	66,092	33.6%
North East NSW	328	286	294	274	280	238	32	1,732	4,626	63,638	7.3%
North West NSW	232	243	234	212	239	156	27	1,343	3,540	67,372	5.3%
South East NSW	638	645	599	607	559	526	170	3,744	9,361	73,210	12.8%
South West NSW	275	277	285	263	239	184	31	1,554	4,100	54,231	7.6%
Central Coast, Newcastle	665	617	565	558	519	434	63	3,421	8,522	80,329	10.6%
NSW total LBOTE	18,760	18,034	17,841	18,105	18,566	16,135	3,805	111,246	291,544	811,802	–
NSW total enrolments	55,969	53,686	52,064	52,312	49,331	39,782	10,720	313,864	811,802	–	–
LBOTE as % enrolments	33.5%	33.6%	34.3%	34.6%	37.6%	40.6%	35.5%	35.4%	35.9%	–	–

Note:

NSW totals include Norfolk Island which is not included in SA4 groups' numbers.

What languages do newly arrived students speak?

Languages spoken by 'new arrival' students are counted on a different basis from LBOTE. The students in Table 6 are counted based on the main languages spoken by the students themselves, while the LBOTE count includes students who speak another language and those with a parent/carer who speaks another language.

New arrivals data is collected through the English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) annual census, conducted in June.

The total number of new arrival students in 2018 was 8,830 and they spoke 137 different languages. Arabic was the most common single language, accounting for 12.2% of these students. However, 27.6% of new arrival students spoke an Indian language, and 12.7% spoke a Chinese language.

For the first time, there were more than 100 new arrival students who spoke Swahili. While it is the second year where more than 100 new arrival students spoke Kurdish, the number of Kurdish-speaking students increased by 83.2 percentage points from 2017. These figures are consistent with refugee arrivals in recent years from countries with high proportions of speakers in these two languages.

Table 6

Main languages spoken by new arrival students, 2018

Language	2018	
	Students	% of NAP students
Indian languages	2,440	27.6%
<i>Hindi</i>	627	7.1%
<i>Urdu</i>	498	5.6%
<i>Tamil</i>	232	2.6%
<i>Telugu</i>	230	2.6%
<i>Malayalam</i>	190	2.2%
<i>Bengali</i>	126	1.4%
<i>Punjabi</i>	110	1.2%
<i>Nepali</i>	101	1.1%
<i>Marathi</i>	100	1.1%
<i>Indian (other)</i>	226	2.6%
Chinese languages	1,119	12.7%
<i>Mandarin</i>	799	9.0%
<i>Cantonese</i>	215	2.4%
<i>Chinese (other)</i>	105	1.2%
Arabic	1,077	12.2%
Filipino/Tagalog	403	4.6%
Vietnamese	375	4.2%
Samoa	215	2.4%
Dari	215	2.4%
Kurdish	196	2.2%
Korean	191	2.2%
Mongolian	160	1.8%
Assyrian Neo-Aramaic	151	1.7%
Thai	134	1.5%
Portuguese	131	1.5%
Spanish	129	1.5%
Chaldean Neo-Aramaic	126	1.4%
Swahili	118	1.3%
French	107	1.2%
Persian (excluding Dari)	106	1.2%
Indonesian	102	1.2%
Others	1,335	15.1%
NSW total	8,830	100%

Note:

1. From 2016 new arrivals data was collected through EAL/D annual census conducted in June.
2. New arrival are defined as students who are enrolling in an Australian school for the first time, within 6 months of arriving in Australia (18 months for Kindergarten), speak a language other than English as their first language, and are in need of intensive EAL/D instruction.
3. Data collected prior to 2016 was collected based on different time periods to the EAL/D collection and so are incomparable with EAL/D new arrivals data.
4. The student count in this table is based on main languages spoken by students themselves. This differs from LBOTE student counts which include languages spoken by the student and/or their parents.

