



# Laos-born Community Information Summary

## Historical Background

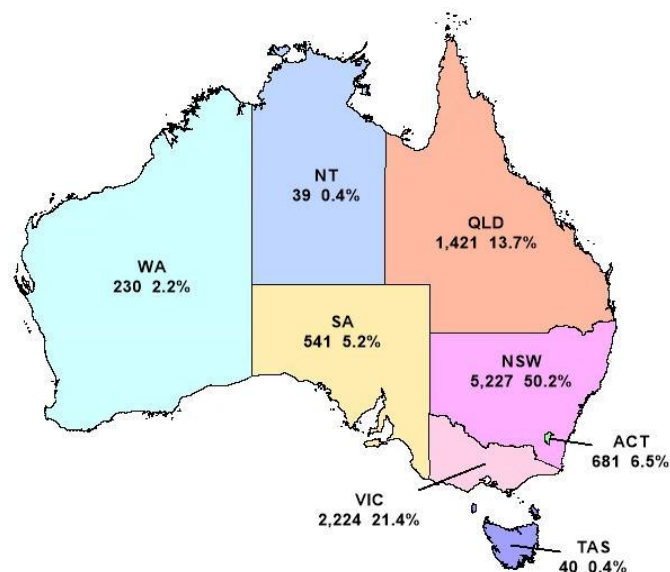
The earliest Lao migrants arrived in Australia as Colombo Plan students in the 1960s and 1970s and were later granted permanent residence. After 1976, they were joined by Lao refugees who left the country following the establishment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic following the end of the war in Indochina. The numbers increased steadily until the 1980s. Since the 1980s small numbers of Laos-born continued to migrate to Australia, mostly under the Family Migration Stream.

## 2016 Census

### Geographic Distribution

The latest Census in 2016 recorded 10,402 Laos-born people in Australia, an increase of 4.7 per cent from the 2011 Census.

The 2016 distribution by State and Territory showed New South Wales had the largest number with 5,227 followed by Victoria (2,224), Queensland (1,421) and the A.C.T (681).

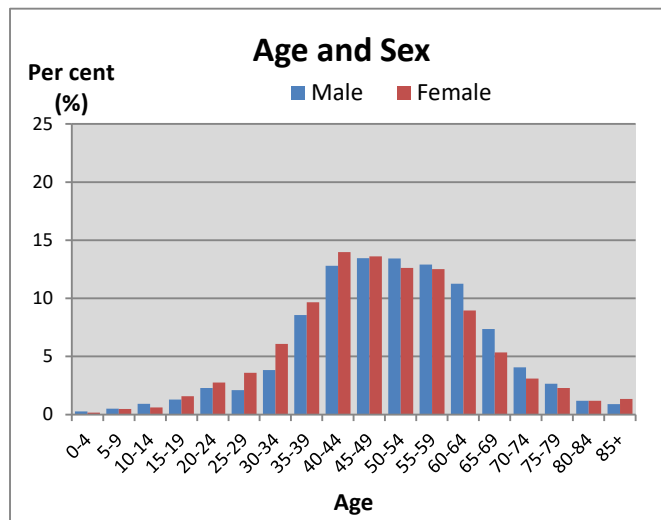


## Age and Sex

The median age of the Laos-born in 2016 was 50 years compared with 44 years for all overseas-born and 38 years for the total Australian population.

The age distribution showed 1.5 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 4.0 per cent were 15-24 years, 30.6 per cent were 25-44 years, 49.4 per cent were 45-64 years and 14.7 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the Laos-born in Australia, there were 4,815 males (46.3 per cent) and 5,582 females (53.7 per cent). The sex ratio was 86 males per 100 females.

