



New and emerging communities in Western Australia

Western Australia (WA) is a highly culturally and linguistically diverse State, with 32.2 per cent of its population born overseas and 16.6 per cent born in non-main English speaking (NMES) countries. Western Australians have a variety of ancestries, are born in a range of countries and speak different languages. For those who have migrated from overseas, there is also diversity in terms of length of time in Australia and pre-migration experience, as well as qualifications, skills and other capabilities.

For policies, programs and services to be accessible for everyone, and to achieve equitable outcomes for all, it is important to understand the characteristics and circumstances of various groups and individuals to better understand their needs and provide appropriate and responsive services. A one-size-fits-all approach will not meet everyone's needs.

New and emerging communities

While people from new and emerging communities are a diverse group, the majority arrive through Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian program and the Family Stream. For Western Australia, data also indicates that new and emerging communities have small populations, with two-thirds having less than 1000 people.

New and emerging communities can face greater disadvantages in the settlement process in Australia, compared with more established communities. This can be due to factors such as recency of arrival in Australia; visa status; low English proficiency, education and income; high unemployment rates; lack of resources (including family networks and support systems); and relative lack of familiarity with mainstream services.

Methodology

In 2013, the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) compiled data derived from the Australian Government's Settlement Database to identify the countries of birth that comprised 'new and emerging communities'.

For this 2018 fact sheet, the countries of birth for new and emerging communities were identified by constructing a composite index, primarily cross-tabulating birthplaces by year of arrival data based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Population and Housing Census data.



Birthplaces were matched with migration streams derived from the Settlement Database in a two-staged sampling process.¹ As length of residence in Australia and migration stream are important factors influencing migration outcomes, length of time in Australia (from less than one up to 10 years) and those who arrived through the Refugee and Humanitarian program and Family Stream, were used as key indicators.² Birthplace groups who arrived in Western Australia between 10 August 2006 and 9 August 2016 were identified based on their size (numerical strength).

A scale (1–5) was used to rank each country against the two indicators: year of arrival (sub-divided into 2016, 2011–2016 and 2006–2016) and migration stream (sub-divided into humanitarian and family visa). Countries with the highest score for each indicator scored highest.

A total of 19 birthplaces were selected and classified into two groups. Group 1 comprised 10 countries that each scored more than 10 in total: Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic (DR) of Congo, Rwanda, Republic of (R) of Congo, Syria, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Eritrea and Liberia (Table 1A). Group 2 comprised countries that scored 10 or less: Iraq, Libya, Malawi, South Sudan, Somalia, Albania, Sierra Leone, Burma³ and Uganda (Table 1B).

Each group comprised 0.7 per cent of the total Western Australian population and four per cent of the population of those born in non-main English speaking (NMES) countries.

Of the 19 birthplaces, 12 remain from the list compiled by OMI in 2013: Afghanistan, Burma, Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo, Iraq, Liberia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan. Five birthplaces have been added: Albania, Libya, South Sudan, Uganda and Uzbekistan. Birthplaces no longer classified as new and emerging are: Burundi, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Tanzania and Togo.⁴

¹ In the first stage, birthplaces with the majority of migrants arriving in WA between 10 August 2006 and 9 August 2016 were identified from the 2016 census. In the second stage, controlling for these countries and their periods of arrival, visa status was then identified from the settlement database.

² The Skilled Migration Program is subject to strict occupational and English language requirements with people arriving through the program achieving more positive settlement outcomes.

³ The name 'Burma' is used as it is more easily recognised than 'Myanmar'. It also more readily links to 'Burmese' ancestry and language; 'Myanmar' does not have an equivalent adjective in English. The ABS refers to Myanmar for country of birth, and Burmese in relation to defining language and ancestry.

⁴ Of the five birthplaces, the populations of those born in the Ivory Coast, Senegal and Togo were fewer than 100 and therefore did not qualify for the population threshold used in this study. As 37.2 per cent of the Tanzania born arrived as skilled migrants, they did not meet the methodological criteria used for the same. The Burundi born did not meet the year of arrival criteria.