Table 7

Enrolments of government preschool students from language backgrounds other than English – largest language groups – March 2019

Language	Students	% of LBOTE
Indian languages	520	25.4%
<i>Urdu</i>	115	5.6%
<i>Bengali</i>	93	4.5%
<i>Gujarati</i>	61	3.0%
<i>Hindi</i>	60	2.9%
<i>Punjabi</i>	53	2.6%
<i>Tamil</i>	52	2.5%
<i>Nepali</i>	27	1.3%
<i>Malayalam</i>	25	1.2%
<i>Telugu</i>	9	0.4%
<i>Marathi</i>	7	0.3%
<i>Sinhalese</i>	7	0.3%
<i>Indian (other)</i>	11	0.5%
Arabic	346	16.9%
Vietnamese	296	14.4%
Chinese	166	8.1%
<i>Mandarin</i>	66	3.2%
<i>Cantonese</i>	60	2.9%
<i>Chinese (other)</i>	40	2.0%
Samoan	69	3.4%
Spanish	45	2.2%
Filipino/Tagalog	44	2.1%
Khmer	43	2.1%
Mongolian	42	2.0%
Tongan	38	1.9%
Indonesian	36	1.8%
Aboriginal English	31	1.5%
Korean	28	1.4%
Greek	26	1.3%
Assyrian/Chaldean	26	1.3%
Dari	23	1.1%
Thai	19	0.9%
Japanese	15	0.7%
Turkish	14	0.7%
Macedonian	13	0.6%
Persian (excluding Dari)	12	0.6%
Fijian	11	0.5%
German	10	0.5%
Other language groups	177	8.6%
NSW total	2,050	100.0%

Note:

1. Preschools include the 99 preschools attached to government primary/infant schools and the John Brothie Nursery School. Government funded community preschools and NSW Centre-Based services that provide a preschool program in NSW are not included.
2. Students include children enrolled in a preschool or an Early Intervention program that is run by a NSW government school. These government preschool classes provide full-time or part-time schooling at pre-primary level.
3. LBOTE as a percentage of preschool enrolment uses March 2019 enrolment data.
4. 'Other language groups' includes 61 language groups.

What language backgrounds do preschool students come from?

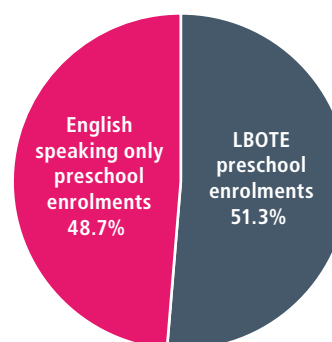
Government preschools enrolled 2,050 students from language backgrounds other than English in 2019, representing 51.3% of all government preschool enrolments (Figure 5).

Government preschool LBOTE enrolments are reported in Table 7 by largest language groups. LBOTE enrolments less than 10 (which equates to about 0.5% of total LBOTE preschool enrolments) are included in the 'Other language groups'. As Figure 5 shows, the proportion of LBOTE children at government preschools is significantly higher than the proportion enrolled at school.

In NSW, most children do not attend a government preschool, but instead receive a preschool education at a government funded community preschool or in Centre-Based services which offer a preschool program.

Figure 5

Language background of preschool students in NSW government schools, March 2019



Definitions

1. 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.

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 with varying levels of proficiency, have differing prior schooling experiences, and represent various socio-economic and family circumstances.

2. New arrivals

New arrival students include only those who meet the following criteria:

- speak a language other than English as their first language
- are enrolling in an Australian school for the first time
- are in need of intensive EAL/D instruction
- have been in Australia less than 6 months (or for Kindergarten students less than 18 months).

The student count of new arrivals is based on main languages spoken by the students themselves. This differs from LBOTE student count which includes languages spoken by the student and/or their parents or carers.

Explanatory notes

The census of students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) was conducted on 8 March 2019 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). 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.

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 nec (ASCL 7199), Hakka (ASCL 7102), Min Nan (ASCL 7107) and Wu (ASCL 7106).

The 'Other Indian' language group includes Kannada (ASCL 5101), Tulu (ASCL 5105), Dravidian (Other) (ASCL 5199), Indo-Aryan nfd (ASCL 5200), Konkani (ASCL 5204), Sindhi, (ASCL 5208), Assamese (ASCL 5213), Kashmiri, (ASCL 5215), Oriya (ASCL 5216), Dhivehi (ASCL 5214), Fijian Hindustani (ASCL 5217), Indo-Aryan nec (ASCL 5299), 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 2019.

3. Statistical Area 4 groupings

Previous publications of the LBOTE bulletin compared enrolments in DoE regions. From 2014 these geographies have been discontinued and replaced with a geographical structure based on the ABS Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). A combination of ASGS Statistical Area 4 (SA4) boundaries in New South Wales have been combined into 11 groups for reporting and publication of department data.

Name of SA4 groupings	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	Hunter Valley exc Newcastle, Far West and Orana, 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

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