

Statistics of ethnic groups in South Australia

INTRODUCTION

Facts and figures about many of the ethnic groups in South Australia, to inform anyone involved in Christian mission.

The main source is the 2011 census, from which I get numbers of people for any country of birth or language spoken, along with any details I find, like religious affiliation, where in the state they live, etc. I also mention if I know of churches in SA of those groups, and this is obviously incomplete.

The main marker of ethnicity I use is "Language spoken at home". If a person speaks English and another language, it's the other one counts. This document began as the ten main ethnic minorities, then I added a few more, now it includes every language with over 500 speakers or over 200 who arrived since 2000, although some at the end are listed only briefly.

Due to time constraints, the possibility of my writing more and my preference for adding information rather than tidying up, this remains rough, with arbitrary roundings, abbreviations and simplifications and without formatting. There's plenty more I could have added. If anyone wants more details, I can provide that. In particular, the ABS website (Table Builder, QuickStats, etc) has lots of census data in different forms, while my Mappage website allows a detailed look at these stats geographically, particularly showing where a national or language group lives.

Eric Love, 5th June 2016

MAJORITY AUSTRALIAN

It's worth describing the majority ethnic group so we can later describe any minorities.

The majority of South Australians are English speaking from British and other European ancestry. Some have ancestors here since the 19th century. Some arrived recently from other English-speaking countries with similar culture to ours, and can be considered part of the majority culture.

82% of SA speak English-only, but this includes some from other ethnic groups, so majority Australians (that's the best term I could come up with) probably make up 70-75% of SA. Majority Australians are a much bigger majority outside Adelaide, in the southern suburbs, coastal suburbs, Adelaide Hills and Tea Tree Gully. Their numbers are lowest in inner and northern Adelaide, particularly the CBD and the middle half of Port Adelaide Enfield.

Most Christian denominations represented in SA, apart from the Orthodox, began among the majority Australians.

The main non-Christian religions came from the ethnic minorities and still have very few adherents among majority Australians. Majority Australians are far more likely to be non-religious than minorities.

IMMIGRANTS OLD AND NEW

The next biggest language groups after English are Italian 2.1%, Greek 1.6%, Mandarin 1%, Vietnamese 1%. Next are Cantonese, Arabic, German and Polish with 6000-9000; Spanish, Punjabi, Hindi and Serbian have 4000-5000.

If we look just at the 106,000 people in our state who arrived since 2000, the list is a bit different. English-only is still top with 31%. Mandarin is 11%. Punjabi, Hindi, Cantonese and Arabic each have 2800-3500, followed by more Asian languages. This document pays more attention to the more recently arrived groups than some of the European groups who came here in earlier decades.

Many of those recently arrived will leave again soon (eg students) but many stay. I haven't looked much at the flows into and out of South Australia. As it is nearly five years since the census and many of the ethnic groups had large numbers immigrating just before the census, it is quite likely that the numbers will have increased significantly. Much of what is written here in the present tense feels outdated already and when the 2016 census data is released we'll find that many of the numbers have grown.

CHINESE

Total who speak a Chinese language 28,100 (1.8% of SA)

By country of birth:

Mainland China 14,600

Australia 3660

Malaysia 3300

Hong Kong 2310

Vietnam 1290

Taiwan 840

Singapore 790

Cambodia 410

Mandarin 15,500

17% Buddhist, 15% Christian, 59% No Rel

(born mainland China 11,100 : 12% Buddhist, 10% Christian, 71% No Rel)

Cantonese 9000

30% Buddhist, 22% Christian, 42% No Rel

(born mainland China 2000 : 22% Buddhist, 12% Christian, 60% No Rel)

Total 22% Buddhist, 19% Christian (5% Catholic), 53% No Religion

7420 uni students

Inner suburbs, all of the east. 23% of people in the city.

The largest numbers of arrivals from China were in the few years before the census.

Several churches in Adelaide have services in Mandarin or Cantonese.

INDIAN & SUBCONTINENT

At the census there were around 25,000 South Australians born in the Indian subcontinent. As there are several different Indian language groups, some of which cross national borders, I include them as a group.

By country of birth:

India 18,700

Sri Lanka 2670

Pakistan 1360

Bangladesh 1290

Nepal 1040

Bhutan 700

Although they are a number of different people groups they have a lot in common.

They live in large numbers in Port-Enfield.

Lots of them came to Australia in 2007-09

For some groups there is a male majority.

It is worth looking at some of the different language groups:

Punjabi 4430.

