



# New and emerging communities in Western Australia

**The purpose of this fact sheet is to assist State Government agencies to understand the term ‘new and emerging communities’. The information in this fact sheet is designed to help agencies to better identify Western Australia’s new and emerging communities for the purpose of policy, program and service development, implementation and evaluation.**

The new and emerging communities identified in this fact sheet are current as of 2011<sup>1</sup>, based on the latest Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) arrivals data. The list is fluid and may change in response to changes in Australia’s humanitarian program and Western Australia’s demographic profile.

## Definition

People from new and emerging communities are sometimes identified as ‘high need clients’ due to the length of time they have spent in refugee camps, their lack of personal support networks in Australia and the additional assistance and resources needed to address the settlement challenges they face.

New and emerging communities are those:

- with a small population
- where the majority of members are recent arrivals to Australia

- where the majority of members entered through Australia’s humanitarian program
- lacking established family networks, support systems, community structures and resources relative to more established communities
- facing challenges settling in Australia and needing additional support and resources.

Members of these communities typically experience at least two of the following settlement challenges:

- low levels of English language proficiency although multilingual in other languages
- low or no literacy in their main language due to a range of factors
- low levels of education and skill due to extended periods in refugee camps
- unfamiliarity with Australian urban living
- experiences of torture and trauma prior to arrival in Australia
- health problems due to lack of health care in their home country or refugee camps
- visible difference
- isolation and social exclusion
- susceptibility to unemployment and under-employment.

<sup>1</sup> Most current data available at the time of writing (February 2012).

## Context of migration

The majority of people belonging to Western Australia's new and emerging communities have arrived as refugees through Australia's Humanitarian Program.

The United Nations defines a refugee as *"any person who ... owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."*

The figures in this fact sheet are based on DIAC arrivals data for humanitarian entrants for 1991–2010, showing the number of arrivals per decade from each country rather than the actual size of the community resident in Western Australia.

## Classification of 'new and emerging'

Western Australia's new and emerging communities can be classified into two groups, distinguished by the main period of arrival.

Group 1 comprises 10 countries from which there were no, or very few, arrivals prior to 2001. Those countries are: Burundi, the Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo<sup>2</sup>, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Togo.<sup>3</sup>

Group 2 comprises eight countries which registered arrivals between 1991 and 2001. Those countries are: Afghanistan, Burma, Iran, Iraq, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. Although arrivals from these countries may have been resident in Western Australia for more than 10 years, they often share many of the characteristics of more newly-arrived entrants.

<sup>2</sup> Note: The Republic of the Congo and Democratic Republic of the Congo are separate countries (as at February 2012).

<sup>3</sup> The figures only include countries that registered 30 or more arrivals after 2001. For this reason, Bhutan (two arrivals) and Mauritania (21 arrivals) are not included.

**Table 1: Number of Group 1 arrivals in Western Australia per decade by source country**

Year of arrival	Burundi	Congo (R)	Congo (DR)	Ivory Coast	Liberia	Rwanda	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Tanzania	Togo
1991–2000	4	10	12	0	0	10	0	0	2	0
2001–2010	333	247	349	66	618	94	30	487	299	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>52</b>

**Table 2: Number of Group 2 arrivals in Western Australia per decade by source country**

Year of arrival	Afghanistan	Burma	Eritrea	Ethiopia	Iran	Iraq	Somalia	Sudan
1991–2000	647	1092	152	369	500	1268	449	308
2001–2010	1416	1583	183	521	560	1010	256	3074
<b>Total</b>	<b>2063</b>	<b>2675</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>1060</b>	<b>2278</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>3382</b>



## Arrival rates

The figures below show the rate of arrivals in Western Australia by country of birth. Figure 1 shows a general increase in the number of entrants from countries where the main period of arrival was after 2001. However, the rates and period of arrival vary across communities. Arrival rates for the Democratic Republic of the Congo-born, Tanzania-born, Burundi-born and Rwanda-born communities have remained high since 2001. Rates of arrival from the Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone have declined.

