



Western Australian Community Profiles 2006 Census

Burma-born

Population

Burmese migration to Western Australia (WA) began in the 1960s after the military coup in Burma. Migrants during this period were mainly Anglo-Burmese. A second period of significant Burmese migration was recorded between 2001 and 2006. Almost two-thirds (64%) of Burma-born people arriving during this period came through the Humanitarian Program. This group consisted mainly of ethnic minorities including the Chin, Karen, Rakhaine and Rohingyas people. The number of Burma-people in WA has remained steady, numbering 5577 in 1996 and 5553 in 2006. In 2006, Burma-born people represented approximately 0.3% of the total WA population.*

Burma-born Western Australians were older compared with the total WA population. In 2006, only a small cohort was aged under 15 (2.1%) and 15–24 (6.5%) compared with the total WA population (20% and 14.2%, respectively). The cohort of Burma-born people aged 65 or more was significantly higher (22.5%) than for the total WA population (12%). The majority of Burma-born people were aged 25–44 (29.6%) and 45–64 (39.3%). The 2006 percentage for the cohort aged 45–64 was higher than the total WA population (25.2%). Between 2001 and 2006, the cohort aged 25–44 decreased (from 35.6%) and the cohort aged 45–64 increased (from 35.3%). The 2006 percentage for the cohort aged 25–64 was similar to that for the total WA total population (28.5%).

Women outnumbered men in all age cohorts except 0–14 and 15–24. The sex-ratio (number of males per 100 females) was estimated at 87.8, much lower than for the total WA population (99.5).

Family pattern

The majority of Burma-born Western Australians lived in couple families with children (38%), significantly more than in 2001 (23.8%), and comparable to the total WA population (38.5%). One-quarter (25%) lived in couple families without children, significantly less than in 2001 (46.3%), but greater than the total WA population (19.4%). Approximately 10.4% of Burma-born people lived in one-parent families, which was comparable to the total WA population (10%).

Geographical distribution

Between 2001 and 2006, the settlement pattern for Burma-born Western Australians remained consistent. The majority lived within the Perth Statistical Division (SD). Local Government Areas (LGAs) recording relatively higher concentrations of Burma-born people were Stirling (15.2%), Gosnells (13.7%), Wanneroo (11.7%) and Swan (9.5%). A small proportion (4%) of Burma-born people had settled outside of the Perth SD, with the largest concentration in the South West SD (2%).



Religious affiliation

The majority of Burma-born Western Australians identified Christianity as their religion (78%), a slight decrease of 2.3% since 2001, but significantly higher than for the total WA population (58.7%). A significant proportion of Burma-born people identified Buddhism as their religion (15.7%), higher than for the total WA population (2%). Only 2.2% identified as having no religion, in comparison with the total WA population (22.6%). A smaller proportion of Burma-born people identified Islam as their religion (1.6%), comparable to the total WA population (1.2%).

Languages

In 2006, 44% of Burma-born Western Australians reported speaking only English at home, fewer than in 2001 (47.9%). The main language other than English spoken at home was Burmese. The proportion of people who reported speaking English well or very well increased slightly between 2001 and 2006 (44.6% to 46%), as did the proportion of those who reported speaking English not well or not at all (7% to 9.2%).

Education

Between 2001 and 2006 the proportion of Burma-born Western Australians qualified at degree level increased from 13.7% to 16.9%, to be slightly higher than the total WA adult population (14.3%). The proportion of Burma-born people qualified at advanced diploma, diploma or certificate level also increased (18.6% to 19.6%) for the same period, but was lower than for the total WA adult population (24.7%). A higher proportion of Burma-born men (25.5%) than women (15.3%) were qualified at advanced diploma, diploma or certificate level. More than half of Burma-born Western Australians (52.7%) had completed Year 12 or equivalent, more than in the total WA adult population (41.8%). The proportion of the Burma-born adult population who had not attended

school (2.1%) was higher than for the total WA adult population (0.6%) but unchanged since 2001.

