



# Community Information Summary

## Cambodia-born

### Historical Background

The first recorded Cambodia-born migrants to 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 seizure of power in Cambodia by the Communist 'Khmer Rouge' led by Pol Pot in 1975, small numbers of Cambodian asylum-seekers came to Australia. 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 Program.

In the late 1980s, the numbers of Cambodian arrivals were mainly sponsored relatives of the earlier waves as well as Cambodians who had migrated to New Zealand prior to moving on to Australia.

Between 1989 and April 1991, approximately 315 asylum-seekers arrived by boat from Cambodia. The Australian Government subsequently introduced the Special Assistance Category Program to encourage boat arrivals to return to Cambodia and apply for sponsorship to Australia under normal migration procedures. Since the early 1990s most Cambodian-born people arrived in Australia under the Family Migration Stream.

### Today

#### **Geographic Distribution**

The 2011 Census recorded 28 330 Cambodia-born people in Australia, an increase of 15.5 per cent from the 2006 Census. The 2011 distribution by state and territory showed Victoria had the largest number with 11 355 followed by New South Wales (11 145), South Australia (2784) and Queensland (1532).

Refer to Figure 1.

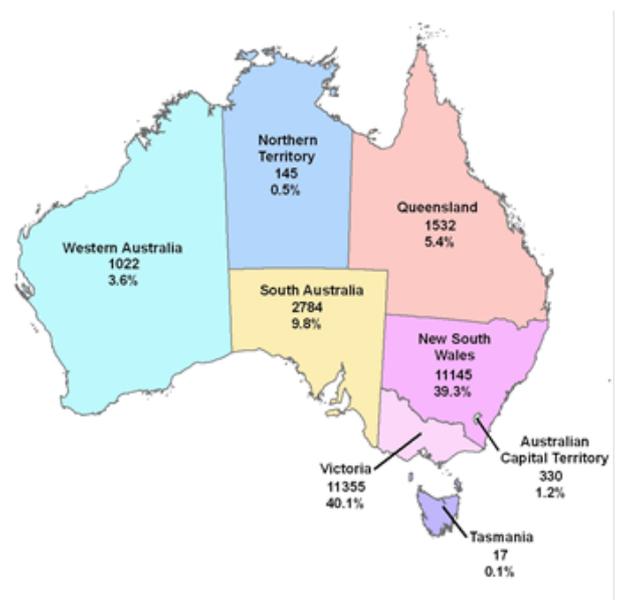


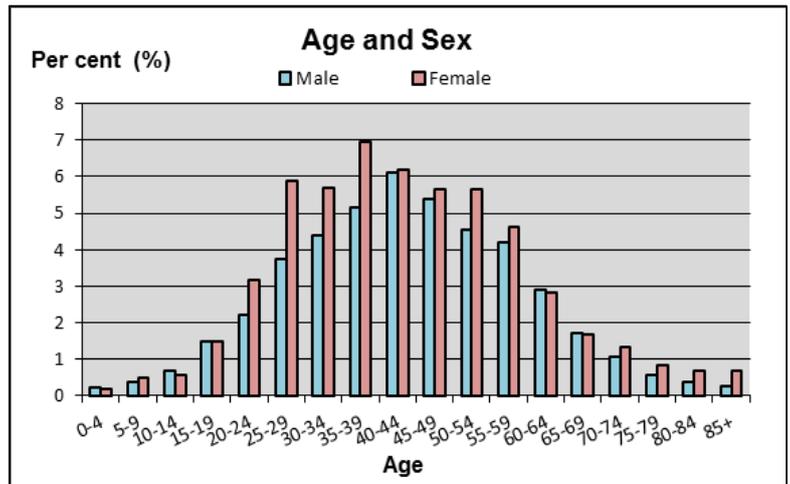
Figure 1

### Age and Sex

The median age of the Cambodia-born in 2011 was 42 years compared with 45 years for all overseas-born and 37 years for the total Australian population.

The age distribution showed 2.5 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 8.3 per cent were 15-24 years, 44.1 per cent were 25-44 years, 35.8 per cent were 45-64 years and 9.2 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the Cambodia-born in Australia, there were 12 865 males (45.4 per cent) and 15 464 females (54.6 per cent). The sex ratio was 83.2 males per 100 females.

