



# Western Australian Community Profiles 2011 Census

## Eritrea-born

### Introduction

**This profile provides a range of information on Western Australians who were born in Eritrea. Using data from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, it details:**

- key social and economic characteristics of the community including population size, age and gender profile, education, income and workforce participation
- migration history and cultural backgrounds including ancestry, language and religious affiliation
- family and wellbeing including marital status, family composition, living arrangements and disability.

The purpose of this profile is to assist all Western Australians to understand the State's cultural diversity and the way it has changed over time. The information can be used for a variety of purposes including policy, program and service development, research and for general interest.

### Eritrea-born community in Western Australia

The Eritrea-born can be classified as a new and emerging community. A new and emerging community is one that is small in number, of which most members arrived in Western Australia (WA) after 1991, and mainly as humanitarian entrants. Four Eritrea-born people were recorded arriving in WA before 1981 with no further arrivals until the 1990s. Since 1991, 441 Eritrea-born people have arrived in WA, mainly as humanitarian entrants.

#### ERITREA-BORN COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE

- There were 454 Eritrea-born people in WA in 2011, a larger number than in 2006 (319).
- There were 706 Western Australians with Eritrean ancestry.
- Half (51%) arrived in WA between 1991 and 2000.
- There were more women (232) than men (222), with a sex ratio of 96 men for every 100 women.
- More than half (58%) of the Eritrea-born were young adults aged between 25 and 44 years. The smallest group was children aged between 0 and 14 years (4%).
- Almost three-quarters (73%) spoke English well or very well and spoke a language other than English (LOTE) at home.
- The main languages spoken at home by the Eritrea-born were Arabic (53%) and Tigrinya (32%).

- ▣ Most (99%) lived in the Greater Perth Metropolitan Area.
- ▣ More than half (55%) of Eritrea-born people aged 15 years and over had completed Year 12 or an equivalent level of education and one-third (34%) had a post-school qualification.
- ▣ More than half (54%) were employed and more than one-third were not in the labour force (38%).
- ▣ The Eritrea-born were employed mainly as machinery operators and drivers (25%), labourers (21%) and professionals (15%).
- ▣ More than two-thirds (69%) were middle or low income earners; 38% had a weekly income between \$300 and \$999, and 31% earned less than \$300 per week.
- ▣ More than one-third (36%) owned their home and more than half (55%) lived in rental accommodation.
- ▣ More than two-thirds (68%) of people aged 25 years and over were married. More than half (56%) lived in couple families with children.
- ▣ Almost one-quarter (24%) of the Eritrea-born aged 65 years and over required assistance with everyday living.

## Migration, culture, ancestry, language and religion

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In 2011, there were 454 Eritrea-born Western Australians, representing 0.02 per cent of the State's total population. This group had grown by 42 per cent (from 319 people) since 2006. Almost three-quarters (74%) were Australian citizens.

### ARRIVAL

Half (51%) of the Eritrea-born arrived in WA between 1991 and 2000 and 43 per cent arrived between 2001 and 2010, mainly as humanitarian entrants. This compares with WA's total overseas-born population of which 11 per cent and 28 per cent, respectively, arrived during the same periods.

### AGE AND GENDER

The Eritrea-born population is composed of a larger proportion of young adults and smaller proportions of children and older people compared with the total WA population. In 2011, more than half (58%) of the Eritrea-born were aged between 25 and 44 years, a larger proportion compared with the WA population (29%). By contrast, smaller proportions were aged 65 years and over (4%) and between 0 and 14 years (4%); both were smaller compared with the total WA population (12% and 20%, respectively).

Between 2001 and 2011, there were decreases in the proportions of the Eritrea-born aged between 0 and 14 years (from 8% to 4%) and 15 and 24 years (from 19% to 6%). By contrast, the proportion of the Eritrea-born aged between 45 and 64 years more than doubled (from 12% to 28%) and there was an increase in the proportion aged 65 years and over (from 1% to 4%).



Age and gender profile	Eritrea-born					WA population 2011		
	2011			2006	2001	Male %	Female %	Total %
Age group	Male %	Female %	Total %	Total %	Total %			
0–14 years	2.3	5.2	4.0	3.1	8.4	20.1	19.2	19.7
15–24 years	5.4	9.1	6.4	10.3	18.9	14.1	13.3	13.7
25–44 years	53.6	61.2	57.7	64.3	59.2	29.4	28.9	29.1
45–64 years	34.2	21.5	27.8	19.1	12.2	25.1	25.3	25.2
65+ years	4.5	3.0	4.2	3.1	1.2	13.2	11.3	12.3
All (number)	222	232	454	319	238	1,126,177	1,112,177	2,239,171
Sex ratio			95.7	114.1	N/A			101.2

In 2011, there were more Eritrea-born women than men. The sex ratio (number of men per 100 women) was 96, lower than in 2006 (114) and compared with the total WA population (101).

