



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 program 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.

Nearly half of people following the Baha'i faith 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 Skilled and Family Streams of the Migration Program.

Today

Geographic Distribution

The latest Census in 2011 recorded 34 453 Iran-born people in Australia, an increase of 52.8 per cent from the 2006 Census. The 2011 distribution by state and territory showed New South Wales had the largest number with 15 463 followed by Victoria (7447), Western Australia (3722) and Queensland (3562).

Refer to Figure 1.

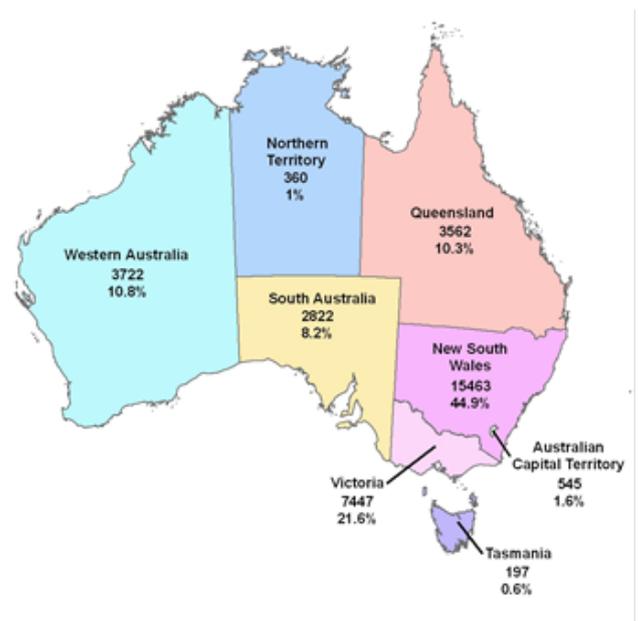


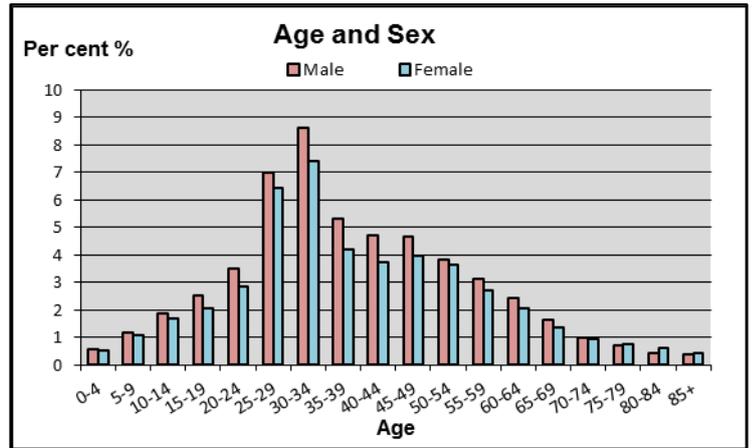
Figure 1

Age and Sex

The median age of the Iran-born in 2011 was 36 years compared with 45 years for all overseas-born and 37 years for the total Australian population.

The age distribution showed 6.9 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 11 per cent were 15-24 years, 47.5 per cent were 25-44 years, 26.4 per cent were 45-64 years and 8.2 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the Iran-born in Australia, there were 18 453 males (53.6 per cent) and 16 002 females (46.4 per cent). The sex ratio was 115.3 males per 100 females.

