



Thailand-born Community Information Summary

Historical Background

Thailand does not have a history of migration in large numbers to other countries. Most of those who came to Australia before the 1980s were either married to Australians or were former students. Many of the students had been sponsored under various schemes, notably the Colombo Plan and military traineeships.

During the 1980s, a large number of Thai students came to Australia, including for short courses in English language training. By 1986, the Thailand-born population rose to 6998 people, half of whom were of Thai ancestry. In Thailand, the population comprises of various ethnic groups such as Thai, Chinese, Khmer, Mon, as well as indigenous groups such as the Semang, Lana and Chao Nam.

Over the centuries, Thailand has been home to displaced people from neighbouring countries. In 1975 a large number of Indochinese refugees were accommodated in border encampments in Thailand. Australia accepted many of the refugees for settlement.

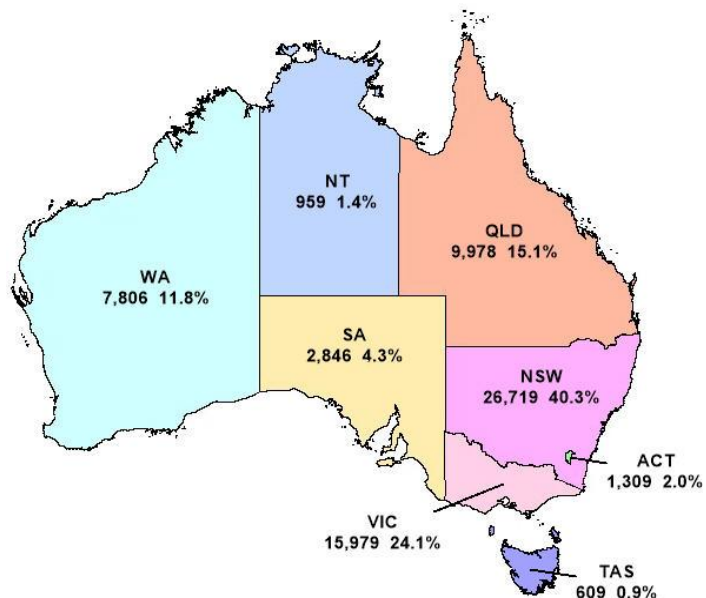
Since the year 2000, most Thailand-born (69 per cent) have arrived under the Family migration stream, followed by Skilled (17 per cent) and Humanitarian (14 per cent) streams.

2016 Census

Geographic Distribution

The latest Census in 2016 recorded 66,229 Thailand-born people in Australia, an increase of 45.7 per cent from the 2011 Census.

The 2016 distribution by State and Territory showed New South Wales had the largest number with 26,719 followed by Victoria (15,979), Queensland (9,978) and Western Australia (7,806).

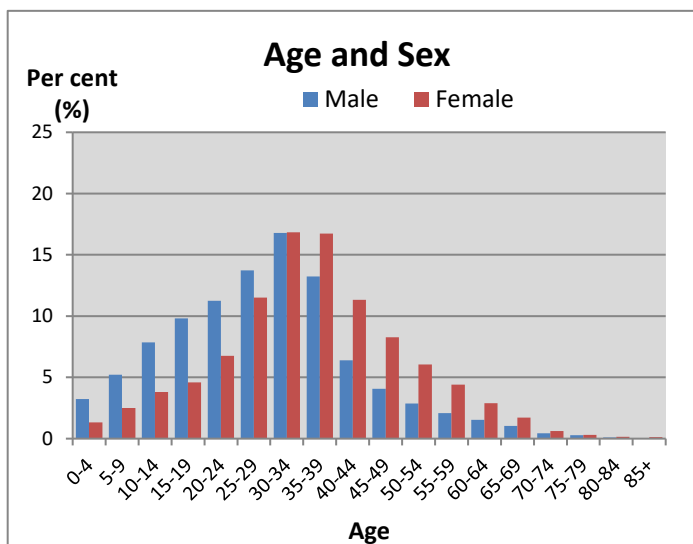


Age and Sex

The median age of the Thailand-born in 2016 was 33 years compared with 44 years for all overseas-born and 38 years for the total Australian population.

The age distribution showed 10.4 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 14.5 per cent were 15-24 years, 54.4 per cent were 25-44 years, 18.1 per cent were 45-64 years and 2.6 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the Thailand-born in Australia, there were 21,243 males (32.1 per cent) and 44,988 females (67.9 per cent). The sex ratio was 47 males per 100 females.