Table 1A: New and emerging communities (Group 1)

Birthplace	Population (number)	Growth per year	Humanitarian visa	Family visa	Arrived 2011– 2016	Arrived 2006– 2016
Afghanistan	5114	5.4	63.9	34.9	43.0	65.7
Ethiopia	1615	7.0	33.0	61.5	27.5	47.6
Congo, DR	708	9.6	66.8	0.9	26.8	63.6
Rwanda	147	3.1	27.0	67.6	32.0	78.9
Congo, R	240	6.4	75.0	10.0	25.4	70.4
Syria	606	16.0	75.0	11.6	48.5	36.3
Thailand	7806	6.6	10.4	78.2	29.5	55.1
Uzbekistan	128	7.1	2.4	42.9	26.5	56.3
Eritrea	591	5.4	66.5	30.5	20.6	40.6
Liberia	577	3.1	12.4	83.5	17.2	59.4

Table 1B: New and emerging communities (Group 2)

Birthplace	Population (number)	Growth per year	Humanitarian visa	Family visa	Arrived 2011– 2016	Arrived 2006– 2016
Iraq	3426	5.7	55.6	32.5	30.6	48.3
Libya	340	0.7	31.4	14.3	37.1	62.6
Malawi	286	3.7	20.0	20.0	28.7	47.2
South Sudan	1202	19.7	11.7	88.3	12.7	40.2
Somalia	1335	5.0	25.8	70.0	21.9	43.6
Albania	195	7.5	10.0	55.0	30.2	44.6
Sierra Leone	502	3.6	15.2	70.9	13.7	45.6
Burma	8707	3.1	70.3	16.1	18.0	39.7
Uganda	653	4.3	20.5	48.9	16.5	41.6

Age and gender distribution

Adults aged 25–44 years comprised the highest proportion in both Group 1 and Group 2, followed by those aged 45–64 years and young people (aged 15–24 years). Except for a few countries, children (0–14 years) and seniors (65 years and over) barely exceeded 10 per cent of the population (Figure 1). However, there are variations by birthplace. For example, Syria-born people had the largest proportion of children (27.6 per cent), followed by Libya (19.1 per cent), Rwanda (16 per cent) and Thailand (15.9 per cent).



None of the Group 1 birthplaces and only two Group 2 countries—Burma (20.6 per cent) and Albania (16.7 per cent)—comprised more than 10 per cent of people aged 65 and over.

For Group 1, however, unlike Group 2, there is only a small difference between people born in the various countries for people aged 45–64 years (20.5 per cent) and 15–24 years (19.5 per cent). This is because of the relatively youthful population in birthplaces such as Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo and Rwanda.

In Group 2, Sierra Leone and South Sudan are the only birthplaces in which the proportion of people aged 15–24 years was larger (23 per cent and 8.7 per cent, respectively) compared with those aged 45–64 years. Burma is another exception: people aged 55–64 years comprised the largest category.

Except for the Republic of Congo, adults aged 25–44 comprised the largest proportion of Group 1 birthplaces, followed by those aged 45–64 and 15–24 (Table 2). Adults aged 25–44 also comprised the largest proportion of Group 2 birthplaces, followed by those aged 45–64 years.

Sierra Leone and South Sudan are the only exceptions: for these two birthplaces, the proportion of adults aged 15–24 years was larger (23 per cent and 18.7 per cent, respectively) compared with those aged 45–64 years (19.1 per cent and 15.4 per cent, respectively).