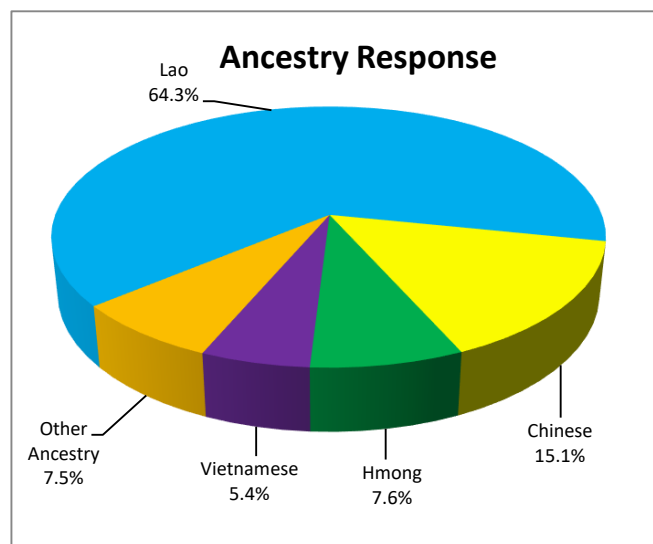


## Ancestry

In the 2016 Census, the top ancestry responses\* that Laos-born people reported were Lao (7,545), Chinese (1,774) and Hmong (893).

In the 2016 Census, Australians reported over 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses\* 15,130 responses were towards Lao ancestry.

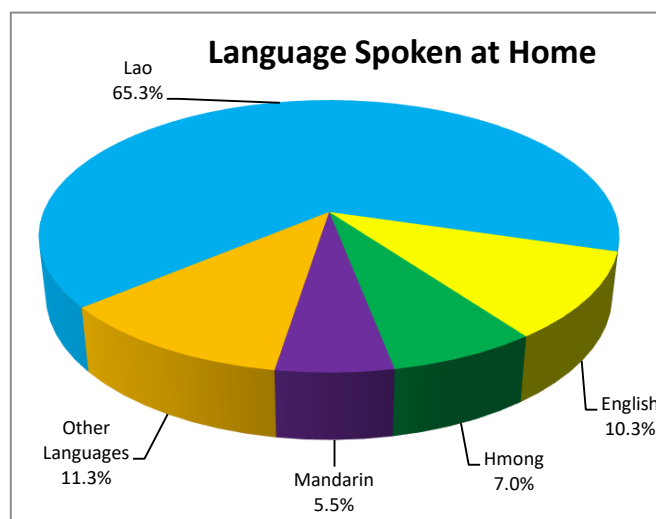
\* At the 2016 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question, therefore there can be more responses than total persons.



## Language

The main languages spoken at home by Laos-born people in Australia were Lao (6,795), English (1,071) and Hmong (725).

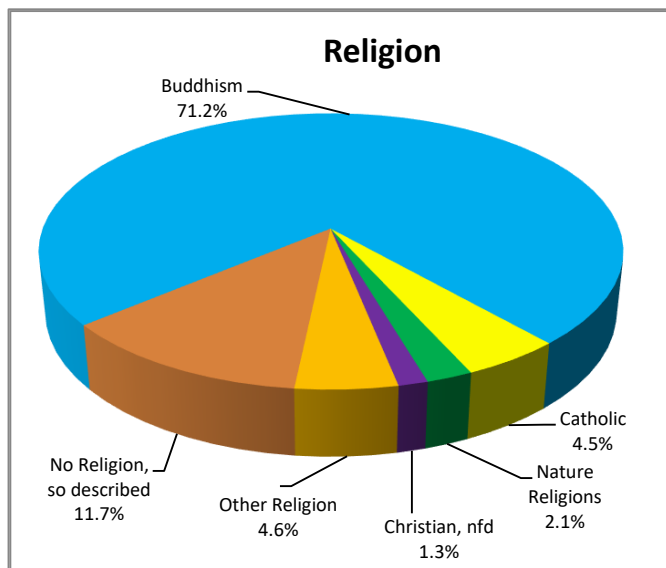
Of the 9,303 Laos-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 62.8 per cent spoke English very well or well, and 36.3 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



## Religion

At the 2016 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Laos-born were Buddhism (7,403), Catholic (472) and Nature Religions (220).