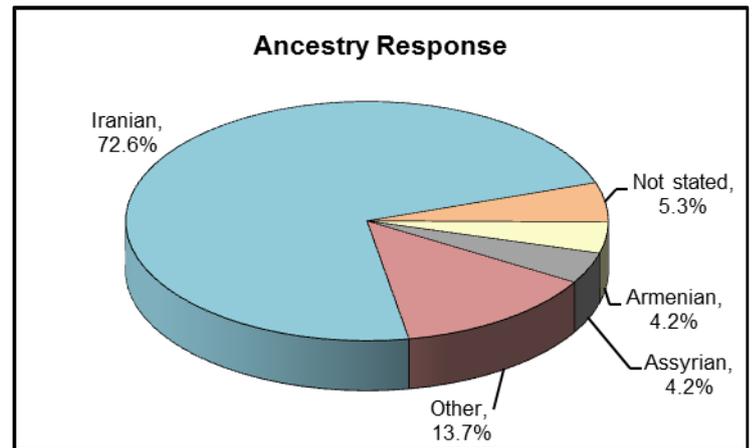


Ancestry

In the 2011 Census, the top ancestry responses* that Iran-born people reported were Iranian (25 841), Armenian (1506) and Assyrian (1499).

In the 2011 Census, Australians reported around 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses*, 36 168 responses were towards Iranian ancestry.

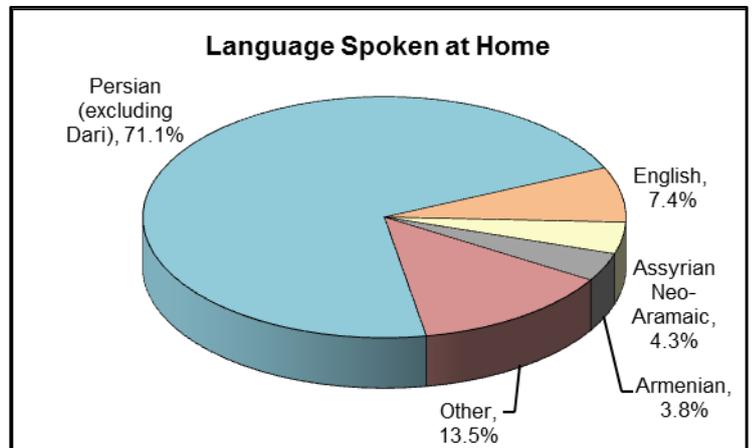
*At the 2011 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question; therefore providing the total responses and not persons count.



Language

The main languages spoken at home by Iran-born people in Australia were Persian (excluding Dari) (24 481), English (2547) and Assyrian Neo-Aramaic (1466).

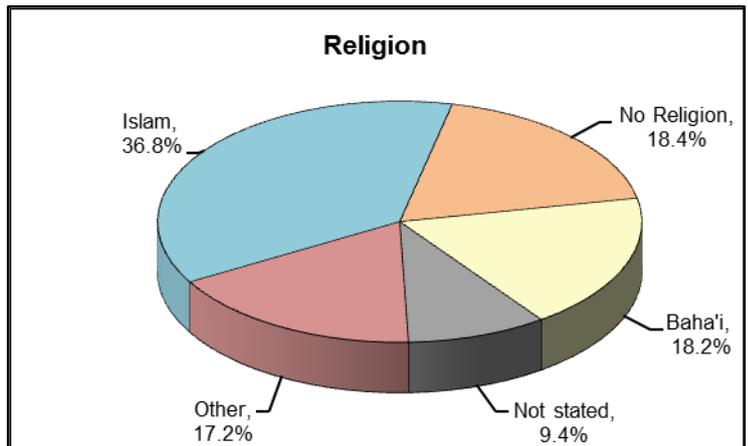
Of the 31 904 Iran-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 79.1 per cent spoke English very well or well, and 16.2 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



Religion

At the 2011 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Iran-born were Islam (12 686) and Baha'i (6269).

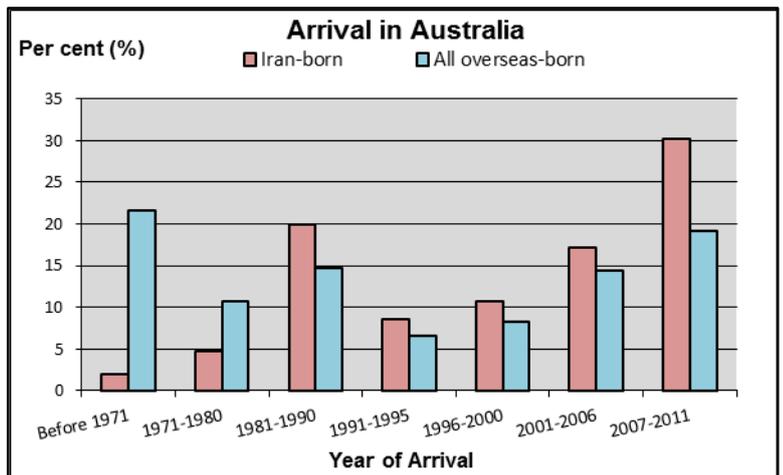
Of the Iran-born, 18.4 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was lower than that of the total Australian population (22.3 per cent), and 9.4 per cent did not state a religion.



