

Definitions

Discrimination: Discrimination happens when a person, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics. Discrimination can be against the law if it is based on a person's:

- age
- disability
- race, including colour, national or ethnic origin or immigrant status
- sex, pregnancy, marital or relationship status, family responsibilities or breastfeeding
- sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.¹

Diversity: Diversity is an intrinsic feature of human communities, and a source of resilience, vitality and innovation, if managed in a respectful and competent way.² The Melton community is diverse. Promoting and supporting diversity is about respecting differences, supporting access and inclusion for all community members, and recognising human dignity across a range of individual attributes, including but not limited to:

- age
- culture
- disability
- employment activity
- educational attainment and fields
- gender and sex
- industrial activity
- language
- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status or status as a carer
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy and breastfeeding
- race
- religious belief or activity
- sexual orientation.³

Diversity advantage: Diversity advantage is both a concept and an approach. It premises that diversity can be a source of innovation bringing valuable benefits to organisations, communities and businesses, when managed with competence and in the spirit of inclusion. The diversity advantage is also the result of policies that unlock the potential of diversity while minimising the risks related to human mobility and cultural diversity.⁴

¹ Australian Human Rights Commission, <https://humanrights.gov.au/quick-guide/12030>

² Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Key Terminology, [TF2000993 \(coe.int\)](https://coe.int/tf2000993)

³ Equal Opportunity Act 2010 – Sect 6 (protected attributes)

⁴ Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Key Terminology, [TF2000993 \(coe.int\)](https://coe.int/tf2000993) Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Key Terminology, [TF2000993 \(coe.int\)](https://coe.int/tf2000993)

Equality: The equal respect and access to rights and opportunities for every individual, in dignity and without discrimination.⁵

Inclusion: Inclusion occurs when people feel, and are, valued and respected. Regardless of their personal characteristic or circumstance, and where they:

- have the opportunity to fulfil their individual and combined potential
- have access to opportunities and resources
- can contribute their personal best in every encounter
- can contribute their perspectives and talents to improve their organisation
- can bring far more of themselves to their jobs
- have a sense of belonging.⁶

Interaction: Supported by the contact theory, interaction is about creating conditions for positive and constructive everyday encounters across people of different backgrounds and lifestyles in a climate of mutual respect, understanding and co-operation.⁷

Intercultural city: an intercultural city has people with different nationality, origin, language or religion/ belief. Political leaders and most citizens regard diversity positively, as a resource. The city actively combats prejudice and discrimination and ensures equal opportunities for all by adapting its governance structures, institutions and services to the needs of a diverse population, without compromising the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In partnership with business, civil society and public service professionals, the intercultural city develops a range of policies and actions to encourage mixing and interaction across cultural, gender, age and other differences and to stimulate the participation of all residents in social life and decision that affect their everyday life. The authorities also highlight and nurture any intercultural practices that may already exist in the city. The high level of trust and social cohesion this leads to helps to prevent conflicts and violence, increases policy effectiveness and make the city attractive for people and investors alike.⁸

Interculturalism: Interculturalism is a policy model for ensuring equality and cohesion in culturally diverse societies. It encourages mixing and interaction among people of different origins, cultures, and backgrounds to build a collective identity that embraces cultural pluralism, human rights, democracy, gender equality and non-discrimination. It is based on the simultaneous application of the principles of equality of rights and opportunities, diversity as an advantage, and positive interaction as a way to mobilise the contributions of all residents for the development of their society. Interculturalism recognises that heritage and identity are dynamic and may intersect and overlap, and that cross-cultural interaction in increasingly globalised and diverse societies is inevitable and desirable. It suggests that such change has to be facilitated and supported, and that identity has to be seen as chosen and developmental.⁹

Intersectionality: Refers to a way of seeing people's experiences as shaped by (but not limited to) their race, socio-economic background, sex, gender, and sexuality all at the same time. This overlap or combination of differences makes up a person's unique identity. Identities within an individual may come, go or converge, depending on time or place (for example life stages). The point of

⁵ Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Key Terminology, [TF2000993 \(coe.int\)](https://www.coe.int/t/t09/Intercultural_Cities/Key_Terminology/TF2000993.pdf)

