



South Korea-born Community Information Summary

Historical Background

There is some evidence of the presence of a small number of Korea-born in Australia as early as 1920, who were most likely the children of Australian Protestant missionaries who began work in Korea around 1885. A few also came to Australia between 1921 and 1941 for education.

After the Korean War (1950-53), some Korean women came to Australia as war brides and children as orphans, adopted by Australian families. The relaxation of immigration restrictions in the late 1960s provided the first opportunity for larger numbers of Koreans to enter Australia. In 1969, the first Korean immigrants arrived in Sydney under the Skilled Migration Program. However, there were only 468 Korea-born recorded as living in Australia at the time of the 1971 Census.

In the early 1970s, about 1000 Koreans arrived each year for short-term stays (mostly as students) and around 100 arrived for permanent residence. Some of these new arrivals subsequently sponsored family members for migration. Between 1976 and 1985, the number of Korea-born living in Australia increased more than sixfold between the 1976 Census (1460) and the 1986 Census (9290).

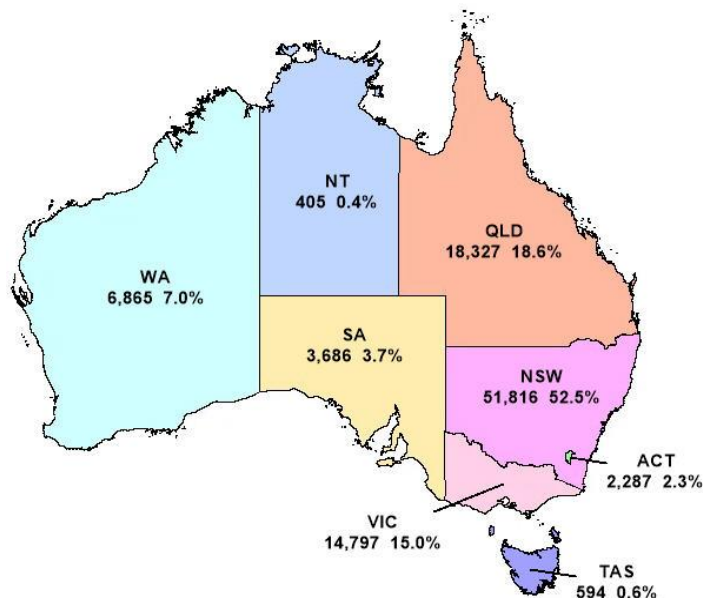
From 1986 to 1991, there was a further increase in settler arrivals, many coming under the Skilled and Business migration categories. Almost half of the Korea-born in Australia have arrived in the last ten years, including as students.

2016 Census

Geographic Distribution

The latest Census in 2016 recorded 98,776 South Korea-born people in Australia, an increase of 32.5 per cent from the 2011 Census.

The 2016 distribution by State and Territory showed New South Wales had the largest number with 51,816 followed by Queensland (18,327), Victoria (14,797) and Western Australia (6,865).

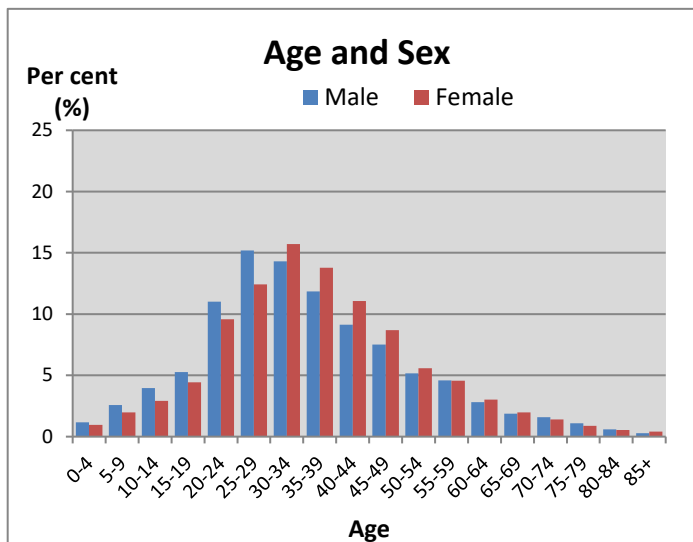


Age and Sex

The median age of the South Korea-born in 2016 was 34 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, 15.1 per cent were 15-24 years, 51.8 per cent were 25-44 years, 21.0 per cent were 45-64 years and 5.4 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the South Korea-born in Australia, there were 46,332 males (46.9 per cent) and 52,443 females (53.1 per cent). The sex ratio was 88 males per 100 females.

