



# Community Information Summary

## Iran-born

### Historical Background

Before the 1979 revolution and the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, most of the migration from Iran to Australia was by service workers, particularly in the oil industry.

In 1981, Australia began a special humanitarian assistance programme for Baha'is seeking to escape religious persecution in Iran. By the end of the decade, around 2500 people had arrived under this and other refugee programs. The Iran-born are primarily Shi'a Muslims, while others are of the Baha'i, Catholic and Armenian Apostolic faiths.

Over one-third of all Baha'is in Australia were born in Iran.

During the 1980s there was a major war between Iran and Iraq. This resulted in an increase in migration to Australia. During the late 1980s and 1990s many professionals started to leave Iran for Australia due to economic and political hardship.

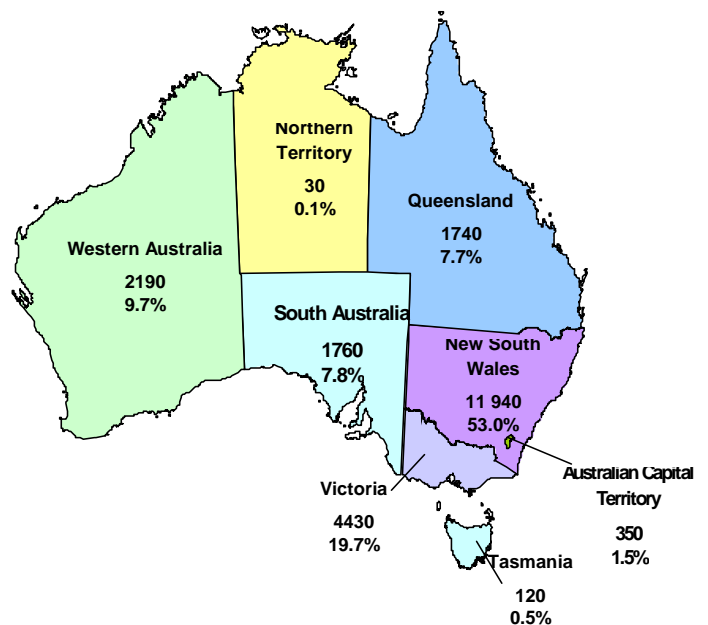
In the latter half of the 1990s, while political and religious persecution remained important reasons for migration, many Iranians also came under the Skill and Family streams of the Migration Programme.

There were 18 840 Iran-born people in Australia at the 2001 Census, making up 0.5 per cent of the overseas-born population.

## Today

### Geographic Distribution

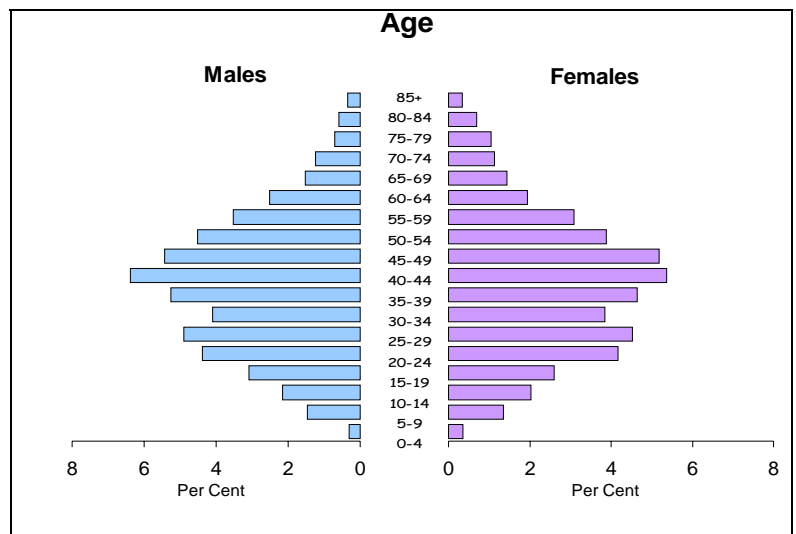
The latest Census in 2006 recorded 22 550 Iran-born people in Australia, an increase of 19.7 per cent from the 2001 Census. The 2006 distribution by state and territory showed New South Wales had the largest number with 11 940 followed by Victoria (4430), Western Australia (2190) and South Australia (1760).



## Age and Sex

The median age of the Iran-born in 2006 was 40.4 years compared with 46.8 years for all overseas-born and 37.1 years for the total Australian population. The age distribution showed 7.6 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 14.2 per cent were 15-24 years, 39.0 per cent were 25-44 years, 30.1 per cent were 45-64 years and 9.0 per cent were 65 and over.

Of the Iran-born in Australia, there were 11 810 males (52.4 per cent) and 10 740 females (47.6 per cent). The sex ratio was 110.0 males per 100 females.