Figure 1: Population distribution by age group (Group 1 and Group 2)

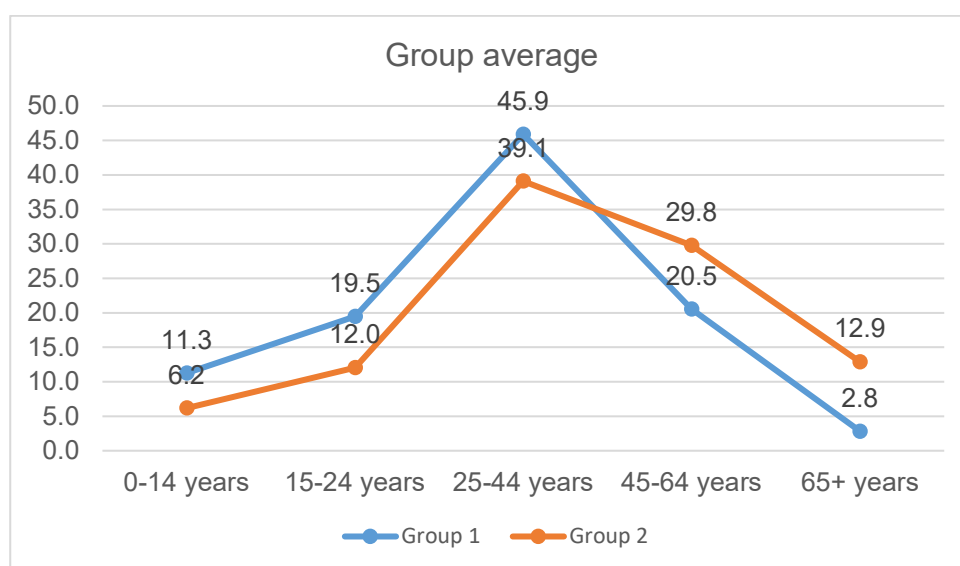




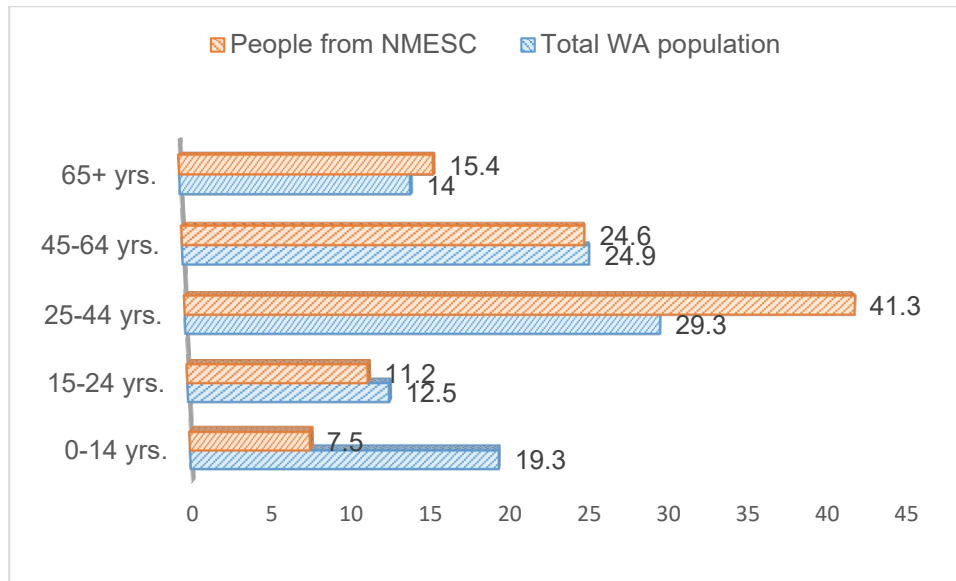
Table 2: Distribution by age group and birthplace (percentage)

