

Prior to the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, few Iran-born persons had migrated to Australia. There was an influx in 1980 following the commencement of war between Iraq and Iran. The numbers grew steadily in the late 1980s and early 1990s, with refugees accepted under the Humanitarian Program fleeing religious persecution and political hardship. In the last decade or so, many Iranians were accepted into Australia as skilled migrants and through family reunion.

At the 2006 Census, there were 4,431 Iran-born persons in Victoria (19.7% of Australia's total), increasing by 39.3% from 3,182 persons in 2001. Only 19.7% of the Iran-born in Victoria had arrived in Australia prior to 1986; 28.6% had arrived between 2001 and 2006. The Iran-born community was distributed throughout metropolitan Melbourne, with distinct concentrations in Manningham (16.3%) and Whitehorse (8.4%). There were 4,942 persons who identified with Iranian ancestry, including second and later generations. Many Iran-born also identified with Assyrian, Iraqi, British and other European ancestries.

The Iran-born community showed a balanced age profile: 12.4% were aged 19-25 years; 38.4% were aged 26-44 years; and 29.3% were aged 45-64 years. The median age was 39 years, compared to 37 years for the total Victorian population. The sex ratio was 111 males to 100 females. Almost three-quarters (73.5%) of the Iran-born spoke Persian (Dari) at home; 7.1% spoke Assyrian; 3.8% spoke Arabic; and 9.4% spoke English only. A significant percentage (15.6%) assessed themselves as speaking English not well or not at all. Over one-third (35.4%) of the Iran-born community were Muslim; 26.6% were Baha'i; and 6.1% were Western Catholic. Almost three-quarters (73.1%) held Australian Citizenship, compared to 67.5% for the total overseas-born population in Victoria.

Demographic Background: 2006 Census

1 Persons born in Iran 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	4,126	18.3	3,038	16.2	2,603	16.0	35.8	16.7
Rest of Victoria ¹	305	1.4	144	0.8	101	0.6	111.8	42.6
Total Victoria	4,431	19.7	3,182	16.9	2,704	16.6	39.3	17.7
Total Australia	22,545	100.0	18,789	100.0	16,271	100.0	20.0	15.5

¹ Includes "No Usual Address, Victoria"

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

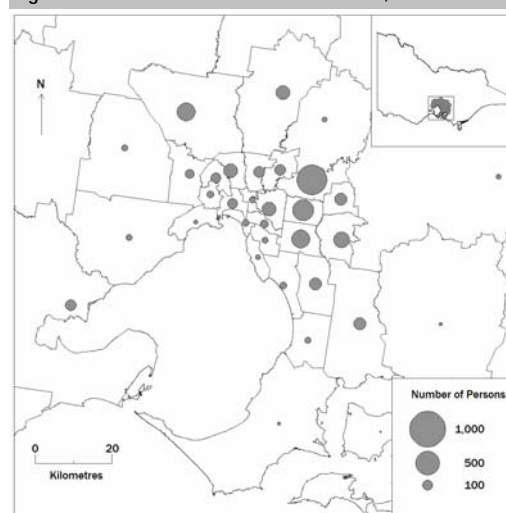
Local Government Area	2006 Census		2001 Census		Rank in 2001
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Manningham (C)	723	16.3	546	17.1	1
Whitehorse (C)	372	8.4	301	9.4	2
Monash (C)	296	6.7	205	6.4	4
Hume (C)	286	6.5	216	6.8	3
Knox (C)	251	5.7	189	5.9	6
Rest of LGAs in Metro Melb	2,195	49.6	1,587	49.8	
Rest of LGAs in Reg. Vic	301	6.8	145	4.5	
Total Victoria	4,424	100.0	3,189	100.0	

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

	2006 Census	2001 Census	2001-2006 % change
Iranian ancestry			
Total First & Second Responses ¹	4,942	3,583	37.9
Total Iran-born, persons	4,431	3,182	39.3

