



Community Information Summary

Cambodia-born

Historical Background

The first recorded Cambodia-born migrants to arrive in Australia were a family of nine who arrived in the late 1940s. Following Cambodia's independence from French rule in 1953, Cambodian students began coming to Australia in small numbers. During the 1960s and 1970s, larger groups of students came to Australia under the Colombo Plan, many of whom settled in Australia.

Following the takeover of Cambodia by the Communist Khmer Rouge regime led by Pol Pot in 1975, small numbers of Cambodian asylum-seekers came to Australia and, by June 1976, the Cambodia-born population in Australia increased to 500 people. Between April 1975 and June 1986, 12 813 Cambodians came to Australia under the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Programme.

Between 1989 and April 1991, some 315 asylum-seekers from Cambodia arrived by boat. The Australian Government subsequently introduced the Special Assistance Category programme to encourage boat arrivals to return to Cambodia and apply for sponsorship to Australia under normal migration procedures. Family stream migration increased the number of the Cambodia-born in Australia.

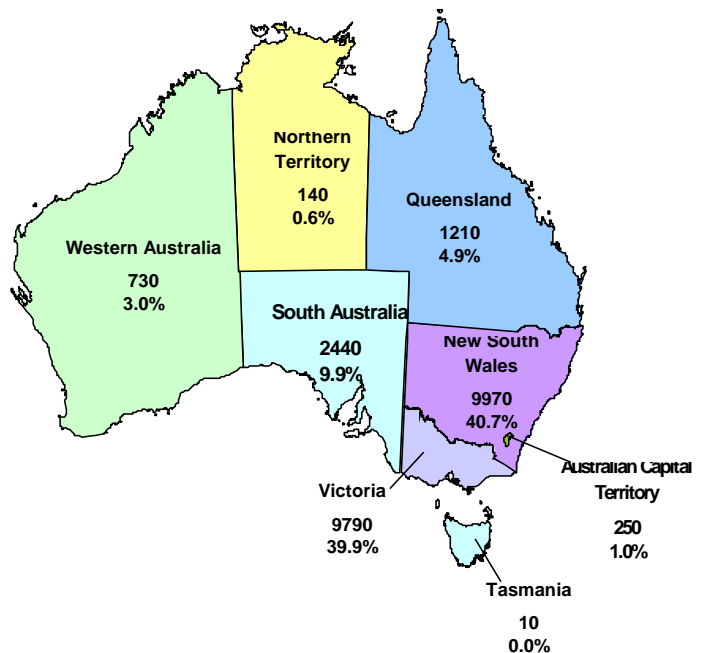
The Cambodians have successfully established communities in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.

There were 23 000 Cambodia-born people in Australia at the 2001 Census, making up 0.6 per cent of the overseas-born population.

Today

Geographic Distribution

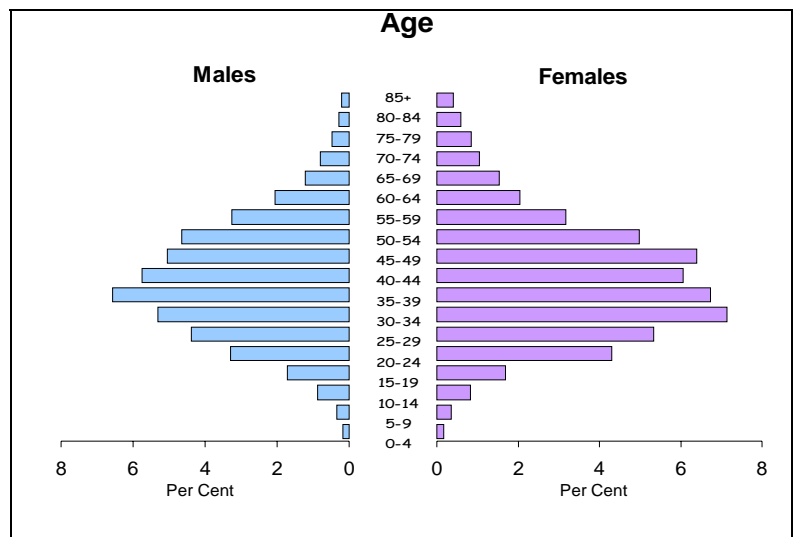
The latest Census in 2006 recorded 24 530 Cambodia-born people in Australia, an increase of 6.7 per cent from the 2001 Census. The 2006 distribution by state and territory showed New South Wales had the largest number with 9970 followed by Victoria (9790), South Australia (2440) and Queensland (1210).



Age and Sex

The median age of the Cambodia-born in 2006 was 40.3 years compared with 46.8 years for all overseas-born and 37.1 years for the total Australian population. The age distribution showed 2.7 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 11.0 per cent were 15-24 years, 47.3 per cent were 25-44 years, 31.6 per cent were 45-64 years and 7.4 per cent were 65 and over.