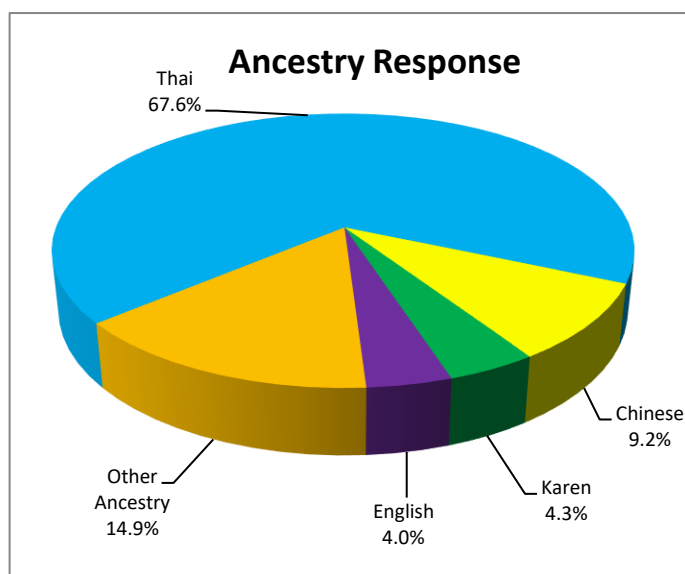


Ancestry

In the 2016 Census, the top ancestry responses* that Thailand-born people reported were Thai (51,676), Chinese (7,043) and Karen (3,279).

In the 2016 Census, Australians reported over 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses* 70,235 responses were towards Thai ancestry.

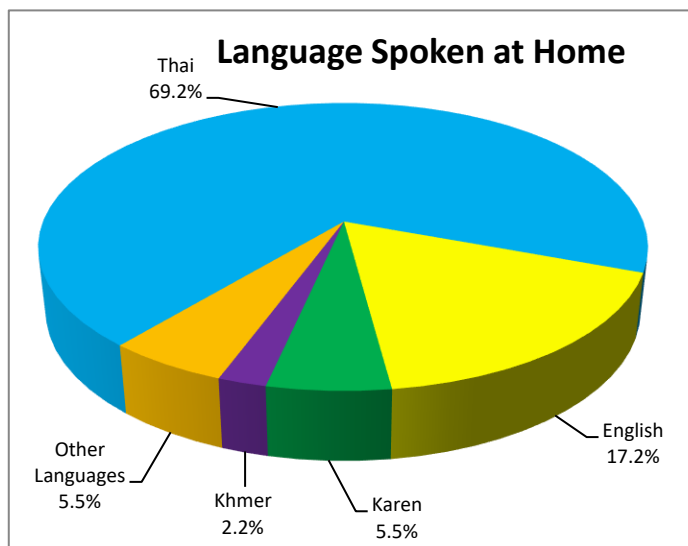
* At the 2016 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question, therefore there can be more responses than total persons.



Language

The main languages spoken at home by Thailand-born people in Australia were Thai (45,811), English (11,401) and Karen (3,658).

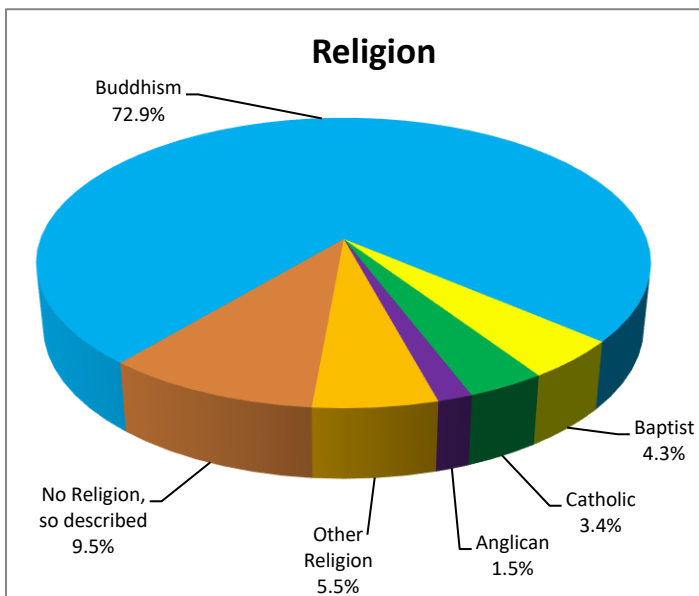
Of the 54,671 Thailand-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 76.8 per cent spoke English very well or well, and 22.3 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



Religion

At the 2016 Census the major religious affiliations amongst Thailand-born were Buddhism (48,248), Baptist (2,839) and Catholic (2,277).