⁶ Victorian Government, [https:// www.vic.gov.au/dpc-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2019-2021/what-dowe-mean-diversity-and-inclusion](https://www.vic.gov.au/dpc-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2019-2021/what-does-mean-diversity-and-inclusion)

⁷ Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Key Terminology, [TF2000993 \(coe.int\)](https://www.coe.int/t/t09/Intercultural_Cities/Key_Terminology/TF2000993.pdf)

⁸ Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Key Terminology, [TF2000993 \(coe.int\)](https://www.coe.int/t/t09/Intercultural_Cities/Key_Terminology/TF2000993.pdf)

⁹ Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Key Terminology, [TF2000993 \(coe.int\)](https://www.coe.int/t/t09/Intercultural_Cities/Key_Terminology/TF2000993.pdf)

understanding intersectionality is to also understand the variety of privileges and/or forms of discrimination or exclusion that one may experience simultaneously at any given time (for example gender and race together).¹⁰

Human rights: rights that universally belong to all human beings. Human rights are indivisible, inalienable and universal and respect the equality and dignity of each individual.¹¹

Minority: Considered in the broader sense, i.e. not referring exclusively to national minorities protected under the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the protection of National Minorities, the term “minority” refers to a group which is numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a State and in a non-dominant position.¹²

Social cohesion: The capacity of a society to ensure the well-being of all its members – minimising disparities and avoiding marginalisation – to manage differences and divisions and ensure the means of achieving welfare for all members.¹³

The most significant piece of work in Australia on social cohesion is conducted by the Scanlon Foundation. The Scanlon Foundation utilises five indicators for social cohesion:

Belonging: Shared values, identification with Australia, trust.

Social justice and equity: Evaluation of national policies.

Participation: Voluntary work, political and cooperative involvement.

Acceptance and rejection, legitimacy: Experience of discrimination, attitudes towards minorities and newcomers.

Worth: Life satisfaction and happiness, future expectations.¹⁴

Pluralism: Pluralism means recognizing, valuing and respecting our differences. In a society that embraces pluralism, differences are not seen as threatening. They present opportunities to learn from one another, and enrich our lives and communities with new perspectives and ideas. In a pluralistic society, membership is determined by institutions and practices, not by one’s appearance, beliefs or place of birth. And every person is free to express the different identities that contribute to their uniqueness. Everyone belongs.¹⁵

Pluralism implies working towards the betterment of the local community through taking into account the interests and needs of a diverse population, empowering participation and active citizenship of all around the common goal of improving everyone’s life, including by promoting human dignity, democracy and the rule of law.

Pluralism is a key tenant of interfaith work, which includes

- ***Respect for Identities*** – where people have the right to form their own religious or non-religious worldviews, express them freely, and expect some reasonable accommodations to live out their

¹⁰ Victorian Government, <https://www.vic.gov.au/dpc-diversityand-inclusion-strategy-2019-2021/whatdo-we-mean-diversity-and-inclusion>

¹¹ Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Key Terminology, [TF2000993 \(coe.int\)](https://www.coe.int/t/t2/Intercultural_Cities/Key_Terminology/TF2000993.aspx)

¹² Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Key Terminology, [TF2000993 \(coe.int\)](https://www.coe.int/t/t2/Intercultural_Cities/Key_Terminology/TF2000993.aspx)

¹³ Council of Europe, New Strategy and Council of Europe Action Plan for Social Cohesion [2010Strategy ActionPlan SocialCohesion \(coe.int\)](https://www.coe.int/t/t2/Social_Cohesion/2010Strategy_ActionPlan_SocialCohesion.aspx)

¹⁴ [Social cohesion in a multicultural Australia: The importance of human rights | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

¹⁵ What is pluralism infographic. [GCP - Section 2 final \(pluralism.ca\)](https://www.pluralism.ca/)

convictions. To respect someone else's worldview doesn't require you to agree with it or to accept it.

- ***Mutually Inspiring Relationships*** – where there are conversations, activities, civic association, and friendly contact between people who orient around religion differently. Areas of both commonality and difference are recognized, but there is always some essential concern for the other's well being.
- ***Commitment to the Common Good*** – where different people share common values, even despite theological disagreements, support the things people generally agree that we have a collective interest to uphold.¹⁶

¹⁶ [Interfaith Cooperation | IFYC](#)