Of the Cambodia-born in Australia, there were 11 380 males (46.4 per cent) and 13 150 females (53.6 per cent). The sex ratio was 86.5 males per 100 females.

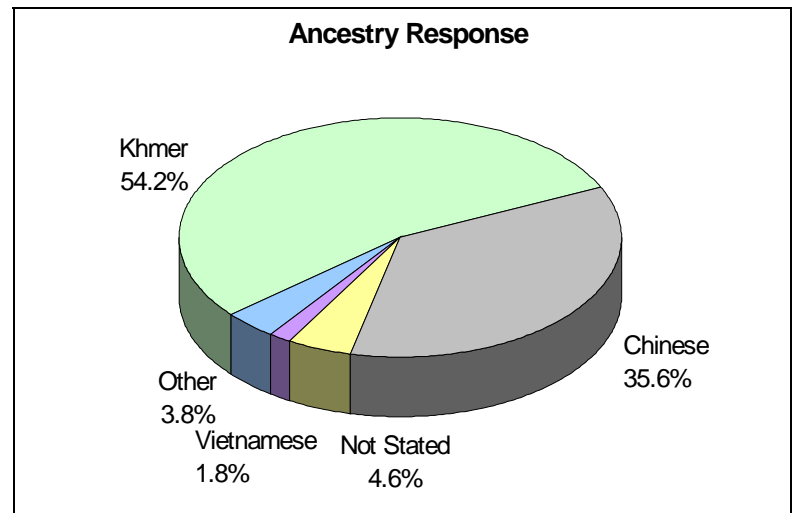


Ancestry

In the 2006 Census, the top three ancestry responses* that Cambodia-born people reported were, Khmer (14 780), Chinese (9680) and Not Stated (1250).

In the 2006 Census, Australians reported more than 250 different Ancestries. From the total ancestry responses*, 0.1 per cent responded as having a Khmer ancestry.

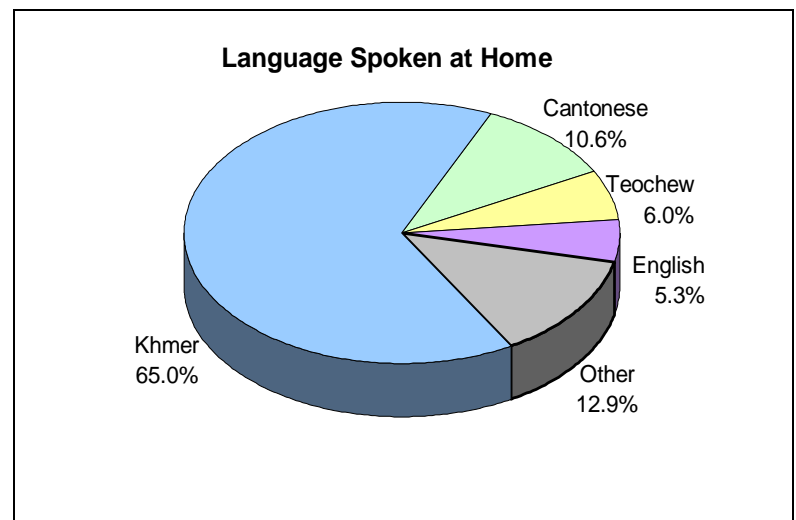
*At the 2006 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question; therefore providing the total responses and not persons count.



Language

The main languages spoken at home by Cambodia-born people in Australia were Khmer (65.0 per cent), Cantonese (10.6 per cent) and Teochew (6.0 per cent).

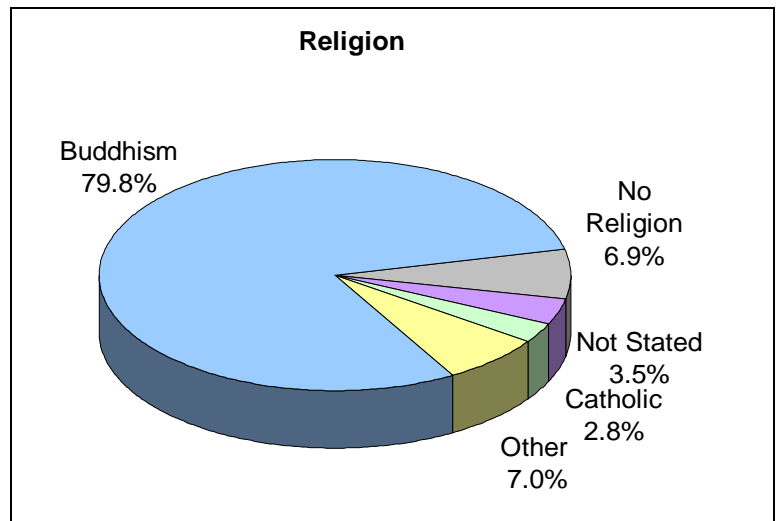
Of the 23 120 Cambodia-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 53.8 per cent spoke English very well or well and 45.2 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



Religion

At the 2006 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Cambodia-born were Buddhism (19 580 persons), No Religion (1680 persons) and Not Stated (870 persons).

