



# Diversity

# figures

A statistical snapshot of the diversity of Queensland's population

## About diversity figures

In 2001, 17.1 per cent of Queensland's total resident population<sup>1</sup> stated they were born overseas, highlighting the diversity of our State. The Queensland Government values the cultural, social and economic rewards this diversity generates within Queensland and has compiled this brochure to illustrate the unique features of our diverse population.

The brochure primarily uses data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) 2001 Census of Population and Housing to provide a snapshot of Queensland's population diversity.<sup>2</sup> Where indicated, unpublished data from the ABS publication *Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia* (3401.0) has also been used to provide a historical perspective of Queensland's diversity.

There are a number of interesting social and cultural characteristics featured in the brochure, including:

- The source countries of overseas-born persons in Queensland.
- The distribution of overseas-born persons across Queensland's local government areas.
- English language proficiency of overseas-born persons.

Further information regarding the statistics presented in this brochure can be obtained from the Office of Economic and Statistical Research (see back page for details).

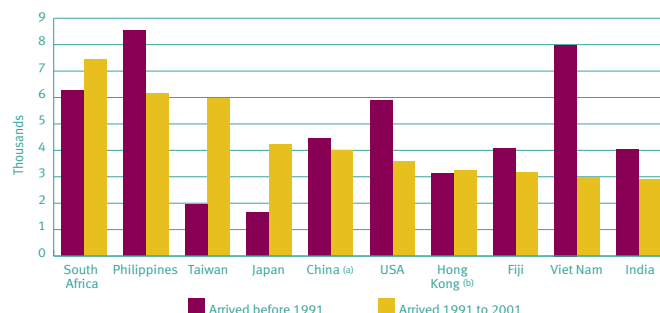
## 2. Arrivals and birthplaces

- There were 601,693 overseas-born persons living in Queensland in 2001, representing 17.1 per cent of Queensland's total resident population.
- More overseas-born Queenslanders came from North-West Europe (6.7 per cent of the total population) than any other major country grouping, followed by Oceania minus Australia (4.4 per cent of the total population – most of whom were from New Zealand), and Southern and Eastern Europe (1.6 per cent of the total population).<sup>3</sup>
- Of interest, settlers who arrived before 1991 came principally from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and European countries such as Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. While New Zealand and the United Kingdom continued to be the principal source countries for settlers to Queensland between 1991 and 2001 (48,456 persons and 22,194 persons respectively), the numbers of migrants from Asian countries such as Taiwan and Japan increased proportionally (see Figure 1).
- In 1998 and 2002 the total number of immigrants intending to settle permanently in Queensland was approximately the same at 15,614 persons and 15,620 persons respectively. The 2002 figure represents a decline of 14.7 per cent from the corresponding 2001 figure of 18,307 persons. (ABS, 3401.0)

## 1. Indigenous persons

- A total of 112,772 persons who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin were counted in Queensland on census night. This represents 3.1 per cent of the State's overall population count.
- The majority (77.4 per cent) of these Indigenous Queenslanders identified as being of Aboriginal origin. A further 14.6 per cent identified as Torres Strait Islander persons, while 8.0 per cent identified as being of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.
- About two-thirds (68.7 per cent) of Indigenous people counted lived outside South-East Queensland in 2001, largely in the northern areas of the State.
- Queensland's Indigenous population count increased by 18.1 per cent between the censuses of 1996 and 2001, compared with an increase of 8.5 per cent for the total population. The relatively large increase in the Indigenous population reflects a greater propensity for Indigenous people to identify, reflecting a growing strength in culture and status within the wider community.

Figure 1 - Overseas-born Queenslanders: top 10 source birthplaces (excluding New Zealand and the United Kingdom) of persons who arrived in Australia between 1991 and 2001



- (a) China (excluding Special Administrative Regions and Taiwan Province).
- (b) Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region of China).

Source: ABS, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

- New Zealand citizens comprised the largest percentage of immigrants intending to settle in Queensland in 2002 (6,534 persons or 41.8 per cent of total immigrants), followed by the United Kingdom (1,650 persons or 10.6 per cent) and South Africa (934 persons or 6.0 per cent). (ABS, 3401.0)

<sup>1</sup> Almost 180,000 persons who were usual residents of Queensland did not state their birthplace at the time of the 2001 Census. These people are included in Queensland's total resident population.

