



Western Australian Community Profiles 2006 Census

Somalia-born

Population

The Somalia-born are a new and emerging community in Western Australia (WA). Small numbers of Somalia-born people settled here in the early 1990s, however, migration from Somalia has increased since the late 1990s. Most Somalia-born people have arrived under the Humanitarian Program. In 2006, there were 624 Somalia-born Western Australians, 33% more than in 2001. In 2006, Somalia-born Western Australians people less than 0.1% of the total WA population.*

Somalia-born Western Australians are younger compared with the total WA population. The majority of Somalia-born people were aged 25–44 (41.5%) and 15–24 (29.5%), significantly higher proportions compared with the total WA population (28.5% and 13.2%, respectively). The cohort of Somalia-born people aged below 15 had decreased since 2001 (from 28.3% to 15.7%), and was slightly lower than for the total WA population (20%). For the same period there were slight increases in the cohorts of people aged 45–64 (from 8.8% to 11.5%) and 65 or older (from 0.6% to 1.8%), but these were significantly lower than for the total WA population (25.2% and 12%, respectively).

Women outnumbered men in all age cohorts except those aged 45–64 and 65 or older. The estimated sex-ratio (number of males per 100 females) of 85 was lower than for the total WA population (99.5).

Family pattern

More than half (52%) of Somalia-born Western Australians lived in couple families with children, significantly higher than for the total WA population (38.5%). The proportion of one-parent families was also higher (28.6%) than for the total WA population (10%). Somalia-born women were more likely than men (34.3% compared with 22%) to be living in one-parent families, similar to the total WA population (12.1% and 7.9%, respectively). In contrast, the proportion of Somalia-born people living as couple families without children was significantly lower than for the total WA population (4.3% compared with 19.4%).

Geographic distribution

The majority of Somalia-born Western Australians (98%) lived in the Perth Statistical Division. Local Government Areas (LGAs) recording relatively higher concentrations of Somalia-born people were Stirling (24.1%), Gosnells (20%) and Canning (11%), South Perth (8.3%), Wanneroo (7.7%) and Belmont (6.2%).

Religious affiliation

In 2006, the majority (95%) of Somalia-born Western Australians identified Islam as their religion, significantly higher than for the total WA population (1.2%). No Somalia-born people identified as having 'no religion' in contrast with nearly a quarter of the total WA population (22.6%).



Languages

The majority (93%) of Somalia-born Western Australians spoke a language other than English at home; the most common were Somali and Arabic. Of these, more than three-quarters (77.3%) reported speaking English very well or well. Somalia-born women were less likely than men (72.2% compared with 83.3%) to report speaking English very well or well. A very small proportion of Somalia-born people (4%) spoke only English at home.

Education

The proportions of Somalia-born Western Australians qualified at bachelor degree or higher, or advanced diploma, diploma or certificate level, were half those for the total population (7% compared with 14.3%, and 11.8% compared with 24.7%, respectively). Somalia-born men were almost 10 times more likely than Somalia-born women (13.4% compared with 1.4%) to have a bachelor degree or higher qualification and almost twice as likely as women (15.4% compared with 8.6%) to have obtained an advanced diploma, diploma or certificate level qualification. The proportion of Somalia-born people who did not attend school was significantly larger than for the total WA population (11.2% compared with 0.6%).

Employment

The majority (53%) of Somalia-born Western Australians were not in the labour force, significantly higher than for the total WA population (30.3%). Somalia-born women were more than twice as likely as men (67.5% compared with 37%) to be in this category. Gender differences, on a smaller scale, were also present in the total WA population (37.4% and 23.2%, respectively). The proportion of Somalia-born people who were employed almost doubled from 2001 to 2006 (15.9% to 28.9%), but was half that of the total WA population (59.1%). Somalia-

born women were less likely than men to be employed (13.6% compared with 46.3%). While the proportion of unemployed Somalia-born people decreased (from 18.2% to 10.6%), it remained significantly higher than for the total WA population (2.3%).

Somalia-born men were mainly employed as machinery operators and drivers (40%), labourers (19.3%), professionals and managers (11.4%), and community and personal workers (10.5%). Somalia-born women were mainly employed as labourers (45%), community and personal workers (15.8%), and professionals and managers (13.2%).

Income

Between 2001 and 2006, the proportion of Somalia-born Western Australians earning between \$250 and \$999 per week increased (from 20.3% to 31%), but remained lower than for the total WA population (43.2%). The proportion of Somalia-born people earning \$1000 or more per week was around one-fifth of the rate for the total WA population (4.4% compared with 20%).

More than one-third (37.6%) of Somalia-born people earned less than \$250 per week and 10% earned no income. These proportions were significantly higher than for the total WA population (19.2% and 6.4%, respectively).

Somalia-born women were more likely than Somalia-born men to earn no weekly income (12.1% compared with 6.9%) or less than \$250 (40.4% compared with 24.6%). Women were less likely than men to earn between \$250 and \$999 (28.2% compared with 34.1%) or \$1000 or more (1.4% compared with 7.7%) per week.