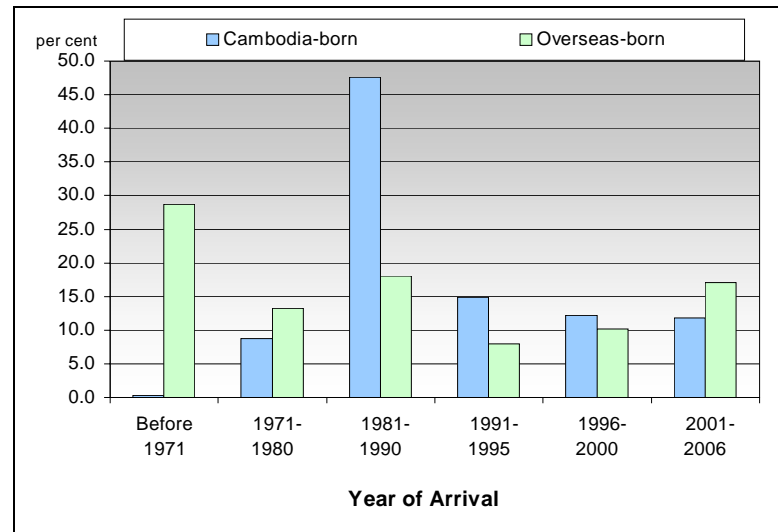
Of the Cambodia-born, 6.9 per cent stated 'No Religion', this was lower than that of the total Australian population (18.7 per cent). 3.5 per cent of the Cambodia-born did not state a religion.



Arrival

Compared to 67.9 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 71.6 per cent of the Cambodia-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 1996.

Among the total Cambodia-born in Australia at the 2006 Census, 12.2 per cent arrived between 1996 and 2000 and 11.8 per cent arrived during 2001 and 2006.



Citizenship

At the 2006 Census, the estimated rate of Australian Citizenship for the Cambodia-born in Australia was 94.6 per cent. The estimated rate for all overseas-born was 75.6 per cent. This rate includes adjustments for people not meeting the residential requirement for citizenship, temporary entrants to Australia and underenumeration at the Census.

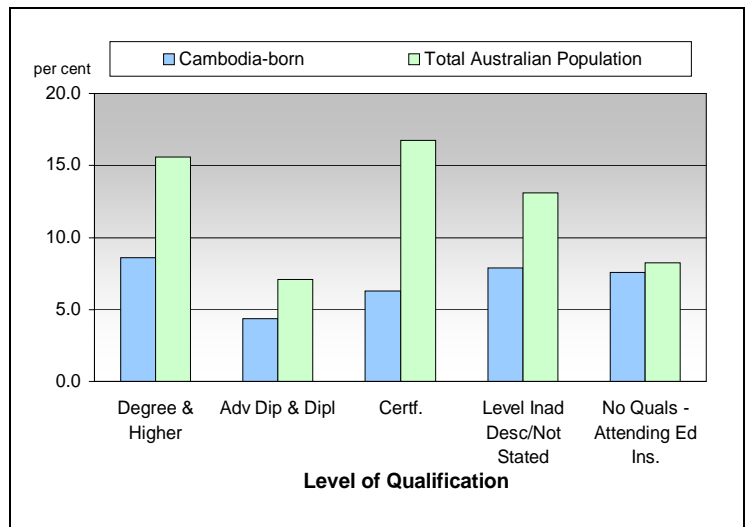
Median Income

At the time of the 2006 Census, the median individual weekly income for the Cambodia-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$328, compared with \$431 for all overseas-born and \$488 for all Australia-born. The total Australian population had a median individual weekly income of \$466.

Qualifications

At the 2006 Census, 27.1 per cent of the Cambodia-born aged 15 years and over had some form of higher non school qualifications compared to 52.5 per cent of the Australian population. Among the Cambodia-born, 13.0 per cent had Diploma level or higher* qualifications and 6.3 per cent had Certificate level qualifications. From the Cambodia-born, 17 090 had no higher non school qualification, of which 10.6 per cent were still attending an educational institution.

* Diploma level or higher qualification includes Degree level or higher, Advanced Diploma and Diploma level.



Employment

Among Cambodia-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 59.1 per cent and the unemployment rate was 11.4 per cent. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 64.6 and 5.2 per cent respectively.

Of the 12 190 Cambodia-born who were employed, 15.6 per cent were employed in a Skill Level 1 occupation, 9.0 per cent in Skill Level 2 and 11.0 per cent in Skill Level 3. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 28.7, 10.7 and 15.1 per cent respectively.

