
Preferred language

Important note: This is an archived metadata standard from the AIHW Knowledgebase. For current metadata standards and related information please access METeOR, the AIHW's Metadata Online Registry at <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au>

Identifying and Definitional Attributes

Data Dictionary: NHDD
Knowledgebase ID: 000132 Version number: 2
Metadata type: DATA ELEMENT
Registration Authority: NHIMG Admin status: SUPERSEDED
 Effective date: 01-MAR-05
Definition: The language (including sign language) most preferred by the person for communication. This may be a language other than English even where the person can speak fluent English.
Context: Health and welfare services:
 An important indicator of ethnicity, especially for persons born in non-English-speaking countries. Its collection will assist in the planning and provision of multilingual services and facilitate program and service delivery for migrants and other non-English speakers.

Relational and Representational Attributes

Datatype: Numeric
Representational form: CODE
Representation layout: NN
Minimum Size: 2
Maximum Size: 2
Data Domain: 00 Afrikaans
 01 Albanian
 02 Alyawarr (Alyawarra)
 03 Arabic (including Lebanese)
 04 Armenian
 05 Arrernte (Aranda)
 06 Assyrian (including Aramaic)
 07 Australian Indigenous languages, not elsewhere
 classified
 08 Bengali
 09 Bisaya

10	Bosnian
11	Bulgarian
12	Burarra
13	Burmese
14	Cantonese
15	Cebuano
16	Croatian
17	Czech
18	Danish
19	English
20	Estonian
21	Fijian
22	Finnish
23	French
24	German
25	Gilbertese
26	Greek
27	Gujarati
28	Hakka
29	Hebrew
30	Hindi
31	Hmong
32	Hokkien
33	Hungarian
34	Indonesian
35	Irish
36	Italian
37	Japanese
38	Kannada
39	Khmer
40	Korean
41	Kriol
42	Kuurinji (Gurindji)
43	Lao
44	Latvian
45	Lithuanian
46	Macedonian
47	Malay
48	Maltese
49	Mandarin
50	Mauritian Creole
51	Netherlandic
52	Norwegian
53	Persian
54	Pintupi

55	Pitjantjatjara
56	Polish
57	Portuguese
58	Punjabi
59	Romanian
60	Russian
61	Samoan
62	Serbian
63	Sinhalese
64	Slovak
65	Slovene
66	Somali
67	Spanish
68	Swahili
69	Swedish
70	Tagalog (Filipino)
71	Tamil
72	Telugu
73	Teochew
74	Thai
75	Timorese
76	Tiwi
77	Tongan
78	Turkish
79	Ukranian
80	Urdu
81	Vietnamese
82	Walmajarri (Walmadjari)
83	Warlpiri
84	Welsh
85	Wik-Mungkan
86	Yiddish
95	Other languages, not further defined
96	Inadequately described
97	Non verbal, so described (including sign languages eg Auslan, Makaton)
98	Not stated

Guide For Use: The classification used in this data element is a modified 2-digit level version of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) classification: Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL).

All non-verbal means of communication, including sign languages, are to be coded to 97.

Code 96 should be used where some information, but insufficient, is provided.

Code 98 is to be used when no information is provided.
All Australian indigenous languages not shown separately on the code list are to be coded to 07.

Collection Methods: This information may be collected in a variety of ways. It may be collected by using a predetermined shortlist of languages that are most likely to be encountered from the above code list accompanied by an open text field for "Other language" or by using an open ended question that allows for recording of the language nominated by the person. Regardless of the method used for data collection the language nominated should be coded using the above ABS codes.

Related metadata: supersedes previous data element Preferred language version 1

Administrative Attributes

Source Document: Australian Standard Classification of Languages, (ASCL)
Australian Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue number 1267.0

Source Organisation: National Health Data Committee
Australian Bureau of Statistics

Comments: The ABS has developed a detailed four-digit language classification of 193 language units which was used in the 1996 Census. Although it is preferable to use the classification at a four-digit level, the requirements of administrative collections have been recognised and the ABS has developed a classification of 86 languages at a two-digit level from those most frequently spoken in Australia. Mapping of this two-digit running code system to the four-digit ASCL is available from ABS. The classification used in this data element is a modified version of the two-digit level ABS classification.

The National Health Data Committee considered that the grouping of languages by geographic region was not useful in administrative settings. Thus the data domain includes an alphabetical listing of the 86 languages from the ABS two-digit level classification with only one code for Other languages, not further defined. By removing the geographic groupings from the classification, information about the broad geographic region of languages that are not specifically coded is lost. However, the NHDC considered that the benefits to data collectors gained from simplifying the code listing outweighed this disadvantage.

Data Element Links

Information Model Entities linked to this Data Element

NHIM

Social characteristic

Data Agreements which include this Data Element

NMDS - Alcohol and other drug treatment services From 01-Jul-02 to

DSS - Cardiovascular disease (clinical) From 01-Jan-03 to