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all Census data in this brochure relates to place of usual residence, which is where persons usually live rather than the place where they were counted on Census night.

<sup>3</sup> Children born in Australia of overseas-born parents are included in the Australian-born figure.

### 3. Overseas-born persons by geographic location

- When ranked according to the proportion of overseas-born persons, eight of the top ten local government areas (LGAs) in Queensland were located in the south-east corner of the State (Brisbane and Moreton statistical divisions). The two LGAs located outside of South-East Queensland were Cairns and Mareeba, with 17.7 per cent and 16.9 per cent of the total usual resident population being born overseas respectively (see Figure 2).
- More than 20 per cent of the total usual resident population in three LGAs were born overseas – Logan (24.9 per cent), Gold Coast (24.5 per cent) and Brisbane (22.7 per cent).
- Overseas-born persons comprised more than 10 per cent of the usual resident population in 35 of Queensland's 125 LGAs, with 33 of these LGAs being located in either South-East Queensland, Wide Bay-Burnett or Fitzroy, or along Queensland's northern coastal areas (see Table 1).
- The United Kingdom and New Zealand were the major source countries in 31 of the 35 LGAs where more than 10 per cent of the population was born overseas. The exceptions were Johnstone, Mareeba and Stanthorpe, where Italian-born persons represented the largest overseas-born group. Additionally, Italian-born persons were the second largest overseas-born group in Atherton and German-born persons ranked equal second with New Zealand-born persons in Herberton.
- It is interesting to note that Germany ranked third as a major source country in 17 of the 35 LGAs where more than 10 per cent of the population was born overseas. Other third-ranked source countries included Netherlands (Esk, Laidley and Redcliffe), Papua New Guinea (Cairns and Townsville), Philippines (Bowen and Mount Isa), Samoa (Logan), South Africa (Calliope, Pine Rivers and Redland) and Viet Nam (Brisbane and Ipswich).

Figure 2 – Overseas-born Queenslanders: proportion of total population born overseas by local government area, 2001

