



# Western Australian Community Profiles 2011 Census Singapore-born

## Introduction

**This profile provides a range of information on Western Australians who were born in Singapore. 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.

## Singapore-born community in Western Australia

Migration from Singapore to Western Australia (WA) began on a small scale in the 19th century. Singaporean migration began to increase during the 1950s, with the arrival of more than 500 Singapore-born people between 1955 and 1969, mainly as international students under the Colombo Plan. A further 1500 people arrived between 1970 and 1980. Migration remained stable until 2000 and then increased with the arrival of 5631 Singapore-born people between 2001 and 2010, mainly as international students and skilled migrants.

### SINGAPORE-BORN COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE

- There were 13,972 Singapore-born in WA, an 18% increase since 2006 (from 11,810).
- More than half (57%) of the Singapore-born identified as having Chinese ancestry.
- More than one-third (40%) arrived in WA between 2001 and 2010.
- There were more women (7629) than men (6343) with a sex ratio of 83 men for every 100 women.
- Almost one-third (32%) of the Singapore-born were young adults aged between 25 and 44 years and a similar proportion were adults aged between 45 and 64 years (32%). The smallest group was older people aged 65 years and over (9%).

- ▣ The median age of the Singapore-born was 39 years.
- ▣ Half (49%) of the Singapore-born spoke English well and spoke a language other than English (LOTE) at home.
- ▣ The main languages spoken by the Singapore-born were Mandarin (26%), Malay (8%) and Tamil (4%).
- ▣ Most (96%) of the Singapore-born lived in the Greater Perth Metropolitan Area.
- ▣ Three-quarters (75%) of the Singapore-born aged 15 years and over had completed Year 12 or an equivalent level of education, one-third had a university degree (33%) and one-quarter (25%) had a technical qualification.
- ▣ Almost two-thirds (64%) were employed and more than one-third (35%) were not in the labour force.
- ▣ The Singapore-born were mainly employed as professionals (35%), clerical and administrative workers (17%) and managers (11%).
- ▣ Almost two-thirds (63%) were middle and high income earners; similar proportions earned between \$300 and \$999 per week (31%) or \$1000 or more per week (32%). Almost one-fifth (19%) had no weekly income.
- ▣ Almost two-thirds (61%) owned their home.
- ▣ More than two-thirds of the Singapore-born aged 25 years and over were married (68%) and half (50%) lived in couple families with children.
- ▣ More than one-tenth (12%) of the Singapore-born aged over 65 years required assistance with everyday living.

## Migration, culture, ancestry, language and religion

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In 2011, there were 13,972 Singapore-born Western Australians, representing 0.6% of the State's total population. This group had increased by 18% (from 11,810) since 2006. More than half (59%) were Australian citizens.

### ARRIVAL

More than one-third (40%) of the Singapore-born arrived in WA between 2001 and 2010, mainly as international students and skilled migrants. This compares with WA's total overseas-born population, of which 28% arrived during the same period.

### AGE AND GENDER

The Singapore-born population was composed of larger proportions of young and mature adults and a smaller proportion of children than the total WA population. In 2011, almost two-thirds of the Singapore-born were aged between 25 and 44 years (32%) or 45 and 64 years (32%). The proportion of people aged between 45 and 64 years had increased since 2001 (from 27%), while the proportion of people aged between 25 and 44 years was comparable. These proportions were slightly larger compared with those of the total WA population (29% and 25%, respectively).

The proportion of Singapore-born children aged between 0 and 14 years (10%) had been stable since 2001, but was half the WA proportion (20%). By contrast, the proportion of Singapore-born young people aged between 15 and 24 years had decreased (from 23% to 18%), but was larger compared with the WA population (14%).

The median age of the Singapore-born was 39 years, compared with 36 years for the total WA population.



| Age and gender profile | Singapore-born |          |         |         |         | WA population 2011 |           |           |
|------------------------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
|                        | 2011           |          |         | 2006    | 2001    | Male %             | Female %  | Total %   |
| Age group              | Male %         | Female % | Total % | Total % | Total % | Male %             | Female %  | Total %   |
| 0–14 years             | 11.2           | 8.5      | 9.7     | 10.8    | 9.9     | 20.1               | 19.2      | 19.7      |
| 15–24 years            | 17.3           | 18.3     | 17.9    | 19.1    | 23.3    | 14.1               | 13.3      | 13.7      |
| 25–44 years            | 33.0           | 30.2     | 31.5    | 30.5    | 33.6    | 29.4               | 28.9      | 29.1      |
| 45–64 years            | 29.5           | 34.1     | 32.0    | 31.6    | 27.0    | 25.1               | 25.3      | 25.2      |
| 65+ years              | 8.9            | 8.9      | 8.9     | 8.0     | 6.1     | 11.3               | 13.2      | 12.3      |
| <b>All (number)</b>    | 6343           | 7629     | 13,972  | 11,810  | 10,234  | 1,126,177          | 1,112,994 | 2,239,171 |
| <b>Sex ratio</b>       | 83.1           |          |         | 83.5    | 83.9    | 101.2              |           |           |

In 2011, there were more Singapore-born women than men. The sex ratio (number of men per 100 women) was estimated at 83, consistent since 2001, but lower compared with the total WA population (101).

