

Russia has had close links with Australia since the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, when Russian ships frequented Australian ports. However, there is no evidence of any substantial migration at this time, nor the following century. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century saw a number of migration waves from Russia, including political exiles and settlers who arrived before World War I; those who arrived as displaced persons after World War II; and those who came from Manchuria and China in the 1950s and 1960s. The late 1980s and early 1990s saw a significant outflow of migrants and refugees from the former USSR, including many who were Jewish. With the dissolution of the USSR, the 1990s were also a time of rapid and chaotic political change, and resulted in a further influx of Russian migrants to Australia, many of whom were skilled professionals.

At the 2006 Census, there were 5,682 Russia-born persons in Victoria (37.0% of Australia's total), decreasing by 3.6% from 5,893 persons in 2001. Only 28.4% of the Russia-born in Victoria had arrived in Australia prior to 1986; 25.2% had arrived between 1991 and 1995. The Russia-born were distinctly concentrated in Glen Eira (29.6%); and in the neighbouring suburbs in Port Phillip (8.6%), Kingston (7.6%), Monash (7.1%) and Bayside (6.4%). Due to their long settlement history, there were 20,104 persons who identified with Russian ancestry, including second and later generations. Some of the Russia-born also identified with Jewish, Polish, Chinese and other European ancestries.

The Russia-born community showed a maturing age profile: 27.7% were aged 45-64 years; and 26.7% were aged 65 years or over. The median age was 47 years, compared to 37 years for the total Victorian population. The gender ratio was biased, with 69 males to 100 females. Over three-quarters (78.0%) spoke Russian at home; 12.2% spoke English only. A significant percentage (19.7%) assessed themselves as speaking English not well or not at all. The two main religions were Judaism (29.2%) and Russian Orthodox (22.0%); 21.7% had no religion. Most (82.3%) held Australian Citizenship, compared to 67.5% for the total overseas-born population in Victoria.

**Demographic Background: 2006 Census**

	2006 Census		2001 Census		1996 Census		2001-2006 % change	1996-2001 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%		
Melbourne	5,407	35.2	5,644	37.6	5,458	38.8	-4.2	3.4
Rest of Victoria <sup>1</sup>	275	1.8	249	1.7	226	1.6	10.4	10.2
<b>Total Victoria</b>	<b>5,682</b>	<b>37.0</b>	<b>5,893</b>	<b>39.2</b>	<b>5,684</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>-3.6</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>Total Australia</b>	<b>15,354</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>15,021</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>14,078</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>6.7</b>

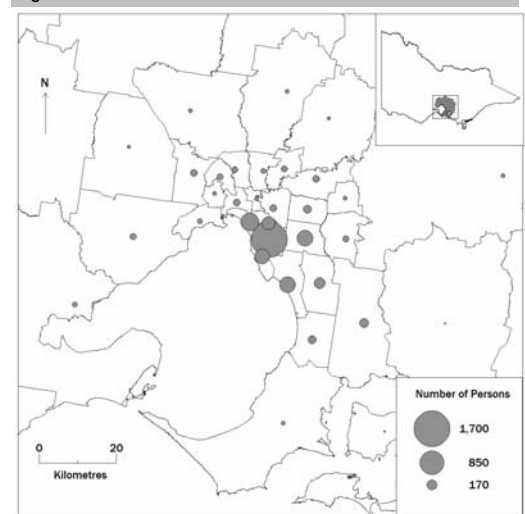
<sup>1</sup> Includes "No Usual Address, Victoria"

Local Government Area	2006 Census		2001 Census		Rank in 2001
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Glen Eira (C)	1,681	29.6	1,922	32.7	1
Port Phillip (C)	486	8.6	697	11.9	2
Kingston (C)	430	7.6	389	6.6	3
Monash (C)	403	7.1	373	6.4	4
Bayside (C)	366	6.4	327	5.6	5
Rest of LGAs in Metro Melb	2,053	36.1	1,932	32.9	
Rest of LGAs in Reg. Vic	261	4.6	229	3.9	
<b>Total Victoria</b>	<b>5,680</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,869</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

