

# Does multicultural Indonesia include its ethnic Chinese?

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## ABSTRACT

Multiculturalism in Indonesia is predominantly concerned with various regional cultures in the country, which continue to exist, and in some cases, to develop and progress. These cultures meet and interact in the context of a unitary national, Indonesian culture. There are however people who or whose ancestors originate from outside Indonesia, the major ones being Chinese and Arabs. They brought with them the cultures and mores of their lands of origin and to varying degrees integrated them into those of the places they adopted as homes. This article discusses how the Chinese who opted for Indonesian citizenship and nationality, fared and fare in Indonesia's multicultural society, what problems slowed them in their path, and what lies behind these problems.

## KEYWORDS

Multicultural, cultural plurality, ethnic Chinese, *peranakan*, indigenous, migration, nationalism, VOC, New Order, Muslim, Confucianism, ancestry, Cheng Ho, *pecinan*, Chinese captaincy.

## WHAT IS MULTICULTURALISM?

In Australia, the United States, and Canada, the media started to use the term multiculturalism from the late 1960s to the early 1970s to describe the nature of the society in their respective countries. It is worth noting that Australia, the United States and Canada have been immigrant-receiving nations where immigrants have had a very significant role in nation building and in economic growth.

*WorldQ.com* explains the concept well and defines multiculturalism or

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