



Queensland
Government

RELIGION IN QUEENSLAND

July 2009



Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury

This bulletin presents information on religious affiliation in Queensland. The data have been extracted from the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), and are based on place of usual residence. Topics include country of birth, Indigenous status, and demographics, as well as an analysis of changes over the last thirty years. This bulletin also presents information on participation in religious activities and volunteer work for religious organisations as collected via the General Social Survey, also conducted by the ABS.

Introduction

In general, a religion is regarded as a set of beliefs and practices, usually involving acknowledgment of a divine or higher being or power, by which people order the conduct of their lives both practically and in a moral sense. Religious affiliation identifies the religious belief to which a person adheres or religious group to which they belong, and also identifies those who do not belong to any religious group.

In the 2006 Census, responses to the religion question were coded to the *Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups (ASCRG)*.¹ It is important to note that religious affiliation in the Census is an optional question. Also, while the religion with which people identify is recorded, the Census does not measure the extent of their involvement or commitment.

The General Social Survey, also conducted by the ABS in 2006, does provide information on active involvement in religious or spiritual groups and whether people volunteered for, or donated money to, religious organisations.

Key points

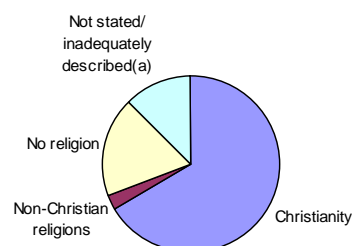
- The Census found that 69.0% of Queenslanders were affiliated with a religious belief or group in 2006, 18.6% did not affiliate with any religion, and the remaining 12.4% did not answer, or did not adequately answer, the question.
- Around two-thirds (66.3%) of Queenslanders were Christians, mostly of Catholic and Anglican denomination, while 2.6% affiliated with a non-Christian religion, with almost half of those reporting to be Buddhists.
- Of all Queenslanders who affiliated with a non-Christian religion, 61.6% were born overseas.
- Females were more likely than males to be affiliated with a religion (71.6% compared with 66.3%). Males were more likely not to affiliate with any religion (20.2% compared with 17.1% of females) or not to answer, or inadequately answer, the question (13.5% compared with 11.4%).
- Older people were more likely to be affiliated with a religion than were younger people (61.8% of those aged 18-24 years compared with 78.4% aged 85 years and over). Correspondingly, younger people were more likely to state they were not affiliated with any religion.

- Christian affiliation was highest in the South West Statistical Division (80.0%) and lowest on the Sunshine Coast and in Far North Queensland (both 62.8%).
- Brisbane Statistical Division had the highest concentration of people affiliated with a non-Christian religion (3.9%) while the lowest was in the Central West (0.3%).
- The proportion of Queenslanders affiliating with a Christian religion has decreased over time while the proportion affiliating with a non-Christian religion, or reporting no religion, has increased.
- Almost one in five (19.4%) Queenslanders aged 18 years and over were actively involved in a religious or spiritual group in 2006.
- Some 7.6% of Queenslanders aged 18 years and over reported they volunteered for a religious organisation in 2006. Of people volunteering for any organisation, 13.5% volunteered because of religious beliefs.

Religious affiliation

According to the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, 69.0% of Queenslanders stated they were affiliated with a religious belief or group. A further 18.6% stated they were not affiliated with any religion, while the remaining 12.4% did not answer the question or did not adequately respond to the question to enable classification of their religion (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Religious affiliation, Queensland, 2006

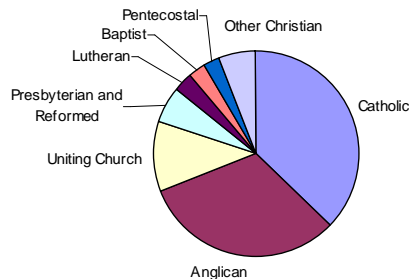


(a) Includes 'Religious belief, nfd', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'.

Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Around two-thirds (66.3%) of Queenslanders were Christians. Of those who affiliated with Christianity, Catholic (36.2%) and Anglican (30.7%) were the most common denominations, followed by Uniting Church (10.9%), Presbyterian and Reformed (5.6%) and Lutheran (3.0%) (Figure 2).

