



Ireland-born Community Information Summary

Historical Background

Irish migration to Australia has been almost continuous throughout the era of European settlement. The first 155 Irish convicts (from County Cork) arrived in Sydney in 1791. An estimated further 7000 Irish convicts were sent to Australia during the remaining years of transportation, which ended in 1868.

In addition to convicts, more than 300,000 other Irish settlers migrated to Australia between 1840 and 1914. Irish migrants accounted for one-quarter of Australia's overseas-born population in 1871. Irish migration was influenced by the politics of colonial immigration which tended to favour those born in England and Scotland. Fluctuations in the economies of Australia and of other prospective destinations also had an effect. America was generally a more favoured destination for Irish migrants.

However, from the 1860s to 1880s, the Civil War and depression in America made it a less attractive destination than Australia which offered assisted passages. Relatives and friends in Australia sponsored many of the assisted Irish immigrants, many of whom were single females. The number of Ireland-born in Australia peaked in 1891 when the colonial Census accounted for 228,230. A decade later the number of Ireland-born had dropped to 184,040. This downward trend continued unabated with the Ireland-born reaching 44,810 by the time of the 1947 Census.

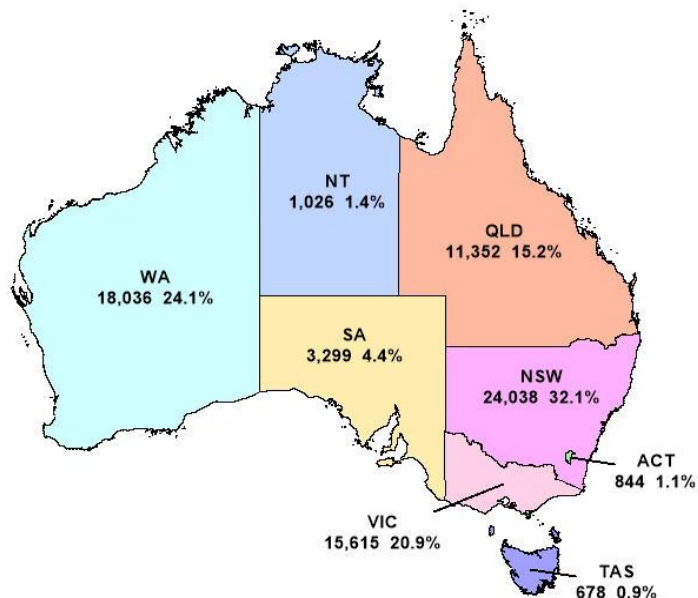
At this time the Ireland-born constituted 6 per cent of the total overseas-born population. As Australia accepted a large influx of immigrants from a wide range of other countries following World War II, the proportion of Ireland-born residents declined, despite a gradual rise in the actual Ireland-born population.

2016 Census

Geographic Distribution

The latest Census in 2016 recorded 74,888 Ireland-born people in Australia, an increase of 11.2 per cent from the 2011 Census.

The 2016 distribution by State and Territory showed New South Wales had the largest number with 24,038 followed by Western Australia (18,036), Victoria (15,615) and Queensland (11,352).

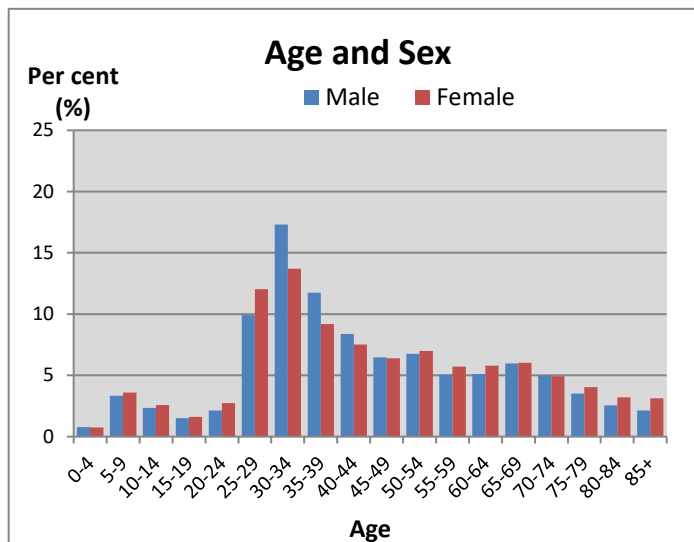


Age and Sex

The median age of the Ireland-born in 2016 was 41 years compared with 44 years for all overseas-born and 38 years for the total Australian population.

The age distribution showed 6.7 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 4.0 per cent were 15-24 years, 45.0 per cent were 25-44 years, 24.1 per cent were 45-64 years and 20.2 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the Ireland-born in Australia, there were 39,729 males (53.1 per cent) and 35,166 females (47.0 per cent). The sex ratio was 113 males per 100 females.