Employment

Between 2001 and 2006, the proportion of Burma-born Western Australians who were employed increased (from 53.1% to 55.9%). Decreases in the proportion of people who were unemployed (4% to 2.1%) or not in the labour force (41.2% to 39.8%), were also recorded. These figures were comparable to the percentage of the people in the total WA population who were employed (59.1%) and unemployed (2.3%) but higher than those not in the labour force (30.3%).

Burma-born women were slightly less likely than Burma-born men to be unemployed (1.5% compared with 2.4%) but more likely not to be in the labour force (47.7% compared with 30.2%). A similar pattern was recorded for the total WA population in which fewer women than men (2.2% compared with 2.4%) were unemployed, while more were not in the labour force (37.4% compared with 23.2%).

Burma-born men were employed mainly as managers and professionals (22.9%), technicians and trades workers (20.8%), labourers (17.8%) and machinery operators and drivers (17.3%). Burma-born women were mainly, and almost equally, employed as clerical and administrative workers (22.5%); professionals and managers (20.7%), labourers (20%), and community and personal service workers (16.4%).

Income

Between 2001 and 2006, there was an increase in the proportion of Burma-born Western Australians earning between \$250 and \$999 per week (from 44.3% to 51.4%) and more than \$1000 per week (from 6.2% to 12.3%). Women were less likely than men to earn more than \$1000 per week (6.6% compared with 18.8%), and more

likely to earn no income (7.8% compared with 3.6%) or less than \$250 per week (39.9% compared with 19.8%).