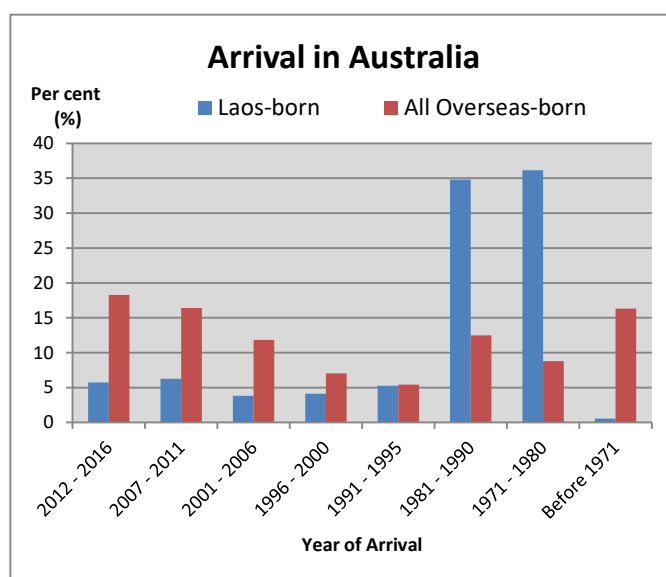
Of the Laos-born, 11.7 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was lower than that of the total Australian population (29.6 per cent), and 4.0 per cent did not state a religion.



## Arrival

Compared to 61.8 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 84.6 per cent of the Laos-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2007.

Among the total Laos-born in Australia at the 2016 Census, 6.3 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011 and 5.7 per cent arrived between 2012 and 2016.



## Median Income

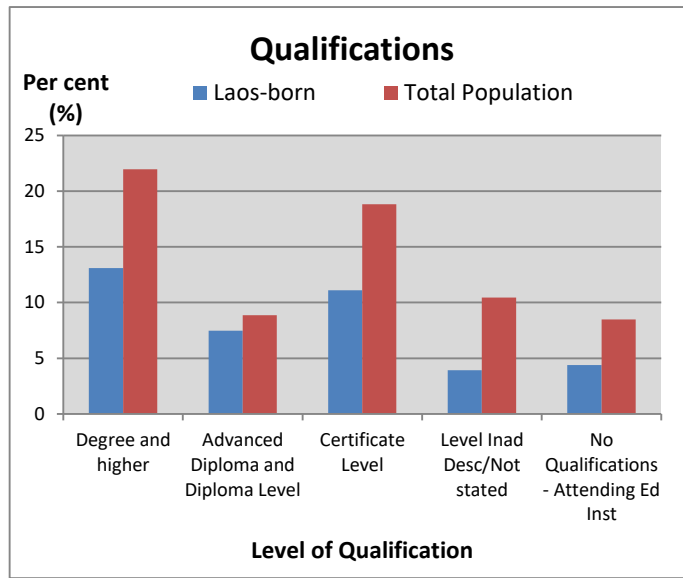
At the time of the 2016 Census, the median Individual Weekly Income for the Laos-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$547, compared with \$615 for all overseas-born and \$688 for all Australian-born.

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

**Qualifications**

At the 2016 Census, 35.6 per cent of the Laos-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 Laos-born aged 15 years and over, 4.4 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.

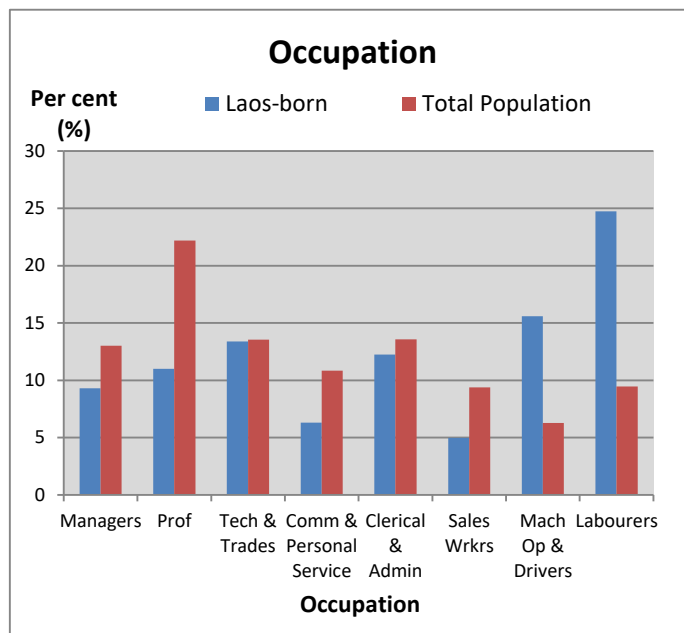


**Employment**

Among Laos-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 58.9 per cent and the unemployment rate was 9.3 per cent.

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

Of the 5,443 Laos-born who were employed, 33.7 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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