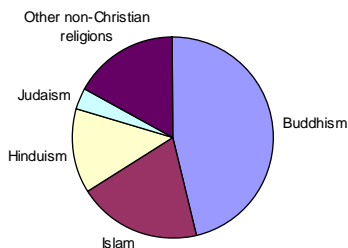
Figure 2: Persons affiliated with Christianity, Queensland, 2006



Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

A small proportion (2.6%) of the Queensland population was affiliated with non-Christian religions. Of those people, almost half (46.1%) were Buddhists, 19.7% were Islamic and 13.7% were Hindus (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Persons affiliated with non-Christian religions, Queensland, 2006



Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Country of birth

Religious affiliation is closely related to country of birth (Table 1). Queenslanders born in Australia were more likely to be Christians (71.3%) than non-Australian born Queenslanders (62.7%). People born in the United Kingdom living in Queensland in 2006 were more likely to be Anglican (42.9% compared with 22.1% of those born in Australia), while those born in Italy were more likely to be Catholic (88.9% compared with 26.0%). Other countries of birth with high proportions affiliating with Catholicism include Malta (82.8%), Poland (76.3%), Philippines (78.5%), Croatia (71.2%) and Ireland (70.6%).

Of all Queenslanders who affiliated with a non-Christian religion in 2006, 61.6% were born overseas. Some 80.5% of those affiliating with Hinduism were born overseas, with 31.5% born in India and a further 27.8% born in Fiji. Some 63.8% of all those affiliating with Buddhism were born overseas, including 15.2% in Viet Nam, 8.5% in Taiwan and 6.7% in Thailand. Of people affiliated with Islam, 68.7% were born overseas, originating from various countries including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Fiji and Indonesia.

People born in China and Japan were most likely to report they had no religion. More than half of people living in Queensland who were born in China (55.4%) and Japan (51.2%) reported they had no religion, compared with 19.4% who were born in Australia. This may be partly because they perceive their belief systems as philosophies rather than religions.²

Indigenous status

The distribution by religious affiliation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders was similar to that of the non-Indigenous Queensland population (Table 2). Overall, 68.2% of Indigenous people reported a Christian affiliation, compared with 69.5% of non-Indigenous Queenslanders.

Table 1: Religious affiliation: proportion by selected country of birth, Queensland, 2006

Country of birth	Catholic	Anglican	Other Christian	Buddhism	Islam	Hinduism	Other non-Christian	No religion	Not stated/ inadequately described(a)	Total
	— % —									
Australia	26.0	22.1	23.3	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.4	19.4	8.0	100.0
Bosnia & Herzegovina	18.5	0.1	18.4	0.2	37.2	..	0.2	17.8	7.6	100.0
China(b)	3.8	1.6	13.3	15.6	0.2	..	0.5	55.4	9.7	100.0
Fiji	10.4	4.8	19.0	0.3	12.2	43.7	0.6	4.6	4.5	100.0
India	20.3	7.7	6.8	0.5	3.6	40.3	13.1	4.2	3.5	100.0
Indonesia	24.7	3.7	29.2	4.2	19.0	2.0	0.4	11.3	5.5	100.0
Ireland	70.6	5.4	8.3	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.3	9.2	5.6	100.0
Italy	88.9	0.3	3.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2	4.1	3.0	100.0
Japan	3.4	1.8	5.3	28.2	0.2	0.0	1.8	51.2	8.1	100.0
Taiwan	2.7	0.8	13.6	42.5	..	0.0	1.6	32.0	6.9	100.0
Thailand	4.3	1.6	7.1	70.5	0.7	0.2	1.6	9.2	4.8	100.0
United Kingdom	11.7	42.9	15.8	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.8	20.5	7.5	100.0
Viet Nam	24.3	0.3	4.2	55.2	0.2	0.0	0.7	11.2	3.9	100.0
Total born overseas	22.0	18.5	22.2	4.3	2.0	1.6	1.1	20.9	7.4	100.0
Total all countries(c)	24.0	20.4	21.9	1.2	0.5	0.4	0.5	18.6	12.4	100.0
	— persons ('000) —									
Total all countries(c)	936.6	795.8	857.0	47.5	20.3	14.1	21.1	726.6	485.5	3,904.5

(a) Includes 'Religious belief, nfd', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'.

(b) Excludes Special Administrative Regions (Hong Kong and Macau) and Taiwan Province.

