



# Myanmar-born Community Information Summary

## Historical Background

The first Myanmar people to settle in Australia were the so called 'Anglo-Burmese'. The Anglo-Burmese were of Myanmar and European descent, and emerged as a distinct community through relations between the British and other European settlers and the indigenous peoples of Myanmar. Myanmar was administered by the British from 1886 as Burma.

Following independence from Britain in 1948 and the rise of nationalism, employment for the Anglo-Burmese became difficult forcing many to leave Myanmar. Between 1947 and 1959, about 3500 Anglo-Burmese settled in Australia. Following the 1962 military takeover of the Myanmar government, a further 2500 Anglo-Burmese settled in Australia between 1965 and 1972. Numbers grew significantly due to the intake of Myanmar people under the Migration Refugee Special Humanitarian Programme. By 1991, the Census recorded 8223 Myanmar-born people in Australia.

Since 1988, more Myanmar people left the country due to ethnic tensions and government oppression. An estimated one million Myanmar people fled to neighbouring countries, predominantly Thailand. Significant numbers have arrived in Australia as refugees, often after long stays in refugee camps.

Myanmar Australian communities are ethnically diverse, each with their own unique dialects, beliefs and customs, reflecting the ethnic makeup of Myanmar. Members of Myanmar communities have tended to self-identify based on ethnicity.

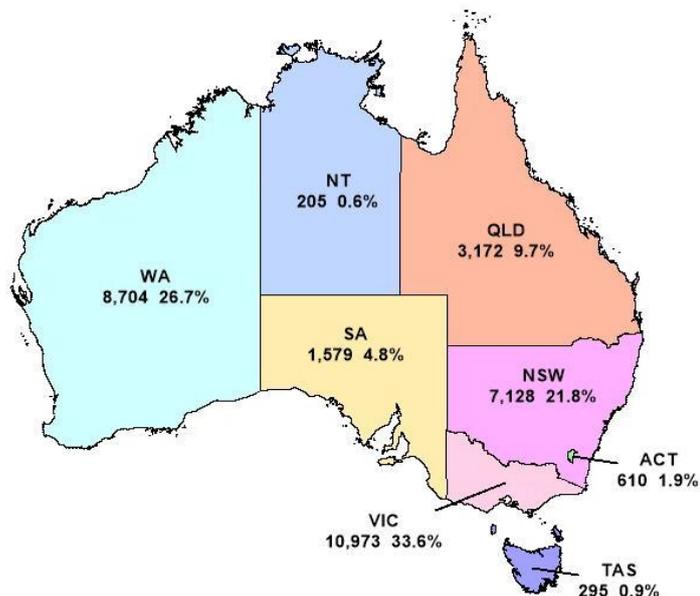
More than half of the Myanmar-born have arrived after 2006 and numbers continue to grow.

## 2016 Census

### Geographic Distribution

The latest Census in 2016 recorded 32,655 Myanmar-born people in Australia, an increase of 50.1 per cent from the 2011 Census.

The 2016 distribution by State and Territory showed Victoria had the largest number with 10,973 followed by Western Australia (8,704), New South Wales (7,128) and Queensland (3,172).

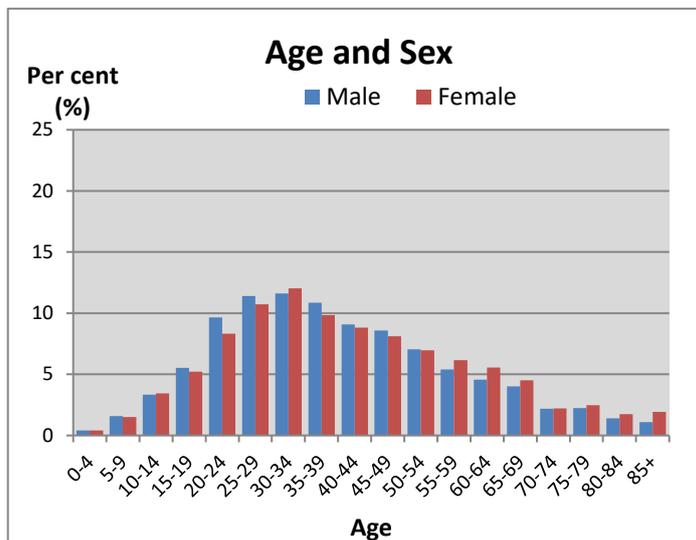


## Age and Sex

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

The age distribution showed 5.3 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 14.4 per cent were 15-24 years, 42.2 per cent were 25-44 years, 26.2 per cent were 45-64 years and 11.9 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the Myanmar-born in Australia, there were 16,483 males (50.5 per cent) and 16,170 females (49.5 per cent). The sex ratio was 102 males per 100 females.

