

Immigration and Population History of Selected Countries of Birth

Introduction

In this section the immigration histories of the seven chosen countries of birth are described from three different perspectives. The history of each country is described by a short textual history of the country of birth within Australia, by a table comparing key population statistics at the beginning and end of the century and by charts plotting demographic trends throughout the century.

The countries featured in this section have been selected to represent a variety of migration patterns. Each of the countries has also been in the top ten in the Australian population at some time during the century.

The primary sources of the historical summaries are the 'Community Profiles' from the 1991 and 1996 Censuses. These are recommended for more detailed historical summaries and extra statistical information that is not included here.

In order to compare the statistical status of each of the countries of birth at the beginning and end of the century, tables of key population statistics are included. They present data from the 1901 and 1996 Censuses.

The 'Demographic Trends' page for each country includes three graphs to illustrate the individuality of the trends undergone by each country of birth. The first graph shows the population of the country of birth in Australia from 1901 to 2000. The second graph plots the sex distribution of the country of birth in Australia at selected Censuses throughout the century. The third graph plots the median age of the country of birth in Australia from 1911 to 2000.

United Kingdom – *A Short Immigration History*

The United Kingdom-born has been the largest overseas-born group throughout the 20th century. This is because the United Kingdom was, prior to the last quarter of the century strongly favoured as a source country by immigrant selection policies and remained the largest single component of the annual immigration intake until 1995–96 when the intake of the New Zealand-born became greater.

The original United Kingdom was formed in 1801, a unification of a number of territories traditionally identified as ‘The British Isles’. These territories included England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and some close, administratively linked islands. In the early 1920s Ireland was partitioned with 26 of the mainly Catholic counties forming the Irish Free State and the other 6 counties remaining as part of the United Kingdom. In 1948 the Irish Free State adopted the name the Republic of Ireland and in 1949 left the British Commonwealth. As a consequence, it is only from the 1954 Australian Census that the Republic of Ireland can be separated from the United Kingdom. Hence, in the following discussion references to the United Kingdom-born prior to 1954 refer to those born in the United Kingdom excluding Ireland.

While the England-born has been the largest component of the United Kingdom-born, the importance of the Ireland-born (those born in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland), Scotland-born and Wales-born should not be underestimated. Up until the First World War the Ireland-born were, in their own right, the second largest immigrant population. Scotland then succeeded Ireland as the second largest.

The British Government initiated European settlement by establishing a penal colony in Sydney Cove. Between 1788 and 1868, about 160,000 convicts, of whom 85 per cent were male, were transported to the Australian colonies augmented by free settlers, including large numbers who arrived during the gold rush of the 1850s. In the second half of the nineteenth century, immigration to Australia was still largely from Britain and Ireland. Of the one million people who came to Australia between 1860 and 1900, almost all (95 per cent) were English, Irish or Scots.

At the beginning of the twentieth century the number of United Kingdom-born in the Australian population was in decline. In 1901 there were only 495,074 after a peak of 594,217 (19 per cent of the non-indigenous population) in 1891. The decline continued until 1911 when it fell to a low of 451,288.

With the exception of the period during the First World War, Australia was in favour of immigration during the early decades of the twentieth century. The effect of this can be observed as a steady rise in the United Kingdom-born in Australia between the 1911 (451,288) and 1933 (633,806) Censuses.

Between 1933 and 1947 the number of United Kingdom-born was again in decline because of the overall halt in immigration due to the Great Depression and World War Two.

Shortly after the Second World War the Australian Government adopted a reconstruction and expansion program. The basis of this program was that the annual intake of immigrants should be at least one per cent of the total population and priority should be given to attracting British immigrants. In 1946 and 1947, the Australian and British Governments entered into agreements to provide free and assisted passage to British ex-servicemen, selected civilians and their dependents. As a result the number of United Kingdom-born in Australia began to climb. There were 626,035 United Kingdom-born in 1954.

Other schemes to encourage migration from Britain during this time included the ‘Bring Out a Briton’ campaign, launched in 1957, under which employers and organisations were encouraged to sponsor particular families and assist in their settlement. By 1961 the number of United Kingdom-born had climbed to 718,345.

The most dramatic increase in the United Kingdom-born population occurred between 1961 and 1971. The number of persons born in the United Kingdom in Australia exceeded one million at the 1971 Census and has remained above one million ever since.

Up until the 1980s, assisted passage was provided for the overwhelming majority of post-war British migrants. The British Government withdrew from providing assistance in 1972 but the Australian Government continued until 1981. Until the mid-1970s, immigrants from the United Kingdom also received rights not available to other immigrants. For example: eligibility for citizenship after only 12 months residence; better assisted passage and hostel arrangements; ease of movement to and from Australia; and eligibility to vote without being Australian citizens. When these privileges ended it effectively ended almost 150 years of continuous public subsidy in Australia for British immigration and coincided with a noticeable decline in the number of British immigrants

The United Kingdom-born population in Australia reached a peak of 1,107,119 in 1991 but at the 1996 Census, this figure had declined to 1,072,514, a decrease of 3 per cent. This decline was largely due to the economic downturn of the early 1990s and the ageing of the United Kingdom-born population in Australia.

Since the end of the Second World War, the proportion of United Kingdom-born within Australia's immigration stream has continued to decline as Australia has looked to other countries for its immigrants. Thus in 1947 the United Kingdom-born was 67 per cent of the total overseas-born but only 27 per cent in 1996. This decline is further illustrated by the fact that the New Zealand-born overtook the United Kingdom-born as the largest group of settler arrivals in 1995–96.

United Kingdom – Key Population Statistics at Federation and Century's End

	1901 Census	1996 Census
Population in Australia	495,074 ^(c)	1,072,514
% Overseas-born	57.7%	27.4%
% Total Australian Population	13.1%	6.0%
Rank by Size	1st	1st
Sex Ratio ^(a)	128 ^(d)	101
Median Age (years)	51 ^(b)	49

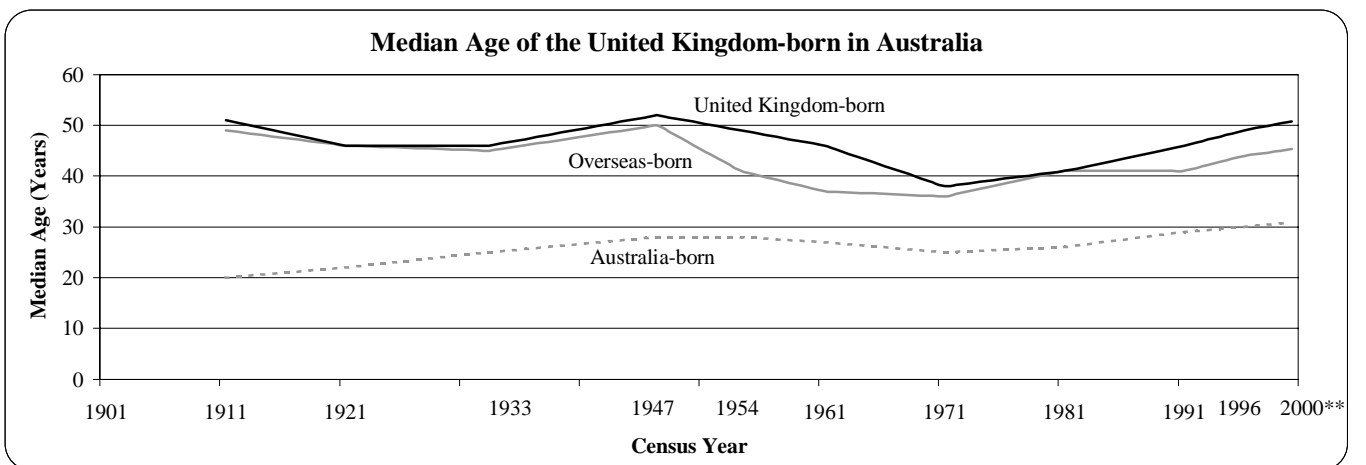
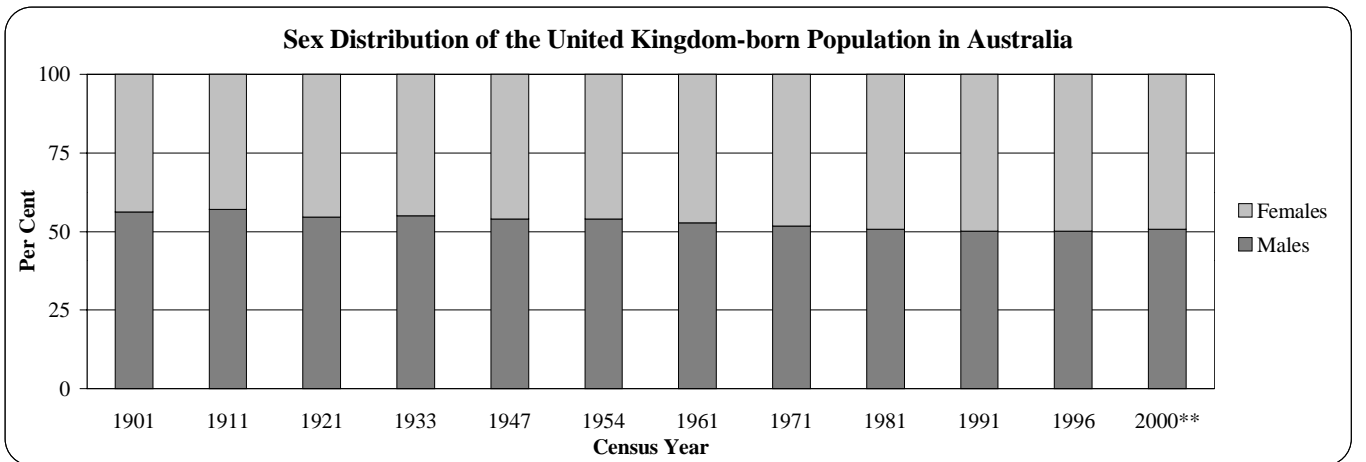
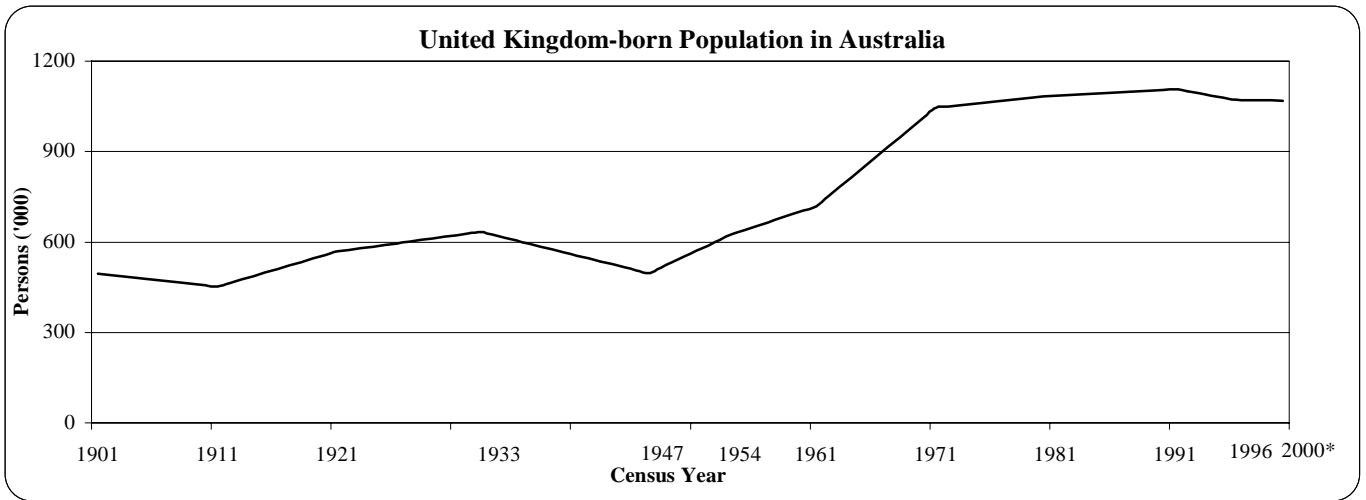
(a) Males per 100 Females.