	0–14 years	15–24 years	25–44 years	45–64 years	65+ years
Group 1					
Afghanistan	5.5	26.0	50.6	15.5	2.5
Congo, R	10.3	37.6	35.1	15.3	1.7
Congo, DR	5.6	28.2	40.4	22.3	3.5
Eritrea	4.6	10.0	41.3	38.6	5.4
Ethiopia	7.4	16.1	49.3	26.2	1.0
Liberia	5.7	18.5	55.8	18.5	1.4
Rwanda	16.0	24.1	43.8	14.2	1.9
Syria	27.6	10.4	35.6	20.0	6.4
Thailand	15.9	16.1	43.4	21.6	3.0
Uzbekistan	11.4	11.4	47.7	23.5	6.1
Group 2					
	0–14 years	15–24 years	25–44 years	45–64 years	65+ years
Albania	2.9	9.8	52.0	18.6	16.7
Iraq	11.1	13.4	45.8	25.8	3.9
Libya	19.1	7.1	41.3	24.8	7.7
Malawi	13.1	9.9	36.9	30.3	9.9
Burma	3.2	9.1	31.9	35.2	20.6
Sierra Leone	5.3	23.0	49.7	19.1	2.9
Somalia	2.8	15.3	53.2	25.7	3.0
South Sudan	5.1	18.7	59.5	15.4	1.3
Uganda	20.8	20.3	21.4	27.1	10.5

New and emerging communities have a larger proportion of children and a smaller proportion of people aged 15–24 compared with the total WA population (Figure 2). Compared with the total NMES population, the proportion of people aged 65+ is smaller, although for other age groups the age distribution pattern is similar.



Figure 2: Distribution of total WA and NMES population by age group (%)



The gender data shows that the overall sex ratio is more balanced for Group 2 birthplaces, compared with Group 1 (Table 3). However, if Group 1 birthplaces with extremely high or low values of sex ratios such as Afghanistan (199.5) and Thailand (38.7) are taken out of equation, then the sex ratio becomes more balanced. Gender data also varies by age group. Generally, the sex ratio is higher for children, indicating more boys than girls, and becomes more balanced with increased age (except for the 45–64 age group) for most birthplaces.



Table 3: New and emerging communities—sex ratio

Group 1	0–14 years	15–24 years	25–44 years	45–64 years	65+ years	Total
Syria	178.3	90.9	100.0	105.1	160.0	120.4
Thailand	101.9	103.9	25.5	11.5	25.0	38.7
Afghanistan	122.2	197.1	229.9	179.8	88.1	199.5
Uzbekistan	400.0	87.5	40.0	55.0	60.0	63.0
Congo, R	127.3	78.4	77.1	105.6	0	89.1
Congo, DR	81.8	115.1	99.3	100.0	316.7	106.4
Liberia	83.3	67.2	105.1	118.4	60.0	96.9
Eritrea	68.8	96.7	92.9	152.2	146.2	113.8
Ethiopia	105.2	87.7	81.1	142.0	300.0	98.0
Rwanda	188.9	50.0	65.1	155.6	0	86.2
All	110.4	126.8	75.3	57.1	63.7	82.1
Group 2	0–14 years	15–24 years	25–44 years	45–64 years	65+ years	Total
South Sudan	134.6	118.4	128.4	125.6	100.0	125.9
Iraq	107.1	96.6	102.3	172.8	120.0	117.2
Burma	83.0	107.8	92.3	92.4	75.7	89.6
Malawi	140.0	42.1	124.4	80.4	68.8	94.3
Somalia	131.3	100.0	80.4	97.1	66.7	88.0
Sierra Leone	92.9	78.8	105.6	113.0	87.5	98.8
Libya	116.1	108.3	101.4	155.9	125.0	118.0
Uganda	101.5	74.0	113.6	103.4	97.1	97.6
Albania	0.0	66.7	171.8	81.0	142.9	137.2
All	103.6	99.3	99.2	106.1	79.8	98.7

Settlement pattern

Most members of new and emerging communities are settled in the Perth metropolitan area, a trend similar to people from NMES countries. The Local Government Areas (LGAs) in which they mainly live are Stirling, Wanneroo, Gosnells, Swan, Canning, Bayswater, Belmont, Armadale, Joondalup, Kalamunda, South Perth and Victoria Park. Except for Canning and Belmont, ranking of the top LGAs differed for each group (Table 4).