(c) Includes 'Not stated', 'Inadequately described', 'At sea' and 'Not elsewhere classified'.

Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Variations exist in affiliation within the Christian denominations. Indigenous Queenslanders were more likely to be Anglican, Pentecostal or Baptist, and less likely to be affiliated with the Catholic, Presbyterian and Reformed or Uniting Churches, than non-Indigenous Queenslanders. Indigenous religious affiliation may have been influenced by past missionary activity.³

Indigenous Queenslanders were less likely to affiliate with a non-Christian religion, with 1.1% affiliating with a non-Christian religion compared with 2.8% of non-Indigenous Queenslanders. The Indigenous were also less likely to report that they did not affiliate with any religion (18.3% of Indigenous compared with 19.6% of non-Indigenous), but more likely not to state or adequately describe their religious affiliation (12.4% compared with 8.1%).

There were 426 Indigenous persons usually resident in Queensland in 2006 who reported they practised an Australian traditional religion. Indigenous people with traditional beliefs may tend to report no religion or not answer the question.³

Table 2: Religious affiliation: proportion by Indigenous status, Queensland, 2006

Religious affiliation	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Total(a)
	— % —		
Christianity			
Anglican	21.2	25.8	20.4
Catholic	25.3	19.2	24.0
Uniting Church	7.7	5.3	7.2
Pentecostal	1.5	5.1	1.6
Baptist	2.0	2.4	1.9
Presbyterian and Reformed	4.0	1.7	3.7
Other Christian	7.8	8.7	7.5
<i>Total Christianity</i>	<i>69.5</i>	<i>68.2</i>	<i>66.3</i>
Non-Christian religions	2.8	1.1	2.6
No religion	19.6	18.3	18.6
Not stated/inadequately described(b)	8.1	12.4	12.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
	— persons ('000) —		
Total	3,552.0	127.6	3,904.5

(a) Includes Indigenous status not stated.

(b) Includes 'Religious belief, nfd', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'.

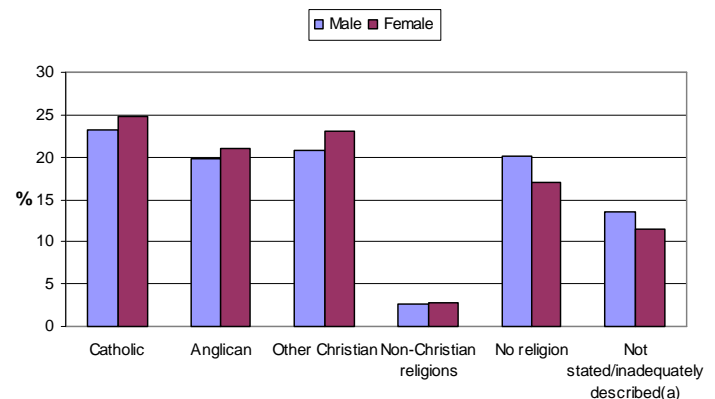
Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Age and sex

Differences were reported in religious affiliation across sex and age. Females of all age groups are more likely to be affiliated with a religion than males of the same age. In 2006, 68.9% of all females indicated they were affiliated with a Christian religion and 2.7% with a non-Christian religion, compared with 63.7% and 2.6% respectively for all males.

Correspondingly, males were more likely to report they did not affiliate with any religion (20.2% compared with 17.1% of females). They were also more likely not to answer, or inadequately answer, the question (13.5% compared with 11.4%) (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Religious affiliation by sex, Queensland, 2006



(a) Includes 'Religious belief, nfd', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'.

Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Older people are more likely to be affiliated with a religion than younger people (Table 3). Of those aged 18-24 years, 61.8% were affiliated with a religion in 2006, compared with 78.4% of those aged 85 years and over.

