



Portugal-born Community Information Summary

Historical Background

Although it is still widely accepted that the Dutch were the earliest European visitors to Australia, there is evidence to suggest that the Portuguese explored parts of Australia's north-western coast, possibly as early as 250 years before Captain Cook's voyage of 1770. This would have been facilitated by the establishment of a Portuguese colony in Timor (only 475 kilometres from the Australian coast) in 1516.

Two Portuguese families are known to have migrated in the nineteenth century, and one was commissioned to grow grapes on an experimental farm. By the time of the 1901 Census there were 311 recorded Portugal-born in Australia. In the early twentieth century the number declined, with the 1933 Census only recording 70 Portugal-born. In the 1950s the number increased slightly with the arrival in Western Australia of some immigrants from Madeira, who established a fishing community in Fremantle.

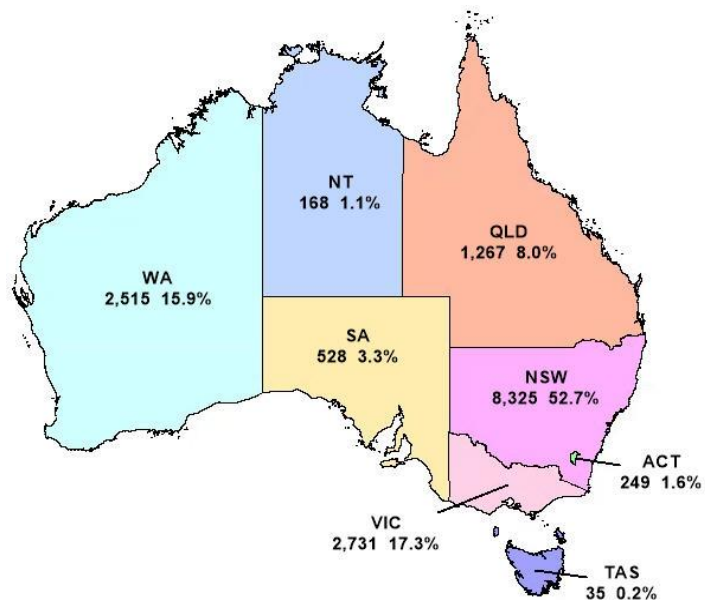
By the 1961 Census, there were 958 Portugal-born in Australia. There was an increase in numbers due to the return of troops following the end of the protracted Portuguese colonial wars in Angola and Mozambique in 1974, and the return of expatriate Portuguese following the arrival of Indonesian troops in East Timor in 1975. These events had a significant impact on Portugal's economy, which led many Portuguese to emigrate to other countries, including Australia.

2016 Census

Geographic Distribution

The latest Census in 2016 recorded 15,809 Portugal-born people in Australia, an increase of 3.1 per cent from the 2011 Census.

The 2016 distribution by State and Territory showed New South Wales had the largest number with 8,325 followed by Victoria (2,731), Western Australia (2,515) and Queensland (1,267).

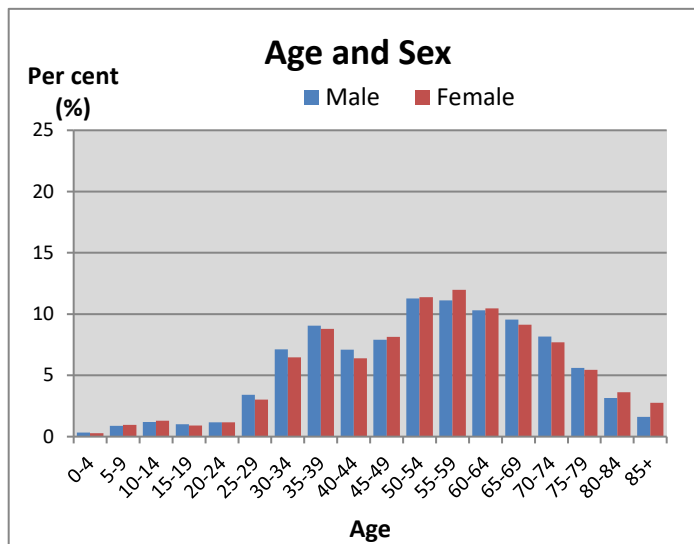


Age and Sex

The median age of the Portugal-born in 2016 was 55 years compared with 44 years for all overseas-born and 38 years for the total Australian population.

The age distribution showed 2.4 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 2.1 per cent were 15-24 years, 25.7 per cent were 25-44 years, 41.3 per cent were 45-64 years and 28.4 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the Portugal-born in Australia, there were 7,996 males (50.6 per cent) and 7,813 females (49.4 per cent). The sex ratio was 102 males per 100 females.