Regional LGAs have low numbers of people from new and emerging communities. Only Mandurah, Katanning, Albany, Kalgoorlie/Boulder, Busselton, Karratha and Greater Geraldton have more than 100 people from these communities, who were mainly born in Thailand, Burma, and/or Afghanistan.

Table 4: New and emerging communities—Top 10 metropolitan LGAs

LGA	Group 1		LGA	Group 2	
Gosnells (C)	3787	15.8	Stirling (C)	2348	23.0
Stirling (C)	3210	13.4	Wanneroo (C)	1429	14.0
Wanneroo (C)	3078	12.8	Swan (C)	1156	11.3
Swan (C)	2012	8.4	Gosnells (C)	1133	11.1
Canning (C)	1336	5.6	Canning (C)	827	8.1
Armadale (C)	1110	4.6	Bayswater (C)	446	4.4
Belmont (C)	925	3.9	Belmont (C)	377	3.7
Bayswater (C)	901	3.8	South Perth (C)	287	2.8
Joondalup (C)	727	3.0	Victoria Park (T)	270	2.6
Kalamunda (S)	586	2.4	Armadale (C)	228	2.2

English proficiency and linguistic diversity

Most people (82 per cent) from new and emerging communities reported speaking a language other than English as the main language spoken at home, while 16.5 per cent spoke only English at home. In contrast, just 17.6 per cent of all Western Australians speak a LOTE as their main language at home and 75.2 per cent speak English only.

The most common languages other than English spoken were Middle Eastern and African languages. Except for Arabic, none were among the most common languages other than English (LOTE) spoken at home by Western Australians (Table 5). Twenty-five per cent of LOTE speakers from new and emerging communities rated their English language proficiency as 'high' while 75 per cent rated it 'low', compared with 86 per cent and 14 per cent of all WA LOTE speakers, respectively.



Table 5: Top 10 languages spoken at home and English proficiency

Top languages spoken at home		Top languages by level of low English proficiency	
New and emerging communities	Western Australia	Number	%
Arabic	Mandarin	Vietnamese	Karen
Amharic	Italian	Cantonese	Chin Haka
Burmese	Vietnamese	Italian	Hazaraghi
Chin Haka	Cantonese	Arabic	Korean
Dari	Tagalog	Korean	Vietnamese
Dinka	Afrikaans	Punjabi	Khmer
Hazaraghi	Arabic	Karen	Dari
Karen	Punjabi	Persian	Mandarin
Oromo	Indonesian	Burmese	Cantonese
Persian	Hindi	Hazaraghi	Burmese

Except for Amharic, Dinka and Oromo, all the top languages spoken by people from new and emerging communities are those spoken by people with low English proficiency in WA (Table 6A).



Table 6A: Language other than English spoken at home

Birthplace	Language spoken at home	Birthplace	Language spoken at home
Afghanistan	Dari, Persian, Hazaraghi, Pashto, Arabic	Albania	Albanian, Greek, Italian
Congo, DR	Swahili, French, Dutch, Vietnamese	Burma	Burmese, Karen, Mandarin, Chin Haka, Mon
Congo, R	Swahili, French, Kirundi, Kinyarwanda	Iraq	Arabic, Kurdish, Assyrian Neo-Aramaic, Turkish, Farsi
Eritrea	Arabic, Tigrinya, Tigre, Italian, Amharic	Libya	Arabic, Italian, Hindi
Ethiopia	Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya, Arabic, Somali	Malawi	Nyanja (Chichewa), Swahili, Somali, French
Liberia	Loma (Lorma), Dan (Gio–Dan), Krahn, Krio, Mandinka	Sierra Leone	Krio, Fulfulde, French, Mandinka, Themne
Rwanda	Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Swahili, French	Somalia	Somali, Arabic, Italian, Gujarati
Syria	Arabic, Armenian, Kurdish, Assyrian Neo-Aramaic	South Sudan	Dinka, Arabic, Bari, Nuer, Madi, Acholi
Thailand	Thai, Karen, Khmer, Burmese	Uganda	Acholi, Madi, Luganda, Gujarati, Swahili
Uzbekistan	Russian, Greek, Uzbek		