From the Indian state of Punjab AND the Pakistani province of Punjab

85% Sikh, 10% Hindu

60% male

17% of SA's taxi drivers speak Punjabi.

Hindi 4420

From northern & central India

77% Hindu, 5.9% Muslim, 5.6% Christian 4.5% Sikh

Gujarati 2400

From the western Indian state of Gujarat

91% Hindu

Malayalam 2190

From the southern state of Kerala

77% Christian (54% Catholic, 10% Mar Thoma), 18% Hindu

Biggest concentration in NW Adelaide

Catholic churches at Parafield Gardens(3), Thebarton(2), St Marys, (Croydon Park)

Mar Thoma church at Woodville

Charismatic church at Seaton?

Ecumenical gathering at Woodville Gardens?

(Anglican service at Alberton)

Nepali 1730

From Nepal and Bhutan

84% Hindu, 8% Buddhist

There is a Nepali congregation at Playford Baptist.

Sinhalese 1720

From Sri Lanka

77% Buddhist, 20% Christian (13% Catholic)

More in the eastern suburbs

Tamil 1700

From the southern state of Tamil Nadu AND Sri Lanka

69% Hindu 23% Christian (11% Catholic)

Quite a few live in eastern suburbs

A few churches have fortnightly or monthly services, that I know of: Alberton Anglican, Hectorville Catholic, Rostrevor Baptist

Bengali 1480

From the eastern state of West Bengal AND Bangladesh

75% Muslim, 18% Hindu

Urdu 1330

From Pakistan

96% Muslim

Spread around Adelaide, with more in the southern suburbs

Telugu 700

From the SE states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

89% Hindu, 7% Christian

Marathi 400

From the western state of Maharashtra

87% Hindu

Kannada 300 (SW state of Karnataka)

No Religion is under 3% for all language groups

Peak arrivals 2007-09.

There were 13,600 Hindus in SA in 2011. 65% were born in India, 11% from elsewhere in south Asia, 10% in Australia. Under 1% had both parents born in Australia.

ITALIAN

33,300 people, 2.2% of SA, speak Italian, mostly aged 45+. The largest numbers are in Campbelltown (where they are 14.6%). They are 90% Catholic.

20,700 South Australians were born in Italy, with over half of them arriving 1952-64.

91,900 indicated Italian ancestry, with 76% of those Catholic.

Several Catholic churches in Adelaide have services in Italian, as well as a few pentecostal churches.

I estimate Italian-speaking Catholics are slightly more nominal than Australian Catholics generally.

ABORIGINAL

There were 29,400 Aboriginal people in SA in the census, 1.8% of the state. Half in Adelaide, with highest numbers in Playford and Port-Enfield. Half outside Adelaide, with most in northern areas, including 2100 in APY Lands where they are the majority.

82% speak English-only

3490 speak Indigenous languages

Languages: Pitjantjatjara 2140, Ngarrindjeri 250, Yankunytjatjara 190

In Outback, No Rel 25%, total Christian 49%, 10% Aboriginal Traditional Religion

In Adelaide, No Rel 41%, total Christian 43% (higher in west)

Aboriginals are fairly well represented in churches. There are a number of Aboriginal churches in Adelaide.

GREEK

25,300 people (1.6% of South Australians) speak Greek.

The largest numbers are in the inner and western suburbs.

93% Greek Orthodox. There are several Greek Orthodox churches around Adelaide, including some that are not part of the main grouping. There are two Greek baptist churches.

9760 people born in Greece. Peak arrivals were 1954-65.

VIETNAMESE

Peak arrivals 1979-1992

16,000 people speak Vietnamese

1230 uni students

Port-Enfield and Salisbury have the most. In particular, they are 19% of the population of the Parks area.

51% Buddhist, 33% Christian (27% Catholic), 13% No Rel

41% Christian in Salisbury

12,000 people born in Vietnam

Evangelical churches in Renown Park and Broadview. A few Catholic churches including Pooraka.

Vietnamese Catholics are less nominal than Australian Catholics generally.

There are a few Vietnamese churches in Adelaide.

FILIPINO

8860 total born Philippines

65% female. There is a long history of Filipino women coming here to marry Australian men, which continues to the present.

Males (hence whole Filipino families) are in significant numbers in Port-Enfield and Salisbury.

The wives of Aussies are spread around more evenly.

Most common ages for those born Philippines 30-54

96% Christian (76% Catholic)

Filipino Catholics are less nominal than Australian Catholics generally.

