

Intercultural Understanding Guide: Ethiopian Culture

Ethiopia, officially named as the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, is located in East Africa.

Language:

- There are five official language in Ethiopia, they are: Amharic, Oromo, Somali, Afar and Tigrinya.
- The 1944 Ethiopian Census also identified 77 languages spoken locally.

Religion:

- Nearly half the Ethiopian population belongs to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, which was established in the fourth century.
- There is also a large Muslim population.

Values:

- Family needs are generally prioritised over others.
- Ethiopian is considered to have a strong sense of community affirmation and expectation to contribute to society.
- A pronounced reverence for seniority is evident. It is customary to convey respect through a bow when introduced to an individual who is older or has a higher hierarchical position.

Social norm/structures/hierarchy:

- Limited physical contact between individuals of different genders is considered a norm in Ethiopia.
- It is important to convey respect through a bow when introduced to an individual who is older or has a higher hierarchical position.

Communication style:

- Loud voices can be seen as aggressive to Ethiopians as they generally speak in soft tones.
- Greetings take the form of multiple kisses on both cheeks and exchanged pleasantries.

Demographics in Australia:

- The 2021 Australian Census indicated that there are 14,092 Ethiopian currently living in Australia. There are also 20,641 Australians who have Ethiopian ancestry.



References:

- [Cultural Atlas](#); [Every Culture](#); [Commisceo Global](#)