**Figure 1: Annual average rate of arrivals for Group 1 by birthplace**

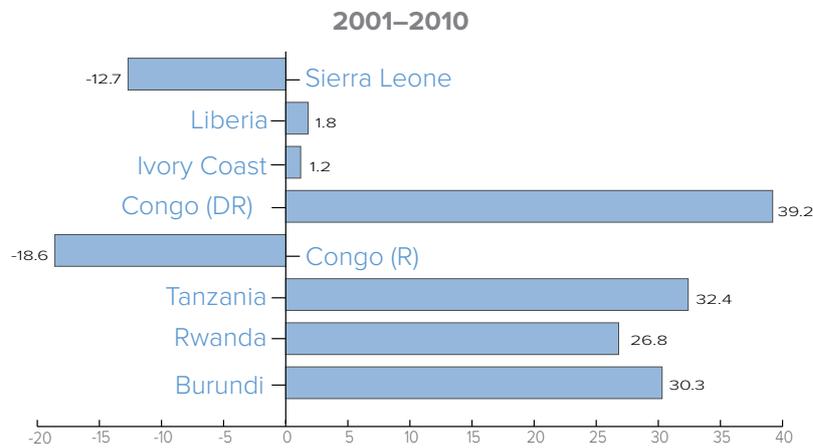
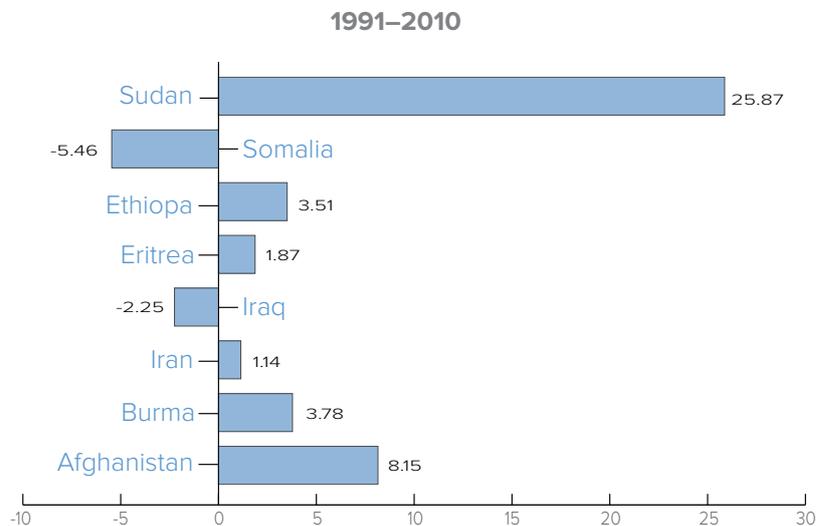


Figure 2 shows significant variations in the rate of arrivals for Group 2 countries since 1991. Arrival rates for the Sudan-born, Afghanistan-born, Burma-born and Ethiopia-born have increased. Arrival rates for the Somalia-born and Iraq-born have declined.

**Figure 2: Annual average rate of arrivals for Group 2 by birthplace**



## Age composition

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- The age composition of arrivals from 1991 onwards is evenly spread, with 46% of people aged over 25 years, 31% aged 0–15 years and 21% aged 16–24 years. A small (3.4%) cohort of arrivals was aged over 55 years, but this cohort is larger than post-2000 arrivals (1.1%). There are also variations between groups. The 0–15 and 16–24 years age cohorts are largest in arrivals from Sudan (63.8%) and Afghanistan (59.2%), and 25–64 years for arrivals from Eritrea (57.3%), Burma (54.9%) and Ethiopia (53.9%).
- Arrivals entering Western Australia after 2001 have a relatively young age profile. Two-thirds of this group is aged under 25 years.<sup>4</sup> The remaining one-third consists primarily of adults aged 25–54 years. However, there is variation across communities. Arrivals from the Ivory Coast, Tanzania and Senegal are primarily children (80% or more), while arrivals from Burundi and Togo are mainly adults (around 52%).

## Gender

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- The gender data suggests that, since the 1990s, the number of women arriving as humanitarian entrants has increased.
- The average sex-ratio (number of men per 100 women) for arrivals after 2001 is 103.6, indicating a relative gender balance. However, the sex-ratio also varies across groups: there is a higher ratio of men to women arriving from Tanzania (119.1), the Republic of the Congo (137.5) and Senegal (150) compared with the higher number of women to men arriving from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (88.1), Ivory Coast (83.3) and Rwanda (74.1). The average sex-ratio for arrivals from 1991 to 2000 is 137.5, meaning there were significantly more men than women.

<sup>4</sup> The pattern for the 0–15 years age cohort is similar to that for other groups of humanitarian entrants in Western Australia. Commissioner for Children and Young People, 2011:23.

## English language proficiency<sup>5</sup>

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- English language proficiency levels are fairly consistent for arrivals across the identified communities.
- Almost 20% of arrivals after 1991 had good or very good English language proficiency, while more than 80% had low or no English language proficiency.
- More than 25% of arrivals after 2001 had good or very good English language proficiency, while almost 75% had low or no English language proficiency. There are differences in levels of English language proficiency between groups but these variations are more distinct in those communities that arrived mainly after 2001.
- Nearly half of arrivals from Liberia (45.7%) and Sierra Leone (44.7%) spoke English well or very well while the majority of arrivals from Tanzania (95.3%) and Senegal (88%) had low or no English language proficiency. Nearly a quarter of arrivals from Iraq and Ethiopia had good or very good English language proficiency, while the majority of arrivals from Afghanistan (86.7%) had low or no English language proficiency.

