

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Since the first Census, the majority of Australians have reported an affiliation with a Christian religion. However, there has been a long-term decrease in affiliation to Christianity from 96% in 1911 to 61% in 2011. Conversely, although Christian religions are still predominant in Australia, there have been increases in those reporting an affiliation to non-Christian religions, and those reporting 'No Religion'.

In the past decade, the proportion of the population reporting an affiliation to a Christian religion decreased from 68% in 2001 to 61% in 2011. This trend was also seen for the two most commonly reported denominations. In 2001, 27% of the population reported an affiliation to Catholicism. This decreased to 25% of the population in 2011. There was a slightly larger decrease for Anglicans from 21% of the population in 2001 to 17% in 2011. Some of the smaller Christian denominations increased over this period - there was an increase for those identifying with Pentecostal from 1.0% of the population in 2001 to 1.1% in 2011. However, the actual number of people reporting this religion increased by one-fifth.

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS

Religion	'000	Popul
Christian	13 150.6	
Catholic	5 439.2	
Anglican	3 680.0	
Uniting Church	1 065.8	
Presbyterian and Reformed	599.5	

Eastern Orthodox	563.1
Baptist	352.5
Lutheran	251.9
Pentecostal	238.0
Other Christian	960.7
Non-Christian	1 546.3
Buddhism	529.0
Islam	476.3
Hinduism	275.5
Judaism	97.3
Other non-Christian	168.2
No Religion	4 796.8
Total(b)	21 507.7

(a) Proportion of people reporting this religion who were born overseas.

(b) Total includes inadequately described (supplementary codes) religions and people

Between 2001 and 2011, the number of people reporting a non-Christian faith increased considerably, from around 0.9 million to 1.5 million, accounting for 7.2% of the total population in 2011 (up from 4.9% in 2001). The most common non-Christian religions in 2011 were Buddhism (accounting for 2.5% of the population), Islam (2.2%) and Hinduism (1.3%). Of these, Hinduism had experienced the fastest growth since 2001, increasing by 189% to 275,500, followed by Islam (increased by 69% to 476,300) and Buddhism (increased by 48% to 529,000 people).

The number of people reporting 'No Religion' also increased strongly, from 15% of the population in 2001 to 22% in 2011. This is most evident amongst younger people, with 28% of people aged 15-34 reporting they had no religious affiliation.

Over half of the overseas-born population (56%) reported a Christian denomination; the two most commonly

reported were Catholicism (24%) and Anglicanism (12%). Non-Christian religions were reported by 19% of the overseas-born population, with Buddhism (6.8%), Islam (5.4%) and Hinduism (4.3%) being the most prevalent. The proportion of the overseas-born population who reported 'No religion' was 20%, slightly lower than the level for the Australian population as a whole (22%).

Recent arrivals were less likely than longer-standing migrants to report an affiliation to Catholicism (18% and 26% respectively) and Anglicanism (7% and 13% respectively). In contrast, a higher proportion of recent arrivals reported Hinduism (10.0% compared to 3.0%), Islam (8.4% compared to 4.7%) and Buddhism (7.7% compared to 6.6%). These differences reflect the larger number of new arrivals from non-European countries. New arrivals were also more likely than longer-standing migrants to report 'No Religion' (24% compared to 19%).