### ANCESTRY

People born in Eritrea, who have one or both parents born there, or who were born elsewhere but have Eritrean ancestors, may identify that they have Eritrean ancestry. In 2011, more than two-thirds (68%) of

Eritrea-born Western Australians identified that they had Eritrean ancestry. Smaller proportions of the Eritrea-born reported having English (10%), Tigrayan (4%), Ethiopian (3%) or Italian (2%) ancestries. Most (96%) had one or both parents born overseas.

Small numbers of the WA population (706) and the Australia-born (207) identified as having Eritrean ancestry.

Ancestry	Eritrea-born		WA population 2011	Australia-born 2011
	2011	2006		
Self-identified ancestry	Total %	Total %	Total %	Total %
Eritrean	67.8	68.7	0.0*	0.0*
Tigrayan	4.4	0.0	0.0*	0.0*
Ethiopian	2.9	4.4	0.1	0.1
Italian	2.2	2.8	5.0	6.2
English	10.0	2.8	37.9	41.3
One or both parents born overseas	95.8	95.8	56.2	35.2
Both parents born in Australia	0.5	0.0	43.8	64.8
One parent born in Australia	0.5	0.6	51.3	75.3

\* The proportions are listed as zero because of the small percentage of people identifying with these ancestries.

Language	Eritrea-born					WA population 2011		
	2011			2006	2001	Male %	Female %	Total %
English proficiency	Male %	Female %	Total %	Total %	Total %	Male %	Female %	Total %
English only	3.2	2.6	2.4	2.3	1.3	78.8	79.8	79.3
Other language and English; very well or well	83.3	62.5	72.7	71.0	76.8	12.4	12.7	12.5
Other language and English; not well or not at all	11.7	34.0	23.3	26.7	20.7	1.8	2.4	2.1
<b>Main languages spoken at home other than English (top two responses)*</b>								
Arabic	55.9	50.4	53.1	63.9	75.8	0.6	0.5	0.6
Tigrinya	27.0	37.0	32.2	21.9	19.5	0.0**	0.0**	0.0**

\* The top two responses for the Eritrea-born. Data for the WA population are not the top responses and are presented for comparative purposes.

\*\* Listed as zero because the proportion is less than 0.1 per cent.

## LANGUAGES

In 2011, most (96%) of the Eritrea-born reported speaking a language other than English (LOTE) at home, mainly Arabic (53%) and Tigrinya (32%).

In 2011, almost three-quarters (73%) of the Eritrea-born reported speaking a LOTE and speaking English well or very well, which was comparable to 2006 (71%). A larger proportion of men (83%) than women (63%) reported a high level of English proficiency.

A small proportion (2%) of the Eritrea-born spoke only English at home, which was relatively unchanged since 2001. Almost one-quarter (23%) of the Eritrea-born reported speaking a LOTE and English not well or not at all. A larger proportion of women (34%) than men (12%) reported having lower levels of English language proficiency.

## RELIGION

Between 2001 and 2011, the religious identification of Eritrea-born Western Australians changed. There was a decrease in the proportion of people who identified with Islam (from 70% to 53%) and an increase in the proportion of people identifying with Christianity (from 23% to 42%). This trend differed from the WA population for which identification with Christianity had decreased and identification with Islam had increased.



## Geographic distribution

Between 2001 and 2011, the settlement pattern for Eritrea-born Western Australians was unchanged. In 2011, most (99%) lived in the Greater Perth Metropolitan Area and one per cent lived in non-metropolitan areas. Compared with the Eritrea-born, a smaller proportion (77%) of the total WA population lived in the Greater Perth Metropolitan Area and a larger proportion (22%) lived in non-metropolitan areas.

Within the Greater Perth Metropolitan Area, the Eritrea-born lived mainly in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Stirling (37%), Wanneroo (13%) and Bayswater (12%).

## Education

In 2011, more than half (55%) of the Eritrea-born aged 15 years and over had completed Year 12 or an equivalent level of education. This was comparable with 2006 (52%) but a larger proportion compared with the total WA population (48%).