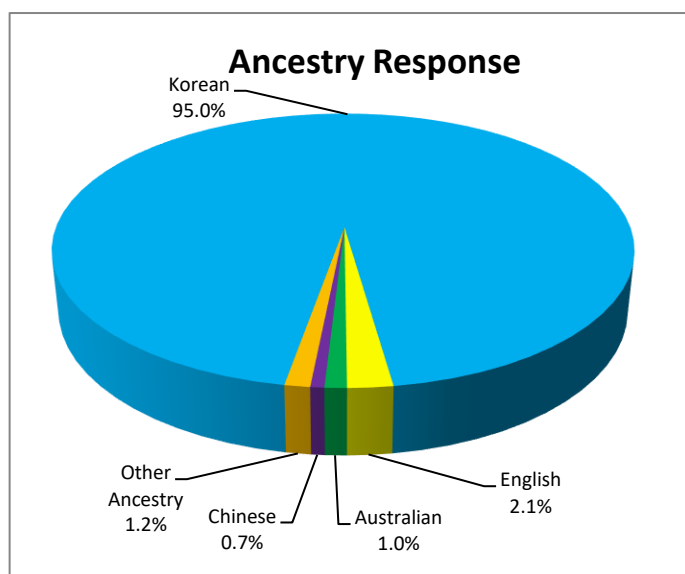


Ancestry

In the 2016 Census, the top ancestry responses* that South Korea-born people reported were Korean (95,664), English (2,161) and Australian (1,048).

In the 2016 Census, Australians reported over 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses* 123,017 responses were towards Korean ancestry.

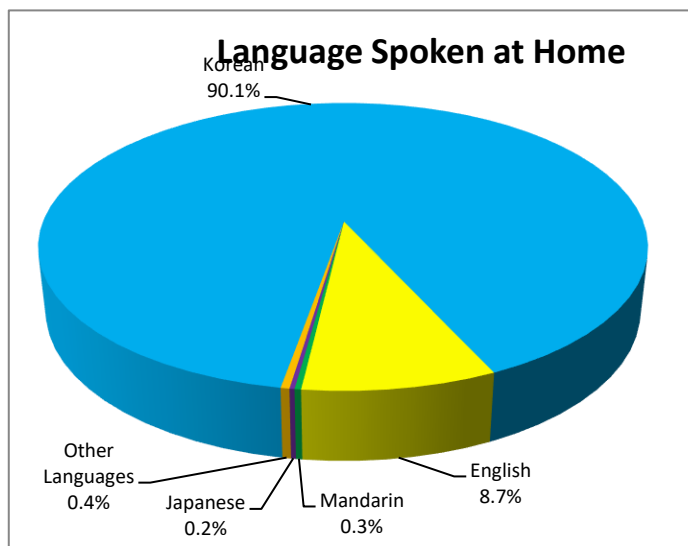
* At the 2016 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question, therefore there can be more responses than total persons.



Language

The main languages spoken at home by South Korea-born people in Australia were Korean (88,960), English (8,596) and Mandarin (284).

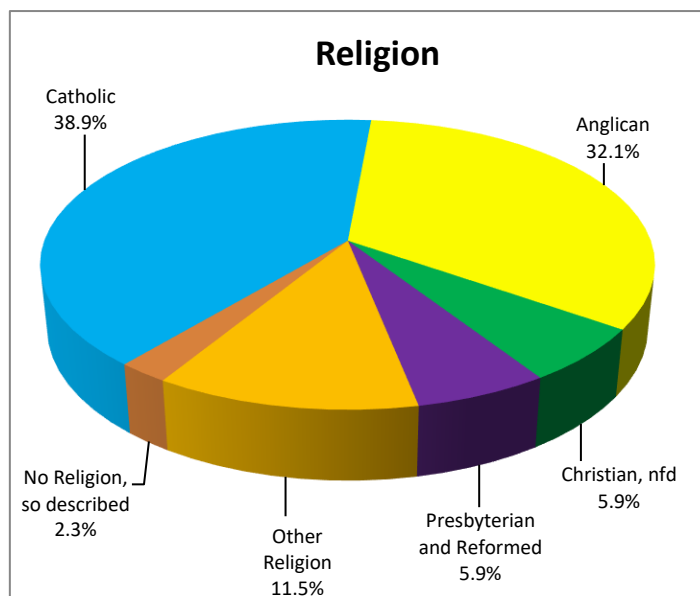
Of the 89,986 South Korea-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 66.2 per cent spoke English very well or well, and 33.1 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



Religion

At the 2016 Census the major religious affiliations amongst South Korea-born were Presbyterian and Reformed (19,200), Catholic (17,363) and Uniting Church (7,506).