Within the group who reported they were affiliated with a religion, younger people were more likely to be affiliated with a non-Christian religion than were older people. Some 3.6% of Queenslanders aged 18-24 years and 3.8% of those aged 25-34

Table 3: Religious affiliation: proportion by age, Queensland, 2006

Religious affiliation	Age (years)									Total
	Less than 18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85 and over	
	— % —									
Christianity										
Catholic	25.6	24.1	22.9	24.5	23.5	22.7	24.0	22.7	19.0	24.0
Anglican	16.4	15.1	17.3	20.5	22.1	26.0	27.9	29.5	30.2	20.4
Other Christian	19.4	19.0	18.6	21.4	24.1	25.7	27.3	28.2	28.4	21.9
<i>Total Christianity</i>	<i>61.4</i>	<i>58.2</i>	<i>58.8</i>	<i>66.4</i>	<i>69.8</i>	<i>74.4</i>	<i>79.2</i>	<i>80.4</i>	<i>77.6</i>	<i>66.3</i>
Non-Christian religions										
Buddhism	0.9	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.0	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.2
Islam	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.5
Hinduism	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4
Other non-Christian religions	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5
<i>Total non-Christian religions</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>3.6</i>	<i>3.8</i>	<i>3.1</i>	<i>2.9</i>	<i>1.9</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>2.6</i>
<i>Total religious affiliation</i>	<i>63.7</i>	<i>61.8</i>	<i>62.6</i>	<i>69.5</i>	<i>72.6</i>	<i>76.3</i>	<i>80.4</i>	<i>81.3</i>	<i>78.4</i>	<i>69.0</i>
No religion	23.3	24.0	24.0	18.5	15.8	12.6	8.9	7.0	5.9	18.6
Not stated/inadequately described(a)	12.9	14.3	13.4	12.0	11.6	11.1	10.7	11.7	15.7	12.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes 'Religious belief, nfd', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'.

Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

years were affiliated with a non-Christian religion in 2006, compared with 0.8% of those aged 85 years and over. This partly reflects an increase in migration from countries with non-Christian religions and the younger age structure of these migrants.³

Correspondingly, younger people were more likely to state they were not affiliated with any religion. Some 24.0% of 18-24 year olds and 25-34 year olds indicated they were not affiliated with any religion in 2006, compared with 5.9% of those aged 85 years and over.

The proportion not answering, or not providing an adequate answer to, the question was similar across all age groups, ranging from a low of 10.7% of those aged 65-74 years to a high of 15.7% of those aged 85 years and over.

Geographic distribution

Christian affiliation was proportionally highest in the South West Statistical Division, where 80.0% of people reported they were Christian (Figure 5). This region also had the highest proportion of people born in Australia (90.0%). The Sunshine Coast and Far North reported the lowest proportion of people affiliating with a Christian religion (both 62.8%). These statistical divisions also had the highest proportion indicating they did not affiliate with any religion – Sunshine Coast (22.7%) and Far North (20.0%).

Brisbane Statistical Division had the highest concentration of people affiliated with a non-Christian religion (3.9%), followed by the Gold Coast (2.7%), while the lowest were in the Central West (0.3%) and the South West (0.5%). These high concentrations in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast reflect large populations of people born in Viet Nam, Taiwan, China and Thailand (mainly affiliating with Buddhism), and India and Fiji (mainly affiliating with Hinduism) living in these regions.

Other characteristics

Queenslanders aged 18 years and over who were married, widowed, divorced or separated as at the 2006 Census were more likely to be affiliated with a religion than those who were never married (Table 4). Correspondingly, those who were never married were more likely not to be affiliated with any religion.

Religious affiliation also varied with labour force status. Those who were not in the labour force in the week prior to the Census were more likely to be affiliated with a Christian religion than those who were employed or unemployed. Those who were unemployed were more likely to be affiliated with a non-Christian religion or not to be affiliated with any religion than other Queenslanders.

Table 4: Religious affiliation: proportion by selected characteristics, persons aged 18 years and over, Queensland, 2006

Selected characteristics(a)	Christianity	Non-Christian religions	No religion	Not stated/inadequately described(b)	Total
— % —					
Marital status					
Never married	57.9	3.1	24.0	15.0	100.0
Married	72.9	2.7	14.0	10.4	100.0
Widowed/divorced/separated	70.3	2.3	14.4	13.0	100.0
Labour force status					
Employed	70.1	2.7	20.1	7.2	100.0
Unemployed	62.2	5.2	23.8	8.8	100.0
Not in the labour force	75.6	3.1	13.7	7.7	100.0
Non-school qualifications					
Bachelor degree or higher	66.0	5.6	22.0	6.3	100.0
Other non-school qualification	71.2	2.2	19.5	7.1	100.0
No non-school qualification(c)	73.4	2.5	16.9	7.2	100.0
Voluntary work(d)					
Volunteer	76.5	2.7	14.7	6.1	100.0
Not a volunteer	70.4	3.0	19.3	7.4	100.0
— persons ('000) —					
Total aged 18 years and over	1,992.1	80.3	499.4	359.6	2,931.4

(a) For each characteristic, excludes not stated/inadequately described.