### ANCESTRY

People who were born in Singapore, who have one or both parents born there, or who were born elsewhere but have Singaporean ancestors, may identify that they have Singaporean ancestry. In 2011, 7% of the Singapore-born identified as having Singaporean ancestry.

Larger proportions identified as having Chinese (57%) or Indian (11%) ancestry, and similar proportions identified as having English (8%) or Malay (6%) ancestry. Most (97%) had one or both parents born overseas.

In 2011, less than one per cent of Western Australians identified as having Malay (8300) or Singaporean ancestry (1902). However, larger numbers and proportions of Western Australians identified with ancestries common to the Singapore-born such as Chinese (75,935 or 3%) and Indian (40,305 or 2%). Of the Australia-born, 17,253 people identified as having Chinese ancestry and 8840 as having Indian ancestry.

| Ancestry                                 | Singapore-born |         | WA population 2011 | Australia-born 2011 |
|--|----------------|---------|--------------------|---------------------|
|  | 2011           | 2006    |                    |                     |
| Self-identified ancestry                 | Total %        | Total % | Total %            | Total %             |
| Chinese                                  | 58.5           | 56.8    | 3.4                | 1.2                 |
| Indian                                   | 10.6           | 9.8     | 1.8                | 0.6                 |
| English                                  | 8.3            | 9.5     | 37.9               | 41.3                |
| Singaporean                              | 7.4            | 7.3     | 0.1                | 0.1                 |
| Malay                                    | 6.0            | 5.5     | 0.4                | 0.2                 |
| <b>One or both parents born overseas</b> | 96.8           | 96.5    | 56.2               | 35.2                |
| <b>Both parents born in Australia</b>    | 2.1            | 0.0     | 43.8               | 64.8                |
| <b>One parent born in Australia</b>      | 3.8            | 3.5     | 51.3               | 75.3                |

| Language  | Singapore-born |          |         |         |         | WA population 2011 |          |         |
|---|----------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|   | 2011           |          |         | 2006    | 2001    | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
| English proficiency   | Male %         | Female % | Total % | Total % | Total % | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
| Speaks English only   | 49.4           | 48.0     | 48.6    | 49.2    | 48.0    | 78.8               | 79.8     | 79.3    |
| Speaks other language and English; very well or well                        | 48.3           | 48.9     | 48.6    | 47.8    | 48.8    | 12.4               | 12.7     | 12.5    |
| Speaks other language and English; not well or not at all                   | 1.8            | 2.5      | 2.2     | 2.4     | 2.8     | 1.8                | 2.4      | 2.1     |
| <b>Main language spoken at home other than English (top two responses)*</b> |                |          |         |         |         |                    |          |         |
| Mandarin  | 25.5           | 25.5     | 25.5    | 24.7    | 21.7    | 1.2                | 1.3      | 1.3     |
| Malay   | 8.1            | 8.4      | 8.2     | 7.5     | 8.2     | 0.2                | 0.3      | 0.3     |

\* The first three columns include the top two responses for the Singapore-born. Data for the WA population are not the top responses and are presented for comparative purposes.

## LANGUAGES

In 2011, more than half (52%) of the Singapore-born reported speaking a language other than English (LOTE) at home, including Mandarin (26%), Malay (8%), Cantonese (8%) and Tamil (4%).

Half (49%) of the Singapore-born reported speaking a LOTE and speaking English well or very well, a proportion that was unchanged since 2001. Half (49%) spoke English only at home, unchanged since 2001.

A smaller proportion of the Singapore-born reported speaking a LOTE and English not well or not at all (2%), a proportion that was unchanged since 2006.

## RELIGION

The religious affiliation of the Singapore-born had remained relatively stable since 2001. In 2011, more than half (54%) of the Singapore-born reported that they identified with Christianity (54%). Smaller proportions identified with Buddhism (11%), Islam (9%) and Hinduism (5%), and 16% identified as having no religion. This trend was different compared with the total WA population, for which identification with Christianity had decreased and identification with non-Christian religions or as having no religion had increased.



## Geographic distribution

Between 2001 and 2011, the settlement pattern for Singapore-born Western Australians remained stable. Most (96%) lived in the Greater Perth Metropolitan Area and 4% lived in non-metropolitan areas. Compared with the Singapore-born, a smaller proportion of the total Western Australian population lived in the Greater Perth Metropolitan Area (77%) and a larger proportion lived in non-metropolitan areas (22%).

