

BANGLADESH DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

In Australia, the population census takes place every five years. The last census undertaken was in August 2006. The Bangladesh-born community is a small ethnic group in Australia with a total population of 17,289 as documented in the last Census.

A majority (68%) of them lives in New South Wales. The second largest group resides in Victoria and Queensland (see Table 1). Less than 100 Bangladeshi lives in Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

Table 1 also shows that the number of Bangladeshi in Australia is increasing. In a period of ten years (1996-2006), the number of Bangladesh community in NSW grew three-fold in numbers. The significant increase occurred between the 2001 – 2006 periods (See table below).

**Table 1: Bangladesh-born population by census years
(1996, 2001 & 2006)**

State	1996	2001	2006	Change
NSW	3,169	6,112	11,432	8,263
Victoria	920	1,415	3,198	2,278
Queensland	279	485	896	617
Western Australia	269	465	656	387
ACT	253	409	620	367
South Australia	123	120	317	194
Tasmania	32	32	86	54
Northern Territory	41	41	84	43
TOTAL	5,076	9,079	17,289	12,213

Source: ABS (2006)

The census collects data on a variety of topics related to population. Some of these are directly ethnicity related such as language spoken at home, country of birth and the ancestry of the population. The data on country of birth (Bangladesh) and language spoken at home show that there were 10,616 Bangladeshi (Bangladesh-born) and 12,993 Bengali Speaking in NSW in 2006 (Appendix 1). It is clear that the Bengali-speaking population in NSW (12,993) is higher than those who were born in Bangladesh in 2006. Since Bengali is the official language of Bangladesh as well as West Bengal (in India), hence the additional 2,317 Bengali-speakers can potentially be Bengalis from West Bengal.

The distribution of the Bangladeshi (Bangladesh-born population) in the Sydney Metropolitan Area (SMA) and in Regional and Rural NSW are presented in Appendices 1 and 2. The highest concentration of Bangladeshi in the SMA is in Canterbury (2115) followed by Campbelltown (1070), Rockdale (1205) and Botany (1075). In Regional and Rural NSW, the highest concentration of Bangladeshi is in Wollongong (58), Newcastle (35), Gosford (23) and Armidale-Dumaresq (26) (Appendix 2).

The number of Bengalis by ancestry includes children and grandchildren born in Australia (or another country of prior settlement) whose parents were born in BD or India and who identified themselves as Bengalis, when answering the Census question “What is your ancestry?” Bengalis

by ancestry would also include some grandchildren, born in Australia of pioneer Bengali grandparents, but this number would be relatively small.

It is interesting to note that in some local government areas in NSW, such as the Blue Mountains, Bellingen and Wentworth there were no Bengali-speakers. However there was a combined total of 19 Bengalis by ancestry (See Appendix 1).

In Leeton, a local government area close to Griffith in regional NSW, there were no Bangladesh-born persons in 2006, but there were 8 Bengali-speakers and 10 Bengalis by ancestry (See Appendix 2).

Overall, the Bangladesh-born population represent a younger population structure with a higher proportion of the population falling in age groups between 0-44 years. Distribution of Bangladesh-born population by age group in both SMA and RRA is presented in Appendices 3 and 4.

Fifty seven per cent of Bangladeshi in the SMA is represented by young working families within the 25-44 age bracket while only less than 1% are of a pensionable age (65 years and over).

The number of Bangladesh-born (12) in regional and rural NSW under the age of 14 years is very small. There is none of pensionable age.

With regard to English language proficiency, a significant number of Bangladeshi, 88% in SMA and 82% in Regional and Rural areas respectively, stated that they can speak English well while only a small proportion have difficulties in communicating in English (See Appendix 5 and 6).

Data on Bangladeshi by year of arrival to Australia show that there is an increase in number of people who arrived in SMA during the 2001-2006 period then prior to 2001 (see appendix 7 and 8). However there is a decline in number of people arrived from Bangladesh to Regional and Rural NSW in the same period.

Appendix 1

Distribution of population in 2006 by: language spoken at home (Bengali) country of birth (Bangladesh) ancestry (Bengali)

SYDNEY METROPOLITAN AREA

City (C), Municipality, Shire	Bengali spoken at home	Bangladesh-born	Bengali by ancestry
Canterbury (C)	2,403	2,115	2,214
Campbelltown (C)	1,402	1,070	1,277
Rockdale (C)	1,236	1,205	1,165
Botany Bay (C)	1,268	1,073	1,138
Blacktown (C)	1,227	899	1,046
Parramatta (C)	704	522	607
Marrickville	473	434	424
Randwick	358	308	334
Baulkham Hills	384	223	318
Sydney (C)	250	249	268
Liverpool (C)	271	201	254
Ashfield	260	233	233
Bankstown (C)	251	200	223
Auburn	233	217	205
Holroyd (C)	227	167	184
Hornsby	257	106	150
Strathfield	200	148	146
Kogarah	190	143	145
Ryde (C)	145	120	145
Penrith (C)	127	93	113
Lane Cove	103	74	95
Burwood	127	94	86
Hurstville	92	80	85
Warringah	34	31	46
Willoughby	40	39	42
North Sydney	51	42	38
Sutherland	35	28	38
Canada Bay	47	31	35
Leichhardt	19	24	27
Waverley	29	21	27
Fairfield (C)	27	21	25
Mosman	18	21	19
Woollahra	11	14	13
Blue Mountains (C)	0	4	12
Pittwater	8	9	12
Ku-Ring-Gai	59	13	11
Hawkesbury (C)	12	8	8
Manly	19	9	6
Camden	3	3	0
TOTAL	12,631	10,304	11,214

Source: ABS (2006) Census Australia