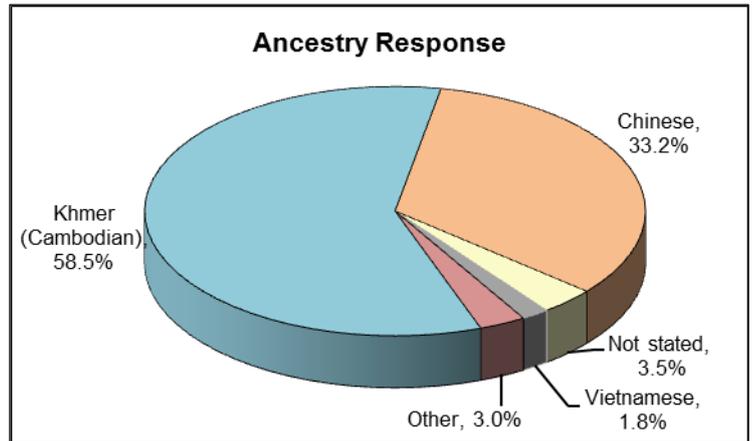


### Ancestry

In the 2011 Census, the top ancestry responses\* that Cambodia-born people reported were Khmer (18 404), Chinese (10 445) and Vietnamese (560).

In the 2011 Census, Australians reported around 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses\*, 33 197 responses were towards Khmer ancestry.

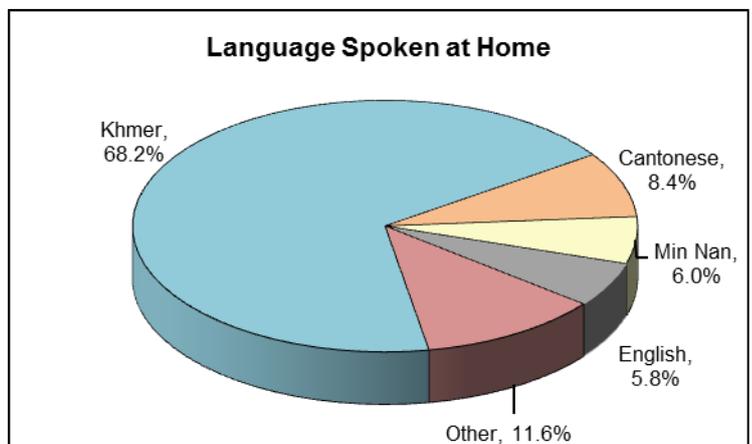
\*At the 2011 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question; therefore providing the total responses and not persons count.



### Language

The main languages spoken at home by Cambodia-born people in Australia were Khmer (19 311), Cantonese (2382) and Min Nan (1710).

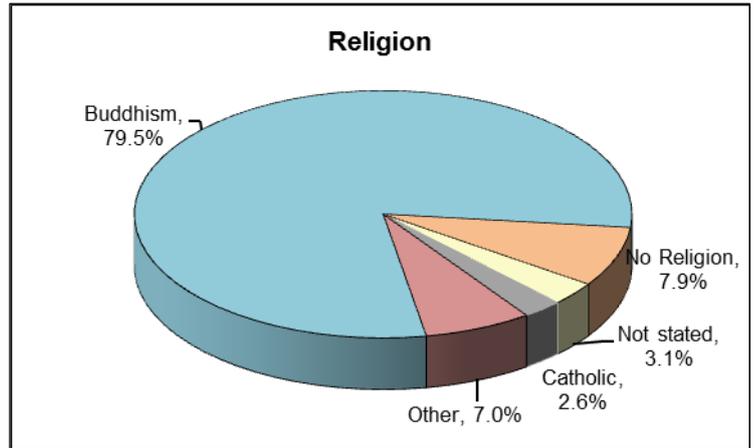
Of the 26 689 Cambodia-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 54.9 per cent spoke English very well or well and 43.6 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



### Religion

At the 2011 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Cambodia-born were Buddhism (22 524) and Catholic (732).

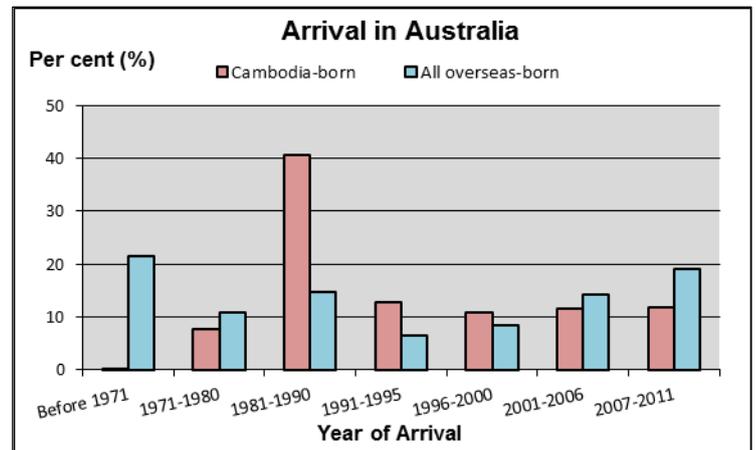
Of the Cambodia-born, 7.9 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was lower than the total Australian population (22.3 per cent), and 3.1 per cent did not state a religion.



