



Community Information Summary

Tonga-born

Historical Background

Tongan migrants have come to Australia to study, work or to join family members, a pattern also traced back to the 1970s. Tongans have tended to migrate in families and maintain strong kinship ties.

From the mid-1970s, following the cessation of the New Zealand contract-worker scheme, many Tongans employed in the scheme left New Zealand and came to Australia looking for work. Other Tongans also migrated to Australia directly from Tonga. Later, their family members joined them under Australia's Family Migration program. This strong pattern of family migration continues to be a feature of Tongan settlement in Australia.

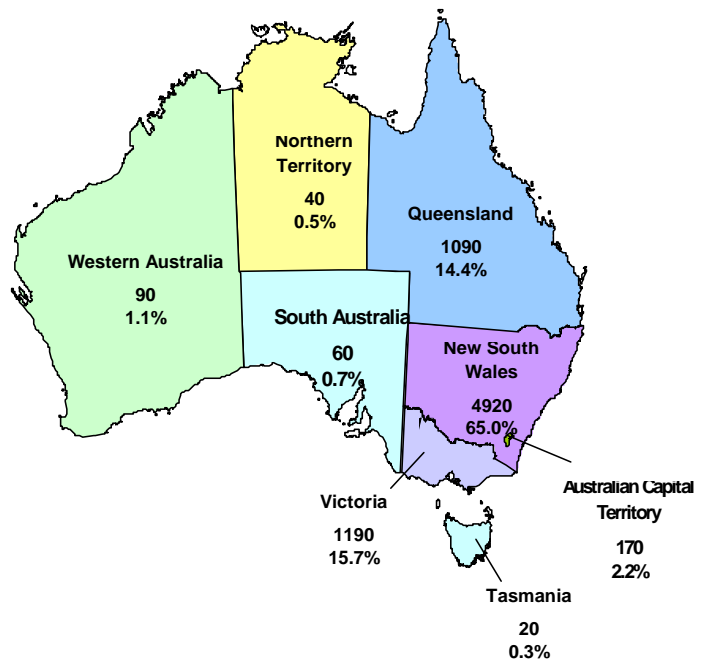
There is a recognisable Tongan community in every major city.

There were 7720 Tonga-born people in Australia at the 2001 Census, making up 0.2 per cent of the overseas-born population.

Today

Geographic Distribution

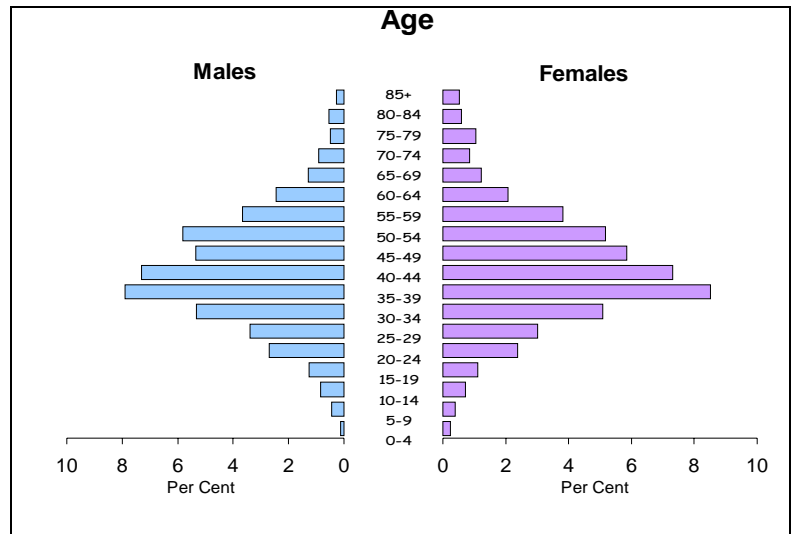
The latest Census in 2006 recorded 7580 Tonga-born people in Australia, a decrease of 1.8 per cent from the 2001 Census. The 2006 distribution by state and territory showed New South Wales had the largest number with 4920 followed by Victoria (1190), Queensland (1090) and Australian Capital Territory (170).



Age and Sex

The median age of the Tonga-born in 2006 was 42.2 years compared with 46.8 years for all overseas-born and 37.1 years for the total Australian population. The age distribution showed 2.8 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 7.4 per cent were 15-24 years, 47.8 per cent were 25-44 years, 34.2 per cent were 45-64 years and 7.8 per cent were 65 and over.

Of the Tonga-born in Australia, there were 3800 males (50.1 per cent) and 3790 females (49.9 per cent). The sex ratio was 100.2 males per 100 females.