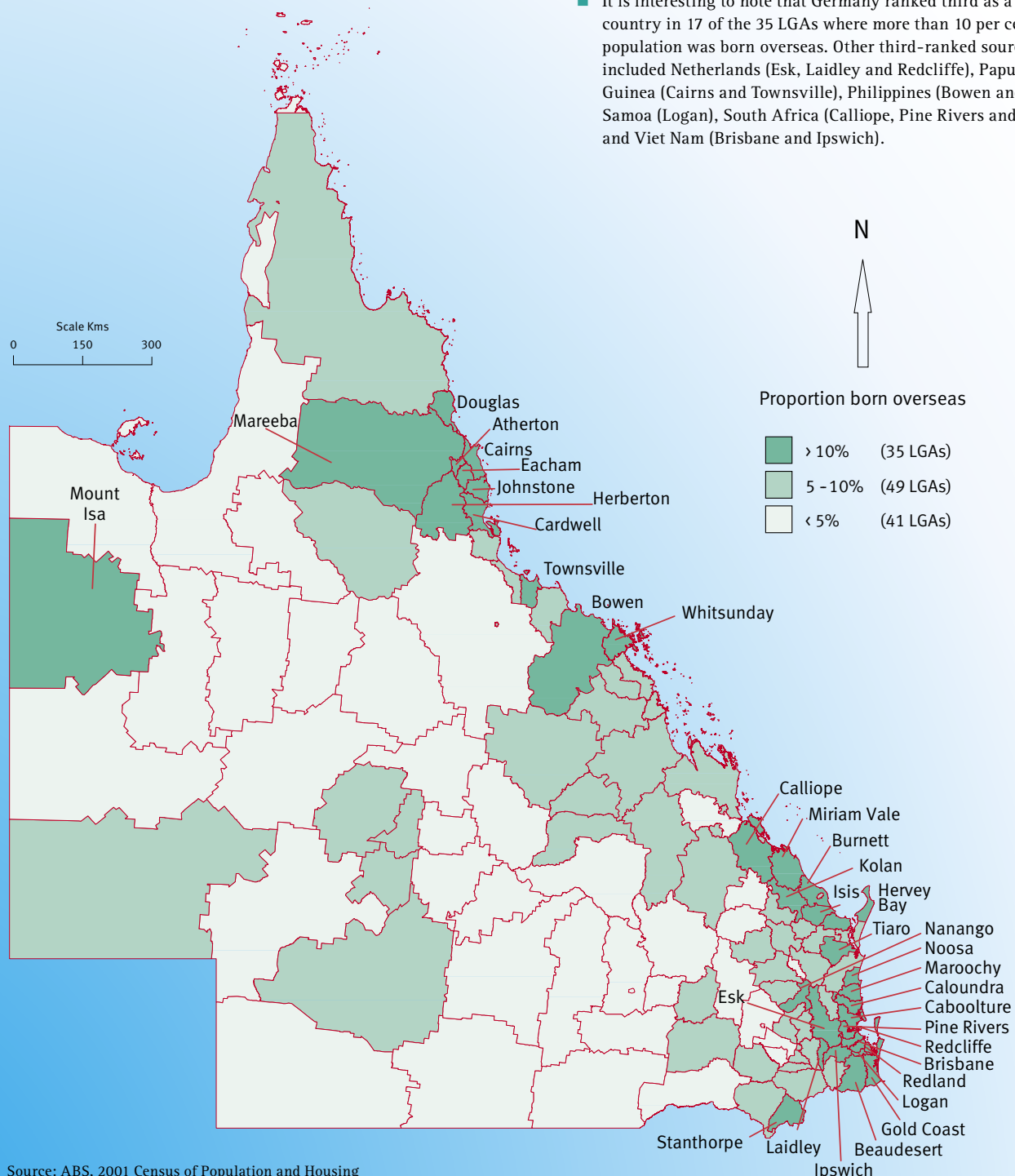


Table 1 – Local government areas with more than ten per cent of persons born overseas, Queensland, 2001

Local government area	Overseas-born persons	Total persons <sup>(a)</sup>	Overseas-born persons as a proportion of total persons %
Atherton (S)	1,367	10,155	13.5
Beaudesert (S)	9,081	52,524	17.3
Bowen (S)	1,262	11,955	10.6
Brisbane (C)	197,294	870,675	22.7
Burnett (S)	2,944	23,087	12.8
Caboolture (S)	17,064	112,277	15.2
Cairns (C)	20,367	114,863	17.7
Calliope (S)	1,691	14,552	11.6
Caloundra (C)	12,167	72,944	16.7
Cardwell (S)	1,225	10,346	11.8
Douglas (S)	1,728	10,344	16.7
Eacham (S)	832	6,041	13.8
Esk (S)	1,638	14,219	11.5
Gold Coast (C)	99,548	406,981	24.5
Herberton (S)	564	5,093	11.1
Hervey Bay (C)	6,333	41,811	15.1
Ipswich (C)	18,375	124,070	14.8
Isis (S)	623	5,623	11.1