### Arrival

Compared to 62 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 72.1 per cent of the Cambodia-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2001.

Among the total Cambodia-born in Australia at the 2011 Census, 11.5 per cent arrived between 2001 and 2006 and 11.8 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011.



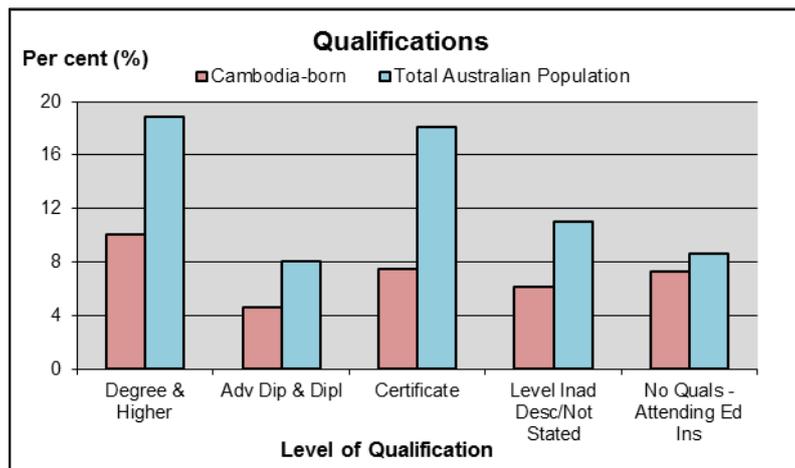
### Median Income

At the time of the 2011 Census, the median individual weekly income for the Cambodia-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$382, compared with \$538 for all overseas-born and \$597 for all Australia-born. The total Australian population had a median individual weekly income of \$577.

## Qualifications

At the 2011 Census, 28.3 per cent of the Cambodia-born aged 15 years and over had some form of higher non-school qualifications compared to 55.9 per cent of the Australian population.

Of the Cambodia-born aged 15 years and over, 7.3 per cent were still attending an educational institution. The corresponding rate for the total Australian population was 8.6 per cent.

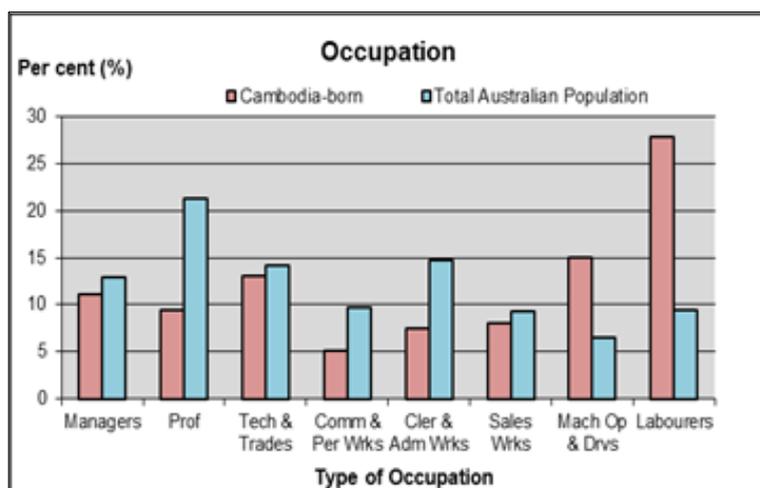


*Level Inad Desc/Not Stated* = Education level inadequately described or not stated  
*No Quals - Attending Ed Ins* = No qualifications and still attending educational institution

## Employment

Among Cambodia-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 59 per cent and the unemployment rate was 9.3 per cent. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 65 per cent and 5.6 per cent respectively.

Of the 14 478 Cambodia-born who were employed, 33.6 per cent were employed in either a skilled managerial, professional or trade occupation. The corresponding rate in the total Australian population was 48.4 per cent.



*Comm & Per Wrks* = Community & Personal Service Workers

Produced by Community Relations 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>