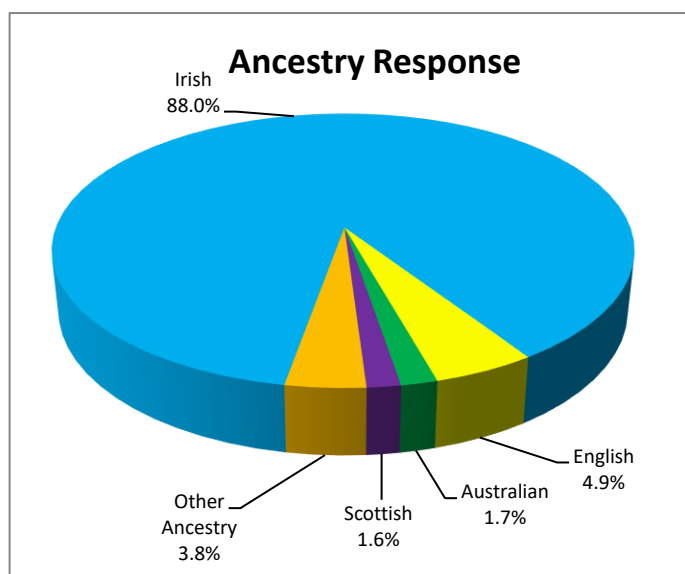


Ancestry

In the 2016 Census, the top ancestry responses* that Ireland-born people reported were Irish (71,971), English (4,002) and Australian (1,415).

In the 2016 Census, Australians reported over 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses* 2,388,058 responses were towards Irish ancestry.

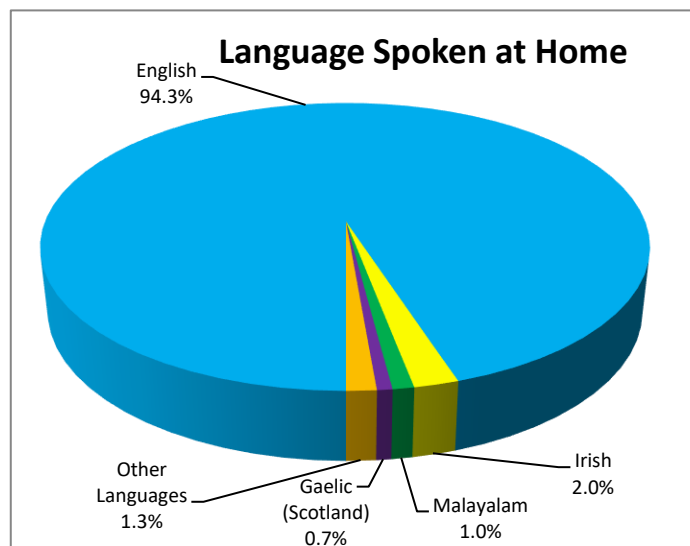
* At the 2016 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question, therefore there can be more responses than total persons.



Language

The main languages spoken at home by Ireland-born people in Australia were English (70,582), Irish (1,498) and Malayalam (715).

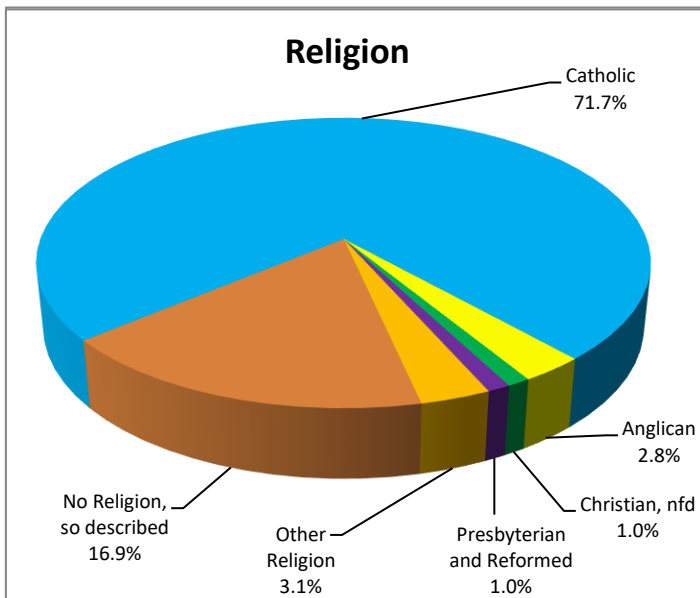
Of the 3,988 Ireland-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 96.3 per cent spoke English very well or well, and 2.9 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



Religion

At the 2016 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Ireland-born were Catholic (53,675), Anglican (2,095) and Christian, nfd (760).