Summary table

Variables	Somalia-born 2006			Somalia-born 2001	Total Western Australian population 2006		
	Male %	Female %	Total %	Total %	Male %	Female %	Total %
AGE GROUP / GENDER							
0–14	14.3	16.9	15.7	28.3	20.6	19.5	20.0
15–24	32.4	27.0	29.5	23.8	14.6	13.8	14.2
25–44	38.3	44.2	41.5	38.5	28.4	28.5	28.5
45–64	12.5	10.7	11.5	8.8	25.4	25.1	25.2
65+	2.4	1.2	1.8	0.6	11.0	13.1	12.0
All (#)	287	337	624	470	990,642	995,607	1,986,249
Sex-ratio			85				99.5
FAMILY TYPE							
Couple family without children	2.4	5.9	4.3	2.3	19.2	19.6	19.4
Couple family with children	55.4	49.1	52.0	52.6	38.7	38.3	38.5
One-parent family	22.0	34.3	28.6	28.4	7.9	12.1	10.0
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY							
Speaks English only	3.5	4.4	4.0	4.0	80.6	81.3	80.9
Speaks other language and English; very well or well	83.3	72.2	77.3	69.1	9.6	9.9	9.8
Speaks other language and English; not well or not at all	8.4	21.9	15.7	21.0	1.5	2.0	1.7
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (15 YEARS AND OVER)							
Degree level	13.4	1.4	7.0	8.3	13.4	15.1	14.3
Advanced diploma/diploma/certificate	15.4	8.6	11.8	8.8	30.3	19.2	24.7
Completed Year 12 schooling	54.9	41.8	47.9	38.7	40.8	42.9	41.8
Did not attend school	5.7	16.1	11.2	8.2	0.5	0.7	0.6
LABOUR FORCE (15 YEARS AND OVER)							
Employed	46.3	13.6	28.9	15.9	65.5	52.7	59.1
Unemployed	11.4	10.0	10.6	18.2	2.4	2.2	2.3
Not in LF	37.0	67.5	53.2	65.0	23.2	37.4	30.3
WEEKLY INCOME (15 YEARS AND OVER)							
None	6.9	12.1	9.7	4.5	4.6	8.1	6.4
<\$250	34.6	40.4	37.6	57.9	13.8	24.4	19.2
<\$1000	34.1	28.2	31.0	20.3	39.7	46.7	43.2
\$1000 and more	7.7	1.4	4.4	2.1	29.9	10.4	20.0

Note: Totals do not always 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.

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

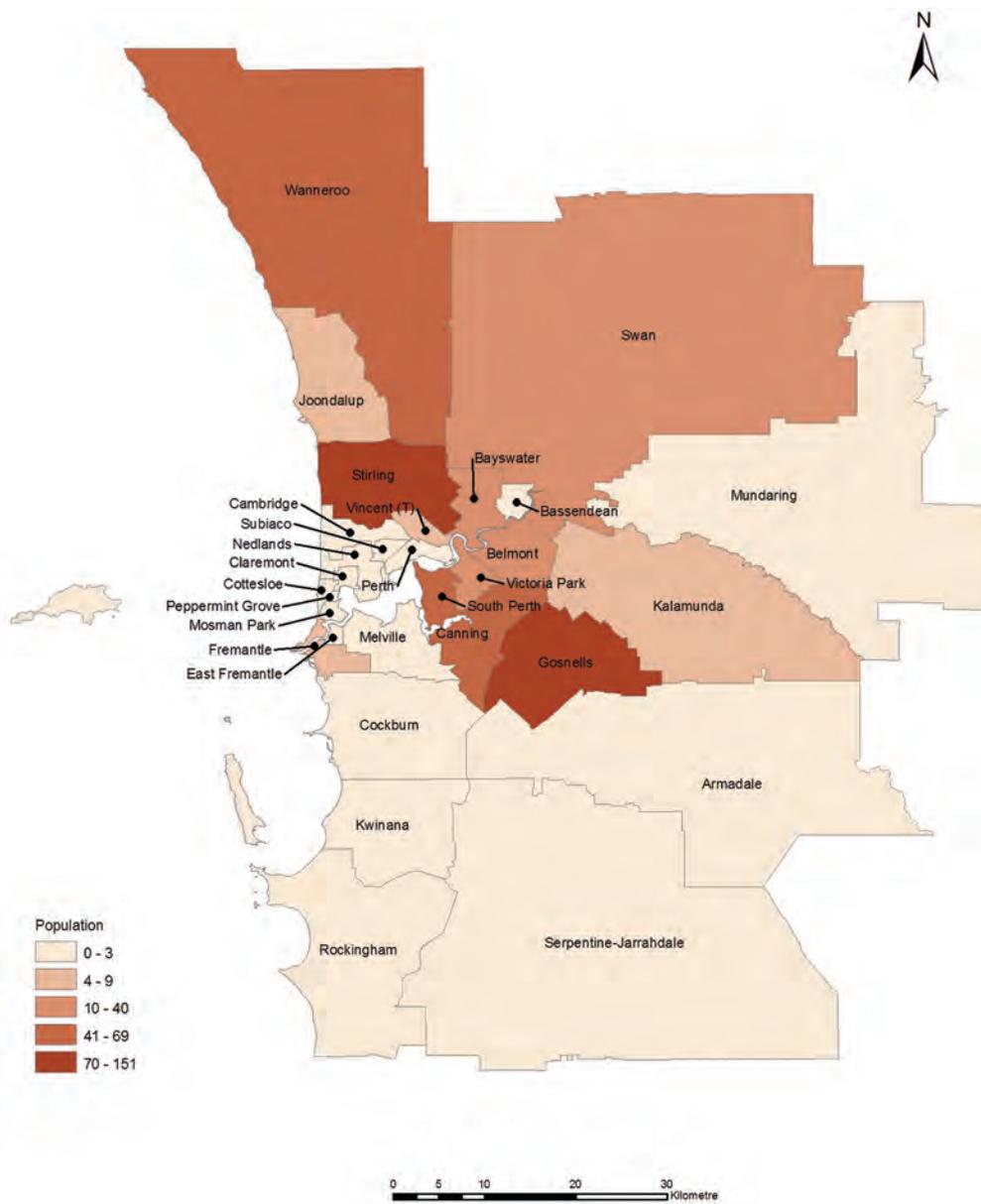


Figure 1: Distribution of Somalia-born people by settlement pattern in the LGAs of the Perth Metropolitan Area (Data Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing).