

Following Cambodia's independence from French rule in 1953, Australia began receiving small numbers of students from Cambodia. In the 1960s and 1970s more students arrived under the Colombo Plan, and many decided to settle in Australia. However, it was during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s that the Cambodia-born population increased significantly in Australia, with many migrating under the Humanitarian Program as a result of persecution and wars back home. Later settlers arrived mainly through family reunion.

At the 2006 Census, there were 9,791 Cambodia-born persons in Victoria (39.9% of Australia's total), increasing by 8.8% from 9,003 persons in 2001. Over one-third (35.3%) of the Cambodia-born in Victoria had arrived in Australia prior to 1986; and the proportions arriving in the inter-censal periods after 1986 varied between 13-17%. The Cambodia-born community was mainly concentrated in the outer south-eastern suburbs in Greater Dandenong (47.8%); Kingston (10.3%) and Casey (9.9%). A small number (1.6%) lived in regional Victoria. There were 10,010 Cambodia-born persons who identified with Khmer Ancestry. However, large numbers of the Cambodia-born also identified with Chinese or other Indo-Chinese ancestries, as indicated in the languages spoken at home.

The Cambodia-born community showed a balanced age profile: 45.4% were aged 26-44 years; 30.4% were aged 45-64 years. The median age was 39 years, compared to 37 years for the total Victorian population. The sex ratio was 87 males to 100 females. Over two-thirds (68.3%) of the Cambodia-born spoke Khmer at home; 8.9% spoke Cantonese; 5.7% spoke Mandarin. A large proportion (41.9%) assessed themselves as speaking English not well or not at all. The most common religion was Buddhism (79.4%); and there were small numbers following a variety of Christian faiths. Most (86.5%) of the Cambodia-born held Australian Citizenship, compared to 67.5% for the total overseas-born population in Victoria.

Demographic Background: 2006 Census

1 Persons born in Cambodia in Victoria and Australia: 2006, 2001 and 1996 Census

	2006 Census		2001 Census		1996 Census		2001-2006 % change	1996-2001 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%		
Melbourne	9,643	39.3	8,845	38.5	8,150	37.8	9.0	8.5
Rest of Victoria ¹	148	0.6	158	0.7	115	0.5	-6.3	37.4
Total Victoria	9,791	39.9	9,003	39.2	8,265	38.4	8.8	8.9
Total Australia	24,526	100.0	22,979	100.0	21,549	100.0	6.7	6.6

¹ Includes "No Usual Address, Victoria"

2 Distribution of Cambodia-born, Top 5 Local Govt Areas: 2006, 2001 Census

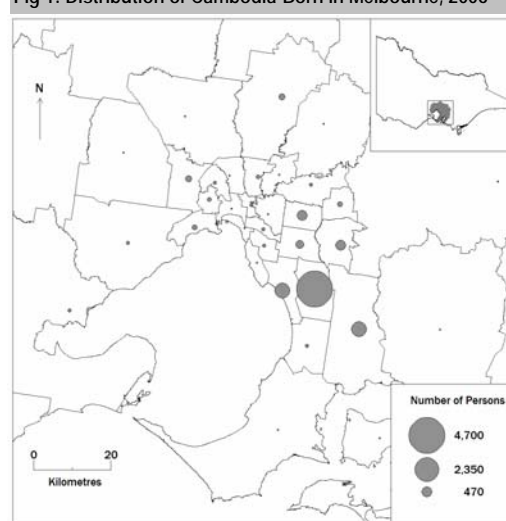
Local Government Area	2006 Census		2001 Census		Rank in 2001
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Greater Dandenong (C)	4,676	47.8	4,295	47.6	1
Kingston (C)	1,005	10.3	1,030	11.4	2
Casey (C)	969	9.9	518	5.7	4
Knox (C)	536	5.5	515	5.7	5
Whitehorse (C)	505	5.2	570	6.3	3
Rest of LGAs in Metro Melb	1,943	19.8	1,920	21.3	
Rest of LGAs in Reg. Vic	156	1.6	169	1.9	
Total Victoria	9,790	100.0	9,017	100.0	

3 Persons Identifying with Khmer Ancestry, Total Responses, 2006, 2001

Khmer ancestry	2006 Census	2001 Census	2001-2006 % change
Total First & Second Responses ¹	10,010	8,122	23.2
Total Cambodia-born, persons	9,791	9,003	8.8

¹ Respondents had the option of nominating several ancestries, but only the first two responses were processed in the Census.