## Educational attainment<sup>6</sup>

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- Rates of educational attainment are fairly consistent across the groups. Approximately 40% of adult arrivals (aged over 16 years) had completed secondary level education and 20% had tertiary and/or trade level qualifications.
- There is a positive correlation between English language proficiency and secondary level education. Secondary level attainment was highest in those groups where the largest cohorts had good or very good English language proficiency such as the Liberia-born, Sierra Leone-born and Rwanda-born.
- The rate for tertiary/trade level qualifications was highest among arrivals from Iraq (29.4%) and lowest among those from Somalia (9.3%).

<sup>5</sup> English language proficiency is self-identified on arrival.

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that there are some anomalies in the available data. Rates should be read as approximates.



## Languages and religions

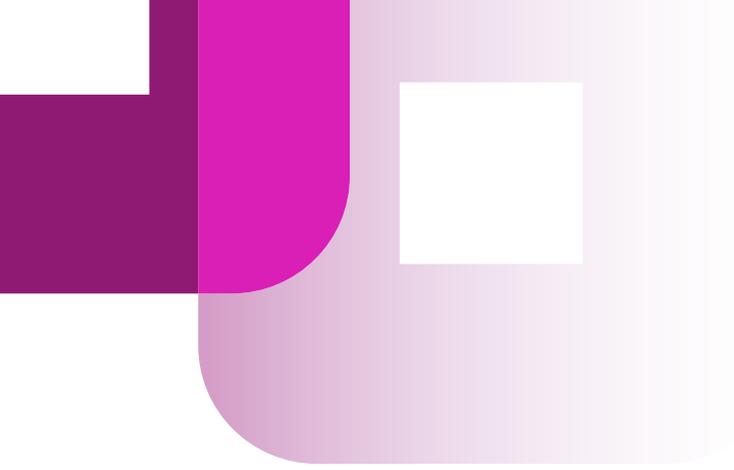
A number of different languages are spoken and religions practised within Group 1 and Group 2 countries. Table 3 lists the main languages and religions found within these country groups.

**Table 3: Main languages and religions of new and emerging communities**

Country	Main languages <sup>7</sup>	Main religions (in order of prevalence)
<b>GROUP 1</b>		
Burundi	Kirundi (o), French (o), Swahili	Christianity, Islam, local religions
Congo (R)	French (o), Lingala (o), Kituba (Kikongo) (o), Akan	Christianity, Animism, Islam
Congo (DR)	French (o), Lingala (t), Kituba (Kikongo), Tshiluba, Kiswahili, Akan, Bemba	Christianity, Islam, Animism
Ivory Coast	French (o), Senoufo (Cebaara), Dan, Anyin	Local religions, Islam, Christianity
Liberia	English (o), Bassa, Kpelle (Liberian), Klao	Christianity, Islam, local religions
Rwanda	English (o), French (o), Kinyarwanda (o)	Christianity, Islam
Senegal	French (o), Jola (o), Mandinka (o), Pulaar (Fulah) (o), Wolof (o), Serer-Sine (o)	Islam, local religions, Christianity
Sierra Leone	English (o), Mende (t), Temne (t), Krio	Islam, Christianity, local religions
Tanzania	English (o), Swahili (o), Arabic, Sukuma	Christianity, Islam
Togo	French (o), Kabye (o), Ewe, Gbe dialects	Local religions, Christianity, Islam
<b>GROUP 2</b>		
Afghanistan	Dari (Afghan Farsi) (o), Pashto (o), Farsi (Persian), Hazaraghi	Islam
Burma	Burmese (o), Chin dialects, Karen dialects	Buddhism, Christianity, Islam
Eritrea	Tigrinya (o), Arabic (o), English (o), Italian (o), Tigre	Christianity, Islam
Ethiopia	Amharic (o), Arabic (o), English (o), Oromo (or), Tigrinya (or), Gamo	Christianity, Islam
Iran	Farsi (o), Arabic, Kurdish, Turkmen	Islam, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Baha'ism
Iraq	Arabic (o), Kurdish (o), Armenian, Azerbaijani, Farsi	Islam, Christianity
Somalia	Somali (o), Arabic, English	Islam, Christianity
Sudan and South Sudan	Arabic (o), English (o), Dinka, Nuer, Acholi	Islam, Christianity, Animism

Key: o = official language, t = trade language, or = official regional language

<sup>7</sup> This table does not include all languages of the identified countries. Languages were identified using information from the 2009 edition of Ethnologue ([www.ethnologue.com.au](http://www.ethnologue.com.au)) and the ABS 2006 Census and chosen on the basis of 1) being the official or national language of the country, 2) a language that is widely spoken as an everyday language, and 3) a language identified in the 2006 Census as being spoken in Western Australia.



## More information

For more information and assistance, please contact:

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