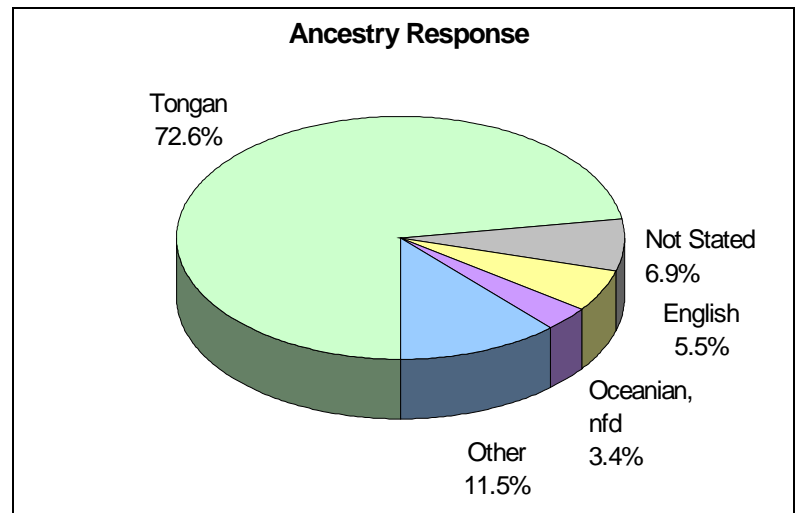


Ancestry

In the 2006 Census, the top three ancestry responses* that Tonga-born people reported were, Tongan (6200), Not Stated (590) and English (470).

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

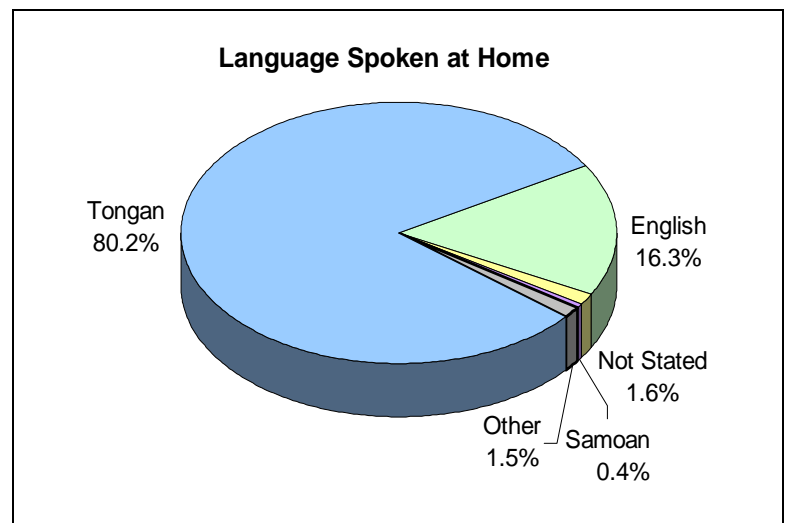
*At the 2006 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question; therefore providing the total responses and not persons count.



Language

The main languages spoken at home by Tonga-born people in Australia were Tongan (80.2 per cent), English (16.3 per cent) and Not Stated (1.6 per cent).

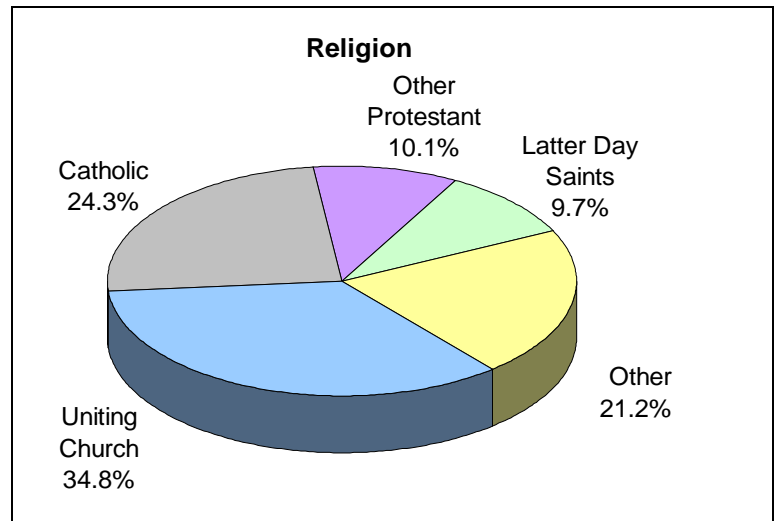
Of the 6260 Tonga-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 84.9 per cent spoke English very well or well and 13.7 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



Religion

At the 2006 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Tonga-born were Uniting Church (2640 persons), Catholic (1840 persons) and Other Protestant (760 persons).

