



As common as Nguyen

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THE Nguyens are keeping up with the Joneses – almost.

The common Vietnamese name has joined Smith and Jones in Australia's surname top 10.

A study by University College London lists Nguyen as the seventh most common surname in Australia after Smith, Jones, Williams, Brown, Wilson and Taylor. Nguyens have even overtaken Johnsons.

Michael Dove, of Melbourne-based company MD & A who was involved in the research, said more than 30,000 Nguyens were living in Australia compared with about 100,000 Smiths, 50,000 Joneses and 29,000 Johnsons.

Mr Dove said he was not surprised by the results of the study. "It certainly reflects our changing cultural diversity," he said.

"Nguyen in Vietnam is a bit like the equivalent of a Smith but even more so because Nguyens are very much more common in Vietnam than Smiths are in Anglo parts of the world."

The study also found more diversity in European surnames than Asian names.

"There is much more diversity of Greek names and Italian names than in Vietnamese, Chinese and Hong Kong names," Mr Dove said.

He said Australia's second most common non-British surname was Tran, also of Vietnamese origin.

He said about 18,000 members of the Tran clan lived in Australia.

Tran ranks as Australia's 44th most common surname.

Trung Nguyen, 71, of Eight Mile Plains in Brisbane's south, has been happy to call Australia home since fleeing Vietnam in 1975. He was among the first group of refugees accepted in Australia after the Vietnam War.

Mr Nguyen and his wife Mai have two children in their early 20s – Jeannine and Daniel – both born in Australia.

While he is keen on younger generations to learn the traditions of his homeland, Australian customs have also become part of his own family.

Son Daniel, 20, an engineering student, is no stranger to cricket and rugby.



WHAT'S in a name . . . Trung Nguyen, 71, pictured, and his wife Mai are happy to call Australia home. They have two children in their early 20s, both born in Australia. Picture: Annette Dew