(b) Median age at the 1911 Census. Median age at the 1901 Census is not available. Includes Ireland.

(c) Excludes Ireland.

(d) Includes Ireland.

United Kingdom – Demographic Trends



* Estimate, based on the percentage change between Estimated Resident Population (ERP) in 1996 and ERP in 2000.
 ** From 2000 ERP.

Italy – A Short Immigration History

Australia did not attract large numbers of Italy-born migrants until the 1950s. However there were individuals and small groups who played important historical roles before this time. Notable individuals were involved in the mapping of Australia in 1676, Captain Cook's Endeavour Voyage of 1770, Captain Phillip's First Fleet of 1788 and a scientific survey in 1793. Although Italian missionaries began arriving in Australia in the early days of British colonisation, up until the mid-19th century, the Italian community was few in numbers and widely dispersed.

According to the 1901 Census there were still only 5,678 Italy-born in Australia. As the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* did not affect the Italy-born, they were able to fill labour shortages that became available as a result of the policy. This continued a slow increase in the Italy-born so that by 1911 there were 6,719 in Australia.

In 1921 there were still only 8,135 Italy-born in Australia but the pace of Italy-born immigration began to pick up in the 1920s as the community consolidated. At the 1933 Census the population had more than tripled to 26,756. One reason for this increase included the restrictive immigration policies of the United States causing emigrant flow from Italy to move in the direction of Australia. Another reason was that after World War One the Italian economy was in depression and an increasing number of people left Italy in search of work. At the same time as this large influx of Italian immigrants there was a change in their settlement pattern, with more of the Italy-born settling in the cities and large industrial areas.

Between 1928 and 1945, Italian migration to Australia was reduced to a trickle, primarily as a consequence of restrictive quotas on immigration from Southern Europe and the cessation of immigration during the war period.

Within a year of the war ending, Italian migration to Australia resumed, although at first the intake was small. Most of these new arrivals after the war were nominated by those in Australia who could guarantee work and accommodation. By the 1947 Census the Italy-born population had reached 33,632 or 4.5 per cent of the overseas-born population and had become the fourth largest overseas-born group.

The period after World War Two marks the start of a spectacular increase in the number of Italy-born in Australia. They were an integral part of Australia's post-war reconstruction and expansion program and by the late 1940s Australia sought to attract an increased number of migrants from Southern Europe including Italian migrants.

In 1951 a new assisted passage scheme was agreed between Australia and Italy. Between 1951 and 1968 this scheme brought 42,000 Italy-born migrants to Australia but it is worth noting that in the three decades following World War Two, the assisted Italy-born immigrants were outnumbered by those without assistance.

In 1954 (119,897) the Italy-born population had increased to three times the size it was in 1947 (33,632) and by 1971 reached a peak of 289,476. At the 1961 Census the Italy-born became the second largest single birthplace group next to the United Kingdom and remained so until the 1991 Census when New Zealand took its place.

In the early 1970s Italian immigration to Australia came to a halt and due to economic buoyancy in Italy at the time, there was an increase in the Italy-born returning to their home country. This, and the ageing of the Italy-born, led to a decline in the number of Italy-born in Australia. By 1981 numbers had declined to 275,883 and by 1996 further losses saw figures fall to 238,216.