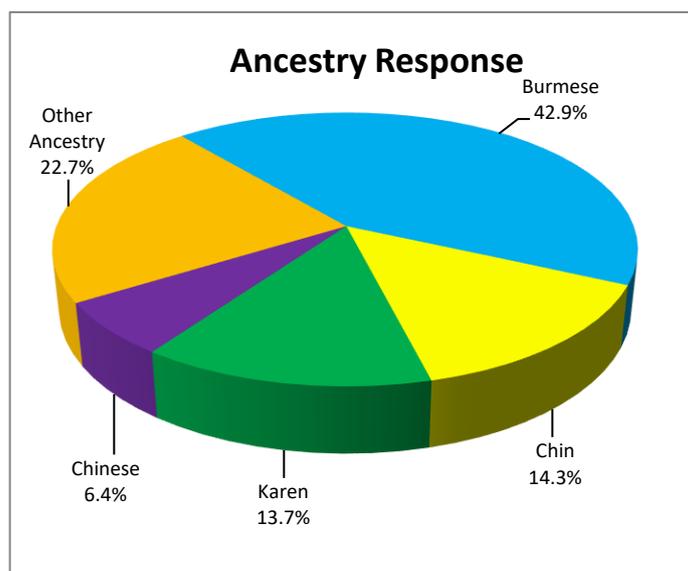


## Ancestry

In the 2016 Census, the top ancestry responses\* that Myanmar-born people reported were Burmese (16,354), Chin (5,438) and Karen (5,238).

In the 2016 Census, Australians reported over 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses\* 28,562 responses were towards Burmese ancestry.

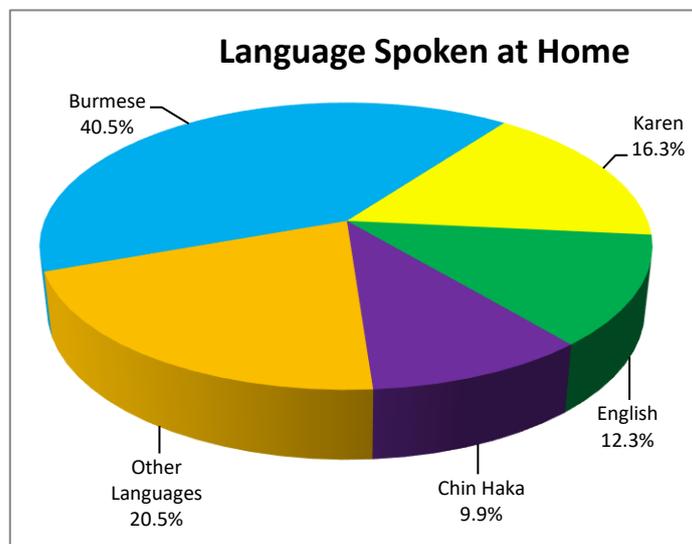
\* At the 2016 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question, therefore there can be more responses than total persons.



## Language

The main languages spoken at home by Myanmar-born people in Australia were Burmese (13,212), Karen (5,330) and English (4,010).

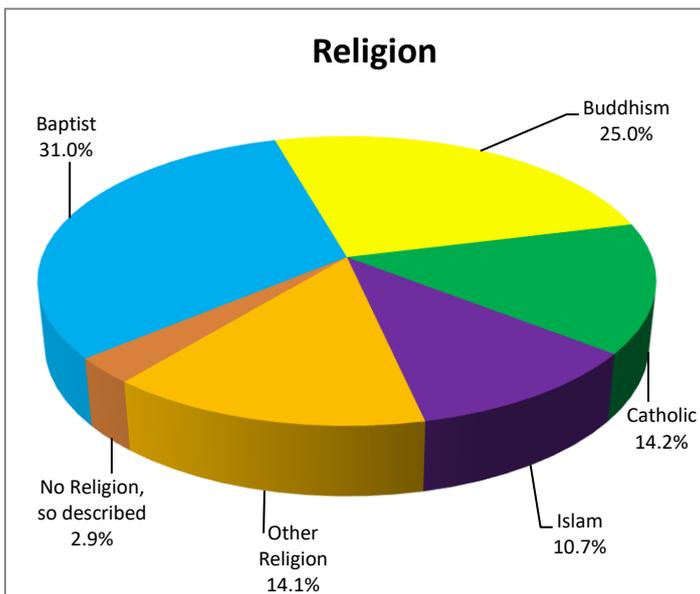
Of the 28,545 Myanmar-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 56.3 per cent spoke English very well or well, and 43.1 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



## Religion

At the 2016 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Myanmar-born were Baptist (10,133), Buddhism (8,163) and Catholic (4,627).