Language = Tagalog/Filipino 6790

Inc uni students 80 M 210 F

Other languages: Bisaya 150, Cebuano 110.

Arrivals have been mostly since 1980, a peak in 1988, larger numbers from 2006.

Springpark BC is majority Filipino, Edwardstown BC also has Filipino ministry

Catholic churches at Greenacres, Noarlunga, Salisbury, Ottoway

YUGOSLAV

About 9800 South Australians were born in the former Yugoslavia, including

Croatia 3130

Bosnia-Herzegovina 2160

Serbia 1350

Slovenia 420

Macedonia 380

Kosovo 120

Peak arrivals 1968-71 and 1993-2001.

The different language identifications are local variants of one language.

The language identifications probably identify the cultural groups more closely than the country of birth. Some of these language groups have one main religious affiliation.

Serbian 4280

87% Eastern Orthodox

A lot concentrated around Hendon

Serbian Orthodox churches in Hindmarsh and Woodville Park

Croatian 3440

86% Catholic

St Patrick's in the city has mass in Croatian

Bosnian 1390

63% Muslim, 23% No Religion

250 in the Parks area

Yugoslavian 590

Albanian 550 (largely from Albania, but some from Kosovo)

Port Adelaide, Charles Sturt

51% Christian, 31% Muslim

Macedonian 370
Half of them in coastal western suburbs
88% Eastern Orthodox
Macedonian Orthodox churches in Findon and Woodville South

Slovene 270 - 87% Catholic

I estimate that Catholics of Yugoslavian background are a lot more nominal than Australian Catholics generally. I suspect the same holds for the Serbian Orthodox, but I have no data.

MIDDLE AFRICAN

17,300 South Australians were born on the African continent. Taking out those from the Arabic-speaking north Africa and the large number of South Africans leaves about 9000 from the mostly black African nationalities.

Country of birth:

Sudan (inc South Sudan) 1810

Zimbabwe 1240

Kenya 1160

Ethiopia 580

DR Congo 540

Liberia 540

Burundi 490

Tanzania 450

Somalia 350

Nigeria 290

Zambia 240

Uganda 230

Sierra Leone 210

Congo 210

Mauritius 210

6790 people speak African languages.

There are a number of language groups well represented.

Dinka 1440

from Sudan and Kenya

95% Christian (47% Anglican, 34% Catholic)

Majority in northern suburbs

Most arrived 2003-07

There are a few Dinka churches in Adelaide.

Swahili 1210

from DR Congo, Kenya, Tanzania, Congo

82% Christian, 11% Muslim

Spread around Adelaide with more in the north.

Lots arrived 2005-10

A few churches in Adelaide speak Swahili

Kirundi 780

from Burundi and Tanzania

93% Christian (30% Pentecostal, 20% Catholic)

Kirundi-speaking churches in Elizabeth Downs and Davoren Park

Half live in Playford, half of the rest in Salisbury.

Half arrived 2005-07

Somali 430

from Somalia and Kenya

96% Muslim

Mostly western suburbs

Lots arrived 2005-2010

Shona 430
from Zimbabwe
86% Christian (24% Catholic)
Peak arrivals 2006-09

Amharic 320
from Ethiopia
91% Christian (70% Orthodox)
Majority in western suburbs
Ethiopian Orthodox church in Greenacres?

Krio 190
from Sierra Leone
63% Christian, 29% Muslim
Western suburbs

Mandinka 170
from Liberia and Guinea
96% Muslim
Half in Port-Enfield

Other Liberians, who are largely English-speaking, are mostly Christian (a lot Baptist, Pentecostal and Uniting), also with a lot in Port-Enfield

Tigrinya 120
from Eritrea and Ethiopia
80% Orthodox
Eritrean Orthodox church in Enfield
Eritrean evangelical church in Findon?

Madi 110 (Sudan)
Christian (55% Catholic)

Oromo 110 (Ethiopia)
89% Muslim

Acholi 110 (Sudan)
58% Catholic

There are several African churches around Adelaide, including quite a few in Playford.

SOUTH AFRICAN

6210 South Australians were born in South Africa, mostly white and relatively well-off.

They are spread around Adelaide, mostly the richer suburbs. Highest concentrations in Roxby Downs and Hallett Cove.

One South African subset of interest is those speaking Afrikaans. At the census they numbered 2080. Most had arrived since 2005.

88% Christian, with a large proportion of active Christians.

The Christian Reformed Churches in Campbelltown, Elizabeth and Hallett Cove have a lot of South Africans.

There were 4110 English speaking South Africans (plus 700 Zimbabweans with similar characteristics).