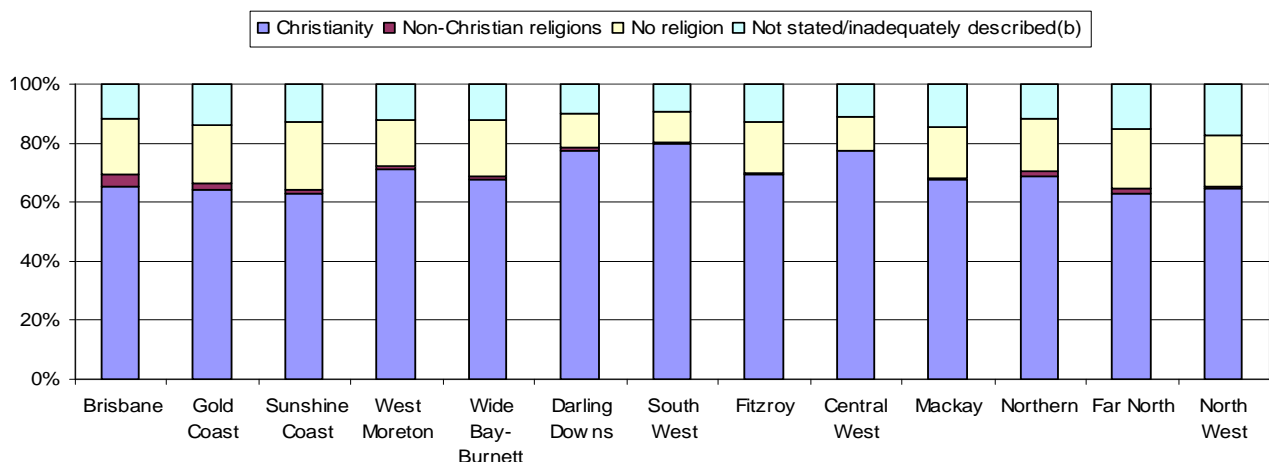
(b) Includes 'Religious belief, nfd', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'.

(c) Includes those still studying for a first qualification.

(d) Unpaid voluntary work through an organisation or group in the 12 months prior to the census.

Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Figure 5: Religious affiliation by statistical division(a), Queensland, 2006



(a) Excludes 'Off-shore areas and migratory' and 'No usual address'.

(b) Includes 'Religious belief, nfd', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'.

Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Holders of a bachelor degree or higher were less likely to be affiliated with Christianity, but more likely to be affiliated with a non-Christian religion than those with a lower level non-school qualification or those who did not hold a non-school qualification.

Queenslanders aged 18 years and over who spent time doing unpaid voluntary work through an organisation or group in the 12 months prior to the 2006 Census were more likely to have been affiliated with a religion than those who did not volunteer.

Changes over time

The religious profile of Queenslanders has changed over time. This may reflect not only generational changes, but also changes in the way data have been collected, in immigration and internal migration patterns, in transfers between religious groups, and in births and deaths.

In 2006, Queensland was still predominantly Christian; however, there has been a downward trend in the proportion of people identifying with Christianity. In 1996, the proportion of people affiliating with a Christian religion was 73.8%, compared with 66.3% in 2006, representing a decrease of 7.5 percentage points over the ten year period (Table 5).

Within Christianity, the denomination showing the largest percentage decrease was Anglican, decreasing from 23.4% of the Queensland population in 1996 to 20.4% in 2006. The number of Catholics actually increased by 115,600; however, as a proportion of the population, affiliates of this religion decreased 1.3 percentage points over this time.

