

# Intercultural Understanding Guide: Indonesian Culture

## **Geographic context:**

- Indonesia, officially known as the Republic of Indonesia, is a country in Southeast Asia and Oceania. It is also the biggest archipelago, consisting of over 17,500 islands.

## **Language:**

- Indonesian is the official language, spoken by more than 90% of the population.
- Javanese is also widely spoken. There are over 700 local dialects and languages spoken in total in Indonesia.

## **Religion:**

- There are over 300 ethnic groups spread across Indonesia.
- According to the 2010 Indonesian Census, 87.2% of the Indonesian population was Muslim, 6.9% was Protestant-Christian, 2.9% was Catholic-Christian and 1.7% was Hindu.

## **Values:**

- There are cultural concepts of broader Asian culture that are recognisable throughout Indonesia, such as face, harmony.

## **Social norms/structure/hierarchy:**

- Indonesian society is hierarchical, organized predominantly by age.
- One's status, education and perceived power will demand degrees of deference, but age usually becomes the overriding factor determining the level of respect.

## **Communication style:**

- Indonesians prefer to use indirect ways of communication.
- Indonesians tend to use less words but more postures, tones of voices and expressions to deliver their meanings.

## **Demographics in Australia:**

- According to the 2021 Australian Census, there are 87,075 Indonesians currently living in Australia. There are also 89,250 Australians who have Indonesian ancestry.



## **References:**

- [Cultural Atlas](#)