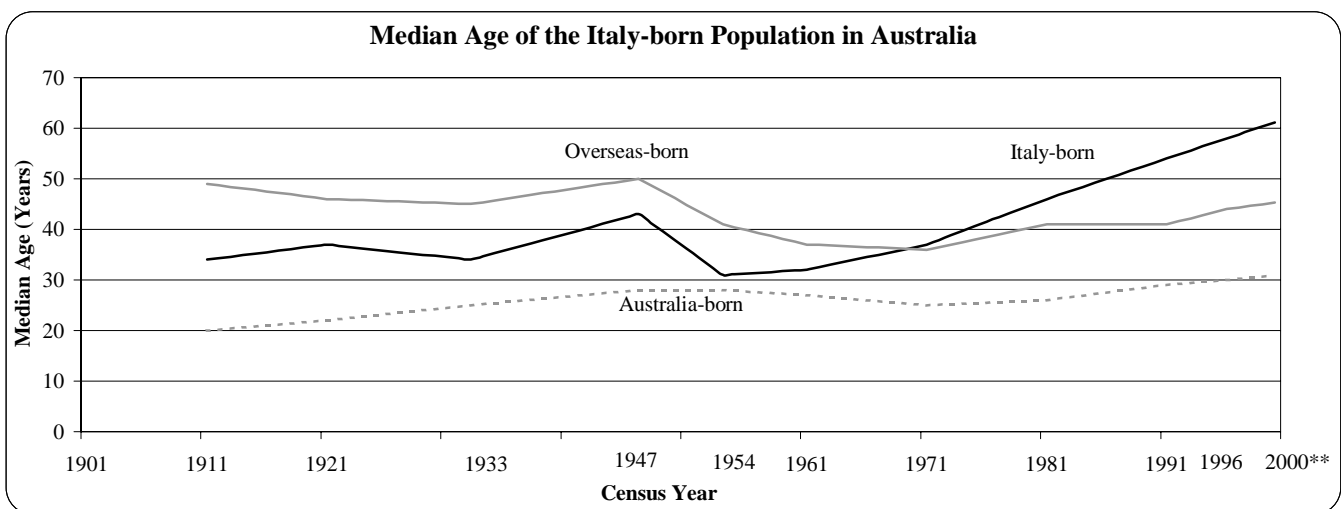
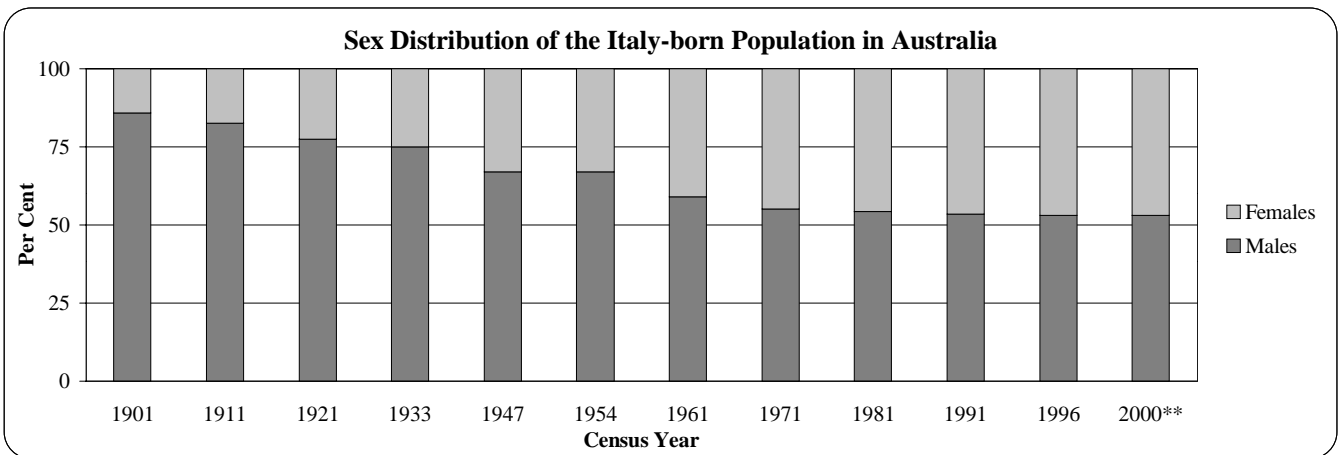
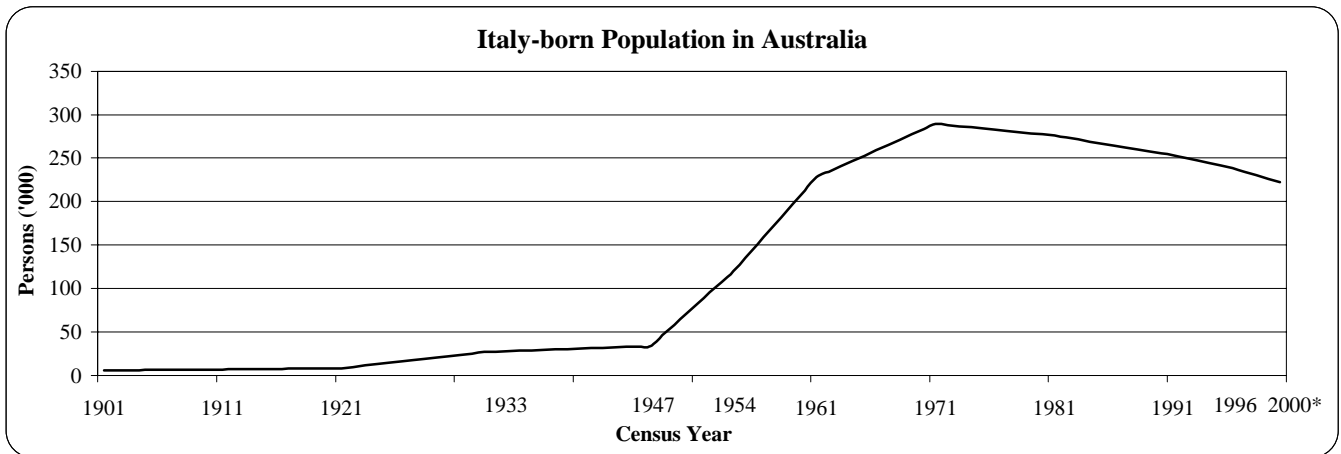
Italy – Key Population Statistics at Federation and Century's End

	1901 Census	1996 Census
Population in Australia	5,678	238,216
% Overseas-born	0.7%	6.1%
% Total Australian Population	0.2%	1.3%
Rank by Size	10th	3rd
Sex Ratio ^(a)	604	113
Median Age (years)	34 ^(b)	58

(a) Males per 100 Females.

(b) Median age at the 1911 Census. Median age at the 1901 Census is not available.

Italy – Demographic Trends



* Estimate, based on the difference between Estimated Resident Population (ERP) in 1996 and ERP in 2000.
 ** From 2000 ERP.

New Zealand – A *Short Immigration History*

From 1828 until 1840 New Zealand was under the jurisdiction of the governor of New South Wales and for six months at the end of this period it was actually part of NSW. In 1841 it was proclaimed a separate British colony, however a close relationship between Australia and New Zealand had begun and continues until this day.

Movement between Australia and New Zealand has always been unrestricted and until 1973 no documentation was required. Since 1973, citizens of the two countries have required a passport for Trans-Tasman travel. Although neither country includes movements of citizens between the countries in their planned migration programs, Trans-Tasman movement is substantial and of considerable significance to both. The size and direction of this movement is sensitive to the relative economic conditions of the countries.

For the first two decades of the century the number of New Zealand-born in Australia rose steadily, increasing from 25,788 in 1901 to 45,963 in 1933. During the Great Depression and World War Two when there was virtually no immigration to Australia, the New Zealand-born population in Australia decreased to 43,610 in 1947.

In the 1960s a substantial increase in migration from New Zealand to Australia began. The increase occurred as a reaction to successive recessions in New Zealand. In 1961 the population had increased to 47,011. By 1971 the population had increased to 80,466 and by 1981 the population more than doubled again to 176,713.

By 1991 the number of New Zealand-born living in Australia had increased to 264,094. At this stage they represented 7.2 per cent of Australia's overseas-born population, and were for the first time the second largest birthplace group after the United Kingdom-born, displacing the Italy-born. The New Zealand-born had previously been the third largest birthplace group at the 1921 (4.6 per cent) and 1947 (5.9 per cent) Censuses.

There was some slowdown of the flow of the New Zealand-born to Australia between 1991 and 1996 but the group still increased by 10 per cent to 291,381 in 1996. The New Zealand-born remained the second largest birthplace group (7.5 per cent of the overseas-born population) in 1996.

There is a long-term trend of much greater flow from New Zealand to Australia than from Australia to New Zealand. However, in 1990–91 and during 1994–1996 poor economic conditions in Australia led to temporary increases in migration of the New Zealand-born to New Zealand.

It is apparent that a significant proportion of New Zealand migration is not intended to be permanent and that many expect to return to New Zealand after a number of years in Australia. However, data for the last decade suggests that there is an increasing trend for the New Zealand-born to become long term stayers in Australia.

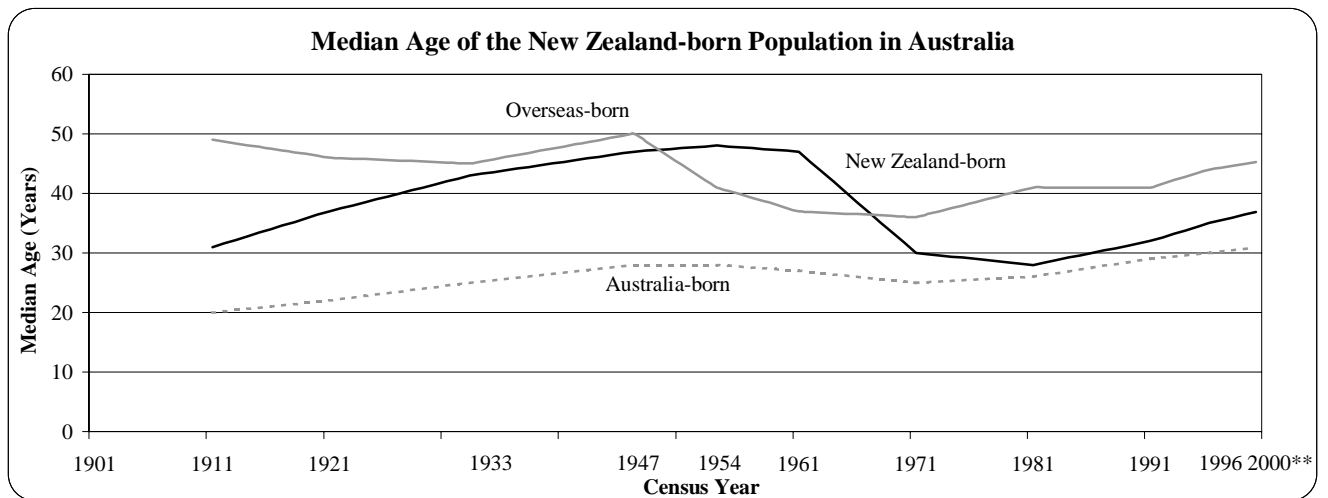
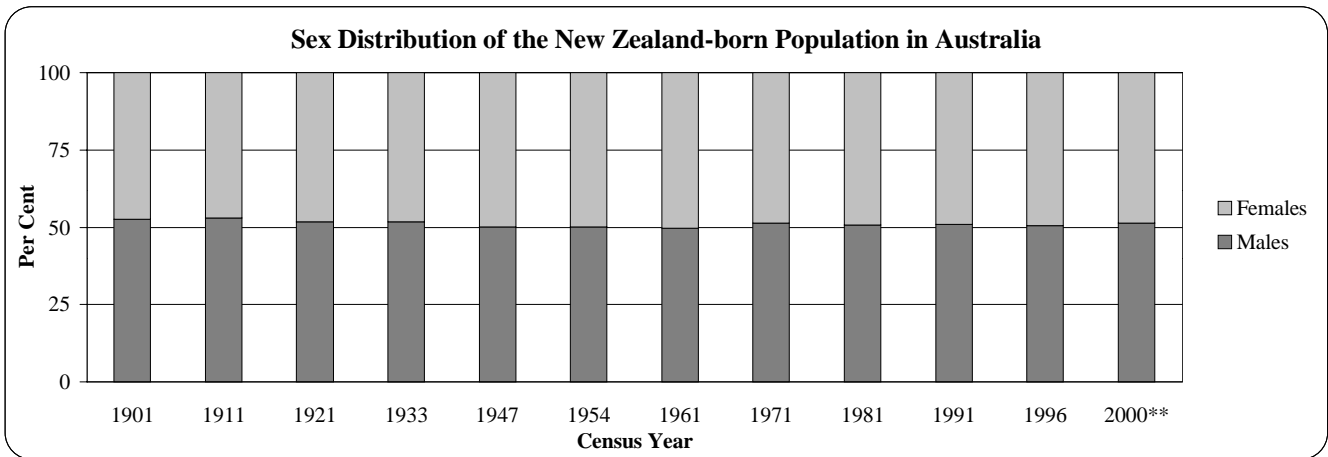
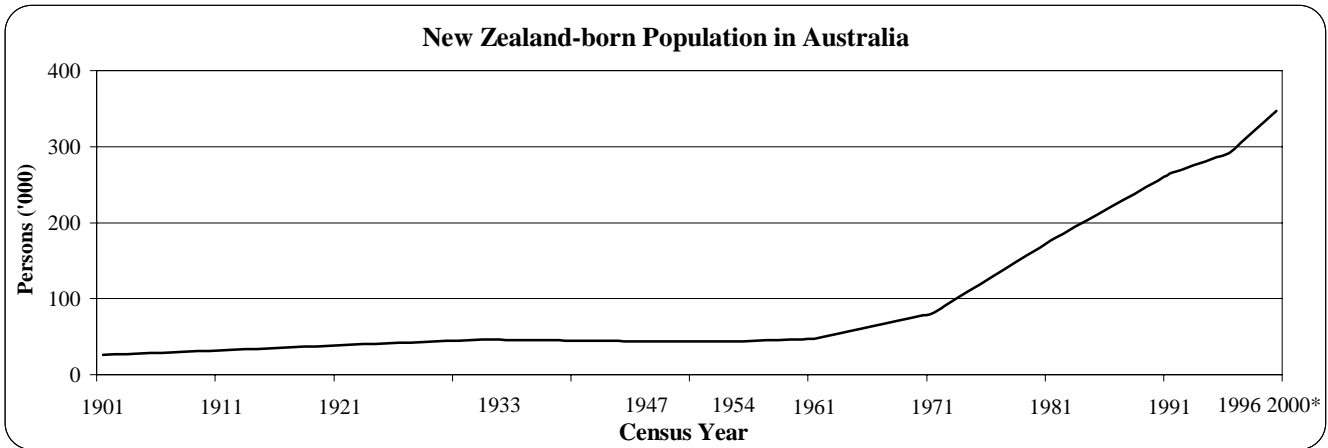
New Zealand – Key Population Statistics at Federation and Century's End