Between 2001 and 2011, there was an increase in the proportion of the Eritrea-born with qualifications at advanced diploma, diploma or certificate level (from 12% to 21%), while the proportions of those with a degree/tertiary level qualification was almost unchanged (11% and 13%, respectively). The proportion of Eritrea-born people with post-school qualifications was smaller compared with the total WA population (34% and 48%, respectively). A larger proportion of Eritrea-born men (43%) than women (25%) had post-school qualifications.

A small proportion (9%) of the Eritrea-born reported that they had not attended school, which was larger compared with the total WA population (0.6%). A larger proportion of women (12%) than men (6%) had not attended school.

Educational attainment	Eritrea-born					WA population 2011		
	2011			2006	2001	Male %	Female %	Total %
Population (15+ years)	Male %	Female %	Total %	Total %	Total %	Male %	Female %	Total %
Degree/tertiary level	17.0	8.6	12.8	13.3	11.1	15.9	19.2	17.5
Advanced diploma/diploma/certificate	26.3	15.9	21.0	19.7	11.6	32.8	22.4	27.6
Completed Year 12/equivalent	64.4	44.0	54.7	52.4	58.1	46.2	49.4	47.8
Did not attend school	5.5	11.8	8.7	11.9	6.5	0.5	0.7	0.6

## Labour force

### PARTICIPATION

The labour force participation rate is the proportion of the total population, aged 15 years and over, employed or unemployed and able to work. In 2011, almost two-thirds (59%) of Eritrea-born Western Australians were in the labour force, a larger proportion than in 2006 (54%) but smaller compared with the total WA population (64%).

Between 2001 and 2011, there was an increase in the proportion of the Eritrea-born who were employed (from 37% to 54%) but this was smaller compared with the total WA population (61%). There were decreases in the proportions of the Eritrea-born not in the labour force (from 44% to 38%) and unemployed (from 17% to 6%). These figures were larger compared with the WA population (29% and 3%, respectively).

The proportion of Eritrea-born men who were employed (74%) was more than double that of women (34%), while the proportion of women not in the labour force (58%) was larger than that of men (19%). These gender-based trends reflect those for the total WA population of which more men were employed than women (67% and 55%, respectively) and more women than men were not in the labour force (23% and 36%, respectively).

Labour force	Eritrea-born					WA population 2011		
	2011			2006	2001	Male %	Female %	Total %
Population (15+ years)	Male %	Female %	Total %	Total %	Total %	Male %	Female %	Total %
Employed	73.7	33.6	53.6	47.9	37.4	66.7	55.3	61.0
Unemployed	5.5	5.9	5.7	5.8	17.3	3.2	2.9	3.0
Not in the labour force	18.9	57.8	38.4	39.8	43.9	22.7	36.1	29.4

### OCCUPATION

The Eritrea-born were mainly employed as machinery operators and drivers (25%), labourers<sup>1</sup> (21%), and professionals (15%). This was different compared with all Western Australians who were mainly employed as professionals (20%), technicians and trade workers (17%), and clerical and administrative workers (14%).

Eritrea-born men were mainly employed as machinery operators and drivers (37%), labourers (16%) and professionals (16%). Eritrea-born women were mainly employed as labourers (31%), community and personal service workers (27%), and professionals (15%).

### BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

Almost one-quarter (23%) of the Eritrea-born were small or medium business owners. This was a larger proportion than in 2006 (15%) and compared with the total WA population (15%). All Eritrea-born business owners were men.

One-fifth (20%) of the businesses owned by the Eritrea-born employed between one and 19 people and almost three-quarters (72%) were self-managed.

<sup>1</sup> According to the 2011 Census Dictionary, 'labourers' include cleaners and laundry workers, construction and mining labourers, factory process workers, farm, forestry and garden workers, food preparation assistants and a miscellaneous category such as handypersons, recycling and rubbish collectors and vending machine attendants.



Weekly income	Eritrea-born 2011					WA population 2011		
	2011			2006*	2001**	Male %	Female %	Total %
Population (15+ years)	Male %	Female %	Total %	Total %	Total %	Male %	Female %	Total %
None	3.2	12.7	7.6	6.5	2.7	5.6	9.8	7.7
< \$300	18.0	44.0	31.2	29.1	50.7	11.7	19.8	15.7
\$300–999	46.0	30.0	38.0	49.8	36.8	29.3	41.9	35.6
\$1000 or more	22.1	1.4	11.7	3.5	1.3	43.0	20.2	31.6

\* Unlike 2011 and 2001, the threshold for the 2006 Census was less than \$250. The next income bracket was \$250–999.