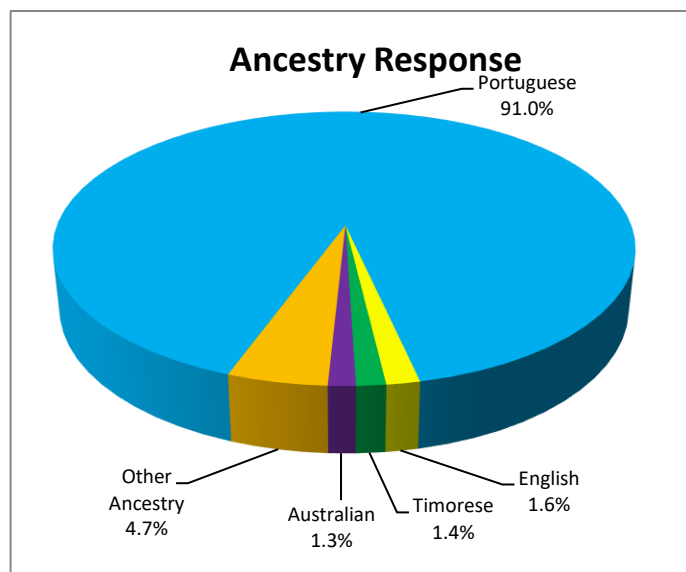


Ancestry

In the 2016 Census, the top ancestry responses* that Portugal-born people reported were Portuguese (14,946), English (260) and Timorese (230).

In the 2016 Census, Australians reported over 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses* 61,885 responses were towards Portuguese ancestry.

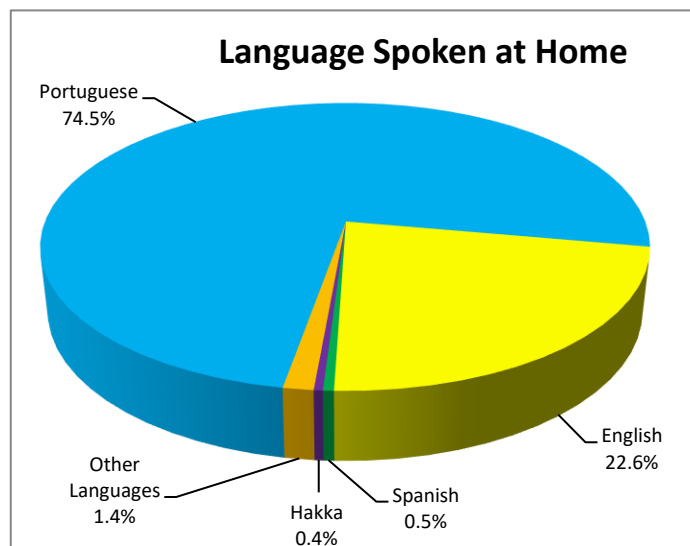
* At the 2016 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question, therefore there can be more responses than total persons.



Language

The main languages spoken at home by Portugal-born people in Australia were Portuguese (11,775), English (3,567) and Spanish (76).

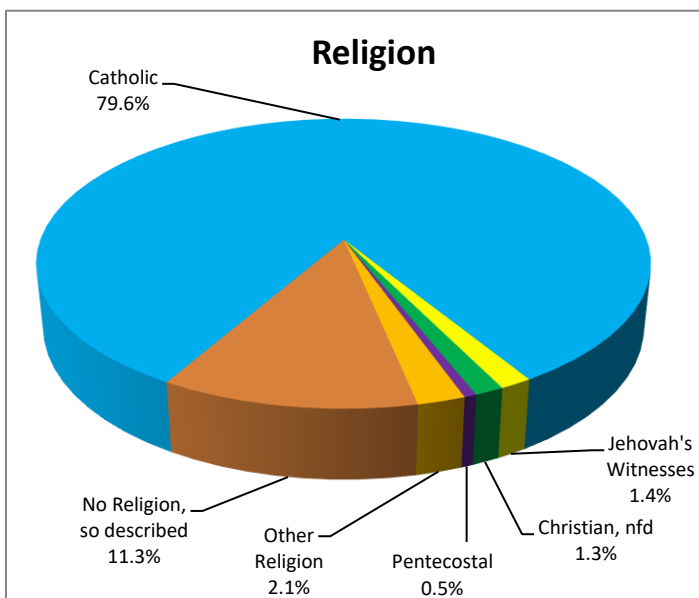
Of the 12,179 Portugal-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 76.7 per cent spoke English very well or well, and 22.3 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



Religion

At the 2016 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Portugal-born were Catholic (12,589), Jehovah's Witnesses (222) and Christian, nfd (201).