Summary table

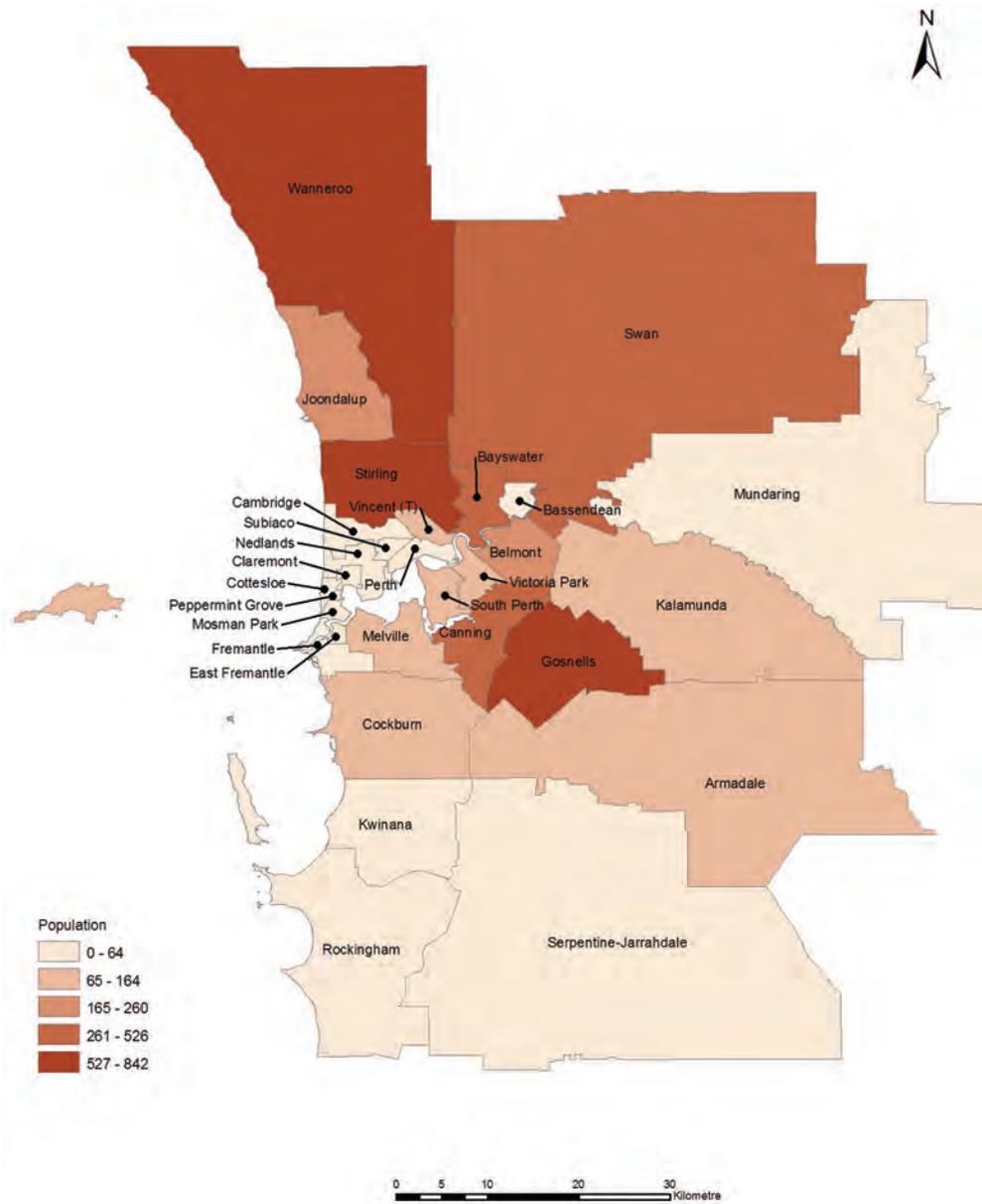
Variables	Burma-born 2006			Burma-born 2001	Total Western Australian population 2006		
	Male %	Female %	Total %	Total %	Male %	Female %	Total %
AGE GROUP / GENDER							
0–14	2.5	1.8	2.1	2.9	20.6	19.5	20.0
15–24	7.8	5.4	6.5	6.6	14.6	13.8	14.2
25–44	30.2	29.0	29.6	35.6	28.4	28.5	28.5
45–64	39.9	38.6	39.3	35.3	25.4	25.1	25.2
65+	19.6	25.1	22.5	19.7	11.0	13.1	12.0
All (Number)	2596	2957	5553	5494	990,642	995,607	1,986,249
Sex-ratio			87.8	90.0			99.5
FAMILY TYPE							
Couple family without children	25.3	25.6	25.4	46.3	19.2	19.6	19.4
Couple family with children	35.6	31.3	33.3	23.8	38.7	38.3	38.5
One-parent family	7.1	13.3	10.4	10.8	7.9	12.1	10.0
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY							
Speaks English only	42.6	44.9	43.9	47.9	80.6	81.3	80.9
Speaks other language and English; very well or well	47.9	44.1	45.9	44.6	9.6	9.9	9.8
Speaks other language and English; not well or not at all	8.2	10.0	9.2	7.0	1.5	2.0	1.7
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (15 YEARS AND OVER)							
Degree level	16.4	15.5	15.9	13.7	13.4	15.1	14.3
Advanced diploma/diploma/ certificate	24.5	15.3	19.6	18.6	30.3	19.2	24.7
Completed Year 12 schooling	54.5	50.7	52.7	49.0	40.8	42.9	41.8
Did not attend school	1.5	2.5	2.1	2.1	0.5	0.7	0.6
LABOUR FORCE (15 YEARS AND OVER)							
Employed	64.7	48.2	55.9	53.1	65.5	52.7	59.1
Unemployed	2.4	1.7	2.1	4.0	2.4	2.2	2.3
Not in LF	30.2	47.7	39.8	41.2	23.2	37.4	30.3
WEEKLY INCOME (15 YEARS AND OVER)							
None	3.6	7.8	5.9	5.3	4.6	8.1	6.4
<\$250	19.8	30.9	25.7	40.3	13.8	24.4	19.2
<\$1000	53.0	50.0	51.4	44.7	39.7	46.7	43.2
\$1000 and more	18.8	6.6	12.3	6.2	29.9	10.4	20.0

Note: Totals do not add up to 100% because of the use of selected indicators.

* The 2006 Census recorded a total WA population of 1,959,095 people.

** For 2001, the cut-off point was \$299.

Figure 1: Distribution of Burma-born people by settlement pattern in the LGAs of the Perth Metropolitan Area
 (Data Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing).



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 and 2006 Census of Population and Housing.