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

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



4 Age and Gender Distribution of Iran-born: 2006, 2001					
Age group (years)	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
0-4	46	1.0	26	0.8	76.9
5-11	206	4.6	119	3.7	73.1
12-18	317	7.2	302	9.5	5.0
19-25	551	12.4	377	11.9	46.2
26-44	1,702	38.4	1,266	39.8	34.4
45-64	1,299	29.3	878	27.6	47.9
65-74	197	4.4	138	4.3	42.8
75+	113	2.6	74	2.3	52.7
Total	4,431	100.0	3,180	100.0	39.3
<i>Sex Ratio</i>	<i>111</i>		<i>males per 100 females</i>		

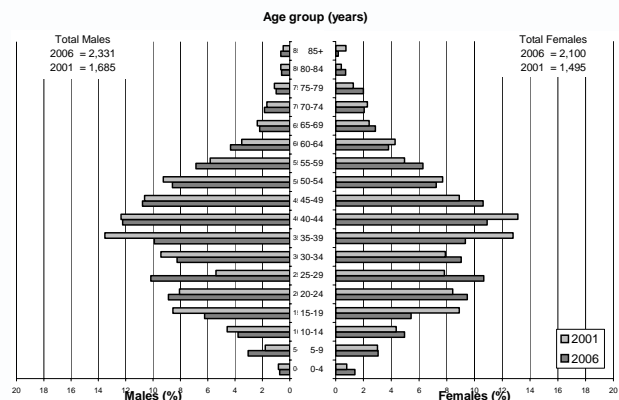
5 Top 5 Languages Spoken at Home by Iran-born: 2006, 2001					
Language	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Persian/Dari	3,252	73.5	2,212	69.3	47.0
Assyrian	313	7.1	279	8.7	12.2
Arabic	168	3.8	63	2.0	166.7
Kurdish	77	1.7	60	1.9	28.3
Armenian	33	0.7	26	0.8	26.9
English only	414	9.4	314	9.8	31.8
Other languages ¹	136	3.1	207	6.5	-34.3
Not stated	31	0.7	31	1.0	0.0
Total	4,424	100.0	3,192	100.0	38.6

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

7 Top 5 Religions of Iran-born: 2006, 2001					
Religion	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Islam	1,567	35.4	1,211	38.1	29.4
Baha'i	1,178	26.6	957	30.1	23.1
Western Catholic	271	6.1	212	6.7	27.8
Uniting Church	53	1.2	33	1.0	60.6
Zoroastrianism	51	1.2	44	1.4	15.9
Other religions	408	9.2	303	9.5	34.7
No religion	527	11.9	201	6.3	162.2
Not stated ¹	375	8.5	218	6.9	72.0
Total	4,430	100.0	3,179	100.0	39.4

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

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



6 Proficiency in English of Iran-born: 2006, 2001					
Proficiency in English	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Speaks English only	408	9.2	349	11.1	16.9
<i>Speaks other language and speaks English</i>					
Very well	1,895	42.8	1,323	42.0	43.2
Well	1,397	31.5	905	28.7	54.4
Not well	552	12.5	443	14.1	24.6
Not at all	137	3.1	106	3.4	29.2
Not stated ¹	42	0.9	27	0.9	55.6
Total	4,431	100.0	3,153	100.0	40.5

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

8 Iran-born with Australian Citizenship by Age, 2006, 2001					
Age group (years)	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
0-4	11	0.3	9	0.4	22.2
5-11	69	2.1	63	2.5	9.5
12-18	198	6.1	223	8.9	-11.2
19-25	377	11.6	288	11.5	30.9
26-44	1,146	35.4	977	39.2	17.3
45-64	1,161	35.8	764	30.6	52.0
65-74	183	5.6	109	4.4	67.9
75+	96	3.0	61	2.4	57.4
Total	3,241	100.0	2,494	100.0	30.0

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