Birthplaces with a significant proportion of people with low English language proficiency are Syria (37 per cent), Afghanistan (32.6 per cent), Burma (25.3 per cent), Iraq (24.5 per cent), Eritrea (20.6 per cent) and Albania (16.4 per cent) (Table 6B). Eight of the 19 birthplaces have a level of English language proficiency (10–15 per cent) comparable with WA's LOTE speakers.



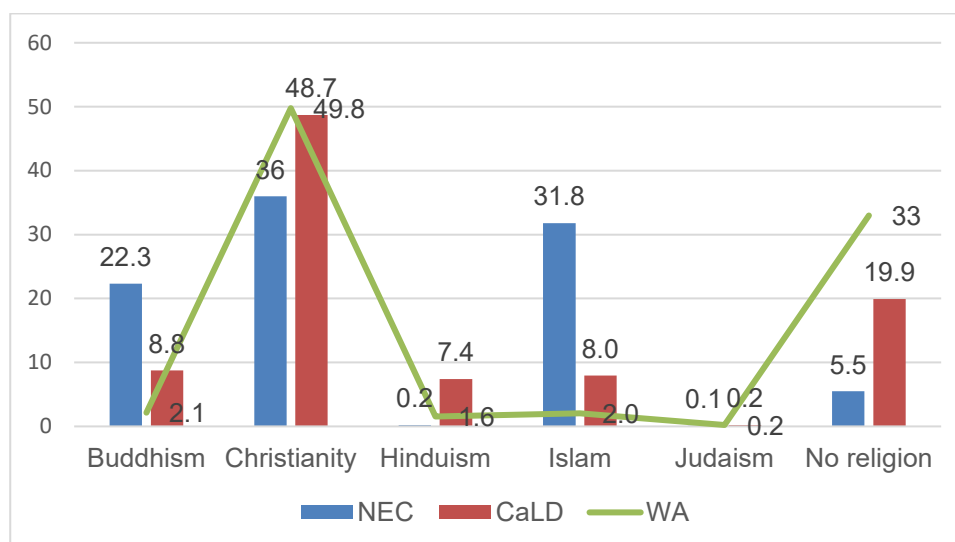
Table 6B: Proportion of community with low level of English language proficiency

Percentage of community	Group 1	Group 2
>35%	Syria	
16–35%	Afghanistan, Eritrea	Albania, Burma, Iraq
10–15%	Congo, DR., Congo, R., Ethiopia, Thailand, Uzbekistan	Libya, Somalia, South Sudan
2–9%	Liberia, Rwanda	Malawi, Sierra Leone, Uganda

Religious affiliation

People from new and emerging communities are mainly affiliated with Christianity (38 per cent), Islam (31 per cent) and Buddhism (22 per cent) (Figure 3A). Except for Albania and Uzbekistan, few members of new and emerging communities identify as having no religion. Most communities are typified by a dominant faith (such as Christianity or Islam) (Figure 3B) except for Eritrea, which has a similar proportion of Christians and Muslims. Thailand and Burma have the highest proportion of Buddhists (70.8 per cent and 20.8 per cent, respectively), which impacts the average figure.