\*\* For the 2001 Census 'no income' also included negative income.

## INCOME

More than one-third (38%) of the Eritrea-born earned a middle income of between \$300 and \$999 per week. This proportion was smaller than in 2006 (50%) but comparable to all Western Australians (36%).

Between 2001 and 2011, the proportion of the Eritrea-born with a high income of \$1000 or more per week increased (from 1% to 12%), but was smaller compared with all Western Australians (32%). The proportion earning less than \$300 per week decreased (from 51% to 31%) during the same period, but was larger compared with the total WA population (16%).

A small proportion (8%) of the Eritrea-born was without a weekly income. This was comparable to 2006 (7%) and the same as the total WA population (8%).

A larger proportion of men (22%) than women (1%) were high income earners and a smaller proportion (3%) of men than women (13%) had no income.

## HOUSING

In 2011, more than one-third (36%) of the Eritrea-born owned their home compared with almost two-thirds (63%) of all Western Australians.

A larger proportion (31%) of Eritrea-born people were living in a home they were purchasing than a home they fully owned (5%). These proportions were smaller compared with the total WA population (39% and 24%, respectively).

More than half (55%) of the Eritrea-born were living in rental accommodation, almost double the proportion of all Western Australians (26%).

## Family

### MARITAL STATUS

In 2011, more than two-thirds of the Eritrea-born aged 25 years and over were married (68%). This was similar to 2006 (71%) but larger compared with the total WA population (58%). A larger proportion of Eritrea-born men (74%) than women (62%) were married.

Between 2006 and 2011, there was an increase in the proportion of the Eritrea-born who were divorced or separated (from 10% to 16%) which was comparable to the total WA population (14%). The proportion of the Eritrea-born who were widowed (6%) was the same as all Western Australians (6%). All of the widowed Eritrea-born were women (11%).

The proportion of the Eritrea-born who had never married (11%) was relatively unchanged since 2006 (13%), but smaller compared with the total WA population (23%).

### FAMILY COMPOSITION

In 2011, more than half (56%) of the Eritrea-born were living in couple families with children. This was unchanged since 2006 but larger compared with the total WA population (20%). The proportion of couples without children (8%) was also unchanged, but was smaller compared with the total WA population (45%).

In 2011, 19 per cent of the Eritrea-born lived in one-parent families, an increase since 2006 (14%), and almost double the proportion of the total WA population (10%).

### LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

In 2011, more than half (55%) of the Eritrea-born were living with a spouse or partner. This was similar to 2006 (57%) but larger compared with the WA population (42%). A larger proportion of men (61%) than women (49%) were living with a spouse. The proportion of women living alone (24%) was double that of men (11%).

Registered marital status (25+ years)	Eritrea-born				WA population 2011		
	2011			2006	Male %	Female %	Total %
	Male %	Female %	Total %	Total %			
Married	73.9	61.7	67.7	71.0	59.0	57.1	58.1
Widowed	0.0	11.4	5.7	4.7	2.3	8.8	5.6
Divorced/separated	14.6	16.9	15.7	9.8	12.3	14.9	13.6
Never married	11.0	10.4	10.7	12.7	26.3	19.2	22.7

### Family composition (all ages)

Couple family with children	60.0	51.7	55.7	54.5	19.4	20.3	19.8
Couple family without children	7.2	9.0	8.1	9.4	45.0	44.7	44.8
One-parent family	9.5	27.2	18.5	13.5	7.8	12.0	9.9





The proportion of the Eritrea-born living with other family or non-family members (19%), not living at home (7%) or living alone (18%) remained almost unchanged since 2006 (21%, 3% and 15%, respectively).

Compared with the Eritrea-born, a larger proportion of all Western Australians lived with other family or non-family members (38%), and comparable proportions were not living at home (8%) or living alone (12%).

### **DISABILITY/SICKNESS**

Disability refers to the level of assistance a person requires in day-to-day activities such as eating, dressing and bathing. In 2011, more than half (57%) of the Eritrea-born women aged 65 years and over required such assistance; no men in this age group required assistance. This proportion was larger compared with Western Australian women of the same age (18%) who required assistance.

In 2011, the proportion of the Eritrea-born aged over 15 years (11%) providing unpaid care and/or assistance to a family member was comparable to the total WA population (9%).

## **More information**

For more information and assistance, please contact:

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