Within the Greater Perth Metropolitan Area, the Singapore-born lived mainly in the Local Government Areas of Canning (13%), Melville (11%) and Gosnells (11%).

## Education

In 2011, three-quarters (75%) of the Singapore-born aged 15 years and over had completed Year 12 or an equivalent level of education. This was a larger proportion than in 2006 (70%) and 2001 (63%), and compared with the total WA population (48%).

Between 2001 and 2011, there was an increase in the proportion of the Singapore-born with qualifications at degree/tertiary level (from 23% to 33%), while the proportion with advanced diploma, diploma and certificate level qualifications was 24%. A larger proportion of the Singapore-born held post-school qualifications than the total WA population (57% and 45%, respectively).

Less than one per cent of Singapore-born Western Australians reported that they had not attended school, which was similar to the proportion of the total WA population (0.6%).

| Educational attainment               | Singapore-born |          |         |         |         | WA population 2011 |          |         |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|                                      | 2011           |          |         | 2006    | 2001    | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
| Population (15+ years)               | Male %         | Female % | Total % | Total % | Total % | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
| Degree/tertiary level                | 33.0           | 32.7     | 32.8    | 28.9    | 22.5    | 15.9               | 19.2     | 17.5    |
| Advanced diploma/diploma/certificate | 27.0           | 22.6     | 24.6    | 24.0    | 22.7    | 32.8               | 22.4     | 27.6    |
| Completed Year 12/equivalent         | 76.2           | 74.4     | 75.2    | 70.1    | 62.8    | 46.2               | 49.4     | 47.8    |
| Did not attend school                | 0.4            | 1.3      | 0.9     | 1.0     | 1.3     | 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 who are employed or unemployed and able to work. In 2011, almost two-thirds (64%) of Singapore-born Western Australians were in the labour force, a larger proportion than in 2001 (52%), but the same as the total WA population (64%).

Between 2001 and 2011, the proportion of the Singapore-born not in the labour force decreased (from 47% to 35%), the rate of unemployment remained relatively stable (around 4%), and the proportion employed increased (from 48% to 60%). The proportions of the Singapore-born who were employed, unemployed or not in the labour force were comparable to the WA population (61%, 3% and 29%, respectively).

A larger proportion of Singapore-born men (67%) than women (54%) were employed. The proportion of women (41%) not in the labour force was larger than the proportion for men (28%). These gender-based trends reflect those for the total WA population, of which 67% of men and 55% of women were employed, and more than one-third of women (36%) and around one-quarter of men (23%) were not in the labour force.

### OCCUPATION

The Singapore-born were mainly employed as professionals (35%), clerical and administrative workers (17%) and managers (11%). The occupation groups and rates for the Singapore-born were comparable to those for the total WA population, except that the proportion of Western Australian professionals was smaller (20%).

Singapore-born men were mainly employed as professionals (34%), technicians and trade workers (15%) and managers (13%). Singapore-born women were mainly employed as professionals (35%), clerical and administrative workers (25%), and community and personal service workers (12%).

### BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

In 2011, 13% of the Singapore-born were small or medium business owners. This proportion was comparable to 2006 (16%) and the total WA population (15%).

Almost two-thirds (61%) of businesses owned by the Singapore-born employed between one and 19 people, one-third (34%) were self-managed, and the remainder (4%) employed 20 or more people. More Singapore-born men (16%) than women (10%) were business owners.

| Labour force            | Singapore-born |          |         |         |         | WA population 2011 |          |         |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|                         | 2011           |          |         | 2006    | 2001    | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
| Population (15+ years)  | Male %         | Female % | Total % | Total % | Total % | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
| Employed                | 67.6           | 54.7     | 60.4    | 58.1    | 47.9    | 66.7               | 55.3     | 61.0    |
| Unemployed              | 3.6            | 4.1      | 3.9     | 3.2     | 4.3     | 3.2                | 2.9      | 3.0     |
| Not in the labour force | 28.2           | 40.7     | 35.1    | 37.7    | 47.2    | 22.7               | 36.1     | 29.4    |



| Weekly income          | Singapore-born |          |         |         |         | WA population 2011 |          |         |
|------------------------|----------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|                        | 2011           |          |         | 2006*   | 2001**  | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
| Population (15+ years) | Male %         | Female % | Total % | Total % | Total % | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
| None                   | 15.3           | 21.9     | 19.0    | 19.6    | 17.9    | 5.6                | 9.8      | 7.7     |
| < \$300                | 13.2           | 17.0     | 15.3    | 18.9    | 32.1    | 11.7               | 19.8     | 15.7    |
| \$300–\$999            | 27.1           | 33.3     | 30.5    | 38.5    | 35.8    | 29.3               | 41.9     | 35.6    |
| \$1000 or more         | 41.8           | 24.9     | 32.5    | 19.4    | 10.3    | 43.0               | 20.2     | 31.6    |

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

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

## INCOME

Almost one-third (31%) of the Singapore-born were middle income earners with a weekly income between \$300 and \$999. This proportion was smaller than in 2001 (36%), and compared with all Western Australians (36%). A similar proportion (33%) of the Singapore-born were high income earners with a weekly income of \$1000 or more, a larger proportion than in 2001 (10%), but comparable to all Western Australians (32%).