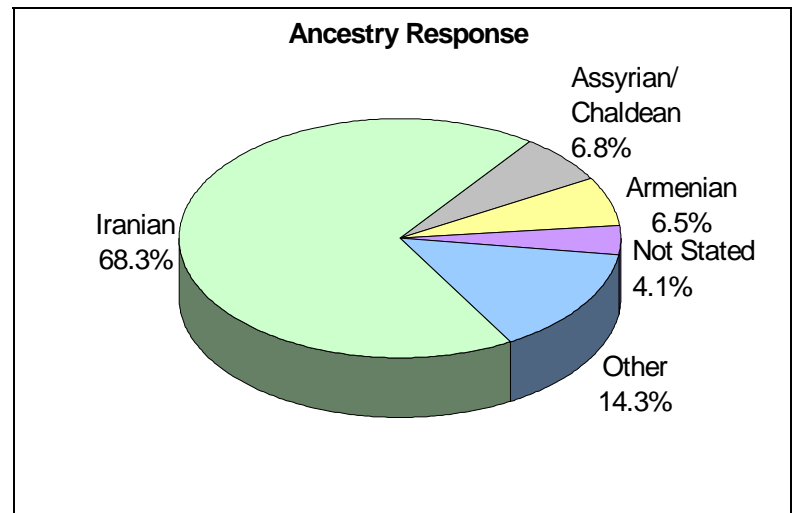


## Ancestry

In the 2006 Census, the top three ancestry responses\* that Iran-born people reported were, Iranian (16 160), Assyrian/Chaldean (1600) and Armenian (1540).

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

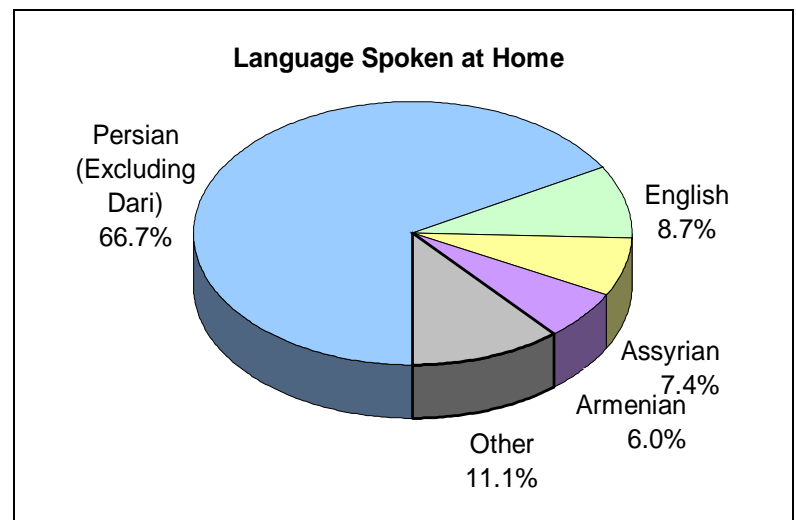
\*At the 2006 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question; therefore providing the total responses and not persons count.



## Language

The main languages spoken at home by Iran-born people in Australia were Persian (Excluding Dari) (66.7 per cent), English (8.7 per cent) and Assyrian (7.4 per cent).

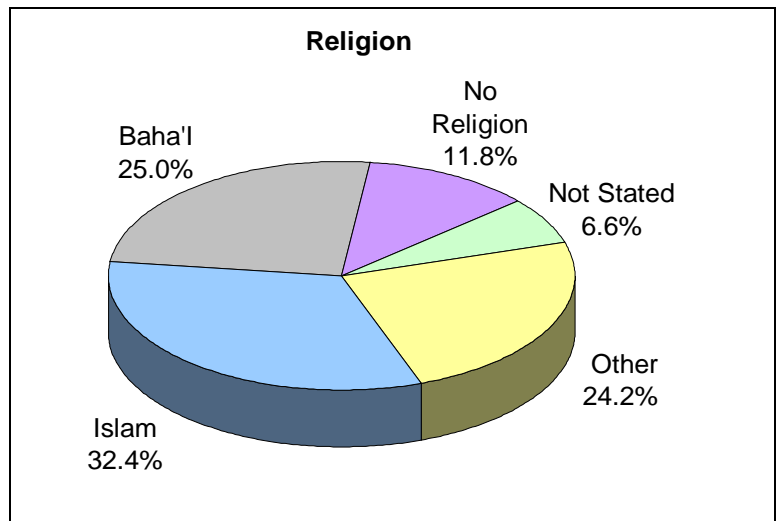
Of the 20 510 Iran-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 80.8 per cent spoke English very well or well and 18.1 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



## Religion

At the 2006 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Iran-born were Islam (7310 persons), Baha'i (5640 persons) and No Religion (2660 persons).