	2006 Census	2001 Census	2001-2006 % change
Russian ancestry			
<b>Total First &amp; Second Responses<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>20,104</b>	<b>18,543</b>	<b>8.4</b>
<b>Total Russia-born, persons</b>	<b>5,682</b>	<b>5,893</b>	<b>-3.6</b>

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

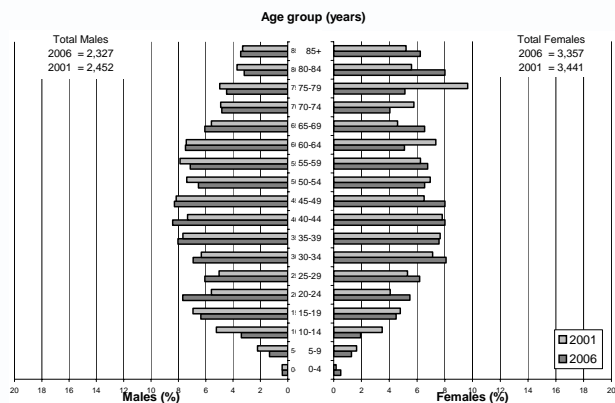
Fig 1: Distribution of Russia-Born in Melbourne, 2006



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

Age group (years)	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
0-4	26	0.5	16	0.3	62.5
5-11	113	2.0	177	3.0	-36.2
12-18	339	6.0	457	7.8	-25.8
19-25	485	8.5	399	6.8	21.6
26-44	1,632	28.7	1,545	26.2	5.6
45-64	1,572	27.7	1,687	28.6	-6.8
65-74	609	10.7	614	10.4	-0.8
75+	908	16.0	998	16.9	-9.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,684</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,893</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>-3.5</b>
<i>Sex Ratio</i>	<i>69</i>		<i>males per 100 females</i>		

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



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

Language	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Russian	4,431	78.0	4,648	79.0	-4.7
Polish	103	1.8	140	2.4	-26.4
Greek	60	1.1	52	0.9	15.4
Hebrew	55	1.0	52	0.9	5.8
Mandarin	28	0.5	29	0.5	-3.4
English only	691	12.2	632	10.7	9.3
Other languages <sup>1</sup>	249	4.4	266	4.5	-6.4
Not stated	62	1.1	68	1.2	-8.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,679</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,887</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>-3.5</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes 'Inadequately described' and 'Non-verbal so described'.

#### 6 Proficiency in English of Russia-born: 2006, 2001

Proficiency in English	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Speaks English only	702	12.3	655	11.2	7.2
<i>Speaks other language and speaks English</i>					
Very well	2,117	37.2	1,869	32.0	13.3
Well	1,632	28.7	1,806	30.9	-9.6
Not well	865	15.2	1,094	18.7	-20.9
Not at all	256	4.5	328	5.6	-22.0
Not stated <sup>1</sup>	115	2.0	96	1.6	19.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,687</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,848</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>-2.8</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes those who did not state a language or proficiency in English.

#### 7 Top 5 Religions of Russia-born: 2006, 2001

Religion	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
Judaism	1,660	29.2	1,859	31.5	-10.7
Russian O'dox	1,248	22.0	1,322	22.4	-5.6
Greek Orthodox	281	5.0	218	3.7	28.9
Western Catholic	220	3.9	257	4.4	-14.4
Eastern O'dox nfd	209	3.7	119	2.0	75.6
Other religions	409	7.2	371	6.3	10.2
No religion	1,233	21.7	1,177	20.0	4.8
Not stated <sup>1</sup>	416	7.3	572	9.7	-27.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,676</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,895</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>-3.7</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes 'Religious Belief, nfd and 'Not Defined'.

#### 8 Russia-born with Australian Citizenship by Age, 2006, 2001

Age group (years)	2006 Census		2001 Census		2001-2006 % change
	Persons	%	Persons	%	
0-4	3	0.1	6	0.1	-50.0
5-11	61	1.3	107	2.1	-43.0
12-18	249	5.3	352	7.0	-29.3
19-25	345	7.4	314	6.3	9.9
26-44	1,204	25.7	1,205	24.1	-0.1
45-64	1,450	31.0	1,555	31.1	-6.8
65-74	557	11.9	561	11.2	-0.7
75+	808	17.3	907	18.1	-10.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,677</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,007</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>-6.6</b>

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](http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au)