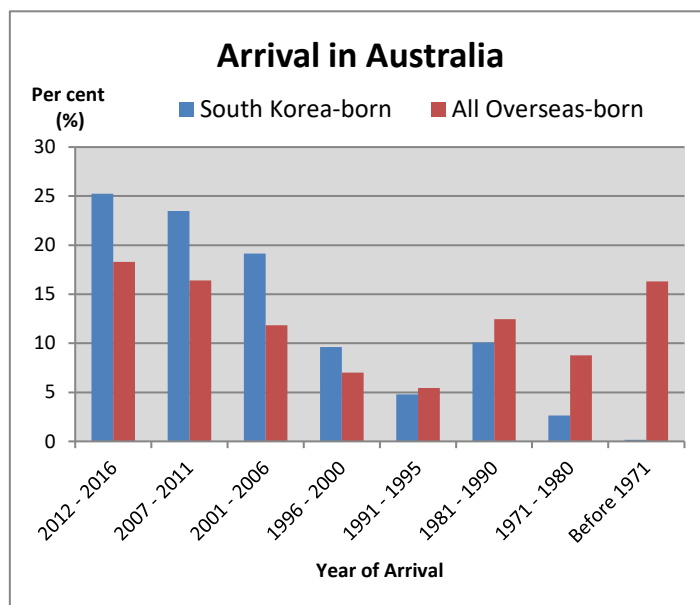
Of the South Korea-born, 37.5 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was higher than that of the total Australian population (29.6 per cent), and 2.5 per cent did not state a religion.



Arrival

Compared to 61.8 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 46.4 per cent of the South Korea-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2007.

Among the total South Korea-born in Australia at the 2016 Census, 23.5 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011 and 25.3 per cent arrived between 2012 and 2016.



Median Income

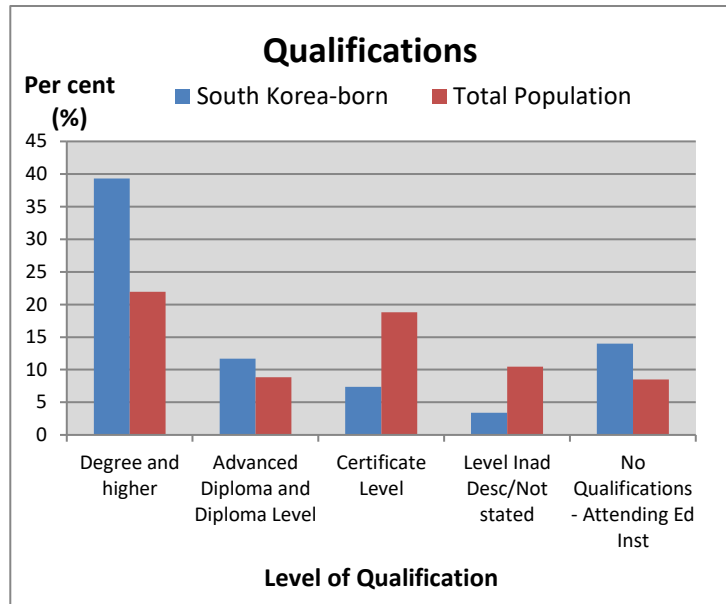
At the time of the 2016 Census, the median Individual Weekly Income for the South Korea-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$491, compared with \$615 for all overseas-born and \$688 for all Australian-born.

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

Qualifications

At the 2016 Census, 61.8 per cent of the South Korea-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 South Korea-born aged 15 years and over, 14.0 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.

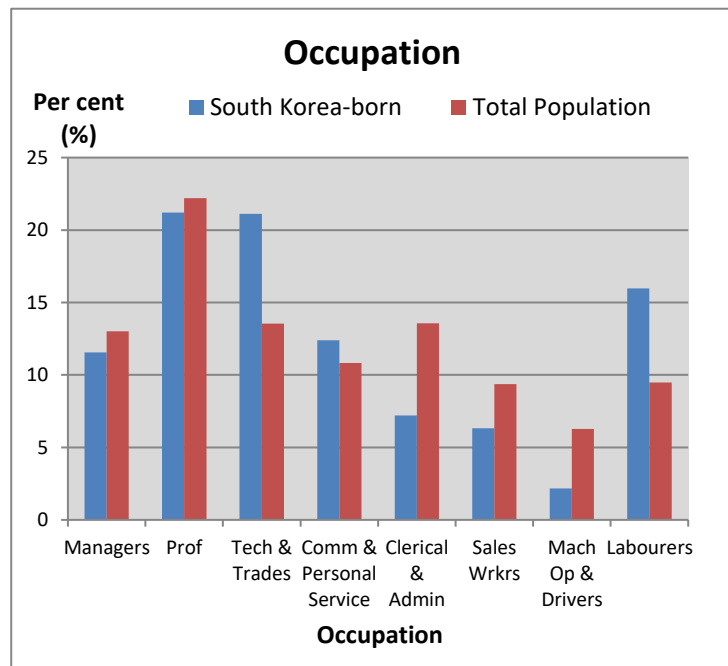


Employment

Among South Korea-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 64.7 per cent and the unemployment rate was 8.6 per cent.

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

Of the 54,132 South Korea-born who were employed, 53.9 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.