Table 5: Religious affiliation, Queensland, 1996 and 2006

Religious affiliation	1996		2006		Change
	'000	%	'000	%	%
Christianity					
Catholic	821.0	25.3	936.6	24.0	14.1
Anglican	761.4	23.4	795.8	20.4	4.5
Uniting Church	305.8	9.4	282.1	7.2	-7.7
Presbyterian and Reformed	152.7	4.7	145.7	3.7	-4.6
Lutheran	72.1	2.2	76.7	2.0	6.4
Baptist	62.0	1.9	74.6	1.9	20.2
Pentecostal	53.0	1.6	61.0	1.6	15.2
Eastern Orthodox(a)	26.8	0.8	32.1	0.8	19.5
Jehovah's Witnesses	23.2	0.7	23.7	0.6	2.2
Salvation Army	16.0	0.5	15.2	0.4	-5.1
Other Christian	103.9	3.2	145.9	3.7	40.4
Total Christianity	2,397.9	73.8	2,589.5	66.3	8.0
Non-Christian religions					
Buddhism	18.0	0.6	47.5	1.2	163.8
Islam	9.3	0.3	20.3	0.5	117.9
Hinduism	6.5	0.2	14.1	0.4	116.6
Judaism	3.1	0.1	3.7	0.1	21.9
Other non-Christian religions	10.0	0.3	17.4	0.4	73.8
Total non-Christian religions	46.9	1.4	103.0	2.6	119.7
No religion	498.8	15.4	726.6	18.6	45.7
Not stated/inadequately described(b)	303.8	9.4	485.5	12.4	59.8
Total	3,247.4	100.0	3,904.5	100.0	20.2

(a) In 1996, was known as 'Orthodox'.

(b) Includes 'Religious belief, nfd', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'.

Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

The number of Queenslanders affiliating with a non-Christian religion increased by 56,100 people, from 1.4% of the State's population in 1996 to 2.6% in 2006. This number grew significantly faster over the ten year period (119.7%) than the number affiliating with a Christian religion (8.0%).

More than half of this increase was accounted for by an increase of 29,500 in the number of Buddhists over this time. This increase in affiliation with non-Christian religions reflects immigration patterns; in particular, there has been an increase in the number of people migrating to Australia from Asia and the Middle East over recent years.⁴

The proportion of people indicating they did not affiliate with a religion continued to increase, from 15.4% of Queenslanders in 1996 to 18.6% in 2006, with the actual number growing by 45.7% over the period. The proportion not answering the question, or not providing an adequate answer, also increased, from 9.4% in 1996 to 12.4% in 2006. The actual number grew by 59.8%.

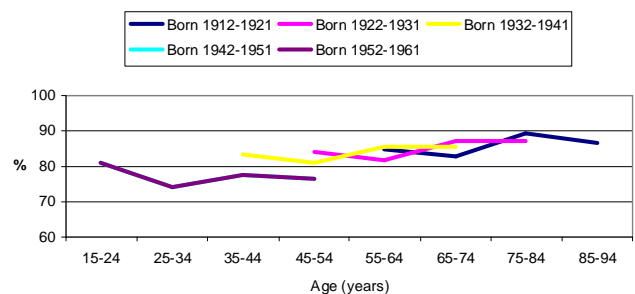
Age-cohort analysis

While it is possible to draw conclusions about changes over time by comparing people across censuses, this does not reveal how the circumstances of people are changing as they move through the life cycle. Age-cohort analysis allows the extent of generational change as well as the effect of age to be examined.

A cohort is a group of people born in the same period. For the purposes of this analysis, data from 10 yearly censuses between 1976 and 2006 have been used, and therefore a cohort is a group of people born in the same 10 year period. The cohorts examined here are not exactly the same each census year due to interstate and overseas migration into and out of Queensland, as well as deaths. In an attempt to lessen the effect of overseas migration into Queensland, the cohorts examined have been restricted to persons born in Australia.

Within a cohort, the proportion of people affiliated with a Christian religion fluctuated as they aged, but showed an overall increase (Figure 6). For example, in 1976, of those aged 45-54 years (born in 1922-1931), 83.9% were affiliated with a Christian religion. In 1986, when these people were aged 55-64 years, this proportion was 81.8%; in 1996 when they were 65-74 years it was 87.2%; and in 2006 when they were 75-84 years it remained level at 87.2%.

