

Chinese migration to Australia has a long history with over 100,000 entering the Australian colonies between the 1840s and 1890s. Some emigrated to escape the wars, uprisings, floods, famines and population pressures in China, while others sought wealth on the goldfields. Many were indentured labourers. By 1891, half were engaged in agricultural activities, and in Victoria, 10% were cabinet-makers. Most of the Chinese in Australia in the 19th Century were male and many eventually returned to China. The earlier migrants originated from the southern coastal provinces. From the late 1980s to the present, large numbers have been arriving in Australia as skilled migrants and students, increasingly drawn from the northern provinces and cities such as Beijing and Shanghai.

At the 2006 Census, there were 56,559 China-born persons in Victoria, increasing by 53.8% from 36,786 persons in 2001. The China-born are among the fastest growing communities in Victoria. Only 9.3% of the China-born population in Victoria had arrived in Australia prior to 1986; 56.2% had arrived between 1996 and 2006. The China-born were distributed throughout metropolitan Melbourne, with distinct concentrations in Monash (14.7%); Whitehorse (10.2%); Manningham (8.0%); Boroondara (7.3%); and Melbourne (6.1%). There were 190,364 persons identified with Chinese ancestry, including second and later generations. This large number also included ethnic Chinese born in various countries besides China, such as Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan.

The age profile of the China-born showed concentrations in the young adult and mature age groups: 23.6% were aged 19-25 years; 33.6% were aged 26-44 years; and 22.7% were aged 45-64 years. The median age of the China-born was 37 years, similar to that of the total Victorian population. The sex ratio was 82 males to 100 females. Almost two-thirds (64.9%) spoke Mandarin at home; 24.4% spoke Cantonese. Almost one-third (31.4%) assessed themselves as speaking English not well or not at all. A large proportion (60.8%) had no religion; 16.3% were Buddhist; and 9.1% followed a variety of Christian religions. Just over half (52.5%) held Australian Citizenship, compared to 67.5% for the total Victorian population.

Demographic Background: 2006 Census

1 Persons born in China 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	54,725	26.5	35,801	25.1	27,357	24.6	52.9	30.9
Rest of Victoria ¹	1,834	0.9	985	0.7	805	0.7	86.2	22.4
Total Victoria	56,559	27.4	36,786	25.8	28,162	25.4	53.8	30.6
Total Australia	206,591	100.0	142,780	100.0	111,009	100.0	44.7	28.6

¹ Includes "No Usual Address, Victoria"

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

Local Government Area	2006 Census		2001 Census		Rank 2001
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Monash (C)	8,314	14.7	4,615	12.5	1
Whitehorse (C)	5,792	10.2	3,473	9.4	3
Manningham (C)	4,551	8.0	3,481	9.5	2
Boroondara (C)	4,148	7.3	2,615	7.1	4
Melbourne (C)	3,462	6.1	1,157	3.1	10
Rest of LGAs in Metro Melb	28,453	50.3	20,459	55.6	
Rest of LGAs in Reg Vic	1,835	3.2	1,003	2.7	
Total Victoria	56,555	100.0	36,803	100.0	

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

	2006 Census	2001 Census	2001-2006 % change
Chinese Ancestry			
Total First & Second Responses ¹	190,364	153,031	24.4
Total China-born, Persons	56,559	36,786	53.8

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

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



4 Age and Gender Distribution of China-born: 2006, 2001					
Age group (years)	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
0-4	331	0.6	206	0.6	60.7
5-11	995	1.8	707	1.9	40.7
12-18	3,741	6.6	3,657	9.9	2.3
19-25	13,329	23.6	2,911	7.9	357.9
26-44	18,983	33.6	15,071	41.0	26.0
45-64	12,843	22.7	8,886	24.2	44.5
65-74	3,639	6.4	3,313	9.0	9.8
75+	2,701	4.8	2,031	5.5	33.0
Total	56,562	100.0	36,782	100.0	53.8
<i>Sex Ratio</i>	<i>82</i>		<i>males per 100 females</i>		

5 Top 5 Languages Spoken at Home by China-born: 2006, 2001					
Language	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Mandarin	36,718	64.9	19,711	53.6	86.3
Cantonese	13,797	24.4	11,448	31.1	20.5
Chinese, nfd	2,278	4.0	2,511	6.8	-9.3
Russian	559	1.0	631	1.7	-11.4
Wu	365	0.6	262	0.7	39.3
English only	1,905	3.4	1,389	3.8	37.1
Other languages ¹	680	1.2	651	1.8	4.5
Not stated	254	0.4	194	0.5	30.9
Total	56,556	100.0	36,797	100.0	53.7

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

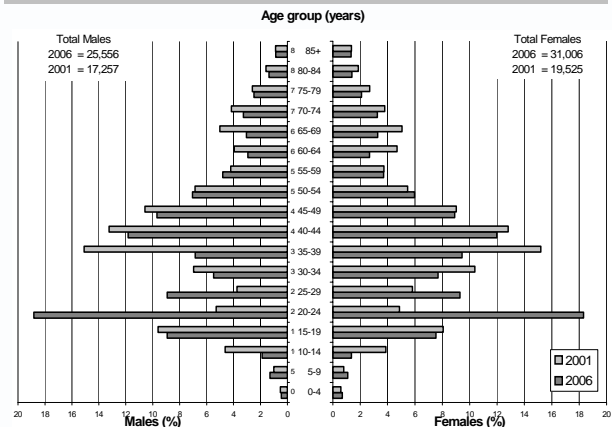
7 Top 5 Religions of China-born: 2006, 2001					
Religion	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Buddhism	9,240	16.3	6,948	18.9	33.0
Western Catholic	1,753	3.1	1,518	4.1	15.5
Baptist	1,410	2.5	1,129	3.1	24.9
Christian, nfd	1,125	2.0	678	1.8	65.9
Uniting Church	824	1.5	524	1.4	57.3
Other religions	2,743	4.8	2,239	6.1	22.5
No religion	34,397	60.8	18,658	50.7	84.4
Not stated ¹	5,071	9.0	5,088	13.8	-0.3
Total	56,563	100.0	36,782	100.0	53.8

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

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.

Fig 2: Age and Gender Distribution of China-Born: 2006



6 Proficiency in English of China-born: 2006, 2001					
Proficiency in English	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Speaks English only	1,904	3.4	1,362	3.7	39.8
<i>Speaks other language and speaks English</i>					
Very well	12,972	22.9	8,479	23.1	53.0
Well	23,389	41.3	12,381	33.7	88.9
Not well	13,094	23.1	9,867	26.9	32.7
Not at all	4,672	8.3	4,142	11.3	12.8
Not stated ¹	539	1.0	475	1.3	13.5
Total	56,570	100.0	36,706	100.0	54.1

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

8 China-born with Australian Citizenship by Age: 2006, 2001					
Age group (years)	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
0-4	152	0.5	79	0.3	92.4
5-11	421	1.4	314	1.3	34.1
12-18	1,382	4.7	1,903	7.9	-27.4
19-25	2,495	8.4	993	4.1	151.3
26-44	10,280	34.6	9,874	41.1	4.1
45-64	10,297	34.7	7,069	29.4	45.7
65-74	2,545	8.6	2,155	9.0	18.1
75+	2,098	7.1	1,631	6.8	28.6
Total	29,670	100.0	24,018	100.0	23.5

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