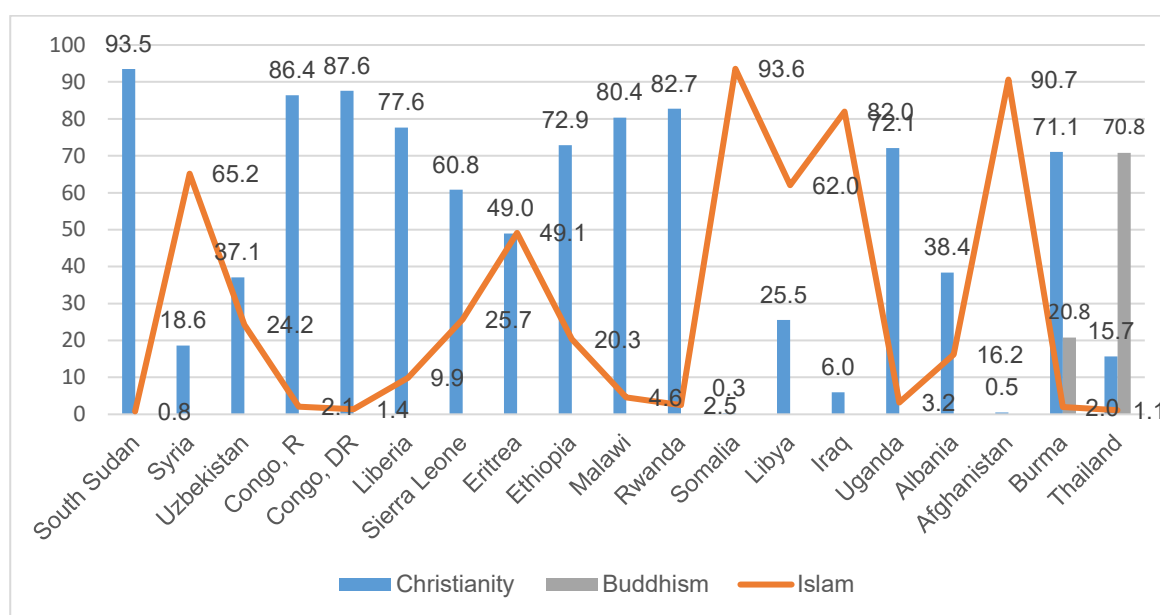
Figure 3A: Religious affiliation





With larger proportions of people affiliated with Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, religious diversity in new and emerging communities is more pronounced, compared with all Western Australians and people born in NMES countries (Figure 3A). This is because the majority in these two groups identified with Christianity (48.7 per cent and 49.8 per cent, respectively), no religion or secular beliefs (33 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively), and smaller proportions with non-Christian religions (ranging between 0.2 per cent and 2 per cent, and between 0.2 per cent and 8.8 per cent, respectively).

Figure 3B: Major religious affiliation



Educational attainment ⁵

Only 15.8 per cent of adults from new and emerging communities (15.3 per cent for Group 1 and 19.4 per cent for Group 2) had obtained a tertiary qualification. This is similar to the WA average of 18.6 per cent but significantly lower than for all Western Australians who were born in NMES countries (32.8 per cent).

Analysis by birthplace shows large variations, ranging from seven per cent each for Afghanistan and Liberia, to 44 per cent for Libya and Uzbekistan (Table 7). The rate for tertiary qualification was below average for most birthplaces.

Almost one-fifth (19.1 per cent) had low (Year 8 or below), or no education. The rate also varied between birthplaces, with Afghanistan having the highest proportion with low or no education (41 per cent) while Malawi, Libya, Uganda and Uzbekistan had the lowest (between zero and three per cent). This compares with 3.8 per cent for all Western Australians and 8.4 per cent for people born in NMES countries.

⁵ Data on educational attainment, employment and unemployment and income is for adults aged 15 years and over



Table 7: Rates of tertiary qualification and low/no education

Tertiary	Group 1	Group 2
High: 35–45%	Uzbekistan	Libya, Malawi
Average: 18–34%	Rwanda, Thailand	Iraq, Somalia, Uganda
Below average: 10–17%	Congo, DR., Congo, R., Eritrea, Ethiopia, Syria	Albania, Burma, Sierra Leone, South Sudan
Low: <10%	Afghanistan, Liberia	None
Low/no education		
Very high: 30–41%	Afghanistan	None
High: 20–29%	Eritrea	Iraq, Somalia
>Average: 10–29%	Ethiopia, Liberia, Syria, Thailand	Albania, Burma, Iraq, South Sudan
Average: <10%	Congo, DR., Congo, R., Rwanda, Uzbekistan	Libya, Sierra Leone, Uganda