Fig 1: Distribution of Cambodia-Born in Melbourne, 2006



4 Age and Gender Distribution of Cambodia-born: 2006, 2001

Age group (years)	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
0-4	38	0.4	23	0.3	65.2
5-11	124	1.3	212	2.4	-41.5
12-18	443	4.5	560	6.2	-20.9
19-25	1,130	11.5	1,132	12.6	-0.2
26-44	4,440	45.4	4,405	48.9	0.8
45-64	2,972	30.4	2,181	24.2	36.3
65-74	416	4.2	297	3.3	40.1
75+	227	2.3	193	2.1	17.6
Total	9,790	100.0	9,003	100.0	8.7
<i>Sex Ratio</i>	<i>87</i>		<i>males per 100 females</i>		

5 Top 5 Languages Spoken at Home by Cambodia-born: 2006, 2001

Language	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Khmer	6,688	68.3	5,966	66.3	12.1
Cantonese	875	8.9	939	10.4	-6.8
Mandarin	559	5.7	430	4.8	30.0
Teochew	515	5.3	423	4.7	21.7
Vietnamese	328	3.3	305	3.4	7.5
English only	473	4.8	339	3.8	39.5
Other languages ¹	262	2.7	524	5.8	-50.0
Not stated	93	0.9	79	0.9	17.7
Total	9,793	100.0	9,005	100.0	8.8

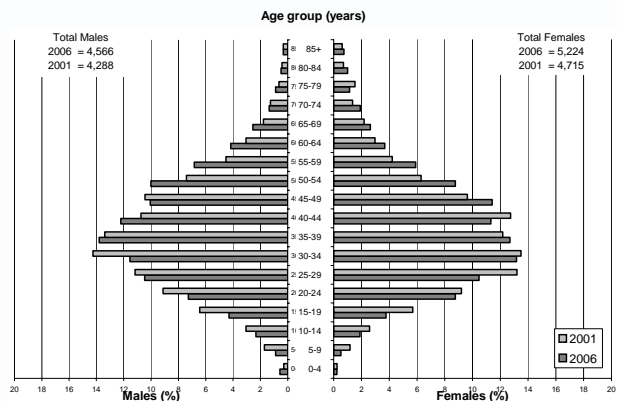
¹ Includes 'Inadequately described' and 'Non-verbal so described'.

7 Top 5 Religions of Cambodia-born: 2006, 2001

Religion	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Buddhism	7,771	79.4	6,945	77.1	11.9
Western Catholic	285	2.9	300	3.3	-5.0
Baptist	257	2.6	294	3.3	-12.6
Christian, nfd	141	1.4	97	1.1	45.4
Uniting Church	89	0.9	113	1.3	-21.2
Other religions	165	1.7	114	1.3	44.7
No religion	706	7.2	658	7.3	7.3
Not stated ¹	376	3.8	487	5.4	-22.8
Total	9,790	100.0	9,008	100.0	8.7

¹ Includes 'Religious Belief, nfd and 'Not Defined'.

Fig 2: Age and Gender Distribution of Cambodia-Born, 2006



6 Proficiency in English of Cambodia-born: 2006, 2001

Proficiency in English	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Speaks English only	474	4.8	352	3.9	34.7
<i>Speaks other language and speaks English</i>					
Very well	2,070	21.1	2,082	23.0	-0.6
Well	3,020	30.8	2,764	30.6	9.3
Not well	3,334	34.0	2,965	32.8	12.4
Not at all	770	7.9	704	7.8	9.4
Not stated ¹	127	1.3	172	1.9	-26.2
Total	9,795	100.0	9,039	100.0	8.4

¹ Includes those who did not state a language or proficiency in English.

8 Cambodia-born with Australian Citizenship by Age, 2006, 2001

Age group (years)	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
0-4	24	0.3	18	0.2	33.3
5-11	83	1.0	151	1.9	-45.0
12-18	301	3.6	451	5.7	-33.3
19-25	764	9.0	914	11.5	-16.4
26-44	3,914	46.2	3,943	49.4	-0.7
45-64	2,780	32.8	2,055	25.8	35.3
65-74	392	4.6	270	3.4	45.2
75+	209	2.5	172	2.2	21.5
Total	8,467	100.0	7,974	100.0	6.2

Source of data: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Population and Housing Census, Persons counted at Place of Usual Residence.

Some country background information is sourced from Jupp, J ed. (2001) *The Australian People*, Cambridge University Press, UK; and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, *Country Information Summary* series, 2004.

For more detailed tables on a wider range of demographic and socio-economic variables from the 2006 Census, refer to *Community Profiles Series: 2006 Census* available on the Victorian Multicultural Commission website: www.multicultural.vic.gov.au