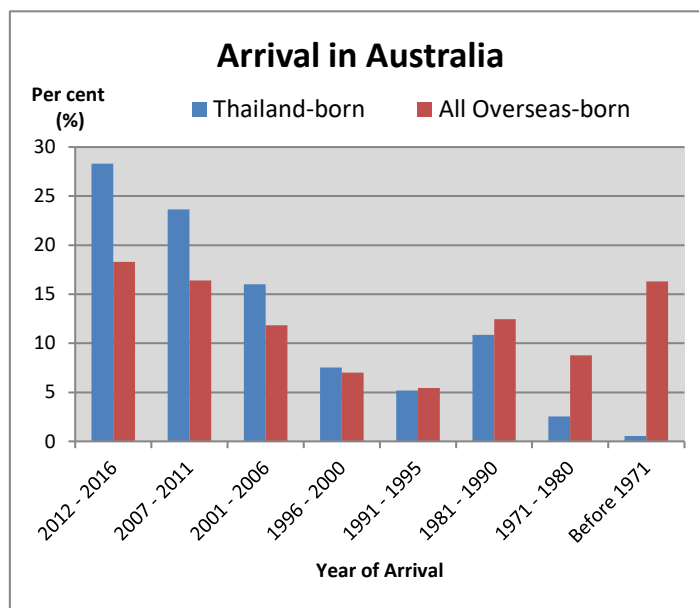
Of the Thailand-born, 9.5 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was lower than that of the total Australian population (29.6 per cent), and 2.6 per cent did not state a religion.



Arrival

Compared to 61.8 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 42.7 per cent of the Thailand-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2007.

Among the total Thailand-born in Australia at the 2016 Census, 23.7 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011 and 28.3 per cent arrived between 2012 and 2016.



Median Income

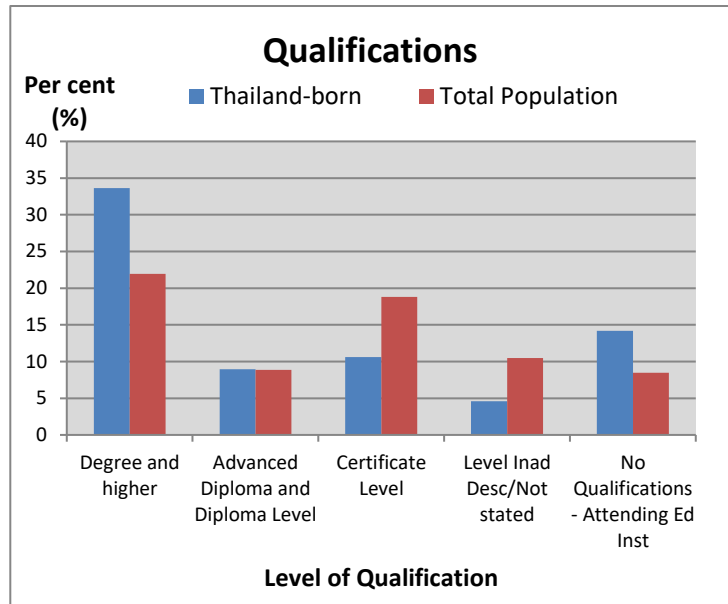
At the time of the 2016 Census, the median Individual Weekly Income for the Thailand-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$449, compared with \$615 for all overseas-born and \$688 for all Australian-born.

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

Qualifications

At the 2016 Census, 57.8 per cent of the Thailand-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 Thailand-born aged 15 years and over, 14.2 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.

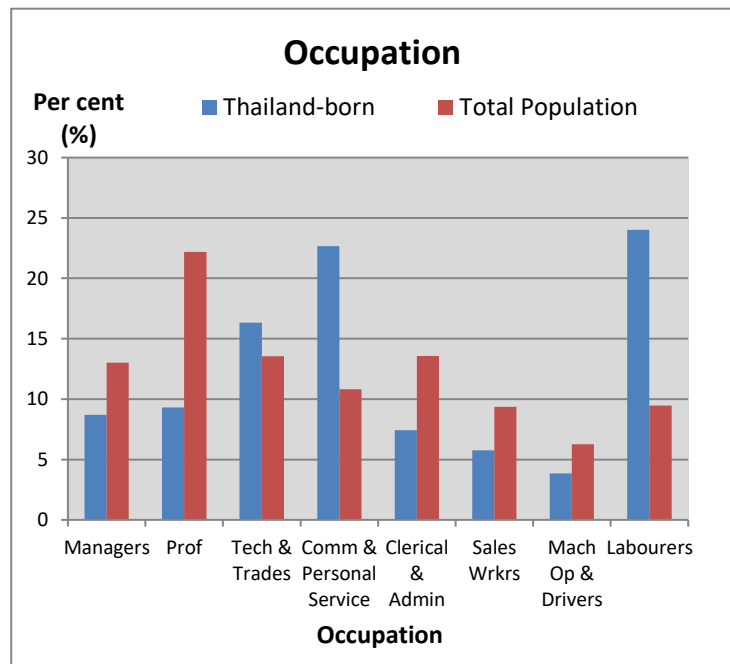


Employment

Among Thailand-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 68.8 per cent and the unemployment rate was 8.7 per cent.

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

Of the 37,000 Thailand-born who were employed, 34.3 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.