

Intercultural Understanding Guide: Timorese Culture

Geographic context:

- Timor-Leste, also known as East Timor, officially the Democratic of Republic of Timor-Leste, is a country in Southeast Asia.

Language:

- The national language of East Timor is Tetum, an Austronesian language influenced by Portuguese.

Religion:

- Due to the influence of Portuguese colonization in the past, about 90% of Timorese identify as Roman Catholic.
- The remaining populations are Protestant, Muslim and Hindu.

Values

- The Timorese cultural heritage is made up of a combination of traditional Timorese, Portuguese, Chinese and Indonesian influences.
- A sense of pride is often derived from the resilience of Timor-Leste's traditional cultures.
- There is a renewed emphasis on appreciating traditional arts.

Social norms/structure/hierarchy:

- Due to its collectivist cultural orientation, Timor-Leste places significant importance on fostering harmony and unity among its people.
- Many East Timorese hold a strong affinity for maintaining connections with close ones.

Communication style:

- Timorese people are widely considered to be hospitable and friendly.
- As indirect communicators, Timorese tend to avoid direct refusals or closed questions to maintain peace and show politeness.



References:

- [Cultural Atlas](#)