	1901 Census	1996 Census
Population in Australia	25,788	291,381
% Overseas-born	3.0%	7.5%
% Total Australian Population	0.7%	1.6%
Rank by Size	5th	2nd
Sex Ratio ^(a)	111	103
Median Age (years)	31 ^(b)	35

(a) Males per 100 Females.

(b) Median age at the 1911 Census. Median age at the 1901 Census is not available.

New Zealand – Demographic Trends



* Estimate, based on the difference between Estimated Resident Population (ERP) in 1996 and ERP in 2000.
 ** From 2000 ERP.

Germany – A Short Immigration History

While the history of German migration to Australia began in the 19th century with the Germans being the first ‘non-British’ ethnic group of influence in the development of a number of Australian colonies, the main period of immigration did not begin until after World War Two.

At the beginning of the 20th century the Germany-born population of Australia was 38,352. Considerable anti-German feeling emerged during World War One and in 1914 immigration from Germany was prohibited and not resumed again until 1925. During the war the Germany-born in Australia were subject to personal, legislative and administrative prejudice including the internment of around 14 per cent of the Germany-born population of Australia. This had a devastating effect on the German community in Australia. After the defeat of Germany in 1918, 696 German citizens were deported, and 4,620 volunteered for repatriation to Germany.

The sharp decline in the Germany-born population in Australia continued until after World War Two. At the 1947 Census, before the post war resettlement process had begun in earnest, the Germany-born population had declined to 14,567, just over a third of the Germany-born population in the country in 1901.

During World War Two 1,500 captured German military personnel, 2,078 ‘Australian-based’ German Nationals and 3,953 Germans formerly held in other British territories were interned in detention camps scattered throughout New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. Of all of the German nationals interned, around 60 per cent remained in Australia after their release.

Despite Australia’s involvement in two world wars involving Germany, Australians perceived Germans as highly desirable immigrants and they were included in the post war resettlement program. There was tremendous growth in immigration to Australia from Germany after World War Two. The Germany-born in Australia climbed from a low of 14,567 in 1947 to 109,315 in 1961.

The 1950s saw the height of Germany-born post-war immigration. In 1952 an agreement was reached between West Germany and Australia to provide assisted passage for 3,000 Germans per annum and grant entry permits for a further 1,000 unassisted Germans. Between 1951 and 1962, 84 per cent of German emigrants received assistance.

The total number of Germany-born in Australia remained relatively stable at between 110,000–115,000 from 1961 until 1996, and hence, as other overseas-born groups have grown, they dropped from 6.1 to 2.8 per cent of the overseas-born population.

Towards the end of the century, the Germany-born in Australia are in a slow decline after peaking at 114,790 in 1986 and dropping to 110,332 in 1996. As ageing of the Germany-born population occurs it is not outweighed by net annual migration. Net annual migration of the Germany-born is low, for example in the 1999–00 financial year there were 781 settler arrivals and 259 permanent departures of the Germany-born.

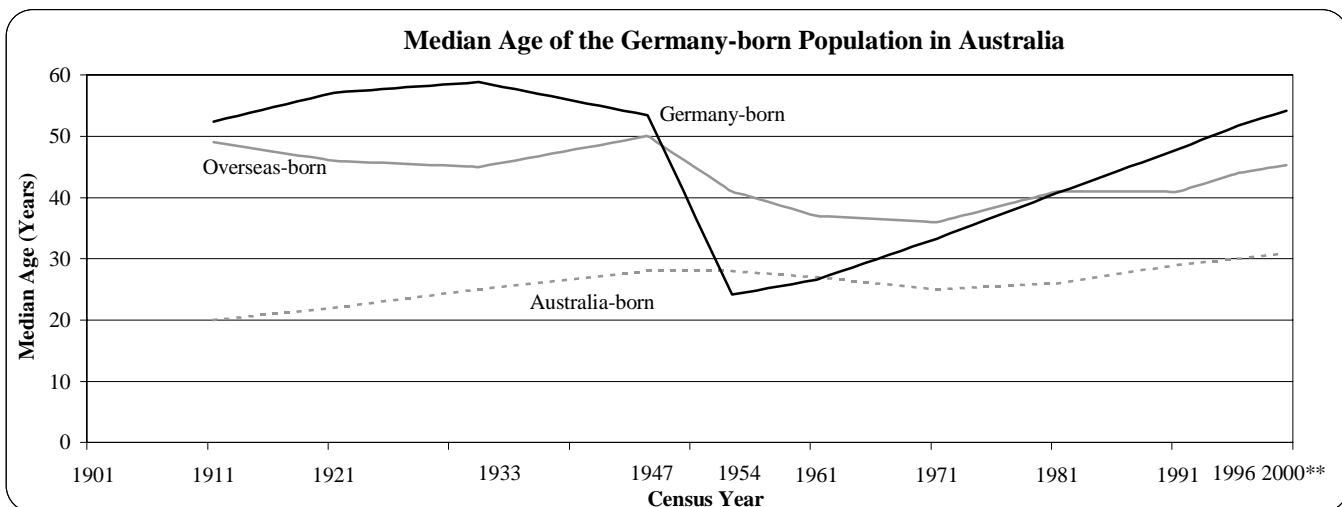
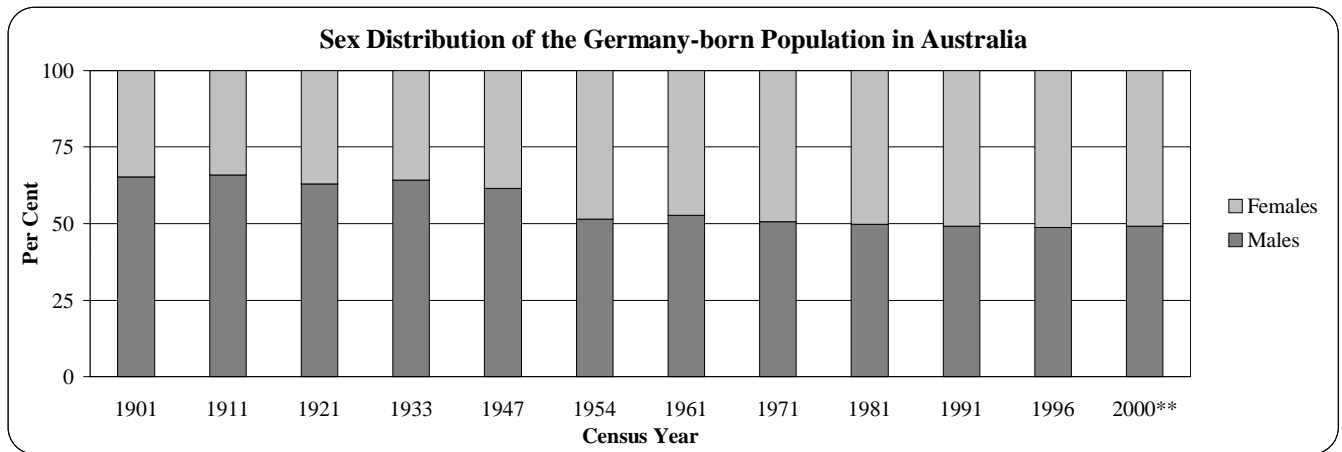
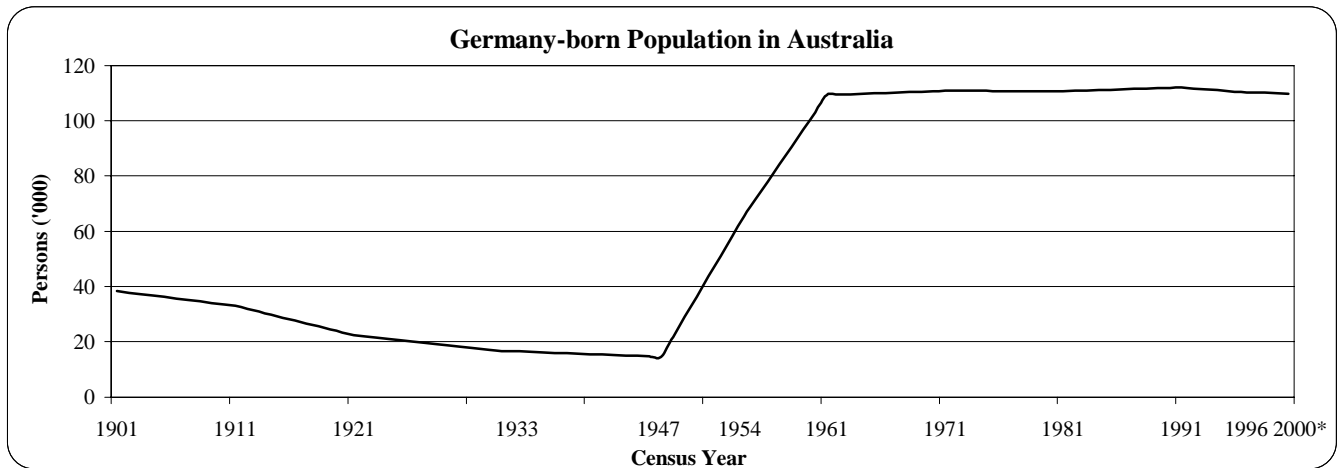
Germany – Key Population Statistics at Federation and Century’s End