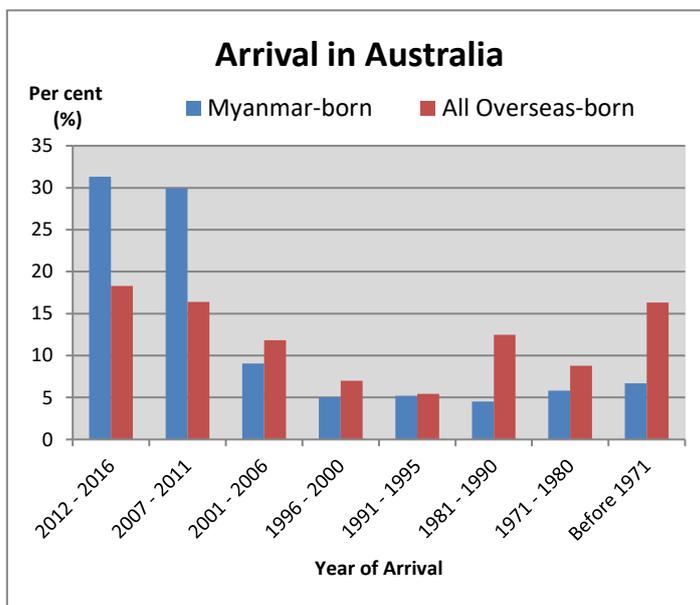
Of the Myanmar-born, 2.9 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was lower than that of the total Australian population (29.6 per cent), and 1.8 per cent did not state a religion.



## Arrival

Compared to 61.8 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 36.3 per cent of the Myanmar-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2007.

Among the total Myanmar-born in Australia at the 2016 Census, 29.9 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011 and 31.3 per cent arrived between 2012 and 2016.



## Median Income

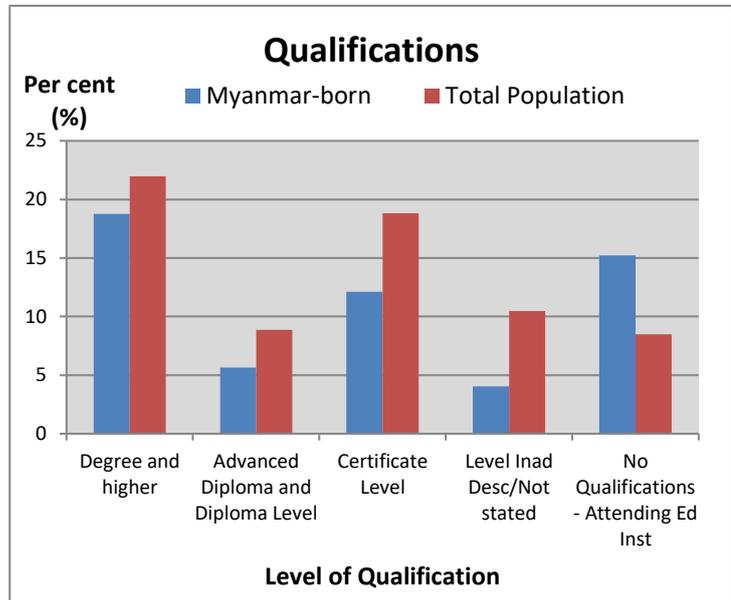
At the time of the 2016 Census, the median Individual Weekly Income for the Myanmar-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$438, compared with \$615 for all overseas-born and \$688 for all Australian-born.

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

## Qualifications

At the 2016 Census, 40.6 per cent of the Myanmar-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 Myanmar-born aged 15 years and over, 15.2 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.

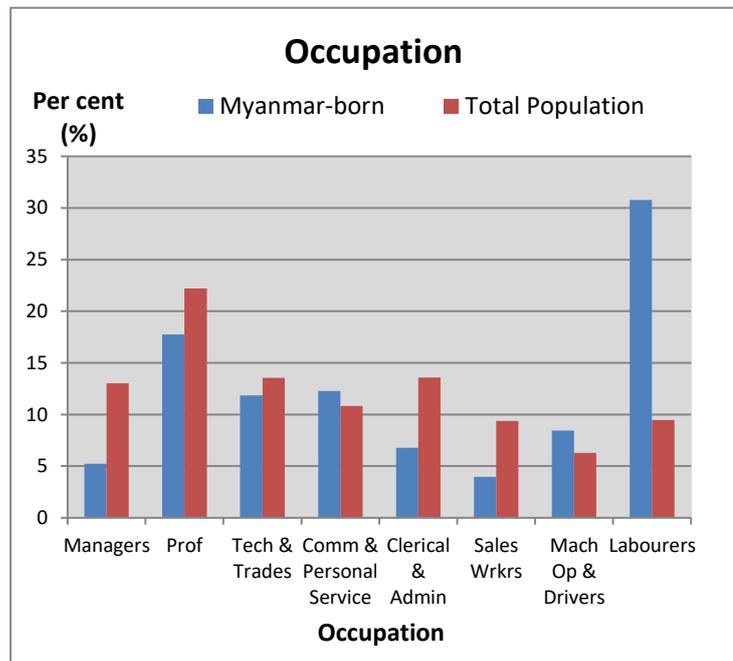


## Employment

Among Myanmar-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 52.9 per cent and the unemployment rate was 12.8 per cent.

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

Of the 14,127 Myanmar-born who were employed, 34.8 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.