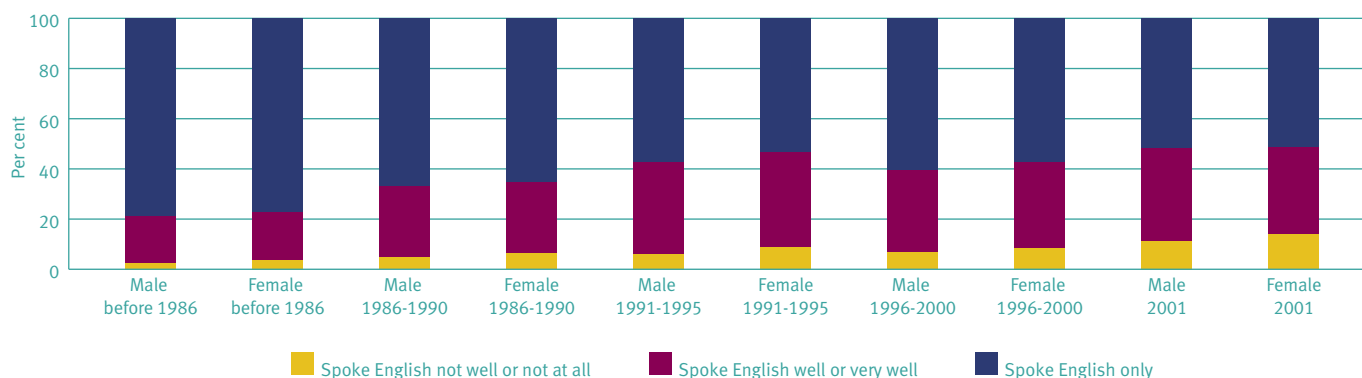
Local government area	Overseas-born persons	Total persons <sup>(a)</sup>	Overseas-born persons as a proportion of total persons %
Johnstone (S)	2,315	18,534	12.5
Kolan (S)	515	4,470	11.5
Laidley (S)	1,467	12,632	11.6
Logan (C)	40,741	163,932	24.9
Mareeba (S)	2,975	17,591	16.9
Maroochy (S)	20,642	121,710	17.0
Miriam Vale (S)	511	4,357	11.7
Mount Isa (C)	2,414	20,268	11.9
Nanango (S)	1,109	8,213	13.5
Noosa (S)	7,897	41,872	18.9
Pine Rivers (S)	18,196	119,767	15.2
Redcliffe (C)	9,704	48,780	19.9
Redland (S)	22,770	114,489	19.9
Stanthorpe (S)	1,326	10,003	13.3
Tiaro (S)	613	4,530	13.5
Townsville (C)	11,138	88,877	12.5
Whitsunday (S)	2,198	15,043	14.6

(S) = Shire, (C) = City, (a) Includes 'not stated'  
Source: ABS, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## 4. English language proficiency

- More than half (57.3 per cent or 61,348 persons) of Queensland's immigrants who arrived in Australia between 1996 and 2001 spoke only English at home. An additional 33.7 per cent considered themselves to be proficient in English and 8.2 per cent did not consider themselves to be proficient in English (see Figure 3). A further 0.8 per cent did not state their language and/or level of proficiency.
- The proportion of Queensland's migrants who spoke only English at home was highest for those who arrived in Australia before 1986 (77.6 per cent) and lowest for those who arrived in 2001 (51.1 per cent).
- Of interest, regardless of the length of time spent in Australia, females were less likely than males to speak only English at home.
- The most popular language spoken in Queensland homes after English was Italian, followed by Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, German and related languages (Letzeburgish, Yiddish and related languages not further defined), South Slavic (Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Macedonian, Serbian, Slovene and South Slavic), and Greek.
- At least 75 per cent of speakers of each of the top ten languages (other than English) spoken in Queensland homes considered themselves to be proficient in English (with the exception of Vietnamese, where 62.8 per cent of speakers considered themselves to be proficient in English).

Figure 3 – Overseas-born Queenslanders: proficiency in English by period of arrival in Australia by sex, 2001

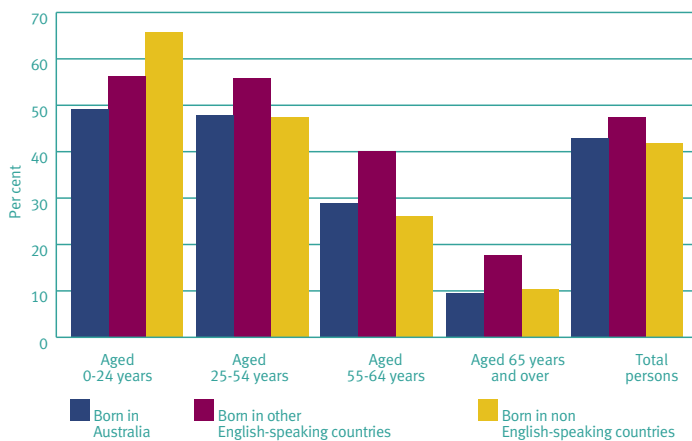


Source: ABS, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## 5. Computer and internet usage

