



平等機會委員會
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION

Equal Opportunities Commission

Racial Equality in Hong Kong

Overview

As a renowned multi-cultural city, many people from around the world call Hong Kong their home. Nevertheless, some non-ethnic Chinese individuals still face marginalisation due to language barriers and biases, limiting their full participation and integration into society.

The **Race Discrimination Ordinance (RDO)** came into effect in 2009, protecting individuals from discrimination, harassment and vilification on the grounds of race in prescribed areas of activities. On 19 June 2020, the Discrimination Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2020 came into force. Among the amendments include providing protection for an associate of a person from direct racial discrimination and racial harassment and introducing protection from direct and indirect racial discrimination and racial harassment by imputation under the RDO. The amendment also renders racial harassment in common workplaces where there is no employment relationship unlawful.



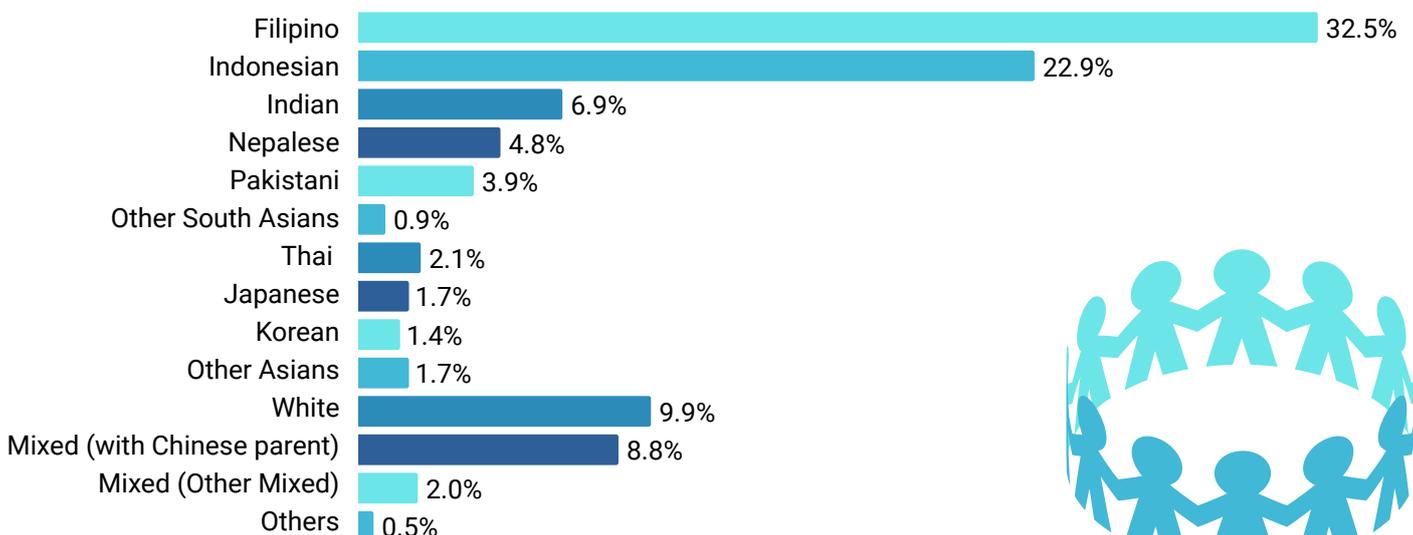
In 2025, the EOC handled

136 complaints under the RDO.

Demographics

- In 2021, there were a total of 619 568 non-ethnic Chinese individuals living in Hong Kong, constituting **8.4%** of the whole population. Compared to 2011, the number increased by 37.3%, far outpacing the growth of the general population during the same period (around 4.8%).
- The median age of all non-ethnic Chinese was 38.5, which was 7.8 years lower than that of the whole population (46.3).

The Non-ethnic Chinese Population in Hong Kong



Education & Language

- In 2021, **36.3%** of non-ethnic Chinese aged 15 and over attended post-secondary education, as compared to the 34.6% of the whole population aged 15 and over. The figure varied significantly by ethnicity. Over 80% of Japanese, Koreans and Whites had attended post-secondary education. By contrast, the proportion for Indonesians (10.9%), Thais (15.4%), Nepalese (22.2%) and Pakistanis (25.1%) is relatively low.
- A total of **83.6%** of non-ethnic Chinese reported that they could speak English, while **43.7%** said they could speak Cantonese. The proportion who could speak Cantonese varied markedly by ethnicity. The majority of Thais (87.6%) and Indonesians (82.5%) could speak Cantonese. Among South Asians, Pakistanis (49.1%) had the highest proportion of Cantonese speakers. At the other end of the spectrum, Filipinos (17.6%), Whites (17.8%), and Koreans (20.0%) had the lowest proportions of Cantonese speakers.



Employment

- In 2021, the labour force participation rate for non-ethnic Chinese (85.1%) was higher than that of the general population (59.7%). The significant difference was mainly due to the number working as foreign domestic workers. Excluding foreign domestic workers, the corresponding rate was **65.5%**, which was still higher than that of the whole population (57.7%).
- Analysed by sex, the male labour force participation rate for most ethnic groups exceeded 60% while the female rate varied by ethnicity. Indonesians (97.4%) and Filipinos (97.1%) had the highest female labour force participation rates as the majority were foreign domestic workers. By contrast, Pakistanis (25.3%) and Japanese (40.5%) recorded the lowest. These figures also contrasted sharply with their male counterparts, which could be related to their traditional customs or the fact that the women in these two ethnic groups were housewives.
- The majority (71.9%) of the working non-ethnic Chinese were engaged in elementary occupations, noticeably higher than the proportion for the whole working population (18.2%). This was mainly because many were foreign domestic workers. There were also variations across ethnic groups. For example, apart from Filipinos and Indonesians, the proportions of Thais (49.6%), Other Mixed (38.8%), South Asians (25.8%) and Other Asians (22.6%) working in “elementary occupations” was higher than for the whole working population. By contrast, the figures for Koreans (1.3%), Japanese (1.4%) and Whites (2%) were far lower.
- The median monthly income of non-ethnic Chinese stood at \$4,920 in 2021, compared to \$18,000 for the overall population. Excluding foreign domestic workers, the median monthly income of non-ethnic Chinese was \$23,750, higher than the figure for the whole working population (\$19,500). The figure varied significantly between different ethnic groups. Whites (\$61,000), Koreans (\$39,810), and Japanese (\$38,750) had the highest median monthly income. Excluding foreign domestic workers, Indonesians (\$13,000), Thais (\$13,500), and Pakistanis (\$15,000) had the lowest median monthly income.