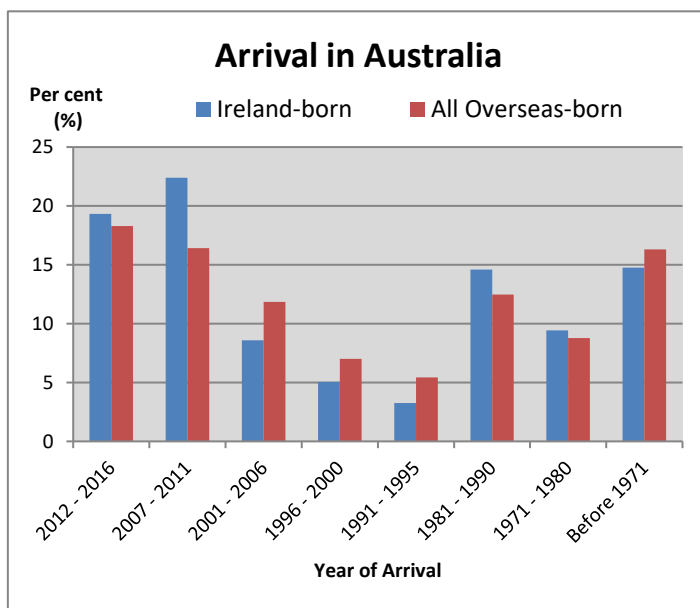
Of the Ireland-born, 16.9 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was lower than that of the total Australian population (29.6 per cent), and 3.2 per cent did not state a religion.



Arrival

Compared to 61.8 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 55.7 per cent of the Ireland-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2007.

Among the total Ireland-born in Australia at the 2016 Census, 22.4 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011 and 19.3 per cent arrived between 2012 and 2016.



Median Income

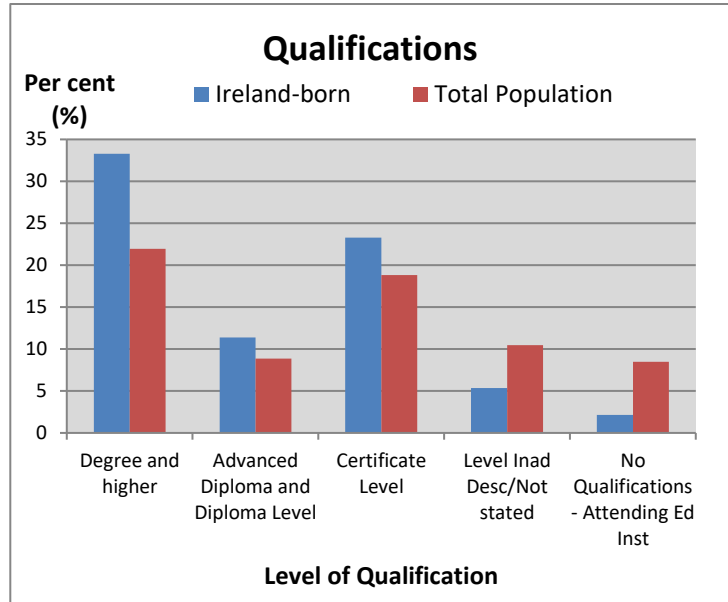
At the time of the 2016 Census, the median Individual Weekly Income for the Ireland-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$1113, compared with \$615 for all overseas-born and \$688 for all Australian-born.

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

Qualifications

At the 2016 Census, 73.4 per cent of the Ireland-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 Ireland-born aged 15 years and over, 2.1 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.

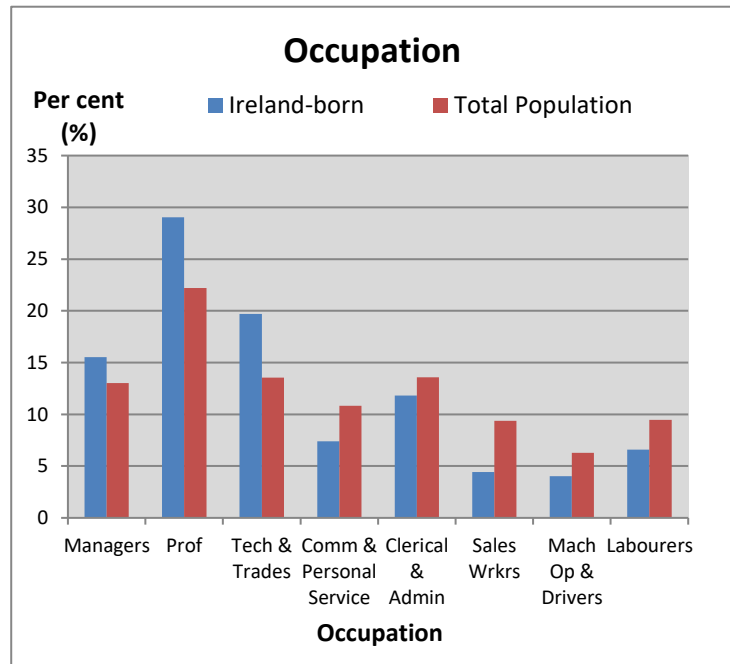


Employment

Among Ireland-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 73.4 per cent and the unemployment rate was 3.4 per cent.

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

Of the 49,030 Ireland-born who were employed, 64.3 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.