	1901 Census	1996 Census
Population in Australia	38,352	110,332
% Overseas-born	4.5%	2.8%
% Total Australian Population	1.0%	0.6%
Rank by Size	3rd	7th
Sex Ratio ^(a)	187	95
Median Age (years)	52 ^(b)	52

(a) Males per 100 Females.

(b) Median age at the 1911 Census. Median age at the 1901 Census is not available.

Germany – Demographic Trends



* Estimate, based on the difference between Estimated Resident Population (ERP) in 1996 and ERP in 2000.
 ** From 2000 ERP.

Greece – A Short Immigration History

At the 1901 Census there were 878 Greek-born people in Australia, mostly living in well-established communities in Sydney and Melbourne. These communities had grown from the Greek-born who lived and worked in the Victorian and New South Wales goldfields of the 1850s. The Greek-born population increased to 1,798 at the 1911 Census.

At the beginning of World War One, the majority of the Greek-born were involved in cafes, restaurants, and fruit, fish and confectioner shops as proprietors, cooks, waiters or shop assistants. In addition there were communities of cane cutters in Queensland and workers at the lead smelters in Port Pirie, South Australia.

Because of the uncertainty of allegiance of Greece and Malta during World War One, immigration from these countries was prohibited and not lifted until 1920. In 1921 there were 3,654 Greek-born in Australia, 86 per cent of whom were males.

The Greek population grew significantly between the wars, so that by the 1947 Census there were 12,291 Greek-born in Australia. Most of this increase occurred in the early 1920s and just before World War Two because between 1924 and 1936 immigration from Southern Europe was restricted by regulation. In 1924 regulation permitted a combined total of only 1,200 sponsored immigrants per year from Greece, Albania and Yugoslavia. In 1929 this number was halved and in 1930 immigration from this region was suspended. The suspension was lifted in 1936.

After World War Two with active encouragement by a Greek Government struggling with post-war reconstruction, the most dramatic change of Greek-born immigration to Australia occurred. After 1952 in particular, the numbers rose quickly after the Australian Government granted assisted passage to Greeks. Between 1952 and 1982, 75,000 Greek immigrants received assisted passage. By 1954 the number of Greek-born had already doubled and by 1961 the population had reached 77,333, more than six times the population in 1947. In the next ten years it more than doubled again to reach a peak of 160,200 in 1971.

Since 1971, there has been limited movement from Greece to Australia and some former settlers have returned to Greece. This has resulted in a steady decline in the number of the Greek-born in Australia. By 1991, it had fallen to 136,028 and by 1996 to 126,524. As the Greek-born in Australia is now an older population, many of these returns to Greece have been pensioners returning to spend their retirement in their homeland.

* Estimate, based on the percentage change between Estimated Resident Population (ERP) in 1996 and ERP in 2000.

** From 2000 ERP.

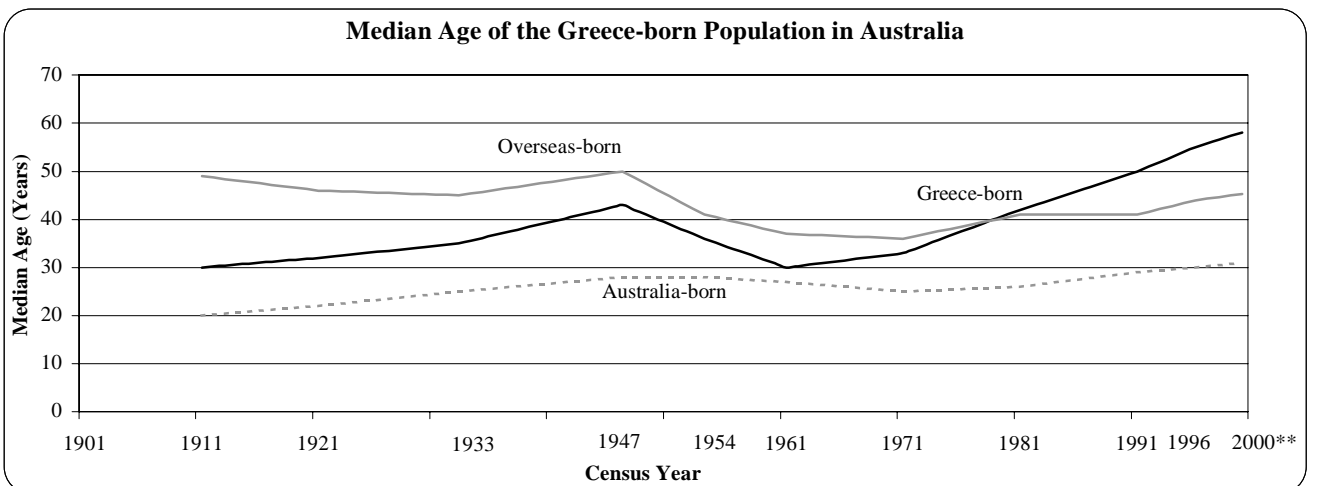
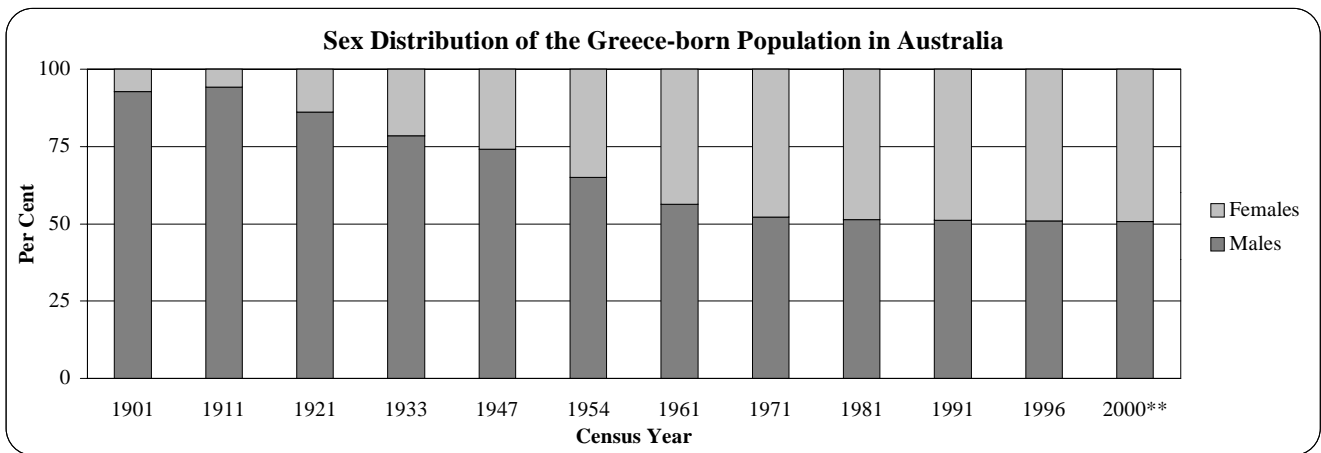
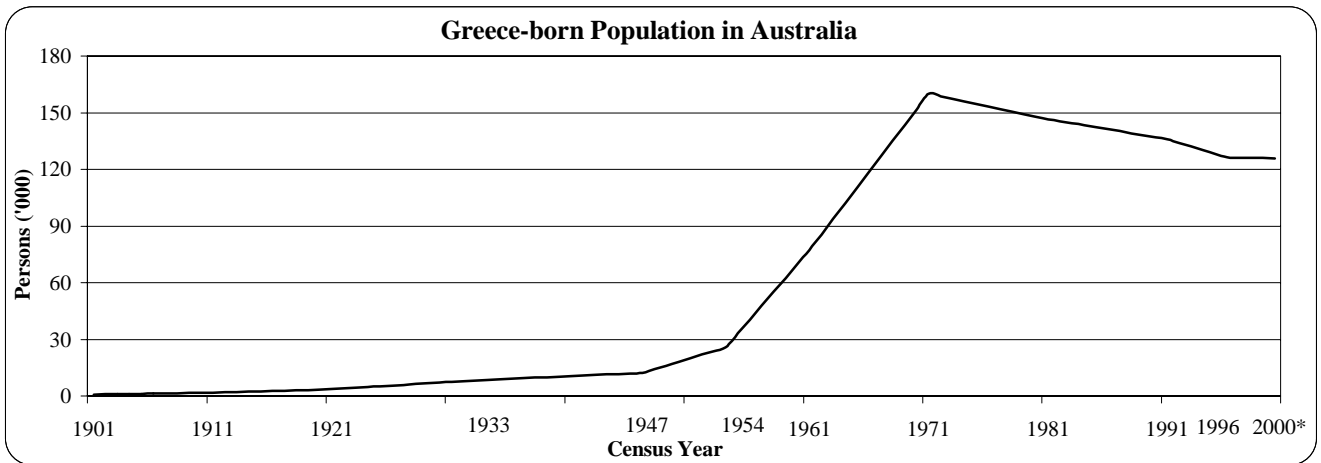
Greece – Key Population Statistics at Federation and Century's End