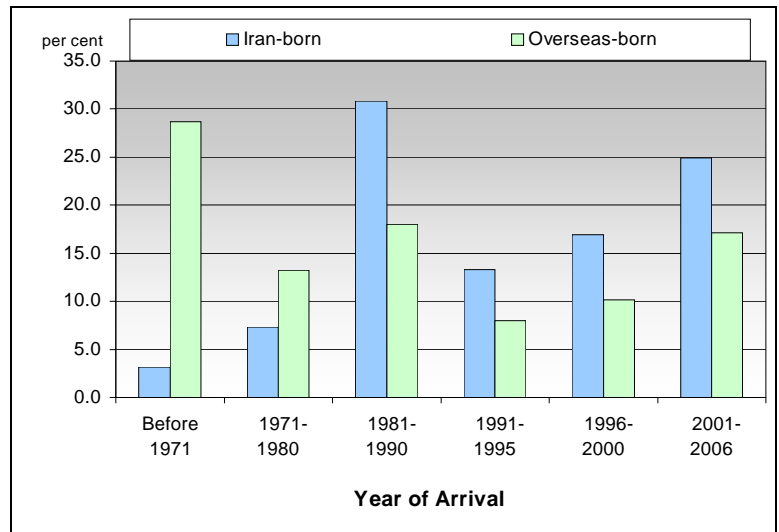
Of the Iran-born, 11.8 per cent stated 'No Religion', this was lower than that of the total Australian population (18.7 per cent). 6.6 per cent of the Iran-born did not state a religion.



## Arrival

Compared to 67.9 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 54.7 per cent of the Iran-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 1996.

Among the total Iran-born in Australia at the 2006 Census, 16.9 per cent arrived between 1996 and 2000 and 24.9 per cent arrived during 2001 and 2006.



## Citizenship

At the 2006 Census, the estimated rate of Australian Citizenship for the Iran-born in Australia was 88.4 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.

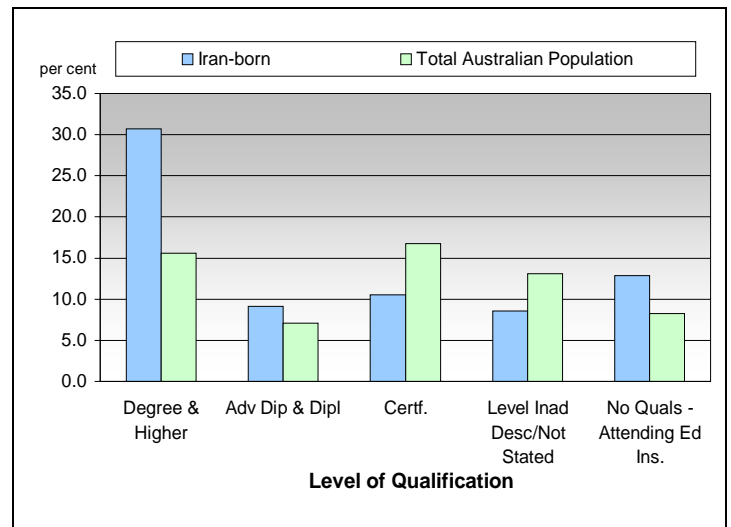
## Median Income

At the time of the 2006 Census, the median individual weekly income for the Iran-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$355, 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, 58.9 per cent of the Iran-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 Iran-born, 39.8 per cent had Diploma level or higher\* qualifications and 10.5 per cent had Certificate level qualifications. From the Iran-born, 8420 had no higher non school qualification, of which 31.8 per cent were still attending an educational institution.

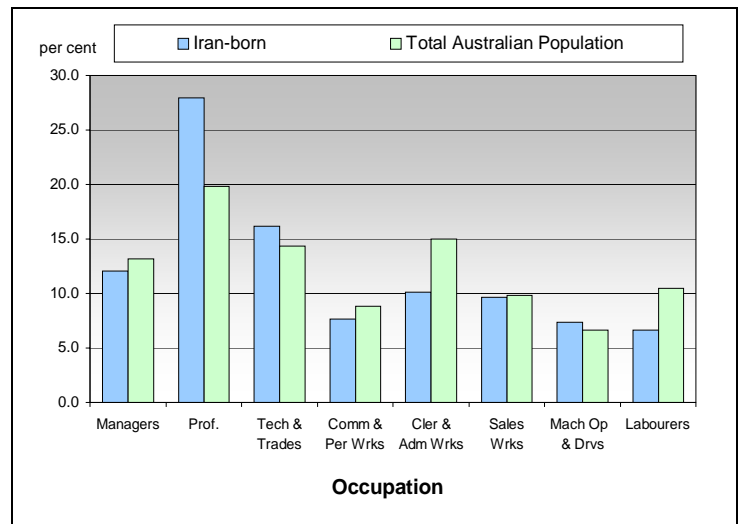
\* Diploma level or higher qualification includes Degree level or higher, Advanced Diploma and Diploma level.



## Employment

Among Iran-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 60.3 per cent and the unemployment rate was 11.7 per cent. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 64.6 and 5.2 per cent respectively.

Of the 10 890 Iran-born who were employed, 35.0 per cent were employed in a Skill Level 1 occupation, 10.7 per cent in Skill Level 2 and 14.7 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.



Jointly produced by Multicultural Affairs Branch and the Programme Statistics and Monitoring Section of DIAC

All data used in this summary is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing. Sources for the Historical Background available at <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/source.htm>

© Commonwealth of Australia