Between 2001 and 2011, the proportion of the Singapore-born earning less than \$300 per week more than halved (from 32% to 15%), but was comparable to the total WA population (16%). The proportion of the Singapore-born who were without a weekly income (19%) was relatively unchanged since 2001, but more than double the proportion of the total WA population (8%).

A larger proportion of Singapore-born women (33%) than men (27%) were middle income earners. A larger proportion of men (42%) than women (25%) were high income earners.

## HOUSING

In 2011, nearly three-quarters (71%) of the Singapore-born owned their home compared with almost two-thirds (63%) of all Western Australians.

In 2011, more than one-third (40%) of the Singapore-born lived in a home they were purchasing, which was comparable to the proportion of all Western Australians (39%). Almost one-third (32%) lived in a home they fully owned, a larger proportion compared with the total WA population (24%).

Less than one-quarter (22%) of Singapore-born Western Australians were living in rental accommodation, which was comparable to the proportion of the total WA population (26%).

## Family

### MARITAL STATUS

In 2011, more than two-thirds (68%) of the Singapore-born aged over 25 years were married, a proportion that was relatively unchanged since 2006 (69%), but was larger compared with the total WA population (58%).

Between 2006 and 2011, the proportions of the Singapore-born who were widowed (4%), divorced or separated (9%) or never married (19%) were stable, but were smaller compared with the total WA population (6%, 14% and 23%, respectively).

A larger proportion of Singapore-born women (6%) than men (1%) were widowed. A larger proportion of men (23%) than women (16%) were never married.

### FAMILY COMPOSITION

In 2011, half (50%) of the Singapore-born lived in couple families with children, more than double the proportion (21%) of people living in couple families without children. These proportions were unchanged since 2006, and comparable to the proportions of the total WA population (45% and 20%, respectively).

In 2011, 8% of the Singapore-born lived in one-parent families, unchanged since 2006 and comparable to the proportion of all Western Australians (10%).

| Registered marital status<br>(25+ years) | Singapore-born |          |         |         | WA population 2011 |          |         |
|--|----------------|----------|---------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|  | 2011           |          |         | 2006    | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
|  | Male %         | Female % | Total % | Total % | Male %             | Female % | Total % |
| Married                                  | 68.4           | 67.8     | 68.0    | 68.9    | 59.0               | 57.1     | 58.1    |
| Widowed                                  | 0.9            | 6.1      | 3.8     | 3.6     | 2.3                | 8.8      | 5.6     |
| Divorced/separated                       | 7.6            | 10.4     | 9.2     | 9.2     | 12.3               | 14.9     | 13.6    |
| Never married                            | 23.0           | 15.9     | 19.1    | 18.3    | 26.3               | 19.2     | 22.7    |
| <b>Family composition (all ages)</b>     |                |          |         |         |                    |          |         |
| Couple family with children              | 51.7           | 47.6     | 49.5    | 50.6    | 45.0               | 44.7     | 44.8    |
| Couple family without children           | 19.4           | 22.0     | 20.8    | 18.6    | 19.4               | 20.3     | 19.8    |
| One-parent family                        | 5.8            | 9.6      | 7.9     | 8.5     | 7.8                | 12.0     | 9.9     |



## LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

In 2011, half (51%) of the Singapore-born lived with a spouse or partner; similar for both men and women. A larger proportion of men (29%) than women (25%) were living with other family or non-family members, while a larger proportion of women (14%) than men (8%) were living alone. All arrangements were similar to 2006.

Compared with the Singapore born, a larger proportion of all Western Australians (34%) lived with other family and/or non-family members, and a smaller proportion (42%) lived with a spouse or partner.

The proportions of the Singapore-born living alone (11%) and not living at home (9%) were comparable to those of all Western Australians (12% and 8%, respectively).

## 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, a comparable proportion of Singapore-born women (13%) aged 65 years and over required such assistance as men (10%). These proportions compare with older Western Australian women (18%) and men (13%). For all other age groups the proportion was around one per cent.

In 2011, 7% of the Singapore-born aged 15 years and over were providing unpaid care and/or assistance to a family member, a rate comparable to the total WA population (9%).

## More information

For more information and assistance, please contact:

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