Their arrival dates go back to 1960, with over half since 1998 and peaking at 2008-09.

69% Christian, 20% No Religion.

ARABIC

7470 speak Arabic

54% male

50% Islam (accounting for 19% of SA's Muslims)

37% Christian (16% Cath, 12% Orthodox), 8% Druse, 3% No Rel

By country of birth:

2150 Australia

1260 Lebanon - Catholic, Muslim, Druse,

910 Iraq - Muslim

660 Saudi Arabia - Muslim

590 Egypt - Coptic

490 Sudan (inc South Sudan) - various Christian

200 Syria

Coptic church in Cowandilla. I think there's an Arabic evangelical group under the radar somewhere.

AFGHAN

3290 South Australians were born in Afghanistan.

Peak arrivals were 2005-2011, with an earlier peak 2000-01.

97% Muslim

They are found in largest numbers in northern Adelaide, as well as Naracoorte, Renmark and Murray Bridge.

Speakers of Afghan languages:

Dari 2250

Hazaraghi 1240

Pashto 200

BURMESE

The various Burmese people groups are not a very large number, but get a mention here because they are well represented in the Baptist movement.

830 speak a Burmese language

Burmese 400

Karen 200

Chin Haka 40

misc Burmese 190

Peak arrivals 2007-09.

720 people born in Myanmar

Christian 80% (Baptist 56%), Buddhist 12%

The Karen live mostly in Mt Gambier. The others live largely in the northern suburbs.

There are a number of Burmese churches in the northern suburbs. There is a Karen congregation at Mt Gambier Baptist.

OTHER MIDDLE EASTERN & CENTRAL ASIAN

Farsi 2900

from Iran and Afghanistan

Half arrived since 2000, some in the 1980s

43% Muslim, 35% Baha'i, 13% No Rel, 3% Christian
Spread around Adelaide. The Baha'i live largely in the southern suburbs.

The large numbers of conversions of Iranians to Christ has been one of the good news stories of this decade. I thought that 3% looks too low, suggesting many are flying under the radar. I expect that 3% will be much higher next time.

Turkish 670
Started migrating in the 1960s. Nearly half were born in Australia.
78% Muslim, 11% No Rel
Renmark, Murray Bridge, Virginia

Kurdish 630
from Iraq and Iran
They started arriving around 1995.
62% Muslim, 30% No Religion
Tea Tree Gully and Salisbury

Uygur 400
from western China
Most came from 2003 onwards.
93% Muslim
Northern suburbs

Uzbek 150
from Uzbekistan
Peak arrivals 2006-08
100% Muslim

OTHER EUROPEAN

German 7460 - Barossa, Adelaide Hills. Lutheran church in city.
Polish 6240 - Salisbury, Port-Enfield, Charles Sturt. Pentecostal church in Albert Park. Catholic churches in Croydon Park, Morphett Vale, Ottoway, Salisbury.
Spanish 4910 (Americas) - Salvadorians live in Salisbury, the rest spread around Adelaide. Catholic churches in Kilburn, Noarlunga. Protestant churches in Croydon Park, Cheltenham.
Russian 3120 - the evangelical community lives around Port Adelaide (two churches in Queenstown), the others are spread around (Russian Orthodox church in Wayville)
Dutch 3110 - 37% No Religion. The Christian Reformed Churches (Campbelltown, Elizabeth, Hallett Cove) originated with the Dutch.
French 2140 - rich suburbs
Hungarian 1480 - east Adelaide. Churches in College Park (Catholic), Unley
Ukrainian 1150 - Port-Enfield, Charles Sturt. Catholic churches in Woodville and Wayville, Orthodox churches in Croydon and Kilkenny.
Portuguese (mostly Brazil) 1050 - Charles Sturt, Salisbury. Catholic church in city.
Romanian 980 - Playford - Orthodox church in Ovingham, Pentecostal church in Salisbury North, Baptist church in Mile End?
Maltese 920 - west and north Adelaide. Catholic churches in Lockleys and Kilburn.
Latvian 630 - rich suburbs - Lutheran church in Wayville

OTHER SOUTHEAST ASIAN

Khmer (Cambodia) 3670 - Salisbury
Korean 3060 - east & inner Adelaide, several churches
Japanese 1770 - 58% female, east & inner Adelaide
Indonesian 1550 - lots around Flinders Uni. Church in Wayville
Thai 1370 - 68% female
Malay 1080 - inner Adelaide, Port-Enfield
Lao 560 - some in Naracoorte