	1901 Census	1996 Census
Population in Australia	878	126,524
% Overseas-born	0.1%	3.2%
% Total Australian Population	0.02%	0.7%
Rank by Size	> 10th	5th
Sex Ratio ^(a)	1,294	104
Median Age (years)	30 ^(b)	55

(a) Males per 100 Females.

(b) Median age at the 1911 Census. Median age at the 1901 Census is not available.

Greece – Demographic Trends



* Estimate, based on the percentage change between Estimated Resident Population (ERP) in 1996 and ERP in 2000.
 ** From 2000 ERP.

China – A Short Immigration History

The first recorded presence of Chinese in Australia was of a few domestic servants and labourers that began to arrive in 1827 to satisfy labour shortages during the second quarter of the 19th century. Later, in the 1850s, the Chinese came in large numbers, attracted to the goldfields of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia. By 1861, the population of the China-born in Australia had reached 38,258, which was 3.4 per cent of the total Australian population. This proportion has not been surpassed.

When the goldfields were exhausted the Chinese remained in Australia but moved to the towns and cities where many set up small businesses. Animosity towards the Chinese which had started in the goldfields, continued in the towns and cities and between 1855 and 1890 the colonies implemented more than two dozen acts to restrict the entry of Chinese.

At the 1901 Census there were 29,907 China-born in Australia of whom 99 per cent were males. This was well down on the 38,258 population of 1861. Nonetheless, because of their previous immigration history, the China-born were the third largest overseas-born group with 3.5 per cent of the overseas-born population.

The Chinese were specifically targeted by the *Immigration and Restriction Act 1901* and the decline in the China-born that had begun in the last forty years of the 19th century was accelerated in the first half of the 20th century. By 1921 the China-born population of Australia had declined to 15,224 or 1.8 per cent of the overseas-born population and by 1947 it had dropped to 6,404 or only 0.9 per cent of the overseas-born population.

In the 1950s elements of the White Australia Policy were relaxed and in 1951 the ‘Colombo Plan’ was introduced, which allowed Asian students to come to Australia to study. Despite these developments the number of China-born in Australia increased very slowly until the mid 1970s.

Most of the Chinese immigrants arriving in the 1970s and early 1980s were born in China but resident in other countries such as Cambodia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Viet Nam. The communist victories in Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam in 1975 and the subsequent exodus of over two million asylum seekers was the push factor behind much of this migration.

The rise in immigration of the China-born that is evident after the 1976 Census can be attributed to several major developments that occurred in the 1970s. The White Australia Policy was formally abolished, the Chinese Government relaxed its control of overseas study, Australian university fees were abolished and the ‘Australian–Chinese Family Reunion Agreement’ was introduced allowing new Australian residents to sponsor entry of other members of their family.

In the mid-1980s the Australian Government actively began marketing educational services overseas. The huge China market was an important early focus and the number of China-born students increased markedly in the 1980s. After the repression of the pro-democracy movement in China in 1989, the Australian Government granted four-year entry permits to all Chinese students in Australia at the time. These developments were largely responsible for the China-born population in Australia more than doubling between 1986 and 1991.

By 1996 the China-born had reached 110,987 or 2.8 per cent of the overseas-born population which brought China back into the top ten countries of birth at 6th position. China had been in the top ten countries of birth up until 1947 but was not present from the late 50s to the early 80s.

