



Review of 2021 Census topics

Cultural Diversity

The ABS is consulting to seek views on the information to be collected in the next Census and this topic brief provides detail about what has been previously included on cultural diversity.

The opportunity to participate in the consultation will be available from 3 April to 30 June 2018 via consult.abs.gov.au

What was included in the Census?

Cultural diversity topics on the Census included:

- Australian citizenship
- country of birth
- country of birth of parents
- year of arrival in Australia
- main language other than English spoken at home
- proficiency in spoken English
- ancestry
- religious affiliation.

For more information view [2901.0 – Census Dictionary](#)

How is this information used?

Understanding the characteristics and origins of all people who call Australia home plays a role in policy and service development. Questions in the Census about citizenship, country of birth, ancestry and when people arrived in Australia provide insights into the nature of our diverse society. For example, knowing which languages are spoken and having information on whether people speak English, and how well, makes it easier to plan for English language programs and translation/interpreter services. Special interest groups, such as religious groups and organisations, also use Census information to assess the need for, and location of, religious based schools, hospitals, community services and homes for the elderly.

If you'd like to explore more about the religions included on the Census form, and why it doesn't list all religions, read our topic brief '**Review of 2021 Census topics: Religion**'

The questions asked on the 2016 Census

- Is the person an Australian citizen?
- In which country was the person born?
- In which country was the person's father born?
- In which country was the person's mother born?
- In what year did the person first arrive in Australia to live here for one year or more?
- Does the person speak a language other than English at home?
- How well does the person speak English?
- What is the person's ancestry?
- What is the person's religion?

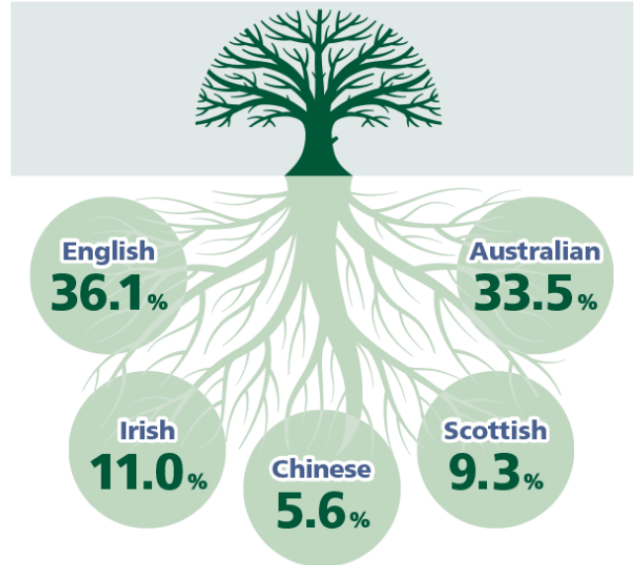
Highlights from the 2016 Census on cultural diversity

TOP FIVE LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME AS A PROPORTION OF ALL LANGUAGES SPOKEN, 2016



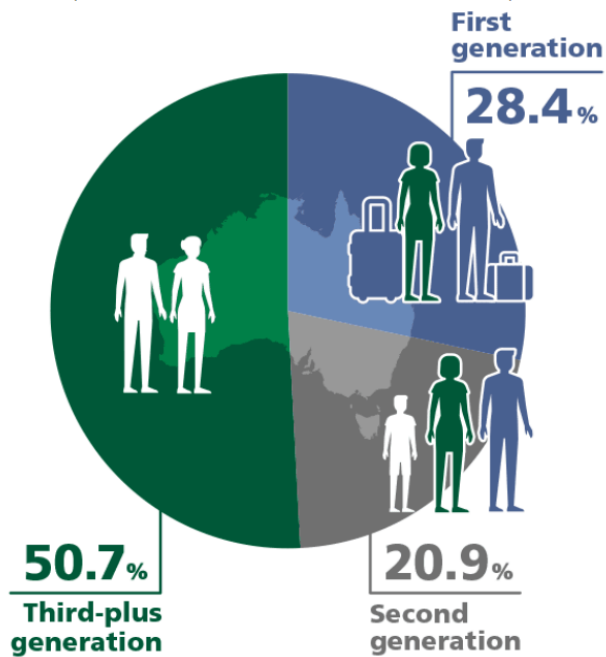
Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

TOP FIVE REPORTED ANCESTRIES AS A PROPORTION OF ALL REPORTED ANCESTRIES, 2016



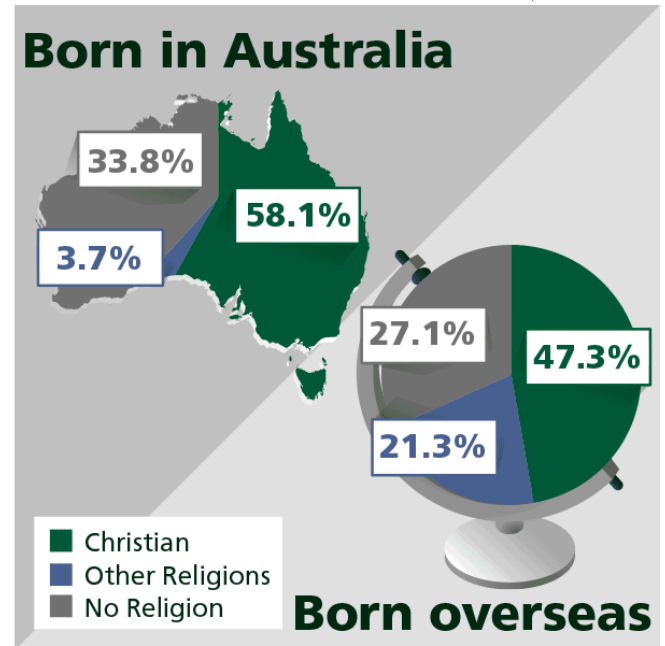
Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD OR MORE GENERATION AUSTRALIANS, 2016



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

RELIGION FOR THOSE BORN IN AUSTRALIA AND OVERSEAS, 2016



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Standards

A number of standards are used by the ABS to classify statistics relating to Cultural Diversity:

- [1200.0.55.010 - Australian Citizenship Standard, 2014, Version 1.2](#)
- [1200.0.55.004 - Country of Birth Standard, 2016](#)
- [1200.0.55.007 - Year of Arrival Standard, 2014, Version 1.4](#)
- [1200.0.55.005 - Language Standards, 2016](#)
- [1200.0.55.009 - Ancestry Standard, 2014, Version 2.1](#)
- [1200.0.55.003 - Religious Affiliation Standard, 2016](#)

For more information go to www.abs.gov.au/census