Cyprus-born
Community Information Summary

Historical Background

The earliest known Greek Cypriot migrants arrived in Australia in the 1850s, attracted by the gold rushes. They settled in the goldfield townships of Ballarat and Daylesford in Victoria.

Following the ceding of Cyprus by the Ottoman Empire to the United Kingdom in 1878, more Cypriots arrived, mostly as crewmen in British ships. By the 1890s, Greek Cypriot shopkeepers had established businesses in Melbourne and Sydney. The Australian Census of 1933 recorded 500 Cyprus-born people, all of them Greek Cypriots. The first Turkish Cypriot arrived in 1947.

The first significant arrival of Cyprus-born immigrants began after World War II, with a second larger wave of migration occurring in the 1970s due to political tensions in Cyprus. Roughly 6600 people arrived in a four-year period as many people sought better opportunity for their families. By 1991 there were 22,030 Cyprus-born in Australia. Cyprus-born migration to Australia has declined since the late 1980s.

2016 Census

Geographic Distribution

The latest Census in 2016 recorded 16,938 Cyprus-born people in Australia, a decrease of 6.3 per cent from the 2011 Census.

The 2016 distribution by State and Territory showed Victoria had the largest number with 7,574 followed by New South Wales (6,239), South Australia (1,179) and Queensland (1,161).
**Age and Sex**

The median age of the Cyprus-born in 2016 was 64 years compared with 44 years for all overseas-born and 38 years for the total Australian population.

The age distribution showed 1.6 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 1.4 per cent were 15-24 years, 8.7 per cent were 25-44 years, 40.7 per cent were 45-64 years and 47.6 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the Cyprus-born in Australia, there were 8,245 males (48.7 per cent) and 8,691 females (51.3 per cent). The sex ratio was 95 males per 100 females.

**Ancestry**

In the 2016 Census, the top ancestry responses* that Cyprus-born people reported were Cypriot (7,557), Greek (6,094) and Turkish (2,382).

In the 2016 Census, Australians reported over 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses* 28,992 responses were towards Cypriot ancestry.

* At the 2016 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question, therefore there can be more responses than total persons.

**Language**

The main languages spoken at home by Cyprus-born people in Australia were Greek (10,713), Turkish (2,961) and English (2,819).

Of the 14,081 Cyprus-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 77.3 per cent spoke English very well or well, and 22.0 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.
Religion

At the 2016 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Cyprus-born were Eastern Orthodox (11,482), Islam (2,506) and Anglican (277).

Of the Cyprus-born, 8.6 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was lower than that of the total Australian population (29.6 per cent), and 3.7 per cent did not state a religion.

Arrival

Compared to 61.8 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 93.2 per cent of the Cyprus-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2007.

Among the total Cyprus-born in Australia at the 2016 Census, 1.2 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011 and 2.5 per cent arrived between 2012 and 2016.

Median Income

At the time of the 2016 Census, the median Individual Weekly Income for the Cyprus-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was $453, compared with $615 for all overseas-born and $688 for all Australian-born.

The total Australian population aged 15 and over had a median Individual Weekly Income of $662.
Qualifications

At the 2016 Census, 39.2 per cent of the Cyprus-born aged 15 years and over had some form of higher non-school qualification compared to 60.1 per cent of the Australian population.

Of the Cyprus-born aged 15 years and over, 1.2 per cent had no qualifications and were still attending an educational institution. The corresponding rate for the total Australian population was 8.5 per cent.

Employment

Among Cyprus-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 40.0 per cent and the unemployment rate was 4.8 per cent.

The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 64.6 per cent and 6.9 per cent respectively.

Of the 6,258 Cyprus-born who were employed, 50.6 per cent were employed in either a skilled managerial, professional or trade occupation. The corresponding rate in the total Australian population was 48.8 per cent.

Produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the Department of Home Affairs

All data used in this summary is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing.

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