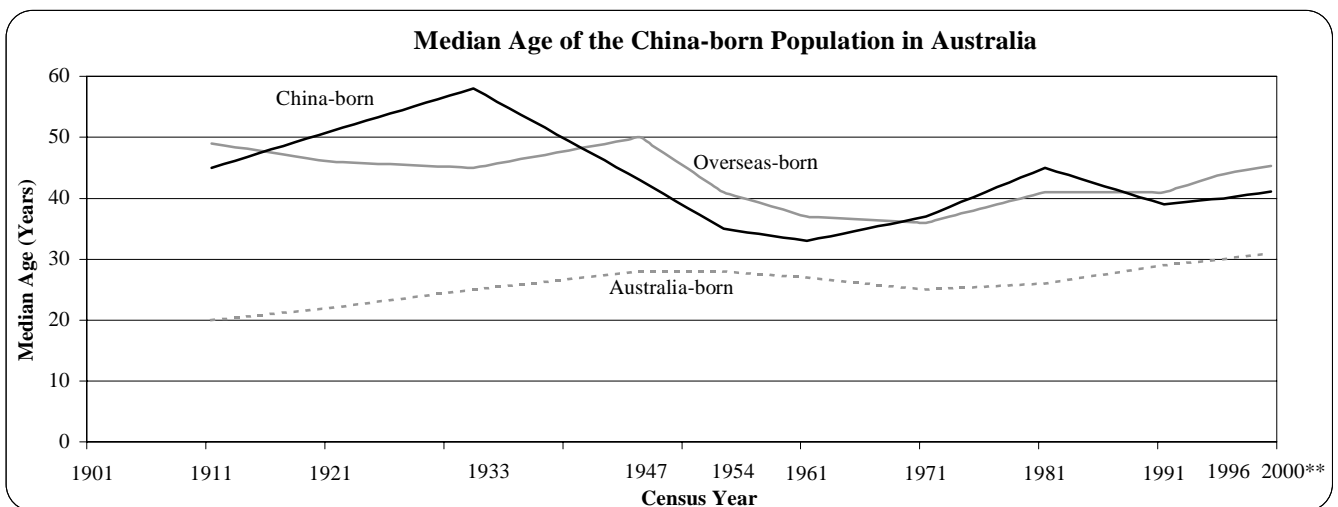
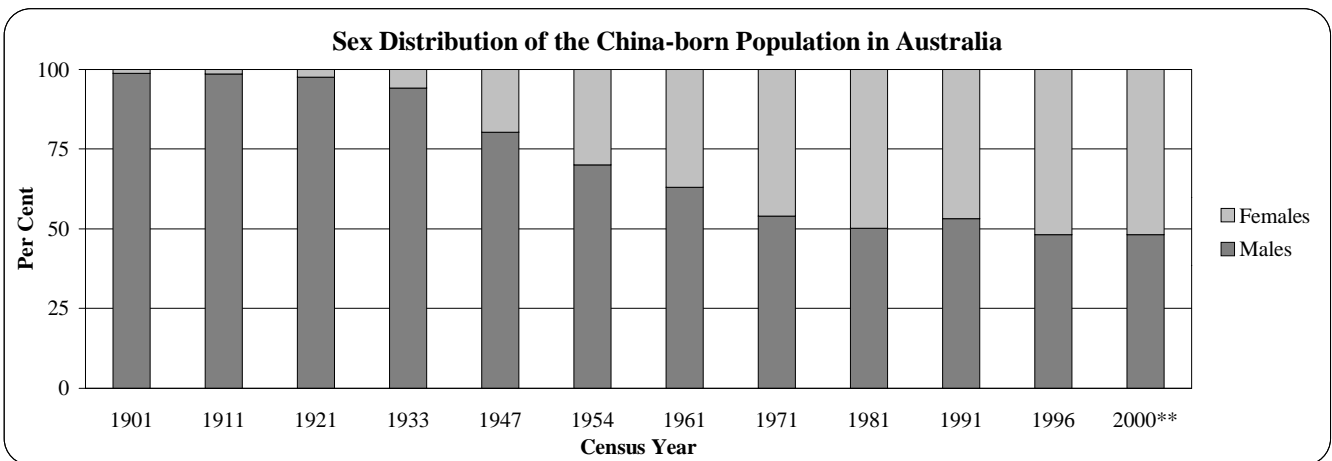
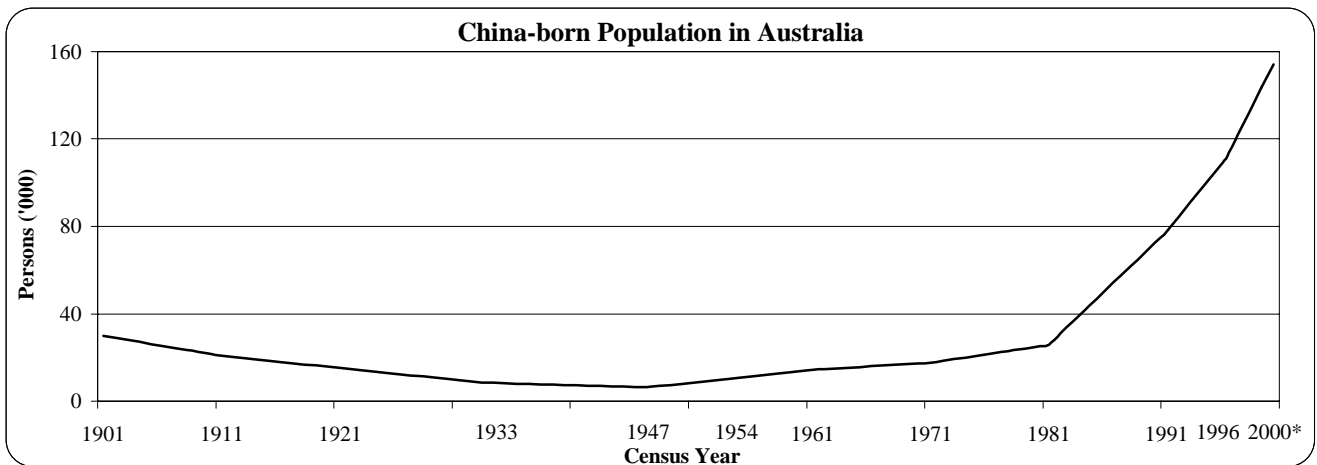
China – Key Population Statistics at Federation and Century's End

	1901 Census	1996 Census
Population in Australia	29,907	110,987
% Overseas-born	3.5%	2.8%
% Total Australian Population	0.8%	0.6%
Rank by Size	4th	6th
Sex Ratio ^(a)	7,491	93
Median Age (years)	45 ^(b)	40

(a) Males per 100 Females.

(b) Median age at the 1911 Census. Median age at the 1901 Census is not available.

China – Demographic Trends



* Estimate, based on the difference between Estimated Resident Population (ERP) in 1996 and ERP in 2000.
 ** From 2000 ERP.

Viet Nam – A Short Immigration History

The Viet Nam-born population has grown rapidly from 2,427 at the 1976 Census, 41,096 at the 1981 Census, 121,813 at the 1991 Census and 151,085 at the 1996 Census, making it very quickly into the top ten countries of birth and the fourth largest overseas-born community in 1996.

The migration of Vietnamese to Australia, which has largely occurred in the last 30 years, can be characterised by three distinct phases: assisting orphans pre-1975; refugee resettlement during 1975–1985; and family reunion, in the late 80s and 1990s.

From 1958, Vietnamese students started to arrive in Australia to study at university under the Colombo Plan. However, almost all of these students returned to Viet Nam after completing their studies. In 1975 it is estimated that there were only about 1,000 Viet Nam-born living in Australia. Of these 335 were Colombo Plan students attending Australian universities, 130 were private Vietnamese students and over 500 were orphans adopted by Australian families.

Australia committed combat troops to the Viet Nam War in 1965. Later, many of these troops and other Australians in Viet Nam during the war married Vietnamese nationals and brought them back to Australia. This was the beginning of the first wave of permanent Vietnamese migration to Australia.

During the Viet Nam war over half the population were internally displaced and millions were killed. As a result, there were over 800,000 orphans in South Viet Nam alone. Australian families adopted 537 Vietnamese orphaned babies and infants between 1972 and 1975

After 1975, Australia accepted refugees who feared reprisals from the communist regime because of their economic or political activities under the previous Government and arrivals of the Viet Nam-born increased quickly. In 1976 (the first Census at which the Viet Nam-born were recorded separately) there were 2,427 Viet Nam-born people in Australia and at the 1981 Census the population had increased to 41,096.

The Viet Nam-born refugees who arrived in the immediate post-war period can be described as four main groups, with different but in some cases overlapping arrival times. The first group, arriving in 1975 were mostly elite Vietnamese, Chinese Businessmen and Catholics who faced severe reprisals from the new government. The second group arrived in 1976–78 and comprised a gradually increasing outflow of refugees from camps outside Viet Nam. The third group, arriving in 1978, was composed of owners of private businesses closed by the Viet Nam Government and other businessmen, especially Chinese, expelled by the Vietnamese Government. The fourth group were so called ‘economic refugees’, mostly small traders, rural and urban workers and the unemployed, who had made their way to refugee camps in Indonesia and Hong Kong and were looking for a more permanent home.

In April 1976, the first boat carrying Vietnamese asylum seekers arrived on Australia’s northern shores and in the following five years, over 50 additional boats with more than 2,000 Vietnamese first asylum seekers arrived. This was part of a vast outflow of people from Viet Nam, most travelling by boat to nearby Asian countries from where they were resettled in third countries such as the USA, Canada and Australia. A small number of asylum seekers came directly to Australia. All of these asylum seekers were detained so that their eligibility as refugees could be assessed, and some were repatriated.

The urgent need to resettle the large numbers of Vietnamese refugees in camps in neighbouring countries and the increasing flow to resettlement countries such as the USA, Canada and Australia led to international discussions and agreements. Australia was party to these agreements and at the same time began to develop domestic refugee policy.

In Geneva in 1979, following negotiations between the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Vietnamese Government agreed to forcibly constrain unregulated departures, but permit an Orderly Departure Program (ODP) in which Vietnamese were permitted to apply to migrate to specific countries.

In 1982 the Australian Government took the first immigrants from Viet Nam under the Orderly Departure Program. From the late 1980s this program was officially applied in Australia as the 'Vietnamese Family Migration Program' (VFMP). Under this program Vietnamese nationals with relatives in Australia were permitted to emigrate directly from Viet Nam to Australia, subject to satisfying Australia's standard refugee requirements.