Figure 6: Persons born in Australia: proportion affiliated with a Christian religion by age, selected birth year cohorts, Queensland, 1976-2006



Source: ABS, 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2006 Census of Population and Housing

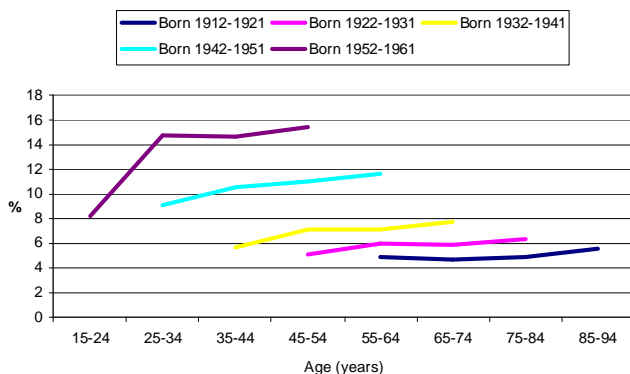
The increase between 1986 and 1996 across all cohorts may be partly explained by a change to the questionnaire. In 1991, the question about religion changed from a write-in response to a tick-box response for the most commonly reported religious groups. This is likely to have increased the selection of one of the seven largest religious groups included in the list.³

With each subsequent cohort there was an overall decrease in the proportion of people indicating they were affiliated with a Christian religion. For example, the proportion of those aged 45-54 years affiliating with a Christian religion decreased from 83.9% for those born in 1922-1931 to 76.2% for those of the same age born in 1952-1961, representing a decrease of 7.7 percentage points over the thirty year period.

This decrease across cohorts in affiliation with a Christian religion is consistent with an increase in the proportion indicating they did not affiliate with any religion. While an analysis of a point in time shows the proportion of people indicating they did not affiliate with any religion decreases with age, an age-cohort analysis shows the proportion within a cohort actually increases as people age, with the proportion increasing across each successive cohort.

For example, in 1976, of those aged 45-54 years (born in 1922-1931), 5.1% were not affiliated with any religion. In 1986, when these people were aged 55-64 years, this proportion was 6.0%. In 1996, when they were 65-74 years, it was 5.9%. In 2006, when they were 75-84 years, it increased to 6.3%. Looking across generations, the proportion of those aged 45-54 years not affiliating with a religion increased from 5.1% for those born in 1922-1931 to 15.5% of those of the same age born in 1952-1961, representing an increase of 10.4 percentage points over the thirty year period (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Persons born in Australia: proportion not affiliated with a religion by age, selected birth year cohorts, Queensland, 1976-2006



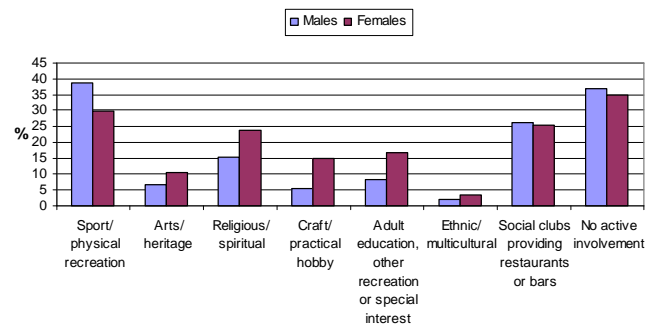
Source: ABS, 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Involvement in religious or spiritual groups

According to the 2006 General Social Survey (GSS), 574,000 people, or 19.4% of all Queenslanders aged 18 years and over, were actively involved in a religious or spiritual group in the 12 months prior to the GSS (Figure 8).

In keeping with being more likely to affiliate with a religion, women were significantly more likely than men to be involved (23.7% of women compared with 15.1% of men). Those aged 65 years and over were most likely to have been involved in a religious or spiritual group (22.1%), while those aged 18-24 years were least likely (14.1%).

Figure 8: Persons aged 18 years and over, proportion actively involved in a social group by type of organisation and sex, Queensland, 2006