Arrival

Compared to 62 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 46.1 per cent of the Iran-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2001.

Among the total Iran-born in Australia at the 2011 Census, 17.2 per cent arrived between 2001 and 2006 and 30.1 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011.



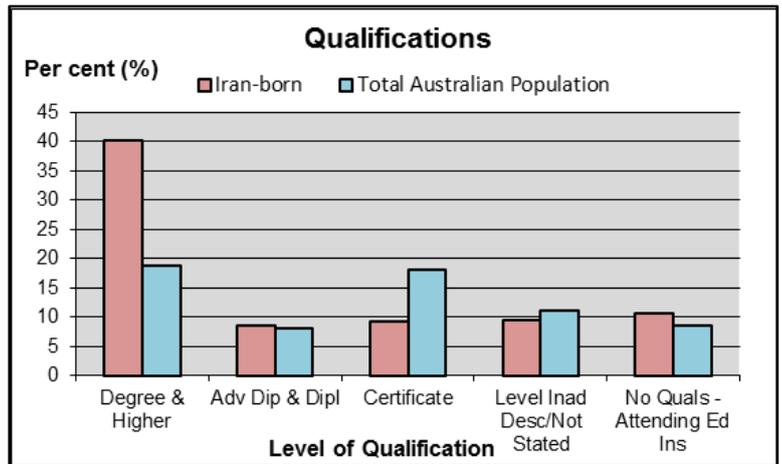
Median Income

At the time of the 2011 Census, the median individual weekly income for the Iran-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$446, 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, 67.4 per cent of the Iran-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 Iran-born aged 15 years and over, 10.5 per cent were still attending an educational institution. The corresponding rate for the total Australian population was 8.6 per cent.

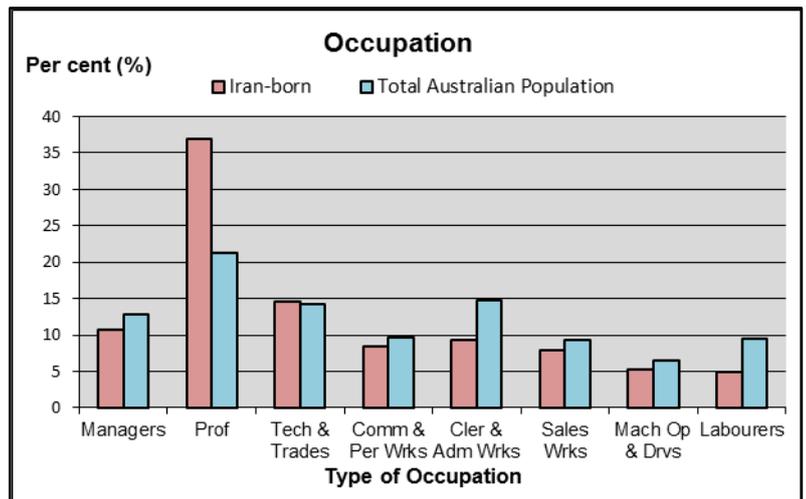


Level Inad Desc/Not Stated = Education level inadequately described or not stated
No Quals - Attending Ed Ins = No qualifications and still attending educational institution

Employment

Among Iran-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 58.3 per cent and the unemployment rate was 12.6 per cent. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 65 per cent and 5.6 per cent respectively.

Of the 16 123 Iran-born who were employed, 62 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>