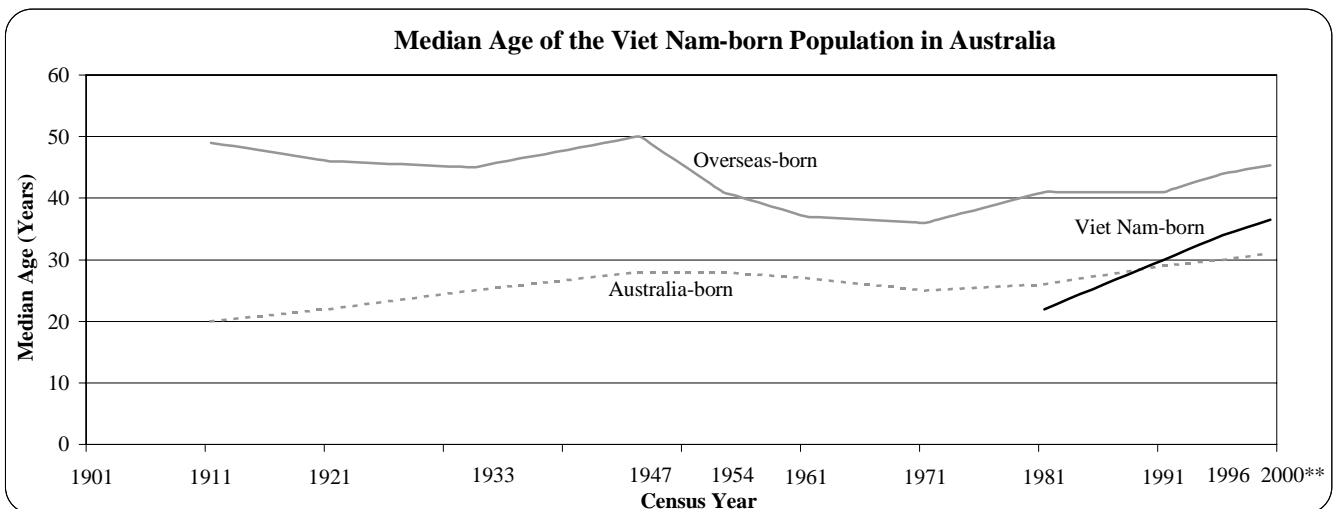
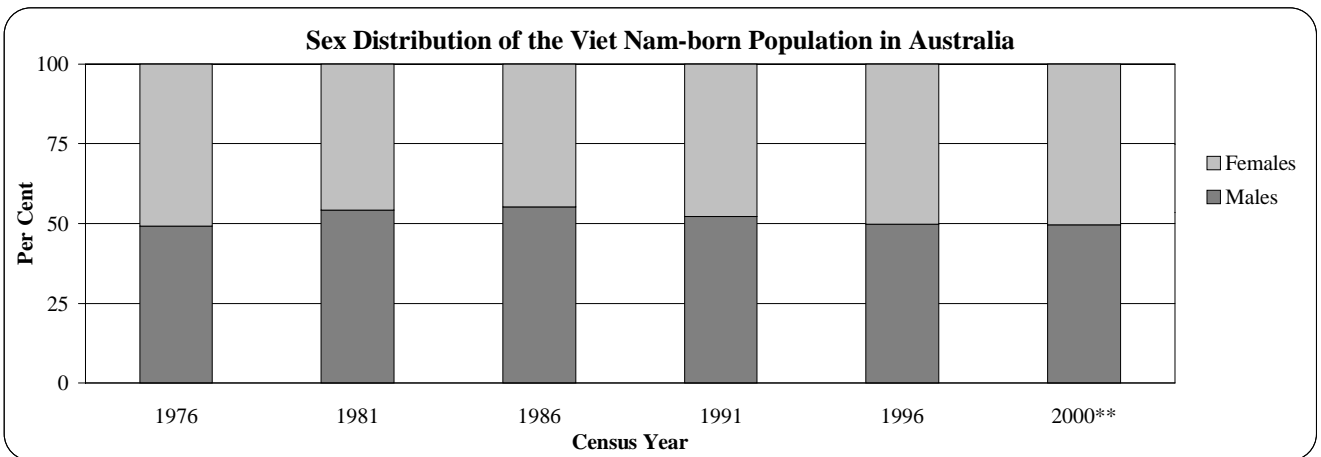
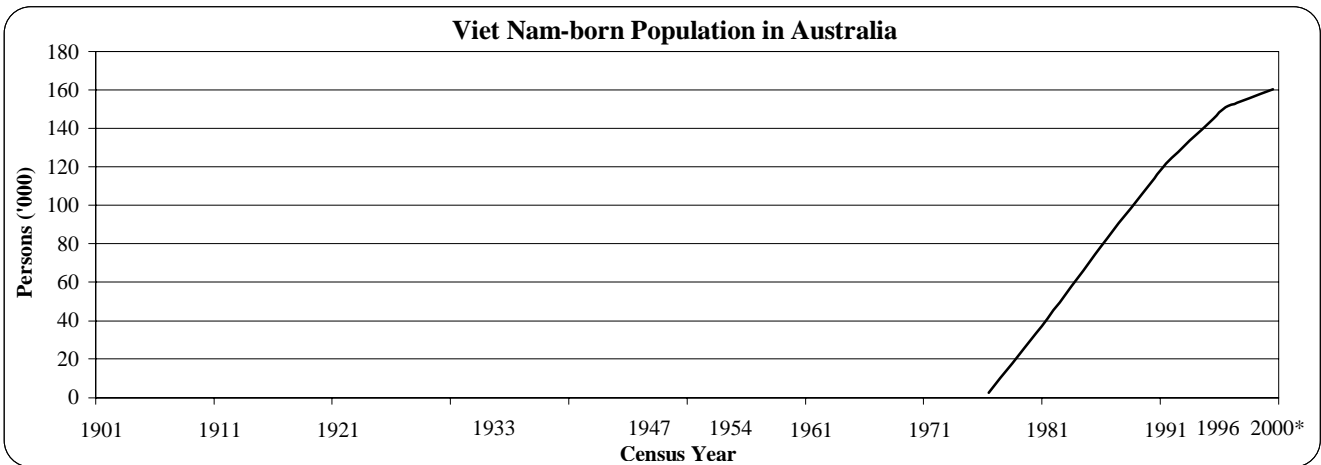
As the refugee crisis was resolved, the VFMP became dominant and the refugee component of Viet Nam-born arrivals progressively reduced. During the 1975 to 1981 period, almost all of the 49,616 Viet Nam-born entering Australia came as refugees and from 1981 to 1986 the proportion still was over 90 per cent of the 44,972 arrivals. The proportion coming as refugees decreased to around 45 per cent of the 44,984 that arrived between 1986 and 1991 and between 1991 and 1993 only 22.7 per cent of those who arrived were refugees. By the 1999–00 financial year the Viet Nam-born humanitarian arrivals were less than 2 per cent of the total Viet Nam-born settler arrivals

Viet Nam – Key Population Statistics at Federation and Century's End

	1901 Census	1996 Census
Population in Australia	na	151,085
% Overseas-born	na	3.9%
% Total Australian Population	na	0.9%
Rank by Size	na	4th
Sex Ratio ^(a)	na	99
Median Age (years)	na	34

(a) Males per 100 Females.

Viet Nam – Demographic Trends



* Estimate, based on the difference between Estimated Resident Population (ERP) in 1996 and ERP in 2000.
 ** From 2000 ERP.

Explanatory Notes

Sources of Data

– *The Population Census*

Population counts began in the earliest days of the colonies of New South Wales, Western Australia and Tasmania when regular musters were held. Before Federation each of the colonies conducted their own Censuses starting with the first official Census of New South Wales in 1828.

Since 1881 the practice of a common Census date has been adopted and by 1901 the colonies had agreed on uniform questions for a national Census. By the end of the 19th century the major colonies were producing detailed Census output.

The new Federal Government established its statistical organisation in 1906, which took over the Census function of the former colonies and it has conducted every national Census since the first in 1911. From this date the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics began to publish nation-wide population estimates and vital migration statistics.

In the early national Census publications, because of a common Census date and common questions, the 1901 colonial statistics are presented as combined national statistics. The only Census information not readily available for the purposes of this publication was 1901 age range data needed for the calculation of median ages in Table 7.

Following on from the first British Census of 1801, the colonies adopted the system of undertaking a Census in the first year of each decade culminating in the coordinated Censuses of the colonies of 1901. This system was continued by the Bureau of Census and Statistics with the first two Censuses occurring in 1911 and 1921. The Great Depression and World War Two broke the sequence with Censuses in 1933, 1947 and 1954 and it was not until 1961 that a Census was held again in the first year of the decade. Censuses were held every 5 years from 1961 when, mostly due to immigration, the pace of change in the characteristics of the population increased.

The tables presenting Census information in this publication include every national Census up to and including 1961. After 1961 the Censuses from the first year of each decade are included. The 1966, 1976 and 1986 Censuses have been omitted because of space constraints and because data from these years would add little to the overall picture. The 1996 Census is included because it is the latest available Census.

As the last Census of the century was 1996, the 2000 Estimated Resident Population (ERP) has been used in the individual historical summaries, to illustrate trends in population, sex distribution and median age at the end of the century.

– *Migration*

Migration to and from Australia was recorded from the earliest days of convict transport and settlement but the country of birth of arrivals was not available nationally until October 1945. The availability of country of birth information coincides with the establishment of the *Federal Department of Immigration* and the onset of post World War Two resettlement.

In Figure 2 and Table 3, Net Overseas Migration is presented from 1901 because it has no country of birth dimension. Other tables with a country of birth dimension are only presented from October 1945. Between October 1945 and June 1959, the availability of Country of Last Residence is useful because it is a reasonable proxy for Country of Birth, which is not available for the period. At this time the Country of Last Residence of an immigrant was likely to be their Country of Birth, as there was generally less

international movement. For countries involved in World War Two however, particularly those in Europe, it is likely that long term displacement of individuals from their countries of birth may mean that Country of Last Residence does not equate well with Country of Birth. From July 1959 the country of birth of settler arrivals is available and has been presented. More information regarding the country of birth of settler arrivals is available in the footnote of Table 4.

Symbols & Abbreviations

..	=	not applicable
-	=	nil
na	=	not available
DIMA	=	Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
ABS	=	Australian Bureau of Statistics

Further Information

The recently released, *Australian Historical Population Statistics* (ABS Catalogue No. 3105.0.65.001), is also a useful resource for investigating historical demographic statistics of Australia. These spreadsheets are available from the ABS AusStats service. AusStats contains the full range of ABS standard products in electronic form. AuStats is a subscription only service. If you are not a subscriber to AusStats you can still access the spreadsheets through the ABS National Information Service and obtain descriptions of the tables without being an AuStats subscriber at <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats>.

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