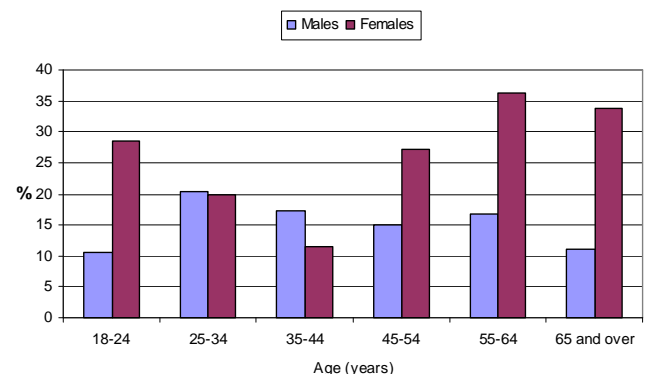


Source: ABS, 2006 General Social Survey

Volunteer work

In the 12 months prior to the 2006 GSS, 225,900 people, or 7.6% of all Queenslanders aged 18 years and over, reported they volunteered for a religious organisation. Women volunteers were more likely than men to have worked for a religious organisation (24.0% of all female volunteers compared with 15.9% of all male volunteers). Volunteers aged 55-64 years were most likely to have worked for a religious organisation (27.8%) while those aged 35-44 years were least likely (14.0%) (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Volunteers aged 18 years and over, proportion volunteering for a religious organisation by age and sex, Queensland, 2006



Note: Estimates have high relative standard errors and should be used with caution.

Source: ABS, 2006 General Social Survey

Of those who volunteered (for any organisation), 13.5% reported they volunteered because of their religious beliefs. Women were more likely to have volunteered because of their religious beliefs than men (14.8% of all female volunteers compared with 12.1% of male volunteers). Those aged 65 years and over were most likely to have volunteered because of religious beliefs (18.9%) while those aged 25-34 years were least likely (9.1%).

One in five (20.8%) Queenslanders aged 18 years and over made a donation to a religious organisation or church over the 12 months prior to the 2006 GSS. Women were more likely to have donated than men (22.6% of women compared with 19.0% of men). Those aged 65 years and over were more likely to have donated (26.7%) than other age groups while those aged 18-24 years were least likely (8.8%).

State and territory comparisons

The proportion of Queenslanders affiliating with a Christian religion in 2006 (66.3%) was 2.4 percentage points higher than the proportion for Australia as a whole (63.9%) (Table 6). Queensland had the second highest proportion after New South Wales (67.7%), while the Northern Territory had the lowest (54.6%). Christians in Queensland were more likely to be affiliated with the Anglican or the Uniting Churches and less likely to be affiliated with the Catholic or Eastern Orthodox Churches than Christians in the rest of Australia.

Table 6: Religious affiliation by states and territories, 2006

States/ territories	Religious affiliation				Total	Born overseas
	Christian- ity	Non- Christian religions	No religion	Not stated/ inadequately described(a)		
			— % —			
NSW	67.7	7.4	14.3	10.6	100.0	23.7
Vic.	60.5	7.1	20.4	11.9	100.0	23.7
Qld	66.3	2.6	18.6	12.4	100.0	17.9
SA	59.8	3.2	24.2	12.7	100.0	20.3
WA	59.3	4.2	22.9	13.5	100.0	27.1
Tas.	64.2	1.4	21.5	12.9	100.0	10.6
NT	54.6	4.4	23.1	17.8	100.0	13.7
ACT	60.2	5.4	23.4	11.0	100.0	21.7
Aust.(b)	63.9	5.6	18.7	11.9	100.0	22.2

(a) Includes 'Religious belief, nfd', 'Not defined', 'New Age, so described' and 'Theism'.

(b) Includes 'Other Territories'.

Source: ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

While New South Wales also had the highest proportion affiliating with a non-Christian religion (7.4%), Queensland's proportion of 2.6% was the second lowest, higher only than Tasmania (1.4%). This may partly reflect the lower proportions of persons born overseas living in Queensland and Tasmania.

The proportion of Queensland's population reporting they were not affiliated with any religion in 2006 (18.6%) was slightly lower than the proportion for Australia (18.7%) and the second lowest of all states and territories. Only New South Wales recorded a lower proportion (14.3%), while South Australia recorded the highest (24.2%).

Some 12.4% of Queensland's residents did not answer, or provide an adequate answer to, the religion question, compared with 11.9% of Australian residents.

Endnotes

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2005, *Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups (ASCRG)*, Australia (second edition), cat. no. 1266.0, ABS, Canberra.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics 1995, *Australian Social Trends 1995*, cat. no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra.

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 1994, *Australian Social Trends 1994*, cat. no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, *Migration, Australia, 2005-06*, cat. no. 3412.0, ABS, Canberra.

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