Birthplaces in which people have a high, above average and average level of low English proficiency were among those with a larger proportion of adult members with low/no education.⁶

Employment

The employment rate for people from new and emerging communities is 49.6 per cent, lower than the average rates for all Western Australians (55 per cent) and all those born in NMES (58 per cent). Birthplaces of new and emerging community members are almost equally divided between those with average and below average rates of employment compared with WA and NMES countries (Table 8). People born in Syria and Iraq had the lowest rates of employment—30.8 per cent and 30.4 per cent, respectively. Malawi and Sierra Leone had the highest employment rates—68.9 per cent and 64 per cent, respectively.

⁶ Average figures are derived from Western Australian and/or NMES countries' averages.



Except for Burma and Thailand, the unemployment rate for new and emerging communities was higher than for all Western Australians (4.9 per cent) and those born in NMES countries (6.2 per cent) (Table 8). Unemployment rates were higher for people born in the Democratic Republic of Congo (15.4 per cent), Somalia (15.1 per cent), Uzbekistan (14.7 per cent), South Sudan (14.1 per cent), Republic of Congo (13.3 per cent), Liberia (12.4 per cent) and Libya (12 per cent).

Table 8: Employment, unemployment and weekly personal income

Employment	Group 1	Group 2
Low: 30–31%	Syria	Iraq
<Average: 41–50%	Afghanistan, Congo, DR., Congo, R., Uzbekistan	Burma, Libya, Somalia
Average: 51–60%	Eritrea, Ethiopia, Liberia, Rwanda, Thailand	Albania, South Sudan, Uganda
High: 61–69%		Sierra Leone, Malawi
Unemployment		
High: 12–15%	Congo, DR., Congo, R., Liberia Uzbekistan	Somalia, South Sudan, Libya
>Average: 9–11%	Afghanistan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Syria	Albania, Iraq, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Uganda
Average: 5–8%	Thailand	Burma
Personal income		
Very high: >65% with no/low income	Syria	Iraq
High: 55–64%	Eritrea	Libya
>Average: 45–54%	Afghanistan, Congo, DR., Congo, R., Ethiopia, Rwanda, Thailand	Burma, Somalia, South Sudan
Average: 35–44%	Liberia, Uzbekistan	Albania, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Uganda



Personal income

The income of just over half (51.5 per cent) of people from new and emerging communities ranged from negative or zero to less than \$500 per week (Table 8). This is higher compared with all Western Australians (35.3 per cent) and those born in NMES countries (43.8 per cent). Between 46 per cent and 69 per cent of people from 14 of the 19 birthplaces fell into this income bracket.

Syria (68.6 per cent) and Iraq (67.2 per cent) had the lowest income levels, followed by Libya (55.6 per cent) and Eritrea (54.9 per cent). This largely reflects the relative employment and unemployment rates experienced in these communities. However, unlike level of education and English proficiency, there is little congruence between level of unemployment and education or English proficiency.

Analysis of employment, unemployment and weekly income indicates the impact of these variables on migration outcomes. A significant proportion of people from Syria, Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Burma, Iraq, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan have both lower levels of income and English proficiency, and higher levels of unemployment, compared with average figures for Western Australians and people from NMES countries.

However, Western Australians from Iraq, Libya and Somalia have higher levels of tertiary education than other new and emerging community members, but this does not translate into higher levels of employment or income. This suggests that factors other than individual characteristics, such as education level and qualifications, can impact migration outcomes. Access to opportunities, culturally responsive policies, programs and services, and inclusive practices, are important in achieving equitable outcomes for all.

This fact sheet is produced by the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) and is available on www.omi.wa.gov.au