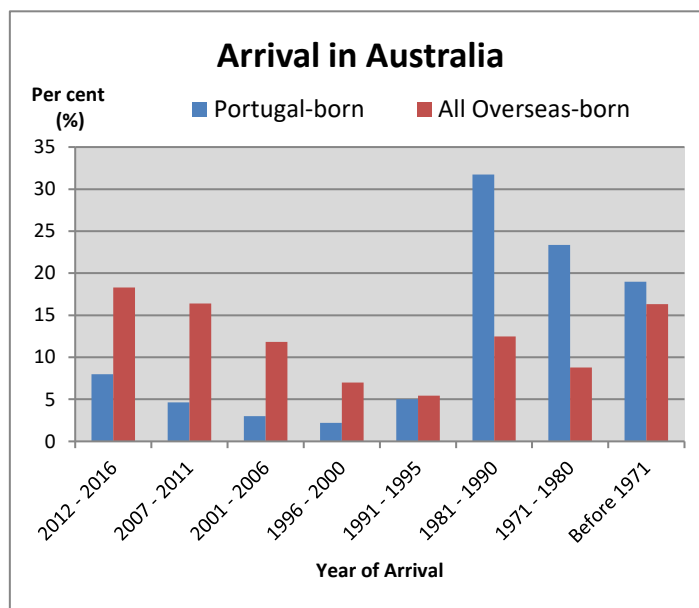
Of the Portugal-born, 11.3 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was lower than that of the total Australian population (29.6 per cent), and 3.6 per cent did not state a religion.



Arrival

Compared to 61.8 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 84.3 per cent of the Portugal-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2007.

Among the total Portugal-born in Australia at the 2016 Census, 4.6 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011 and 8.0 per cent arrived between 2012 and 2016.



Median Income

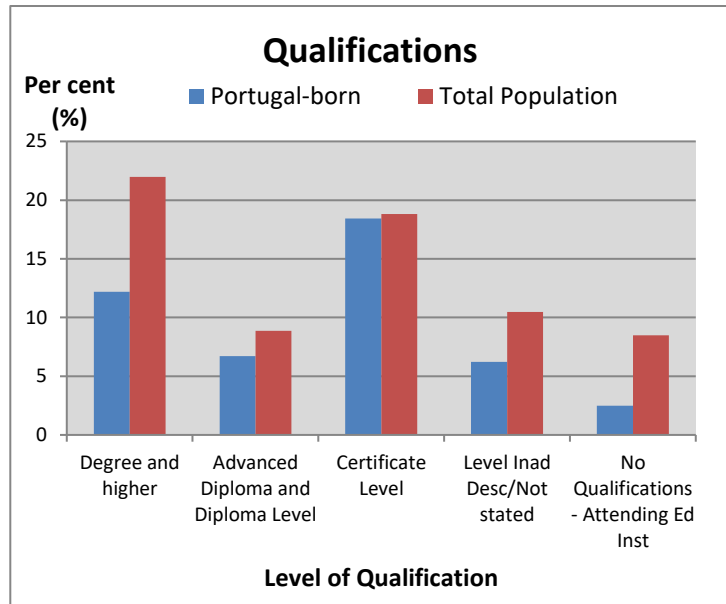
At the time of the 2016 Census, the median Individual Weekly Income for the Portugal-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$614, compared with \$615 for all overseas-born and \$688 for all Australian-born.

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

Qualifications

At the 2016 Census, 43.6 per cent of the Portugal-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 Portugal-born aged 15 years and over, 2.5 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.

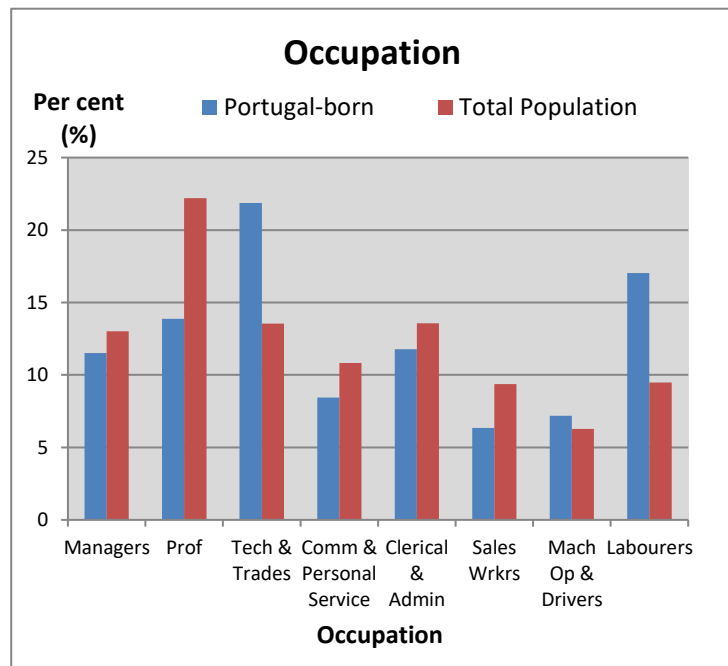


Employment

Among Portugal-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 57.1 per cent and the unemployment rate was 5.1 per cent.

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

Of the 8,253 Portugal-born who were employed, 47.2 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.