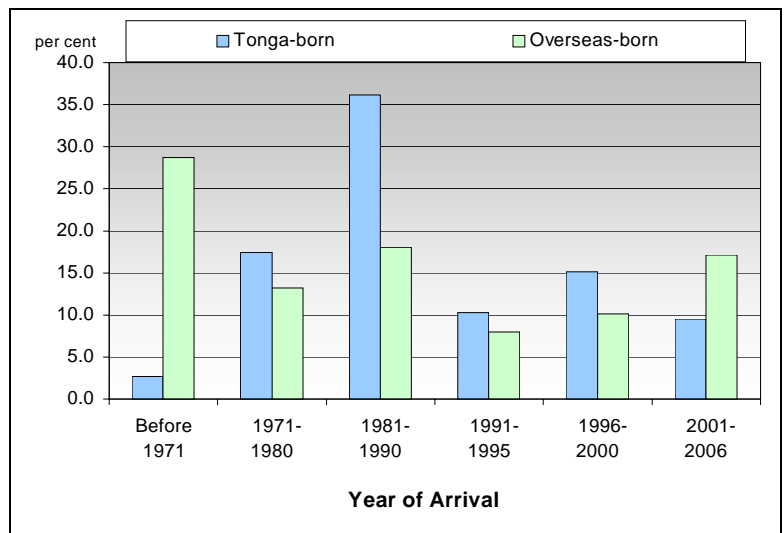
Of the Tonga-born, 1.9 per cent stated 'No Religion', this was lower than that of the total Australian population (18.7 per cent). 3.5 per cent of the Tonga-born did not state a religion.



Arrival

Compared to 67.9 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 66.5 per cent of the Tonga-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 1996.

Among the total Tonga-born in Australia at the 2006 Census, 15.1 per cent arrived between 1996 and 2000 and 9.5 per cent arrived during 2001 and 2006.



Citizenship

At the 2006 Census, the estimated rate of Australian Citizenship for the Tonga-born in Australia was 67.4 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.

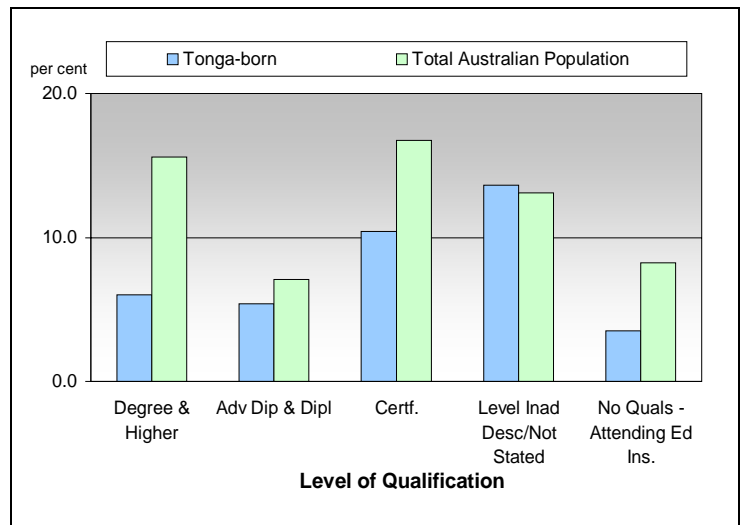
Median Income

At the time of the 2006 Census, the median individual weekly income for the Tonga-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$475, 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, 35.4 per cent of the Tonga-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 Tonga-born, 11.4 per cent had Diploma level or higher* qualifications and 10.4 per cent had Certificate level qualifications. From the Tonga-born, 4620 had no higher non school qualification, of which 5.6 per cent were still attending an educational institution.

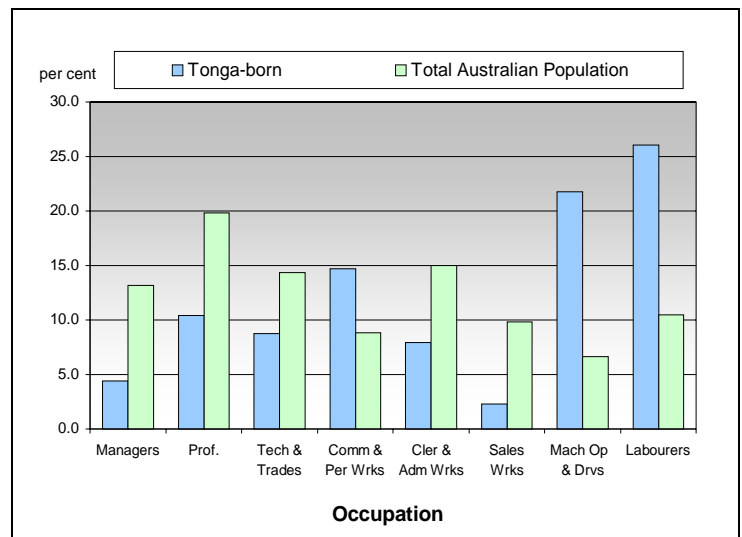
* Diploma level or higher qualification includes Degree level or higher, Advanced Diploma and Diploma level.



Employment

Among Tonga-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 64.7 per cent and the unemployment rate was 8.9 per cent. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 64.6 and 5.2 per cent respectively.

Of the 4150 Tonga-born who were employed, 13.4 per cent were employed in a Skill Level 1 occupation, 4.1 per cent in Skill Level 2 and 8.8 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 Program 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>

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