- Figure 4 illustrates that persons born overseas in the main English-speaking countries<sup>4</sup> were more likely to use a computer at home than persons born in Australia and persons born overseas in non English-speaking countries (47.4 per cent, 42.8 per cent and 41.8 per cent respectively). However, this situation did not hold true for all of the age groups illustrated in Figure 4.
- Figure 4 shows that persons born in Australia who were aged 0 to 24 years were less likely to use a computer at home than persons born overseas who were aged 0 to 24 years (49.2 cent of Australian-born persons used a computer at home compared with 56.2 per cent of persons born overseas in English-speaking countries and 65.8 per cent of persons born overseas in non English-speaking countries).

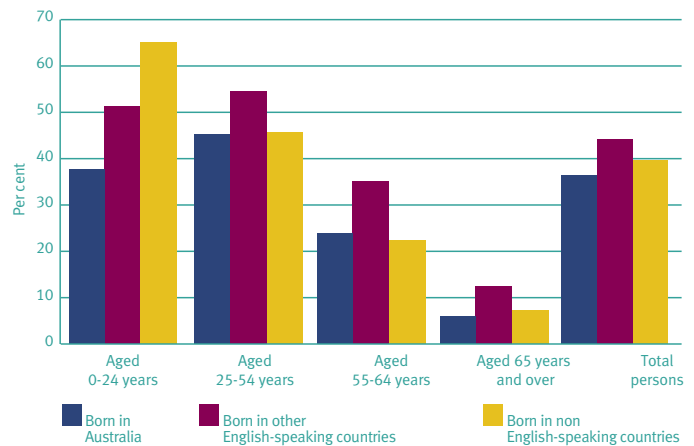
Figure 4 – Persons who used a computer at home as a percentage of total persons by age and birthplace, Queensland, 2001



Source: ABS, 2001 Census of Population and Housing

- A total of 44.2 per cent of Queensland's residents born overseas in English-speaking countries used the internet either at home, at work and/or elsewhere. The comparable figures for Australian-born residents and persons born overseas in non English-speaking countries were 36.4 per cent and 39.7 per cent respectively.
- It is shown in Figure 5 that the largest percentage point difference in internet usage by age occurred in the 0 to 24 year age group, where 37.7 per cent of Australian-born persons used the internet compared with 51.3 per cent of persons born overseas in English-speaking countries and 65.1 per cent of persons born overseas in non English-speaking countries.

Figure 5 – Persons who used the internet as a percentage of total persons by age and birthplace, Queensland, 2001



## 6. Other characteristics

- The proportion of Queensland's usual residents who stated they had a Christian religious affiliation was 71.0 per cent (2.5 million persons), the proportion who stated they had a Buddhist religious affiliation was 1.1 per cent (37,575 persons), and the proportion who stated they had an Islamic religious affiliation was 0.4 per cent (14,861 persons). The proportion of Queensland's usual residents who had no religious affiliation was 14.8 per cent (522,550 persons).
- It is acknowledged that the response rate of persons with an Australian South Sea Islander ancestry to the 2001 Census ancestry question is low, but the data illustrate that persons with an Australian South Sea Islander ancestry are concentrated in Queensland's Mackay, Fitzroy and Northern statistical divisions.
- Of persons who stated they had a private dwelling tenure type, overseas-born persons were more likely than Australian-born persons to fully own their place of residence (37.3 per cent and 33.9 per cent respectively), less likely than Australian-born persons to be purchasing their place of residence (28.1 per cent and 33.5 per cent respectively), and more likely than Australian-born persons to be renting their place of residence (32.3 per cent and 29.8 per cent respectively).

<sup>4</sup> The main English-speaking countries are comprised of Canada, Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States of America.

*Diversity Figures* is a joint project of Multicultural Affairs Queensland, Community Engagement Division, Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury. For more information please contact the Office of Economic and Statistical Research on (07) 3224 5326.

Information about Queensland's diversity is also outlined in the *Diversity Figures* poster available from Multicultural Affairs Queensland on (07) 3224 5690 or at [www.premiers.qld.gov.au](http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au)

